

The Light That Shines in All

The Light That Shines in All

FOUR SPIRITUAL EPIC POEMS

OF

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

The Song Celestial (Hinduism)

The Light of Asia (Buddhism)

The Light of the World (Christianity)

Pearls of the Faith (Islām)

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PREFACE.

To 2025 Edition

Gathered here in one place are four poems representing the teachings of four major world religions. Sir Edwin Arnold (1832-1904) was an English poet and journalist, and seems to have followed faithfully the story lines and interpretations of these major faiths.

Some minor word changes were made to standardize things, and changes were made to all the non-English words, to put them in their native spelling with diacritics. This, of course, in many cases changed the meter of the poems. I am not a language scholar, so many of the words may be slightly wrong, wrong tense, or gender, or plurality — and in some cases maybe the whole word. This was my attempt to acknowledge original cultures, and not simply blot them out in preference of a more easy-reading, English language edition. I did not note where changes were made, but did indicate additions where braces { } occur, as those were notes deliberately inserted by this Editor.

This edition is not for all, as it is difficult to read without a glossary — which does not appear herein. My hope is that one would appreciate the points of agreement is all religions more from having them brought all together and set beside each other — to show their similarities and not their differences. Hopefully some with gain an openness to others by this act.

Scott J. Osterhage
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THE SONG CELESTIAL

OR

BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

(FROM THE MAHĀBHĀRATA)

Being a Discourse between
ARJUNA, PRINCE OF INDIA, AND THE SUPREME BEING
UNDER THE FORM OF KRSNA

Translated from the Sanskrit Text

BY

EDWIN ARNOLD, M.A.

1886.

DEDICATION.

TO INDIA.

*So have I read this wonderful and spirit-thrilling speech,
By Kṛṣṇa and Prince Arjun held, discoursing each with each;
So have I writ its wisdom here,—its hidden mystery,
For England; O our India! as dear to me as She!*

EDWIN ARNOLD.

PREFACE.

THIS famous and marvellous Sanskrit poem occurs as an episode of the *Mahābhārata*, in the sixth—or “*Bhīṣma*”—Parva of the great Hindu epic. It enjoys immense popularity and authority in India, where it is reckoned as one of the “Five Jewels,”—*pañcaratna*—of Devanāgarī literature. In plain but noble language it unfolds a philosophical system which remains to this day the prevailing Brāhmaṇic belief, blending as it does the doctrines of Kapila, Patañjali, and the Vedāḥ. So lofty are many of its declarations, so sublime its aspirations, so pure and tender its piety, that Schlegel, after his study of the poem, breaks forth into this outburst of delight and praise towards its unknown author:

“Magistrōrum reverentia a Brāchmanīs inter sanctissima pietātis officiā refertur. Ergo tē pīmūm, vātēs sanctissime, numinisque hypophēta—quisquis tandem inter mortālēs dictus tū fueris—carminis huius auctor, cuius ḫrāculīs mēns ad excelsa quaque, aetērna atque dīvīna, cum inenarrābilī quādam dēlectatiōne rāpitur—tē pīmūm, inquam, salvēre iubēo, et vestīgia tua semper adōrō.”

{“Reverence for teachers is counted among the most sacred duties of piety by the Brāhmans. Therefore you first, most holy poet and interpreter of the divine—whoever you may have been among mortal men—author of this song, by whose oracles the mind is borne aloft with an indescribable delight to all things lofty, eternal, and divine—you first, I say, I bid hail, and I ever adore your footsteps.”}

Lassen re-echoes this splendid tribute; and indeed, so striking are some of the moralities here inculcated, and so close the parallelism—ofttimes actually verbal—between its teachings and those of the New Testament, that a controversy has arisen between Pandits and Missionaries on the point whether the author borrowed from Christian sources, or the Evangelists and Apostles from him.

This raises the question of its date, which cannot be positively settled. It must have been inlaid into the ancient epic at a period later than that of the original *Mahābhārata*, but Mr. Kaśinath Telang has offered some fair arguments to prove it anterior to the Christian era. The

weight of evidence, however, tends to place its composition at about the third century after Christós; and perhaps there are really echoes in this Brāhmaṇic poem of the lessons of Ha-Gālīl, and of the 'Ārammī incarnation.

Its scene is the level country between the Jumna and the Sarsooti rivers—now Kurnool and Jind. Its simple plot consists of a dialogue held by Prince Arjuna, the brother of King Yudhiṣṭhīra, with Krṣṇa {Krishna}, the Supreme Deity, wearing the disguise of a charioteer. A great battle is impending between the armies of the Kauravāḥ and Pāṇḍavas, and this conversation is maintained in a war-chariot drawn up between the opposing hosts.

The poem has been turned into French by Burnouf, into Latin by Lassen, into Italian by Stanislav Gatti, into Greek by Galanos, and into English by Mr. Thomson and Mr. Davies, the prose transcript of the last-named being truly beyond praise for its fidelity and clearness. Mr. Telang has also published at Bombay a version in colloquial rhythm, eminently learned and intelligent, but not conveying the dignity or grace of the original. If I venture to offer a translation of the wonderful poem after so many superior scholars, it is in grateful recognition of the help derived from their labours, and because English literature would certainly be incomplete without possessing in popular form a poetical and philosophical work so dear to India.

There is little else to say which the "Song Celestial" does not explain for itself. The Sanskrit original is written in the *Anuṣṭubh* metre, which cannot be successfully reproduced for Western ears. I have therefore cast it into our flexible blank verse, changing into lyrical measures where the text itself similarly breaks. For the most part, I believe the sense to be faithfully preserved in the following pages; but Schlegel himself had to say: "*In reconditoribus mē semper poētae mentem rectē dīvināsse affirmāre nōn ausim.*" {"In more recondite matters, I would not dare to affirm that I have always correctly divined the poet's meaning."} Those who would read more upon the philosophy of the poem may find an admirable introduction in the volume of Mr. Davies, printed by Messrs. Trübner & Co.

EDWIN ARNOLD, C.S.I.

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THE SONG CELESTIAL;

OR,

BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ.

CHAPTER I.

DHRTARĀSTRA:

RANGED thus for battle on the sacred plain—
On Kurukṣetra—say, Sañjaya! say
What wrought my people, and the Pāṇḍavas?

SAÑJAYA:

When he beheld the host of Pāṇḍavas,
Rāja Duryōdhana to Drona drew,
And spake these words: “Ah, Guru! see this line,
How vast it is of Pāṇḍu fighting-men,
Embattled by the son of Drupada,
Thy scholar in the war! Therein stand ranked
Chiefs like Arjuna, like to Bhīma chiefs,
Benders of bows; Virāṭa, Yuyudhāna,
Drupada, eminent upon his car,
Dhrṣṭaketu, Cekitāna, Kāśi’s stout lord,
Purujit, Kuntībhoja, and Śaivya,
With Yudhamanyu, and Uttamauja
Subhadrā’s child; and Drupadi’s;—all famed!
All mounted on their shining chariots!
On our side, too,—thou best of Brāhmaṇs! see
Excellent chiefs, commanders of my line,
Whose names I joy to count: thyself the first,
Then Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpa fierce in fight,
Vikarṇa, Aśvatthāman; next to these
Strong Saumadattiya, with full many more
Valiant and tried, ready this day to die

For me their king, each with his weapon grasped,
Each skilful in the field. Weakest—meseems—
Our battle shows where Bhīṣma holds command,
And Bhīma, fronting him, something too strong!
Have care our captains nigh to Bhīṣma's ranks
Prepare what help they may! Now, blow my shell!

Then, at the signal of the aged king,
With blare to wake the blood, rolling around
Like to a lion's roar, the trumpeter
Blew the great Conch; and, at the noise of it,
Trumpets and drums, cymbals and gongs and horns
Burst into sudden clamour; as the blasts
Of loosened tempest, such the tumult seemed!
Then might be seen, upon their car of gold
Yoked with white steeds, blowing their battle-shells,
Krṣṇa the God, Arjuna at his side:
Krṣṇa, with knotted locks, blew his great conch
Carved of the "Giant's bone;" Arjuna blew
Indra's loud gift; Bhīma the terrible—
Wolf-bellied Bhīma—blew a long reed-conch;
And Yudhiṣṭhīra, Kuntī's blameless son,
Winded a mighty shell, "Victory's Voice;"
And Nakula blew shrill upon his conch
Named the "Sweet-sounding," Sahadeva on his
Called "Gem-bedecked," and Kāśī's Prince on his.
Śikhaṇḍīn on his car, Dhṛṣṭadyumna,
Virāṭa, Sātyaki the Unsubdued,
Drupada, with his sons, (O Lord of Earth!)
Long-armed Subhadrā's children, all blew loud,
So that the clangour shook their foemen's hearts,
With quaking earth and thundering heav'n.

Then 'twas—
Beholding Dhṛtarāṣṭra's battle set,
Weapons unsheathing, bows drawn forth, the war
Instant to break—Arjuna, whose ensign-badge
Was Hanūmān the monkey, spake this thing
To Krṣṇa the Divine, his charioteer:
"Drive, Dauntless One! to yonder open ground
Betwixt the armies; I would see more nigh
These who will fight with us, those we must slay

To-day, in war's arbitrament; for, sure,
On bloodshed all are bent who throng this plain,
Obeying Dhṛitarāṣṭra's sinful son."

Thus, by Arjuna prayed, (O Bhārataḥ!)
Between the hosts that heavenly Charioteer
Drove the bright car, reining its milk-white steeds
Where Bhīṣma led, and Drona, and their Lords.
"See!" spake he to Arjuna, "where they stand,
Thy kindred of the Kuravah:—" and the Prince
Marked on each hand the kinsmen of his house,
Grandsires and sires, uncles and brothers and sons,
Cousins and sons-in-law and nephews, mixed
With friends and honoured elders; some this side,
Some that side ranged: and, seeing those opposed,
Such kith grown enemies—Arjuna's heart
Melted with pity, while he uttered this:

ARJUNA:

Kṛṣṇa! as I behold, come here to shed
Their common blood, yon concourse of our kin,
My members fail, my tongue dries in my mouth,
A shudder thrills my body, and my hair
Bristles with horror; from my weak hand slips
Gāndīva, the goodly bow; a fever burns
My skin to parching; hardly may I stand;
The life within me seems to swim and faint;
Nothing do I foresee save woe and wail!
It is not good, Keśava! nought of good
Can spring from mutual slaughter! Lo, I hate
Triumph and domination, wealth and ease,
Thus sadly won! *Aho!* what victory
Can bring delight, Govinda! what rich spoils
Could profit; what rule recompense; what span
Of life itself seem sweet, bought with such blood?
Seeing that these stand here, ready to die,
For whose sake life was fair, and pleasure pleased,
And power grew precious:—grandsires, sires, and sons,
Brothers, and fathers-in-law, and sons-in-law,
Elders and friends! Shall I deal death on these
Even though they seek to slay us? Not one blow,

O Mādhusūdana! will I strike to gain
The rule of all Three Worlds; then, how much less
To seize an earthly kingdom! Killing these
Must breed but anguish, Kṛṣṇa! If they be
Guilty, we shall grow guilty by their deaths;
Their sins will light on us, if we shall slay
Those sons of Dhṛitarāṣṭra, and our kin;
What peace could come of that, O Mādhava?
For if indeed, blinded by lust and wrath,
These cannot see, or will not see, the sin
Of kingly lines o'erthrown and kinsmen slain,
How should not we, who see, shun such a crime—
We who perceive the guilt and feel the shame—
O thou Delight of Men, Janārdana?
By overthrow of houses perisheth
Their sweet continuous household piety,
And—rites neglected, piety extinct—
Enters impiety upon that home;
Its women grow unwomaned, whence there spring
Mad passions, and the mingling-up of castes,
Sending a Hell-ward road that family,
And whoso wrought its doom by wicked wrath.
Nay, and the souls of honoured ancestors
Fall from their place of peace, being bereft
Of funeral-cakes and the wan death-water.¹
So teach our holy hymns. Thus, if we slay
Kinsfolk and friends for love of earthly power,
Aho vata! what an evil fault it were!
Better I deem it, if my kinsmen strike,
To face them weaponless, and bare my breast
To shaft and spear, than answer blow with blow.

So speaking, in the face of those two hosts,
Arjuna sank upon his chariot-seat,
And let fall bow and arrows, sick at heart.

1. Some repetitionary lines are here omitted.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER I. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled "Arjuna-viṣāda,"
Or "The Book of the Distress of Arjuna."

CHAPTER II.

SAÑJAYA:

Him, filled with such compassion and such grief,
With eyes tear-dimmed, despondent, in stern words
The Driver, Mādhusūdana, thus addressed:

KRŚNA:

How hath this weakness taken thee? Whence springs
The inglorious trouble, shameful to the brave,
Barring the path of virtue? Nay, Arjuna!
Forbid thyself to feebleness! it mars
Thy warrior-name! cast off the coward-fit!
Wake! Be thyself! Arise, Scourge of thy Foes!

ARJUNA:

How can I, in the battle, shoot with shafts
On Bhīṣma, or on Drona—O thou Chief!—
Both worshipful, both honourable men?

*Better to live on beggar's bread
With those we love alive,
Than taste their blood in rich feasts spread,
And guiltily survive!
Ah! were it worse—who knows?—to be
Victor or vanquished here,
When those confront us angrily
Whose death leaves living drear?
In pity lost, by doubtings tossed,
My thoughts—distracted—turn
To Thee, the Guide I reverence most,
That I may counsel learn:
I know not what would heal the grief
Burned into soul and sense,
If I were earth's unchallenged chief—
A god—and these gone thence!*

SAÑJAYA:

So spake Arjuna to the Lord of Hearts,
And sighing, “I will not fight!” held silence then.

To whom, with tender smile, (O Bhārataḥ!)
While the Prince wept despairing 'twixt those hosts,
Krṣṇa made answer in divinest verse:

KRṢNA:

Thou grievest where no grief should be! Thou speak'st
Words lacking wisdom! for the wise in heart
Mourn not for those that live, nor those that die.
Nor I, nor thou, nor any one of these,
Ever was not, nor ever will not be,
For ever and for ever afterwards.
All, that doth live, lives always! To man's frame
As there come infancy and youth and age,
So come there raisings-up and layings-down
Of other and of other life-abodes,
Which the wise know, and fear not. This that irks—
Thy sense-life, thrilling to the elements—
Bringing thee heat and cold, sorrows and joys,
'Tis brief and mutable! Bear with it, Prince!
As the wise bear. The soul which is not moved,
The soul that with a strong and constant calm
Takes sorrow and takes joy indifferently,
Lives in the life undying! That which is
Can never cease to be; that which is not
Will not exist. To see this truth of both
Is theirs who part essence from accident,
Substance from shadow. Indestructible,
Learn thou! the Life is, spreading life through all;
It cannot anywhere, by any means,
Be anywise diminished, stayed, or changed.
But for these fleeting frames which it informs
With spirit deathless, endless, infinite,
They perish. Let them perish. Prince! and fight!
He who shall say, "Lo! I have slain a man!"
He who shall think, "Lo! I am slain!" those both
Know naught! Life cannot slay. Life is not slain!
Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
 Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever;
 Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the
 house of it seems!

Who knoweth it exhaustless, self-sustained,
Immortal, indestructible,—shall such
Say, “I have killed a man, or caused to kill?”

*Nay, but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away.
And, taking new ones, sayeth,
“These will I wear to-day!”
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh.*

I say to thee weapons reach not the Life;
Flame burns it not, waters cannot o'erwhelm,
Nor dry winds wither it. Impenetrable,
Unentered, unassailed, unharmed, untouched,
Immortal, all-arriving, stable, sure,
Invisible, ineffable, by word
And thought uncompassed, ever all itself,
Thus is the Soul declared! How wilt thou, then,—
Knowing it so,—grieve when thou shouldst not grieve?
How, if thou hearest that the man new-dead
Is, like the man new-born, still living man—
One same, existent Spirit—wilt thou weep?
The end of birth is death; the end of death
Is birth: this is ordained! and mournest thou,
Chief of the stalwart arm! for what befalls
Which could not otherwise befall? The birth
Of living things comes unperceived; the death
Comes unperceived; between them, beings perceive:
What is there sorrowful herein, dear Prince?

*Wonderful, wistful, to contemplate!
Difficult, doubtful, to speak upon!
Strange and great for tongue to relate,
Mystical hearing for every one!
Nor wotteth man this, what a marvel it is,
When seeing, and saying, and hearing are done!*

This Life within all living things, my Prince!
Hides beyond harm; scorn thou to suffer, then,
For that which cannot suffer. Do thy part!
Be mindful of thy name, and tremble not!
Nought better can betide a martial soul
Than lawful war; happy the warrior
To whom comes joy of battle—comes, as now,
Glorious and fair, unsought; opening for him
A gateway unto Heav'n. But, if thou shunn'st
This honourable field—a Kṣatriya—
If, knowing thy duty and thy task, thou bidd'st
Duty and task go by—that shall be sin!
And those to come shall speak thee infamy
From age to age; but infamy is worse
For men of noble blood to bear than death!
The chiefs upon their battle-chariots
Will deem 'twas fear that drove thee from the fray.
Of those who held thee mighty-souled the scorn
Thou must abide, while all thine enemies
Will scatter bitter speech of thee, to mock
The valour which thou hadst; what fate could fall
More grievously than this? Either—being killed—
Thou wilt win Svarga's safety, or—alive
And victor—thou wilt reign an earthly king.
Therefore, arise, thou Son of Kuntī! brace
Thine arm for conflict, nerve thy heart to meet—
As things alike to thee—pleasure or pain,
Profit or ruin, victory or defeat:
So minded, gird thee to the fight, for so
Thou shalt not sin!

Thus far I speak to thee
As from the “Sāṅkhyā”—unspiritually—
Hear now the deeper teaching of the Yoga,
Which holding, understanding, thou shalt burst
Thy Karma-bandha, the bondage of wrought deeds.
Here shall no end be hindered, no hope marred,
No loss be feared: faith—yea, a little faith—
Shall save thee from the anguish of thy dread.
Here, Glory of the Kuravah! shines one rule—
One steadfast rule—while shifting souls have laws

Many and hard. Specious, but wrongful deem
The speech of those ill-taught ones who extol
The letter of their Vedāḥ, saying, “This
Is all we have, or need;” being weak at heart
With wants, seekers of Heaven: which comes—they say—
As “fruit of good deeds done;” promising men
Much profit in new births for works of faith;
In various rites abounding; following whereon
Large merit shall accrue towards wealth and power;
Albeit, who wealth and power do most desire
Least fixity of soul have such, least hold
On heavenly meditation. Much these teach,
From Vedāḥ, concerning the “three qualities;”
But thou, be free of the “three qualities,”
Free of the “pairs of opposites,”¹ and free
From that sad righteousness which calculates;
Self-ruled, Arjuna! simple, satisfied!²
Look! like as when a tank pours water forth
To suit all needs, so do these Brāhmaṇs draw
Texts for all wants from tank of Holy Writ.
But thou, want not! ask not! Find full reward
Of doing right in right! Let right deeds be
Thy motive, not the fruit which comes from them.
And live in action! Labour! Make thine acts
Thy piety, casting all self aside,
Contemning gain and merit; equable
In good or evil: equability
Is Yoga, is piety!

Yet, the right act
Is less, far less, than the right-thinking mind.
Seek refuge in thy soul; have there thy heaven!
Scorn them that follow virtue for her gifts!
The mind of pure devotion—even here—
Casts equally aside good deeds and bad,
Passing above them. Unto pure devotion
Devote thyself: with perfect meditation
Comes perfect act, and the right-hearted rise—
More certainly because they seek no gain—
Forth from the bands of body, step by step,
To highest seats of bliss. When thy firm soul

Hath shaken off those tangled oracles
Which ignorantly guide, then shall it soar
To high neglect of what's denied or said,
This way or that way, in doctrinal writ.
Troubled no longer by the priestly lore,
Safe shall it live, and sure; steadfastly bent
On meditation. This is Yoga—and Peace!

ARJUNA:

What is his mark who hath that steadfast heart,
Confirmed in holy meditation? How
Know we his speech, Keśava? Sits he, moves he
Like other men?

KRŚNA:

When one, Pṛthā's Son!—
Abandoning desires which shake the mind—
Finds in his soul full comfort for his soul,
He hath attained the Yoga—that man is such!
In sorrows not dejected, and in joys
Not overjoyed; dwelling outside the stress
Of passion, fear, and anger; fixed in calms
Of lofty contemplation;—such an one
Is Muni, is the Sage, the true Recluse!
He, who to none and nowhere overbound
By ties of flesh, takes evil things and good
Neither desponding nor exulting, such
Bears wisdom's plainest mark! He who shall draw
As the wise tortoise draws its four feet safe
Under its shield, his five frail senses back
Under the spirit's buckler from the world
Which else assails them, such an one, my Prince!
Hath wisdom's mark! Things that solicit sense
Hold off from the self-governed; nay, it comes,
The appetites of him who lives beyond
Depart,—aroused no more. Yet may it chance,
O Son of Kuntī! that a governed mind
Shall some time feel the sense-storms sweep, and wrest
Strong self-control by the roots. Let him regain
His kingdom! let him conquer this, and sit
On Me intent. That man alone is wise

Who keeps the mastery of himself! If one
Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness; then the memory—all betrayed—
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.
But, if one deals with objects of the sense
Not loving and not hating, making them
Serve his free soul, which rests serenely lord,
Lo! such a man comes to tranquillity;
And out of that tranquillity shall rise
The end and healing of his earthly pains,
Since the will governed sets the soul at peace.
The soul of the ungoverned is not his,
Nor hath he knowledge of himself; which lacked,
How grows serenity? and, wanting that,
Whence shall he hope for happiness?

The mind

That gives itself to follow shows of sense
Seeth its helm of wisdom rent away,
And, like a ship in waves of whirlwind, drives
To wreck and death. Only with him, great Prince!
Whose senses are not swayed by things of sense—
Only with him who holds his mastery,
Shows wisdom perfect. What is midnight-gloom
To unenlightened souls shines wakeful day
To his clear gaze; what seems as wakeful day
Is known for night, thick night of ignorance,
To his true-seeing eyes. Such is the Saint!

And like the ocean, day by day receiving
Floods from all lands, which never overflows;
Its boundary-line not leaping, and not leaving,
Fed by the rivers, but unswelled by those;—

So is the perfect one! to his soul's ocean
The world of sense pours streams of witchery;
They leave him as they find, without commotion,
Taking their tribute, but remaining sea.

Yea! whoso, shaking off the yoke of flesh
Lives lord, not servant, of his lusts; set free
From pride, from passion, from the sin of “Self,”
Toucheth tranquillity! O Pṛthā’s Son!
That is the state of Brahma! There rests no dread
When that last step is reached! Live where he will,
Die when he may, such passeth from all ’plaining,
To blest Nirvāṇa, with the Gods, attaining.

1. Technical phrases of Vedic religion.
2. The whole of this passage is highly involved and difficult to render.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER II. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Sāṅkhyā-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Doctrines.”

CHAPTER III.

ARJUNA:

Thou whom all mortals praise, Janārdana!
If meditation be a nobler thing
Than action, wherefore, then, great Keśava!
Dost thou impel me to this dreadful fight?
Now am I by thy doubtful speech disturbed!
Tell me one thing, and tell me certainly;
By what road shall I find the better end?

KRŚNA:

I told thee, blameless Lord! there be two paths
Shown to this world; two schools of wisdom. First
The Sāṅkhyā's, which doth save in way of works
Prescribed¹ by reason; next, the Yoga, which bids
Attain by meditation, spiritually:
Yet these are one! No man shall 'scape from act
By shunning action; nay, and none shall come
By mere renouncements unto perfectness.
Nay, and no jot of time, at any time,
Rests any actionless; his nature's law
Compels him, even unwilling, into act;
[For thought is act in fancy]. He who sits
Suppressing all the instruments of flesh,
Yet in his idle heart thinking on them,
Plays the inept and guilty hypocrite:
But he who, with strong body serving mind,
Gives up his mortal powers to worthy work,
Not seeking gain, Arjuna! such an one
Is honourable. Do thine allotted task!
Work is more excellent than idleness;
The body's life proceeds not, lacking work,
There is a task of holiness to do,
Unlike world-binding toil, which bindeth not
The faithful soul; such earthly duty do
Free from desire, and thou shalt well perform
Thy heavenly purpose. Spake Prajāpati—
In the beginning, when all men were made,
And, with mankind, the sacrifice—“Do this!

Work! sacrifice! Increase and multiply
With sacrifice! This shall be Kāmadhenū,
Your 'Cow of Plenty,' giving back her milk
Of all abundance. Worship the gods thereby;
The gods shall yield ye grace. Those meats ye crave
The gods will grant to Labour, when it pays
Tithes in the altar-flame. But if one eats
Fruits of the earth, rendering to kindly Heaven
No gift of toil, that thief steals from his world."

Who eat of food after their sacrifice
Are quit of fault, but they that spread a feast
All for themselves, eat sin and drink of sin.
By food the living live; food comes of rain,
And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil;
Thus action is of Brahmā, who is One,
The Only, All-pervading; at all times
Present in sacrifice. He that abstains
To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
Shameful and vain. Existing for himself,
Self-concentrated, serving self alone,
No part hath he in aught; nothing achieved,
Nought wrought or unwrought toucheth him; no hope
Of help for all the living things of earth
Depends from him.² Therefore, thy task prescribed
With spirit unattached gladly perform,
Since in performance of plain duty man
Mounts to his highest bliss. By works alone
Janaka and ancient saints reached blessedness!
Moreover, for the upholding of thy kind,
Action thou should'st embrace. What the wise choose
The unwise people take; what best men do
The multitude will follow. Look on me,
Thou Son of Pr̥thā! in the three wide worlds
I am not bound to any toil, no height
Awaits to scale, no gift remains to gain,
Yet I act here! and, if I acted not—
Earnest and watchful—those that look to me
For guidance, sinking back to sloth again

Because I slumbered, would decline from good,
And I should break earth's order and commit
Her offspring unto ruin, Bhārataḥ!
Even as the unknowing toil, wedded to sense,
So let the enlightened toil, sense-freed, but set
To bring the world deliverance, and its bliss;
Not sowing in those simple, busy hearts
Seed of despair. Yea! let each play his part
In all he finds to do, with unyoked soul.
All things are everywhere by Nature wrought
In interaction of the qualities.
The fool, cheated by self, thinks, "This I did"
And "That I wrought;" but—ah, thou strong-armed Prince!—
A better-lessoned mind, knowing the play
Of visible things within the world of sense,
And how the qualities must qualify,
Standeth aloof even from his acts. Th' untaught
Live mixed with them, knowing not Nature's way,
Of highest aims unwitting, slow and dull.
Those make thou not to stumble, having the light;
But all thy dues discharging, for My sake,
With meditation centred inwardly,
Seeking no profit, satisfied, serene,
Heedless of issue—fight! They who shall keep
My ordinance thus, the wise and willing hearts,
Have quittance from all issue of their acts;
But those who disregard My ordinance,
Thinking they know, know nought, and fall to loss,
Confused and foolish. 'Sooth, the instructed one
Doth of his kind, following what fits him most:
And lower creatures of their kind; in vain
Contending 'gainst the law. Needs must it be
The objects of the sense will stir the sense
To like and dislike, yet th' enlightened man
Yields not to these, knowing them enemies.
Finally, this is better, that one do
His own task as he may, even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.
To die performing duty is no ill;
But who seeks other roads shall wander still.

ARJUNA:

Yet tell me, Teacher! by what force doth man
Go to his ill, unwilling; as if one
Pushed him that evil path?

KRŚNA:

Kāma it is!
Passion it is! born of the Darknesses,
Which pusheth him. Mighty of appetite,
Sinful, and strong is this!—man's enemy!
As smoke blots the white fire, as clinging rust
Mars the bright mirror, as the womb surrounds
The babe unborn, so is the world of things
Foiled, soiled, enclosed in this desire of flesh.
The wise fall, caught in it; the unresting foe
It is of wisdom, wearing countless forms,
Fair but deceitful, subtle as a flame.
Sense, mind, and reason—these, O Kuntī's Son!
Are booty for it; in its play with these
It maddens man, beguiling, blinding him.
Therefore, thou noblest child of Bhāratah!
Govern thy heart! Constrain th' entangled sense!
Resist the false, soft sinfulness which saps
Knowledge and judgment! Yea, the world is strong,
But what discerns it stronger, and the mind
Strongest; and high o'er all the ruling Soul.
Wherfore, perceiving Him who reigns supreme,
Put forth full force of Soul in thy own soul!
Fight! vanquish foes and doubts, dear Hero! slay
What haunts thee in fond shapes, and would betray!

1. I feel convinced *sāṅkhyānām* and *yoginān* must be transposed here in sense.

2. I am doubtful of accuracy here.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER III. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled "Karma-yogaḥ,"
Or "The Book of Virtue in Work."

CHAPTER IV.

KRŚNA:

This deathless Yoga, this deep union,
I taught Vivasvat,¹ the Lord of Light;
Vivasvat to Manu gave it; he
To Ikṣvāku; so passed it down the line
Of all my royal Rṣis {Rishis}. Then, with years,
The truth grew dim and perished, noble Prince!
Now once again to thee it is declared—
This ancient lore, this mystery supreme—
Seeing I find thee votary and friend.

ARJUNA:

Thy birth, dear Lord, was in these later days,
And bright Vivasvat's preceded time!
How shall I comprehend this thing thou sayest,
“From the beginning it was I who taught?”

KRŚNA:

Manifold the renewals of my birth
Have been, Arjuna! and of thy births, too!
But mine I know, and thine thou knowest not,
Slayer of thy Foes! Albeit I be
Unborn, undying, indestructible,
The Lord of all things living; not the less—
By Maya, by my magic which I stamp
On floating Nature-forms, the primal vast—
I come, and go, and come. When Righteousness
Declines, Bhāratah! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move a man with men,
Succouring the good, thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again.
Who knows the truth touching my births on earth
And my divine work, when he quits the flesh
Puts on its load no more, falls no more down
To earthly birth: to Me he comes, dear Prince!

Many there be who come! from fear set free,
From anger, from desire; keeping their hearts
Fixed upon me—my Faithful—purified
By sacred flame of Knowledge. Such as these
Mix with my being. Whoso worship me,
Them I exalt; but all men everywhere
Shall fall into my path; albeit, those souls
Which seek reward for works, make sacrifice
Now, to the lower gods. I say to thee
Here have they their reward. But I am He
Made the Four Castes, and portioned them a place
After their qualities and gifts. Yea, I
Created, the Reposeful; I that live
Immortally, made all those mortal births:
For works soil not my essence, being works
Wrought uninvolved.² Who knows me acting thus
Unchained by action, action binds not him;
And, so perceiving, all those saints of old
Worked, seeking for deliverance. Work thou
As, in the days gone by, thy fathers did.

Thou sayst, perplexed, It hath been asked before
By singers and by sages, “What is act,
And what inaction?” I will teach thee this,
And, knowing, thou shalt learn which work doth save.
Needs must one rightly meditate those three—
Doing,—not doing,—and undoing. Here
Thorny and dark the path is! He who sees
How action may be rest, rest action—he
Is wisest 'mid his kind; he hath the truth!
He doeth well, acting or resting. Freed
In all his works from prickings of desire,
Burned clean in act by the white fire of truth,
The wise call that man wise; and such an one,
Renouncing fruit of deeds, always content.
Always self-satisfying, if he works,
Doth nothing that shall stain his separate soul,
Which—quit of fear and hope—subduing self—
Rejecting outward impulse—yielding up
To body's need nothing save body, dwells
Sinless amid all sin, with equal calm

Taking what may befall, by grief unmoved,
Unmoved by joy, unenvyingly; the same
In good and evil fortunes; nowise bound
By bond of deeds. Nay, but of such an one,
Whose crave is gone, whose soul is liberate,
Whose heart is set on truth—of such an one
What work he does is work of sacrifice,
Which passeth purely into ash and smoke
Consumed upon the altar! All's then God!
The sacrifice is Brahma, the ghee and grain
Are Brahma, the fire is Brahma, the flesh it eats
Is Brahma, and unto Brahma attaineth he
Who, in such office, meditates on Brahma.
Some votaries there be who serve the gods
With flesh and altar-smoke; but other some
Who, lighting subtler fires, make purer rite
With will of worship. Of the which be they
Who, in white flame of continence, consume
Joys of the sense, delights of eye and ear,
Foregoing tender speech and sound of song:
And they who, kindling fires with torch of Truth,
Burn on a hidden altar-stone the bliss
Of youth and love, renouncing happiness:
And they who lay for offering there their wealth,
Their penance, meditation, piety,
Their steadfast reading of the scrolls, their lore
Painfully gained with long austerities:
And they who, making silent sacrifice,
Draw in their breath to feed the flame of thought,
And breathe it forth to waft the heart on high,
Governing the vantage of each entering air
Lest one sigh pass which helpeth not the soul:
And they who, day by day denying needs,
Lay life itself upon the altar-flame,
Burning the body wan. Lo! all these keep
The rite of offering, as if they slew
Victims; and all thereby efface much sin.
Yea! and who feed on the immortal food
Left of such sacrifice, to Brahma pass,
To The Unending. But for him that makes
No sacrifice, he hath nor part nor lot

Even in the present world. How should he share
Another, O thou Glory of thy Line?

In sight of Brahma all these offerings
Are spread and are accepted! Comprehend
That all proceed by act; for knowing this,
Thou shalt be quit of doubt. The sacrifice
Which Knowledge pays is better than great gifts
Offered by wealth, since gifts' worth—O my Prince!
Lies in the mind which gives, the will that serves:
And these are gained by reverence, by strong search,
By humble heed of those who see the Truth
And teach it. Knowing Truth, thy heart no more
Will ache with error, for the Truth shall show
All things subdued to thee, as thou to Me.
Moreover, Son of Pāṇḍu! wert thou worst
Of all wrong-doers, this fair ship of Truth
Should bear thee safe and dry across the sea
Of thy transgressions. As the kindled flame
Feeds on the fuel till it sinks to ash,
So unto ash, Arjuna! unto nought
The flame of Knowledge wastes works' dross away!
There is no purifier like thereto
In all this world, and he who seeketh it
Shall find it—being grown perfect—in himself.
Believing, he receives it when the soul
Masters itself, and cleaves to Truth, and comes—
Possessing knowledge—to the higher peace,
The uttermost repose. But those untaught,
And those without full faith, and those who fear
Are shent; no peace is here or other where,
No hope, nor happiness for whoso doubts.
He that, being self-contained, hath vanquished doubt,
Disparting self from service, soul from works,
Enlightened and emancipate, my Prince!
Works fetter him no more! Cut then awain
With sword of wisdom, Son of Bhārataḥ!
This doubt that binds thy heart-beats! cleave the bond
Born of thy ignorance! Be bold and wise!
Give thyself to the field with me! Arise!

1. A name of the sun.
2. Without desire of fruit.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER IV. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Jñāna-yogaḥ,”
Or “The Book of the Religion of Knowledge.”

CHAPTER V.

ARJUNA:

Yet, Kṛṣṇa! at the one time thou dost laud
Surcease of works, and, at another time,
Service through work. Of these twain plainly tell
Which is the better way?

Kṛṣṇa:

To cease from works
Is well, and to do works in holiness
Is well; and both conduct to bliss supreme;
But of these twain the better way is his
Who working piously refraineth not.

That is the true Renouncer, firm and fixed,
Who—seeking nought, rejecting nought—dwells proof
Against the “opposites.”¹ O valiant Prince!
In doing, such breaks lightly from all deed:
'Tis the new scholar talks as they were two,
This Sāṅkhya and this Yoga: wise men know
Who husbands one plucks golden fruit of both!
The region of high rest which Sāṅkhyans reach
Yogins attain. Who sees these twain as one
Sees with clear eyes! Yet such abstraction, Chief!
Is hard to win without much holiness.
Whoso is fixed in holiness, self-ruled,
Pure-hearted, lord of senses and of self,
Lost in the common life of all which lives—
A “Yoga-yukta”—he is a Saint who wends
Straightway to Brahma. Such an one is not touched
By taint of deeds. “Nought of myself I do!”
Thus will he think—who holds the truth of truths—
In seeing, hearing, touching, smelling; when
He eats, or goes, or breathes; slumbers or talks,
Holds fast or loosens, opes his eyes or shuts;
Always assured “This is the sense-world plays
With senses.” He that acts in thought of Brahma,
Detaching end from act, with act content,
The world of sense can no more stain his soul

Than waters mar th' enamelled lotus-leaf.
With life, with heart, with mind,—nay, with the help
Of all five senses—letting selfhood go—
Yogins toil ever towards their souls' release.
Such votaries, renouncing fruit of deeds,
Gain endless peace: the unwoved, the passion-bound,
Seeking a fruit from works, are fastened down.
The embodied sage, withdrawn within his soul,
At every act sits godlike in “the town
Which hath nine gateways,”² neither doing aught
Nor causing any deed. This world's Lord makes
Neither the work, nor passion for the work,
Nor lust for fruit of work; the man's own self
Pushes to these! The Master of this World
Takes on himself the good or evil deeds
Of no man—dwelling beyond! Mankind errs here
By folly, darkening knowledge. But, for whom
That darkness of the soul is chased by light,
Splendid and clear shines manifest the Truth
As if a Sun of Wisdom sprang to shed
Its beams of dawn. Him meditating still,
Him seeking, with Him blended, stayed on Him,
The souls illuminated take that road
Which hath no turning back—their sins flung off
By strength of faith. [Who will may have this Light;
Who hath it sees.] To him who wisely sees,
The Brāhmaṇaḥ with his scrolls and sanctities,
The cow, the elephant, the unclean dog,
The Outcast gorging dog's meat, are all one.

The world is overcome—aye! even here!
By such as fix their faith on Unity.
The sinless Brahma dwells in Unity,
And they in Brahma. Be not over-glad
Attaining joy, and be not over-sad
Encountering grief, but, stayed on Brahma, still
Constant let each abide! The sage whose soul
Holds off from outer contacts, in himself
Finds bliss; to Brahma joined by piety,
His spirit tastes eternal peace. The joys
Springing from sense-life are but quickening wombs

Which breed sure griefs: those joys begin and end!
The wise mind takes no pleasure, Kuntī's Son!
In such as those! But if a man shall learn,
Even while he lives and bears his body's chain,
To master lust and anger, he is blest!
He is the *Yukta*; he hath happiness,
Contentment, light, within: his life is merged
In Brahma's life; he doth Nirvāṇa touch!
Thus go the Ṛṣis unto rest, who dwell
With sins effaced, with doubts at end, with hearts
Governed and calm. Glad in all good they live,
Nigh to the peace of God; and all those live
Who pass their days exempt from greed and wrath,
Subduing self and senses, knowing the Soul!

The Saint who shuts outside his placid soul
All touch of sense, letting no contact through;
Whose quiet eyes gaze straight from fixēd brows,
Whose outward breath and inward breath are drawn
Equal and slow through nostrils still and close;
That one—with organs, heart, and mind constrained,
Bent on deliverance, having put away
Passion, and fear, and rage;—hath, even now,
Obtained deliverance, ever and ever freed.
Yea! for he knows Me Who am He that heeds
The sacrifice and worship, God revealed;
And He who heeds not, being Lord of Worlds,
Lover of all that lives, God unrevealed,
Wherein who will shall find surety and shield!

1. That is, “joy and sorrow, success and failure, heat and cold,” &c.
2. *i.e.*, the body.

HERE ENDS CHAPTER V. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Karma-sannyāsa-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Religion hy Renouncing Fruit of Works.”

CHAPTER VI.

Kṛṣṇa:

Therefore, who doeth work rightful to do,
Not seeking gain from work, that man, Prince!
Is Sannyāsī and Yogī—both in one
And he is neither who lights not the flame
Of sacrifice, nor setteth hand to task.

Regard as true Renouncer him that makes
Worship by work, for who renounceth not
Works not as Yогin. So is that well said:
“By works the votary doth rise to saith,
And saintship is the ceasing from all works;”
Because the perfect Yогin acts—but acts
Unmoved by passions and unbound by deeds,
Setting result aside.

Let each man raise
The Self by Soul, not trample down his Self,
Since Soul that is Self’s friend may grow Self’s foe.
Soul is Self’s friend when Self doth rule o’er Self,
But Self turns enemy if Soul’s own self
Hates Self as not itself.¹

The sovereign soul
Of him who lives self-governed and at peace
Is centred in itself, taking alike
Pleasure and pain; heat, cold; glory and shame.
He is the Yogī, he is *Yukta*, glad
With joy of light and truth; dwelling apart
Upon a peak, with senses subjugate
Whereto the clod, the rock, the glistering gold
Show all as one. By this sign is he known
Being of equal grace to comrades, friends,
Chance-comers, strangers, lovers, enemies,
Aliens and kinsmen; loving all alike,
Evil or good.

Sequestered should he sit,
Steadfastly meditating, solitary,
His thoughts controlled, his passions laid away,

Quit of belongings. In a fair, still spot
Having his fixed abode,—not too much raised,
Nor yet too low,—let him abide, his goods
A cloth, a deerskin, and the Kuśa-grass.
There, setting hard his mind upon The One,
Restraining heart and senses, silent, calm,
Let him accomplish Yoga, and achieve
Purity of soul, holding immovable
Body and neck and head, his gaze absorbed
Upon his nose-end,² rapt from all around,
Tranquil in spirit, free of fear, intent
Upon his brahmacharya vow, devout,
Musing on Me, lost in the thought of Me.
That Yogin, so devoted, so controlled,
Comes to the peace beyond,—My peace, the peace
Of high Nirvāṇa!

But for earthly needs

Religion is not his who too much fasts
Or too much feasts, nor his who sleeps away
An idle mind; nor his who wears to waste
His strength in vigils. Nay, Arjuna! call
That the true piety which most removes
Earth-aches and ills, where one is moderate
In eating and in resting, and in sport;
Measured in wish and act; sleeping betimes,
Waking betimes for duty.

When the man,

So living, centres on his soul the thought
Straitly restrained—untouched internally
By stress of sense—then is he *Yukta*, See!
Steadfast a lamp burns sheltered from the wind;
Such is the likeness of the Yogi's mind
Shut from sense-storms and burning bright to Heaven.
When mind broods placid, soothed with holy wont;
When Self contemplates self, and in itself
Hath comfort; when it knows the nameless joy
Beyond all scope of sense, revealed to soul—
Only to soul! and, knowing, wavers not,
True to the farther Truth; when, holding this,
It deems no other treasure comparable,
But, harboured there, cannot be stirred or shook

By any gravest grief, call that state “peace,”
That happy severance Yoga; call that man
The perfect Yogin!

Steadfastly the will

Must toil thereto, till efforts end in ease,
And thought has passed from thinking. Shaking off
All longings bred by dreams of fame and gain,
Shutting the doorways of the senses close
With watchful ward; so, step by step, it comes
To gift of peace assured and heart assuaged,
When the mind dwells self-wrapped, and the soul broods
Cumberless. But, as often as the heart
Breaks—wild and wavering—from control, so oft
Let him re-curb it, let him rein it back
To the soul’s governance; for perfect bliss
Grows only in the bosom tranquillised,
The spirit passionless, purged from offence,
Vowed to the Infinite. He who thus vows
His soul to the Supreme Soul, quitting sin,
Passes unhindered to the endless bliss
Of unity with Brahma. He so vowed,
So blended, sees the Life-Soul resident
In all things living, and all living things
In that Life-Soul contained. And whoso thus
Discerneth Me in all, and all in Me,
I never let him go; nor looseneth he
Hold upon Me; but, dwell he where he may,
Whate’er his life, in Me he dwells and lives,
Because he knows and worships Me, Who dwell
In all which lives, and cleaves to Me in all.
Arjuna! if a man sees everywhere—
Taught by his own similitude—one Life,
One Essence in the Evil and the Good,
Hold him a Yogi, yea! well-perfected!

ARJUNA:

Slayer of Madhu! yet again, this Yoga,
This Peace, derived from equanimity,
Made known by thee—I see no fixity
Therein, no rest, because the heart of men
Is unfixed, Kṛṣṇa! rash, tumultuous,

Wilful and strong. It were all one, I think,
To hold the wayward wind, as tame man's heart.

KRSNA:

Hero long-armed! beyond denial, hard
Man's heart is to restrain, and wavering;
Yet may it grow restrained by habit, Prince!
By wont of self-command. This Yoga, I say,
Cometh not lightly to th' ungoverned ones;
But he who will be master of himself
Shall win it, if he stoutly strive thereto.

ARJUNA:

And what road goeth he who, having faith,
Fails, Kṛṣṇa! in the striving; falling back
From holiness, missing the perfect rule?
Is he not lost, straying from Brahma's light,
Like the vain cloud, which floats 'twixt earth and heaven
When lightning splits it, and it vanisheth?
Fain would I hear thee answer me herein,
Since, Kṛṣṇa! none save thou can clear the doubt.

Kṛṣṇa:

He is not lost, thou Son of Pṛthī! No!
Nor earth, nor heaven is forfeit, even for him,
Because no heart that holds one right desire
Treadeth the road of loss! He who should fail,
Desiring righteousness, cometh at death
Unto the Region of the Just; dwells there
Measureless years, and being born anew,
Beginneth life again in some fair home
Amid the mild and happy. It may chance
He doth descend into a Yigin house
On Virtue's breast; but that is rare! Such birth
Is hard to be obtained on this earth, Chief!
So hath he back again what heights of heart
He did achieve, and so he strives anew
To perfectness, with better hope, dear Prince!
For by the old desire he is drawn on
Unwittingly; and only to desire
The purity of Yoga is to pass

Beyond the *Śabda-brahman*, the spoken Veda.
But, being Yogī, striving strong and long,
Purged from transgressions, perfected by births
Following on births, he plants his feet at last
Upon the farther path. Such an one ranks
Above ascetics, higher than the wise,
Beyond achievers of vast deeds! Be thou
Yogī, Arjuna! And of such believe,
Truest and best is he who worships Me
With inmost soul, stayed on My Mystery!

1. The Sanskrit has this play on the double meaning of *Ātman*.

2. So in original.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER VI. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “*Ātma-samyama-yogah*,”
Or “*The Book of Religion by Self-Restraint*.”

CHAPTER VII.

KRSNA:

Learn now, dear Prince! how, if thy soul be set
Ever on Me—still exercising Yoga,
Still making Me thy Refuge—thou shalt come
Most surely unto perfect hold of Me.
I will declare to thee that utmost lore,
Whole and particular, which, when thou knowest,
Leaveth no more to know here in this world.

Of many thousand mortals, one, perchance,
Striveth for Truth; and of those few that strive—
Nay, and rise high—one only—here and there—
Knoweth Me, as I am, the very Truth.

Earth, water, flame, air, ether, life, and mind,
And individuality—those eight
Make up the showing of Me, Manifest.

These be my lower Nature; learn the higher,
Whereby, thou Valiant One! this Universe
Is, by its principle of life, produced;
“Whereby the worlds of visible things are born
As from a *Yoni*. Know! I am that womb:
I make and I unmake this Universe:
Than me there is no other Master, Prince!
No other Maker! All these hang on me
As hangs a row of pearls upon its string.
I am the fresh taste of the water; I
The silver of the moon, the gold o’ the sun,
The word of worship in the *Vedāh*, the thrill
That passeth in the ether, and the strength
Of man’s shed seed. I am the good sweet smell
Of the moistened earth, I am the fire’s red light,
The vital air moving in all which moves,
The holiness of hallowed souls, the root
Undying, whence hath sprung whatever is;
The wisdom of the wise, the intellect
Of the informed, the greatness of the great,

The splendour of the splendid. Kuntī's Son!
These am I, free from passion and desire;
Yet am I right desire in all who yearn.
Chief of the Bhārata! for all those moods,
Soothfast, or passionate, or ignorant,
Which Nature frames, deduce from me; but all
Are merged in me—not I in them! The world—
Deceived by those three qualities of being—
Wotteth not Me Who am outside them all,
Above them all, Eternal! Hard it is
To pierce that veil divine of various shows
Which hideth Me; yet they who worship Me
Pierce it and pass beyond.

I am not known

To evil-doers, nor to foolish ones,
Nor to the base and churlish; nor to those
Whose mind is cheated by the show of things,
Nor those that take the way of Asuras.¹

Four sorts of mortals know me: he who weeps,
Arjuna! and the man who yearns to know;
And he who toils to help; and he who sits
Certain of me, enlightened.

Of these four,

O Prince of India! highest, nearest, best
That last is, the devout soul, wise, intent
Upon "The One." Dear, above all, am I
To him; and he is dearest unto me!
All four are good, and seek me; but mine own,
The true of heart, the faithful—stayed on me,
Taking me as their utmost blessedness,
They are not "mine," but I—even I myself!
At end of many births to Me they come!
Yet hard the wise Mahātmā is to find,
That man who sayeth, "All is Vāsudeva!"²

There be those, too, whose knowledge, turned aside
By this desire or that, gives them to serve
Some lower gods, with various rites, constrained
By that which mouldeth them. Unto all such—
Worship what shrine they will, what shapes, in faith—

'Tis I who give them faith! I am content!
The heart thus asking favour from its God,
Darkened but ardent, hath the end it craves,
The lesser blessing—but 'tis I who give!
Yet soon is withered what small fruit they reap:
Those men of little minds, who worship so,
Go where they worship, passing with their gods.
But Mine come unto me! Blind are the eyes
Which deem th' Unmanifested manifest,
Not comprehending Me in my true Self!
Imperishable, viewless, undeclared,
Hidden behind my magic veil of shows,
I am not seen by all; I am not known—
Unborn and changeless—to the idle world.
But I, Arjuna! know all things which were,
And all which are, and all which are to be,
Albeit not one among them knoweth Me!

By passion for the “pairs of opposites,”
By those twain snares of Like and Dislike, Prince!
All creatures live bewildered, save some few
Who, quit of sins, holy in act, informed,
Freed from the “opposites,” and fixed in faith,
Cleave unto Me.

Who cleave, who seek in Me
Refuge from birth³ and death, those have the Truth!
Those know Me BRAHMA; know Me Soul of Souls,
The ADHYĀTMAN; know KARMA, my work;
Know I am ADHIBHŪTA, Lord of Life,
And ADHIDAIVA, Lord of all the Gods,
And ADHIYAJÑA, Lord of Sacrifice;
Worship Me well, with hearts of love and faith,
And find and hold Me in the hour of death.

1. Beings of low and devilish nature.

2. Kṛṣṇa.

3. I read here *janma*, “birth;” not *jarā*, “age.”

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER VII. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GITĀ,
Entitled “Vijñāna-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Religion by Discernment.”

CHAPTER VIII.

ARJUNA:

Who is that BRAHMA? What that Soul of Souls,
The ADHYĀTMAN? What, Thou Best of All!
Thy work, the KARMA? Tell me what it is
Thou namest ADHIBHŪTA? What again
Means ADHIDAIVA? Yea, and how it comes
Thou canst be ADHIYAJÑA in thy flesh?
Slayer of Madhu! Further, make me know
How good men find thee in the hour of death?

KRŚNA:

I BRAHMA am! the One Eternal GOD,
And ADHYĀTMAN is My Being's name,
The Soul of Souls! What goeth forth from Me,
Causing all life to live, is KARMA called:
And, Manifested in divided forms,
I am the ADHIBHŪTA, Lord of Lives;
And ADHIDAIVA, Lord of all the Gods,
Because I am PURUṢA, who begets.
And ADHIYAJÑA, Lord of Sacrifice,
I—speaking with thee in this body here—
Am, thou embodied one! (for all the shrines
Flame unto Me!) And, at the hour of death,
He that hath meditated Me alone,
In putting off his flesh, comes forth to Me,
Enters into My Being—doubt thou not!
But, if he meditated otherwise
At hour of death, in putting off the flesh,
He goes to what he looked for, Kuntī's Son!
Because the Soul is fashioned to its like.

Have Me, then, in thy heart always! and fight!
Thou too, when heart and mind are fixed on Me,
Shalt surely come to Me! All come who cleave
With never-wavering will of firmest faith,
Owning none other Gods: all come to Me,
The Uttermost, Puruṣa, Holiest!

Whoso hath known Me, Lord of sage and singer,
Ancient of days; of all the Three Worlds Stay,
Boundless,—but unto every atom Bringer
Of that which quickens it: whoso, I say,

Hath known My form, which passeth mortal knowing;
Seen my effulgence—which no eye hath seen—
Than the sun's burning gold more brightly glowing,
Dispersing darkness,—unto him hath been

Right life! And, in the hour when life is ending,
With mind set fast and trustful piety,
Drawing still breath beneath calm brows unbending,
In happy peace that faithful one doth die,—

In glad peace passeth to Puruṣa's heaven.
The place which they who read the Vedāḥ name
AKṢARAM, “Ultimate;” whereto have striven
Saints and ascetics—their road is the same.

That way—the highest way—goes he who shuts
The gates of all his senses, locks desire
Safe in his heart, centres the vital airs
Upon his parting thought, steadfastly set;
And, murmuring OM, the sacred syllable—
Emblem of BRAHMA—dies, meditating Me.

For who, none other Gods regarding, looks
Ever to Me, easily am I gained
By such a Yogi; and, attaining Me,
They fall not—those Mahātmās—back to birth,
To life, which is the place of pain, which ends,
But take the way of utmost blessedness.

The worlds, Arjuna!—even Brahmā's world—
Roll back again from Death to Life's unrest;
But they, Kuntī's Son! that reach to Me,
Taste birth no more. If ye know Brahmā's Day
Which is a thousand Yugas; if ye know
The thousand Yugas making Brahmā's Night,
Then know ye Day and Night as He doth know!

When that vast Dawn doth break, th' Invisible
Is brought anew into the Visible;
When that deep Night doth darken, all which is
Fades back again to Him Who sent it forth;
Yea! this vast company of living things—
Again and yet again produced—expires
At Brahmā's Nightfall; and, at Brahmā's Dawn,
Riseth, without its will, to life new-born.
But—higher, deeper, innermost—abides
Another Life, not like the life of sense,
Escaping sight, unchanging. This endures
When all created things have passed away:
This is that Life named the Unmanifest,
The Infinite! the All! the Uttermost.
Thither arriving none return. That life
Is Mine, and I am there! And, Prince! By faith
Which wanders not, there is a way to come
Thither. I, the PURUṢA, I Who spread
The Universe around me—in Whom dwell
All living Things—may so be reached and seen!

Richer than holy fruit on Vedāḥ growing,
Greater than gifts, better than prayer or fast,
Such wisdom is! The Yogī, this way knowing,
Comes to the Utmost Perfect Peace at last.

1. I have discarded ten lines of Sanskrit text here as an undoubted interpolation by some Vedāntin.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER VIII. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled "Akṣara-parabrahma-yogah,"
Or "The Book of Religion by Devotion to the One Supreme God."

CHAPTER IX.

KRSNA:

Now will I open unto thee—whose heart
Rejects not—that last lore, deepest-concealed,
That farthest secret of My Heavens and Earths,
Which but to know shall set thee free from ills,—
A Royal lore! a Kingly mystery!
Yea! for the soul such light as purgeth it
From every sin; a light of holiness
With inmost splendour shining; plain to see;
Easy to walk by, inexhaustible!

They that receive not this, failing in faith
To grasp the greater wisdom, reach not Me,
Destroyer of thy foes! They sink anew
Into the realm of Flesh, where all things change!

By Me the whole vast Universe of things
Is spread abroad;—by Me, the Unmanifest!
In Me are all existences contained;
Not I in them!

Yet they are not contained,
Those visible things! Receive and strive to embrace
The mystery majestic! My Being—
Creating all, sustaining all—still dwells
Outside of all!

See! as the shoreless airs
Move in the measureless space, but are not space,
[And space were space without the moving airs];
So all things are in Me, but are not I.

At closing of each Kalpa, Indian Prince!
All things which be back to My Being come:
At the beginning of each Kalpa, all
Issue new-born from Me.

By Energy

And help of Prakṛti, my outer Self,
Again, and yet again, I make go forth
The realms of visible things—without their will—
All of them—by the power of Prakṛti.

Yet these great makings, Prince! involve Me not
Enchain Me not! I sit apart from them,
Other, and Higher, and Free; nowise attached!

Thus doth the stuff of worlds, moulded by Me,
Bring forth all that which is, moving or still,
Living or lifeless! Thus the worlds go on!

The minds untaught mistake Me, veiled in form;—
Naught see they of My secret Presence, nought
Of My hid Nature, ruling all which lives.
Vain hopes pursuing, vain deeds doing; fed
On vainest knowledge, senselessly they seek
An evil way, the way of brutes and fiends.
But My Mahātmās, those of noble soul
Who tread the path celestial, worship Me
With hearts unwandering,—knowing Me the Source,
Th' Eternal Source, of Life. Unendingly
They glorify Me; seek Me; keep their vows
Of reverence and love, with changeless faith
Adoring Me. Yea, and those too adore,
Who, offering sacrifice of wakened hearts,
Have sense of one pervading Spirit's stress,
One Force in every place, though manifold!
I am the Sacrifice! I am the Prayer!
I am the Funeral-Cake set for the dead!
I am the healing herb! I am the ghee,
The Mantra, and the flame, and that which burns!
I am—of all this boundless Universe—
The Father, Mother, Ancestor, and Guard!
The end of Learning! That which purifies
In lustral water! I am OM! I am
Rgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda;
The Way, the Fosterer, the Lord, the Judge,
The Witness; the Abode, the Refuge-House,

The Friend, the Fountain and the Sea of Life
Which sends, and swallows up; Treasure of Worlds
And Treasure-Chamber! Seed and Seed-Sower,
Whence endless harvests spring! Sun's heat is mine;
Heaven's rain is mine to grant or to withhold;
Death am I, and Immortal Life I am,
Arjuna! SAT and ASAT, Visible Life,
And Life Invisible!

Yea! those who learn
The threefold Vedāḥ, who drink the Soma-wine,
Purge sins, pay sacrifice—from Me they earn
Passage to Svarga; where the meats divine

Of great gods feed them in high Indra's heaven,
Yet they, when that prodigious joy is o'er,
Paradise spent, and wage for merits given,
Come to the world of death and change once more.

They had their recompense! they stored their treasure,
Following the threefold Scripture and its writ;
Who seeketh such gaineth the fleeting pleasure
Of joy which comes and goes! I grant them it!

But to those blessed ones who worship Me,
Turning not otherwhere, with minds set fast,
I bring assurance of full bliss beyond.

Nay, and of hearts which follow other gods
In simple faith, their prayers arise to me,
O Kuntī's Son! though they pray wrongfully;
For I am the Receiver and the Lord
Of every sacrifice, which these know not
Rightfully; so they fall to earth again!
Who follow gods go to their gods; who vow
Their souls to Pitaraḥ go to Pitaraḥ; minds
To evil Bhūts given o'er sink to the Bhūts;
And whoso loveth Me cometh to Me.
Whoso shall offer Me in faith and love
A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water poured forth,
That offering I accept, lovingly made

With pious will. Whatever thou doest, Prince!
Eating or sacrificing, giving gifts,
Praying or fasting, let it all be done
For Me, as Mine. So shalt thou free thyself
From *Karma-bandha*, the chain which holdeth men
To good and evil issue, so shalt come
Safe unto Me—when thou art quit of flesh—
By faith and abdication joined to Me!

I am alike for all! I know not hate,
I know not favour! What is made is Mine!
But them that worship Me with love, I love;
They are in Me, and I in them!

Nay, Prince!
If one of evil life turn in his thought
Straightly to Me, count him amidst the good;
He hath the high way chosen; he shall grow
Righteous ere long; he shall attain that peace
Which changes not. Thou Prince of India!
Be certain none can perish, trusting Me!
O Pr̥thā's Son! whoso will turn to Me,
Though they be born from the very womb of Sin,
Woman or man; sprung of the Vaiśya caste
Or lowly disregarded Sūdra,—all
Plant foot upon the highest path; how then
The holy Brāhmaṇs and My Royal Saints?
Ah! ye who into this ill world are come—
Fleeting and false—set your faith fast on Me!
Fix heart and thought on Me! Adore Me! Bring
Offerings to Me! Make Me prostrations! Make
Me your supremest joy! and, undivided,
Unto My rest your spirits shall be guided.

HERE ENDS CHAPTER IX. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “*Rāja-vidyā-rāja-guhya-yogaḥ*,”
Or “*The Book of Religion by the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery*.”

CHAPTER X.

Kṛṣṇa:¹

Hear farther yet, thou Long-Armed Lord! these latest words I say—
Uttered to bring thee bliss and peace, who lovest Me alway—
Not the great company of gods nor kingly Ṛṣis know
My Nature, Who have made the gods and Ṛṣis long ago;
He only knoweth—only he is free of sin, and wise,
Who seeth Me, Lord of the Worlds, with faith-enlightened eyes,
Unborn, undying, unbegun. Whatever Natures be
To mortal men distributed, those natures spring from Me!
Intellect, skill, enlightenment, endurance, self-control,
Truthfulness, equability, and grief or joy of soul,
And birth and death, and fearfulness, and fearlessness, and shame,
And honour, and sweet harmlessness,² and peace which is the same
Whate'er befalls, and mirth, and tears, and piety, and thrift,
And wish to give, and will to help,—all cometh of My gift!
The Seven Chief Saints, the Elders Four, the Lordly Manus set—
Sharing My work—to rule the worlds, these too did I beget;
And Ṛṣis, Pitarah, Manus, all, by one thought of My mind;
Thence did arise, to fill this world, the races of mankind;
Wherfrom who comprehends My Reign of mystic Majesty—
That truth of truths—is thenceforth linked in faultless faith to Me:
Yea! knowing Me the source of all, by Me all creatures wrought,
The wise in spirit cleave to Me, into My Being brought;
Hearts fixed on Me; breaths breathed to Me; praising Me, each to each,
So have they happiness and peace, with pious thought and speech;
And unto these—thus serving well, thus loving ceaselessly—
I give a mind of perfect mood, whereby they draw to Me;
And, all for love of them, within their darkened souls I dwell,
And, with bright rays of wisdom's lamp, their ignorance dispel.

ARJUNA:

Yes! Thou art Parabrahman! The High Abode!
The Great Purification! Thou art God
Eternal, All-creating, Holy, First,
Without beginning! Lord of Lords and Gods!
Declared by all the Saints—by Nārada,
Vyāsa, Asita, and Devala;
And here Thyself declaring unto me!

What Thou hast said now know I to be truth,
O Keśava! that neither gods nor men
Nor demons comprehend Thy mystery
Made manifest, Divinest! Thou Thyself
Thyself alone dost know, Maker Supreme!
Master of all the living! Lord of Gods!
King of the Universe! To Thee alone
Belongs to tell the heavenly excellence
Of those perfections wherewith Thou dost fill
These worlds of Thine; Pervading, Immanent!
How shall I learn, Supremest Mystery!
To know Thee, though I muse continually?
Under what form of Thine unnumbered forms
Mayst Thou be grasped? Ah! yet again recount,
Clear and complete, Thy great appearances,
The secrets of Thy Majesty and Might,
Thou High Delight of Men! Never enough
Can mine ears drink the Amrit³ of such words!

KRŚNA:

Hanta! So be it! Kuru Prince! I will to thee unfold
Some portions of My Majesty, whose powers are manifold!
I am the Spirit seated deep in every creature's heart;
From Me they come; by Me they live; at My word they depart!
Viṣṇu of the Ādityas I am, those Lords of Light;
Marīciḥ of the Marutām, the Kings of Storm and Blight;
By day I gleam, the golden Sun of burning cloudless Noon;
By Night, amid the asterisms I glide, the dappled Moon!
Of Vedāḥ I am Sāmaveda, of gods in Indra's Heaven
Vāsava; of the faculties to living beings given
The mind which apprehends and thinks; of Rudrāḥ Śaṅkara;
Of Yakṣāṇām and of Rākshasas, Vitteśah; and Pāvakah
Of Vasūnām, and of mountain-peaks Meruḥ; Bṛhaspatiḥ
Know Me 'mid planetary Powers; 'mid Warriors heavenly
Skanda; of all the water-floods the Sea which drinketh each,
And Bhrgu of the holy Saints, and OM of sacred speech;
Of prayers the prayer ye whisper;⁴ of hills Himālaya's snow,
And Aśvaththa, the fig-tree, of all the trees that grow;
Of the Devarshis, Nārada; and Citrarath of them
That sing in Heaven, and Kapila of Munayah, and the gem
Of flying steeds, Uccaiḥśravas, from Amṛta-wave which burst;
Of elephants Airāvata; of males the Best and First;

Of weapons Heav'n's hot thunderbolt; of cows white Kāmadhuk,
From whose great milky udder-teats all hearts' desires are strook;
Vāsuki of the serpent-tribes, round Mandara entwined;
And thousand-fanged Ananta, on whose broad coils reclined
Leans Viṣṇu; and of water-things Varuṇa; Aryaman
Of Pitaraḥ, and, of those that judge, Yama the Judge I am;
Of Daityāḥ dread Prahlāda; of what metes days and years,
Time's self I am; of woodland-beasts—buffaloes, deers, and bears—
The lordly-painted tiger; of birds the vast Garuḍa,
The whirlwind 'mid the winds; 'mid chiefs Rāma with blood imbrued,
Makar 'mid fishes of the sea, and Gaṅgā 'mid the streams;
Yea! First, and Last, and Centre of all which is or seems
I am, Arjuna! Wisdom Supreme of what is wise,
Words on the uttering lips I am, and eyesight of the eyes,
And "A" of written characters, Dvandva⁵ of knitted speech,
And Endless Life, and boundless Love, whose power sustaineth each;
And bitter Death which seizes all, and joyous sudden Birth,
Which brings to light all beings that are to be on earth;
And of the viewless virtues, Fame, Fortune, Song am I,
And Memory, and Patience; and Craft, and Constancy:
Of Vedic hymns the Br̥hatsāma, of metres Gāyatrī,
Of months the Mārgaśīrṣa, of all the seasons three
The flower-wreathed Spring; in dicer's-play the conquering Double-Eight;
The splendour of the splendid, and the greatness of the great,
Victory I am, and Action! and the goodness of the good,
And Vāsudevah of Vṛṣṇinām race, and of this Pāṇḍu brood
Thyself!—Yea, my Arjuna! thyself; for thou art Mine!
Of poets Uśana, of saints Vyāsa, sage divine;
The policy of conquerors, the potency of kings,
The great unbroken silence in learning's secret things;
The lore of all the learned, the seed of all which springs.
Living or lifeless, still or stirred, whatever beings be,
None of them is in all the worlds, but it exists by Me!
Nor tongue can tell, Arjuna! nor end of telling come
Of these My boundless glories, whereof I teach thee some;
For wheresoe'er is wondrous work, and majesty, and might,
From Me hath all proceeded. Receive thou this aright!
Yet how shouldst thou receive, O Prince! The vastness of this word?
I, who am all, and made it all, abide its separate Lord!

1. The Sanskrit poem here rises to an elevation of style and manner which I have endeavoured to mark by change of metre.
2. Ahimsā.
3. The nectar of immortality.
4. Called “The Japa.”
5. The compound form of Sanskrit words.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER X. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ
Entitled “Vibhūti-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Religion by the Heavenly Perfections.”

CHAPTER XI.

ARJUNA:

This, for my soul's peace, have I heard from Thee,
The unfolding of the Mystery Supreme
Named Adhyātman; comprehending which,
My darkness is dispelled; for now I know—
O Lotus-eyed!¹—whence is the birth of men,
And whence their death, and what the majesties
Of Thine immortal rule. Fain would I see,
As thou Thyself declar'st it, Sovereign Lord!
The likeness of that glory of Thy Form
Wholly revealed. O Thou Divinest One!
If this can be, if I may bear the sight,
Make Thyself visible, Lord of all prayers!
Show me Thy very self, the Eternal God!

KRŚNA:

Gaze, then, thou Son of Pṛthā! I manifest for thee
Those hundred thousand thousand shapes that clothe my Mystery:
I show thee all my semblances, infinite, rich, divine,
My changeful hues, my countless forms. See! in this face of mine,
Ādityāḥ, Vasavāḥ, Rudrāḥ, Aśvinau, and Marutāḥ; see
Wonders unnumbered, Indian Prince! revealed to none save thee.
Behold! this is the Universe!—Look! what is live and dead
I gather all in one—in Me! Gaze, as thy lips have said,
ON GOD ETERNAL, VERY GOD! See ME! see what thou prayest!

Thou canst not!—nor, with human eyes, Arjuna! ever mayest!
Therefore I give thee sense divine. Have other eyes, new light!
And, look! This is My glory, unveiled to mortal sight!

SAÑJAYA:

Then, O King! the God, so saying,
Stood, to Pṛthā's Son displaying
All the splendour, wonder, dread
Of His vast Almighty-head.
Out of countless eyes beholding,
Out of countless mouths commanding,

Countless mystic forms enfolding
In one Form: supremely standing
Countless radiant glories wearing,
Countless heavenly weapons bearing,
Crowned with garlands of star-clusters,
Robed in garb of woven lustres,
Breathing from His perfect Presence
Breaths of every subtle essence
Of all heavenly odours; shedding
Blinding brilliance; overspreading—
Boundless, beautiful—all spaces
With His all-regarding faces;
So He showed! If there should rise
Suddenly within the skies
Sunburst of a thousand suns
Flooding earth with beams undreamed-of,
Then might be that Holy One's
Majesty and radiance dreamed of!

So did Pāṇḍu's Son behold
All this universe enfold
All its huge diversity
Into one vast shape, and be
Visible, and viewed, and blended
In one Body—subtle, splendid,
Nameless—th' All-comprehending
God of Gods, the Never-Ending
Deity!

But, sore amazed,
Thrilled, o'erfilled, dazzled, and dazed,
Arjuna knelt; and bowed his head,
And clasped his palms; and cried, and said:

ARJUNA:
Yea! I have seen! I see!
Lord! all is wrapped in Thee!
The gods are in Thy glorious frame! the creatures
Of earth, and heaven, and hell
In Thy Divine form dwell,
And in Thy countenance shine all the features

Of Brahmā, sitting lone
Upon His lotus-throne;
Of saints and sages, and the serpent races
Ananta, Vāsuki;
Yea! mightiest Lord! I see
Thy thousand thousand arms, and breasts, and faces,

And eyes,—on every side
Perfect, diversified;
And nowhere end of Thee, nowhere beginning,
Nowhere a centre! Shifts—
Wherever soul's gaze lifts—
Thy central Self, all-wielding, and all-winning!

Infinite King! I see
The anadem on Thee,
The club, the shell, the discus; see Thee burning
In beams insufferable,
Lighting earth, heaven, and hell
With brilliance blazing, glowing, flashing; turning

Darkness to dazzling day,
Look I whichever way;
Ah, Lord! I worship Thee, the Undivided,
The Uttermost of thought,
The Treasure-Palace wrought
To hold the wealth of the worlds; the Shield provided

To shelter Virtue's laws;
The Fount whence Life's stream draws
All waters of all rivers of all being:
The One Unborn, Unending:
Unchanging and Unblending!
With might and majesty, past thought, past seeing!

Silver of moon and gold
Of sun are glories rolled
From Thy great eyes; Thy visage, beaming tender
Throughout the stars and skies,
Doth to warm life surprise
Thy Universe. The worlds are filled with wonder

Of Thy perfections! Space
Star-sprinkled, and void place
From pole to pole of the Blue, from bound to bound,
Hath Thee in every spot,
Thee, Thee!—Where Thou art not,
O Holy, Marvellous Form! is nowhere found!

O Mystic, Awful One!
At sight of Thee, made known,
The Three Worlds quake; the lower gods draw nigh Thee;
They fold their palms, and bow
Body, and breast, and brow,
And, whispering worship, laud and magnify Thee!

R̥sis and Siddhas cry
“Hail! Highest Majesty!”
From sage and singer breaks the hymn of glory
In dulcet harmony,
Sounding the praise of Thee;
While countless companies take up the story,

Rudras, who ride the storms,
Th' Ādityāḥ shining forms,
Vasavāḥ and Sādhyāḥ, Viśve, Uṣmapāḥ;
Marutāḥ, and those great Twins
The heavenly, fair, Aśvinau,
Gandharvāḥ, Rākṣasāḥ, Siddhāḥ, and Asurāḥ,²—

These see Thee, and revere
In sudden-stricken fear;
Yea! the Worlds,—seeing Thee with form stupendous,
With faces manifold,
With eyes which all behold,
Unnumbered eyes, vast arms, members tremendous,

Flanks, lit with sun and star,
Feet planted near and far,
Tushes of terror, mouths wrathful and tender;—
The Three wide Worlds before Thee
Adore, as I adore Thee,
Quake, as I quake, to witness so much splendour!

I mark Thee strike the skies
With front, in wondrous wise
Huge, rainbow-painted, glittering; and thy mouth
Opened, and orbs which see
All things, whatever be
In all Thy worlds, east, west, and north and south.

O Eyes of God! O Head!
My strength of soul is fled,
Gone is heart's force, rebuked is mind's desire!
When I behold Thee so,
With awful brows a-glow,
With burning glance, and lips lighted by fire

Fierce as those flames which shall
Consume, at close of all,
Earth, Heaven! Ah me! I see no Earth and Heaven!
Thee, Lord of Lords! I see,
Thee only—only Thee!
Now let Thy mercy unto me be given,

Thou Refuge of the World!
Lo! to the cavern hurled
Of Thy wide-opened throat, and lips white-tushed,
I see our noblest ones,
Great Dhṛtarāṣṭrasya sons,
Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and Karna, caught and crushed!

The Kings and Chiefs drawn in,
That gaping gorge within;
The best of both these armies torn and riven!
Between Thy jaws they lie
Mangled full bloodily,
Ground into dust and death! Like streams down-driven

With helpless haste, which go
In headlong furious flow
Straight to the gulping deeps of th' unfilled ocean,
So to that flaming cave
Those heroes great and brave
Pour, in unending streams, with helpless motion!

Like moths which in the night
Flutter towards a light,
Drawn to their fiery doom, flying and dying,
So to their death still throng,
Blind, dazzled, borne along
Ceaselessly, all those multitudes, wild flying!

Thou, that hast fashioned men,
Devourest them again,
One with another, great and small, alike!
The creatures whom Thou mak'st.
With flaming jaws Thou tak'st,
Lapping them up! Lord God! Thy terrors strike

From end to end of earth,
Filling life full, from birth
To death, with deadly, burning, lurid dread!
Ah, Viṣṇu! make me know
Why is Thy visage so?
Who art Thou, feasting thus upon Thy dead?

Who? awful Deity!
I bow myself to Thee,
*Nāmostu te, devavara! prasīda!*³
O Mightiest Lord! rehearse
Why hast Thou face so fierce?
Whence doth this aspect horrible proceed?

KRŚNA:

Thou seest Me as Time who kills, Time who brings all to doom,
The Slayer Time, Ancient of Days, come hither to consume;
Excepting thee, of all these hosts of hostile chiefs arrayed,
There stands not one shall leave alive the battlefield! Dismayed
No longer be! Arise! obtain renown! destroy thy foes!
Fight for the kingdom waiting thee when thou hast vanquished those.
By Me they fall—not thee! the stroke of death is dealt them now,
Even as they show thus gallantly; My instrument art thou!
Strike, strong-armed Prince, at Drona! at Bhīṣma strike! deal death
On Karṇa, Jayadratha; stay all their warlike breath!
'Tis I who bid them perish! Thou wilt but slay the slain;
Fight! they must fall, and thou must live, victor upon this plain!

SAÑJAYA:

Hearing mighty Keśava's word,
Tremblingly that helmed Lord
Clasped his lifted palms, and—praying
Grace of Kṛṣṇa—stood there, saying,
With bowed brow and accents broken,
These words, timorously spoken:

ARJUNA:

Worthily, Lord of Might!
The whole world hath delight
In Thy surpassing power, obeying Thee;
The Rākṣasas, in dread
At sight of Thee, are sped
To all four quarters; and the company

Of Siddhāḥ sound Thy name.
How should they not proclaim
Thy Majesties, Divinest, Mightiest?
Thou Brahma, than Brahma greater!
Thou Infinite Creator!
Thou God of gods, Life's Dwelling-place and Rest!

Thou, of all souls the Soul!
The Comprehending Whole!
Of being formed, and formless being the Framer;
O Utmost One! O Lord!
Older than eld. Who stored
The worlds with wealth of life! O Treasure-Claimer,

Who wottest all, and art
Wisdom Thyself! O Part
In all, and All; for all from Thee have risen
Numberless now I see
The aspects are of Thee!
Vayu⁴ Thou art, and He who keeps the prison

Of Naraka, Yama dark;
And Agni's shining spark;
Varuṇa's waves are Thy waves. Moon and starlight
Are Thine! Prajāpati

Art Thou, and 'tis to Thee
They knelt in worshipping the old world's far light,

The first of mortal men.

Again, Thou God! again
A thousand thousand times be magnified!
Honour and worship be—
Glory and praise,—to Thee
Namo, Namaste, cried on every side;

Cried here, above, below,
Uttered when Thou dost go,
Uttered where Thou dost come! *Namō!* we call;
Namo 'stu! God adored!
Namo 'stu! Nameless Lord!
Hail to Thee! Praise to Thee! Thou One in all;

For Thou art All! Yea, Thou!
Ah! if in anger now
Thou shouldst remember I did think Thee Friend,
Speaking with easy speech,
As men use each to each;
Did call Thee “*Kṛṣṇa*,” “Prince,” nor comprehend

Thy hidden majesty,
The might, the awe of Thee;
Did, in my heedlessness, or in my love,
On journey, or in jest,
Or when we lay at rest,
Sitting at council, straying in the grove,

Alone, or in the throng,
Do Thee, most Holy! wrong,
Be Thy grace granted for that witless sin!
For Thou art, now I know,
Father of all below,
Of all above, of all the worlds within

Guru of Gurus; more
To reverence and adore
Than all which is adorable and high!

How, in the wide worlds three
Should any equal be?
Should any other share Thy majesty?

Therefore, with body bent
And reverent intent,
I praise, and serve, and seek Thee, asking grace.
As father to a son,
As friend to friend, as one
Who loveth to his lover, turn Thy face

In gentleness on me!
Good is it I did see
This unknown marvel of Thy Form! But fear
Mingles with joy! Retake,
Dear Lord! for pity's sake
Thine earthly shape, which earthly eyes may bear!

Be merciful, and show
The visage that I know;
Let me regard Thee, as of yore, arrayed
With disc and forehead-gem,
With mace and anadem,
Thou that sustaineſt all things! Undismayed

Let me once more behold
The form I loved of old,
Thou of the thousand arms and countless eyes!
This frightened heart is fain
To see restored again
My Charioteer, in Kṛṣṇa's kind disguise.

Kṛṣṇa:

Yea! thou hast seen, Arjuna! because I loved thee well,
The secret countenance of Me, revealed by mystic spell,
Shining, and wonderful, and vast, majestic, manifold,
Which none save thou in all the years had favour to behold;
For not by Vedaḥ cometh this, nor sacrifice, nor alms,
Nor works well-done, nor penance long, nor prayers, nor chaunted psalms,
That mortal eyes should bear to view the Immortal Soul unclad,
Prince of the Kuravah! This was kept for thee alone! Be glad!

Let no more trouble shake thy heart, because thine eyes have seen
My terror with My glory. As I before have been
So will I be again for thee; with lightened heart behold!
Once more I am thy Kṛṣṇa, the form thou knew'st of old!

SAÑJAYA:

These words to Arjuna spake
Vāsudeva, and straight did take
Back again the semblance dear
Of the well-loved charioteer;
Peace and joy it did restore
When the Prince beheld once more
Mighty BRAHMĀ'S form and face
Clothed in Kṛṣṇa's gentle grace.

ARJUNA:

Now that I see come back, Janārdana!
This friendly human frame, my mind can think
Calm thoughts once more; my heart beats still again!

Kṛṣṇa:

Yea! it was wonderful and terrible
To view me as thou didst, dear Prince! The gods
Dread and desire continually to view!
Yet not by Vedāḥ, nor from sacrifice,
Nor penance, nor gift-giving, nor with prayer
Shall any so behold, as thou hast seen!
Only by fullest service, perfect faith,
And uttermost surrender am I known
And seen, and entered into, Indian Prince!
Who doeth all for Me; who findeth Me
In all; adoreth always; loveth all
Which I have made, and Me, for Love's sole end,
That man, Arjuna! unto Me doth wend.

1. "Kamalapatrākṣa." 2. These are all divine or deified orders of the Hindu Pantheon.
3. "Hail to Thee, God of Gods! Be favourable!" 4. The wind.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XI. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,

Entitled "Viśvarūpa-darśana-yogah,"

Or "The Book of the Manifesting of the One and Manifold."

CHAPTER XII.

ARJUNA:

Lord! of the men who serve Thee—true in heart—
As God revealed; and of the men who serve,
Worshipping Thee Unrevealed, Unbodied, Far,
Which take the better way of faith and life?

KRŚNA:

Whoever serve Me—as I show Myself—
Constantly true, in full devotion fixed,
Those hold I very holy. But who serve—
Worshipping Me The One, The Invisible,
The Unrevealed, Unnamed, Unthinkable,
Uttermost, All-pervading, Highest, Sure—
Who thus adore Me, mastering their sense,
Of one set mind to all, glad in all good,
These blessed souls come unto Me.

Yet, hard

The travail is for such as bend their minds
To reach th' Unmanifest. That viewless path
Shall scarce be trod by man bearing the flesh!
But whereso any doeth all his deeds
Renouncing self for Me, full of Me, fixed
To serve only the Highest, night and day
Musing on Me—him will I swiftly lift
Forth from life's ocean of distress and death,
Whose soul clings fast to Me. Cling thou to Me!
Clasp Me with heart and mind! so shalt thou dwell
Surely with Me on high. But if thy thought
Droops from such height; if thou be'st weak to set
Body and soul upon Me constantly,
Despair not! give Me lower service! seek
To reach Me, worshipping with steadfast will;
And, if thou canst not worship steadfastly,
Work for Me, toil in works pleasing to Me!
For he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure! find
Refuge in Me! let fruits of labour go,

Renouncing hope for Me, with lowliest heart,
So shalt thou come; for, though to know is more
Than diligence, yet worship better is
Than knowing, and renouncing better still.
Near to renunciation—very near—
Dwelleth Eternal Peace!

Who hateth nought

Of all which lives, living himself benign,
Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,
Exempt from love of self, unchangeable
By good or ill; patient, contented, firm
In faith, mastering himself, true to his word,
Seeking Me, heart and soul; vowed unto Me,—
That man I love! Who troubleth not his kind,
And is not troubled by them; clear of wrath,
Living too high for gladness, grief, or fear,
That man I love! Who, dwelling quiet-eyed,¹
Stainless, serene, well-balanced, unperplexed,
Working with Me, yet from all works detached,
That man I love! Who, fixed in faith on Me,
Dotes upon none, scorns none; rejoices not,
And grieves not, letting good or evil hap
Light when it will, and when it will depart,
That man I love! Who, unto friend and foe
Keeping an equal heart, with equal mind
Bears shame and glory; with an equal peace
Takes heat and cold, pleasure and pain; abides
Quit of desires, hears praise or calumny
In passionless restraint, unmoved by each;
Linked by no ties to earth, steadfast in Me,
That man I love! But most of all I love
Those happy ones to whom 'tis life to live
In single fervid faith and love unseeing,
Drinking the blessed Amrit of my Being!

1. "Not peering about," *anapekṣah*.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XII. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled "Bhakti-yogah,"
Or "The Book of the Religion of Faith."

CHAPTER XIII.

ARJUNA:

Now would I hear, O gracious Keśava!¹
Of Life which seems, and Soul beyond, which sees,
And what it is we know—or think to know.

KRŚNA:

Yea! Son of Kuntī! for this flesh ye see
Is *Kṣetra*, is the field where Life disports;
And that which views and knows it is the Soul,
Kṣetrajña. In all “fields,” thou Indian prince!
I am *Kṣetrajña*, I am what surveys!
Only that knowledge knows which knows the known
By the knower!¹² What it is, that “field” of life,
What qualities it hath, and whence it is,
And why it changeth, and the faculty
That wotteth it, the mightiness of this,
And how it wotteth—hear these things from Me!

3

The elements, the conscious life, the mind,
The unseen vital force, the nine strange gates
Of the body, and the five domains of sense;
Desire, dislike, pleasure and pain, and thought
Deep-woven, and persistency of being;
These all are wrought on Matter by the Soul!

Humbleness, truthfulness, and harmlessness,
Patience and honour, reverence for the wise,
Purity, constancy, control of self,
Contempt of sense-delights, self-sacrifice,
Perception of the certitude of ill
In birth, death, age, disease, suffering, and sin;
Detachment, lightly holding unto home,
Children, and wife, and all that bindeth men;
An ever-tranquil heart in fortunes good
And fortunes evil, with a will set firm
To worship Me—Me only! ceasing not;

Loving all solitudes, and shunning noise
Of foolish crowds; endeavours resolute
To reach perception of the Utmost Soul,
And grace to understand what gain it were
So to attain,—this is true Wisdom, Prince!
And what is otherwise is ignorance!

Now will I speak of knowledge best to know—
That Truth which giveth man Amrit to drink,
The Truth of HIM, the Parabrahman, the All,
The Uncreated; not *Asat*, not *Sat*,
Not Form, nor the Unformed; yet both, and more;—
Whose hands are everywhere, and everywhere
Planted His feet, and everywhere His eyes
Beholding, and His ears in every place
Hearing, and all His faces everywhere
Enlightening and encompassing His worlds.
Glorified in the senses He hath given,
Yet beyond sense He is; sustaining all,
Yet dwells He unattached: of forms and modes
Master, yet neither form nor mode hath He;
He is within all beings—and without—
Motionless, yet still moving; not discerned
For subtlety of instant presence; close
To all, to each; yet measurelessly far!
Not manifold, and yet subsisting still
In all which lives; for ever to be known
As the Sustainer, yet, at the End of Times,
He maketh all to end—and re-creates.
The Light of Lights He is, in the heart of the Dark
Shining eternally. Wisdom He is
And Wisdom's way, and Guide of all the wise,
Planted in every heart.

So have I told
Of Life's stuff, and the moulding, and the lore
To comprehend. Whoso, adoring Me,
Perceiveth this, shall surely come to Me!

Know thou that Nature and the Spirit both
Have no beginning! Know that qualities
And changes of them are by Nature wrought;

That Nature puts to work the acting frame,
But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause
Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit, linked
To moulded matter, entereth into bond
With qualities by Nature framed, and, thus
Married to matter, breeds the birth again
In good or evil *yonis*.⁴

Yet is this—
Yea! in its bodily prison!—Spirit pure,
Spirit supreme; surveying, governing,
Guarding, possessing; Lord and Master still
PURUŚA, Ultimate, One Soul with Me.

Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul
PURUŚA, working through the qualities
With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!
Whatever flesh he bears, never again
Shall he take on its load. Some few there be
By meditation find the Soul in Self
Self-schooled; and some by long philosophy
And holy life reach thither; some by works:
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those—to teaching true—
Overpass Death!

Wherever, Indian Prince!
Life is—of moving things, or things unmoved,
Plant or still seed—know, what is there hath grown
By bond of Matter and of Spirit: Know
He sees indeed who sees in all alike
The living, lordly Soul; the Soul Supreme,
Imperishable amid the Perishing:
For, whoso thus beholds, in every place,
In every form, the same, one, Living Life,
Doth no more wrongfulness unto himself,
But goes the highest road which brings to bliss.
Seeing, he sees, indeed, who sees that works
Are Nature's wont, for Soul to practise by
Acting, yet not the agent; sees the mass
Of separate living things—each of its kind—
Issue from One, and blend again to One:

Then hath he BRAHMA, he attains!
O Prince!

That Ultimate, High Spirit, Uncreate,
Unqualified, even when it entereth flesh
Taketh no stain of acts, worketh in nought!
Like to th' ethereal air, pervading all,
Which, for sheer subtlety, avoideth taint,
The subtle Soul sits everywhere, unstained:
Like to the light of the all-piercing sun
[Which is not changed by aught it shines upon,]
The Soul's light shineth pure in every place;
And they who, by such eye of wisdom, see
How Matter, and what deals with it, divide;
And how the Spirit and the flesh have strife,
Those wise ones go the way which leads to Life!

1. The Kalikātā edition of the Mahābhārata has these three opening lines.
2. This is the nearest possible version of *Kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam् yat taj jñānam matam् mama.*
3. I omit two lines of the Sanskrit here, evidently interpolated by some Vedāntin.
4. Wombs.

HERE ENDS CHAPTER XIII. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled "Kṣetra-kṣetrajñā-vibhāga-yogaḥ,"
Or "The Book of Religion by Separation of Matter and Spirit."

CHAPTER XIV.

Kṛṣṇa:

Yet farther will I open unto thee
This wisdom of all wisdoms, uttermost,
The which possessing, all My saints have passed
To perfectness. On such high verities
Reliant, rising into fellowship
With Me, they are not born again at birth
Of *Kalpas*, nor at *Pralayas* suffer change!

This Universe the womb is where I plant
Seed of all lives! Thence, Prince of India, comes
Birth to all beings! Whoso, Kuntī's Son!
Mothers each mortal form, Brahma conceives,
And I am He that fathers, sending seed!

Sattvam, Rajas, and Tamas, so are named
The qualities of Nature, "Soothfastness,"
"Passion," and "Ignorance." These three bind down
The changeless Spirit in the changeful flesh.
Whereof sweet "Soothfastness," by purity
Living unsullied and enlightened, binds
The sinless Soul to happiness and truth;
And Passion, being kin to appetite,
And breeding impulse and propensity,
Binds the embodied Soul, Kuntī's Son!
By tie of works. But Ignorance, begot
Of Darkness, blinding mortal men, binds down
Their souls to stupor, sloth, and drowsiness.
Yea, Prince of India! Soothfastness binds souls
In pleasant wise to flesh; and Passion binds
By toilsome strain; but Ignorance, which blots
The beams of wisdom, binds the soul to sloth.
Passion and Ignorance, once overcome,
Leave Soothfastness, O Bhārata! Where this
With Ignorance are absent, Passion rules;
And Ignorance in hearts not good nor quick.
When at all gateways of the Body shines
The Lamp of Knowledge, then may one see well

Soothfastness settled in that city reigns;
Where longing is, and ardour, and unrest,
Impulse to strive and gain, and avarice,
Those spring from Passion—Prince!—engrained; and where
Darkness and dulness, sloth and stupor are,
'Tis Ignorance hath caused them, Kuru Chief!

Moreover, when a soul departeth, fixed
In Soothfastness, it goeth to the place—
Perfect and pure—of those that know all Truth.
If it departeth in set habitude
Of Impulse, it shall pass into the world
Of spirits tied to works; and, if it dies
In hardened Ignorance, that blinded soul
Is born anew in some unlighted womb.

The fruit of Soothfastness is true and sweet;
The fruit of lusts is pain and toil; the fruit
Of Ignorance is deeper darkness. Yea!
For Light brings light, and Passion ache to have;
And gloom, bewilderments, and ignorance
Grow forth from Ignorance. Those of the first
Rise ever higher; those of the second mode
Take a mid place; the darkened souls sink back
To lower deeps, loaded with witlessness!

When, watching life, the living man perceives
The only actors are the Qualities,
And knows what rules beyond the Qualities,
Then is he come nigh unto Me!

The Soul,

Thus passing forth from the Three Qualities—
Whereby arise all bodies—overcomes
Birth, Death, Sorrow, and Age; and drinketh deep
The undying wine of Amṛta.

ARJUNA:

Oh, my Lord!
Which be the signs to know him that hath gone
Past the Three Modes? How liveth he? What way
Leadeth him safe beyond the threefold Modes?

KRŚNA:

He who with equanimity surveys
Lustre of goodness, strife of passion, sloth
Of ignorance, not angry if they are,
Not wishful when they are not: he who sits
A sojourner and stranger in their midst
Unruffled, standing off, saying—serene—
When troubles break, “These be the Qualities!”
He unto whom—self-centred—grief and joy
Sound as one word; to whose deep-seeing eyes
The clod, the marble, and the gold are one;
Whose equal heart holds the same gentleness
For lovely and unlovely things, firm-set,
Well-pleased in praise and dispraise; satisfied
With honour or dishonour; unto friends
And unto foes alike in tolerance;
Detached from undertakings,—he is named
Surmounter of the Qualities!

And such—

With single, fervent faith adoring Me,
Passing beyond the Qualities, conforms
To Brahma, and attains Me!

For I am

That whereof Brahma is the likeness! Mine
The Amṛta is; and Immortality
Is mine; and mine perfect Felicity!

HERE ENDS CHAPTER XIV. OF THE

BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,

Enitled “Guna-traya-vibhāga-yogah,”

Or “The Book of Religion by Separation from the Qualities.”

CHAPTER XV.

Kṛṣṇa:

Men call the Aśvattha,—the Nyagrodha {Banyan}-tree,—
Which hath its boughs beneath, its roots above,—
The ever-holy tree. Yea! for its leaves
Are green and waving hymns which whisper Truth!
Who knows the Aśvattha, knows Vedāḥ, and all.

Its branches shoot to heaven and sink to earth,¹
Even as the deeds of men, which take their birth
From qualities: its silver sprays and blooms,
And all the eager verdure of its girth,

Leap to quick life at kiss of sun and air,
As men's lives quicken to the temptings fair
Of wooing sense: its hanging rootlets seek
The soil beneath, helping to hold it there,

As actions wrought amid this world of men
Bind them by ever-tightening bonds again.
If ye knew well the teaching of the Tree,
What its shape saith; and whence it springs; and, then

How it must end, and all the ills of it,
The axe of sharp Detachment ye would whet,
And cleave the clinging snaky roots, and lay
This Aśvattha of sense-life low,—to set

New growths upspringing to that happier sky,—
Which they who reach shall have no day to die,
Nor fade away, nor fall—to Him, I mean,
FATHER and FIRST, Who made the mystery

Of old Creation; for to Him come they
From passion and from dreams who break away;
Who part the bonds constraining them to flesh,
And,—Him, the Highest, worshipping alway—

No longer grow at mercy of what breeze
Of summer pleasure stirs the sleeping trees,
 What blast of tempest tears them, bough and stem:
To the eternal world pass such as these!

Another Sun gleams there! another Moon!
Another Light,—not Dusk, nor Dawn, nor Noon—
 Which they who once behold return no more;
They have attained My rest, life's Utmost boon!

When, in this world of manifested life,
The undying Spirit, setting forth from Me,
Taketh on form, it draweth to itself
From Being's storehouse,—which containeth all,—
Senses and intellect. The Sovereign Soul
Thus entering the flesh, or quitting it,
Gathers these up, as the wind gathers scents,
Blowing above the flower-beds. Ear and Eye,
And Touch and Taste, and Smelling, these it takes,—
Yea, and a sentient mind;—linking itself
To sense-things so.

The unenlightened ones
Mark not that Spirit when he goes or comes,
Nor when he takes his pleasure in the form,
Conjoined with qualities; but those see plain
Who have the eyes to see. Holy souls see
Which strive thereto. Enlightened, they perceive
That Spirit in themselves; but foolish ones,
Even though they strive, discern not, having hearts
Unkindled, ill-informed!

Know, too, from Me
Shineth the gathered glory of the suns
Which lighten all the world: from Me the moons
Draw silvery beams, and fire fierce loveliness.
I penetrate the clay, and lend all shapes
Their living force; I glide into the plant—
Root, leaf, and bloom—to make the woodlands green
With springing sap. Becoming vital warmth,
I glow in glad, respiration frames, and pass,

With outward and with inward breath, to feed
The body by all meats.²

For in this world
Being is twofold: the Divided, one;
The Undivided, one. All things that live
Are “the Divided.” That which sits apart,
“The Undivided.”

Higher still is He,
The Highest, holding all, whose Name is LORD,
The Eternal, Sovereign, First! Who fills all worlds,
Sustaining them. And—dwelling thus beyond
Divided Being and Undivided—I
Am called of men and Vedāḥ, Life Supreme,
The PURUṢOTTAMA.

Who knows Me thus,
With mind unclouded, knoweth all, dear Prince!
And with his whole soul ever worshippeth Me.

Now is the sacred, secret Mystery
Declared to thee! Who comprehendeth this
Hath wisdom! He is quit of works in bliss!

1. I do not consider the Sanskrit verses here—which are somewhat freely rendered—“an attack on the authority of the Vedāḥ,” with Mr. Davies, but a beautiful lyrical episode, a new “Parable of the fig-tree.”

2. I omit a verse here, evidently interpolated.

HERE ENDS CHAPTER XV. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Puruṣottama-prāpti-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Religion by attaining the Supreme.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Kṛṣṇa:

Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety,
And love of lonely study; humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed,
With patience, fortitude, and purity;
An unrevengeful spirit, never given
To rate itself too high;—such be the signs,
O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!

Deceitfulness, and arrogance, and pride,
Quickness to anger, harsh and evil speech,
And ignorance, to its own darkness blind,—
These be the signs. My Prince! of him whose birth
Is fated for the regions of the vile.¹

The Heavenly Birth brings to deliverance,
So should'st thou know! The birth with Asurāḥ
Brings into bondage. Be thou joyous. Prince!
Whose lot is set apart for heavenly Birth.

Two stamps there are marked on all living men,
Divine and Undivine; I speake to thee
By what marks thou shouldst know the Heavenly Man,
Hear from me now of the Unheavenly!

They comprehend not, the Unheavenly,
How Souls go forth from Me; nor how they come
Back unto Me: nor is there Truth in these,

Nor purity, nor rule of Life. "This world
Hath not a Law, nor Order, nor a Lord,"
So say they: "nor hath risen up by Cause
Following on Cause, in perfect purposing,
But is none other than a House of Lust."
And, this thing thinking, all those ruined ones—
Of little wit, dark-minded—give themselves
To evil deeds, the curses of their kind.
Surrendered to desires insatiable,
Full of deceitfulness, folly, and pride,
In blindness cleaving to their errors, caught
Into the sinful course, they trust this lie
As it were true—this lie which leads to death—
Finding in Pleasure all the good which is,
And crying "Here it finisheth!"

Ensnared

In nooses of a hundred idle hopes,
Slaves to their passion and their wrath, they buy
Wealth with base deeds, to glut hot appetites;
"Thus much, to-day," they say, "we gained! thereby
Such and such wish of heart shall have its fill;
And this is ours! and th' other shall be ours!
To-day we slew a foe, and we will slay
Our other enemy to-morrow! Look!
Are we not lords? Make we not goodly cheer?
Is not our fortune famous, brave, and great?
Rich are we, proudly born! What other men
Live like to us? Kill, then, for sacrifice!
Cast largesse, and be merry!" So they speak
Darkened by ignorance; and so they fall—
Tossed to and fro with projects, tricked, and bound
In net of black delusion, lost in lusts—
Down to foul Naraka. Conceited, fond,
Stubborn and proud, dead-drunken with the wine
Of wealth, and reckless, all their offerings
Have but a show of reverence, being not made
In piety of ancient faith. Thus vowed
To self-hood, force, insolence, feasting, wrath,
These My blasphemers, in the forms they wear
And in the forms they breed, my foemen are,

Hateful and hating; cruel, evil, vile,
Lowest and least of men, whom I cast down
Again, and yet again, at end of lives,
Into some devilish womb, whence—birth by birth—
The devilish wombs re-spawn them, all beguiled;
And, till they find and worship Me, sweet Prince!
Tread they that Nether Road.

The Doors of Hell

Are threefold, whereby men to ruin pass,—
The door of Lust, the door of Wrath, the door
Of Avarice. Let a man shun those three!
He who shall turn aside from entering
All those three gates of Naraka, wendeth straight
To find his peace, and comes to Svarga's gate.

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1. “Of the Asurāḥ,” lit.

2. I omit the ten concluding ślokāḥ, with Mr. Davies.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XVI. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Daivāsura-sampad-vibhāga-yogah,”
Or “The Book of the Separateness of the Divine and Undivine.”

CHAPTER XVII.

ARJUNA:

If men forsake the holy ordinance,
Heedless of Śāstrāḥ, yet keep faith at heart
And worship, what shall be the state of those,
Great Kṛṣṇa! *Sattvam, Rajas, Tamas?* Say!

Kṛṣṇa:

Threefold the faith is of mankind, and springs
From those three qualities,—becoming “true,”
Or “passion-stained,” or “dark,” as thou shalt hear!

The faith of each believer, Indian Prince!
Conforms itself to what he truly is.
Where thou shalt see a worshipper, that one
To what he worships lives assimilate,
[Such as the shrine, so is the votary,]
The “soothfast” souls adore true gods; the souls
Obeying *Rajas* worship Rākṣasāḥ¹
Or Yaksāḥ; and the men of Darkness pray
To Pretas and to Bhūtas.² Yea, and those
Who practise bitter penance, not enjoined
By rightful rule—penance which hath its root
In self-sufficient, proud hypocrisies—
Those men, passion-beset, violent, wild,
Torturing—the witless ones—My elements
Shut in fair company within their flesh,
(Nay, Me myself, present within the flesh!)
Know them to devils devoted, not to Heaven!
For like as foods are threefold for mankind
In nourishing, so is there threefold way
Of worship, abstinence, and almsgiving!
Hear this of Me! there is a food which brings
Force, substance, strength, and health, and joy to live,
Being well-seasoned, cordial, comforting,
The “Soothfast” meat. And there be foods which bring
Aches and unrests, and burning blood, and grief,
Being too biting, heating, salt, and sharp,
And therefore craved by too strong appetite.

And there is foul food—kept from over-night,³
Savourless, filthy, which the foul will eat,
A feast of rottenness, meet for the lips
Of such as love the “Darkness.”

Thus with rites;—
A sacrifice not for rewardment made,
Offered in rightful wise, when he who vows
Sayeth, with heart devout, “This I should do!”
Is “Soothfast” rite. But sacrifice for gain,
Offered for good repute, be sure that this,
O Best of Bhāratāḥ! is Rajas-rite,
With stamp of “passion.” And a sacrifice
Offered against the laws, with no due dole
Of food-giving, with no accompaniment
Of hallowed hymn, nor largesse to the priests,
In faithless celebration, call it vile,
The deed of “Darkness!”—lost!

Worship of gods
Meriting worship; lowly reverence
Of Twice-borns, Teachers, Elders; Purity,
Rectitude, and the brahmacharya ’s vow,
And not to injure any helpless thing,—
These make a true religiousness of Act.

Words causing no man woe, words ever true,
Gentle and pleasing words, and those ye say
In murmured reading of a Sacred Writ,—
These make the true religiousness of Speech.

Serenity of soul, benignity,
Sway of the silent Spirit, constant stress
To sanctify the Nature,—these things make
Good rite, and true religiousness of Mind.

Such threefold faith, in highest piety
Kept, with no hope of gain, by hearts devote,
Is perfect work of *Sattvam*, true belief.

Religion shown in act of proud display
To win good entertainment, worship, fame,
Such—say I—is of *Rajas*, rash and vain.

Religion followed by a witless will
To torture self, or come at power to hurt
Another,—’tis of *Tamas*, dark and ill.

The gift lovingly given, when one shall say
“Now must I gladly give!” when he who takes
Can render nothing back; made in due place,
Due time, and to a meet recipient,
Is gift of *Sattvam*, fair and profitable.

The gift selfishly given, where to receive
Is hoped again, or when some end is sought,
Or where the gift is proffered with a grudge,
This is of *Rajas*, stained with impulse, ill.

The gift churlishly flung, at evil time,
In wrongful place, to base recipient,
Made in disdain or harsh unkindliness,
Is gift of *Tamas*, dark; it doth not bless!⁴

1. Rāksasāḥ and Yakṣāḥ are unembodied but capricious beings of great power, gifts, and beauty, sometimes also of benignity.
2. These are spirits of evil, wandering ghosts.
3. Yātayāmam, food which has remained after the watches of the night. In India this would probably “go bad.”
4. I omit the concluding ślokāḥ, as of very doubtful authenticity.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XVII. OF THE
BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ,
Entitled “Śraddhātraya-vibhāga-yogah,”
Or “The Book of Religion by the Threefold Kinds of Faith.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARJUNA:

Fain would I better know, Thou Glorious One!
The very truth—Heart's Lord!—of *Sannyāsa*,
Abstention; and Renunciation, Lord!
Tyāga; and what separates these twain!

KRŚNA:

The poets rightly teach that *Sannyāsa*
Is the foregoing of all acts which spring
Out of desire; and their wisest say
Tyāga is renouncing fruit of acts.

There be among the saints some who have held
All action sinful, and to be renounced;
And some who answer, “Nay! the goodly acts—
As worship, penance, alms—must be performed!”
Hear now My sentence, Best of Bhāratāḥ!

’Tis well set forth, O Chaser of thy Foes!
Renunciation is of threefold form,
And Worship, Penance, Alms, not to be stayed;
Nay, to be gladly done; for all those three
Are purifying waters for true souls!

Yet must be practised even those high works
In yielding up attachment, and all fruit
Produced by works. This is My judgment, Prince!
This My insuperable and fixed decree!

Abstaining from a work by right prescribed
Never is meet! So to abstain doth spring
From “Darkness,” and Delusion teacheth it.
Abstaining from a work grievous to flesh,
When one saith “ ’Tis unpleasing! “this is null!
Such an one acts from “passion; “nought of gain
Wins his Renunciation! But, Arjuna!
Abstaining from attachment to the work,
Abstaining from rewardment in the work,

While yet one doeth it full faithfully,
Saying, “ ‘Tis right to do!” that is “true” act
And abstinence! Who doeth duties so,
Unvexed if his work fail, if it succeed
Unflattered, in his own heart justified,
Quit of debates and doubts, his is “true” act:
For, being in the body, none may stand
Wholly aloof from act; yet, who abstains
From profit of his acts is abstinent.

The fruit of labours, in the lives to come,
Is threefold for all men,—Desirable,
And Undesirable, and mixed of both;
But no fruit is at all where no work was.

Hear from me, Long-armed Lord! the makings five
Which go to every act, in Sāṅkhyā taught
As necessary. First the force; and then
The agent; next, the various instruments;
Fourth, the especial effort; fifth, the God.
What work soever any mortal doth
Of body, mind, or speech, evil or good,
By these five doth he that. Which being thus,
Whoso, for lack of knowledge, seeth himself
As the sole actor, knoweth nought at all
And seeth nought. Therefore, I say, if one—
Holding aloof from self—with unstained mind
Should slay all yonder host, being bid to slay,
He doth not slay; he is not bound thereby!

Knowledge, the thing known, and the mind which knows,
These make the threefold starting-ground of act.
The act, the actor, and the instrument,
These make the threefold total of the deed.
But knowledge, agent, act, are differenced
By three dividing qualities. Hear now
Which be the qualities dividing them.

There is “true” Knowledge. Learn thou it is this:
To see one changeless Life in all the Lives,
And in the Separate, One Inseparable.

There is imperfect Knowledge: that which sees
The separate existences apart,
And, being separated, holds them real.

There is false Knowledge: that which blindly clings
To one as if 'twere all, seeking no Cause,
Deprived of light, narrow, and dull, and “dark.”

There is “right” Action: that which—being enjoined—
Is wrought without attachment, passionlessly,
For duty, not for love, nor hate, nor gain.

There is “vain” Action: that which men pursue
Aching to satisfy desires, impelled
By sense of self, with all-absorbing stress:
This is of *Rajas*—passionate and vain.

There is “dark” Action: when one doth a thing
Heedless of issues, heedless of the hurt
Or wrong for others, heedless if he harm
His own soul—’tis of *Tamas*, black and bad!

There is the “rightful” doer. He who acts
Free from self-seeking, humble, resolute,
Steadfast, in good or evil hap the same,
Content to do aright—he “truly” acts.

There is th’ “impassioned” doer. He that works
From impulse, seeking profit, rude and bold
To overcome, unchastened; slave by turns
Of sorrow and of joy: of *Rajas* he!
And there be evil doers; loose of heart,
Low-minded, stubborn, fraudulent, remiss,
Dull, slow, despondent—children of the “dark.”

Hear, too, of Intellect and Steadfastness
The threefold separation, Conqueror-Prince!
How these are set apart by Qualities.

Good is the Intellect which comprehends
The coming forth and going back of life,
What must be done, and what must not be done,
What should be feared, and what should not be feared,
What binds and what emancipates the soul:
That is of *Sattvam*, Prince! of “soothfastness.”

Marred is the Intellect which, knowing right
And knowing wrong, and what is well to do
And what must not be done, yet understands
Nought with firm mind, nor as the calm truth is:
This is of *Rajas*, Prince! and “passionate!”
Evil is Intellect which, wrapped in gloom,
Loots upon wrong as right, and sees all things
Contrariwise of Truth. O Pṛthā’s Son!
That is of *Tamas*, “dark” and desperate!

Good is the steadfastness whereby a man
Masters his beats of heart, his very breath
Of life, the action of his senses; fixed
In never-shaken faith and piety:
That is of *Sattvam*, Prince! “soothfast” and fair!
Stained is the steadfastness whereby a man
Holds to his duty, purpose, effort, end,
For life’s sake, and the love of goods to gain,
Arjuna! ’tis of *Rajas*, passion-stamped!
Sad is the steadfastness wherewith the fool
Cleaves to his sloth, his sorrow, and his fears,
His folly and despair. This—Pṛthā’s Son!—
Is born of *Tamas*, “dark” and miserable!

Hear further, Chief of Bhāratāḥ! from Me
The threefold kinds of Pleasure which there be.

Good Pleasure is the pleasure that endures,
Banishing pain for aye; bitter at first
As poison to the soul, but afterward
Sweet as the taste of Amṛta. Drink of that!
It springeth in the Spirit’s deep content.
And painful Pleasure springeth from the bond
Between the senses and the sense-world. Sweet
As Amṛt is its first taste, but its last
Bitter as poison. ’Tis of *Rajas*, Prince!
And foul and “dark” the Pleasure is which springs
From sloth and sin and foolishness; at first
And at the last, and all the way of life
The soul bewildering. ’Tis of *Tamas*, Prince!

For nothing lives on earth, nor 'midst the gods
In utmost heaven, but hath its being bound
With these three Qualities, by Nature framed.

The work of Brāhmaṇs, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas,
And Śudras, O thou Slayer of thy Foes!
Is fixed by reason of the Qualities
Planted in each:

A Brāhmaṇasya's virtues, Prince!
Born of his nature, are serenity,
Self-mastery, religion, purity,
Patience, uprightness, learning, and to know
The truth of things which be. A Kṣatriya's pride,
Born of his nature, lives in valour, fire,
Constancy, skilfulness, spirit in fight,
And open-handedness and noble mien,
As of a lord of men. A Vaiśya's task,
Born with his nature, is to till the ground,
Tend cattle, venture trade. A Śūdra's state,
Suiting his nature, is to minister.

Whoso performeth—diligent, content—
The work allotted him, whatever it be,
Lays hold of perfectness! Hear how a man
Findesth perfection, being so content:
He findeth it through worship—wrought by work—
Of HIM that is the Source of all which lives,
Of HIM by Whom the universe was stretched.

Better thine own work is, though done with fault,
Than doing others' work, ev'n excellently.
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task
Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!
For every work hath blame, as every flame
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,
Desires for ever dead, results renounced.

Learn from me. Son of Kuntī! also this,
How one, attaining perfect peace, attains
BRAHMA, the supreme, the highest height of all!

Devoted—with a heart grown pure, restrained
In lordly self-control, foregoing wiles
Of song and senses, freed from love and hate,
Dwelling 'mid solitudes, in diet spare,
With body, speech, and will tamed to obey,
Ever to holy meditation vowed,
From passions liberate, quit of the Self,
Of arrogance, impatience, anger, pride;
Freed from surroundings, quiet, lacking nought—
Such an one grows to oneness with the BRAHMA;
Such an one, growing one with BRAHMA, serene,
Sorrows no more, desires no more; his soul,
Equally loving all that lives, loves well
Me, Who have made them, and attains to Me.
By this same love and worship doth he know
Me as I am, how high and wonderful,
And knowing, straightway enters into Me.
And whatsoever deeds he doeth—fixed
In Me, as in his refuge—he hath won
For ever and for ever by My grace
Th' Eternal Rest! So win thou! In thy thoughts
Do all thou dost for Me! Renounce for Me!
Sacrifice heart and mind and will to Me!
Live in the faith of Me! In faith of Me
All dangers thou shalt vanquish, by My grace;
But, trusting to thyself and heeding not,
Thou can'st but perish! If this day thou say'st,
Relying on thyself, "I will not fight!"
Vain will the purpose prove! thy qualities
Would spur thee to the war. What thou dost shun,
Misled by fair illusions, thou wouldst seek
Against thy will, when the task comes to thee
Waking the promptings in thy nature set.
There lives a Master in the hearts of men
Maketh their deeds, by subtle pulling-strings,
Dance to what tune HE will. With all thy soul
Trust Him, and take Him for thy succour, Prince!

So—only so, Arjuna!—shalt thou gain—
By grace of Him—the uttermost repose,
The Eternal Place!

Thus hath been opened thee
This Truth of Truths, the Mystery more hid
Than any secret mystery. Meditate!
And—as thou wilt—then act!

Nay! but once more
Take My last word, My utmost meaning have!
Precious thou art to Me; right well-beloved!
Listen! I tell thee for thy comfort this.
Give Me thy heart! adore Me! serve Me! cling
In faith and love and reverence to Me!
So shalt thou come to Me! I promise true,
For thou art sweet to Me!

And let go those—
Rites and writ duties! Fly to Me alone!
Make Me thy single refuge! I will free
Thy soul from all its sins! Be of good cheer!

*[Hide, the holy Kṛṣṇa saith,
This from him that hath no faith,
Him that worships not, nor seeks
Wisdom's teaching when she speaks:
Hide it from all men who mock;
But, wherever, 'mid the flock
Of My lovers, one shall teach
This divinest, wisest, speech—
Teaching in the faith to bring
Truth to them, and offering
Of all honour unto Me—
Unto Brahma cometh he!
Nay, and nowhere shall ye find
Any man of all mankind
Doing dearer deed for Me;
Nor shall any dearer be
In My earth. Yea, furthermore,
Whoso reads this converse o'er,
Held by Us upon the plain,
Pondering piously and fain,*

*He hath paid Me sacrifice!
(Kṛṣṇa speaketh in this wise!)
Yea, and whoso, full of faith,
Heareth wisely what it saith,
Heareth meekly,—when he dies,
Surely shall his spirit rise
To those regions where the Blest,
Free of flesh, in joyance rest.]*

Hath this been heard by thee, O Indian Prince!
With mind intent? hath all the ignorance—
Which bred thy trouble—vanished. My Arjuna?

ARJUNA:

Trouble and ignorance are gone! the Light
Hath come unto me, by Thy favour, Lord!
Now am I fixed! my doubt is fled away!
According to Thy word, so will I do!

SAÑJAYA:

Thus gathered I the gracious speech of Kṛṣṇa, O my King!
Thus have I told, with heart a-thrill, this wise and wondrous thing
By great Vyāsa's learning writ, how Kṛṣṇa's self made known
The Yoga, being Yoga's Lord. So is the high truth shown!
And aye, when I remember, O Lord my King, again
Arjuna and the God in talk, and all this holy strain,
Great is my gladness: when I muse that splendour, passing speech,
Of Hari, visible and plain, there is no tongue to reach
My marvel and my love and bliss. O Archer-Prince! all hail!
O Kṛṣṇa, Lord of Yoga! surely there shall not fail
Blessing, and victory, and power, for Thy most mighty sake,
Where this song comes of Arjuna, and how with God he spake.

HERE ENDS, WITH CHAPTER XVIII.,
Entitled "Mokṣa-sannyāsa-yogah,"
Or "The Book of Religion by Deliverance and Renunciation,"

THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ.

THE END.

THE LIGHT OF ASIA

Or

The Great Renunciation

(MAHĀBHINISHKRAMANA)

By

Edwin Arnold, M.A.

1879.

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PREFACE.

IN the following Poem, I have sought, by the medium of an imaginary Buddhist votary, to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism.

A generation ago little or nothing was known in Europe of this great faith of Asia, which had nevertheless existed during twenty-four centuries, and at this day surpasses, in the number of its followers and the area of its prevalence,—any other form of creed. Four hundred and seventy millions of our race live and die in the tenets of Gautama; and the spiritual dominions of this ancient teacher extend, at the present time, from Nepal and Sri Lanka over the whole Eastern Peninsula to China, Japan, Tibet, Central Asia, Siberia, and even Swedish Lapland. India itself might fairly be included in this magnificent empire of belief, for though the profession of Buddhism has for the most part passed away from the land of its birth, the mark of Gautama's sublime teaching is stamped ineffaceably upon modern Brāhmaṇatva, and the most characteristic habits and convictions of the Hindus are clearly due to the benign influence of Buddha's precepts. More than a third of mankind, therefore, owe their moral and religious ideas to this illustrious prince, whose personality, though imperfectly revealed in the existing sources of information, cannot but appear the highest, gentlest, holiest, and most beneficent, with one exception, in the history of Thought. Discordant in frequent particulars, and sorely overlaid by corruptions, inventions, and misconceptions, the Buddhistical books yet agree in the one point of recording nothing—no single act or word—which mars the perfect purity and tenderness of this Indian teacher, who united the truest princely qualities with the intellect of a sage and the passionate devotion of a martyr. Even M. Barthelemy St. Hilaire, totally misjudging, as he does, many points of Buddhism, is well cited by Professor Max Müller as saying of Prince Siddhārtha, “*Sa vie n'a point de tache. Son constant héroïsme égale sa conviction; et si la théorie qu'il préconise est fausse, les exemples personnels qu'il donne sont irréprochables. Il est le modèle achevé de toutes les vertus qu'il prêche; son abnégation, sa charité, sa douceur inaltérable ne se démentent point un seul instant. (...) Il prépare silencieusement sa doctrine par six années de retraite et de*

méditation; il la propage par la seule puissance de la parole et de la persuasion pendant plus d'un demi-siècle, et quand il meurt entre les bras de ses disciples, c'est avec la sérénité d'un sage qui a pratiqué le bien toute sa vie et qui est assuré d'avoir trouvé le vrai." {"His life is without stain. His constant heroism equals his conviction; and if the theory he advocates is false, the personal examples he sets are beyond reproach. He is the perfect model of all the virtues he preaches; his self-denial, his charity, his unalterable gentleness never fail for a single instant. . . . He prepares his doctrine in silence through six years of retreat and meditation; he spreads it by the sole power of speech and persuasion for more than half a century; and when he dies in the arms of his disciples, it is with the serenity of a sage who has practiced goodness all his life and who is certain of having found the truth."} To Gautama has consequently been given this stupendous conquest of humanity; and—though he discountenanced ritual, and declared himself, even when on the threshold of Nirvāṇa, to be only what all other men might become—the love and gratitude of Asia, disobeying his mandate, have given him fervent worship. Forests of flowers are daily laid upon his stainless shrines, and countless millions of lips daily repeat the formula, "I take refuge in Buddha!"

The Buddha of this poem—if, as need not be doubted, he really existed—was born on the borders of Nepal, about 620 B.C., and died about 543 B.C. at Kusināgara in Oudh. In point of age, therefore, most other creeds are youthful compared with this venerable religion, which has in it the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indescribable element of faith in final good, and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom. The extravagances which disfigure the record and practice of Buddhism are to be referred to that inevitable degradation which priesthoods always inflict upon great ideas committed to their charge. The power and sublimity of Gautama's original doctrines should be estimated by their influence, not by their interpreters; nor by that innocent but lazy and ceremonious church which has arisen on the foundations of the Buddhistic Brotherhood or "Sangha."

I have put my poem into a Buddhist's mouth, because, to appreciate the spirit of Asiatic thought, they should be regarded from the Oriental point of view; and neither the miracles which consecrate this record, nor the philosophy which it embodies, could have been otherwise so naturally reproduced. The doctrine of Transmigration, for instance—startling to modern minds—was established and thoroughly accepted by the Hindus of Buddha's time, that period when al-Quds

{Jerusalem} was being taken by Nebuchadnezzar, when Nineveh was falling to the Medes, and Marseille was founded by the Phocaeans. The exposition here offered of so antique a system is of necessity incomplete, and—in obedience to the laws of poetic art—passes rapidly by many matters philosophically most important, as well as over the long ministry of Gautama. But my purpose has been obtained if any just conception be here conveyed of the lofty character of this noble prince, and of the general purport of his doctrines. As to these there has arisen prodigious controversy among the erudite, who will be aware that I have taken the imperfect Buddhistic citations much as they stand in Spence Hardy's work, and have also modified more than one passage in the received narratives. The views, however, here indicated of "Nirvāṇa," "Dharma," "Karma," and the other chief features of Buddhism, are at least the fruits of considerable study, and also of a firm conviction that a third of mankind would never have been brought to believe in blank abstractions, or in Nothingness as the issue and crown of Being.

Finally, in reverence to the illustrious Promulgator of this "Light of Asia," and in homage to the many eminent scholars who have devoted noble labors to his memory, for which both repose and ability are wanting to me, I beg that the shortcomings of my too-hurried study may be forgiven. It has been composed in the brief intervals of days without leisure, but is inspired by an abiding desire to aid in the better mutual knowledge of East and West. The time may come, I hope, when this book and my "Indian Song of Songs" will preserve the memory of one who loved India and the Indian peoples.

EDWIN ARNOLD, C.S.I.

London, July, 1879.

THE LIGHT OF ASIA.

BOOK THE FIRST.

*The Scripture of the Saviour of the World,
Lord Buddha—Prince Siddhārtha styled on earth—
In Earth and Heavens and Hells Incomparable,
All honored, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful;
The Teacher of Nirvāṇa and the Law.*

Thus came he to be born again for men.

Below the highest sphere four Regents sit
Who rule our world, and under them are zones
Nearer, but high, where saintliest spirits dead
Wait thrice ten thousand years, then live again;
And on Lord Buddha, waiting in that sky,
Came for our sakes the five sure signs of birth,
So that the Devas knew the signs, and said
“Buddha will go again to help the World.”
“Yea!” spake He, “now I go to help the World
This last of many times; for birth and death
End hence for me and those who learn my Law.
I will go down among the Śākyas,
Under the southward snows of Himālaya,
Where pious people live and a just King.”

That night the wife of King Śuddhodana,
Maya the Queen, asleep beside her Lord,
Dreamed a strange dream; dreamed that a star from Heaven—
Splendid, six-rayed, in color rosy-pearl,
Whereof the token was an Elephant
Six-tusked and whiter than Vāhuka’s milk—
Shot through the void and, shining into her,

Entered her womb upon the right. Awaked,
Bliss beyond mortal mother's filled her breast,
And over half the earth a lovely light
Forewent the morn. The strong hills shook; the waves
Sank lulled; all flowers that blow by day came forth
As 'twere high noon; down to the farthest hells
Passed the Queen's joy, as when warm sunshine thrills
Wood-glooms to gold, and into all the deeps
A tender whisper pierced. "Oh ye." it said,
"The dead that are to live, the live who die,
Uprise, and hear, and hope! Buddha is come!"
Whereat in Limbos numberless much peace
Spread, and the world's heart throbbed, and a wind blew
With unknown freshness over lands and seas.
And when the morning dawned, and this was told,
The grey dream-readers said "The dream is good!
The Crab is in conjunction with the Sun;
The Queen shall bear a boy, a holy child
Of wondrous wisdom, profiting all flesh,
Who shall deliver men from ignorance,
Or rule the world, if he will deign to rule."

In this wise was the holy Buddha born.

Queen Maya stood at noon, her days fulfilled,
Under a Palsa in the Palace-grounds,
A stately trunk, straight as a temple-shaft,
With a crown of glossy leaves and fragrant blooms;
And, knowing the time come—for all things knew—
The conscious tree bent down its boughs to make
A bower about Queen Maya's majesty,
And Earth put forth a thousand sudden flowers
To spread a couch, while, ready for the bath,
The rock hard by gave out a limpid stream
Of crystal flow. So brought she forth her child
Pangless—he having on his perfect form
The marks, thirty and two, of blessed birth;
Of which the great news to the Palace came.
But when they brought the painted palanquin
To fetch him home, the bearers of the poles
Were the four Regents of the Earth, came down

From Mount Sumeru—they who write men's deeds
On brazen plates—the Angel of the East,
Whose hosts are clad in silver robes, and bear
Targets of pearl: the Angel of the South,
Whose horsemen, the Kumbhāṇḍas, ride blue steeds,
With sapphire shields: the Angel of the West,
By Nāgas followed, riding steeds blood-red,
With coral shields: the Angel of the North,
Environed by his Yakṣas, all in gold,
On yellow horses, bearing shields of gold.
These, with their pomp invisible, came down
And took the poles, in caste and outward garb
Like bearers, yet most mighty gods; and gods
Walked free with men that day, though men knew not:
For Heaven was filled with gladness for Earth's sake,
Knowing Lord Buddha thus was come again.

But King Śuddhodana wist not of this;
The portents troubled, till his dream-readers
Augured a Prince of earthly dominance,
A Cakravartin, such as rise to rule
Once in each thousand years; seven gifts he has—
The Cakra-ratna, disc divine; the gem;
The horse, the Aśva-ratna, that proud steed
Which tramps the clouds; a snow-white elephant,
The Hasti-ratna, born to bear his king;
The crafty Minister, the General
Unconquered, and the wife of peerless grace,
The Iṣṭrī-ratna, lovelier than the Dawn.
For which gifts looking with this wondrous boy,
The King gave order that his town should keep
High festival; therefore the ways were swept,
Rose-odors sprinkled in the street, the trees
Were hung with lamps and flags, while merry crowds
Gaped on the sword-players and posturers,
The jugglers, charmers, swingers, rope-walkers,
The nautch-girls in their spangled skirts and bells
That chime light laughter round their restless feet;
The masquers wrapped in skins of bear and deer,
The tiger-tamers, wrestlers, quail-fighters,
Beaters of drums and twanglers of the wire,

Who made the people happy by command.
Moreover from afar came merchant-men,
Bringing, on tidings of this birth, rich gifts
In golden trays; goat-shawls, and nard and jade,
Turkises, "evening-sky" tint, woven webs—
So fine twelve folds hid not a modest face—
Waist-cloths sewn thick with pearls, and sandal-wood;
Homage from tribute cities; so they called
Their Prince Sāvarthasiddh, "All-Prospering,"
Briefer, Siddhārtha.

'Mongst the strangers came
A grey-haired saint, Asita, one whose ears,
Long closed to earthly things, caught heavenly sounds,
And heard a prayer beneath his peepul-tree
The Devas singing songs at Buddha's birth.
Wondrous in lore he was by age and fasts;
Him, drawing nigh, seeming so reverend,
The King saluted, and Queen Maya made
To lay her babe before such holy feet;
But when he saw the Prince the old man cried
"Ah, Queen, not so!" and thereupon he touched
Eight times the dust, laid his waste visage there,
Saying, "O Babe! I worship. Thou art He!
I see the rosy light, the foot-sole marks,
The soft curled tendril of the Svastika,
The sacred primal signs thirty and two,
The eighty lesser tokens. Thou art Buddh,
And thou wilt preach the Law and save all flesh
Who learn the Law, though I shall never hear,
Dying too soon, who lately longed to die;
Howbeit I have seen Thee. Know, O King!
This is that Blossom on our human tree
Which opens once in many myriad years—
But opened, fills the world with Wisdom's scent
And Love's dropped honey; from thy royal root
A Heavenly Lotus springs: "Ah, happy House!
Yet not all-happy, for a sword must pierce
Thy bowels for this boy—whilst thou, sweet Queen!
Dear to all gods and men for this great birth,
Henceforth art grown too sacred for more woe,
And life is woe, therefore in seven days

Painless thou shalt attain the close of pain.”

Which fell: for on the seventh evening
Queen Maya smiling slept, and waked no more,
Passing content to Trāyastriṁśa-Heaven,
Where countless Devas worship her and wait
Attendant on that radiant Motherhead.
But for the Babe they found a foster-nurse,
Princess Mahāprajāpati—her breast
Nourished with noble milk the lips of Him
Whose lips comfort the Worlds.

When th’ eighth year passed
The careful King bethought to teach his son
All that a Prince should learn, for still he shunned
The too vast presage of those miracles,
The glories and the sufferings of a Buddh.
So, in full council of his Ministers,
“Who is the wisest man, great sirs,” he asked,
“To teach my Prince that which a Prince should know?
Whereto gave answer each with instant voice
“King! Viśvāmitra is the wisest one,
The farthest-seen in Scriptures, and the best
In learning, and the manual arts, and all.”
Thus Viśvāmitra came and heard commands;
And, on a day found fortunate, the Prince
Took up his slate of ox-red sandal-wood,
All-beautified by gems around the rim,
And sprinkled smooth with dust of emery,
These took he, and his writing-stick, and stood
With eyes bent down before the Sage, who said,
“Child, write this Scripture,” speaking slow the verse
“Gāyatrī” named, which only High-born hear:—

*Om tat savitur vareṇyam
bhargo devasya dhīmahi
dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt.*

“Ācārya, I write,” meekly replied
The Prince, and quickly on the dust he drew—
Not in one script, but many characters—
The sacred verse; Nāgarī, Dakṣiṇā, Niṣāda (Ni),
Maṅgala, Pāruṣa, Yava, Tīrthī, Uk,

Darad, Sikhyāni, Māna, Madhyācāra,
The pictured writings and the speech of signs,
Tokens of cave-men and the sea-peoples,
Of those who worship snakes beneath the earth,
And those who flame adore and the sun's orb,
The Magians and the dwellers on the mounds;
Of all the nations all strange scripts he traced
One after other with his writing-stick,
Reading the master's verse in every tongue;
And Viśvāmitra said, "It is enough,
Let us to numbers.

After me repeat

Your numeration till we reach the Lakh,
One, two, three, four, to ten, and then by tens
To hundreds, thousands." After him the child
Named digits, decades, centuries; nor paused,
The round lakh reached, but softly murmured on
"Then comes the Koṭi, Nahuta, Ninna-nayuta,
Skambha, Viśkambha, abab, Attatā,
To Kumuda, Gandhikā, Utpala,
By Pundarīkas unto Padmas,
Which last is how you count the utmost grains
Of Hastagiri ground to finest dust;
But beyond that a numeration is,
The Kathā, used to count the stars at night;
The Koṭi-Kathā, for the ocean drops;
Aṅka, the calculus of circulars;
Sarva-nikṣepa, by the which you deal
With all the sands of Gaṅgā, till we come
To Antaḥ-Kalpas, where the unit is
The sands of ten crore Gaṅgās. If one seeks
More comprehensive scale, th' arithmetic mounts
By the Asaṃkhyeya, which is the tale
Of all the drops that in ten thousand years
Would fall on all the worlds by daily rain;
Thence unto Mahā-kalpas, by the which
The Gods compute their future and their past."

" 'Tis good," the Sage rejoined, "Most noble Prince,
If these thou know'st, needs it that I should teach
The mensuration of the lineal?"

Humbly the boy replied, “Ācārya?”
“Be pleased to hear me. Paramāṇus ten
A para-sūkṣma make; ten of those build
The trasareṇu, and seven trasareṇus
One mote’s-length floating in the beam, seven motes
The whisker-point of mouse, and ten of these
One likhyā; likhyās ten a yūka, ten
Yūkas a heart of barley, which is held
Seven times a wasp-waist; so unto the grain
Of mung and mustard and the barley-corn,
Whereof ten give the finger-joint, twelve joints
The span, wherfrom we reach the cubit, staff,
Bow-length, lance-length; while twenty lengths of lance
Mete what is named a ‘breath,’ which is to say
Such space as man may stride with lungs once filled,
Whereof a gow is forty, four times that
A yojana; and, Master! if it please,
I shall recite how many sun-motes lie
From end to end within a yojana.”
Thereat, with instant skill, the little Prince
Pronounced the total of the atoms true.
But Viśvāmitra heard it on his face
Prostrate before the boy; “For thou,” he cried,
“Art Teacher of thy teachers—thou, not I,
Art Guru. Oh, I worship thee, sweet Prince!
That comest to my school only to show
Thou knowest all without the books, and know’st
Fair reverence besides.”

Which reverence

Lord Buddha kept to all his schoolmasters,
Albeit beyond their learning taught; in speech
Right gentle, yet so wise; princely of mien,
Yet softly-mannered; modest, deferent,
And tender-hearted, though of fearless blood;
No bolder horseman in the youthful band
E’er rode in gay chase of the shy gazelles;
No keener driver of the chariot
In mimic contest scoured the Palace-courts;
Yet in mid-play the boy would oftentimes pause,
Letting the deer pass free; would oftentimes yield
His half-won race because the laboring steeds

Fetched painful breath; or if his princely mates
Saddened to lose, or if some wistful dream
Swept o'er his thoughts. And ever with the years
Waxed his compassionateness of our Lord,
Even as a great tree grows from two soft leaves
To spread its shade afar; but hardly yet
Knew the young child of sorrow, pain, or tears,
Save as strange names for things not felt by kings,
Nor even to be felt. But it befell
In the Royal garden on a day of spring,
A flock of wild swans passed, voyaging north
To their nest-places on Himālaya's breast.
Calling in love-notes down their snowy line
The bright birds flew, by fond love piloted;
And Devadatta, cousin of the Prince,
Pointed his bow, and loosed a wilful shaft
Which found the wide wing of the foremost swan
Broad-spread to glide upon the free blue road,
So that it fell, the bitter arrow fixed,
Bright scarlet blood-gouts staining the pure plumes.
Which seeing, Prince Siddhārtha took the bird
Tenderly up, rested it in his lap—
Sitting with knees crossed, as Lord Buddha sits—
And, soothing with a touch the wild thing's fright,
Composed its ruffled vans, calmed its quick heart,
Caressed it into peace with light kind palms
As soft as plaintain-leaves an hour unrolled
And while the left hand held, the right hand drew
The cruel steel forth from the wound and laid
Cool leaves and healing honey on the smart.
Yet all so little knew the boy of pain
That curiously into his wrist he pressed
The arrow's barb, and winced to feel it sting,
And turned with tears to soothe his bird again.

Then some one came who said, "My Prince hath shot
A swan, which fell among the roses here,
He bids me pray you send it. Will you send?"
"Nay," quoth Siddhārtha, "if the bird were dead
To send it to the slayer might be well,
But the swan lives; my cousin hath but killed
The god-like speed which throbbed in this white wing."

And Devadatta answered, “The wild thing,
Living or dead, is his who fetched it down;
’Twas no man’s in the clouds, but fall’n ’tis mine,
Give me my prize, fair Cousin.” Then our Lord
Laid the swan’s neck beside his own smooth cheek
And gravely spake, “Say no! the bird is mine,
The first of myriad things which shall be mine
By right of mercy and love’s lordliness.
For now I know, by what within me stirs,
That I shall teach compassion unto men
And be a speechless world’s interpreter,
Abating this accursed flood of woe,
Not man’s alone; but, if the Prince disputes,
Let him submit this matter to the wise
And we will wait their word.” So was it done;
In full divan the business had debate,
And many thought this thing, and many that,
Till there arose an unknown priest who said,
“If life be aught, the saviour of a life
Owns more the living thing than he can own
Who sought to slay—the slayer spoils and wastes,
The cherisher sustains, give him the bird:”
Which judgment all found just; but when the King
Sought out the sage for honor, he was gone;
And some one saw a hooded snake glide forth,—
The gods come oftentimes thus! So our Lord Buddha
Began his works of mercy.

Yet not more

Knew he as yet of grief than that one bird’s,
Which, being healed, went joyous to its kind.
But on another day the King said, “Come,
Sweet son! and see the pleasance of the spring,
And how the fruitful earth is wooed to yield
Its riches to the reaper; how my realm—
Which shall be thine when the pile flames for me—
Feeds all its mouths and keeps the King’s chest filled.
Fair is the season with new leaves, bright blooms,
Green grass, and cries of plough-time.” So they rode
Into a land of wells and gardens, where,
All up and down the rich red loam, the steers
Strained their strong shoulders in the creaking yoke

Dragging the ploughs; the fat soil rose and rolled
In smooth dark waves back from the plough; who drove
Planted both feet upon the leaping share
To make the furrow deep; among the palms
The tinkle of the rippling water rang,
And where it ran the glad earth 'broidered it
With balsams and the spears of lemon-grass.
Elsewhere were sowers who went forth to sow;
And all the jungle laughed with nesting-songs,
And all the thickets rustled with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle, and creeping things
Pleased at the spring-time. In the mango-sprays
The sun-birds flashed; alone at his green forge
Toiled the loud coppersmith; bee-eaters hawked
Chasing the purple butterflies; beneath,
Striped squirrels raced, the mynas perked and picked,
The nine brown sisters chattered in the thorn,
The pied fish-tiger hung above the pool,
The egrets stalked among the buffaloes,
The kites sailed circles in the golden air;
About the painted temple peacocks flew,
The blue doves cooed from every well, far off
The village drums beat for some marriage-feast;
All things spoke peace and plenty, and the Prince
Saw and rejoiced. But, looking deep, he saw
The thorns which grow upon this rose of life:
How the swart peasant sweated for his wage,
Toiling for leave to live; and how he urged
The great-eyed oxen through the flaming hours,
Goaded their velvet flanks: that marked he, too,
How lizard fed on ant, and snake on him,
And kite on both; and how the fish-hawk robbed
The fish-tiger of that which it had seized;
The shrike chasing the bulbul, which did chase
The jeweled butterflies; till everywhere
Each slew a slayer and in turn was slain,
Life living upon death. So the fair show
Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
Of mutual murder, from the worm to man,
Who himself kills his fellow; seeing which—
The hungry ploughman and his laboring kine,

Their dewlaps blistered with the bitter yoke,
The rage to live which makes all living strife—
The Prince Siddhārtha sighed. “Is this,” he said,
“That happy earth they brought me forth to see?
How salt with sweat the peasant’s bread! how hard
The oxen’s service! in the brake how fierce
The war of weak and strong! i’ th’ air what plots!
No refuge e’en in water. Go aside
A space, and let me muse on what ye show.”
So saying, the good Lord Buddha seated him
Under a jambu-tree, with ankles crossed—
As holy statues sit—and first began
To meditate this deep disease of life,
What its far source and whence its remedy.
So vast a pity filled him, such wide love
For living things, such passion to heal pain,
That by their stress his princely spirit passed
To ecstasy, and, purged from mortal taint
Of sense and self, the boy attained thereat
Dhyāna, first step of “the path.”

There flew

High overhead that hour five holy ones,
Whose free wings faltered as they passed the tree.
“What power superior draws us from our flight?”
They asked, for spirits feel all force divine,
And know the sacred presence of the pure.
Then, looking downward, they beheld the Buddha
Crowned with a rose-hued aureole, intent
On thoughts to save; while from the grove a voice
Cried, “Rṣis {Rishis}! this is He shall help the world,
Descend and worship.” So the Bright Ones came
And sang a song of praise, folding their wings,
Then journeyed on taking good news to Gods.

But certain from the King seeking the Prince
Found him still musing, though the noon was past,
And the sun hastened to the western hills:
Yet, while all shadows moved, the jambu-tree’s
Stayed in one quarter, overspreading him,
Lest the sloped rays should strike that sacred head;
And he who saw this sight heard a voice say,

Amid the blossoms of the rose-apple,
“Let be the King’s sun! till the shadow goes
Forth from his heart my shadow will not shift.”

NOTE

1. Nāgarī, Dakṣiṇā, Niṣāda (Ni), Maṅgala, Pāruṣa, Yavana (Yava), Tīrthika (Tīrthī), Utkala (Uk), Darada, Saikya (Sikhyāni), Māna, Madhyācāra,
2. Koṭi, Nayuta (Nahuta), Ninna-nayuta, Skambha, Viśkambha, abab, attata, Kumuda, Gandhikā, Utpala, Puṇḍarīka, Padma.

BOOK THE SECOND.

Now, when our Lord was come to eighteen years,
The King commanded that there should be built
Three stately houses, one of hewn square beams
With cedar lining, warm for winter days;
One of veined marbles, cool for summer heat;
And one of burned bricks, with blue tiles bedecked,
Pleasant at seed-time, when the champaks bud—
Subha, Surāmā, Ramma, were their names.
Delicious gardens round about them bloomed,
Streams wandered wild and musky thickets stretched,
With many a bright pavilion and fair lawn
In midst of which Siddhārtha strayed at will,
Some new delight provided every hour;
And happy hours he knew, for life was rich,
With youthful blood at quickest; yet still came
The shadows of his meditation back,
As the lake's silver dulls with driving clouds.

Which the King marking, called his Ministers:
“Bethink ye, sirs! how the old Ṛṣi spake,”
He said, “and what my dream-readers foretold.
This boy, more dear to me than mine heart's blood,
Shall be of universal dominance,
Trampling the neck of all his enemies,
A King of kings—and this is in my heart;—
Or he shall tread the sad and lowly path
Of self-denial and of pious pains,
Gaining who knows what good, when all is lost
Worth keeping; and to this his wistful eyes
Do still incline amid my palaces.
But ye are sage, and ye will counsel me;
How may his feet be turned to that proud road
Where they should walk, and all fair signs come true
Which gave him Earth to rule, if he would rule?”

The eldest answered, “Mahārāja! love
Will cure these thin distempers; weave the spell
Of woman's wiles about his idle heart.

What knows this noble boy of beauty yet,
Eyes that make heaven forget, and lips of balm?
Find him soft wives and pretty playfellows;
The thoughts ye cannot stay with brazen chains
A girl's hair lightly binds."

And all thought good,
But the King answered, "If we seek him wives,
Love choosest oftentimes with another eye;
And if we bid range Beauty's garden round,
To pluck what blossom pleases, he will smile
And sweetly shun the joy he knows not of."
Then said another, "Roams the barasingh
Until the fated arrow flies; for him,
As for less lordly spirits, some one charms,
Some face will seem a Paradise, some form
Fairer than pale Dawn when she wakes the world.
This do, my King! Command a festival
Where the realm's maidens shall be competitors
In youth and grace, and sports that Śākyas use.
Let the Prince give the prizes to the fair,
And, when the lovely victors pass his seat,
There shall be those who mark if one or two
Change the fixed sadness of his tender cheek;
So we may choose for Love with Love's own eyes,
And cheat his Highness into happiness."
This thing seemed good; wherefore upon a day
The criers bade the young and beautiful
Pass to the palace, for 'twas in command
To hold a court of pleasure, and the Prince
Would give the prizes, something rich for all,
The richest for the fairest judged. So flocked
Kapilavastu's maidens to the gate,
Each with her dark hair newly smoothed and bound,
Eyelashes lusted with the soorma-stick,
Fresh-bathed and scented; all in shawls and cloths
Of gayest; slender hands and feet new-stained
With crimson, and the tilaka-spots stamped bright.
Fair show it was of all those Indian girls
Slow-pacing past the throne with large black eyes
Fixed on the ground, for when they saw the Prince
More than the awe of Majesty made beat

Their fluttering hearts, he sate so passionless,
Gentle, but so beyond them. Each maid took
With down-dropped lids her gift, afraid to gaze;
And if the people hailed some lovelier one
Beyond her rivals worthy royal smiles,
She stood like a scared antelope to touch
The gracious hand, then fled to join her mates
Trembling at favor, so divine he seemed,
So high and saint-like and above her world.
Thus filed they, one bright maid after another,
The city's flowers, and all this beauteous march
Was ending and the prizes spent, when last
Came young Yaśodharā, and they that stood
Nearest Siddhārtha saw the princely boy
Start, as the radiant girl approached. A form
Of heavenly mould; a gait like Pārvatī's;
Eyes like a hind's in love-time, face so fair
Words cannot paint its spell; and she alone
Gazed full—folding her palms across her breasts—
On the boy's gaze, her stately neck unbent.
“Is there a gift for me?” she asked, and smiled.
“The gifts are gone,” the Prince replied, “yet take
This for amends, dear sister, of whose grace
Our happy city boasts;” therewith he loosed
The emerald necklace from his throat, and clasped
Its green beads round her dark and silk-soft waist;
And their eyes mixed, and from the look sprang love.

Long after—when enlightenment was full—
Lord Buddha—being prayed why thus his heart
Took fire at first glance of the Sākyā girl,
Answered, “We were not strangers, as to us
And all it seemed; in ages long gone by
A hunter's son, playing with forest girls
By Yamunā's springs, where Nandādevī stands,
Sate umpire while they raced beneath the firs
Like hares at eve that run their playful rings;
One with flower-stars crowned he, one with long plumes
Plucked from eyed pheasant and the jungle-cock,
One with fir-apples; but who ran the last
Came first for him, and unto her the boy

Gave a tame fawn and his heart's love beside.
And in the wood they lived many glad years,
And in the wood they undivided died.
Lo! as hid seed shoots after rainless years,
So good and evil, pains and pleasures, hates
And loves, and all dead deeds, come forth again
Bearing bright leaves or dark, sweet fruit or sour.
Thus I was he and she Yaśodharā;
And while the wheel of birth and death turns round,
That which hath been must be between us two."

But they who watched the Prince at prize-giving
Saw and heard all, and told the careful King
How sate Siddhārtha heedless, till there passed
Great Suprabuddha's child, Yaśodharā:
And how—at sudden sight of her—he changed,
And how she gazed on him and he on her,
And of the jewel-gift, and what beside
Passed in their speaking glance.

The fond King smiled:
"Look! we have found a lure, take counsel now
To fetch therewith our falcon from the clouds.
Let messengers be sent to ask the maid
In marriage for my son." But it was law
With Śākyas, when any asked a maid
Of noble house, fair and desirable,
He must make good his skill in martial arts
Against all suitors who should challenge it;
Nor might this custom break itself for kings.
Therefore her father spake: "Say to the King,
The child is sought by princes far and near;
If thy most gentle son can bend the bow,
Sway sword, and back a horse better than they,
Best would he be in all and best to us:
But how shall this be, with his cloistered ways?"
Then the King's heart was sore, for now the Prince
Begged sweet Yaśodharā for wife—in vain,
With Devadatta foremost at the bow,
Arjuna master of all fiery steeds,
And Nanda chief in sword-play; but the Prince
Laughed low and said, "These things, too, I have learned;

Make proclamation that thy son will meet
All comers at their chosen games. I think
I shall not lose my love for such as these.”
So 'twas given forth that on the seventh day
The Prince Siddhārtha summoned whoso would
To match with him in feats of manliness,
The victor's crown to be Yaśodharā.

Therefore, upon the seventh day, there went
The Śākyā lords and town and country round
Unto the maidān; and the maid went too
Amid her kinsfolk, carried as a bride,
With music, and with litters gayly dight,
And gold-horned oxen, flower-caparisoned.
Whom Devadatta claimed, of royal line,
And Nanda and Arjuna, noble both,
The flower of all youth there, till the Prince came
Riding his white horse Kanṭaka, which neighed,
Astonished at this great strange world without:
Also Siddhārtha gazed with wondering eyes
On all those people born beneath the throne,
Otherwise housed than kings, otherwise fed,
And yet so like—perchance—in joys and griefs.
But when the Prince saw sweet Yaśodharā,
Brightly he smiled, and drew his silken rein,
Leaped to the earth from Kanṭaka's broad back,
And cried, “He is not worthy of this pearl
Who is not worthiest; let my rivals prove
If I have dared too much in seeking her.”
Then Nanda challenged for the arrow-test
And set a brazen drum six gows away,
Arjuna six and Devadatta eight;
But Prince Siddhārtha bade them set his drum
Ten gows from off the line, until it seemed
A cowry-shell for target. Then they loosed,
And Nanda pierced his drum, Arjuna his,
And Devadatta grove a well-aimed shaft
Through both sides of his mark, so that the crowd
Marvelled and cried; and sweet Yaśodharā
Dropped the gold sari o'er her fearful eyes,
Lest she should see her Prince's arrow fail.

But he, taking their bow of lacquered cane,
With sinews bound, and strung with silver-wire
Which none but stalwart arms could draw a span,
Thrummed it—low laughing—drew the twisted string
Till the horns kissed, and the thick belly snapped:
“That is for play, not love,” he said; “hath none
A bow more fit for Śākyā lords to use?”
And one said, “There is Simhahanu’s bow,
Kept in the temple since we know not when,
Which none can string, nor draw if it be strung.”
“Fetch me,” he cried, “that weapon of a man!”
They brought the ancient bow, wrought of black steel,
Laid with gold tendrils on its branching curves
Like bison-horns; and twice Siddhārtha tried
Its strength across his knee, then spake—“Shoot now
With this, my cousins!” but they could not bring
The stubborn arms a hand’s-breadth nigher use;
Then the Prince, lightly leaning, bent the bow,
Slipped home the eye upon the notch, and twanged
Sharply the cord, which, like an eagle’s wing
Thrilling the air, sang forth so clear and loud
That feeble folk at home that day inquired
“What is this sound?” and people answered them,
“It is the sound of Simhahanu’s bow,
Which the King’s son has strung and goes to shoot;”
Then fitting fair a shaft, he drew and loosed,
And the keen arrow clove the sky, and drove
Right through the farthest drum, not stayed its flight,
But skimmed the plain beyond, past reach of eye.

Then Devadatta challenged with the sword,
And clove a Tālas-tree six fingers thick;
Arjuna seven; and Nanda cut through nine;
But two such stems together grew, and both
Siddhārtha’s blade shred at one flashing stroke,
Keen, but so smooth that the straight trunks upstood,
And Nanda cried, “His edge turned!” and the maid
Trembled anew seeing the trees erect,
Until the Devas of the air, who watched,
Blew light breaths from the south, and both green crowns
Crashed in the sand, clean-felled.

Then brought they steeds,
High-mettled, nobly-bred, and three times scoured
Around the maidān, but white Kaṇṭaka
Left even the fleetest far behind—so swift,
That ere the foam fell from his mouth to earth
Twenty spear-lengths he flew; but Nanda said,
“We too might win with such as Kaṇṭaka;
Bring an unbroken horse, and let men see
Who best can back him.” So the syces brought
A stallion dark as night, led by three chains,
Fierce-eyed, with nostrils wide and tossing mane,
Unshod, unsaddled, for no rider yet
Had crossed him. Three times each young Śākyā
Sprung to his mighty back, but the hot steed
Furiously reared, and flung them to the plain
In dust and shame; only Arjuna held
His seat awhile, and, bidding loose the chains,
Lashed the black flank, and shook the bit, and held
The proud jaws fast with grasp of master-hand,
So that in storms of wrath and rage and fear
The savage stallion circled once the plain,
Half-tamed; but sudden turned with naked teeth,
Gripped by the foot Arjuna, tore him down,
And would have slain him, but the grooms ran in
Fettering the maddened beast. Then all men cried,
“Let not Siddhārtha meddle with this Bhūta,
Whose liver is a tempest, and his blood
Red flame;” but the Prince said, “Let go the chains,
Give me his forelock only,” which he held
With quiet grasp, and, speaking some low word,
Laid his right palm across the stallion’s eyes,
And drew it gently down the angry face,
And all along the neck and panting flanks,
Till men astonished saw the night-black horse
Sink his fierce crest and stand subdued and meek,
As though he knew our Lord and worshipped him.
Nor stirred he while Siddhārtha mounted, then
Went soberly to touch of knee and rein
Before all eyes, so that the people said,
“Strive no more, for Siddhārtha is the best.”

And all the suitors answered “He is best!”
And Suprabuddha, father of the maid,
Said, “It was in our hearts to find thee best,
Being dearest, yet what magic taught thee more
Of manhood ’mid thy rose-bowers and thy dreams
Than war and chase and world’s work bring to these?
But wear, fair Prince, the treasure thou hast won.”
Then at a word the lovely Indian girl
Rose from her place above the throng, and took
A crown of mogra-flowers and lightly drew
The veil of black and gold across her brow,
Proud pacing past the youths, until she came
To where Siddhārtha stood in grace divine,
New lighted from the night-dark steed, which bent
Its strong neck meekly underneath his arm.
Before the Prince lowly she bowed, and bared
Her face celestial beaming with glad love;
Then on his neck she hung the fragrant wreath,
And on his breast she laid her perfect head,
And stooped to touch his feet with proud glad eyes,
Saying, “Dear Prince, behold me, who am thine!”
And all the throng rejoiced, seeing them pass,
Hand fast in hand, and heart beating with heart,
The veil of black and gold drawn close again.

Long after—when enlightenment was come—
They prayed Lord Buddha touching all, and why
She wore this black and gold, and stepped so proud.
And the World-honored answered, “Unto me
This was unknown, albeit it seemed half-known;
For while the wheel of birth and death turns round,
Past things and thoughts, and buried lives come back.
I now remember, myriad rains ago,
What time I roamed Himālaya’s hanging woods,
A tiger, with my striped and hungry kind;
I, who am Buddh, couched in the kusa grass
Gazing with green blinked eyes upon the herds
Which pastured near and nearer to their death
Round my day-lair; or underneath the stars
I roamed for prey, savage, insatiable,
Sniffing the paths for track of man and deer.

Amid the beasts that were my fellows then,
Met in deep jungle or by reedy jheel,
A tigress, comeliest of the forest, set
The males at war; her hide was lit with gold,
Black-broidered like the veil Yaśodharā
Wore for me; hot the strife waxed in that wood
With tooth and claw, while underneath a neem
The fair beast watched us bleed, thus fiercely wooed.
And I remember, at the end she came
Snarling past this and that torn forest-lord
Which I had conquered, and with fawning jaws
Licked my quick-heaving flank, and with me went
Into the wild with proud steps, amorously.
The wheel of birth and death turns low and high.”

Therefore the maid was given unto the Prince
A willing spoil; and when the stars were good—
Meṣa, the Red Ram, being Lord of heaven—
The marriage-feast was kept, as Śākyas use,
The golden gāḍi set, the carpet spread,
The wedding garlands hung, the arm-threads tied,
The sweet-cake broke, the rice and attar thrown,
The two straws floated on the reddened milk,
Which, coming close, betokened “love till death;”
The seven steps taken thrice around the fire,
The gifts bestowed on holy men, the alms
And temple offerings made, the mantras sung,
The garments of the bride and bridegroom tied.
Then the grey father spake: “Worshipful Prince,
She that was ours henceforth is only thine;
Be good to her, who hath her life in thee.”
Wherewith they brought home sweet Yaśodharā,
With songs and trumpets, to the Prince’s arms,
And love was all in all.

Yet not to love

Alone trusted the King; love’s prison-house
Stately and beautiful he bade them build,
So that in all the earth no marvel was
Like Viśrāmavan, the Prince’s pleasure-place.
Midway in those wide palace-grounds there rose
A verdant hill whose base Rohinī bathed,

Murmuring adown from Himālayay's broad feet,
To bear its tribute into Gaṅgā's waves.
Southward a growth of tamarind trees and sal,
Thick set with pale sky-colored ganthi flowers,
Shut out the world, save if the city's hum
Came on the wind no harsher than when bees
Hum out of sight in thickets. Northwards soared
The stainless ramps of huge Himālaya's wall,
Ranged in white ranks against the blue—untrod,
Infinite, wonderful—whose uplands vast,
And lifted universe of crest and crag,
Shoulder and shelf, green slope and icy horn,
Riven ravine, and splintered precipice
Led climbing thought higher and higher, until
It seemed to stand in heaven and speak with gods.
Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp laced
With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
Lower grew rose-oaks and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles: under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars. Fronting this
The builders set the bright pavilion up,
Fair-planted on the terraced hill, with towers
On either flank and pillared cloisters round.
Its beams were carved with stories of old time—
Rādhā and Krṣṇa and the sylvan girls—
Sītā and Hanumān and Draupadī;
And on the middle porch God Ganeśa,
With disc and hook—to bring wisdom and wealth—
Propitious sate, wreathing his sidelong trunk.
By winding ways of garden and of court
The inner gate was reached, of marble wrought,
White with pink veins; the lintel lazuli,
The threshold alabaster, and the doors
Sandal-wood, cut in pictured panelling;
Whereby to lofty halls and shadowy bowers
Passed the delighted foot, on stately stairs,
Through latticed galleries, 'neath painted roofs
And clustering columns, where cool fountains—fringed

With lotus and nelumbo—danced, and fish
Gleamed through their crystal, scarlet, gold, and blue.
Great-eyed gazelles in sunny alcoves browsed
The blown red roses; birds of rainbow wing
Fluttered among the palms; doves, green and grey,
Built their safe nests on gilded cornices;
Over the shining pavements peacocks drew
The splendors of their trains, sedately watched
By milk-white herons and the small house-owls.
The plum-necked parrots swung from fruit to fruit;
The yellow sunbirds whirred from bloom to bloom,
The timid lizards on the lattice basked
Fearless, the squirrels ran to feed from hand,
For all was peace: the shy black snake, that gives
Fortune to households, sunned his sleepy coils
Under the moon-flowers, where the musk-deer played,
And brown-eyed monkeys chattered to the crows.
And all this house of love was peopled fair
With sweet attendance, so that in each part
With lovely sights were gentle faces found,
Soft speech and willing service, each one glad
To gladden, pleased at pleasure, proud to obey;
Till life glided beguiled, like a smooth stream
Banked by perpetual flow'rs, Yaśodharā
Queen of the enchanting Court.

But innermost,
Beyond the richness of those hundred halls,
A secret chamber lurked, where skill had spent
All lovely fantasies to lull the mind.
The entrance of it was a cloistered square—
Roofed to the sky, and in the midst a tank—
Of milky marble built, and laid with slabs
Of milk-white marble; bordered round the tank
And on the steps, and all along the frieze
With tender inlaid work of agate-stones.
Cool as to tread in summer-time on snows
It was to loiter there; the sunbeams dropped
Their gold, and, passing into porch and niche,
Softened to shadows, silvery, pale, and dim,
As if the very Day paused and grew Eve
In love and silence at that bower's gate;

For there beyond the gate the chamber was,
Beautiful, sweet; a wonder of the world!
Soft light from perfumed lamps through windows fell
Of nakre and stained stars of lucent film
On golden cloths outspread, and silken beds,
And heavy splendor of the purdah's fringe,
Lifted to take only the loveliest in.
Here, whether it was night or day, none knew,
For always streamed that softened light, more bright
Than sunrise, but as tender as the eve's;
And always breathed sweet airs, more joy-giving
Than morning's, but as cool as midnight's breath;
And night and day lutes sighed, and night and day
Delicious foods were spread, and dewy fruits,
Sherbets new chilled with snows of Himālayay,
And sweetmeats made of subtle daintiness,
With sweet tree-milk in its own ivory cup.
And night and day served there a chosen band
Of nautch girls, cup-bearers, and cymballers,
Delicate, dark-browed ministers of love,
Who fanned the sleeping eyes of the happy Prince,
And when he waked, led back his thoughts to bliss
With music whispering through the blooms, and charm
Of amorous songs and dreamy dances, linked
By chime of ankle-bells and wave of arms
And silver vīṇā-strings; while essences
Of musk and champak and the blue haze spread
From burning spices soothed his soul again
To drowse by sweet Yaśodharā; and thus
Siddhārtha lived forgetting.

Furthermore,

The King commanded that within those walls
No mention should be made of death or age,
Sorrow, or pain, or sickness. If one drooped
In the lovely Court—her dark glance dim, her feet
Faint in the dance—the guiltless criminal
Passed forth an exile from that Paradise,
Lest he should see and suffer at her woe.
Bright-eyed intendants watched to execute
Sentence on such as spake of the harsh world
Without, where aches and plagues were, tears and fears,

And wail of mourners, and grim fume of pyres.
'Twas treason if a thread of silver strayed
In tress of singing-girl or nautch-dancer;
And every dawn the dying rose was plucked,
The dead leaves hid, all evil sights removed:
For said the King, "If he shall pass his youth
Far from such things as move to wistfulness,
And brooding on the empty eggs of thought,
The shadow of this fate, too vast for man,
May fade, belike, and I shall see him grow
To that great stature of fair sovereignty
When he shall rule all lands—if he will rule—
The King of kings and glory of his time."

Wherefore, around that pleasant prison-house—
Where love was gaoler and delights its bars,
But far removed from sight—the King bade build
A massive wall, and in the wall a gate
With brazen folding-doors, which but to roll
Back on their hinges asked a hundred arms;
Also the noise of that prodigious gate
Opening, was heard full half a yojana.
And inside this another gate he made,
And yet within another—through the three
Must one pass if he quit that Pleasure-house.
Three mighty gates there were, bolted and barred,
And over each was set a faithful watch;
And the King's order said, "Suffer no man
To pass the gates, though he should be the prince:
This on your lives—even though it be my son."

BOOK THE THIRD.

IN which calm home of happy life and love
Ligged our Lord Buddha, knowing not of woe,
Nor want, nor pain, nor plague, nor age, nor death,
Save as when sleepers roam dim seas in dreams,
And land a wearied on the shores of day,
Bringing strange merchandise from that black voyage.
Thus oftentimes when he lay with gentle head
Lulled on the dark breasts of Yaśodharā,
Her fond hands fanning slow his sleeping lids,
He would start up and cry, “My world! Oh, world!
I hear! I know! I come!” And she would ask,
“What ails my Lord?” with large eyes terror-struck;
For at such times the pity in his look
Was awful, and his visage like a god’s.
Then would he smile again to stay her tears,
And bid the vīṇās sound; but once they set
A stringed gourd on the sill, there where the wind
Could linger o’er its notes and play at will—
Wild music makes the wind on silver strings—
And those who lay around heard only that;
But Prince Siddhārtha heard the Devas play,
And to his ears they sang such words as these:—

*We are the voices of the wandering wind,
Which moan for rest and rest can never find;
Lo! as the wind is so is mortal life,
A moon, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife.*

*Wherefore and whence we are ye cannot know,
Nor where life springs nor whither life doth go;
We are as ye are, ghosts from the inane,
What pleasure have we of our changeful pain?*

*What pleasure hast thou of thy changeless bliss?
Nay, if love lasted, there were joy in this;
But life’s way is the wind’s way, all these things
Are but brief voices breathed on shifting strings.*

*O Maya's son! because we roam the earth
Moan we upon these strings; we make no mirth,
So many woes we see in many lands,
So many streaming eyes and wringing hands.*

*Yet mock we while we wail, for, could they know,
This life they cling to is but empty show;
'Twere all as well to bid a cloud to stand,
Or hold a running river with the hand.*

*But thou that art to save, thine hour is nigh!
The sad world waiteth in its misery,
The blind world stumbleth on its round of pain;
Rise, Maya's child! wake! slumber not again!*

*We are the voices of the wandering wind:
Wander thou, too, O Prince, thy rest to find;
Leave love for love of lovers, for woe's sake
Quit state for sorrow, and deliverance make.*

*So sigh we, passing o'er the silver strings,
To thee who know'st not yet of earthly things;
So say we; mocking, as we pass away,
These lovely shadows wherewith thou dost play.*

Thereafter it befell he sate at eve
Amid his beauteous Court, holding the hand
Of sweet Yaśodharā, and some maid told—
With breaks of music when her rich voice dropped—
An ancient tale to speed the hour of dusk,
Of love, and of a magic horse, and lands
Wonderful, distant, where pale peoples dwelled,
And where the sun at night sank into seas.
Then spake he, sighing, “Citra brings me back
The wind's song in the strings with that fair tale.
Give her, Yaśodharā, thy pearl for thanks.
But thou, my pearl! is there so wide a world?
Is there a land which sees the great sun roll
Into the waves, and are there hearts like ours,
Countless, unknown, not happy—it may be—
Whom we might succor if we knew of them?

Ofttimes I marvel, as the Lord of day
Treads from the east his kingly road of gold,
Who first on the world's edge hath hailed his beam,
The children of the morning; oftentimes,
Even in thine arms and on thy breasts, bright wife,
Sore have I panted, at the sun's decline,
To pass with him into that crimson west
And see the peoples of the evening.
There must be many we should love—how else?
Now have I in this hour an ache, at last,
Thy soft lips cannot kiss away: oh, girl!
O Citra! you that know of fairyland!
Where tether they that swift steed of the tale?
My palace for one day upon his back,
To ride and ride and see the spread of the earth!
Nay, if I had yon callow vulture's plumes—
The carrion heir of wider realms than mine—
How would I stretch for topmost Himālayay,
Light where the rose-gleam lingers on those snows,
And strain my gaze with searching what is round!
Why have I never seen and never sought?
Tell me what lies beyond our brazen gates.”

Then one replied, “The city first, fair Prince!
The temples, and the gardens, and the groves,
And then the fields, and afterwards fresh fields,
With nullahs, maidans, jungle, koss on koss;
And next King Bimbisāra's realm, and then
The vast flat world, with crores on crores of folk.”
“Good,” said Siddhārtha, “let the word be sent
That Channa yoke my chariot—at noon
To-morrow I shall ride and see beyond.”

Whereof they told the king: “Our Lord, thy son,
Wills that his chariot be yoked at noon,
That he may ride abroad and see mankind.”

“Yea!” spake the careful King, “ 'tis time he see!
But let the criers go about and bid
My city deck itself, so there be met
No noisome sight; and let none blind or maimed,

None that is sick or stricken deep in years,
No leper, and no feeble folk come forth.”
Therefore the stones were swept, and up and down
The water-carriers sprinkled all the streets
From spiring skins, the housewives scattered fresh
Red powder on their thresholds, strung new wreaths,
And trimmed the tulasi-bush before their doors.
The paintings on the walls were heightened up
With liberal brush, the trees set thick with flags,
The idols gilded; in the four-went ways
Sūrya-deva and the great gods shone
'Mid shrines of leaves; so that the city seemed
A capital of some enchanted land.
Also the criers passed, with drum and gong,
Proclaiming loudly, “Ho! all citizens,
The King commands that there be seen to-day
No evil sight: let no one blind or maimed,
None that is sick or stricken deep in years,
No leper, and no feeble folk go forth.
Let none, too, burn his dead nor bring them out
Till nightfall. Thus Śuddhodana commands.”

So all was comely and the houses trim
Throughout Kapilavastu, while the Prince
Came forth in painted car, which two steers drew,
Snow-white, with swinging dewlaps and huge humps
Wrinkled against the carved and lacquered yoke.
Goodly it was to mark the people's joy
Greeting their Prince; and glad Siddhārtha waxed
At sight of all those liege and friendly folk
Bright-clad and laughing as if life were good.
“Fair is the world,” he said, “it likes me well!
And light and kind these men that are not kings,
And sweet my sisters here, who toil and tend;
What have I done for these to make them thus?
Why, if I love them, should those children know?
I pray take up yon pretty Śākyā boy
Who flung us flowers, and let him ride with me.
How good it is to reign in realms like this!
How simple pleasure is, if these be pleased
Because I come abroad! How many things

I need not if such little households hold
Enough to make our city full of smiles!
Drive, Channa! through the gates, and let me see
More of this gracious world I have not known."

So passed they through the gates, a joyous crowd
Thronging about the wheels, whereof some ran
Before the oxen, throwing wreaths, some stroked
Their silken flanks, some brought them rice and cakes,
All crying, "Jai! Jai! for our noble Prince!"
Thus all the path was kept with gladsome looks
And filled with fair sights—for the King's word was
That such should be—when midway in the road,
Slow tottering from the hovel where he hid,
Crept forth a wretch in rags, haggard and foul,
An old, old man, whose shrivelled skin, sun-tanned,
Clung like a beast's hide to his fleshless bones.
Bent was his back with load of many days,
His eyepits red with rust of ancient tears,
His dim orbs blear with rheum, his toothless jaws
Wagging with palsy and the fright to see
So many and such joy. One skinny hand
Clutched a worn staff to prop his quavering limbs,
And one was pressed upon the ridge of ribs
Whence came in gasps the heavy painful breath.
"Alms!" moaned he, "give, good people! for I die
To-morrow or the next day!" then the cough
Choked him, but still he stretched his palm, and stood
Blinking, and groaning 'mid his spasms, "Alms!"
Then those around had wrenched his feeble feet
Aside, and thrust him from the road again,
Saying, "The Prince! dost see? get to thy lair!"
But that Siddhārtha cried, "Let be! let be!
Channa! what thing is this who seems a man,
Yet surely only seems, being so bowed,
So miserable, so horrible, so sad?
Are men born sometimes thus? What meaneth he
Moaning 'to-morrow or next day I die?'
Finds he no food that so his bones jut forth?
What woe hath happened to this piteous one?"
Then answer made the charioteer, "Sweet Prince!

This is no other than an aged man.
Some fourscore years ago his back was straight,
His eye bright, and his body goodly: now
The thievish years have sucked his sap away,
Pillaged his strength and filched his will and wit;
His lamp has lost its oil, the wick burns black;
What life he keeps is one poor lingering spark
Which flickers for the finish: such is age;
Why should your Highness heed?" Then spake the Prince—
"But shall this come to others, or to all,
Or is it rare that one should be as he?"
"Most noble," answered Channa, "even as he,
Will all these grow if they shall live so long."
"But," quoth the Prince, "if I shall live as long
Shall I be thus; and if Yaśodharā
Live fourscore years, is this old age for her,
Jālinī, little Hasta, Gautamī,
And Gaṅgā, and the others?" "Yea, great Sir!"
The Charioteer replied. Then spake the Prince:
"Turn back, and drive me to my house again!
I have seen that I did not think to see."

Which pondering, to his beauteous Court returned
Wistful Siddhārtha, sad of mien and mood;
Nor tasted he the white cakes nor the fruits
Spread for the evening feast, nor once looked up
While the best palace-dancers strove to charm:
Nor spake—save one sad thing—when wofully
Yaśodharā sank to his feet and wept,
Sighing, "Hath not my Lord comfort in me?"
"Ah, Sweet!" he said, "such comfort that my soul
Aches, thinking it must end, for it will end,
And we shall both grow old, Yaśodharā!
Loveless, unlovely, weak, and old, and bowed.
Nay, though we locked up love and life with lips
So close that night and day our breaths grew one,
Time would thrust in between to filch away
My passion and thy grace, as black Night steals
The rose-gleams from yon peak, which fade to grey
And are not seen to fade. This have I found,
And all my heart is darkened with its dread,

And all my heart is fixed to think how Love
Might save its sweetness from the slayer, Time,
Who makes men old." So through that night he sate
Sleepless, uncomforted.

And all that night
The King Śuddhodana dreamed troublous dreams.
The first fear of his vision was a flag
Broad, glorious, glistening with a golden sun,
The mark of Indra; but a strong wind blew,
Rending its folds divine, and dashing it
Into the dust; whereat a concourse came
Of shadowy Ones, who took the spoiled silk up
And bore it eastward from the city gates.
The second fear was ten huge elephants,
With silver tusks and feet that shook the earth,
Trampling the southern road in mighty march;
And he who sate upon the foremost beast
Was the King's son—the others followed him.
The third fear of the vision was a car,
Shining with blinding light, which four steeds drew,
Snorting white smoke and champing fiery foam;
And in the car the Prince Siddhārtha sate.
The fourth fear was a wheel which turned and turned,
With nave of burning gold and jewelled spokes,
And strange things written on the binding tire,
Which seemed both fire and music as it whirled.
The fifth fear was a mighty drum, set down
Midway between the city and the hills,
On which the Prince beat with an iron mace,
So that the sound pealed like a thunderstorm,
Rolling around the sky and far away.
The sixth fear was a tower, which rose and rose
High o'er the city till its stately head
Shone crowned with clouds, and on the top the Prince
Stood, scattering from both hands, this way and that,
Gems of most lovely light, as if it rained
Jacynths and rubies; and the whole world came,
Striving to seize those treasures as they fell
Towards the four quarters. But the seventh fear was
A noise of wailing, and behold six men
Who wept and gnashed their teeth, and laid their palms

Upon their mouths, walking disconsolate.

These seven fears made the vision of his sleep,
But none of all his wisest dream-readers
Could tell their meaning. Then the King was wroth,
Saying, "There cometh evil to my house,
And none of ye have wit to help me know
What the great gods portend sending me this."
So in the city men went sorrowful
Because the King had dreamed seven signs of fear
Which none could read; but to the gate there came
An aged man, in robe of deer-skin clad,
By guise a hermit, known to none; he cried,
"Bring me before the King, for I can read
The vision of his sleep;" who, when he heard
The sevenfold mysteries of the midnight dream,
Bowed reverent and said, "O Mahārāj!
I hail this favored House, whence shall rise
A wider-reaching splendor than the sun's!
Lo! all these seven fears are seven joys,
Whereof the first, where thou didst see a flag—
Broad, glorious, gilt with Indra's badge—cast down
And carried out, did signify the end
Of old faiths and beginning of the new,
For there is change with gods not less than men,
And as the days pass kalpas pass at length.
The ten great elephants that shook the earth
The ten great gifts of wisdom signify,
In strength whereof the Prince shall quit his state
And shake the world with passage of the Truth.
The four flame-breathing horses of the car
Are those four fearless virtues which shall bring
Thy son from doubt and gloom to gladsome light;
The wheel that turned with nave of burning gold
Was that most precious Wheel of perfect Law
Which he shall turn in sight of all the world.
The mighty drum whereon the Prince did beat,
Till the sound filled all lands, doth signify
The thunder of the preaching of the Word
Which he shall preach; the tower that grew to heaven
The growing of the Gospel of this Buddh
Sets forth; and those rare jewels scattered thence

The untold treasures are of that good Law
To gods and men dear and desirable.
Such is the interpretation of the tower;
But for those six men weeping with shut mouths,
They are the six chief teachers whom thy son
Shall, with bright truth and speech unanswerable,
Convince of foolishness. O King! rejoice;
The fortune of my Lord the Prince is more
Than kingdoms, and his hermit-rags will be
Beyond fine cloths of gold. This was thy dream!
And in seven nights and days these things shall fall.”
So spake the holy man, and lowly made
The eight prostrations, touching thrice the ground;
Then turned and passed; but when the King bade send
A rich gift after him, the messengers
Brought word, “We came to where he entered in
At Chandra’s temple, but within was none
Save a grey owl which fluttered from the shrine.”
The gods come sometimes thus.

But the sad King

Marveled, and gave command that new delights
Be compassed to enthrall Siddhārtha’s heart
Amid those dancers of his pleasure-house,
Also he set at all the brazen doors
A double guard.

Yet who shall shut out Fate?

For once again the spirit of the Prince
Was moved to see this world beyond his gates,
This life of man, so pleasant if its waves
Ran not to waste and woful finishing
In Time’s dry sands. “I pray you let me view
Our city as it is,” such was his prayer
To King Śuddhodana. “Your Majesty
In tender heed hath warned the folk before
To put away ill things and common sights,
And make their faces glad to gladden me,
And all the causeways gay; yet have I learned
This is not daily life, and if I stand
Nearest, my father, to the realm and thee,

Fain would I know the people and the streets,
Their simple usual ways, and workday deeds,
And lives which those men live who are not kings.
Give me good leave, dear Lord! to pass unknown
Beyond my happy gardens; I shall come
The more contented to their peace again,
Or wiser, father, if not well content.
Therefore, I pray thee, let me go at will
To-morrow, with my servants, through the streets.”
And the King said, among his Ministers,
“Belike this second flight may mend the first.
Note how the falcon starts at every sight
News from his hood, but what a quiet eye
Cometh of freedom; let my son see all,
And bid them bring me tidings of his mind.”

Thus on the morrow, when the noon was come,
The Prince and Channa passed beyond the gates,
Which opened to the signet of the King;
Yet knew not they who rolled the great doors back
It was the King’s son in that merchant’s robe,
And in the clerkly dress his charioteer.
Forth fared they by the common way afoot,
Mingling with all the Śākyā citizens,
Seeing the glad and sad things of the town:
The painted streets alive with hum of noon,
The traders cross-legged ’mid their spice and grain,
The buyers with their money in the cloth,
The war of words to cheapen this or that,
The shout to clear the road, the huge stone wheels,
The strong slow oxen and their rustling loads,
The singing bearers with the palanquins,
The broad-necked hamals sweating in the sun,
The housewives bearing water from the well
With balanced chatties, and athwart their hips
The black-eyed babes; the fly-swarmed sweet-meat shops,
The weaver at his loom, the cotton-bow
Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, the dogs
Prowling for orts, the skilful armorer
With tong and hammer linking-shirts of mail,
The blacksmith with a mattock and a spear

Reddening together in his coals, the school
Where round their Guru, in a grave half-moon,
The Śākyā children sang the mantras through,
And learned the greater and the lesser gods;
The dyers stretching waistcloths in the sun
Wet from the vats—orange, and rose, and green;
The soldiers clanking past with swords and shields,
The camel-drivers rocking on the humps,
The Brāhmaṇa proud, the martial Kṣatriya,
The humble toiling Śūdra; here a throng
Gathered to watch some chattering snake-tamer
Wind round his wrist the living jewellery
Of asp and nag, or charm the hooded death
To angry dance with drone of beaded gourd;
There a long line of drums and horns, which went,
With steeds gay painted and silk canopies,
To bring the young bride home; and here a wife
Stealing with cakes and garlands to the god
To pray her husband's safe return from trade,
Or beg a boy next birth; hard by the booths
Where the swart potters beat the noisy brass
For lamps and lotas; thence, by temple walls
And gateways, to the river and the bridge
Under the city walls.

These had they passed
When from the roadside moaned a mournful voice,
“Help, masters! lift me to my feet; oh, help!
Or I shall die before I reach my house!”
A stricken wretch it was, whose quivering frame,
Caught by some deadly plague, lay in the dust
Writhing, with fiery purple blotches specked;
The chill sweat beaded on his brow, his mouth
Was dragged awry with twitchings of sore pain,
The wild eyes swam with inward agony.
Gasping, he clutched the grass to rise, and rose
Half-way, then sank, with quaking feeble limbs
And scream of terror, crying, “Ah, the pain!
Good people, help!” whereon Siddhārtha ran,
Lifted the woful man with tender hands,
With sweet looks laid the sick head on his knee,
And while his soft touch comforted the wretch,

Asked, "Brother, what is ill with thee? what harm
Hath fallen? wherefore canst thou not arise?
Why is it, Channa, that he pants and moans,
And gasps to speak and sighs so pitiful?"
Then spake the charioteer: "Great Prince! this man
Is smitten with some pest; his elements
Are all confounded; in his veins the blood,
Which ran a wholesome river, leaps and boils
A fiery flood; his heart, which kept good time,
Beats like an ill-played drum-skin, quick and slow;
His sinews slacken like a bow-string slipped;
The strength is gone from ham, and loin, and neck,
And all the grace and joy of manhood fled:
This is a sick man with the fit upon him.

See how he plucks and plucks to seize his grief,
And rolls his bloodshot orbs, and grinds his teeth,
And draws his breath as if 'twere choking smoke.
Lo! now he would be dead, but shall not die
Until the plague hath had its work in him,
Killing the nerves which die before the life;
Then, when his strings have cracked with agony
And all his bones are empty of the sense
To ache, the plague will quit and light elsewhere.
Oh, sir! it is not good to hold him so!

The harm may pass, and strike thee, even thee."

But spake the Prince, still comforting the man,
"And are there others, are there many thus?
Or might it be to me as now with him?"

"Great Lord!" answered the charioteer, "this comes
In many forms to all men; griefs and wounds,
Sickness and tetterers, palsies, leprosies,
Hot fevers, watery wastings, issues, blains
Befall all flesh and enter everywhere."

"Come such ills unobserved?" the Prince inquired.
And Channa said, "Like the sly snake they come
That stings unseen; like the striped murderer,
Who waits to spring from the Karuṇḍa bush,
Hiding beside the jungle path; or like
The lightning, striking these and sparing those,
As chance may send."

"Then all men live in fear?"

“So live they, Prince!”

“And none can say, ‘I sleep
Happy and whole to-night, and so shall wake?’ ”
“None say it.”

“And the end of many aches,
Which come unseen, and will come when they come,
Is this, a broken body and sad mind,
And so old age?”

“Yea, if men last as long.”

“But if they cannot bear their agonies,
Or if they will not bear, and seek a term;
Or if they bear, and be, as this man is,
Too weak except for groans, and so still live,
And growing old, grow older, then what end?”
“They die, Prince.”

“Die?”

“Yea, at the last comes death,
In whatsoever way, whatever hour.
Some few grow old, most suffer and fall sick,
But all must die—behold, where comes the Dead!”

Then did Siddhārtha raise his eyes, and see
Fast pacing towards the river brink a band
Of wailing people, foremost one who swung
An earthen bowl, with lighted coals, behind
The kinsmen shorn, with mourning marks, ungirt,
Crying aloud, “O Rāma, Rāma, hear!
Call upon Rāma, brothers;” next the bier,
Knit of four poles with bamboos interlaced,
Whereon lay, stark and stiff, feet foremost, lean,
Chapfallen, sightless, hollow-flanked, a-grin,
Sprinkled with red and yellow dust—the Dead,
Whom at the four-went ways they turned head first,
And crying, “Rāma, Rāma!” carried on
To where a pile was reared beside the stream;
Thereon they laid him, building fuel up—
Good sleep hath one that slumbers on that bed!
He shall not wake for cold albeit he lies
Naked to all the airs—for soon they set
The red flame to the corners four, which crept,
And licked, and flickered, finding out his flesh

And feeding on it with swift hissing tongues,
And crackle of parched skin, and snap of joint;
Till the fat smoke thinned and the ashes sank
Scarlet and grey, with here and there a bone
White midst the grey—the total of the man.

Then spake the Prince: “Is this the end which comes
To all who live?”

“This is the end that comes
To all,” quoth Channa; “he upon the pyre—
Whose remnants are so petty that the crows
Caw hungrily, then quit the fruitless feast—
Ate, drank, laughed, loved, and lived, and liked life well.
Then came—who knows?—some gust of jungle wind,
A stumble on the path, a taint in the tank,
A snake’s nip, half a span of angry steel,
A chill, a fishbone, or a falling tile,
And life was over and the man is dead;
No appetites, no pleasures, and no pains
Hath such; the kiss upon his lips is nought,
The fire-scorch nought; he smelleth not his flesh
A-roast, nor yet the sandal and the spice
They burn; the taste is emptied from his mouth,
The hearing of his ears is clogged, the sight
Is blinded in his eyes; those whom he loved
Wail desolate, for even that must go,
The body, which was lamp unto the life,
Or worms will have a horrid feast of it.
Here is the common destiny of flesh:
The high and low, the good and bad, must die,
And then, ’tis taught, begin anew and live
Somewhere, somehow,—who knows?—and so again
The pangs, the parting, and the lighted pile:—
Such is man’s round.”

“But lo! Siddhārtha turned
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to the sky,
Eyes lit with heavenly pity to the earth;
From sky to earth he looked, from earth to sky,
As if his spirit sought in lonely flight
Some far-off vision, linking this and that,
Lost—past—but searchable, but seen, but known.

Then cried he, while his lifted countenance
Glowed with the burning passion of a love
Unspeakable, the ardor of a hope
Boundless, insatiate: "Oh! suffering world,
Oh! known and unknown of my common flesh,
Caught in this common net of death and woe,
And life which binds to both! I see, I feel
The vastness of the agony of earth,
The vainness of its joys, the mockery
Of all its best, the anguish of its worst;
Since pleasures end in pain, and youth in age,
And love in loss, and life in hateful death,
And death in unknown lives, which will but yoke
Men to their wheel again to whirl the round
Of false delights and woes that are not false.
Me too this lure hath cheated, so it seemed
Lovely to live, and life a sunlit stream
For ever flowing in a changeless peace;
Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood
Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn
Only to pour its crystal quicklier
Into the foul salt sea. The veil is rent
Which blinded me! I am as all these men
Who cry upon their gods and are not heard
Or are not heeded—yet there must be aid!
For them and me and all there must be help!
Perchance the gods have need of help themselves,
Being so feeble that when sad lips cry
They cannot save! I would not let one cry
Whom I could save! How can it be that Brahmā
Would make a world and keep it miserable,
Since, if all-powerful, he leaves it so,
He is not good, and if not powerful,
He is not God?—Channa! lead home again!
It is enough! mine eyes have seen enough!"

Which when the King heard, at the gates he set
A triple guard, and bade no man should pass
By day or night, issuing or entering in,
Until the days were numbered of that dream.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

BUT when the days were numbered, then befell
The parting of our Lord—which was to be—
Whereby came wailing in the Golden Home,
Woe to the King and sorrow o'er the land,
But for all flesh deliverance, and that law
Which—whoso hears—the same shall make him free.

Softly the Indian night sinks on the plains
At full moon in the month of Chaitra Śukla,
When mangoes reddens and the asoka buds
Sweeten the breeze, and Rāma's birthday comes,
And all the fields are glad, and all the towns.
Softly that night fell over Viśrāmavan,
Fragrant with blooms and jeweled thick with stars,
And cool with mountain airs sighing adown
From snow-flats on Himālaya high-outspread;
For the moon swung above the eastern peaks,
Climbing the spangled vault, and lighting clear
Rohinī's ripples and the hills and plains,
And all the sleeping land, and near at hand
Silvering those roof-tops of the pleasure-house,
Where nothing stirred nor sign of watching was,
Save at the outer gates, whose warders cried
Mudrā, the watchword, and the countersign
Āṅgaṇa, and the watch-drums beat a round;
Whereat the earth lay still, except for call
Of prowling jackals, and the ceaseless trill
Of crickets in the garden grounds.

Within—

Where the moon glittered through the lace-worked stone
Lighting the walls of pearl-shell and the floors
Paved with veined marble—softly fell her beams
On such rare company of Indian girls,
It seemed some chamber sweet in Paradise
Where Devīs rested. All the chosen ones
Of Prince Siddhārtha's pleasure-home were there,
The brightest and most faithful of the Court,
Each form so lovely in the peace of sleep,

That you had said “This is the pearl of all!”
Save that beside her or beyond her lay
Fairer and fairer, till the pleasured gaze
Roamed o'er that feast of beauty as it roams
From gem to gem in some great goldsmith-work,
Caught by each color till the next is seen.
With careless grace they lay, their soft brown limbs
Part hidden, part revealed; their glossy hair
Bound back with gold or flowers, or flowing loose
In black waves down the shapely nape and neck,
Lulled into pleasant dreams by happy toils,
They slept, no wearier than jeweled birds
Which sing and love all day, then under wing
Fold head till morn bids sing and love again.
Lamps of chased silver swinging from the roof
In silver chains, and fed with perfumed oils,
Made with the moonbeams' tender lights and shades,
Whereby were seen the perfect lines of grace,
The bosom's placid heave, the soft stained palms
Drooping or clasped, the faces fair and dark,
The great arched brows, the parted lips, the teeth
Like pearls a merchant picks to make a string,
The satin-lidded eyes, the lashes dropped
Sweeping the delicate cheeks, the rounded wrists,
The smooth small feet with bells and bangles decked,
Tinkling low music where some sleeper moved,
Breaking her smiling dream of some new dance
Praised by the Prince, some magic ring to find,
Some fairy love-gift. Here one lay full-length,
Her vīṇā by her cheek, and in its strings
The little fingers still all interlaced
As when the last notes of her light song played
Those radiant eyes to sleep and sealed her own.
Another slumbered folding in her arms
A desert-antelope, its slender head
Buried with back-sloped horns between her breasts
Soft nestling; it was eating—when both drowsed—
Red roses, and her loosening hand still held
A rose half-mumbled, while a rose-leaf curled
Between the deer's lips. Here two friends had dozed
Together, weaving mogra-buds, which bound

Their sister-sweetness in a starry chain,
Linking them limb to limb and heart to heart
One pillow'd on the blossoms, one on her.
Another, ere she slept, was stringing stones
To make a necklet—agate, onyx, sard,
Coral, and moonstone—round her wrist it gleamed
A coil of splendid color, while she held,
Unthreaded yet, the bead to close it up
Green turkis, carved with golden gods and scripts.
Lulled by the cadence of the garden stream,
Thus lay they on the clustered carpets, each
A girlish rose with shut leaves, waiting dawn
To open and make daylight beautiful.
This was the antechamber of the Prince;
But at the purdah's fringe the sweetest slept—
Gaṅgā and Gautamī—chief ministers
In that still house of love.

The purdah hung,
Crimson and blue, with broidered threads of gold,
Across a portal carved in sandal-wood,
Whence by three steps the way was to the bower
Of inmost splendor, and the marriage-couch
Set on a dais soft with silver cloths,
Where the foot fell as though it trod on piles
Of neem-blooms. All the walls were plates of pearl,
Cut shapely from the shells of Lanka's wave;
And o'er the alabaster roof there ran
Rich inlayings of lotus and of bird,
Wrought in skilled work of lazulite and jade,
Jacynth and jasper; woven round the dome,
And down the sides, and all about the frames
Wherein were set the fretted lattices,
Through which were breathed, with moonlight and cool airs,
Scents from the shell-flowers and the jasmine sprays
Not bringing thither grace or tenderness
Sweeter than shed from those fair presences
Within the place—the beauteous Śākyā Prince,
And hers, the stately, bright Yaśodharā.

Half risen from her soft nest at his side,
The chuddah fallen to her waist, her brow

Laid in both palms, the lovely Princess leaned
With heaving bosom and fast falling tears.
Thrice with her lips she touched Siddhārtha's hand,
And at the third kiss moaned, "Awake, my Lord!
Give me the comfort of thy speech!" Then he—
"What is it with thee, O my life?" but still
She moaned anew before the words would come;
Then spake, "Alas, my Prince! I sank to sleep
Most happy, for the babe I bear of thee
Quickened this eve, and at my heart there beat
That double pulse of life and joy and love
Whose happy music lulled me, but—aho!—
In slumber I beheld three sights of dread,
With thought whereof my heart is throbbing yet.
I saw a white bull with wide branching horns,
A lord of pastures, pacing through the streets,
Bearing upon his front a gem which shone
As if some star had dropped to glitter there,
Or like the kantha-stone the great Snake keeps
To make bright daylight underneath the earth.
Slow through the streets towards the gates he paced,
And none could stay him, though there came a voice
From Indra's temple, 'If ye stay him not,
The glory of the city goeth forth.'
Yet none could stay him. Then I wept aloud,
And locked my arms about his neck, and strove,
And bade them bar the gates; but that ox-king
Bellowed, and, lightly tossing free his crest,
Broke from my clasp, and bursting through the bars,
Trampled the warders down and passed away.
The next strange dream was this: Four Presences
Splendid, with shining eyes, so beautiful
They seemed the Regents of the Earth who dwell
On Mount Sumeru, lighting from the sky
With retinue of countless heavenly ones,
Swift swept unto our city, where I saw
The golden flag of Indra on the gate
Flutter and fall; and lo! there rose instead
A glorious banner, all the folds whereof
Rippled with flashing fire of rubies sewn
Thick on the silver threads, the rays wherefrom

Set forth new words and weighty sentences
Whose message made all living creatures glad;
And from the east the wind of sunrise blew
With tender waft, opening those jeweled scrolls
So that all flesh might read; and wondrous blooms—
Plucked in what clime I know not—fell in showers,
Colored as none are colored in our groves.”

Then spake the Prince: “All this, my Lotus-flower!
Was good to see.”

“Ay, Lord,” the Princess said,
“Save that it ended with a voice of fear
Crying ‘The time is nigh! the time is nigh!’
Thereat the third dream came; for when I sought
Thy side, sweet Lord! ah, on our bed there lay
An unpressed pillow and an empty robe—
Nothing of thee but those!—nothing of thee,
Who art my life and light, my king, my world!
And sleeping still I rose, and sleeping saw
Thy belt of pearls, tied here below my breasts,
Change to a stinging snake; my ankle-rings
Fall off, my golden bangles part and fall;
The jasmines in my hair wither to dust;
While this our bridal-couch sank to the ground,
And something rent the crimson purdah down;
Then far away I heard the white bull low,
And far away the embroidered banner flap,
And once again that cry, ‘The time is come!’
But with that cry—which shakes my spirit still—
I woke! O Prince! what may such visions mean
Except I die, or—worse than any death—
Thou shouldest forsake me or be taken?”

Sweet

As the last smile of sunset was the look
Siddhārtha bent upon his weeping wife.
“Comfort thee, dear!” he said, “if comfort lives
In changeless love; for though thy dream may be
Shadows of things to come, and though the gods
Are shaken in their seats, and though the world
Stands nigh, perchance, to know some way of help,
Yet, whatsoever fall to thee and me,

Be sure I loved and love Yaśodhārā.
Thou knowest how I muse these many moons,
Seeking to save the sad earth I have seen;
And when the time comes, that which will be will.
But if my soul yearns sore for souls unknown,
And if I grieve for griefs which are not mine,
Judge how my high-winged thoughts must hover here
O'er all these lives that share, and sweeten mine—
So dear! and thine the dearest, gentlest, best,
And nearest. Ah, thou mother of my babe!
Whose body mixed with mine for this fair hope,
When most my spirit wanders, ranging round
The lands and seas—as full of ruth for men
As the far-flying dove is full of ruth
For her twin nestlings—ever it has come
Home with glad wing and passionate plumes to thee,
Who art the sweetness of my kind best seen,
The utmost of their good, the tenderest
Of all their tenderness, mine most of all.
Therefore, whatever after this betide,
Bethink thee of that lordly bull which lowed,
That jewelled banner in thy dream which waved
Its folds departing, and of this be sure,
Always I loved and always love thee well,
And what I sought for all sought most for thee.
But thou, take comfort; and, if sorrow falls,
Take comfort still in deeming there may be
A way of peace on earth by woes of ours;
And have with this embrace what faithful love
Can think of thanks or frame for benison—
Too little, seeing love's strong self is weak—
Yet kiss me on the mouth, and drink these words
From heart to heart therewith, that thou mayst know—
What others will not—that I loved thee most
Because I loved so well all living souls.
Now, Princess! rest, for I will rise and watch.”

Then in her tears she slept, but sleeping sighed—
As if that vision passed again—“The time!
The time is come!” Whereat Siddhārtha turned,
And, lo! the moon shone by the Crab! the stars

In that same silver order long foretold
Stood ranged to say, "This is the night!—choose thou
The way of greatness or the way of good:
To reign a King of kings, or wander lone,
Crownless and homeless, that the world be helped."
Moreover, with the whispers of the gloom
Came to his ears again that warning song,
As when the Devas spoke upon the wind:
And surely Gods were round about the place
Watching our Lord, who watched the shining stars.

"I will depart," he spake; "the hour is come!
Thy tender lips, dear sleeper, summon me
To that which saves the earth but sunders us;
And in the silence of yon sky I read
My fated message flashing. Unto this
Came I, and unto this all nights and days
Have led me; for I will not have that crown
Which may be mine: I lay aside those realms
Which wait the gleaming of my naked sword:
My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels
From victory to victory, till earth
Wears the red record of my name. I choose
To tread its path with patient, stainless feet,
Making its dust my bed, its loneliest wastes
My dwelling, and its meanest things my mates:
Clad in no prouder garb than outcasts wear,
Fed with no meats save what the charitable
Give of their will, sheltered by no more pomp
Than the dim cave lends or the jungle-bush.
This will I do because the woful cry
Of life and all flesh living cometh up
Into my ears, and all my soul is full
Of pity for the sickness of this world;
Which I will heal, if healing may be found
By uttermost renouncing and strong strife.
For which of all the great and lesser Gods
Have power or pity? Who hath seen them—who?
What have they wrought to help their worshipers?
How hath it steaded man to pray, and pay
Tithes of the corn and oil, to chant the charms,

To slay the shrieking sacrifice, to rear
The stately fane, to feed the priests, and call
On Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sūrya, who save
None—not the worthiest—from the griefs that teach
Those litanies of flattery and fear
Ascending day by day, like wasted smoke?
Hath any of my brothers 'scaped thereby
The aches of life, the stings of love and loss,
The fiery fever and the ague-shake,
The slow, dull sinking into withered age,
The horrible dark death—and what beyond
Waits—till the whirling wheel comes up again,
And new lives bring new sorrows to be borne,
New generations for the new desires
Which have their end in the old mockeries?
Hath any of my tender sisters found
Fruit of the fast or harvest of the hymn,
Or bought one pang the less at bearing-time
For white curds offered and trim tulsi-leaves?
Nay; it may be some of the Gods are good
And evil-some, but all in action weak;
Both pitiful and pitiless, and both—
As men are—bound upon this wheel of change,
Knowing the former and the after lives.
For so our scriptures truly seem to teach,
That—once, and wheresoe'er, and whence begun—
Life runs its rounds of living, climbing up
From mote, and gnat, and worm, reptile, and fish,
Bird and shagged beast, man, demon, deva, God,
To clod and mote again; so are we kin
To all that is; and thus, if one might save
Man from his curse, the whole wide world should share
The lightened horror of this ignorance
Whose shadow is chill fear, and cruelty
Its bitter pastime. Yea, if one might save!
And means must be! There must be refuge! Men
Perished in winter-winds till one smote fire
From flint-stones coldly hiding what they held,
The red spark treasured from the kindling sun.
They gorged on flesh like wolves, till one sowed corn,
Which grew a weed, yet makes the life of man;

They mowed and babbled till some tongue struck speech,
And patient fingers framed the lettered sound.
What good gift have my brothers, but it came
From search and strife and loving sacrifice?
If one, then, being great and fortunate,
Rich, dowered with health and ease, from birth designed
To rule—if he would rule—a King of kings;
If one, not tired with life's long day but glad
I' the freshness of its morning, one not cloyed
With love's delicious feasts, but hungry still;
If one not worn and wrinkled, sadly sage,
But joyous in the glory and the grace
That mix with evils here, and free to choose
Earth's loveliest at his will: one even as I,
Who ache not, lack not, grieve not, save with griefs
Which are not mine, except as I am man;—
If such a one, having so much to give,
Gave all, laying it down for love of men,
And thenceforth spent himself to search for truth,
Wringing the secret of deliverance forth,
Whether it lurk in hells or hide in heavens,
Or hover, unrevealed, nigh unto all:
Surely at last, far off, sometime, somewhere,
The veil would lift for his deep-searching eyes,
The road would open for his painful feet,
That should be won for which he lost the world,
And Death might find him conqueror of death.
This will I do, who have a realm to lose,
Because I love my realm, because my heart
Beats with each throb of all the hearts that ache,
Known and unknown, these that are mine and those
Which shall be mine, a thousand million more
Saved by this sacrifice I offer now.
Oh, summoning stars! I come! Oh, mournful earth!
For thee and thine I lay aside my youth,
My throne, my joys, my golden days, my nights,
My happy palace—and thine arms, sweet Queen!
Harder to put aside than all the rest!
Yet thee, too, I shall save, saving this earth;
And that which stirs within thy tender womb,
My child, the hidden blossom of our loves,

Whom if I wait to bless my mind will fail.
Wife! child! father! and people! ye must share
A little while the anguish of this hour
That light may break and all flesh learn the Law.
Now am I fixed, and now I will depart,
Never to come again till what I seek
Be found—if fervent search and strife avail.”

So with his brow he touched her feet, and bent
The farewell of fond eyes, unutterable,
Upon her sleeping face, still wet with tears;
And thrice around the bed in reverence,
As though it were an altar, softly stepped
With clasped hands laid upon his beating heart,
“For never,” spake he, “lie I there again!”
And thrice he made to go, but thrice came back,
So strong her beauty was, so large his love:
Then, o’er his head drawing his cloth, he turned
And raised the purdah’s edge:

There drooped, close-hushed,
In such sealed sleep as water-lilies know,
The lovely garden of his Indian girls;
That twin dark-petalled lotus-buds of all—
Gāngā and Gautamī—on either side,
And those, their silk-leaved sisterhood, beyond.
“Pleasant ye are to me, sweet friends!” he said,
“And dear to leave; yet if I leave ye not
What else will come to all of us save eld
Without assuage and death without avail?
Lo! as ye lie asleep so must ye lie
A-dead; and when the rose dies where are gone
Its scent and splendor? when the lamp is drained
Whither is fled the flame? Press heavy, Night!
Upon their down-dropped lids and seal their lips,
That no tear stay me and no faithful voice.
For all the brighter that these made my life,
The bitterer it is that they and I,
And all, should live as trees do—so much spring,
Such and such rains and frosts, such winter-times,
And then dead leaves, with maybe spring again,
Or axe-stroke at the root. This will not I,

Whose life here was a God's!—this would not I,
Though all my days were godlike, while men moan
Under their darkness. Therefore, farewell, friends!
While life is good to give, I give, and go
To seek deliverance and that unknown Light!"

Then, lightly treading where those sleepers lay,
Into the night Siddhārtha passed: its eyes,
The watchful stars, looked love on him: its breath,
The wandering wind, kissed his robe's fluttered fringe;
The garden-blossoms, folded for the dawn,
Opened their velvet hearts to waft him scents
From pink and purple censers: o'er the land,
From Himālayay unto the Indian Sea,
A tremor spread, as if earth's soul beneath
Stirred with an unknown hope; and holy books—
Which tell the story of our Lord—say, too,
That rich celestial musics thrilled the air
From hosts on hosts of shining ones, who thronged
Eastward and westward, making bright the night—
Northward and southward, making glad the ground.
Also those four dread Regents of the Earth,
Descending at the doorway, two by two,—
With their bright legions of Invisibles
In arms of sapphire, silver, gold, and pearl—
Watched with joined hands the Indian Prince, who stood,
His tearful eyes raised to the stars, and lips
Close-set with purpose of prodigious love.

Then strode he forth into the gloom and cried,
“Channa, awake! and bring out Kanṭaka!”

“What would my Lord?” the charioteer replied—
Slow-rising from his place beside the gate—
“To ride at night when all the ways are dark?”

“Speak low,” Siddhārtha said, “and bring my horse,
For now the hour is come when I should quit
This golden prison where my heart lives caged
To find the truth; which henceforth I will seek,
For all men's sake, until the truth be found.”

“Alas! dear Prince,” answered the charioteer,
“Spake then for nought those wise and holy men
Who cast the stars and bade us wait the time
When King Śuddhodana’s great son should rule
Realms upon realms, and be a Lord of lords?
Wilt thou ride hence and let the rich world slip
Out of thy grasp, to hold a beggar’s bowl?
Wilt thou go forth into the friendless waste
That hast this Paradise of pleasures here?”

The Prince made answer, “Unto this I came,
And not for thrones: the kingdom that I crave
Is more than many realms—and all things pass
To change and death. Bring me forth Kanṭaka!”

“Most honored,” spake again the charioteer,
“Bethink thee of my Lord thy father’s grief!
Bethink thee of their woe whose bliss thou art—
How shalt thou help them, first undoing them?”

Siddhārtha answered, “Friend, that love is false
Which clings to love for selfish sweets of love;
But I, who love these more than joys of mine—
Yea, more than joy of theirs—depart to save
Them and all flesh, if utmost love avail.
Go, bring me Kanṭaka!”

Then Channa said,
“Master, I go!” and forthwith, mournfully,
Unto the stall he passed, and from the rack
Took down the silver bit and bridle-chains,
Breast-cord and curb, and knitted fast the straps,
And linked the hooks, and led out Kanṭaka;
Whom tethering to the ring, he combed and dressed,
Stroking the snowy coat to silken gloss;
Next on the steed he laid the numdah square,
Fitted the saddle-cloth across, and set
The saddle fair, drew tight the jewelled girths,
Buckled the breech-bands and the martingale,
And made fall both the stirrups of worked gold.
Then over all he cast a golden net,
With tassels of seed-pearl and silken strings,
And led the great horse to the palace door,

Where stood the Prince; but when he saw his Lord,
Right glad he waxed and joyously he neighed,
Spreading his scarlet nostrils; and the books
Write, "Surely all had heard Kantaka's neigh,
And that strong trampling of his iron heels,
Save that the Devas laid their unseen wings
Over their ears and kept the sleepers deaf."

Fondly Siddhārtha drew the proud head down,
Patted the shining neck, and said, "Be still,
White Kanṭaka! be still, and bear me now
The farthest journey ever rider rode;
For this night take I horse to find the truth,
And where my quest will end yet know I not,
Save that it shall not end until I find.
Therefore to-night, good steed, be fierce and bold!
Let nothing stay thee, though a thousand blades
Deny the road! let neither wall nor moat
Forbid our flight! Look! if I touch thy flank
And cry, 'On, Kanṭaka!' let whirlwinds lag
Behind thy course! Be fire and air, my horse!
To steady thy Lord, so shalt thou share with him
The greatness of this deed which helps the world;
For therefore ride I, not for men alone,
But for all things which, speechless, share our pain
And have no hope, nor wit to ask for hope.
Now, therefore, bear thy master valorously!"

Then to the saddle lightly leaping, he
Touched the arched crest, and Kanṭaka sprang forth
With armed hoofs sparkling on the stones and ring
Of champing bit; but none did hear that sound,
For that the Śuddha-devāḥ, gathering near,
Plucked the red mohra-flowers and strewed them thick
Under his tread, while hands invisible
Muffled the ringing bit and bridle chains.
Moreover, it is written when they came
Upon the pavement near the inner gates,
The Yakṣas of the air laid magic cloths
Under the stallion's feet, so that he went
Softly and still.

But when they reached the gate
Of tripled brass—which hardly fivescore men
Served to unbar and open—lo! the doors
Rolled back all silently, though one might hear
In daytime two koss off the thunderous roar
Of those grim hinges and unwieldy plates.

Also the middle and the outer gates
Unfolded each their monstrous portals thus
In silence as Siddhārtha and his steed
Drew near; while underneath their shadow lay,
Silent as dead men, all those chosen guards—
The lance and sword let fall, the shields unbraced,
Captains and soldiers—for there came a wind,
Drowsier than blows o'er Mālava's fields of sleep,
Before the Prince's path, which, being breathed,
Lulled every sense aswoon: and so he passed
Free from the palace.

When the morning star
Stood half a spear's length from the eastern rim,
And o'er the earth the breath of morning sighed
Rippling Anomā's wave, the border-stream,
Then drew he rein, and leaped to earth and kissed
White Kanṭaka betwixt the ears, and spake
Full sweet to Channa: "This which thou hast done
Shall bring thee good and bring all creatures good.
Be sure I love thee always for thy love.
Lead back my horse and take my crest-pearl here,
My princely robes, which henceforth stead me not,
My jeweled sword-belt and my sword, and these
The long locks by its bright edge severed thus
From off my brows. Give the King all, and say
Siddhārtha prays forget him till he come
Ten times a Prince, with royal wisdom won
From lonely searchings and the strife for light:
Where, if I conquer, lo! all earth is mine—
Mine by chief service!—tell him—mine by love!
Since there is hope for man only in man,
And none hath sought for this as I will seek,
Who cast away my world to save my world."

BOOK THE FIFTH.

ROUND Rājagrha five fair hills arose,
Guarding King Bimbisāra's sylvan town:
Baibhara, green with lemon-grass and palms;
Vipyla, at whose foot thin Sarasvatī
Steals with warm ripple; shadowy Tapovana,
Whose steaming pools mirror black rocks, which ooze
Sovereign earth-butter from their rugged roofs;
South-east the vulture-peak Śailagiri;
And eastward Ratnagiri, hill of gems.
A winding track, paven with footworn slabs,
Leads thee by safflower fields and bamboo tufts
Under dark mangoes and the jujube-trees,
Past milk-white veins of rock and jasper crags,
Low cliffs and flats of jungle-flowers, to where
The shoulder of that mountain, sloping west,
O'erhangs a cave with wild figs canopied.
Lo! thou who comes thither, bare thy feet
And bow thy head! for all this spacious earth
Hath not a spot more dear or hallowed. Here
Lord Buddha sate the scorching summers through,
The driving rains, the chilly dawns and eves;
Wearing for all men's sakes the yellow robe,
Eating in beggar's guise the scanty meal
Chance-gathered from the charitable; at night
Couched on the grass, homeless, alone; while yelped
The sleepless jackals round his cave, or coughs
Of famished tiger from the thicket broke.
By day and night here dwelt the World-honored,
Subduing that fair body born for bliss
With fast and frequent watch and search intense
Of silent meditation, so prolonged
That oftentimes while he mused—as motionless
As the fixed rock his seat—the squirrel leaped
Upon his knee, the timid quail led forth
Her brood between his feet, and blue doves pecked
The rice-grains from the bowl beside his hand.

Thus would he muse from noontide—when the land
Shimmered with heat, and walls and temples danced
In the reeking air—till sunset, noting not
The blazing globe roll down, nor evening glide,
Purple and swift, across the softened fields;
Nor the still coming of the stars, nor throb
Of drum-skins in the busy town, nor screech
Of owl and night-jar; wholly wrapt from self
In keen unraveling of the threads of thought
And steadfast pacing of life's labyrinths.
Thus would he sit till midnight hushed the world,
Save where the beasts of darkness in the brake
Crept and cried out, as fear and hatred cry,
As lust and avarice and anger creep
In the black jungles of man's ignorance.
Then slept he for what space the fleet moon asks
To swim a tenth part of her cloudy sea;
But rose ere the False-dawn, and stood again
Wistful on some dark platform of his hill,
Watching the sleeping earth with ardent eyes
And thoughts embracing all its living things,
While o'er the waving fields that murmur moved
Which is the kiss of Morn waking the lands,
And in the east that miracle of Day
Gathered and grew. At first a dusk so dim
Night seems still unaware of whispered dawn,
But soon—before the jungle-cock crows twice—
A white verge clear, a widening, brightening white,
High as the herald-star, which fades in floods
Of silver, warming into pale gold, caught
By topmost clouds, and flaming on their rims
To fervent golden glow, flushed from the brink
With saffron, scarlet crimson, amethyst;
Whereat the sky burns splendid to the blue,
And, robed in raiment of glad light, the King
Of Life and Glory cometh!

Then our Lord,
After the manner of a Rṣi, hailed
The rising orb, and went—ablutions made—
Down by the winding path into the town;
And in the fashion of a Rṣi passed

From street to street, with begging-bowl in hand,
Gathering the little pittance of his needs.
Soon was it filled, for all the townsmen cried,
“Take of our store, great sir!” and “Take of ours!”
Marking his godlike face and eyes enrapt;
And mothers, when they saw our Lord go by,
Would bid their children fall to kiss his feet,
And lift his robe’s hem to their brows, or run
To fill his jar, and fetch him milk and cakes.
And oftentimes as he paced, gentle and slow,
Radiant with heavenly pity, lost in care
For those he knew not, save as fellow-lives,
The dark surprised eyes of some Indian maid
Would dwell in sudden love and worship deep
On that majestic form, as if she saw
Her dreams of tenderest thought made true, and grace
Fairer than mortal fire her breast. But he
Passed onward with the bowl and yellow robe,
By mild speech paying all those gifts of hearts,
Wending his way back to the solitudes
To sit upon his hill with holy men,
And hear and ask of wisdom and its roads.

Midway on Ratnagiri’s groves of calm,
Beyond the city, but below the caves,
Lodged such as hold the body foe to soul,
And flesh a beast which men must chain and tame
With bitter pains, till sense of pain is killed,
And tortured nerves vex torturer no more—
Yogīs and Brahmacārīs, Bhiksus, all
A gaunt and mournful band, dwelling apart.
Some day and night had stood with lifted arms,
Till—drained of blood and withered by disease—
Their slowly-wasting joints and stiffened limbs
Jutted from sapless shoulders like dead forks
From forest trunks. Others had clenched their hands
So long and with so fierce a fortitude,
The claw-like nails grew through the festered palm.
Some walked on sandals spiked; some with sharp flints
Gashed breast and brow and thigh, scarred these with fire,
Threaded their flesh with jungle thorns and spits,

Besmeared with mud and ashes, crouching foul
In rags of dead men wrapped about their loins.
Certain there were inhabited the spots
Where death-pyres smouldered, cowering defiled
With corpses for their company, and kites
Screaming around them o'er the funeral-spoils:
Certain who cried five hundred times a day
The names of Śiva, wound with darting snakes
About their sun-tanned necks and hollow flanks
One palsied foot drawn up against the ham.
So gathered they, a grievous company;
Crowns blistered by the blazing heat, eyes bleared,
Sinews and muscles shriveled, visages
Haggard and wan as slain men's, five days dead;
Here crouched on in the dust who noon by noon
Meted a thousand grains of millet out,
Ate it with famished patience, seed by seed,
And so starved on; there one who bruised his pulse
With bitter leaves lest palate should be pleased;
And next, a miserable saint self-maimed,
Eyeless and tongueless, sexless, crippled, deaf;
The body by the mind being thus stripped
For glory of much suffering, and the bliss
Which they shall win—say holy books—whose woe
Shames gods that send us woe, and makes men gods
Stronger to suffer than Hell is to harm.

Whom sadly eying spake our Lord to one,
Chief of the woe-begones: "Much-suffering sir!
These many moons I dwell upon the hill—
Who am a seeker of the Truth—and see
My brothers here, and thee, so piteously
Self-anguished; wherefore add ye ills to life
Which is so evil?"

Answer made the sage:

" 'Tis written if a man shall mortify
His flesh, till pain be grown the life he lives
And death voluptuous rest, such woes shall purge
Sin's dross away, and the soul, purified,
Soar from the furnace of its sorrow, winged
For glorious spheres and splendor past all thought."

“Yon cloud which floats in heaven,” the Prince replied,
“Wreathed like gold cloth around your Indra’s throne,
Rose thither from the tempest-driven sea;
But it must fall again in tearful drops,
Trickling through rough and painful water-ways
By cleft and nullah and the muddy flood,
To Gaṅgā and the sea, wherefrom it sprang.
Know’st thou, my brother, if it be not thus,
After their many pains, with saints in bliss?
Since that which rises falls, and that which buys
Is spent; and if ye buy heav’n with your blood
In hell’s hard market, when the bargain’s through
The toil begins again!”

“It may begin,”
The hermit moaned. “Alas! we know not this,
Nor surely anything; yet after night
Day comes, and after turmoil peace, and we
Hate this accursed flesh which clogs the soul
That fain would rise; so, for the sake of soul
We stake brief agonies in game with Gods
To gain the larger joys.”

“Yet if they last
A myriad years,” he said, “they fade at length,
Those joys; or if not, is there then some life
Below, above, beyond, so unlike life
It will not change? Speak! do your Gods endure
For ever, brothers?”

“Nay,” the Yogīs said,
“Only great Brahmā endures: the Gods but live.”

Then spake Lord Buddha: “Will ye, being wise,
As ye seem holy and strong-hearted ones,
Throw these sore dice, which are your groans and moans,
For gains which may be dreams, and must have end?
Will ye, for love of soul, so loathe your flesh,
So scourge and maim it, that it shall not serve
To bear the spirit on, searching for home,
But founder on the track before nightfall,

Like willing steed o'er-spurred? Will ye, sad sirs,
Dismantle and dismember this fair house,
Where we have come to dwell by painful pasts;
Whose windows give us light—the little light—
Whereby we gaze abroad to know if dawn
Will break, and whither winds the better road?"

Then cried they, "We have chosen this for road
And tread it, Rājaputra, till the close—
Though all its stones were fire—in trust of death.
Speak, if thou know'st a way more excellent;
If not, peace go with thee!"

Onward he passed,
Exceeding sorrowful, seeing how men
Fear so to die they are afraid to fear,
Lust so to live they dare not love their life,
But plague it with fierce penances, belike
To please the Gods who grudge pleasure to man;
Belike to balk hell by self-kindled hells;
Belike in holy madness, hoping soul
May break the better through their wasted flesh.
"Oh, flowerets of the field!" Siddhārtha said,
"Who turn your tender faces to the sun—
Glad of the light, and grateful with sweet breath
Of fragrance and these robes of reverence donned
Silver and gold and purple—none of ye
Miss perfect living, none of ye despoil
Your happy beauty. Oh, ye palms! which rise
Eager to pierce the sky and drink the wind
Blown from Malaya and the cool blue seas,
What secret know ye that ye grow content,
From time of tender shoot to time of fruit,
Murmuring such sun-songs from your feathered crowns?
Ye, too, who dwell so merry in the trees—
Quick-darting parrots, bee-birds, bulbuls, doves—
None of ye hate your life, none of ye deem
To strain to better by foregoing needs!
But man, who slays ye—being lord—is wise,
And wisdom, nursed on blood, cometh thus forth
In self-tormentings!"

While the Master spake
Blew down the mount the dust of pattering feet,
White goats and black sheep winding slow their way,
With many a lingering nibble at the tufts,
And wanderings from the path, where water gleamed
Or wild figs hung. But always as they strayed
The herdsman cried, or slung his sling, and kept
The silly crowd still moving to the plain.
A ewe with couplets in the flock there was,
Some hurt had lamed one lamb, which toiled behind
Bleeding, while in the front its fellow skipped,
And the vexed dam hither and thither ran,
Fearful to lose this little one or that;
Which when our Lord did mark, full tenderly
He took the limping lamb upon his neck,
Saying, “Poor woolly mother, be at peace!
Whither thou goest I will bear thy care;
’Twere all as good to ease one beast of grief
As sit and watch the sorrows of the world
In yonder caverns with the priests who pray.”

“But,” spake he to the herdsmen, “wherefore, friends!
Drive ye the flocks adown under high noon,
Since ’tis at evening that men fold their sheep?”

And answer gave the peasants: “We are sent
To fetch a sacrifice of goats five score,
And five score sheep, the which our Lord the King
Slayeth this night in worship of his gods.”

Then said the Master: “I will also go!”
So paced he patiently, bearing the lamb
Beside the herdsmen in the dust and sun,
The wistful ewe low-bleating at his feet.

Whom, when they came unto the river-side,
A woman—dove-eyed, young, with tearful face
And lifted hands—saluted, bending low:
“Lord! thou art he,” she said, “who yesterday
Had pity on me in the fig-grove here,
Where I live lone and reared my child; but he

Straying amid the blossoms found a snake,
Which twined about his wrist, whilst he did laugh
And tease the quick forked tongue and opened mouth
Of that cold playmate. But, alas! ere long
He turned so pale and still, I could not think
Why he should cease to play, and let my breast
Fall from his lips. And one said, 'He is sick
Of poison;' and another, 'He will die.'
But I, who could not lose my precious boy,
Prayed of them physic, which might bring the light
Back to his eyes; it was so very small
That kiss-mark of the serpent, and I think
It could not hate him, gracious as he was,
Nor hurt him in his sport. And some one said,
'There is a holy man upon the hill—
Lo! now he passeth in the yellow robe—
Ask of the Rṣi if there be a cure
For that which ails thy son.' Whereon I came
Trembling to thee, whose brow is like a god's,
And wept and drew the face cloth from my babe,
Praying thee tell what simples might be good.
And thou, great sir! didst spurn me not, but gaze
With gentle eyes and touch with patient hand;
Then draw the face-cloth back, saying to me,
'Yea! little sister, there is that might heal
Thee first, and him, if thou couldst fetch the thing;
For they who seek physicians bring to them
What is ordained. Therefore, I pray thee, find
Black mustard-seed, a tola; only mark
Thou take it not from any hand or house
Where father, mother, child, or slave hath died;
It shall be well if thou canst find such seed.'
Thus didst thou speak, my Lord!"

The Master smiled

Exceeding tenderly. "Yea! I spake thus,
Dear Kisa-Gautamī! But didst thou find
The seed?"

"I went, Lord, clasping to my breast
The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut—
Here in the jungle and towards the town—
'I pray you, give me mustard, of your grace,

A tola—black;’ and each who had it gave,
For all the poor are piteous to the poor;
But when I asked, ‘In my friend’s household here
Hath any peradventure ever died—
Husband or wife, or child, or slave?’ they said:
‘O Sister! what is this you ask? the dead
Are very many, and the living few!’
So with sad thanks I gave the mustard back,
And prayed of others; but the others said,
‘Here is the seed, but we have lost our slave!’
‘Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!’
‘Here is some seed, but he that sowed it died
Between the rain-time and the harvesting!’
Ah, sir! I could not find a single house
Where there was mustard-seed and none had died!
Therefore, I left my child—who would not suck
Nor smile—beneath the wild-vines by the stream,
To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
Where I might find this seed and find no death,
If now, indeed, my baby be not dead,
As I do fear, and as they said to me.”

“My sister! thou hast found,” the Master said,
“Searching for what none finds—that bitter balm
I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept
Dead on thy bosom yesterday: to-day
Thou know’st the whole wide world weeps with thy woe:
The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish, and which drives
O’er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice—
As these dumb beasts are driven—men their lords.
I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!”

So entered they the city side by side,
The herdsmen and the Prince, what time the sun
Gilded slow Sona’s distant stream, and threw
Long shadows down the street and through the gate
Where the King’s men kept watch. But when these saw
Our Lord bearing the lamb, the guards stood back,

The market-people drew their wains aside,
In the bazaar buyers and sellers stayed
The war of tongues to gaze on that mild face;
The smith, with lifted hammer in his hand,
Forgot to strike; the weaver left his web,
The scribe his scroll, the money-changer lost
His count of cowries; from the unwatched rice
Shiva's white bull fed free; the wasted milk
Ran o'er the lota while the milkers watched
The passage of our Lord moving so meek,
With yet so beautiful a majesty.
But most the women gathering in the doors
Asked, "Who is this that brings the sacrifice
So graceful and peace-giving as he goes?
What is his caste? whence hath he eyes so sweet?
Can he be Śakra, or the Devarāj?"
And others said, "It is the holy man
Who dwelleth with the R̄ṣis on the hill."
But the Lord paced, in meditation lost,
Thinking. "Alas! for all my sheep which have
No shepherd; wandering in the night with none
To guide them; bleating blindly towards the knife
Of Death, as these dumb beasts which are their kin."

Then some one told the King, "There cometh here
A holy hermit, bringing down the flock
Which thou didst bid to crown the sacrifice."

The King stood in his hall of offering,
On either hand the white-robed Brāhmaṇs ranged
Muttered their mantras, feeding still the fire
Which roared upon the midmost altar. There
From scented woods flickered bright tongues of flame,
Hissing and curling as they licked the gifts
Of ghee and spices and the Soma juice,
The joy of Indra. Round about the pile
A slow, thick, scarlet streamlet smoked and ran,
Sucked by the sand, but ever rolling down,
The blood of bleating victims. One such lay,
A spotted goat, long-horned, its head bound back
With munja grass; at its stretched throat the knife

Pressed by a priest, who murmured, "This, dread gods,
Of many yajñas cometh as the crown
From Bimbisāra: take ye joy to see
The spited blood, and pleasure in the scent
Of rich flesh roasting 'mid the fragrant flames;
Let the King's sins be laid upon this goat,
And let the fire consume them burning it,
For now I strike."

But Buddha softly said,
"Let him not strike, great King!" and therewith loosed
The victim's bonds, none staying him, so great
His presence was. Then, craving leave, he spake
Of life, which all can take but none can give,
Life, which all creatures love and strive to keep,
Wonderful, dear and pleasant unto each,
Even to the meanest; yea, a boon to all
Where pity is, for pity makes the world
Soft to the weak and noble for the strong.
Unto the dumb lips of his flock he lent
Sad pleading words, showing how man, who prays
For mercy to the gods, is merciless,
Being as god to those; albeit all life
Is linked and kin, and what we slay have given
Meek tribute of the milk and wool, and set
Fast trust upon the hands which murder them.
Also he spake of what the holy books
Do surely teach, how that at death some sink
To bird and beast, and these rise up to man
In wanderings of the spark which grows purged flame.
So were the sacrifice new sin, if so
The fated passage of a soul be stayed.
Nor, spake he, shall one wash his spirit clean
By blood; nor gladden gods, being good, with blood;
Nor bribe them, being evil; nay, nor lay
Upon the brow of innocent bound beasts
One hair's weight of that answer all must give
For all things done amiss or wrongfully,
Alone, each for himself, reckoning with that
The fixed arithmetic of the universe,
Which meteth good for good and ill for ill,
Measure for measure, unto deeds, words, thoughts;

Watchful, aware, implacable, unmoved;
Making all futures fruits of all the pasts.
Thus spake he, breathing words so piteous
With such high lordliness of ruth and right,
The priests drew back their garments o'er the hands
Crimsoned with slaughter, and the King came near,
Standing with clasped palms reverencing Buddh;
While still our Lord went on, teaching how fair
This earth were if all living things be linked
In friendliness and common use of foods,
Bloodless and pure; the golden grain, bright fruits,
Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters wan,
Sufficient drinks and meats. Which when these heard,
The might of gentleness so conquered them,
The priests themselves scattered their altar-flames
And flung away the steel of sacrifice;
And through the land next day passed a decree
Proclaimed by criers, and in this wise graved
On rock and column: "Thus the King's will is:—
There hath been slaughter for the sacrifice
And slaying for the meat, but henceforth none
Shall spill the blood of life nor taste of flesh,
Seeing that knowledge grows, and life is one,
And mercy cometh to the merciful."
So ran the edit, and from those days forth
Sweet peace hath spread between all living kind,
Man and the beasts which serve him, and the birds,
On all those banks of Gaṅgā where our Lord
Taught with his saintly pity and soft speech.

For aye so piteous was the Master's heart
To all that breathe this breath of fleeting life,
Yoked in one fellowship of joys and pains,
That it is written in the holy books
How, in an ancient age—when Buddha wore
A Brāhmaṇa's form, dwelling upon the rock
Named Muṇḍa, by the village of Dalidd—
Drought withered all the land: the young rice died
Ere it could hide a quail; in forest glades
A fierce sun sucked the pools; grasses and herbs
Sickened, and all the woodland creatures fled

Scattering for sustenance. At such a time,
Between the hot walls of a nullah, stretched
On naked stones, our Lord spied, as he passed,
A starving tigress. Hunger in her orbs
Glared with green flame; her dry tongue lolled a span
Beyond the gasping jaws and shrivelled jowl;
Her painted hide hung wrinkled on her ribs
As when between the rafters sinks a thatch
Rotten with rains; and at the poor lean dugs
Two cubs, whining with famine, tugged and sucked,
Mumbling those milkless teats which rendered nought,
While she, their gaunt dam, licked full motherly
The clamorous twins, yielding her flank to them
With moaning throat, and love stronger than want,
Softening the first of that wild cry wherewith
She laid her famished muzzle to the sand
And roared a savage thunder-peal of woe.
Seeing which bitter strait, and heeding nought
Save the immense compassion of a Buddh,
Our Lord bethought, "There is no other way
To help this murdereress of the woods but one.
By sunset these will die, having no meat:
There is no living heart will pity her,
Bloody with ravin, lean for lack of blood.
Lo! if I feed her, who shall lose but I,
And how can love lose doing of its kind
Even to the uttermost?" So saying, Buddh
Silently laid aside sandals and staff,
His sacred thread, turban, and cloth, and came
Forth from behind the milk-bush on the sand,
Saying, "Ho! mother, here is meat for thee!"
Whereat the perishing beast yelped hoarse and shrill,
Sprang from her cubs, and, hurling to the earth
That willing victim, had her feast of him
With all the crooked daggers of her claws
Rending his flesh, and all her yellow fangs
Bathed in his blood: the great cat's burning breath
Mixed with the last sigh of such fearless love.

Thus large the Master's heart was long ago,
Not only now, when with his gracious ruth

He bade cease cruel worship of the Gods.
And much King Bimbisāra prayed our Lord—
Learning his royal birth and holy search—
To tarry in that city, saying oft,
“Thy princely state may not abide such fasts;
Thy hands were made for sceptres, not for alms.
Sojourn with me, who have no son to rule,
And teach my kingdom wisdom, till I die,
Lodged in my palace with a beauteous bride.”
But ever spake Siddhārtha, of set mind,
“These things I had, most noble King, and left,
Seeking the Truth; which still I seek, and shall;
Not to be stayed, though Śakra’s palace ope’d
Its doors of pearl and Devi wooed me in.
I go to build the Kingdom of the Law,
Journeying to Gayā and the forest shades,
Where, as I think, the light will come to me;
For nowise here among the R̥sis comes
That light, nor from the Śāsters, nor from fasts
Borne till the body faints, starved by the soul.
Yet there is light to reach and truth to win;
And surely, O true Friend, if I attain
I will return and quit thy love.”

Thereat

Thrice round the Prince King Bimbisāra paced,
Reverently bending to the Master’s feet,
And bade him speed. So passed our Lord away
Towards Uravilvā, not yet comforted,
And wan of face, and weak with six years’ quest.
But they upon the hill and in the grove—
Ālāra, Udraka, and the ascetics five—
Had stayed him, saying all was written clear
In holy Śāsters, and that none might win
Higher than Śruti and than Smṛti—nay,
Not the chief saints!—for how should mortal man
Be wiser than the Jñāna-kāṇḍa, which tells
How Brahma is bodiless and actionless,
Passionless, calm, unqualified, unchanged,
Pure life, pure thought, pure joy? Or how should man
Be better than the Karma-kāṇḍa, which shows
How he may strip passion and action off,

Break from the bond of self, and so, unsphered,
Be God, and melt into the vast divine,
Flying from false to true, from wars of sense
To peace eternal, where the silence lives?

But the Prince heard them, not yet comforted.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

THOU who wouldst see where dawned the light at last,
North-westwards from the “Thousand Gardens” go
By Gaṅgā’s valley till thy steps be set
On the green hills where those twin streamlets spring
Nīlajan and Mohana; follow them,
Winding beneath broad-leaved mahua-trees,
'Mid thickets of the sansar and the bir,
Till on the plain the shining sisters meet
In Phalgu’s bed, flowing by rocky banks
To Gayā and the red Barābar hills.
Hard by that river spreads a thorny waste,
Uruvelā named in ancient days,
With sandhills broken; on its verge a wood
Waves sea-green plumes and tassels 'thwart the sky
With undergrowth wherethrough a still flood steals,
Dappled with lotus-blossoms, blue and white,
And peopled with quick fish and tortoises.
Near it the village of Senani reared
Its roofs of grass, nestled amid the palms,
Peaceful with simple folk and pastoral toils.

There in the sylvan solitudes once more
Lord Buddha lived, musing the woes of men,
The ways of fate, the doctrines of the books,
The lessons of the creatures of the brake,
The secrets of the silence whence all come,
The secrets of the gloom whereto all go,
The life which lies between, like that arch flung
From cloud to cloud across the sky, which hath
Mists for its masonry and vapory piers,
Melting to void again which was so fair
With sapphire hues, garnet, and chrysoprase.
Moon after moon our Lord sate in the wood,
So meditating these that he forgot
Ofttimes the hour of food, rising from thoughts
Prolonged beyond the sunrise and the noon
To see his bowl unfilled, and eat perforce
Of wild fruit fallen from the boughs o'erhead,

Shaken to earth by chattering ape or plucked
By purple paroheet. Therefore his grace
Faded; his body, worn by stress of soul,
Lost day by day the marks, thirty and two,
Which testify the Buddha. Scarce that leaf,
Fluttering so dry and withered to his feet
From off the sal-branch, bore less likeliness
Of spring's soft greenery than he of him
Who was the princely flower of all his land.

And once at such a time the o'erwrought Prince
Fell to the earth in deadly swoon, all spent,
Even as one slain, who hath no longer breath
Nor any stir of blood; so wan he was,
So motionless. But there came by that way
A shepherd-boy, who saw Siddhārtha lie
With lids fast-closed, and lines of nameless pain
Fixed on his lips—the fiery noonday sun
Beating upon his head—who, plucking boughs
From wild rose-apple trees, knitted them thick
Into a bower to shade the sacred face.
Also he poured upon the Master's lips
Drops of warm milk, pressed from his she-goat's bag,
Lest, being of low caste, he do wrong to one
So high and holy seeming. But the books
Tell how the jambu-branches, planted thus,
Shot with quick life in wealth of leaf and flower.
And glowing fruitage interlaced and close,
So that the bower grew like a tent of silk
Pitched for a king at hunting, decked with studs
Of silver-work and bosses of red gold.
And the boy worshiped, deeming him some God;
But our Lord gaining breath, arose and asked
Milk in the shepherd's lota. "Ah, my Lord,
I cannot give thee," quoth the lad; "thou seest
I am a Śūdra, and my touch defiles!"
Then the World-honored spake: "Pity and need
Make all flesh kin. There is no caste in blood,
Which runneth of one hue, nor caste in tears,
Which trickle salt with all; neither comes man
To birth with tilkā-mark stamped on the brow,

Nor sacred thread on neck. Who doth right deeds
Is twice-born, and who doeth ill deeds vile.
Give me a drink, my brother; when I come
Unto my quest it shall be good for thee.”
Thereat the peasant’s heart was glad, and gave.

And on another day there passed that road
A band of tinselled girls, the nautch-dancers
Of Indra’s temple in the town, with those
Who made their music—one that beat a drum
Set round with peacock-feathers, one that blew
The piping bansuli, and one that twitched
A three-string sītār. Lightly tripped they down
From ledge to ledge and through the chequered paths
To some gay festival, the silver bells
Chiming soft peals about the small brown feet,
Armlets and wrist-rings tattling answer shrill;
While he that bore the sitar thrummed and twanged
His threads of brass, and she beside him sang—

*“Fair goes the dancing when the sitar’s tuned;
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high,
And we will dance away the hearts of men.*

*The string o’erstretched breaks, and the music flies;
The string o’erslack is dumb, and music dies;
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high.”*

So sang the nautch-girl to the pipe and wires,
Fluttering like some vain, painted butterfly
From glade to glade along the forest path,
Nor dreamed her light words echoed on the ear
Of him, that holy man, who sate so rapt
Under the fig-tree by the path. But Buddh
Lifted his great brow as the wantons passed,
And spake: “The foolish oftentimes teach the wise;
I strain too much this string of life, belike,
Meaning to make such music as shall save.
Mine eyes are dim now that they see the truth,
My strength is waned now that my need is most;
Would that I had such help as man must have,
For I shall die, whose life was all men’s hope.”

Now, by that river dwelt a landholder
Pious and rich, master of many herds,
A goodly chief, the friend of all the poor;
And from his house the village drew its name—
“Senānī.” Pleasant and in peace he lived,
Having for wife Sujātā, loveliest
Of all the dark-eyed daughters of the plain;
Gentle and true, simple and kind was she,
Noble of mien, with gracious speech to all
And gladsome looks—a pearl of womanhood—
Passing calm years of household happiness
Beside her lord in that still Indian home,
Save that no male child blessed their wedded love.
Wherefore with many prayers she had besought
Lukshmi; and many nights at full-moon gone
Round the great Lingam, nine times nine, with gifts
Of rice and jasmine wreaths and sandal oil,
Praying a boy; also Sujātā vowed—
If this should be—an offering of food
Unto the Wood-God, plenteous, delicate,
Set in a bowl of gold under his tree,
Such as the lips of Devs may taste and take.
And this had been: for there was born to her
A beauteous boy, now three months old, who lay
Between Sujata’s breasts, while she did pace
With grateful foot-steps to the Wood-God’s shrine,
One arm clasping her crimson sari close
To wrap the babe, that jewel of her joys,
The other lifted high in comely curve
To steady on her head the bowl and dish
Which held the dainty victuals for the God.

But Rādhā, sent before to sweep the ground
And tie the scarlet threads around the tree,
Came eager, crying, “Ah, dear Mistress! look!
There is the Wood-God sitting in his place,
Revealed, with folded hands upon his knees.
See how the light shines round about his brow!
How mild and great he seems, with heavenly eyes!
Good fortune is it thus to meet the gods.”

So,—thinking him divine,—Sujātā drew
Tremblingly nigh, and kissed the earth and said,
With sweet face bent, “Would that the Holy One
Inhabiting this grove, Giver of good,
Merciful unto me his handmaiden,
Vouchsafing now his presence, might accept
These our poor gifts of snowy curds, fresh-made,
With milk as white as new-carved ivory!”

Therewith into the golden bowl she poured
The curds and milk, and on the hands of Buddh
Dropped attar from a crystal flask—distilled
Out of the hearts of roses: and he ate,
Speaking no word, while the glad mother stood
In reverence apart. But of that meal
So wondrous was the virtue that our Lord
Felt strength and life return as though the nights
Of watching and the days of fast had passed
In dream, as though the spirit with the flesh
Shared that fine meat and plumed its wings anew,
Like some delighted bird at sudden streams
Weary with flight o'er endless wastes of sand,
Which laves the desert dust from neck and crest.
And more Sujātā worshiped, seeing our Lord
Grow fairer and his countenance more bright:
“Art thou indeed the God?” she lowly asked,
“And hath my gift found favor?”

But Buddh said,
“What is it thou dost bring me?”
“Holy one!”
Answered Sujātā, “from our droves I took
Milk of a hundred mothers newly-calved,
And with that milk I fed fifty white cows,
And with their milk twenty-and-five, and then
With theirs twelve more, and yet again with theirs
The six noblest and best of all our herds.
That yield I boiled with sandal and fine spice
In silver lotas, adding rice, well grown
From chosen seed, set in new-broken ground,
So picked that every grain was like a pearl.
This did I of true heart, because I vowed

Under thy tree, if I should bear a boy
I would make offering for my joy, and now
I have my son and all my life is bliss!"

Softly our Lord drew down the crimson fold,
And, laying on the little head those hands
Which help the worlds, he said, "Long be thy bliss!
And lightly fall on him the load of life!
For thou hast holpen me who am no God,
But one, thy Brother; heretofore a Prince
And now a wanderer, seeking night and day
These six hard years that light which somewhere shines
To lighten all men's darkness, if they knew!
And I shall find the light; yea, now it dawned
Glorious and helpful, when my weak flesh failed
Which this pure food, fair Sister, hath restored,
Drawn manifold through lives to quicken life
As life itself passes by many births
To happier heights and purging off of sins.
Yet dost thou truly find it sweet enough
Only to live? Can life and love suffice?"

Answered Sujātā, "Worshipful! my heart
Is little, and a little rain will fill
The lily's cup which hardly moists the field.
It is enough for me to feel life's sun
Shine in my Lord's grace and my baby's smile,
Making the loving summer of our home.
Pleasant my days pass filled with household cares
From sunrise when I wake to praise the gods,
And give forth grain, and trim the tulsi-plant,
And set my handmaids to their tasks, till noon,
When my Lord lays his head upon my lap
Lulled by soft songs and wavings of the fan;
And so to supper-time at quiet eve,
When by his side I stand and serve the cakes.
Then the stars light their silver lamps for sleep,
After the temple and the talk with friends.
How should I not be happy, blest so much,
And bearing him this boy whose tiny hand
Shall lead his soul to Svarga, if it need?
For holy books teach when a man shall plant

Trees for the travelers' shade, and dig a well
For the folks' comfort, and beget a son,
It shall be good for such after their death;
And what the books say that I humbly take,
Being not wiser than those great of old
Who spake with gods, and knew the hymns and charms,
And all the ways of virtue and of peace.
Also I think that good must come of good
And ill of evil—surely—unto all—
In every place and time—seeing sweet fruit
Growtheth from wholesome roots, and bitter things
From poison-stocks; yea, seeing, too, how spite
Breedeth hate, and kindness friends, and patience peace
Even while we live; and when 'tis willed we die
Shall there not be as good a 'Then' as 'Now'?
Haply much better! since one grain of rice
Shoots a green feather gemmed with fifty-pearls,
And all the starry champak's white and gold
Lurks in those little, naked, grey spring-buds,
Ah, Sir. I know there might be woes to bear
Would lay fond Patience with her face in dust;
If this my babe pass first I think my heart
Would break—almost I hope my heart would break!
That I might clasp him dead and wait my Lord—
In whatsoever world holds faithful wives—
Duteous, attending till his hour should come.
But if Death called Senānī, I should mount
The pile and lay that dear head in my lap,
My daily way, rejoicing when the torch
Lit the quick flame and rolled the choking smoke.
For it is written if an Indian wife
Die so, her love shall give her husband's soul
For every hair upon her head a crore
Of years in Svarga. Therefore fear I not.
And therefore, Holy Sir! my life is glad,
Nowise forgetting yet those other lives
Painful and poor, wicked and miserable,
Whereupon the gods grant pity! but for me,
What good I see humbly I seek to do,
And live obedient to the law, in trust
That what will come, and must come, shall come well.”

Then spake our Lord, "Thou teachest them who teach,
Wiser than wisdom in thy simple lore.
Be thou content to know not, knowing thus
Thy way of right and duty: grow, thou flower!
With thy sweet kind in peaceful shade—the light
Of Truth's high noon is not for tender leaves
Which must spread broad in other suns and lift
In later lives a crowned head to the sky.
Thou who hast worshipped me, I worship thee!
Excellent heart! learned unknowingly.
As the dove is which flieth home by love.
In thee is seen why there is hope for man
And where we hold the wheel of life at will.
Peace go with thee, and comfort all thy days!
As thou accomplish, may I achieve!
He whom thou thoughtest God bids thee wish this."

"May'st thou achieve," she said, with earnest eyes
Bent on her babe, who reached its tender hands
To Buddh—knowing, belike, as children know,
More than we deem, and reverencing our Lord;
But he arose—made strong with that pure meat—
And bent his footsteps where a great Tree grew,
The Bodhi-tree (thenceforward in all years
Never to fade, and ever to be kept
In homage of the world), beneath whose leaves
It was ordained that truth should come to Buddh:
Which now the Master knew; wherefore he went
With measured pace, steadfast, majestical,
Unto the Tree of Wisdom. Oh, ye Worlds!
Rejoice! our Lord wended unto the Tree!

Whom—as he passed into its ample shade,
Cloistered with columned drooping stems, and roofed
With vaults of glistening green—the conscious earth
Worshipped with waving grass and sudden flush
Of flowers about his feet. The forest-boughs
Bent down to shade him; from the river sighed
Cool wafts of wind laden with lotus-scents
Breathed by the water-gods. Large wondering eyes
Of woodland creatures—panther, boar, and deer—

At peace that eve, gazed on his face benign
For cave and thicket. From its cold cleft wound
The mottled deadly snake, dancing its hood
In honor of our Lord; bright butterflies
Fluttered their vans, azure and green and gold,
To be his fan-bearers; the fierce kite dropped
Its prey and screamed; the striped palm-squirrel raced
From stem to stem to see; the weaver-bird
Chirped from her swinging nest; the lizard ran;
The koil sang her hymn; the doves flocked round;
Even the creeping things were 'ware and glad.
Voices of earth and air joined in one song,
Which unto ears that hear said, "Lord and Friend!
Lover and Saviour! Thou who hast subdued
Angers and prides, desires and fears and doubts,
Thou that for each and all hast given thyself,
Pass to the Tree! The sad world blesseth thee
Who art the Buddh that shall assuage her woes.
Pass, Hailed and Honored! strive thy last for us,
King and high Conqueror! thine hour is come;
This is the Night the ages waited for!"

Then fell the night even as our Master sate
Under that Tree. But he who is the Prince
Of Darkness, Māra—knowing this was Buddh
Who should deliver men, and now the hour
When he should find the Truth and save the worlds—
Gave unto all his evil powers command.
Wherefore there trooped from every deepest pit
The fiends who war with Wisdom and the Light,
Ārati, Trṣṇā, Rāga, and their crew
Of passions, horrors, ignorances, lusts,
The brood of gloom and dread; all hating Buddh,
Seeking to shake his mind; nor knoweth one,
Not even the wisest, how those fiends of Hell
Battled that night to keep the Truth from Buddh:
Sometimes with terrors of the tempest, blasts
Of demon-armies clouding all the wind,
With thunder, and with blinding lightning flung
In jagged javelins of purple wrath
From splitting skies; sometimes with wiles and words

Fair-sounding, 'mid hushed leaves and softened airs
From shapes of witching beauty; wanton songs,
Whispers of love; sometimes with royal allures
Of proffered rule; sometimes with mocking doubts,
Making truth vain. But whether these befell
Without and visible, or whether Buddh
Strove with fell spirits in his inmost heart,
Judge ye:—I write what ancient books have writ.

The ten chief Sins came—Māra's mighty ones,
Angels of evil—Ātmavāda first,
The Sin of Self, who in the Universe
As in a mirror sees her fond face shown,
And crying “I” would have the world say “I,”
And all things perish so if she endure.
“If thou be'st Buddh,” said she, “let others grope
Lightless; it is enough that thou art Thou
Changelessly; rise and take the bliss of gods
Who change not, heed not, strive not.” But Buddh spake,
“The right in thee is base, the wrong a curse;
Cheat such as love themselves.” Then came wan Doubt,
He that denies—the mocking Sin—and this
Hissed in the Master's ear, “All things are shows,
And vain the knowledge of their vanity;
Thou dost but chase the shadow of thyself;
Rise and go hence, there is no better way
Than patient scorn, nor any help for man,
Nor any staying of his whirling weel.”
But quoth our Lord, “Thou hast no part with me,
False Visikitcha, subtlest of man's foes.”
And third came she who gives dark creeds their power,
Sīlabbata-parāmāsa, sorceress,
Draped fair in many lands as lowly Faith,
But ever juggling souls with rites and prayers;
The keeper of those keys which lock up Hells
And open Heavens. “Wilt thou dare,” she said,
“Put by our sacred books, dethrone our gods,
Unpeople all the temples, shaking down
That law which feeds the priests and props the realms?”
But Buddha answered, “What thou bidd'st me keep
Is form which passes, but the free Truth stands;

Get thee unto thy darkness." Next there drew
Gallantly nigh a braver Tempter, he,
Kāma, the King of passions, who hath sway
Over the Gods themselves, Lord of all loves,
Ruler of Pleasure's realm. Laughing he came
Unto the tree, bearing his bow of gold
Wreathed with red blooms, and arrows of desire
Pointed with five-tongued delicate flame which stings
The heart it smites sharper than poisoned barb:
And round him came into that lonely place
Bands of bright shapes with heavenly eyes and lips
Singing in lovely words the praise of Love
To music of invisible sweet chords,
So witching that it seemed the night stood still
To hear them, and the listening stars and moon
Paused in their orbits while these hymned to Buddh
Of lost delights, and how a mortal man
Findeth nought dearer in the three wide worlds
Than are the yielding loving fragrant breasts
Of Beauty and the rosy breast-blossoms,
Love's rubies; nay, and toucheth nought more high
Than is that dulcet harmony of form
Seen in the lines and charms of loveliness
Unspeakable, yet speaking soul to soul,
Owned by the bounding blood, worshipped by will
Which leaps to seize it, knowing this is best,
This is the true heaven where mortals are like gods,
Makers and Masters, this the gift of gifts
Ever renewed and worth a thousand woes.
For who hath grieved when soft arms shut him safe,
And all life melted to a happy sigh,
And all the world was given in one warm kiss?
So sang they with soft float of beckoning hands,
Eyes lighted with love-flames, alluring smiles;
In dainty dance their supple sides and limbs
Revealing and concealing like burst buds
Which tell their color, but hide yet their hearts.
Never so matchless grace delighted eye
As troop by troop these midnight-dancers swept
Nearer the Tree, each daintier than the last,
Murmuring "O great Siddhārtha! I am thine,

Taste of my mouth and see if youth is sweet!"
Also, when nothing moved our Master's mind,
Lo! Kāma waved his magic bow, and lo!
The band of dancers opened, and a shape
Fairest and stateliest of the throng came forth
Wearing the guise of sweet Yaśodharā.
Tender the passion of those dark eyes seemed
Brimming with tears; yearning those outspread arms
Opened toward him; musical that moan
Wherewith the beauteous shadow named his name,
Sighing "My Prince! I die for lack of thee!"
What heaven hast thou found like that we knew
By bright Rohinī in the Pleasure-house,
Where all these weary years I weep for thee?
Return, Siddhārtha! ah! return. But touch
My lips again, but let me to thy breast
Once, and these fruitless dreams will end! Ah, look!
Am I not she thou lovedst?" But Buddh said,
"For that sweet sake of her thou playest thus
Fair and false Shadow! is thy playing vain;
I curse thee not who wear'st a form so dear,
Yet as thou art so are all earthly shows.
Melt to thy void again!" Thereat a cry
Thrilled through the grove, and all that comely rout
Faded with flickering wafts of flame, and trail
Of vaporous robes.

Next under darkening skies
And noise of rising storm came fiercer Sins,
The rearmost of the Ten; Patigha—Hate—
With serpents coiled about her waist, which suck
Poisonous milk from both her hanging dugs,
And with her curses mix their angry hiss.
Little wrought she upon that Holy One
Who with his calm eyes dumbed her bitter lips
And made her black snakes writhe to hide their fangs.
Then followed Rūparāga—Lust of days—
That sensual Sin which out of greed for life
Forgets to live; and next him Lust of Fame,
Nobler Arūparāga, she whose spell
Beguiles the wise, mother of daring deeds,
Battles, and toils. And haughty Mano came,

The Fiend of Pride; and smooth Self-Righteousness,
Uddhacca; and—with many a hideous band
Of vile and formless things, which crept and flapped
Toad-like and bat-like—Ignorance, the Dam
Of Fear and Wrong, Avidyā, hideous hag,
Whose footsteps left the midnight darker, while
The rooted mountains shook, the wild winds howled,
The broken clouds shed from their caverns streams
Of levin-lighted rain; stars shot from heaven,
The solid earth shuddered as if one laid
Flame to her gaping wounds; the torn black air
Was full of whistling wings, of screams and yells,
Of evil faces peering, of vast fronts
Terrible and majestic, Lords of Hell
Who from a thousand Limbos led their troops
To tempt the Master.

But Buddh heeded not,
Sitting serene, with perfect virtue walled
As is a stronghold by its gates and ramps;
Also the Sacred Tree—the Bodhi-tree—
Amid that tumult stirred not, but each leaf
Glistened as still as when on moonlit eves
No zephyr spills the glittering gems of dew;
For all this clamor raged outside the shade
Spread by those cloistered stems:

In the third watch,
The earth being still, the hellish legions fled,
A soft air breathing from the sinking moon,
Our Lord attained *Sammā-sambuddh*; he saw
By light which shines beyond our mortal ken
The line of all his lives in all the worlds,
Far back and farther back and farthest yet,
Five hundred lives and fifty. Even as one,
At rest upon a mountain-summit, marks
His path wind up by precipice and crag,
Past thick-set woods shrunk to a patch; through bogs
Glittering false-green; down hollows where he toiled
Breathless; on dizzy ridges where his feet
Had well-nigh slipped; beyond the sunny lawns,
The cataract and cavern and the pool,
Backward to those dim flats wherefrom he sprang

To reach the blue; thus Buddh did behold
Life's upward steps long-linked, from levels low
Where breath is base, to higher slopes and higher
Whereon the ten great Virtues wait to lead
The climber skyward. Also, Buddh saw
How new life reaps what the old life did sow:
How where its march breaks off its march begins;
Holding the gain and answering for the loss;
And how in each life good begets more good,
Evil fresh evil; Death but casting up
Debit or credit, whereupon th' account
In merits or demerits stamps itself
By sure arithmetic—where no tittle drops—
Certain and just, on some new-springing life;
Wherein are packed and scored past thoughts and deeds,
Strivings and triumphs, memories and marks
Of lives foregone:

And in the middle watch
Our Lord attained *Abhijñā*—in sight vast
Ranging beyond this sphere to spheres unnamed,
System on system, countless worlds and suns
Moving in splendid measures, band by band
Linked in division, one, yet separate,
The silver islands of a sapphire sea
Shoreless, unfathomed, undiminished, stirred
With waves which roll in restless tides of change.
He saw those Lords of Light who hold their worlds
By bonds invisible, how they themselves
Circle obedient round mightier orbs
Which serve profounder splendors, star to star
Flashing the ceaseless radiance of life
From centers ever shifting unto cirques
Knowing no uttermost. These he beheld
With unsealed vision, and of all those worlds,
Cycle on epicycle, all their tale
Of Kalpas, Mahākalpas—terms of time
Which no man grasps, yea, though he knew to count
The drops in Gaṅgā from her springs to the sea,
Measureless unto speech—whereby these wax
And wane; whereby each of this heavenly host

Fulfils its shining life and darkling dies.
Sakwal by Sakwal, depths and heights he passed
Transported through the blue infinitudes,
Marking—behind all modes, above all spheres,
Beyond the burning impulse of each orb—
That fixed decree at silent work which wills
Evolve the dark to light, the dead to life,
To fulness void, to form the yet unformed,
Good unto better, better unto best,
By wordless edict; having none to bid,
None to forbid; for this is past all gods
Immutable, unspeakable, supreme,
A Power which builds, unbuilds, and builds again,
Ruling all things accordant to the rule
Of virtue, which is beauty, truth, and use.
So that all things do well which serve the Power,
And ill which hinder; nay, the worm does well,
Obedient to its kind; the hawk does well
Which carries bleeding quarries to its young;
The dewdrop and the star shine sisterly,
Globing together in the common work;
And man who lives to die, dies to live well
So if he guide his ways by blamelessness
And earnest will to hinder not but help
All things both great and small which suffered life.
These did our Lord see in the middle watch.

But when the fourth which came the secret came
Of Sorrow, which with evil mars the law,
As damp and dross hold back the goldsmith's fire.
Then was the Duhkha-satya opened him
First of the "Noble Truths;" how Sorrow is
Shadow to life, moving where life doth move;
Not to be laid aside until one lays
Living aside, with all its changing states,
Birth, growth, decay, love, hatred, pleasure, pain,
Being and doing. How that none strips off
These sad delights and pleasant griefs who lacks
Knowledge to know them snares; but he who knows
Avidyā—Delusion—sets those snares,
Love's life no longer but ensues escape.

The eyes of such a one are wide, he sees
Delusion breeds Saṅkhāra, Tendency
Perverse: Tendency, Energy—Vidnnan—
Whereby comes Nāma-rūpa, local form
And name and bodiment, bringing the man
With senses naked to the sensible,
A helpless mirror of all shows which pass
Across his heart; and so Vedanā grows—
“Sense-life”—false in its gladness, fell in sadness,
But sad or glad, the Mother of Desire,
Trsñā, that thirst which makes the living drink
Deeper and deeper of the false salt waves
Whereupon they float, pleasures, ambitions, wealth,
Praise, fame, or domination, conquest, love;
Rich meats and robes, and fair abodes, and pride
Of ancient lines, and lust of days, and strife
To live, and sins that flow from strife, some sweet,
Some bitter. Thus Life’s thirst quenches itself
With draughts which double thirst, but who is wise
Tears from his soul this Trsñā, feeds his sense
No longer on false shows, files his firm mind
To seek not, strive not, wrong not; bearing meek
All ills which flow from foregone wrongfulness,
And so constraining passions that they die
Famished; till all the sum of ended life—
The *Karma*—all that total of a soul
Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,
The ‘Self’ it wove—with woof of viewless time,
Crossed on the warp invisible of acts—
The outcome of him on the Universe,
Grows pure and sinless; either never more
Needing to find a body and a place,
Or so informing what fresh frame it takes
In new existence that the new toils prove
Lighter and lighter not to be at all,
Thus “finishing the Path;” free from Earth’s cheats;
Released from all the skandhas of the flesh;
Broken from ties—from Upādānas—saved
From whirling on the wheel; aroused and sane
As is a man wakened from hateful dreams.
Until—greater than Kings, than Gods more glad!—

The aching craze to live ends, and life glides—
Lifeless—to nameless quiet, nameless joy,
Blessed NIRVĀNA—sinless, stirless rest—
That change which never changes!

Lo! the Dawn

Sprang with Buddh's Victory! lo! in the East
Flamed the first fires of beauteous day, poured forth
Through fleeting folds of Night's black drapery.
High in the widening blue the herald-star
Faded to paler silver as there shot
Brighter and brightest bars of rosy gleam
Across the grey. Far off the shadowy hills
Saw the great Sun, before the world was 'ware,
And donned their crowns of crimson; flower by flower
Felt the warm breath of Morn and 'gan unfold
Their tender lids. Over the spangled grass
Swept the swift footsteps of the lovely Light,
Turning the tears of Night to joyous gems,
Decking the earth with radiance, 'broidering
The sinking storm-clouds with a golden fringe,
Gilding the feathers of the palms, which waved
Glad salutation; darting beams of gold
Into the glades; touching with magic wand
The stream to rippled ruby; in the brake
Finding the mild eyes of the antelopes
And saying "it is day;" in nested sleep
Touching the small heads under many a wing
And whispering, "Children, praise the light of day!"
Whereat there piped anthems of all the birds,
The Kōil's fluted song, the Bulbul's hymn,
The "morning, morning" of the painted thrush,
The twitter of the sunbirds starting forth
To find the honey ere the bees be out,
The grey crow's caw, the parrot's scream, the strokes
Of the green hammersmith, the myna's chirp,
The never finished love-talk of the doves:
Yea! and so holy was the influence
Of that high Dawn which came with victory
That, far and near, in homes of men there spread
An unknown peace. The slayer hid his knife;

The robber laid his plunder back; the shroff
Counted full tale of coins; all evil hearts
Grew gentle, kind hearts gentler, as the balm
Of that divinest Daybreak lightened Earth.
Kings at fierce war called truce; the sick man leaped
Laughing from beds of pain; the dying smiled
As though they knew that happy Morn was sprung
From fountains farther than the utmost East:
And o'er the heart of sad Yaśodharā,
Sitting forlorn at Prince Siddhārtha's bed,
Came sudden bliss, as if love should not fail
Nor such vast sorrow miss to end in joy.
So glad the World was—though it wist not why—
That over desolate wastes went swooning songs
Of mirth, the voice of bodiless Prets and Bhūtas
Foreseeing Buddh; and Devas in the air
Cried “It is finished, finished!” and the priests
Stood with the wondering people in the streets
Watching those golden splendors flood the sky
And saying “There hath happed some mighty thing.”
Also in Ran and Jungle grew that day
Friendship amongst the creatures; spotted deer
Browsed fearless where the tigress fed her cubs,
And cheetahs lapped the pool beside the bucks;
Under the eagle's rocks the brown hares scoured
While his fierce beak but preened an idle wing;
The snake sunned all his jewels in the beam
With deadly fangs in sheath; the shrike let pass
The nestling-finch; the emerald halcyons
Sate dreaming while the fishes played beneath,
Nor hawked the merops, though the butterflies—
Crimson and blue and amber—flitted thick
Around his perch; the Spirit of our Lord
Lay potent upon man and bird and beast,
Even while he mused under that Bodhi-tree
Glorified with the Conquest gained for all
And lightened by a Light greater than Day's.

Then he arose—radiant, rejoicing, strong—
Beneath the Tree, and lifting high his voice
Spake this, in hearing of all Times and Worlds:—

*Anekajāti-saṃsāram
sandhāvissaṃ anibbisāṃ;
gahakārakaṃ gavesanto,
dukkhā jāti punappunam.*

*Gahakāraka diṭṭhosi,
punagehaṃ na kāhasi;
sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā,
gahakūṭaṃ visaṅkhataṃ;
visaṅkhāragataṃ cittam,
tanhānaṃ khayamajjhagā.*

{Poetic English translation (*Dhammapada* verses 153–154):

Through countless births I wandered on,
seeking but never finding the builder of this house.
Sorrowful indeed is birth again and again.

O house-builder! You are seen at last—
you shall not build this house again.
All your rafters are broken,
your ridge-pole is destroyed.
My mind has reached the Unconditioned;
the craving's end has been attained.}

MANY A HOUSE OF LIFE
HATH HELD ME—SEEKING EVER HIM WHO WROUGHT
THESE PRISONS OF THE SENSES, SORROW-FRAUGHT;
SORE WAS MY CEASELESS STRIFE!

BUT NOW,
THOU BUILDER OF THIS TABERNACLE—THOU!
I KNOW THEE! NEVER SHALT THOU BUILD AGAIN
THESE WALLS OF PAIN,
NOR RAISE THE ROOF-TREE OF DECEITS, NOR LAY
FRESH RAFTERS ON THE CLAY;
BROKEN THY HOUSE IS, AND THE RIDGE-POLE SPLIT!
DELUSION FASHIONED IT!
SAFE PASS I THENCE—DELIVERANCE TO OBTAIN.

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

SORROWFUL dwelt the King Śuddhodana
All those long years among the Śākyā Lords
Lacking the speech and presence of his Son;
Sorrowful sate the sweet Yaśodharā
All those long years, knowing no joy of life,
Widowed of him her living Liege and Prince
And ever, on the news of some recluse
Seen far away by pasturing camel-men
Or traders threading devious paths for gain,
Messengers from the King had gone and come
Bringing account of many a holy sage
Lonely and lost to home; but nought of him
The crown of white Kapilavastu's line,
The glory of her monarch and his hope,
The heart's content of sweet Yaśodharā,
Far-wandered now, forgetful, changed, or dead.

But on a day in the Vasanta-time,
When silver sprays swing on the mango trees
And all the earth is clad with garb of spring,
The Princess sate by that bright garden-stream
Whose gliding glass, bordered with lotus-cups,
Mirrored so often in the bliss gone by
Their clinging hands and meeting lips. Her lids
Were wan with tears, her tender cheeks had thinned;
Her lips' delicious curves were drawn with grief;
The lustrous glory of her hair was hid—
Close bound as widows use; no ornament
She wore, nor any jewel clasped the cloth—
Coarse, and of mourning-white—crossed on her breast
Slow moved and painfully those small fine feet
Which had the roe's gait and the rose-leaf's fall
In old years at the loving voice of him.
Her eyes, those lamps of love,—which were as if
Sunlight should shine from out the deepest dark,
Illumining Night's peace with Daytime's glow—
Unlighted now, and roving aimlessly,
Scarce marked the clustering signs of coming Spring

So the silk lashes drooped over their orbs.
In one hand was a girdle thick with pearls,
Siddhārtha's—treasured since that night he fled—
(Ah, bitter Night! mother of weeping days!
When was fond Love so pitiless to love
Save that this scorned to limit love by life?)
The other led her little son, a boy
Divinely fair the pledge Siddhārtha left—
Named Rāhula—now seven years old, who tripped
Gladsome beside his mother, light of heart
To see the spring-blooms burgeon o'er the world.

So while they lingered by the lotus-pools
And, lightly laughing, Rāhula flung rice
To feed the blue and purple fish; and she
With sad eyes watched the swiftly-flying cranes,
Sighing, "Oh! creatures of the wandering wing,
If ye shall light where my dear Lord is hid,
Say that Yaśodharā lives nigh to death
For one word of his mouth, one touch of him!"—
So, as they played and sighed—mother and child—
Came some among the damsels of the Court
Saying, "Great Princess! there have entered in
At the south gate merchants of Hastinapura
Tripuṣa, called and Bhalluka, men of worth,
Long traveled from the loud sea's edge, who bring
Marvelous lovely webs pictured with gold,
Waved blades of gilded steel, wrought bowls in brass,
Cut ivories, spice, simples, and unknown birds,
Treasures of far-off peoples; but they bring
That which doth beggar these, for He is seen!
Thy Lord,—our Lord,—the hope of all the land—
Siddhārtha! they have seen him face to face,
Yea, and have worshipped him with knees and brows,
And offered offerings; for he is become
All which was shown, a teacher of the wise,
World-honored, holy, wonderful; a Buddh
Who doth deliver men and save all flesh
By sweetest speech and pity vast as Heaven:
And, lo! he journeyeth hither these do say."

Then—while the glad blood bounded in her veins
As Gaṅgā leaps when first the mountain snows
Melt at her springs—uprose Yaśodharā
And clapped her palms, and laughed, with brimming tears
Beading her lashes. “Oh! call quick,” she cried:
“These merchants to my purdah, for mine ears
Thirst like parched throats to drink their blessed news.
Go bring them in,—but if their tale be true,
Say I will fill their girdles with much gold,
With gems that Kings shall envy: come ye too,
My girls, for ye shall have guerdon of this
If there be gifts to speak my greatful heart.”

So went those merchants to the Pleasure-House,
Full softly pacing through its golden ways
With naked feet, amid the peering maids,
Much wondering at the glories of the Court.
Whom, when they came without the purdah’s folds,
A voice, tender and eager, filled and charmed
With trembling music, saying, “Ye are come
From far, fair Sirs! and ye have seen my Lord—
Yea, worshipped—for he is become a Buddh,
World-honored, holy, and delivers men,
And journeyeth hither. Speak! for, if this be,
Friends are ye of my House, welcome and dear.”

Then answer made Tripuṣa, “We have seen
That sacred Master, Princess! we have bowed
Before his feet; for who was lost a Prince
Is found a greater than the King of kings.
Under the Bodhi-tree by Phalgu’s bank
That which shall save the world hath late been wrought
By him—the Friend of all, the Prince of all—
Thine most, High Lady! from whose tears men win
The comfort of this Word the Master speaks.
Lo! he is well, as one beyond all ills,
Uplifted as a god from earthly woes,
Shining with risen Truth, golden and clear.
Moreover as he entereth town by town,
Preaching those noble ways which lead to peace,
The hearts of men follow his path as leaves

Troop to wind or sheep draw after one
Who knows the pastures. We ourselves have heard
By Gayā in the green Cīrṇikā grove
Those wondrous lips and done them reverence:
He cometh hither ere the first rains fall.”

Thus spake he, and Yaśodharā, for joy,
Scarce mastered breath to answer, “Be it well
Now and at all times with ye, worthy friends!
Who bring good tidings; but of this great thing
Wist ye how it befell?”

Then Bhalluk told
Such as the people of the valleys knew
Of that dread night of conflict, when the air
Darkened with fiendish shadows, and the earth
Quaked, and the waters swelled with Māra’s wrath.
Also how gloriously that morning broke
Radiant with rising hopes for man, and how
The Lord was found rejoicing ’neath his Tree.
But many days the burden of release—
To be escaped beyond all storms of doubt,
Safe on Truth’s shore—lay, spake he, on that heart
A golden load; for how shall men—Buddh mused—
Who love their sins and cleave to cheats of sense,
And drink of error from a thousand springs—
Having no mind to see, nor strength to break
The fleshly snare which binds them—how should such
Receive the Twelve Nidānas and the Law
Redeeming all, yet strange to profit by,
As the caged bird oft shuns its opened door?
So had we missed the helpful victory
If, in this earth without a refuge, Buddh
Winning the way, had deemed it all too hard
For mortal feet, and passed, none following him.
Yet pondered the compassion of our Lord,
But in that hour there range a voice as sharp
As cry of travail, so as if the earth
Moaned in birth-throe “*Naśyāmi aham, bhūḥ
Naśyati lokah!*”¹ SURELY I AM LOST,
I AND MY CREATURES: then a pause, and next
A pleading sigh borne on the western wind,

“*Śrūyatām Dharma-Bhāgavatam!*”² OH, SUPREME!
LET THY GREAT LAW BE UTTERED! Whereupon
The Master cast his vision forth on flesh,
Saw who should hear and who must wait to hear,
As the keen Sun gilding the lotus-lakes
Seeth which buds will open to his beams
And which are not yet risen from their roots;
Then spake, divinely smiling, “Yea! I preach!
Whoso will listen let him learn the Law.”

Afterwards passed he, said they, by the hills
Unto Benares, where he taught the Five,
Showing how birth and death should be destroyed,
And how man hath no fate except past deeds,
No Hell but what he makes, no Heaven too high
For those to reach whose passions sleep subdued.
This was the fifteenth day of Vaishya
Mid-afternoon and that night was full moon.

But, of the R̄sis, first Kaundinya
Owned the Four Truths and entered on the Paths;
And after him Bhadrika, Ásvajit,
Basava, Mahānāma; also there
Within the Deer-park, at the feet of Buddh,
Yaśada, the Prince, with nobles fifty-four
Hearing the blessed word our Master spake
Worshipped and followed; for there sprang up peace
And knowledge of a new time come for men
In all who heard, as spring the flowers and grass
When water sparkles through a sandy plain.

These sixty—said they—did our Lord send forth
Made perfect in restraint and passion free,
To teach the Way; but the World-honored turned
South from the Deer-park and Isipatan
To Yaṣṭi and King Bimbisāra’s realm,
Where many days he taught; and after these
King Bimbisāra and his folk believed,
Learning the law of love and ordered life.
Also he gave the Master, of free gift,—
Pouring forth water on the hands of Buddh—

The Bamboo-Garden, named Veluvana,
Wherein are streams and caves and lovely glades;
And the King set a stone there, carved with this:—

*Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā
tesam hetum Tathāgato āha;
tesañca yo nirodho
evaṁ vādī Mahāsamaṇo.*

“What life’s course and cause sustain
These Tathagato made plain;
What delivers from life’s woe
That our Lord hath made us know.”

And, in that Garden—said they—there was held
A high Assembly, where the Teacher spake
Wisdom and power, winning all souls which heard,
So that nine hundred took the yellow robe—
Such as the Master wears,—and spread his Law;
And this the gatha was wherewith he closed:—

*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇam,
kusalassa upasampadā;
sacittapariyodapanam,
etam buddhānam sāsanam.*

“Evil swells the debts to pay,
Good delivers and acquits;
Shun evil, follow good; hold sway
Over thyself. This is the Way.”

Whom, when they ended, speaking so of him,
With gifts, and thanks which made the jewels dull,
The Princess recompensed. “But by what road
Wendeth my Lord?” she asked: the merchants said,

“Yojans three score stretch from the city-walls
To Rājagrha, whence the easy path
Passeth by Sona hither and the hills.
Our oxen, treading eight slow koss a day,
Came in one moon.”

Then the King hearing word,
Sent nobles of the Court—well-mounted lords—
Nine separate messengers, each embassy
Bidden to say, “The King Śuddhodana—
Nearer the pyre by seven long years of lack,
Wherethrough he hath not ceased to seek for thee—
Prays of his son to come unto his own,
The Throne and people of this longing Realm,
Lest he shall die and see thy face no more.”
Also nine horsemen sent Yaśodhārā
Bidden to say, “The Princess of thy House—
Rāhula’s mother—craves to see thy face
As the night-blowing moon-flower’s swelling heart
Pines for the moon, as pale ásoka-buds
Wait for a woman’s foot: if thou hast found
More than was lost, she prays her part in this,
Rāhula’s part, but most of all thyself.”
So sped the Śākyā Lords, but it befell
That each one, with the message in his mouth,
Entered the Bamboo-Garden in that hour
When Buddha taught his Law; and—hearing—each
Forgot to speak, lost thought of King and quest,
Of the sad Princess even; only gazed
Eye-rapt upon the Master; only hung
Heart-caught upon the speech, compassionate,
Commanding, perfect, pure, enlightening all,
Poured from those sacred lips. Look! like a bee
Winged for the hive, who sees the mogras spread
And scents their utter sweetness on the air,
If he be honey-filled, it matters not;
If night be nigh, or rain, he will not heed;
Needs must he light on those delicious blooms
And drain their nectar; so these messengers
One with another, hearing Buddha’s words,
Let go the purpose of their speed, and mixed,
Heedless of all, amid the Master’s train.
Wherefore the King bade that Udāyī go—
Chiefest in all the Court, and faithfulest,
Siddhārtha’s playmate in the happier days—
Who, as he drew anear the garden, plucked
Blown tufts of tree-wool from the grove and sealed

The entrance of his hearing; thus he came
Safe through the lofty peril of the place
And told the message of the King, and hers.

Then meekly bowed his head and spake our Lord
Before the people, "Surely, I shall go!
It is my duty as it was my will;
Let no man miss to render reverence
To those who lend him life, whereby come means
To live and die no more, but safe attain
Blissful Nirvāṇa, if ye keep the Law,
Purging past wrongs and adding nought thereto,
Complete in love and lovely charities.
Let the King know and let the Princess hear
I take the way forthwith." This told, the folk
Of white Kapilavastu and its fields
Made ready for the entrance of their Prince.
At the south gate a bright pavilion rose
With flower-wreathed pillars and the walls of silk
Wrought on their red and green with woven gold.
Also the roads were laid with scented boughs
Of neem and mango, and full mussuks shed
Sandal and jasmine on the dust, and flags
Fluttered; and on the day when he should come
It was ordained how many elephants—
With silver howdahs and their tusks gold-tipped—
Should wait beyond the ford, and where the drums
Should boom "Siddhārtha cometh!" where the lords
Should light and worship, and the dancing-girls
Where they should strew their flowers with dance and song,
So that the steed he rode might tramp knee-deep
In rose and balsam, and the ways be fair;
While the town rang with music and high joy.
This was ordained, and all men's ears were pricked
Dawn after dawn to catch the first drum's beat
Announcing, "Now he cometh!"
But it fell—
Eager to be before—Yaśodharā
Rode in her litter to the city-walls
Where soared the bright pavilion. All around
A beauteous garden smiled—Nigrodha named—

Shaded with bel-trees and the green-plumed dates,
New-trimmed and gay with winding walks and banks
Of fruits and flowers; for the southern road
Skirted its lawns, on this hand leaf and bloom,
On that the suburb-huts where base-borns dwelt
Outside the gates, a patient folk and poor,
Whose touch for Kṣatriya and priest of Brahmā
Were sore defilement. Yet those, too, were quick
With expectation, rising ere the dawn
To peer along the road, to climb the trees
At far-off trumpet of some elephant,
Or stir of temple-drum; and when none came,
Busied with lowly chores to please the Prince;
Sweeping their door-stones, setting forth their flags,
Stringing the fluted fig-leaves into chains,
New furbishing the Lingam, decking new
Yesterday's faded arch of boughs, but aye
Questioning wayfarers if any noise
Be on the road of great Siddhārtha. These
The Princess marked with lovely languid eyes,
Watching, as they, the southward plain, and bent
Like them to listen if the passers gave
News of the path. So fell it she beheld
One slow approaching with his head close shorn,
A yellow cloth over his shoulder cast,
Girt as the hermits are, and in his hand
An earthen bowl, shaped melonwise, the which
Meekly at each hut-door he held a space,
Taking the granted dole with gentle thanks
And all as gently passing where none gave.
Two followed him wearing the yellow robe,
But he who bore the bowl so lordly seemed,
So reverend, and with such a passage moved,
With so commanding presence filled the air,
With such sweet eyes of holiness smote all,
That, as they reached him alms the givers gazed
Awestruck upon his face, and some bent down
In worship, and some ran to fetch fresh gifts
Grieved to be poor; till slowly, group by group,
Children and men and women drew behind
Into his steps, whispering with covered lips,

“Who is he? who? when looked a R̄ṣi thus?
But as he came with quiet footfall on
Nigh the pavilion, lo! the silken door
Lifted, and, all unveiled, Yaśodharā
Stood in his path crying, “Siddhārtha! Lord!”
With wide eyes streaming and with close-clasped hands,
Then sobbing fell upon his feet, and lay.

Afterwards, when this weeping lady passed
Into the Noble Paths, and one had prayed
Answer from Buddha wherefore—being vowed
Quit of all mortal passion and the touch,
Flower-soft and conquering, of a woman’s hands—
He suffered such embrace, the Master said:
“The greater beareth with the lesser love
So it may raise it unto easier heights.
Take heed that no man, being ’scaped from bonds,
Vexeth bound souls with boasts of liberty.
Free are ye rather that your freedom spread
By patient winning and sweet wisdom’s skill.
Three eras of long toil bring Bodhisats—
Who will be guides and help this darkling world—
Unto deliverance, and the first is named
Of deep ‘Resolve,’ the second of ‘Attempt,’
The third of ‘Nomination.’ Lo! I lived
In era of Resolve, desiring good,
Searching for wisdom, but mine eyes were sealed.
Count the grey seeds on yonder castor-clump,
So many rains it is since I was Ram,
A merchant of the coast which looketh south
To Lanka and the hiding-place of pearls.
Also in that far time Yaśodharā
Dwelt with me in our village by the sea,
Tender as now, and Lukshmi was her name.
And I remember how I journeyed thence
Seeking our gain, for poor the household was
And lowly. Not the less with wistful tears
She prayed me that I should not part, nor tempt
Perils by land and water. ‘How could love
Leave what it loved?’ she wailed; yet, venturing, I
Passed to the Straits, and after storm and toil

And deadly strife with creatures of the deep,
And woes beneath the midnight and the noon,
Searching the wave I won therefrom a pearl
Moonlike and glorious, such as Kings might buy
Emptying their treasury. Then came I glad
Unto mine hills, but over all that land
Famine spread sore; ill was I stead to live
In journey home, and hardly reached my door—
Aching for food—with that white wealth of the sea
Tied in my girdle. Yet no food was there;
And on the threshold she for whom I toiled—
More than myself—lay with her speechless lips
Nigh unto death for one small gift of grain.
Then cried I, ‘If there be who hath of grain,
Here is a kingdom’s ransom for one life:
Give Lakṣmī bread and take my moonlight pearl.’
Whereat one brought the last of all his hoard,
Millet—three seers—and clutched the beauteous thing.
But Lakṣmī lived and sighed with gathered life,
‘Lo! thou didst love indeed! I spent my pearl
Well in that life to comfort heart and mind
Else quite uncomforted, but these pure pearls,
My last large gain, won from a deeper wave—
The Twelve Nidānas and the Law of Good—
Cannot be spent, nor dimmed, and must fulfill
Their perfect beauty being freeliest given.
For like as is to Meruḥ yonder hill
Heaped by the little ants, and like as dew
Dropped in the footmark of a bounding roe
Unto the shoreless seas, so was that gift
Unto my present giving; and so love—
Vaster in being free from toils of sense—
Was wisest stooping to the weaker heart;
And so the feet of sweet Yaśodharā
Passed into peace and bliss, being softly led.”

But when the King heard how Siddhārtha came
Shorn, with the mendicant’s sad-colored cloth,
And stretching out a bowl to gather orts
From base-borns’ leavings, wrathful sorrow drove
Love from his heart. Thrice on the ground he spat,

Plucked at his silvered beard, and strode straight forth
Lackeyed by trembling lords. Frowning he clomb
Upon his war-horse, drove the spurs, and dashed,
Angered, though wondering streets and lanes of folk,
Scarce finding breath to say, "The King! bow down!"
Ere the loud cavalcade had clattered by:
Which—at the turning by the Temple-wall
Where the south gate was seen—encountered full
A mighty crowd; to every edge of it
Poured fast more people, till the roads were lost,
Blotted by that huge company which thronged
And grew, close following him whose look serene
Met the old King's. Nor lived the father's wrath
Longer than while the gentle eyes of Buddh
Lingered in worship on his troubled brows,
Then downcast sank, with his true knee, to earth
In proud humility. So dear it seemed
To see the Prince, to know him whole, to mark
That glory greater than of earthly state
Crowning his head, that majesty which brought
All men, so awed and silent in his steps.
Nathless the King broke forth, "Ends it in this
That great Siddhārtha steals into his realm,
Wrapped in a clout, shorn, sandalled, craving food
Of low-borns, he whose life was as a God's?
My son! heir of this spacious power, and heir
Of Kings who did but clap their palms to have
What earth could give or eager service bring?
Thou shouldst have come apparelled in thy rank,
With shining spears and tramp of horse and foot.
Lo! all my soldiers camped upon the road,
And all my city waited at the gates;
Where hast thou sojourned through these evil years
Whilst thy crowned father mourned? and she, too, there
Lived as the widows use, foregoing joys;
Never once hearing sound of song or string.
Nor wearing once the festal robe, till now
When in her cloth of gold she welcomes home
A beggar spouse in yellow remnants clad.
Son! why is this?"

“My father!” came reply,
“It is the custom of my race.”

“Thy race,”

Answered the King, “counteth a hundred thrones
From Mahā Sammata, but no deed like this.”

“Not of a mortal line,” the Master said,
“I spake, but of descent invisible,
The Buddhas who have been and who shall be:
Of these am I, and what they did I do,
And this which now befalls so fell before
That at his gate a King in warrior-mail
Should meet his son, a Prince in hermit-weeds;
And that, by love and self-control, being more
Than mightiest Kings in all their puissance,
The appointed Helper of the Worlds should bow—
As now do I—and with all lowly love
Proffer, where it is owed for tender debts,
The first-fruits of the treasure he hath brought;
Which now I proffer.”

Then the King amazed
Inquired, “What treasure?” and the Teacher took
Meekly the royal palm, and while they paced
Through worshiping streets—the Princess and the King
On either side—he told the things which make
For peace and pureness, these Four noble Truths
Which hold all wisdom as shores shut the seas
Those eight right rules whereby who will may walk—
Monarch or slave—upon the perfect Path
That hate its Stages Four and Precepts Eight,
Whereby whoso will live—mighty or mean,
Wise or unlearned, man, woman, young or old—
Shall soon or late break from the wheels of life
Attaining blest Nirvāṇa. So they came
Into the Palace-porch, Śuddhodana
With brows unknit drinking the mighty words,
And in his own hand carrying Buddha’s bowl,
Whilst a new light brightened the lovely eyes
Of sweet Yaśodharā and sunned her tears,
And that night entered they the Way of Peace.

NOTES

1. "I am perishing, O Earth, The world is perishing."
2. "May the sacred teaching of Dharma be listened to."

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

A BROAD mead spreads by swift Kohana's bank
At Nagarā; five days shall bring a man
In ox-wain thither from Benares' shrines
Eastward and northward journeyed. The horns
Of white Himālaya look upon the place,
Which all the year is glad with blooms and girt
By groves made green from that bright streamlet's wave.
Soft are its slopes and cool its fragrant shades,
And holy all the spirit of the spot
Unto this time: the breath of eve comes hushed
Over the tangled thickets, and high heaps
Of carved red stones cloven by root and stem
Of creeping fig, and clad with waving veil
Of leaf and grass. The still snake glistens forth
From crumbled work of lac and cedar-beams
To coil his folds there on deep-graven slabs:
The lizard dwells and darts o'er painted floors
Where Kings have paced; the grey fox litters safe
Under the broken thrones; only the peaks,
And stream, and sloping lawns, and gentle air
Abide unchanged. All else, like all fair shows
Of life, are fled—for this is where it stood,
The city of Śuddhodana, the hill
Whereon, upon an eve of gold and blue
At sinking sun Lord Buddha set himself
To teach the Law in hearing of his own.

Lo! ye shall read it in the Sacred Books
How, being met in that glad pleasance-place—
A garden in old days with hanging walks,
Fountains, and tanks, and rose-banked terraces
Girdled by gay pavilions and the sweep
Of stately palace-fronts—the Master sate
Eminent, worshiped, all the earnest throng
Catching the opening of his lips to learn
The wisdom which hath made our Asia mild;
Whereto four hundred crores of living souls
Witness this day. Upon the King's right hand

He sate, and round were ranged the Śākyā Lords
Ānanda, Devadatta—all the Court.
Behind stood Seriyut and Moggallāna, chiefs
Of the calm brethren in the yellow garb,
A goodly company. Between his knees
Rāhula smiled with wondering childish eyes
Bent on the awful face, while at his feet
Sate sweet Yaśodhara, her heartaches gone,
Foreseeing that fair love which doth not feed
On fleeting sense, that life which knows no age,
That blessed last of deaths when Death is dead,
His victory and hers. Wherefore she laid
Her hand upon his hands, folding around
Her silver shoulder-cloth his yellow robe,
Nearest in all the world to him whose words
The Three Worlds waited for. I cannot tell
A small part of the splendid lore which broke
From Buddha's lips: I am a late-come scribe
Who love the Master and his love of men,
And tell this legend, knowing he was wise,
But have not wit to speak beyond the books;
And time hath blurred their script and ancient sense,
Which once was new and mighty, moving all.
A little of that large discourse I know
Which Buddha spake on the soft Indian eve.
Also I know it writ that they who heard
Were more – lakhs more – crores more – than could be seen,
For all the Devas and the Dead thronged there,
Till Heaven was emptied to the seventh zone
And uttermost dark Hells opened their bars;
Also the daylight lingered past its time
In rose-leaf radiance on the watching peaks,
So that it seemed Night listened in the glens
And noon upon the mountains; yea! they write,
The evening stood between them like some maid
Celestial, love-struck, rapt; the smooth-rolled clouds
Her braided hair; the studded stars the pearls
And diamonds of her coronal; the moon
Her forehead-jewel, and the deepening dark
Her woven garments. 'Twas her close-held breath
Which came in scented sighs across the lawns

While our Lord taught, and, while he taught, who heard—
Though he were stranger in the land, or slave,
High caste or low, come of the Āryan blood,
Or Mleccha or Jungle-dweller—seemed to hear
What tongue his fellow talked. Nay, outside those
Who crowded by the river, great and small,
The birds and beasts and creeping things—’tis writ
Had sense of Buddha’s vast embracing love
And took the promise of his piteous speech;
So that their lives—prisoned in shape of ape,
Tiger, or deer, shagged bear, jackal, or wolf,
Foul-feeding kite, pearly dove, or peacock gemmed.
Squat toad, or speckled serpent, lizard, bat;
Yea, or of fish fanning the river-waves—
Touched meekly at the skirts of brotherhood
With man who hath less innocence than these;
And in mute gladness knew their bondage broke
Whilst Buddha spake these things before the King:—

OM, AMITĀYUS! measure not with words
Th’ Immeasurable: nor sink the string of thought
Into the Fathomless. Who asks doth err,
Who answers, errs. Say nought!

The Books teach Darkness was, at first of all,
And Brahmā, sole meditating in that Night:
Look not for Brahmā and the Beginning there!
Nor him, nor any light

Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
Or any searcher know by mortal mind,
Veil after veil will lift—but there must be
Veil upon veil behind.

Stars sweep and question not. This is enough
That life and death and joy and woe abide;
And cause and sequence, and the course of time,
And Being’s ceaseless tide,

Which, ever-changing, runs, linked like a river
By ripples following ripples, fast, or slow—
The same yet not the same—from far-off fountain
To where its waters flow

Into the seas. These, steaming to the Sun,
Give the lost wavelets back in cloudy fleece
To trickle down the hills, and glide again;
Having no pause or peace.

This is enough to know, the phantasms are;
The Heavens, Earths, Worlds, and changes changing them
A mighty whirling wheel of strife and stress
Which none can stay or stem.

Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten! Ask
Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains!
Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek

Nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruit and cakes;
Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
Each man his prison makes.

Each hath such lordship as the loftiest ones;
Nay, for with Powers above, around, below,
As with all flesh and whatsoever lives,
Act maketh joy and woe.

What hath been bringeth what shall be, and is,
Worse—better—last for first and first for last;
The Angels in the Heavens of Gladness reap
Fruits of a holy past.

The devils in the underworlds wear out
Deeds that were wicked in an age gone by.
Nothing endures; fair virtues waste with time,
Foul sins grow purged thereby.

Who toiled a slave may come anew a Prince
For gentle worthiness and merit won;
Who ruled a King may wander earth in rags
For things done and undone.

Higher than Indra's ye may lift your lot,
And sink it lower than the worm or gnat;
The end of many myriad lives is this,
The end of myriads that.

Only, while turns this wheel invisible,
No pause, no peace, no staying-place can be;
Who mounts will fall, who falls may mount; the spokes
Go round unceasingly!

• • • •
If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,
And no way were of breaking from the chain,
The Heart of boundless Being is a curse,
The Soul of Things fell Pain.

Ye are not bound! the Soul of Things is sweet,
The Heart of Being is celestial rest;
Stronger than woe is will: that which was Good
Doth pass to Better—Best.

I, Buddh, who wept with all my brothers' tears,
Whose heart was broken by a whole world's woe,
Laugh and am glad, for there is Liberty!
Ho! ye who suffer, know

Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels,
None other holds you that ye live and die,
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss
Its spokes of agony,

Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness.
Behold, I show you Truth! Lower than hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahmā doth dwell,

Before beginning, and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand shaped lotus-leaves;
In dark soil and the silence of the seeds
The robe of Spring it weaves;

That is its painting on the glorious clouds,
And these its emeralds on the peacock's train;
It hath its stations in the stars; its slaves
In lightning, wind, and rain.

Out of the dark it wrought the heart of man,
Out of dull shells the pheasant's pencilled neck;
Ever at toil, it brings to loveliness
All ancient wrath and wreck.

The grey eggs in the golden sun-bird's nest
Its treasures are, the bees' six-sided cell
Its honey-pot; the ant wots of its ways,
The white doves know them well.

It spreadeth forth for flight the eagle's wings
What time she beareth home her prey; it sends
The she-wolf to her cubs; for unloved things
It findeth food and friends.

It is not marred nor stayed in any use,
All liketh it; the sweet white milk it brings
To mothers' breasts; it brings the white drops, too,
Wherewith the young snake stings.

The ordered music of the marching orbs
It makes in viewless canopy of sky;
In deep abyss of earth it hides up gold,
Sards, sapphires, lazuli.

Ever and ever bringing secrets forth,
It sitteth in the green of forest-glades
Nursing strange seedlings at the cedar's root,
Devising leaves, blooms, blades.

It slayeth and it saveth, nowise moved
Except unto the working out of doom;
Its threads are Love and Life; and Death and Pain
The shuttles of its loom.

It maketh and unmaketh, mending all;
What it hath wrought is better than hath been;
Slow grows the splendid pattern that it plans
Its wistful hands between.

This is its work upon the things ye see,
The unseen things are more; men's hearts and minds,
The thoughts of peoples and their ways and wills,
Those, too, the great Law binds.

Unseen it helpeth ye with faithful hands,
Unheard it speaketh stronger than the storm.
Pity and Love are man's because long stress
Moulded blind mass to form.

It will not be contemned of any one;
Who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains;
The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,
The hidden ill with pains.

It seeth everywhere and marketh all;
Do right—it recompenseth! do one wrong—
The equal retribution must be made,
Though DHARMA tarry long.

It knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true
Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs;
Times are as nought, to-morrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;
The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
And spoiler rob, to render.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

The Books say well, my Brothers! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes
The bygone right breeds bliss.

That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew!
So is a man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.

If he shall labor rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where they grew,
Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

If he who liveth, learning whence woe springs,
Endureth patiently, striving to pay
His utmost debt for ancient evils done
In Love and Truth alway;

If making none to lack, he thoroughly purge
The lie and lust of self forth from his blood;
Suffering all meekly, rendering for offence
Nothing but grace and good:

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true; and rend
Desire from where it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end:

He—dying—leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it.

No need hath such to live as ye name life;
That which began in him when he began
Is finished: he hath wrought the purpose through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
Invade his safe eternal peace; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto NIRVĀNA. He is one with Life
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be
OṂ MANI PADME HŪṂ, OṂ! the Dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea!

• • • •
This is the doctrine of the KARMA. Learn!
Only when all the dross of sin is quit,
Only when life dies like a white flame spent
Death dies along with it.

Say not “I am,” “I was,” or “I shall be,”
Think not ye pass from house to house of flesh
Like travelers who remember and forget,
Ill-lodged or well-lodged. Fresh

Issues upon the Universe that sum
Which is the lattermost of lives. It makes
Its habitation as the worm spins silk
And dwells therein. It takes

Function and substance as the snake's egg hatched
Takes scale and fang; as feathered reed-seeds fly
O'er rock and loam and sand, until they find
Their marsh and multiply.

Also it issues forth to help or hurt.
When Death the bitter murderer doth smite,
Red roams the unpurged fragment of him, driven
On wings of plague and blight.

But when the mild and just die, sweet airs breathe;
The world grows richer, as if desert-stream
Should sink away to sparkle up again
Purer, with broader gleam.

So merit won winneth the happier age
Which by demerit halteth short of end;
Yet must this Law of Love reign King of all
Before the Kalpas end.

What lets?—Brothers! the Darkness lets! which breeds
Ignorance, mazed whereby ye take these shows
For true, and thirst to have, and, having, cling
To lusts which work you woes.

Ye that will tread the Middle Road, whose course
Bright Reason traces and soft Quiet smoothes;
Ye who will take the high Nirvāna-way
List the *Four Noble Truths*.

The First Truth is of *Sorrow*. Be not mocked!
Life which ye prize is long-drawn agony:
Only its pains abide; its pleasures are
As birds which light and fly.

Ache of the birth, ache of the helpless days,
Ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's prime;
Ache of the chill grey years and choking death,
These fill your piteous time.

Sweet is fond Love, but funeral-flames must kiss
The breasts which pillow and the lips which cling;
Gallant is warlike Might, but vultures pick
The joints of chief and King.

Beauteous is Earth, but all its forest-broods
Plot mutual slaughter, hungering to live;
Of sapphire are the skies, but when men cry
Famished, no drops they give.

Ask of the sick, the mourners, ask of him
Who tottereth on his staff, lone and forlorn,
“Liketh thee life?”—these say the babe is wise
That weepeth, being born.

The Second Truth is *Sorrow's Cause*. What grief
Springs of itself and springs not of Desire?”
Senses and things perceived mingle and light
Passion's quick spark of fire:

So flameth Trṣṇā, lust and thirst of things.
Eager ye cleave to shadows, dote on dreams;
A false Self in the midst ye plant, and make
A world around which seems;

Blind to the height beyond, deaf to the sound
Of sweet airs breathed from far past Indra's sky;
Dumb to the summons of the true life kept
For him who false puts by.

So grow the strifes and lusts which make earth's war,
So grieve poor cheated hearts and flow salt tears;
So wax the passions, envies, angers, hates;
So years chase blood-stained years

With wild red feet. So, where the grain should grow,
Spreads the biran-weed with its evil root
And poisonous blossoms; hardly good seeds find
Soil where to fall and shoot;

And drugged with poisonous drink the soul departs,
And fierce with thirst to drink Karma returns;
Sense-struck again the sodden self begins,
And new deceits it earns.

The Third is *Sorrow's Ceasing*. This is peace
To conquer love of self and lust of life.
To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,
To still the inward strife;

For love to clasp Eternal Beauty close;
For glory to be Lord of self, for pleasure
To live beyond the gods; for countless wealth
To lay up lasting treasure

Of perfect service rendered, duties done
In charity, soft speech, and stainless days:
These riches shall not fade away in life,
Nor any death dispraise.

Then Sorrow ends, for Life and Death have ceased;
How should lamps flicker when their oil is spent?
The old sad count is clear, the new is clean;
Thus hath a man content.

• • • •
The Fourth Truth is *The Way*. It openeth wide,
Plain for all feet to tread, easy and near,
The Noble Eightfold Path; it goeth straight
To peace and refuge. Hear!

Manifold tracks lead to yon sister-peaks
Around whose snows the gilded clouds are curled;
By steep or gentle slopes the climber comes
Where breaks that other world.

Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;
The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge
With many a place of rest.

So is the Eightfold Path which brings to peace;
By lower or by upper heights it goes.
The firm soul hastes, the feeble tarries. All
Will reach the sunlit snows.

The First good Level is *Right Doctrine*. Walk
In fear of Dharma, shunning all offence;
In heed of Karma, which doth make man's fate;
In lordship over sense.

The Second is *Right Purpose*. Have good-will
To all that lives, letting unkindness die
And greed and wrath; so that your lives be made
Like soft airs passing by.

The Third is *Right Discourse*. Govern the lips
As they were palace-doors, the King within;
Tranquil and fair and courteous be all words
Which from that presence win.

The Fourth is *Right Behavior*. Let each act
Assoil a fault or help a merit grow:
Like threads of silver seen through crystal beads
Let love through good deeds show.

Four higher roadways be. Only those feet
May tread them which have done with earthly things;
Right Purity, Right Thought, Right Loneliness,
Right Rapture. Spread no wings

For sunward flight, thou soul with unplumed vans!
Sweet is the lower air and safe, and known
The homely levels: only strong ones leave
The nest each makes his own.

Dear is the love, I know, of Wife and Child;
Pleasant the friends and pastimes of your years;
Fruitful of good Life's gentle charities;
False, though firm-set, its fears.

Live—ye who must—such lives as live on these;
 Make golden stairways of your weakness; rise
By daily sojourn with those phantasies
 To lovelier verities.

So shall ye pass to clearer heights and find
 Easier ascents and lighter loads of sins,
And larger will to burst the bonds of sense,
 Entering the Path. Who wins

To such commencement hath the *First Stage* touched;
 He knows the Noble Truths, the Eightfold Road;
By few or many steps such shall attain
 NIRVĀNA's blest abode.

Who standeth at the *Second Stage*, made free
 From doubts, delusions, and the inward strife,
Lord of all lusts, quit of the priests and books,
 Shall live but one more life.

Yet onward lies the *Third Stage*: purged and pure
 Hath grown the stately spirit here, hath risen
To love all living things in perfect peace.
 His life at end, life's prison

Is broken. Nay, there are who surely pass
 Living and visible to utmost goal
By *Fourth Stage* of the Holy ones—the Buddhs—
 And they of stainless soul.

Lo! like fierce foes slain by some warrior,
 Ten sins along these Stages lie in dust,
The *Love of Self, False Faith, and Doubt* are three,
 Two more, *Hatred and Lust.*

Who of these Five is conqueror hath trod
 Three stages out of Four: yet there abide
The *Love of Life* on earth, *Desire for Heaven,*
 Self-Praise, Error, and Pride.

As one who stands on yonder snowy horn
Having nought o'er him but the boundless blue,
So, these sins being slain, the man is come
NIRVĀNA's verge unto.

Him the Gods envy from their lower seats;
Him the Three Worlds in ruin should not shake;
All life is lived for him, all deaths are dead;
Karma will no more make

New houses. Seeking nothing, he gains all;
Foregoing self, the Universe grows "I":
If any teach NIRVĀNA is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.

If any teach NIRVĀNA is to live,
Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless bliss.

Enter the Path! There is no grief like Hate!
No pain like passions, no deceit like sense!
Enter the Path! far hath he gone whose foot
Treads down one fond offence.

Enter the Path! There spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst! there bloom th' immortal flowers
Carpeting all the way with joy! there throng
Swiftest and sweetest hours!

More is the treasure of the Law than gems;
Sweeter than comb its sweetness; its delights
Delightful past compare. Thereby to live
Hear the *Five Rules* aright:—

Kill not—for Pity's sake—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.

Give freely and receive, but take from none
By greed, or force or fraud, what is his own.

Bear not false witness, slander not, nor lie;
Truth is the speech of inward purity.

Shun drugs and drinks which work the wit abuse;
Clear minds, clean bodies, need no Soma juice.

Touch not thy neighbor's wife, neither commit
Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

These words the Master spake of duties due
To father, mother, children, fellows, friends;
Teaching how such as may not swiftly break
The clinging chains of sense—whose feet are weak
To tread the higher road—should order so
This life of flesh that all their hither days
Pass blameless in discharge of charities
And first true footfalls in the Eightfold Path;
Living pure, reverent, patient, pitiful,
Loving all things which live even as themselves;
Because what falls for ill is fruit of ill
Wrought in the past, and what falls well of good;
And that by howsomuch the householder
Purgeth himself of self and helps the world,
By so much happier comes he to next stage,
In so much bettered being. This he spake,
As also long before, when our Lord walked
By Rājagrha in the bamboo-grove:
For on a dawn he walked there and beheld
The householder Singala, newly bathed,
Bowing himself with bare head to the earth,
To Heaven, and all four quarters; while he threw
Rice, red and white, from both hands. "Wherefore thus
Bowest thou, Brother?" said the Lord; and he,
"It is the way, Great Sir! our fathers taught
At every dawn, before the toil begins,
To hold off evil from the sky above

And earth beneath, and all the winds which blow.”
Then the World-honored spake: “Scatter not rice,
But offer loving thoughts and acts to all.
To parents as the East where rises light;
To teachers as the South whence rich gifts come;
To wife and children as the West where gleam
Colors of love and calm, and all days end;
To friends and kinsmen and all men as North;
To humblest living things beneath, to Saints
And Angels and the blessed Dead above:
So shall all evil be shut off, and so
The six main quarters will be safely kept.”

But to his own, them of the yellow robe—
They who, as wakened eagles, soar with scorn
From life’s low vale, and wing towards the Sun—
To these he taught the Ten Observances
The *Daśa-Śīla* and, and how a mendicant
Must know the *Three Doors* and the *Triple Thoughts*;
The *Sixfold States of Mind*; the *Fivefold Powers*;
The *Eight High Gates of Purity*; the *Modes*
Of Understanding; *Iddhi*; *Upeksā*;
The *Five Great Meditations*, which are food
Sweeter than Amrit for the holy soul
The *Jhāna*’s and the *Three Chief Refuges*.
Also he taught his own how they should dwell;
How live, free from the snares of love and wealth;
What eat and drink and carry—three plain cloths,—
Yellow, of stitched stuff, worn with shoulder bare—
A girdle, alms bowl, strainer. Thus he laid
The great foundations of our Sangha well,
That noble Order of the Yellow Robe
Which to this day standeth to help the World.

So all that night he spake, teaching the Law:
And on no eyes fell sleep—for they who heard
Rejoiced with tireless joy. Also the King,
When this was finished, rose upon his throne
And with bared feet bowed low before his Son
Kissing his hem; and said, “Take me, O Son!
Lowest and least of all thy Company.”

And sweet Yaśodharā, all happy now,—
Cried “Give to Rāhula—thou Blessed One!
The Treasure of the Kingdom of thy Word
For his inheritance.” Thus passed these Three
Into the Path.

Here endeth what I write
Who love the Master for his love of us.
A little knowing, little have I told
Touching the Teacher and the Ways of Peace.
Forty-five rains thereafter showed he those
In many lands and many tongues and gave
Our Asia light, that still is beautiful,
Conquering the world with spirit of strong grace:
All which is written in the holy Books,
And where he passed and what proud Emperors
Carved his sweet words upon the rocks and caves:
And how—in fulness of the times—it fell
The Buddha died, the great Tathāgato,
Even as a man 'mongst men, fulfilling all:
And how a thousand thousand crores since then
Have trod the Path which leads whither he went
Unto NIRVĀNA where the Silence lives.

AH! BLESSED LORD! OH, HIGH DELIVERER!
FORGIVE THIS FEEBLE SCRIPT, WHICH DOTH THEE WRONG
MEASURING WITH LITTLE WIT THY LOFTY LOVE.
AH! LOVER! BROTHER! GUIDE! LAMP OF THE LAW!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY NAME AND THEE!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY LAW OF GOOD!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY ORDER! *OM!*
THE DEW IS ON THE LOTUS!—RISE, GREAT SUN!
AND LIFT MY LEAF AND MIX ME WITH THE WAVE.
OM MANI PADME HUM, THE SUNRISE COMES!
THE DEWDROP SLIPS INTO THE SHINING SEA!

THE END.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Or

Great Consummation

By

Sir Edwin Arnold

1891.

PROEME.

THE SOVEREIGN VOICE SPAKE, ONCE MORE, IN MINE EAR:
“WRITE, NOW, A SONG UNSTAINED BY ANY TEAR!”

“WHAT SHALL I WRITE?” I SAID: THE VOICE REPLIED:
“WRITE WHAT WE TELL THEE OF THE CRUCIFIED!”

“HOW SHALL I WRITE,” I SAID, “WHO AM NOT MEET
ONE WORD OF THAT SWEET SPEAKING TO REPEAT?”

“IT SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO THEE! DO THIS THING!”
ANSWERED THE VOICE: “WASH THY LIPS CLEAN, AND SING!”

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The Light of the World

AT BÊT LEHEM.

So many hills arising, green and grey,
On Earth's large round; and that one hill to say:
"I was His bearing-place!" On Earth's wide breast
So many maids! and She—of all most blest—
Heavily mounting Bêt Lehem {Bethlehem}—to be
His Mother! Holy Maid of ha-Gâlîl {Galilee}!
Hill, with the olives and the little town!
If rivers from their crystal founts flow down,
If 'twas the Dawn which did Day's gold unbar,
Ye were beginnings of the best we are,
The most we see, the highest that we know,
The lifting heavenward of Man's life below.
Therefore, though better lips ye shall not lack,
Suffer, if one of modern mood steals back—
Weary and wayworn, from the Desert-road
Of barren Thought; from Hope's Dead Sea which glowed
"With's Love's fair mirage; from the Poet's haunt,
The Scholar's lamp, the Statesman's scheme, the vaunt,
The failure, of all fond Philosophies,—
Back unto Thee, back to thy olive-trees,
Thy people, and thy story, and thy Son,
Miryām {María – Mary} of Nâṣrat {Nazareth}! so long agone
Bearing us Him Who made our Christendom,
And came to save the Earth, from Heav'n, His home.

So many hill-sides, crowned with rugged rocks!
So many simple shepherds keeping flocks
In many moonlit fields! but, only they—
So lone, so long ago, so far away—
On that one winter's night, at Bêt Lehem,
To have white Angels singing lauds for them!

They—only hinds wrapped in the he-goat's skin—
To hear Heaven's music, bidding Peace begin!
Only for those, of countless watching eyes,
The “Glory of the Mār” glad to arise;
The skies to blaze with gold and silver light
Of seraphs, by strong joy flashed into sight;
The wind, for them, with that strange song to swell,—
By too much happiness incredible.—
That tender Anthem of good times to be
Then at their dawn—not daylight yet, ah me!
“Peace upon Earth! Goodwill!” sung to the strings
Of lutes celestial. Nay, if these things
Too blessed to believe have seemed, or seem,
Not ours the fault, dear Angels! Prove the dream
Waking and true! sing once again, and make
Moonlight and starlight sweet for Earth's sad sake!
Or, if Heaven bids ye lock in silence still
Conquest of Peace, and coming of Goodwill,
Till times to be, then—oh, you placid sheep!
Ah, thrice-blest shepherds! suffer that we creep
Back through the tangled thicket of the years
To graze in your fair flock, to strain our ears
With listening herdsmen, if, perchance, one note
Of such high singing in the fine air float;
If any rock thrills yet with that great strain
We did not hear, and shall not hear, again;
If any olive-leaf at Bêt Lehem
Lisps still one syllable vouchsafed to them;
If some stream, conscious still—some breeze—be stirred
With echo of th' immortal words ye heard.

What was it that ye heard? the wind of Night
Playing in cheating tones, with touches light,
Amid the palm-plumes? Or, one stop outblown
Of planetary music, so far flown
Earthwards, that to those innocent ears 'twas brought
Which bent the mighty measure to their thought?
Or, haply, from breast-shaped Beth-Haccarem,
The hill of Hērōdēs', some waft sent to them
Of storming drums and trumps, at festival
Held in the Idumaean's purple hall?

Or, it may be, some Ārāmāyā song
Of country lovers, after parting long
Meeting anew, with much “goodwill,” indeed,
Blown by some swain upon his Ha-Yardēn reed?
Nay, nay! your abbas back ye did not fling,
From each astonished ear, for swains to sing
Their village-verses clear for sounds well known
Of wandering breeze, or whispering trees, or tone
Of Hērōdēs’s trumpets. And ye did not gaze
Heart-startled on the stars (albeit the rays
Of that lone orb shot, sparkling, from the East
Unseen before); for these, largest and least,
Were fold-lamps, lighted nightly: and ye knew
Far differing glory in the Night’s dark blue
Suddenly lit with rose, and pierced with spike
Of golden spear beam. Oh, a dream, belike!
Some far-fetched Vision, new to peasant’s sleep,
Of Paradise stripped bare!—But, why thus keep
Secrets for them? This bar, which doth enclose
Better and nobler souls, why burst for those
Who supped on the parched pulse, and lapped the stream?
And each, at the same hour, dreams the same dream!
Or, easier still, they lied! Yet, wherefore, then
“Rise, and go up to Bêt Lehem,” and unpen
To wolf and jackal all their hapless fold
“So they might “see these things which had been told”
In Heaven’s own Voice? And Heaven, whate’er betide,
Spreads surely somewhere, on Death’s farther side!
This sphere obscure, viewed with dim eyes to match,
This earthly span—gross, brief—wherein we snatch,
Rarely and faintly, glimpses of Times past
Which have been boundless, and of Times to last
Beyond them timelessly; how should such be
All to be seen, all we were made to see?
This flesh fallacious, binding us, indeed,
To sense, and yet so largely leaving freed
That we do know things are we cannot know,
And high and higher on Thought’s stairways go
Till each last round leads to some sudden steep
Where Reason swims, and falters; or must leap
Headlong, perforce, into the Infinite,

How should we say outside this shines no light
Of lovelier scenes unseen; of lives which spread
Pleasant and unexpected for the Dead,
As our World, opening to the Babe's wide eyes
New from the Womb, and full of birth's surprise?
How should this prove the All, the Last, the First?
Why shall no inner, under, splendours burst
Once—twice—the Veil? Why put a marvel by
Because too rich with hope? Why quite deny
The Heavenly story, lest our doubtful hearts—
Which mark the stars, and take them for bright parts
Of boundless Being, ships of life that sail
In glittering argosies—without a tale,
Without a term aye, of that shoreless Sea,
The scattered silver Islets, drifting free
To destinies unmeasured—see, too, there
By help of dead believing eyes, which were,
The peoples of the stars; and listen, meek,
To those vast voices of the stars, which speak—
If ever they shall speak—in each man's tongue?

And, truly, if Joy's music once hath rung
From lips of bands invisible, if any—
Be they the Dead, or of the Deathless Many—
Love and serve Man, angelical Befrienders,
Glad of his weal, and from his woe Defenders,—
If such, in Heaven, have pity on our tears,
Forever falling with the unmending years,
High cause had they at Bêt Lehem, that night
To lift the curtain of Hope's hidden light,
To break decree of silence with Love's cry,
Foreseeing how this Babe, born lowlily,
Should—past dispute, since now achieved is this—
Bring Earth great gifts of blessing and of bliss;
Date, from that crib, the Dynasty of Love;
Strip his misusëd thunderbolts from Zeus;
Bend to their knees Rome's Caesars; break the chain
From the slave's neck; set sick hearts free again,
Bitterly bound by priests, and scribes, and scrolls;
And heal with balm of pardon, sinking souls;
Should Mercy to her vacant throne restore,

Teach Right to Kings, and Patience to the Poor;
Should by His sweet name all names overthrow,
And by His lovely words, the quick seeds sow
Of golden equities, and brotherhood,
Of Pity, Peace, and gentle praise of good;
Of knightly honour, holding life in trust
For God, and Mār, and all things pure and just;
Lowly to Woman; for Maid Miryām's sake
Lifting our sister from the dust, to take
In homes her equal place, the household's Queen,
Crowned and august who sport and thrall had been!
Of arts adorning life, of Charities
Gracious and wide, because the impartial skies
Roof one race in; and poor, weak, mean, oppressed,
Are children of one bounteous Mother's breast,
One Father's care: emancipating man,
Should, from that bearing-cave, outside the Khān,
Amid the kneeling cattle, rise, and be
Light of all lands, and splendour of each sea,
The Sun-burst of a new Morn come to Earth,
Not yet, alas! broad Day, but Day's white birth
Which promiseth; and blesseth, promising.
These from that Night! What cause of wondering
If that one Silence of all Silences
Brake into Music? if, for hopes like these
Angels, who love us, sang that song, and show
Of Time's far purpose made the "great light" glow?

Wherefore, let whosoever will drink dry
His cup of Faith; and think that, verily,
Not in a vision, no way otherwise
Than those poor shepherds told, there did arise
This portent. Being amidst their sheep and goats,
Lapped careless in their pasture-keeping coats,
Blind as their drowsy beasts to what drew nigh,
(Such the lulled ear, and such the unbusied eye
Which oftentimes hears and sees hid things!) there spread
The "glory of the Mār" around each head,
A light not moon-glow, nor the grey of Night
Nor lightning-flash, nor lit like any light
By earthly sense beheld, but fetched from beam

Of that concentral Sun whereby Suns gleam,
Which kindles spheres, and has for dusk full Noon,
Shining behind the Blue, past Sun and Moon,
And making hyaline of aether clear
Where, with new eyes, souls—free of Death and Fear—
In range incomprehensible, and ray
Of limitless illumining, see alway
Authentic Being; outside Life's close bars,
By Life's light blotted, as at noon the stars.
Such sight spreads bright behind that blindness here
Which men name “seeing;” and such Heav'n-Dawn dear
(As it had reason by such Day to follow!)
Broke, be it deemed, o'er hill and over hollow,
On the inner seeing, the sense concealed, unknown,
Of those plain hinds—glad, humble, and alone—
Flooding their minds, filling their hearts; around,
Above, below, disclosing grove and ground,
The rocks, the hill, the town, the solitude,
The wondering flocks,—a-gaze with grass half-chewed,—
The palm-crowns, and the path to Bêt Lehem,
As sight angelic spies. And, came to them
The “Angel of the Mār,” visible, sure,
Known for the Angel by his presence pure
Whereon was written Love, and Peace, and Grace,
With beauty passing mortal mien and face,
His form declaring him. We should not seek,—
As they, too, sought not,—any voice to speak
The titles of the Chief of those who stand
Ruling our Planet, 'neath th' encircling Hand
Which scatters suns and stars athwart the Blue
As sowers fling the seed. We should know, too,
The great and tender eyes, sad with our sinning,
Glad when we strive aright, 'ware of Beginning,
And ending, and the Reasons, and the Path;
That gracious, potent, Friend who wisdom hath
Of whence all come, and whereunto all go;
(He, in Gath-shemannē {Gethsemane}, did see him so!)
The embodied, blinding, loveliness of all
Which, of Earth's dearest Dead, our hearts recall,
To perfectness transfigured and combined,
In heavenly type of utmost Humankind.

Not robed, not sandalled, as the painters limn,
But past all dreams, till we wake, seeing him;
And, then, as natural, as dear, as known
As to the Babe its Mother's brows bent down.
Wingless; for where these live there blows no wind,
Nor aught spreads, gross as air, nor any kind
Of substance, whereby spirits' march is stopped;
Nothing so heavy as the snow-flower dropped
Feather-like on the wild swan's feather; or dip
Of swallow in the streamlet; or Love's lip
Kissing her Dead. Oh, certes! not of men,
Yet, blending form with spirit; nay, and then,
Supreme, majestic! for terror fell—
With worship,—on their hearts, the writings tell;
So that the Angel of the Earth had need
To comfort them, speaking these words, indeed:

“FEAR NOT! FOR BEHOLD I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS
OF GREAT JOY, WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.”

“FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF
DAVID, A SAVIOUR, WHICH IS CHRISTÓS THE MĀR.”

“AND THIS THE SIGN UNTO YOU! YE SHALL FIND
THE BABE WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHES, LYING IN A MANGER.”

Might he not speak so, if, in truth, we heard
Our Angel, and the Mār's; with simple word
Easy and sweet, as to her little son
A nursing mother;—or when Night is done—
“Dawn's soft breath whispering plain: Lo! I am Day!”
But, of those things which the Bright One did say,
So high, so new, so glad, so comforting,
“Good tidings of great joy to you I bring!”
The echo, not the meaning of his speech
Lives; and men tell it sadly, each to each,
With lips, not hearts; sadly, from tongue to tongue,
The Ages, unpersuaded, pass along
The dulcet message, like a dream bygone
Which was for happy sleepers, but is flown.
We bleed, and hate, and suffer, and are blind,

Uncomprehending; yet, if one will mind,
That light is shining still on Life's far side;
And the Apostle, and Heaven's Angel, lied,
Or else, from Heaven that night th' Evangel fell:
"Beginnings of the Golden Times we tell!"
Now is the New Law opened! Miryām's Son
Hath opened it, and, when full years are run,
Peace shall be, and Goodwill, and Mercy shed
Over all flesh and spirit, quick and dead!
The Consummation comes, the purposed Bliss;
Earth was for Now; her glad days spring from this!

Nor only that one Angel (if we dare
Receive) for "suddenly was with him there
A multitude of heavenly ones," who throng
The silvery gleam, all singing that same song
Of Peace and Love; all—for our Planet's sake—
Praising ELŌI.

('Tis the Name He spake
In th' Ārāmāyā, at His Mother's knee,
In white-walled Nāṣrat of Ha-Gālil,
Lispings first speech; and after, on His Cross;
But we have sore misused, to all men's loss,
The great word "God," speaking th' Unspeakable
With daily lips, and doing nowise well
To give thereby parts, passions, qualities
To the All-Being, Who hath none of these;
Mingling weak mortal thoughts of "Sire" and "King"
In "God the Father;" and, so worshipping
An idol, served with muttered spell and moan,
Baser than brass, and duller than dead stone;
A graven image of that Glorious All
Who hath no form, and Whom His Angels call
By never-uttered names, and Whom to see
Not once hath been, and never once shall be:
Who doth, in universal rule, possess
Majesty, beauty, love, delightfulness;
The Omnipresent, Conscious, Joy. 'Twere well,—
If name must be—with Miryām's Son to spell
This unspoiled Word, mystical, free of dread,

Ancient and hallowed; and by those lips said
Which knew its meaning most, and called “God” so,
“ELŌI” in the Highest.)

Heaven a-glow!

And the mild burden of its minstrelsy:

PEACE BEGINNING TO BE,
DEEP AS THE SLEEP OF THE SEA
WHEN THE STARS THEIR FACES GLASS
IN ITS BLUE TRANQUILLITY;
HEARTS OF MEN UPON EARTH,
FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND BIRTH,
TO REST AS THE WILD WATERS REST
WITH THE COLOURS OF HEAVEN ON THEIR BREAST.

LOVE, WHICH IS SUNLIGHT OF PEACE,
AGE BY AGE TO INCREASE,
TILL ANGER AND HATE ARE DEAD
AND SORROW AND DEATH SHALL CEASE;
“PEACE ON EARTH AND GOODWILL!”
SOULS THAT ARE GENTLE AND STILL
HEAR THE FIRST MUSIC OF THIS
FAR-OFF, INFINITE BLISS!

So—or in such wise—those rude shepherds heard
The Angels singing clear; when, not one word
Wiser ones caught that night—solemn and still—
Of their high errand: “PEACE! GOODWILL! GOODWILL!”

Ah! think we listened there,
With opened heart and ear,
And heard, in truth, as these men say they heard,
On flock, and rock, and tree
Raining such melody;
Heaven’s love descending in that loveliest word,

“PEACE!” Not at first! not yet!
Our Earth had to forget
Burden of birth, and travail of slow years;
But now the dark time done!
Daylight at length begun!
First gold of sun in sight, dispelling fears!

PEACE, pledged, at last, to Man!
Oh! if there only ran
Thrill of such surety through one human soul,
Would not the swift joy start
From beating heart to heart,
Lighting all lands, leaping from pole to pole?

PEACE, PEACE—to come! to be!
If such were certainty
Far-off, at length, at latest, any while,
What woe were hard to bear?
What sorrow worth one tear?
Murder would soften; black Despair would smile.

But, heralded on high;
From midnight's purple sky
Dropped like the sudden rain which brings the flowers;
PEACE! Aye to dwell with men;
No strife, no wars! And, then,
The coupled comfort of those golden hours,

GOODWILL! Consider this,
What easy, perfect bliss
If, over all the Earth the one change spread
That Hate and Fraud should die,
And all, in amity,
Let go rapine, and wrath, and wrong, and dread!

What lack of Paradise
If, in angelic wise,
Each unto each, as to himself, were dear?
If we in souls descried,
Whatever form might hide,
Own brother, and own sister, everywhere?

All this,—not whispered low
To one heart, full of woe
By reason of blood-reddened fields of Earth,
By sight of Fear and Hate,
And policies of State,
And evil fruits which have from these their birth:

But, through their ears, to us
Straitly imparted thus
“With pomp of glittering Angels, and their train;
 And radiance of such light
 As maketh mid-day night,
And heavenliest speech of Heaven, not heard again

Till these things come to pass!—
 Nay, if it be—alas!—
A Vision, let us sleep and dream it true!
 Or—sane, and broad-awake,—
 For its great sound and sake,
Take it, and make it Earth’s; and peace ensue!

So, when the Angels were no more to see,
Re-entering those gates of space,—whose key
Love keeps on that side, and on this side Death—
Each shepherd to the other whispering saith,
Lest he should miss some lingering symphonies
Of that departing music, “Let us rise
And go even now to Bêt Lehem, and spy
This which is come to pass, showed graciously
By the Mār’s Angels.” Therewith hastened they
By olive-yards, and old walls mossed and grey
Where, in close chinks, the lizard and the snake
Thinking the sunlight come, stirred, half-awake:
Across the terraced levels of the vines,
Under the pillared palms; along the lines
Of lance-leaved oleanders, scented sweet;
Through the pomegranate-gardens sped their feet:
Over the causeway, up the slope, they spring,
Breast the steep path, with steps unslackening;
Past David’s well, past the town-wall they ran
Unto the House of Kimhām, to the Khān;
Where mark them peering in, the posts between,
Questioning—out of breath—if birth hath been
This night, in any guest-room, high or low?
The drowsy porter at the gate saith “No!”—
Shooting the bars; while the packed camels shake
Their bells to listen, and the sleepers wake;
And to their feet the ponderous steers slow rise,

Lifting from trampled fodder large mild eyes.—
“Nay! Brothers! no such thing! yet there is gone
Yonder, one nigh her time, a gentle one!
With him that seemed her spouse—of Ha-Gālīl;
They toiled at sun-down to our doors—but, see!
No nook was here! Seek at the cave instead;
We shook some barley-straw to make their bed.”

Then to the cave they wended, and there spied
That which was more, if truth be testified,
Than all the pomp seen thro’ proud Hērōdēs’s porch
Ablaze with brass, and silk, and scented torch,
High on Bēt ha-Kerem; more to behold,
If men had known, than all the glory told
Of splendid Caesar in his marbled home
On the white Isle, or audience-hall at Rome
With trembling princes thronged. A clay lamp swings
By twisted camel-cords, from blackened rings,
Showing with flickering gleams, a Child new-born
Wrapped in a cloth, laid where the beasts, at morn
Will champ their bean-straw: in the lamp’s ray dim
A fresh-made Mother by Him, fostering Him
With face and mien to worship, speaking nought;
Close at hand Yōsēf, and the ass, hath brought
That precious twofold burden to the gate;
With goats, sheep, oxen, driven to shelter late.
No mightier sight! yet all sufficeth it—
If we will deem things be beyond our wit—
To prove Heaven’s music true, and show Heaven’s way,
How, not by famous kings, nor with array
Of brazen letters on the boastful stone,
But “by the mouth of babes,” quiet, alone,
Little beginnings planning for large ends,
With other purpose than fond man attends,
Wisdom and Love in secret fellowship
Guide our World’s wanderings with a finger-tip;
And how, that night, as these did darkly see,
They sealed the first scrolls of Earth’s history,
And opened what shall run till Death be dead.

Which Babe they reverenced, bending low the head,
First of all worshippers, and told the things
Done in the plain, and played on Angels' strings.
Then those around wondered and worshipped, too,
And Miryām heard—but wondered not—anew
Hiding this in her heart, the heart which beat
With blood of Yēšūa' Christós {Jesus Christ}, holy and sweet.

Also, not marvelling, albeit they heard,
Stood certain by—those three swart ones—appeared
From climes unknown; yet, surely, on high quest
Of what that Star proclaimed, bright on the breast
First of the Ram, afterwards glittering thence
Into the watery Trigon; where, intense,
It lit the Crab, and burned the Fishes pale.
Three Signiors, owning many a costly bale;
Three travelled Masters, by their bearing Mārs
Of lands and slaves. The Indian silk affords,
With many a folded braid of white and gold,
Shade to their brows; rich goat-hair shawls did fold
Their gowns of flower'd white muslin, midway tied;
And ruby, turkis, emerald—stones of pride—
Blazed on their thumb-rings; and a pearl gleamed white
In every ear; and silver belts, clasped tight,
Held ink-box, reeds, and knives, in scabbards gemmed;
Curled shoes of goat-skin dyed, with seed-pearls hemmed,
Shod their brown feet; hair shorn; lids low, to think—
Eyes deep and wistful, as of those who drink
Waters of hidden wisdom, night and day,
And live twain lives, conforming as they may,
In diligence, and due observances,
To ways of men; yet, not at one with these;
But ever straining past the things that seem
To that which Is—the Truth behind the Dream.
Three princely wanderers of the Asian blood
Perchance, by Indus dwellers; or some flood
That feeds her from Himālaya's icy dome;
Or, haply, to those 'Ārammī {Syrian} palm-trees come
From Gaṅgā's banks, or mounts of Malabar
Which lift the Deccan to its sun, and far—
Rampart-like—fringe the blue Arabian Sea.

True followers of the Buddh they seemed to be,
The better arm and shoulder showing bare
With each; and on the neck of each, draped fair
A scarf of saffron, patched; and 'twixt the eyes,
In saffron stamped, the Name of mysteries
OM; and the Svastika, with secrets rife
How man may 'scape the dire deceits of Life.

These three stood by, as who would entrance make;
And heard the Shepherds' tale; and hearing, spake
Strange Indian words one to another; then sent
Command. Their serving-men, obedient,
Cast loose from off the camels, kneeling nigh,
Nettings and mats, and made the fastenings fly
From belly-band, and crupper-rope, and tail;
And broke the knots, and let each dusty bale
Slide from the saddle-horns, and give to see
Long hoarded treasure of great jewellery,
And fragrant secrets of the Indian grove,
And splendours of the Indian looms, inwove
With gold and silver flowers; "for now," said they,
"Our eyes have found this thing sought day by day;
By the all-conscious, silent sky well-known,
And, specially, of yon white star foreshown,
Which, bursting magically on the sight,
Beckoned us from our homes, shining aright,
The silver beacon to this holy hill.
Mark if it sparkles not, aware and still,
Over the place? The astral houses, see!
Spake truth: our feet were guided faithfully.
'Tis the Star-Child, who was to rise and wear
A crown than Suleiman's more royal and rare,
'King of the Yəhūdīs.' Grant an approach to us
Who crave to worship Him."

Now, it fell thus
That these first to al-Quds had passed;
And sojourned there, observing feast and fast
In the thronged city; oft of townsmen seen
In market and bazaar; and, by their mien
Noted for lordliest of all strangers there,
Much whispered of, in sooth, as who read clear

Shadows of times to come, and secrets bright
Writ in the jewelled cypher of the Night.
So that the voice of this to Hērōdēs' went
Feastful and fearful ever ill-content
'Mid plots and perils; girt with singing boys,
And dancing girls of Tyre, and armoured noise
Of Caesar's legionaries. Long and near,
In audience-hall, each dusky wayfarer
Questioned he of their knowledge, and the Star,
What message flashed it? Whether nigh or far
Would rise this portent of a Babe to reign
King of the Yēhūdīs, and bring a crown again
To weeping Šiyyōn's {Zion}, and cast forth from them
The Roman scourge? And, if at Bēt Lehem,
As with one voice, priests, elders, scribes aver,
Then let them thither wend, and spy the stir,
And find this Babe, and come anew to him,
Declaring where the wonder. “ 'Twas his whim,”
Quotha: “to be of fashion with the stars,
(Weary, like them, of gazing upon wars)
To shine upon this suckling, bending knee
Save unto Caesar uncrooked latterly.”

Thence came it those Three stood at entering
Before the door; and their rich gifts did bring:
Red gold from the Indian rocks, cunningly beat
To plate and chalice, with old fables sweet
Of Buddh's compassion, and dark Māra's powers
Round the brims glittering; and a riot of flowers
Done on the gold, with gold script to proclaim
The noble Truths, and Threefold mystic Name
OM, and the Svastika; and how man wins
Blessēd Nirvāṇa's rest, being quit of sins,
And, day and night, reciting, “Oh, the gem!
Upon the Lotus! Oh, the Lotus-stem!”
Also, more precious than much gold, they poured
Rare spices forth, unknitting cord on cord;
And, one by one, unwinding cloths, as though
The merchantmen had sought to shut in so
The breath of those distillings: in such kind
As when Ye'or's black embalming slaves would bind

Sindon o'er sindon, cere-cloth, cinglets, bands,
Roll after roll, on head, breast, feet, and hands,
Round some dead king, whose cold and withered palm
Had dropped the sceptre;—drenched with musk and balm,
And natron, and what keeps from perishing;
So they might save—after long wandering—
The body for the spirit, and hold fast
Life's likeness, till the dead man lived at last.
Thus, from their coats involved of leaves and silk
Slowly they freed the odorous thorn-tree's milk,
The grey myrrh, and the cassia, and the spice,
Filling the wind with frankincense past price,
With hearts of blossoms from a hundred glens
And essence of a thousand Rose-gardens;
Till the night's gloom like a royal curtain hung
Jewelled with stars, and rich with fragrance flung
Athwart the arch; and, in the cavern there
The air around was as the breathing air
Of a queen's chamber, when she comes to bed,
And all that glad Earth owns gives goodlihead.

Witness them entering, those Three from afar—
Who knew the skies, and had the strange white Star
To light their nightly lamp, thro' deserts wide
Of Bactria, and the Persic wastes, and tide
Of Tigris and Euphrates; past the snow
Of 'Arārāt, and where the sand-winds blow
O'er Ituraea; and the crimson peaks
Of Moab, and the fierce, bright, barren reeks
From Asphaltites; to this hill—to thee,
Bêt Lehèm 'Ephrātāh! Witness these three
Gaze, hand in hand, with faces grave and mild,
Where, 'mid the gear and goats, Mother and Child
Make state and splendour for their eyes. Then, lay
Each stranger on the Earth, in th' Indian way,
Paying the "eight prostrations;" and was heard
Saying softly, in the Indian tongue, that word
Wherewith a Prince is honoured. Nimbly ran,
On this, the people of their caravan
And fetch the gold, and—laid on gold—the spice,
Frankincense, myrrh: and next with reverence nice

Foreheads in dust, they spread the precious things
At Miryām's feet, and worship Him who clings
To Miryām's bosom, drinking soft life so
Who shall be Life and Light to all below.
“For now we see,” say they, departing: “plain
The Star's word come to pass! The Buddh again
Appeareth, or some Bōddhisat of might
Arising for the West, who shall set right,
And serve, and reconcile; and maybe, teach
Knowledge to those who know. We, brothers, each,
Have heard yon shepherds' prattling; if the sky
Speaketh with such, Heaven's mercy is drawn nigh!
Well did we counsel, journeying to this place!
Yon hour-old babe, milking that breast of grace,
The World will praise and worship, well-content.”

Then, fearing Hērōdēs', to their homes they went
Musing along the road. But he, alway
Angered and troubled, bade his soldiers slay
Whatever man-child sucked in Bêt Lehem.
Mār! hadst Thou been all God, as pleaseth them
Who poorly see Thy God-like self, and take
True glory from Thee for false glory's sake;
Co-equal Power, as these—too bold—blaspheme,
Ruler of what Thou earnest to redeem;
Not Babe Divine, feeling with touch of silk
For fountains of a mortal Mother's milk
With sweet mouth buried in the warm feast thus,
And dear heart growing great to beat for us,
And soft feet waiting till the way be spread
Whereby what was true God in Thee should tread
Triumphant over woe and death to bliss,—
Thou, from Thy cradle would'st have stayed in this
Those butchers! with one Angel's swift decree,
Out of the silver cohorts lackeying Thee,
Thou hadst thrust down the bitter Prince who killed
Thine innocents! Would'st Thou not? Was't not willed?
“Alas! Peace and Goodwill” in agony
Found first-fruits! Rāmāh heard that woeful cry
Of Rāhēl {Rachel} weeping for the children; lone,
Uncomforted, because her babes are gone.

Hērōdēs' the King! hast thou heard Rāhēl's wail
Where restitution is? Did aught avail
Somewhere? at last? past life? After long stress
Of heavy shame, to bring forgetfulness?
If such grace be, no hopeless sin is wrought!
Thy bloody blade missed what its vile edge sought;
Mother, and Child, and Yōsēf {Joseph}—safe from thee—
Journey to Miṣrayim {Egypt}, while the Eastern three
Wind homewards, lightened of their spice and gold;
And those great days that were to be, unfold
In the fair fields beside the shining sea
Which rolls, 'mid palms and rocks, in Ha-Gālīl;
As I—if I have grace—hereafter sing,
Telling the dream which came about this thing,
What time, with reverent feet, I wandered there
Treading Christós' ground, and breathing Christós' sweet air.

BOOK I.

MIRYĀM MIGDALĀ'Ā

CLEAR silver water in a cup of gold,
Under the sunlit steeps of Gádara,
It shines—His Lake—the Sea of Kinnéret—
The waves He loved, the waves that kissed His feet
So many blessèd days. Oh, happy waves!
Oh, little, silver, happy Sea, far-famed,
Under the sunlit steeps of Gádara!

Fair is the scene still, tho' the grace is gone
Of those great times when nine white cities dipped
Their walls into its brink, and steel-shod keels
Of Roman galleys ground its sparkling sands;
And Hérōdēs's painted pinnaces, ablaze
With lamps, and brazen shields, and spangled slaves,
Came and went lordly at Tiberiás;
And merchant-ships of al-Ghawr {Ghōr}, and fisher-boats,
From green 'Bêt Ṣaydā' and Chorazín, drove
Pearl-furrows in the sapphire of its sleep:
And, by its beach,—where the cranes wade mid-leg,
And long reeds lisp, and milky ripples roll
The purple-banded shells; and wind-fall'n flowers
Of date and oleander dye the rim
Of blown foam rosy, wended by, league-long,
The caravans of Miṣrayim, treasure-stuffed,
To proud Dimashq {Damascus}, or thronged Sepphoris,
Or 'Akkō's quays. Or, Caesar's spearmen rode
Terrible with the eagles, bringing news
Of life and death from Rome. Or strode austere,
Contemptuously, flaunting phylacteries,
The Pārūsh {Pharisee} and Scribe. Or, noise of slaves,
Sweating beneath the litter's gilded poles,
Told where there passed some languid Palace dame
Fresh from the bath; or praetor, girt with rods:
Or there went by, upon its rocky brim,

The high-capped Mādai bringing stallions in;
The Indian traders with the spice and silk,
The negro-men from Kūš, and ‘Ēlāmī s,
And Red Sea sailors, and from shores of Ye’or
The blue-gowned, swart, Egyptian; for they filled
From all Earth’s regions, in those bygone days,
The pathways by its waters: frequent feet
Of Tyrian traders, and dark Desert-men
Rocking upon their camels, with wild eyes
Glittering like lance-points; and Šīdōnīm,
’Ārammīm and Héllēns and Yəhūdīs; a motley world
Treading th’ enamelled borders, where the vines
Ran clustering, and the almond’s crimson snow
Rained upon crocus, lily, and cyclamen
At feet of feathery palms, and tamarisks
Alive with doves and steel-bright halcyons.
And green and rich rose then the terraced fields
This coast and that; and loud the water-wheels
Poured the cool crystal of the stream and lake
Over a thousand gardens; and an air
Fresher than now; with breath of moistened growths—
Pomegranate, citron, fig—tempered the heats
Blown from the wilderness. And, more than now,
Beauteous the mountains soared, with girdling woods,
Homesteads, and villages, and melon-fields
Hanging between the rocks, and, side by side,
Temples of Zeus and Pan, with singogahs {synagogues}
Of Israel’s Yāh. But, opening then, as now
To let swift Ha-Yardēn stay his eager flood
Under their sunny peaks, foregoing there
The speed he took from Hermōn; glad to spread
Broadened to lake, fringed with wild figs, and flags,
Peopled with pelicans and fish; and fain,
A little, to forget how he must glide
From river into bitter, barren, mere;
Must pass, from waving willows, and cool nooks
Of water-lilies, to lie salt and dead,
Sucked by the Sun, under hot ’Ēdōm’s crags,
In that red hollow of the Sea of Lōt.

Now all is changed—all save the changeless things—
The mountains, and the waters, and the sky—
These, as He saw them, have their glory yet
At sunrise, and at sunset; and when noon
Burns the blue vault into a cope of gold.
And oftentimes, in the 'Ārammī Spring, steals back
Well-nigh the ancient beauty to those coasts
Where Christós' feet trod. That Lily which He loved
And praised for splendour passing Shəlōmōh's {Solomon}—
The scarlet martagon—decks herself still,
Mindful of His high words, in red and gold,
To meet the step of Summer. Cyclamens
Lift their pale heads to see if He will pass;
And amaryllis and white hyacinths
Pour from their pearly vases spikenard forth,
Lest He should come unhonoured. In His paths
Still, as of old, the lowly crocus spreads
A golden carpet for Him; and the birds—
Small almoners of Heaven, as once He said,
Who fall not unregarded—trill their hymns
Of lively love and thanks in every thorn.
Only what Man could do, Man hath well done
To blot with blood and tears His track divine,
To sweep His holy footsteps from His Earth.
In steel and gold, splendid and strong and fierce,
Host after host under that Mount has marched
“Where He sate saying: Blessèd the peace-makers!”
In rage and hatred host with host has clashed
There where he taught, “Love ye your enemies!”
Banners which bore His cross, have mocked His cross,
Scattering His land with slain; till now, at last,
Truly the sword, not peace, is what He brought!
For love of Him nation hates nation so
That at His shrine the watchful Islāmite
Guards Christian throats! Dead lie His once fair fields;
Barren the fallows where His Sower sowed;
None reaps the silver harvests of His Sea;
None in the wheat-row roots the ill tares out.
The hungry land gasps empty in the glare;
The vulture's self goes famished; the wolf prowls
Fasting, amid the broken stones which built

The cities of His sojourn. Wild birds nest
Where revels once were loudest. All are gone
Save for those names never to pass away—
Kəfar Nahūm {Capernaum}, ‘Bêt Saydā, ‘Migdalā,—
The nine white towns that sate beside His Lake.
Vanished the stately stoas, lofty fanes;
Vanished the walls, the towers, the citadels!
Titus and ‘Ómer wrought fair Palestine
No hurt like His who gave her hallowed ground
The fatal benediction of His feet!
Love’s house is desolate for love of Love!
The waters glass no sail; the ways have shrunk
Into a camel-path; the centuries
With flood and blast have torn the terrace bare
Where the fox littered in the grapes. Ask not
Which was “His City” ’mid this ruined life!
None surely knoweth of Kəfar Nahūm
Whether ’twas here, or there. Perchance He dwelt
Longest and latest at this nameless mound
Where, on the broken Column, nests the stork;
Where knot-grass with its spikes, and bitter balls
Of trailing colocynth, and nebbuk-thorns
Bind as they will the marble wrecks, and weave
Shelter for shy jerboas, and the snake.
So still, so far away, so quite forsook,
His City’s burial-place, the painted grouse
Lays her eggs there in carved acanthus-leaves,
And crickets chirp where Caesar’s year is writ.
Yon Arab, with the matchlock and the spear,
Glancing askance—for Afreets haunt the spot—
Murmurs: “Peace be to you! This is Tall Hūm!”
Desolate most of all, with one starved palm
And huddle of sad squalid hovels, thou,
al-Mijdal! burned a-dry beneath black crags,
Choked with thick sand, comfortless, poor, despised,
Who stretched beforetimes to the adjacent Lake
Proud fortress-arms, and—Lady of the plain,—
Holding the keys of glad Kinnéserset,
Took tribute of all passers. Vainly praised
For thy strong Tower,—soaring so high, now laid
Lost in the dust—yet wert thou marked to live,

Stamped for immortal memory by one Name,
Hers who “loved much,” and had her home in thee,
Miryām Migdalā’ā.

There 'twas I saw,
Or seemed to see, that night in Palestine,
Lodging in Mijdal, what is written now;
Lodging at Mijdal on a night of balm
When all the stars on high had sister-stars
Mirrored in Ha-Gālil’s dark purple tide;
And the land lay, a-dream it lived again;
And all the past rolled back, and out of Heaven
Almost the fancy dared to hear that song:

PEACE BEGINNING TO BE,
DEEP AS THE SLEEP OF THE SEA
WHEN THE STARS THEIR STILL GLEAMS GLASS
IN ITS BLUE TRANQUILLITY:
HEARTS OF ALL UPON EARTH,
FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND BIRTH,
TO REST AS THE WILD WATERS REST
WITH COLOURS OF HEAVEN ON THEIR BREAST.

LOVE, WHICH IS SUNLIGHT OF PEACE
AGE BY AGE TO INCREASE,
TILL ANGER AND HATE ARE DEAD,
AND SORROW AND DEATH SHALL CEASE;
“PEACE ON EARTH AND GOODWILL!”
SOULS THAT ARE GENTLE AND STILL
HEAR THE FIRST MUSIC OF THIS
FAR-OFF, INFINITE BLISS!

THE third Spring after Yēšūa‘ Christós had passed:
In the fifth moon, when Ha-Gālil is green,
And the palm shakes fresh feathers to the wind,
Came, through the gates of ‘Migdalā, at eve,
Spearmen and swordmen; and, on armoured steeds,
The Roman knights, and lictors with their rods;
The train of Pōntius Pilātus, moving North

To answer, before Caesar, wrongs alleged
In rescript of the Lord Vitellius,
Legate of 'Arām {Syria}. On Gərizīm's height
Grievously had he broke Shōmrōn {Samaria},
Chastising well, at first, rebellious folk;
But in his after wrath, it was put forth
He wronged the clemency of Home, and wrought
Treason to Caesar. "Therefore must he go
To meet, at throne-steps of Tiberius,
Those his accusers"—wrote Vitellius;
Thus 'twas the Procurator wended North.

And, as along the margin of the Lake
The wind swept cold, the Imperial Relegate
Would that night, with his wife, lie in the walls.
Thereat rose question where in 'Migdalā
Meet room was for a Roman Consular
Of the high Samnīta race of Telesīnus,
Yəhūdāh's (Judea) Governor, thro' ten-strong years,
And, maybe, yet to rule all 'Arām,
If Caesar purges. Also, for his spouse
Procula; from the Claudian line; ill-apt
To couch patrician limbs in leathern tent,
Reared to the ivory and the gold, or share
Peasant's coarse shelter. And the townsmen said:
"One house we have where this great Mār might lie
Between the walls of 'Migdalā—might halt
Well-honoured. 'Tis the Lady Miryām's
Who dwelleth yonder by the north Sea-gate;
Yon stone Khān, with the carved door and the palms.
Many fair chambers, and a garden-court
With marbles paved, and falling waters 'freshed,
And cedar work from Tyre, and well-girt slaves,
The Roman there shall find."

So it befell
That Pilātus lodged with Miryām Migdalā'ā.

And there were those who heard what Pilātus spake,
Upon the leewān leaning sad that night,
Unlulled by lute, or 'Ārammī dance, or splash

Of fountains tinkling on the painted stones.
For sleep came not; and she, beside him, said—
Klaudía Prókoula —“Mārī {My Lord} doeth ill
To keep sick vigil, when soft beds are spread,
And guards are set, and even Ha-Gālīl
Lends so fair shelter that henceforth in Rome
We shall think gentlier of th’ injurious land.”
“In Rome? Ah, Rome!” stern Pōntius cried: “but Rome
Held not my thought, great Claudia! nor these hogs
We herded with our spear-points, pricking them
Time after time to grunt. Caesar is just,
And Caesar will not judge me heedlessly—
Friend of Sejanus, and for ten years here
Keeping the heel of Rome on Hērōdēs’s neck—
At word of vile Shōmrōnīm {Samaritans}. But I
All day long, as we rode out from the plain
Of Yizre‘ēl {Esdraēlon}—from Shōmrōn
To Nāṣrat; and, threading Nāṣrat,
With horse and foot and litters, clattered on
Under the Horns of Hattin, and so down,
Through that dark-shadowed Valley of the Dove,
To this green hollow, where the Ha-Yardēn gains
Peace for a day, before he hastens on
To foam and fret and die—as rivers die,
And men die,—helplessly; I had in mind
The Man I did adjudge unrighteously.
Know’st thou, fair wife! that was His dwelling-place,
The poor, white, clustered town amid the hills
Where we clomb up from Qīshōn, and you saw
The hoopoees run in the rye—Shēlōmōh’s birds,
Which knew the name of God! Would I had known
On that ill day at the Praetorium!
By Pan! I tell thee all the way He came,
The pale, sweet Man; the Man that was ‘the King,’
And did adjudge us, His judiciaries.
I saw Him at Gērizīm, where I smote
Those dogs of Sychár—very pitiful
Marking the blood. And then, as if He paced
Effortless over bare Gilbōa‘, ’twas He
Gazed on me at Mēgiddō, and Yizre‘ēl;
And Shūnēm and Kēsullōt, always pale,

Always with that high look of godlike calm,
Those eyes of far perception—those mild eyes
I saw that morn in the Praetorium;
Accursed hour!—more in my thoughts than Rome!—
When Synedrītai {Sanhedrists} and Priests, with Kaiāphas
To lead the learnēd rabble, broke my sleep,
And brought, that I should doom Him, that one Man
Whom, of all Yəhūdīs, I hated not, nor scorned.
And when I asked, ‘What accusation
Have ye against this One?’ and bade them judge
According to their law (which—under Rome—
Held no more power to kill), they, wanting blood,
Must have me hear how He perverted minds,
Decried our tax, would pull the Temple down,
And make Himself a King. ’Sooth! to make Kings,
And unmake, was for Caesar’s self alone;
Wherefore, to keep unbroke our Roman peace;
And yet to spare this Man, I led Him in
Away from those that clamoured, to my hall,
Thinking to clear Him, when His trembling lips,
Inside the Agrippeum, gave me ground
To make it good at Rome, and guard the peace,
Yet choke those hounds from their most innocent prey.
But as I questioned Him upon these things,
And asked, “Art Thou, indeed, King of the Yəhūdīs?”
Lo! He, with such a mien as one should have
Wearing the purple, spake full royally,
‘Aye! as thou sayest, a King!’ and, no word more!
Still I went on: ‘Speakest Thou nought to me
Whose nod can send Thee hence to live or die?
Art thou King of the Yəhūdīs?’ And the Man said,
‘Yea! King! yet not of any earthly realm:
To this end was I born, and therefore came
King of all Kings, because I witness Truth.’
Then asked I, ‘What is Truth?’ He answered nought;
Or I was wroth, and hearkened not: hot scorn
Shook me, to hear that horde of circumcised
Howling for blood outside my Palace-gates.
So, yet anew, thinking to stay their lust
With some ignoble gobbet, I came forth
And from my Bēma spake: ‘Ye have the right

Now, at your Passover, that I release
Some one condemned: See! I set this Man free;
And give for your good sport another prey
Also called Yēšūa‘— Yēšūa‘ bar-Rabbān!'
The vile herd shouted, ‘Set us free the thief! ’ ”

And Claudia moaned: “I, too, remember well!
I saw Him from my lattice, and His eyes
Burned themselves on my heart. Truly a King
Of Truth—if anywhere such kingdom be!”
“By Hercules!”—the Roman yet went on—
“I would that I had hearkened, asking that
Which none hath answered; not the Samian;
Nor he of Kittīm; nor the oracles;
Nor any Augur, out of any bird;
Nor the high Flāmens, nor dread Zeus {Jove} himself.
Who knows whence gleamed the fire of those strange eyes
Which had no fear, nor any bitterness,
But seemed to look beyond us, glad to die?
They drove me forth again, angry and sick,
Crying: ‘I find no fault in Him, at all! ’ ”

And Claudia sighed: “There was no fault at all!”

“Thence sent I Him to Antípas. That fox
Worried with claws of spite my patient one
But would not bite. So came He back to me;
And—sitting there upon the ’Gabbəthā,
With Rome and Justice by—I might have saved!
What was for me to fear? Thrice before that,—
Once—when I brought the silver eagles in,
Though all al-Quds yelled at my gates;
Once, when I spent those pious shekels, stored
In their most holy treasury, to fetch
Fair water from the pools of Shəlōmōh,
That they might drink clean swill; and once again,
When I hung up, in the Hērōdeion,
The gilded shields of Caesar; I did set
These Yəhūdī swine at nought. But then, oh, then!
I faltered, paltered, yielded; Claudia! yea,
I played worse traitor to my Roman soul

Than aught e'er done to Caesar. I, who read
That daybreak, on my scroll, how Socrates—
In the sweet Héllén—with loftiest scorn of life—
Condemned the Athenian judges to live on,
And took, triumphant, from their guilty lips,
Gift of his hemlock! Oh, thou great, grave face!
That journey'dst with me all this mindful day,
Amid thy watching hills of Ha-Gálil;
Why did'st Thou not reply? I might have saved!
Why would'st Thou not reply? I would have saved!
Moreover, wife! did'st thou not send to me—
Me, whom my Father told of Julius,
And how he bled, and how Calphurnia dreamed—
That message of thy vision, saying, 'Mār!
Deal thou in nothing with that innocent one,
For I have suffered much in sleep this night
Because of Him?' ”

And Claudia answered: “Aye!
I sent thee word: for, in the morning watch,
When dreams glide truest thro' Sleep's gate of horn,
There came upon mine eyes in slumber sealed,
Shadow or semblance of the fairest form,
Presence most sweet and most majestical,
Seen amongst men. Nay, not of men it seemed,
For white Apollo, in our Atrium,
Wrought of the Thracian marble, was to this—
The high gods pardon!—but a satyr! Blood
Crimsoned His brow in beaded drops, from where
A crown of thorns pricked deep; and bloody holes
Marked either open palm, and either foot.
Yet, by the exceeding gladness of His face;
By His assured, benign, serenity;
These were, I knew, to some royal rights He had
But as imperial purple. Ah, the ray
Shed from those gentle eyes, flushed my stilled soul
With such a glow of glory, such delight
Of sudden seeing, as if I had been
An Apennine, touched singly by the sun,
Dyed rose-red by some earliest shaft of Dawn,
While all the other peaks were dark, and slept.

But soon my greatness faded while I stretched
Eager quick hands of worship unto Him,
And fell upon my knees, for love, and fear,
And reverence and wonder; lo! He spake
Solemnly, and in accent known, it seemed,
More to my heart than ear; not in our tongue,
Nor any tongue, except what stars, and seas,
And the low voice of Night will sometimes use;
Saying full mildly—or He seemed to say:—
‘This morn, thy Mār—if Heaven’s way changeth not—
Will wrongfully adjudge Me unto death
Who am the lover of men, of him, thee, all,
And come to be Beginning of a time
When Peace shall reign and men see Angels near,
And perfect Love shall cast out Fear, which hath
The torment. But, not knowing well of this,
They, of whose blood I am, will spill My blood;
And he, if this dream help not, shall abet,
Delivering Me to die upon the Cross
For policy and Caesar’s Roman peace.
Whence, for all flesh deliverance, and the Light;
But for thee tears and woe, and for thy Mār
The burden of a shame, sinking his soul,
The burden of a name, intolerable,
Accurst thro’ all the Ages, hated, scorned,
Long after I forgive and comfort him.
Wake from thy sleep, then; bid him list to thee
Saying what I have said!’

“So, with a start
I brake the bonds of slumber, and I heard,—
In place of that sweet voice, majestic, calm,
Making my terror tender—angry roars
As if of hungered beasts, men who cried out,
‘Crucify this one; free us bar-Rabbān!’
And drawing nigh my latticed window, saw,
Oh, Zeus! Him of my vision, passing down
Godlike, but not yet crowned with cruel thorns,
Nor pierced in hand or foot. What should it mean?
Was that—the ’Ārammī with those searching eyes—
My warner in the dream? Trembling to see,

I snatched my tablets, drove the point i' the wax
Hasteful, as thou didst note; and wrote the word
Eheu! thou would'st not heed!"

And Pōntius bent

His proud brows down, and muttered: "On my heart
Thy stylus pricked—but vainly! Caesar's wrath
Were but the idle wind which stirs my hair,
If I had only back that Man, that hour!
Forever and forever have they passed;
And now, and yesterday, and all my days
Something which is not shame, and is not grief,
Nor womanish tenderness at blood and death—
Being soldier as I am, not apt to melt—
Nor penitence, strange to my Stoic mind
Which knows what hath been, must be;—but the pang
Of a strong spirit that betrayed itself;
Rage for the act reflection pardons not;
The sting of playing slave to Destiny;
Bite at my soul more sharp than fangs of those;
Whisper, as though to mock me from myself,
Mine own past words, the words I flung at them—
'That which is writ, is writ!' Thou wottest what fell:
The Patient One, who came to witness Truth,
To rule without a throne,—without—just gods!—
The Purple, or the Eagles, or the Spears—
Stood on my Paved Way, with their Cut-throat, there,
Side by side, nowise blenching; while they picked
A life to grace their festival. Thou knowest
They chose bar-Rabbān. Thereupon I asked,
'What will ye that I do with this your King?'
They howled: 'The Cross! the Cross!' and I let go
Their leash, and He was scourged, and mocked, and decked
With that sharp crown thou sawest—gemmed with blood,
As I do sadly mind—and, o'er His back
Some evil-witted Hebrew flung, in spite
A red palūdāmentum, lātīclāvus
To robe His sovereignty. Yet, even thus,
Sick at the midriff with my wrath—I stood!
Something I risked to save myself and Him.
'Twas while they clamoured: 'Give the Man for death!

'Tis due! He made Himself a Son of God!'
Was't, then, Apollo, masquing here below?
Or some Olympian? great Latōna's brood
At play-games 'midst us? and we scourging Him
That should have reared the altars? On such thought
Fain had I learned from those unlying lips
What it might mean; and drew Him in again,
To private speech, and questioned; 'Whence art Thou?'
No answer did He deign, till I had stormed:
'Answerest me nought, who have the power of Thee?'
High Zeus! but then He answered, stripping me,
With sweet commanding scorn, of pride and might;
And making me, and Caesar, and our whips,
Blind bondsmen to some dread decree He knew
Driving us, like the moon which drags the tides,
Helplessly up and down the beach of things.
'Thou hast,' quoth He, 'no power of Me at all
Except it had been given thee from above:
Therefore is thy sin lighter!' Seest thou, Wife?
Here was thy Galilaean pitied me!
Found for His hangman pleas! At that fresh speech
Stamping Him praetor, me His prisoner,
I had more will to ransom; and I spake
Leading Him forth again: 'He is your King!'
Hoarsely they hooted: 'Caesar is our King!
No King save Caesar! If thou let Him go
Thou art not Caesar's Friend!' 'Twas there I failed!
They held so much against me; many griefs;
The last, that blood I mingled, over-hot,
With the fools' sacrifice. And then, at Rome
Our Emperor nursed some grudges. Nigh to fall
Was great Seiānus; and those Roman streets
To see the statues haled to the melting-pot,
That kitchen wenches might have pans and plates
From him that had stood second in our world.
I did not dare! the knaves my firm soul struck
Through that one corslet-joint I could not patch;
I did not dare! *Mē Miserum!* I took
Water, and washed my hands before the herd,
And cried: 'The blame of this just blood be yours!'
The rabble answered: 'Yea! on us, on us,

And on our children be His blood!' Oh, Dis!
'Grave those words deep on thy dark muniments,
If Hades be, and black assizes sit,
That, age by age, yon Hebrew priests may pay
Fair share of my accomp't! I could not wash
My conscience clean! The water, to my eyes,
Ran foul and grimy to the golden bowl
From each palm, vainly laved. So did He pass
To lofty death, and I to life defamed.
What can they do, who hate me most, at Rome
One little part as deadly as this hurt
I wrought against myself?"

And Claudia groaned:

"He passed 'mid many portents—it was told.
Folks spake of darkness, earthquakes; in the midst
Of their proud Temple—in the Adýtum —
The veil suddenly rent; of cries to Heaven
Uttered, and that way answered. Didst thou hear
The talk ran that He had not died at all,
Or, dying, glided back to life again;
Was seen; ate, drank, walked, talked—Man among men—
Or if not Man (which could not be!) then shape,
Larva, or Lemur, or some unnamed thing,
Visible, seeming whatsoe'er Life seems;
And, lastly, 'scaped from sight? Those whom He left,
A band of honest ones, give stoutly forth
He was caught up in clouds, snatched to the Blue.
And, day by day, my slave-girls say, this grows,—
Making a sect, which hath no dread of Death;
But will spend life and breath, and gold, and pains
To succour any wretch; because they hold
This Christós did die for him—grows, good Mārī!
Not only here, but in the coasts, and Isles;
And toucheth Athens, and hath crept to Rome."

"There, too?" broke Pōntius, "must I find at Rome,—
Despite the stony tomb, the guards we set,
My soldier's word; the spear, stabbed socket-deep,—
That face which fills each night with dreams for me?
Will He run over-sea whose tireless step

Outstrips my swiftest war-horse, mends my stride
On every march, pitches my camp with me,
Sits with me in my tent, my judgment-hall,
My banquet-room, my bed-place? watches me
With those great eyes which do not hate, nor blast,
But send a keen light to my inmost self
Where I read: 'This is Pōntius, Fortune's slave
For Caesar's fear.' 'Sooth! why should I have played
Butcher to Kaïphas? Note, Claudia!
That blood of Julius, spilt to enfranchise Rome,
Bequeathed Augustus and Tiberius;
And this pure blood, belike, sown in Death's field,
May breed some different crop than peace and ease,
Things fall so wry with Earth, sometimes I think
Thy Galilaean erred not; that men's powers
Are lent them out of some Imperium,
Shadowy, majestic, unopposable,
Wronging all wrongers till they render right,
'Established behind the Thrones; where Fate's pipe blows
And we must dance the step, or be shoved by.

Know any of ye here of any wight
Who loved this Nāṣrātī {Nazarene}, and followed Him,
And cleaves, distraught, to such wild fancy yet
That Cross, and Spear, and grave-stone did not end?"

"Great Sir!" a 'Arammī hand-maid gave reply;
"This is the house is called 'Migdalā's,'
Named, as some will, from Migdal, where we lie;
And others from the braided locks she wore
Who lives House-mistress here; the long hair tressed
The Harlot's way. They told us, in the town,
This Dame,—much honoured now for noble works—
Was devil-haunted, and the wildest wench
Of Ha-Gālīl, before the Nāṣrātī
Tamed her, and taught her; and she grew His Friend,
Closest amid the faithful. Is't thy will
We bid her to the Presence?"

Pōntius said:

"I might command, for still I bear my seal;
Authority sits yet upon my lip;
But here and now, I soften. Say to her

The Procurator, guest and friend, entreats
Speech with the Lady Miryām."

Thus met

She who most loved Him, he who rendered Him
To death:—Pōntius and Miryām! For, anon,
The bar slides backward of the Woman's Court,
And, on the stairway of the leewān, stood
One tall, and proud, and fair; albeit, past grief
Had dimmed the lustre of those large dark eyes
Bent upon Pilātus. Rich the Yəhūdī blood
Glowed through the sunburnt ivory of her face—
Unveiled for salutation—lending show
Of colour to the thinned uncoloured cheek,
But leaving pale as pearl-lined ocean shell
The full white neck, and—where neck rose to breast—
The tender margins of the bosom, bound
By silver-bordered cymar, crossed;—and pale
As moonlight's heart the low smooth forehead, framed
Under the black-waved hair; forehead and hair;
And eyebrows, bent like the new moon; full lids;
Silk lashes long and curved, shadowing with touch
Of softest melancholy that worn place
Where the tears gather—all declaring her
A Daughter of the Sun, in those climes born
Where light and life are larger. Ah, and marked
With stamp of those strong passions of the East
Where Nature has her pangs and throes not more
Than Man, cradled upon her burning breast,
Tender and quick. There are the Dawns of Love
Enkindling hearts with instant golden glow
Like morning in the desert; there Love's Noons
Consuming, all-revealing, shadowless;
With fiery fervour draining young hearts dry
As mid-day drinks the streams; and there Love's Eves
Swift-sinking from the fierce fit to the lull,
From sun-blaze, by brief dusk, to tranquil stars,
And satisfied, still Night. Earthquakes and floods,
Withering Simooms, and winds that tear the Seas
To milky madness; find their counterparts
In those own children of the Light, who live

And love and hate with pulse at quicker beat.
Such heart-storms gone on that high countenance
Had writ their passage, but not left her marred.
Rather, like some majestic Mount she showed
In Cathay {China} or Japan,¹ whose lofty bulk
Raged once, all flame; which broke its boundaries,
And,—torn and red and furious,—scattered round
Levin, and lava-slime, and barren ash,
Blighting what lay below. Then came the hush;
And that which was all terrible, grew fair.
The Hill of Hell is Crest of Paradise!
The cup which on its head steamed scarlet reek
And spilled forth fires, wears in the cloudless Blue
A silvery rim of snows; the fevered breast;
Slumbers in comforted, unbroken, calm,
With placid bands of gilded clouds girt round,
And hues of sunrise and of sunset soft
On the scorched rocks. Where molten channels ran
Streams of sweet mountain crystal babble down
Embellishing black glen, and fissured cliff,
Deep hollows where sad Winter hides away
From Summer, with the snow still in her lap;
And shoulders of sharp crags and windy shelves,
With laughing light of flowers, and sparkling threads
Of the white falling water, and green glades
Where wild birds have their home, and plumy ferns
Wave for them, and the iris decks their nests
With flutter of her purple velvet flags.
And, in the happy plain, that Mountain's foot
Stands feared no more, but worshipped, watched, and praised
For comeliness exceeding, and large gifts
Of cooling airs, and shadows cast around,
And wandering cloud-banks with their welcome rains
Gathered and garnered; fringed with villages
And wandering flocks, and vines, and clustering groves
Whose roots, in death and desolation fixed,
Make loveliness of loss, and grace of wreck.
So did that Lady show a peace and charm,
A gracious presence, brought from passions stilled,
From tempests of the blood, for ever hushed:
Fairer, maybe, as she stood there, serene,

Than in those bygone days, the evil days
When Ha-Gālīl, down to its utmost edge,
And all the South, was loud in talk of her
Who walked in woven gold, and wore her braids—
A Queen of Sin—crowning the shameless brow
With diadem of tresses, tied with pearls;
And set her henna-scented feet on necks
Of Héllēn and Latin lovers.

Now, most meek
The proud, pale, bended face; the folded palms,
The knees touching the pavement, as she said:
“The Roman Lord, who may command, hath prayed
Speech with his servant. She must needs obey,
Hostess and subject. I am Miryām!”

“Wottest thou who I am?” asked Pōntius.

The flame of those old fires a little leaped;
The fair hill shook again with bygone storms
One moment, while she murmured: “Time hath been
When, with a curse, or by my girdle-knife,
The answer of thy handmaid had been given.
Now I have grace to say I hate thee not,
But pray His peace for thee. Did He not pray
‘Father, forgive them!’ Yea, I know thee well!
’Twas thou didst send my Master to the Cross!”

“Hast thou forgiven, who didst love Him so
That which my well-worn soul, careless of blood,
Pardons not to itself?” quoth Pōntius.

And Miryām said: “I could not love Him so,
Nor rightly worship Him, nor live to-day—
As always I must live, on the dear food
Of His true lips, nor trust to go to Him
The way He went, if I forgot His word—
‘Love ye your enemies.’ Remembering that
I bear to look upon thee, Roman Lord!
Remembering what we heard Him say at last:
‘Forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ ”

“Nay, but I knew!” quoth Pōntius: “whereunto
Prayed thus thy Rabbi? what new God had He?
What God hast thou, greater than Zeus—to nod,
And so undo past deeds which have been done,
And—as thou sayest—‘forgive’?”

“That which befalls,”
She gave reply, “befalls not otherwise
Than as it hath been willed. He made us know
There cometh to the ground no little fowl,
No sparrow of the house-top, but its end
Was cared for; and the flowers, and lowly grass,
Which are to-morrow for the wayside fire,
Have raiment fore-provided them to wear
Brighter than Shēlōmōh’s. If not one life
Goes anywhere to death, save for good use,
And by the over-arching Power allowed,
Under vast Law of Love, He—most of all—
Died for Love’s sake, and was ordained to die,
Whom thou didst doom. Yet thou thyself wast doomed
To do Love that sad service, slaying Him
Who could not die, but freeth all from death:
For we have seen Him, strong, and beautiful,
And living on the farther shore of Death.
Therefore we hate thee not, but pity thee;
And those like thee whose evil prospers good;
And pray for thee, since Love alone helps Hate
To ’scape the whips that scourge it into Right,
And bring it by long penance into peace
Unwittingly;—under a greater Name
Than what thou namest, and thy Romans serve.”

“Yea! Pōntius mused: “He spake to me of power
Lent from above, and not from Zeus, or Rome!
What hindered that I should not use it, then,
To have thy peace this night in place of irk?
To taste full greatness of thy feebleness,
Not groan with littleness of majesty?”

She answered: “That which hindered was thyself
More feared of Caesar, than of wrongfulness;

And that which hindered was thy lust to win
Favour of men instead of praise from Heaven,
Whose still Voice whispered thy vexed will in vain.
He spake to us: ‘Lay up no treasures here,
Where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves do steal;
But lay it up in Heaven!’ ”

Pilatus brake in:
“*Mēhercle!* I would give much sesterces
To buy that ill time back, albeit, before,
Death never spoiled my slumbers! What saidst thou,
That, slaying Him, we could not kill? Thy brow
Weareth no brand of madness, yet thy speech
Sounds rank unreason!”

“Have I leave,” she asked,
“For my great Master’s sake, to speak more near?”

“I pray thee very humbly,” Pontius said,
“To speak as thou shalt deign.”

Thereat she rose
Stateliest,—and light of living Love and Truth
Made fairer her fair face, kindled her eyes
To heav’nlier lustre, while she told the things
Which had befallen after Calvary.
How, surely, with the sad days ending there
New days were dawned, and hopes unknown to Earth.
How He walked here, the shadow of Him Love,
The speech of Him soft Music, and His step
A Benediction; making sick folk whole,
The lame to walk, the lepers to go clean,
And taking back the dead from Death, by might
Of some deep secret which He had of Heaven.
Until,—at that hard triumph of the Cross,
In hour, and way, and by th’ appointed hands—
He Himself passed, mild and majestic,
Through Death’s black gate, whose inner side none saw
Before He set it wide, golden and glad,
Conqueror for us of the Unconquerable.
Also, along these coasts, what works He wrought—

Many most mighty works—and how He taught
The nearness of eternal things, the law
Of perfect Sonship; being Son of God
By eminence of manhood; King of Kings
By royalty o'erpassing realms and crowns.
Also, she told beautiful words He spake,—
Words of bright mercy and of boundless peace—
With wisdom wondrous, clad in simplest speech
As scent, and silver leaves, are shut, and seed,
For golden gardens under suns to come,
In the upfolded flow'r-cup. “Which blest buds,”
Spake she: “shall blossom ever more and more
For all flesh living, till the full fruit rounds,
And there be ‘Peace on Earth—Peace and Goodwill!’ ”

But many drew into the marbled Court
Silently, one by one, hearing those words
Fearless and sure, spoke high to Pōntius.
For, 'twas as though the Angels' song anew
Found echo in our air. And, 'mid them came—
Leaving his kneeling camel at the gate—
A swarthy stranger in the Eastern garb,
Girdled and turbaned, as those use who wend
In the far-toiling caravans of Hind.
Reverent and wrapt he stood; and, when she ceased,
Drew swiftly from his breast a silken roll
Tied with a silvered thong, and, bending low,
Laid this at Miryām's foot.

But Pilātus leaped
Fierce, from his place; with visage white and writhed.
“Call them to horse!” he cried, “for I will ride
To Sépphōris, before the Sun is high,
If spurs can prick! One other watch spent here
Will brand me Nāṣrātī!” Therewith he flung
Furiously forth, buckling his Roman sword,
And strode down to the margin of the Lake,
While in the street, with sleepy stumbling tread,
Spearmen and slaves slow gathered for the march.

But over Ha-Gālīl, the first rays spread—
Tender and pearly—of that Dawn, who takes
No taint of Earth, whereon her white feet walk.
The hills of Gádara were ridged with rose,
And every wimpling wavelet of the Sea
Rolled a light edge of silver on the gloom.
A blue belt widened; and the beam, which broke
Between the Morning-star and Night's last clouds,
Even while it showed the wind-flower's stainless cup,
And the red lily, waiting for her Mār,
Gleamed on the greaves of Pilātus, gemmed his helm
With dancing flecks, and lit his studded shield
With soft forgiving splendours. And that breeze
Which is the breath of Day, waking the world,
Stirred with no gentler waft the innocent plumes
Of water-linnets, rousing in the reeds,—
Than the proud purple of his martial cloak
Clasped with the brazen eagles. And, he mused,
One sandal in the ripples of the Lake,
Which did not shun his foot:—“Aye, by the gods!
She spake of this! ‘He makes His Sun to shine
On evil and on good!’ Who makes? We held
’Twas young Apollo, driving steeds of gold,
That made. Not Caesar, certes! for whose wrath
I sold myself to Rabbī Kaiáphas.
Yet blows this breeze as tender on my cheek
As if ’twere hers of Migdal, who hath sinned
And lives the sweetlier! Yon all-seeing Sun,
Hastening above the verge, dips not again
To mark me standing in the waves He loved!
Those waves, with wet lips, kiss my wrongful foot;
The blind blooms waft me fragrance! Wherefore fear?
Why tremble? Yet, a Son of Heaven! A King!
Would I had heard His answer! Would I knew
What portion mine must prove, if these things grow
And Rome should pass, and huge Olympus’ self
Be emptied of its gods!”

Thereat he turned
To stride his snorting war-horse; and the Day
Broadened in glory over Ha-Gālīl,

Forgetting no man's roof; giv'n out of Heaven
Alike to all, to warm and comfort all.
And, in the whispering palms, and waving grass,
Once more that lovely promise seemed to sound:

HEARTS OF ALL UPON EARTH,
FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND BIRTH,
TO REST AS THE WILD WATERS REST,
WITH THE COLOURS OF HEAVEN ON THEIR BREAST.

1. The lines ensuing were written at the foot of the famous extinct volcano, Fuji San, near Tokyo, in Japan.

BOOK II.

THE MĀGUS.

THE writing of the silken roll was this,
In 'Ārammîm set fair; with much soft phrase
Of salutation, and high courtesies
Precedent: then she read:

“One nowise meet—
Except for humbleness and gravity—
To kiss the latchet of her shoe who walked
Closest and dearest of His nearest friends,
With Yēšūa‘, called The Nāṣrātî, doth pray
Speech of the Lady Miryām. He comes,
By eight hard moons, from Indus to this sea
In quest of it; last quest of waning life,
Seeing thy servant numbereth fourscore years,
Ill-apt for journeyings. A slave lays these
Before thy feet; himself, thy slave, awaits,
Making the Eight Prostrations.”

Hearing that,—
Upon the morrow, for his errand’s sake,
And for his years, and for fair courtesy,
She gave good answer, writing how her gates
Stood wide for such an one, and she herself
His handmaiden.

Thereat, with goodly train
Of serving-men and beasts caparisoned,
Camels and riding asses—to her door
Came this far-travelled Elder; entered in;
With silvered brows bowed low, and thin worn hands
Clasped meekly, palm to palm, before his breast—
The Indian way. Upon the pavement there
He placed his forehead, and, in soft wise, spake:

“Art thou that Miryām of ‘Migdalā
Whose name is borne to us with Name of Him
That was the Teacher here; and wrought great works;
And died at last the death upon the Cross,
Three spring-times back, thyself beholding this?”

And Miryām said: “My name with His great Name
Was no more worthy to keep company
Than the pale fire-fly with the risen sun!
Yet am I she who in His glorious light
Through two years dwelled, and breathed the blessed air
Sweet with His breath, and in these happy ears
Took the great music of His wisdom. Sir!
How shall this stead you? and what purposes
Brought thy most honourable feet so far?”

He made reply: “I alone live, of Three
Who many winters past, came to thy land
Led by a strange white Star, burst suddenly
New from the spangled purple of the Night:
And, while we read the sky, our knowledge grew
That this beamed token of a Teacher born
Illumining the world, as that great Star
Shot its fair splendours far: But loving Light,
And always seeking Light—as taught of Buddh—
We journeyed hither from our Indian hills
Wending to Bēt Lehem; and found that Babe
Whom thou hast known as Man, divinely signed
By praise and portent to be Whom we sought.
So, at those little feet we laid our gifts,
Worshipping, and we looked upon the face—
Tender and pure—of Her that bore the Babe;
Then, warned betimes of Hērōdēs’’s dark design,
Homeward returned. There, while the years went by,
Came, presently, borne by the Caravans,
Word of this Wonder grown; and, to our minds,
The gold and silk and myrrh of all their bales
Counted but dross to what was wafted us
Of loftiest wisdom and large doctrines given
To mend the old. But those that came with me
Beforetimes, died; desiring to know this;
And I myself die soon,—which is not feared

By such as follow great Lord Buddha's Law.
Yet had I will unquenchable to learn
The setting of that Star of Men, whose rise
My younger eyes beheld. Therefore, once more
Over this weary way my steps have passed,
To hear before I die. And, when men said
In Magdal, by the Lake of Ha-Gālīl,
She dwelleth, who did love and serve Him most,
My face I turned, sweet Lady! to thy gate,
And, by thy graciousness emboldened now,
I make my prayer."

"What prayer?" soft she replied,
Lifting, and leading him with tender hand,
As daughter doth her sire, to that raised seat
Upon the leewān.

Then he said: "Mine ears
Hunger to know, what thou canst best impart,
The deeds thy Yēšūa' did, the words He spoke,
The ways He walked, the manner of His days,
And of their close, and what it is they tell,—
Strange and unheard before,—how, after death
He was seen living. Talk of such new things
Came to us by the merchants, making trade
From ours to yours. One sate upon a Mount
Which hangs above thy town; and heard Him speak
Words to a multitude, whose echoes faint—
All so far-off—were heavenly; like the musk
Which keeps his fragrance through a thousand leagues.
One, selling spices in al-Quds,
Caught, as he lay at Bēt-'Anyāh {Bethany}, some waft
Of some wight, fetched to breath again, being dead;
—An 'El'āzār,' townsman of the place:—
And yet another, wending from the sea,
Met Him in Tyre, and had it from the mouth
Of a Šīdōnī woman, how He healed
Her child—being distant far—with one strong word.
Yet, more than any marvels, would I learn
What truths He taught beyond those truths we know
Of our Lord Buddha. Such my humble prayer,
And hither have I journeyed, hoping this."

The light of larger love than shines for Earth
Made beautiful her eyes, while at his knee
She bowed; and kissed his hands; and reverently
Spake: "Surely thou art one He would have praised,
Desiring truth; and He hath bidden us
Declare what truth we know. Small wit I have
To tell a tenth part of the sweetness poured
From those dear lips; yet, what I saw and heard
Gladly shall I recite. Sojourn, I pray,
Here, with thy servants, for a space; and take
Rest from that too long road!"

Thus did it fall
That, day by day for six fair friendly days,
The Lady and the Indian Māgus sate
In gentle converse: Miryām nowise loath
With Memory's spell to fetch the good hours back
When He was near; and that grave Eastern sage
Listening more close, to catch the least of it,
Than lover for the last words of the loved.
And where they sate the place was suitable
For lofty talk. A cool, white paven Court
Shut by high walls from noise of the bazaar,
With fountains tinkling on the veiny stones;
And trickling basins, where the silvery fins
Of fishes fanned; and crimson lotus-cups
Lolled on the water; and papyrus spread
Her filmy fingers; and in painted jars
Citron and oleander spread around
Delicious odours; and, with fearless wing,
The friendly silken swallow, nest-building,
Came and went lightsome, through the latticed stone;
Where rounded arches let the blue sky in
And one might see a topmost palm-branch wave.
There, on the soft-piled carpets, sadly-glad,
Told she the Master's story, as I tell.

"What was, in the beginning of these things,
Scantly I know by hearing; and such word

As, sometimes, from the brothers of Mārī,
Or from His Mother, fell. But those not apt
Greatly to speak; since, well-nigh to the end,
Small honour found He in His father's house:
And She who bore Him—blessëd beyond all
Of mortal mothers—bore a load besides
Of love and fear, wonder and reverence,
So heavy on her heart that her still lips
Were locked as if an Angel held them close.
Only you saw, if Heaven should seek on Earth
Fit Mother for its Messenger of grace,
Fit womb to lock such precious treasure safe,
These were the eyes,—communing with the skies—
That was the face,—tender and true and pure;—
There was the breast,—beautiful, sinless, sweet—
This was the frame,—majestic, maidenly—
And these the soft strong hands, and those the arms,
And those the knees, bent daily in meek prayer—
Whereto the Eternal Love would needs commit
The flower of Humankind to bud and blow.

“I, who have been that which He found me, hide
My stained cheeks in my hands, speaking of her
Who showed so noble, humble, heavenly,
So virginal and motherly; so fair,
The Rose of Women. Sir! if thou should’st pluck
A thousand lilies here in Ha-Gālīl
One would show whitest silver; one would have
Most gold at heart. And, Sir! if thou should’st fetch
A thousand pearls up from thy Arab Sea
One would gleam brightest, best! The queenliest gem,
The choicest bloom, would happen suddenly;
Unlooked for! What hath made them perfect, none
Wotteth, no more than where the fount will rise
Amid a hundred hollows of the grass
Whence the stream starts; no more than which shall be—
Of cedar-apples shed by myriads
When sea-winds shake the groves on Ləvānōn {Lebanon}—
The chosen one to shoot, and grow, and spread
A roof of dark green glory o’er the hill.
In such wise, as I dare to deem, He came

Of purest Mother Perfect Child, begot
Divinelier, surely, than we know; arrived
In this world,—of the many worlds,—by path
Leading to birth as new, as sweet, as strange
As what His dear feet opened past the Tomb.
If we should strive to say in mortal speech
Where He was Man, and why much more than Man,
The earthly words would mar the Heavenly truth.
Love tells it best in her simplicity;
And Worship in his deepest silences.

“Thou knowest of the Birth, and how there fell
Lauds out of Heaven to hail Him, and high songs
Of peace, and comfortable years to come:
And of the bitter Prince; the murdered babes,
The cry of childless mothers. How they fled—
Miryām and Yōsēf—to the Land of Ye’or {Nile},
By Hevrōn and by Zīf, sore-toiling south
Over the Brook of Miṣrayim. On their way
’Tis told the palm-trees stooped to give them fruit;
That dragons of the Desert slid their scales—
Shamed to be deadly—into cleft and den:
That robbers, by the road, flung spear and sword
Down on the sand, and laid their fierce brows there,
Convinced of evil by mere majesty
Of Babe and Mother. And dry Roses bloomed
Back into beauty, when their garments brushed
The Rose-bush; and a wayside sycamore
Beneath whose leaves they rested, moved his boughs
From noon till evening with the moving sun
To make them shade. And, coming nigh to On—
Where stands the House of Rā,—its mighty god,
Cut in black porphyry, prodigious, feared,
Fell from his seat. But if all this be so
I wot not.

“Two years sojourned they by Ye’or:
Then Hērōdēs’ died, and Archelaus ruled
Yəhūdāh, and Antípas in Ha-Gālīl;
And to the parts of Ha-Gālīl they came,
Home to their city, white-roofed Nāṣrat.”

The Indian said: “I passed by Nāṣrat,
Riding from Esdraelon that steep path
Where your hills open.”

“Thou hast thereby seen”—

Miryām replied:—“the place which was His own
Those thirty years of holy quietude
When He was growing to His manhood fair,
And the birds knew Him, and the fields, and flowers;
But His world knew Him not. For we, and all
Went foolish, wondering at al-Quds,
And Rome and Athens; not the little town
More great than these by that one lowly hut.
And thou hast thereby viewed what face His Earth
Morning and eve turned towards Him, showing Him
More love than we, by silent loveliness.
Thou saw’st, from His own hill, how Carmel plunged
Its broad foot in the tideless hyacinth Sea,
And how, to eastward, glad with groves and streams,
Rose Tabor, rounded like a breast; what leagues
Of grey and golden plains, fading to blue,
Stretched beyond Qīṣōn, under ‘Eyn-Dōr, Nā‘īn,
Down to Mægiddō with her twofold peak,
And Gilbōa‘, dry and smooth; and Shūnēm’s slope;
And, between Shūnēm and soft Tāvōr, glimpse
Of ha-Yardēn’s {Jordan} speed, with sunlit ramps beyond
Fencing the Desert. These did feed His eyes:
Here was His world, almost the all He saw.
The Sun, whose golden mandate well He knew,
Showed Him no more than this, of all His Earth;
The Stars, watching Him grow a star, to save,
Lighted no larger tract for His mild eyes.
Only that white town and those hills around,
Karmel and Tāvōr, as thou sawest them rise;
And here the Lake, and there the shining Sea.
Yet, from thy camel’s saddle, thou could’st note
How fair and gracious was the land, made good
With grass and blooms, and clad in fruitful green,
Pasture and tilth; and every channel fringed
With rosy lanes of oleander sprays;
And every hollow thick with oak, and fig,
Palm, and pomegranate—where the tree-doves coo,

The crested hoopoe flits; the roller-bird
Lights the dark thicket with his burning blues;
The water-tortoise winnows the clear stream;
The white cranes watch their shadows in the pool;
The fish leap, red and silver; and the fox
Plays with her cubs, 'mid lines of trellised vines
Climbing the crags. A goodly land and still,
Habited by a people, pastoral,
Simple and poor; owning for wealth their skies,
Their Sea, their streams, and mountains.”

“Nay! I saw,”
The Māgus said: “with eyes rejoiced, your hills
Which follow well the sorrowful burnt rocks
Belting al-Quds.”

“Aye!”—she went on—
“Thither, each year, at time of Passover,
He wended with His parents; and would see
‘En Gannīm and Shəkem —where the lowland creeps,
Under the uplands, into narrowed green,
Like lake made river; with those crests for coasts
‘Ēval, Gərizīm; and by Giv‘āh
And Bēt-’Ēl {Bethel}, and the Valley of the Thorns,
To Scopus—to the brow where, white and gold,
Under sloped Har ha-Zētūm {Olivet – Mt. of Olives}, the Temple rears
Her stately glory. And the Child would pass
Into the City’s midst, and mingle there
With Yəhūdī {Jew} and Gentilis {Gentile}, in the thronged bazaar;
Would mark, above the sanctuary gate,
Hērōdēs’ {Herod} great Eagle; and the keen steel spears
Of Roman Annius, or Coponius,
Glitter around the black Praetorium.
Would know His time come nigh with Ṣiyyōn’s shame,
And note the Pərūsh {Pharisee} and Ṣaddōqī {Sadducee},
Priest, scribe, and lawyer, feeding hungry souls
With husks of law. Nay, and would oft repair
Within the Temple; and was one day found
Astrayed, sitting amid the Rabbīm there—
Hillēl, and Shammai, and Gamlī’ēl,
ben-Zakkai, ben-‘Uzzī’ēl, wise Naqdīmōn,

Arimathaean Yôsêf—all our best—
Hearing and asking questions. Yet none knew,
For all their wisdom and their wintry hairs,
That sweet Boy in the 'Arammî Country-frock,
With heavenly eyes and mouth of music, sent
To put aside the ancient scrolls, the Law,
The *Hagâgôt* and *Hallâkôth*; to break
Their chains, and into living spirit melt
Their dead cold letter.”

“Ever back He came
Glad—so I deem—to sunlit hê Galilaá:
Not bowing, not consenting, nowise bound
To that hard God, served in al-Quds,
Jehovah of the Law, the jealous Mâr
“Who ‘eye for eye, and tooth for tooth’ decreed,
And loved the bloody sacrifice, and wrought
Good to His Tribes, but ill to enemies.
Day by day, wandering in those folded hills,
A statelier Temple in His heart He built;
A happier altar reared; a truer God;
Enshrined; that Presence and that Power Who fills
All hearts with what is Life and what is Love,
And what endures when seen things pass away:
Nameless; or if, for human needs, we name,
Then—from the narrow treasury of our tongues—
The highest, holiest, dearest, closest, best
Of Earth’s weak words. Ofttimes, in later hours
When lack was of some name, He called that Spirit
Which is the All, and makes the wide seas roll,
The blue sky bend, the clustered planets shine,
The dead things come to life, the live things live;
That Being, which,—ever with Him,—was as He,
And, largest, fullest, in His own sure soul
Dwelt immanent—‘Our Father.’ ”

Softly brake

“The Mâgus in: “*Om, Amitâbha!* Oh,
The Immeasurable!—What word but doeth wrong
Clothing the Eternal in the forms of Now?
Our great Lord Buddha would not name Him once,
As much,—as little,—‘Mother,’ ‘Lover,’ ‘Friend,’

As 'Father;' being not He nor she, nor aught
Which may be compassed by an earthly word;
But Thinker, Thought, Maker and Made, in one!"

"My Friend is wise with many years, and lore
Of the large East," she said. "If no name be
Will not the weak souls say 'nought is to name'?"

"They say so! they will say so!" answered he,
"Yet is the Parabrahman unspeakable!"

"Tell me a little how thy Scriptures call
This Parabrahman"—she said.

The Indian mused,
And then replied: "We have a scroll which saith
'Worship, but name no name! blind are those eyes
Which deem th' unmanifested manifest,
Not comprehending Me in My True Self,
Imperishable, viewless, undeclared.
Hidden behind My magic veil of shows
I am not seen at all. Name not My Name!'
Also a verse runs in our Holy Writ:
'Richer than heavenly fruit on Vedāḥ growing;
Greater than gifts; better than prayer or fast;
Such sacred silence is! Man, this way knowing,
Comes to the utmost, perfect, Peace at last!'
Yet pause not, gracious Daughter! for mine ears
Drink with an unslaked thirst thy precious tale."

" 'God is a Spirit! they who worship Him
In spirit and in truth must worship Him!'
He spake that, too!"—Miryām went on,—and then
"Thus ligged He—as we gathered—all those years
In Nāṣrat: and Yôsēf died; and need
Came that He take, with all humility,
The load of common lives. So in that town
Hard by the fountain; in the house I know,—
(Oh me! I passed with Pappus by its porch;
We in the gilded litters, He at toil!)
His trade He plied, a Carpenter; and built

Doors, where folk come and go, unto this hour,
Not wotting how the hands which wrought their doors
Unbarred Death's gate by Love's high sacrifice;—
Tables whereon folks set their meat, and eat,
Heedless of who was 'Bread of Life,' and gave
Such food that whoso eateth hungereth not.
And in those little lanes of Nāṣrat
Each morn His holy feet would come and go
While He bore planks and beams, whose back must bear
The cruel cross. And, then, at evening's fall
Resting from labour, with those patient feet
Deep in white wood-dust, and the long curled shreds
Shorn by His plane,—He would turn innocent eyes
Gazing far past the sunset to that world
He came from, and must go to; nigh to Him,—
Nigh unto us, albeit we see it not;
Whereof Life is the curtain, and mute Death
Herald and Doorkeeper. One eve, they say,
The shadow of His outstretched arms,—cast strong
By sun-down's low-shot light,—painted a cross
Black on the wall; and Miryām, trembling, drew
Her garment o'er the lattice. But He spake:
'Near unto Me is near to loss and death;
And far from Me is far from Life and gain!'
There is a maid of those that love Him here
Sings on the minnīm a poor song of this,
If thou wilt hear; while those about us bring
Olives and grapes, and we a little rest."

Thereat, a Hebrew girl tied back her sleeve,
Tuning the strings, and, to their melancholy,
Sang softly of "The Shadow and the Light."

*"Meek and sweet in the sun He stands,
Drinking the cool of His 'Ārammī skies;
Lifting to Heaven toil-wearied hands,
Seeing His Father with those pure eyes.*

*"Gazing from trestle, and bench, and saw,
To the kingdom kept for His rule above;
Oh, Yēšūa', Mār! we see with awe;
Ah, Miryām's Son! we look with love!*

*“We know what message that Eventide
Bore, when it painted the Roman cross,
And the purples of night-fall prophesied
The hyssop to Him, and to us the loss.*

*“The crown which the Magi brought to her,
It made a vision of brows that bleed;
And the censer, with spikenard, and balm and myrrh,
It lay on the wall like the Sponge and Reed.*

*“But now Thou art in the Shadowless Land,
Behind the light of the setting Sun;
And the worst is forgotten which Evil planned
And the best which Love’s glory could win is won.”*

“Yet, on His seldom-saddened countenance”—
Miryām went on—“no shadows lay! He saw
By sunlight and by starlight, steadfastly,
That radiance of the kingdom, that high noon
Of Life and Love, which, shining inwardly,
Hath never any night. Therein He dwelt
Prince of the Heavenly purple; Heir and Son
Of spheres eternal and invisible,
Where meek souls sit the highest, and the poor
Are richest, and the pure in heart are Mārs.
And, ever in His spirit, sage and calm
That which we name not habited, the sense
Of an abiding Presence, Fatherly,
Motherly, Friend-like, Lover-like; more dear
Than dearest ones on Earth, more near than blood
To the beating heart, or neck-vein to the neck;
More boundless than the immeasurable blue;
More mighty than a thousand-bolted Zeus
Throned on some new Olympus, whose vast head
Smiteth the stars; more sweet to love and serve
Than dulcet-speaking mistress; more to trust
Than truest friend; more tender than the arms
Of nursing mother; more forgiving, fond,
Kindred, and kind, than Father. Yea, Great God
Making us gods and taking us to Him.

“Wherefore, grace spread around Him, and fair peace
Coming and going; and the air grew glad
Whithersoever He would pass; and gaze
Of townsfolk, and of women at the well—
Not knowing wherefore,—followed Him; and tongues
Were stilled, not knowing why, if He did speak.
For then, already, grew that mystery
Of wisdom in Him, and that word which seemed
Higher than Earth’s. Afterwards, people told
Strange tales of those hid days,—how, at His toil,
Touching a plank, it stretched to rightful length,
Or shortened, at His will—the dead wood quick
To live again and serve Him. How He made
Birds out of clay, and clapped His hands, and lo!
They chirruped, spread their wings, and flew away;
And how in month of ’Adār, ’Ārammī boys
Playing in Nāṣrat—as thou hast seen—
With girdled frocks, striped tunics, and feet bare—
Found Him, and crowned Him with white lily-buds,
And put a stick of lilies in His hand,
And set Him on the hillside, bending knee
In merry worship, and made whoso passed
Halt and bow lowly, crying: ‘Hither come,
Worship our King, then wend upon thy way!’

“Surely, as thus we heard, at Nāṣrat
Full soft and holy sped the happy time
In the white hut, hard by that well, where yet
Wives come and go with pitchers, dawn and eve,
Who came and went with Him, and helped Him draw
Fair water thence, and bear it, dutiful,
To where His Mother wrought her household chares—
Silent, and wondering what should fall; and doves
Sunned on the roof their silver wings, and vines
Climbed, glad to glorify His lowly door.
Within thou wottest well what little rooms,
What chest of wood, gay-painted; on a shelf
What quilted beds uprolled; what pans and cups—
Copper, and brass and clay,—ranged duly round
With great jar at the back, by flag-leaves shut
To keep the water cool. And when Night fell

Hatchet and saw and nails laid in their place,
And the low table spread with peasant's food,
Rice and the libbān, and a common bowl.
Afterwards, peaceful sleep—yet, had men eyes
Sleep watched by wondering eyes of wakeful stars,
And guarded, out of that new-opening Heaven
By glorious Angels, golden sentinels,
Keeping Him safe, whose words shall save the world.”

BOOK III.

THE ALABASTER BOX.

NEXT morn,—upon the marble leewān met—
Soft salutations paid, and praise, and thanks—
“What hast thou in thy hand,” the Indian asked,
“Which thou dost gaze upon so fixedly?”

For, sitting with her long hair loose, and eyes
Bent downwards, Miryām in her clasped palms held
A broken box of Alabaster, shards
Of some rare casket, cut from satin stone,
Where the wrecked beauty of the precious work
Yet shone with lovely lustre; milk-white rock
Veined rose and gold, and thinned, diaphanous,
So that light filtered through its fragments pale,
And, past them, the close clinging fingers showed.

“Good Friend!”—the Lady Miryām began—“thy Hind—
Which hath those rivers with the sands of gold,
And hills of lazulite, and fisheries
Whence the great pearls are gotten, could not buy
With all its precious store of Orient wealth
The treasure of this broken box from me!
Sweeter than spikenard odours, lingering still
On each white remnant of the wondrous toil,
Hangs the dear memory of a day more sad,
More glad,—more proud, more shameful—more to mourn,
More to rejoice in—than all other days
Of all thy handmaid’s years. Nay, but my life
Rather began when this fair thing found end!
’Twas an Miṣrayim labour, cut with pains
From the streaked stone, and wrought, as thou shalt see,
By matchless master-craft, to make a gift
For Caesar;—since the Emperor owned it first;
And next it fell to Rufus, but he gave
The beauteous marvel at his banquet board

To one that sold it for a hundred slaves;
So came it to Panthéra. Did they tell—
Sending thee hither—thee so grey and grave—
What Miryām once had been?”

The Indian sage
Gave gentle answer: “If mine ears have heard
Evil of thee, my heart would quite forget,
Which hath no room, to-day for any thought,
Not good and grateful, of my Lady’s grace.”

“Aye! but”—she sighed—“evil was good for me!
I lived, in all this land the boldest, worst,
Who braided up her hair the harlot’s way.
That beauty Nature gave me I abased,
Selling it with a loveless heart to win
Wealth, and rich raiment, and the knees of men.
Oh me! my days splendid and sinful! Earth
Emptied her stores to pleasure me; they brought,
To buy my smiles, their Sōrī {Tyrian} purple webs,
Their Myrrhīnē cups, their silks, their sards, their nard,
Drachmaí, and dareikós, shəqālīm, sēstertiī;
And slaves to fan my sleep, and gilded chairs
To bear me to the Temples and the feasts.
I, that am still and sane to-day, have led
Revels so mad the shamed stars drew the clouds
Over their argent faces;—Kinnéret
Burned with our cressets; and the water-way
Ran to its brink red with our chalice dregs.
And ‘Arām groaned and fierce Shōmrōn surged,
And wild mobs clamoured round the Palace-gates
While in these arms Caesar’s drugged satraps dreamed,
Praetor, and Procurator. Nay! hear all!
Not Latins only; no, nor Héllēn alone;
Nor Yəhūdī, nor Idumaean; for my name,
My golden infamy, grew East and West,
Till Rōma and Athēnai heard; and Sōr and Krētē;
And Kýpros; and the Isles, and Mēdīa,
Not less than Migdal and Tiberiás,
Talk of the Miryām of Ha-Gālīl,
The Harlot with the long black braided hair

Who melted hearts in spiced pomegranate wine—
Than Alexandrītis Queen more prodigal,—
And laughed their wealth to want, and trod their pride
Under her 'brodered sandals and took toll;
Of goods and gear, wasting in one wild bout
The Temple's wealth; till,—like that rose-faced One
Of Mémphis, I had reared a pyramid
With but one block from each who fawned on me.
Sir! such was I, that play thy hostess here,
With these white shards, which saved me, in my lap.
Reverend and grave thou show'st: if thy will be
Now to depart, hearing these stained lips speak,
Thou shalt have praise, not blame, from Miryām.”

“Child!” soft he said: “I hail the stately ship
Safe from all storms, anchored in quietness!
I hail the fair white hind, flower of these woods,
Fled from the wolves of sense, which tore her flesh!
I hail the gentle River, stayed and vexed
By crag and ledge, smooth-gliding at the last,
'Mid fruitful fields and dropping blooms, to find
Calm consummation in the accepting Sea!
I hail thy heavenly beauty, purged, to prove
Grace and not Plague to men! Oh, thou that art
Thine own high Conqueror, and hast set foot
On the Eight Noble Paths, an old man's lips
Low at thy hem, praise thee and honour thee!
Yet, tell me, Lady! how the new days came.”

“He would have spoken so; so did He speak,
So speaking He did heal me!”—murmured she;
Then said aloud—“Learn thou that Nāṣrat
Cast forth her glory, flung her star away;
Forgot those good years when His fellowship
Made her air sweeter and her heavenly sky
Diviner, those fair years when all might hear
The mallet of 'The Carpenter' at work,
While in His holy soul He built the frame
Of Truth's high kingdom here—fitted the beams
Of such a Temple as the Eternal Love
Would dwell in. One ill Shabbāt {Sabbath}, when He came

Journeying by Sychár, new from seeing John—
John the Forerunner, who had surely said
‘This is the Christós to be!’—He entered in
That singogah thou sawest on the hill;
And stood to read.¹ The Ḥazzān drew the scroll
Forth from the silken curtains of its ark,
Unrolled the great Megillāh to the page
Marked for the day, giving Īsaáis {Isaiah} out,—
And, from the Prophet, Yēšūa‘ spake these words:—

‘THE SPIRIT OF THE MĀR IS UPON ME. BECAUSE HE
HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE
POOR: HE HATH SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKEN-HEARTED;
TO PREACH DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVER-
ING OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND; TO SET AT LIBERTY THEM
THAT ARE BRUISED, TO PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF
THE MĀR.’

“This He did read, and spake, in majesty,
That which was true, as afterwards all knew,
‘I am your Promised Prophet, Priest and King!
Wherat they stormed, brake into bitter wrath,
Drove forth their Rabbī with the heavenly face,
Had will to kill Him,—being but ‘Carpenter’
Who made Himself Māšiāh {Messiah}; had fierce mind
To fling Him down the steep; but He passed through,
And went His way.

“That was the day we rode
Up from Sebasté towards Tiberiás,
And, on my wrist a damning splash of blood
From throat of one my angry lover stabbed
At mid-feast, in the madness of the wine.
’Twas there, at Qannā’, ’mid my thickest sins,
Red outwardly with murder, inwardly
Black to the heart’s core with wild wickedness,
Dwelt in by all the seven dark devils of Hell,
I saw Mārī! Oh, first I saw Mārī!
And, Sir! I heard His voice. Was one we knew
Steward to Hērōdēs’—(for my revellers
Were men of Antípas) who stayed Him there—

Bent for K̄efar Nahūm from Nāṣrat—
Praying swift succour for a dying child,
And urging fervently. While we made halt
To witness, tenderly the Master turned
With look ineffable, and gazed; and spake:
'Go! Thy Son liveth!'

"Whom I saw,—with eyes
Which never have forgot, nor will forget
Till Heaven's day shows me Him again—was one
Of a commanding stature²—beautiful—
Bearing such countenance, as, whoso gazed,
Must love, or fear. "Wine-colour shone His hair
Glittering and waved, an aureole folded down,
Its long rays lighted locks,—which fell, and flowed,
Fair-parted from the middle of His head,
After the manner of the Nəzīrīm {Nazarites}.
Even and clear His forehead; and the face
Of dignity surpassing, pure and pale
As the Héllēn's marble, but flushed frequently
With the bright blood of manhood. Nose and mouth
Faultless for grace, and full and soft the beard,
Forked, of the hazelled colour of His hair:
The great eyes blue and radiant; mild as sky
Of spring-time after rain, yet terrible
As lightning leaping sudden from that sky,
When He rebuked. In admonition calm;
In tender hours each word like music's soul
Heard past the sound! Not oftentimes seen to smile,
More oft to weep; yet of a lofty cheer
Commonly—nay, of playful raillery
And swift wit, softened with sweet gravity.
Straight-standing like a palm-tree; hands and limbs
So moulded that the noblest copy them:
Among the Sons of Men fairest and first.

"Friend! shall you think one remnant of myself,
One shred of that wild will was Miryām's,
One pulse of the quick blood wont to be stirred
By passion, and the goodly shapes of men
Moved me, when, on the sight of Him, I left

My litter, and my Lover, and my Life,
And followed in His footsteps? Pray thee, know
Mortal desire as well might reach at stars
As woman's eye, and woman's wish climb up
To such far height of starry majesty;—
By that impassable blue of Holiness
Endlessly separate! But love?—Oh, aye!
Swift, strong, supreme, consuming, final love!
With such a worship filled, such reverence,
The heart had knees, and bowed; the soul had eyes
Which veiled themselves at gaze; the mind had mind
To die for Him; the body burned to grow
His temple. Heart, soul, body, mind, all His
For ever and for ever!—at first sight,—
In some fair newer World, shown possible
At that first sight. And in such world I live
From that time, on the road of Ha-Gālīl,
When in my breast the seven dark devils dwelt,
And round my wrist the blood of Páppos clung:
And that old life seems like a feather dropped
From free bird's wing—mine, yet no longer mine:
And in the air of sweet new life I soar
Singing and soaring with the joy He taught.

“Wherefore, I followed to Kəfar Nahūm,
One in His lengthening train—the last and least—
Unnoticed; for I cast aside my webs
Of Coan, and my torques of Roman gold
At 'Qannā—and put on the *mitpahat*
Rādīd and *ṣa'if*, dressed as our peasants use
Along the Lake. So did I see Him teach
Day after day; and in the Singogah
Behind the women's lattice, heard the Law
Read to the congregation by such lips
As lit its mighty line with meanings new,
Like when the Moon swims, full, into the Night,
And what was dark grows clear, and what was void
Peopled; and, white and straight, the road regained
Winds plain and easy through the illumined land.
Also I saw them bring the sick to Him,
The maimed and miserable, and wretches torn

With plaguing devils,—less to dread than mine!—
Whom all He healed, comforting them with words
Of sovereign power, calming their cries and griefs;
As when the Mother’s bosom charms to smiles,
Before its tears are dry, an infant’s wail.
A woman lay in Simon’s house, alight
With fever’s fire. I saw Him take her hand,
Quiet the leaping blood, still the hot heart,
And lift her, cool and whole. I heard Him teach,—
Sitting in Simon’s boat, moored by those sands
Which fringe Bêt-Saydā—making plain and known
That farther Kingdom, nigh unto us all,
Yea, ‘at our very gates.’ And, when He passed
At nightfall to the Mountain, communing
With Heaven, which loved Him, and His own high soul,
Under the stars—less touched by taint than they!—
It was as though another golden Sun
Set from our eyes: till darkness fled again
And brought back Dawn, and that diviner light
Shed from Him.

“Ah, the Kingdom!—We, of old,
Being the people of this land, had served—
If service were—that God of Ibrāhīm {Abraham}
Mild to His own, but smiting enemies,
Hewing them hip and thigh, for Israel:
That Mār of Moses, awful on the Mount
With thunders, and red lightnings, and the Law:
Seen in the Burning Bush; riding the storm;
A jealous, dreadful, distant God. We lived
Obeying—if we did obey—for fruit
Of earthly goods; or, if in after time,
Then, for our children’s children. But He taught;
And, lo! ourselves to share! Another world
Hidden within, without, beyond! He took
Terrors away, and showed us Life for Death,
Mercy for sacrifice, and Love for Law.
For that dread YĀH, ruling o’er Israel,
A Father Universal, marking not
Gentilis from Yəhūdī, or fair from swart, or great
From small; but holding all alike; and heard—

An ever-present Lover, Mār, and Guide—
In conscience and the silence of the breast.
Perfect and Pure, and loving love of such;
And willing all men such; but waiting long,
Far-suffering, large, compassionate, aware;
Making suns rise on evil and on good,
Rains fall on just and unjust. Look! one word!
And like the walls of Jericho which fell
To music, or a sunshine-parted cloud,
He burst the bars; He lightly lifted up
Earth's painted veil, and showed us,—close beyond,
Infinite, clear,—eternal life, decreed
Not for to-morrow, or hereafter—no!—
Already round, and in, and over us,
Already ours to enter and possess;
Always existing, always nigh; shut off
Some little while by sense, which having eyes,
Sees not; and, hearing, hears not; for some while
By body darkened. But He said: 'Fear not
Those who can kill the body, and, on that,
Have nothing they can do!' So did we learn,
Walking in those dear footsteps, scorn of Death
Which could not keep its Dead, if He bade yield,
But is Life's gate-porter, holding the keys
To larger Worlds and larger:—'Many mansions
Are in My Father's House!' this would He say
With great eyes on the stars.

“Thus did He bring
Our glad souls daily, by His glorious words,
Into the Kingdom of the Spirit. There
The sorrowful and shamed are comforted;
The humble are exalted ;and the meek
Inherit good. The pure in heart see God;
The merciful find mercy. Those that wept
Dry their glad eyes; the peacemakers have praise;
And they who hungered after righteousness
With righteousness are filled. No dream! no draught
Of Fancy's frenzied wine-cup; ecstacy
Of musing drugged with Faith's fine mandragore!
But the words true as daylight; plain and straight

The way as paths in meadows; clear the voice
Calling to airs celestial, as of Morn
Bidding with breezy lips the World awake.
Surer than any joy the heart can know
Bliss of that sudden hour when each for each
Knows Heaven so nigh! Only to let go Earth,
To let go, listen, love, and have:—for then
The Kingdom came! Came! and we did not need
To merit, or to seek, or strive, or wait:
We needed but to know Him one with God,
And we with Him, and then His peace was ours!
We heard Him utter ‘Fear not, little flock!
It is your Father’s joy to give to you
The Kingdom.’

“Journeying hither didst thou mark
The two-horned hill which overhangs our Sea,
Hittin? And, how, beneath his nearer peak
Spreads a fair upland, rimmed with rounded banks
Where nebbuks glisten, and dark junipers,
Rose-laurels blow, and mallows; and soft grass
Carpets with lily-sprinkled green the spot?
One day, before the Dawn, thither He went
And drew His Twelve with Him, those who should be
Close to His counsels. Then, He named them His
To come and go in all the cities here—
Preaching The Kingdom—and beyond:—and be
Beginnings of a new-established State,
Greater than States, and governing all States;
Which should not have for boundaries the seas,
Mountains or streams, nor any border-line
By bloody sword-point traced; and should not have
Armies nor tributes, treasures nor crowns.
But, overleaping races, realms, and tongues,
Thrones, zones, and dominations, lands, and seas,
Should clasp in one wide confine all those hearts
Which seek and love the Light, and hail the Light
Shining from secret Heaven, by Him revealed
First-born of Heaven, first soul of Human souls
That touched the top of Manhood, and—from height
Of godlike, pure, Humanity—reached God.

To this end was He sent, for this made known
Life beyond death, Love manifest through Law,
And God no name, no angry judge, no 'Yāh,'
But Spirit, worshipped in the spirit; One
With His sweet spirit, and with ours, through His;
Unseen, unspeakable, not to be known
By searching; being beyond all sight, speech, search;
But Mār and Lover of all living things,
King of the Kingdom!

"And a multitude
Followed Him to the Mountain, gathering
By troops and companies, on bank and mead,
Heedless of Earth, to hear His heavenliest words,
Till all the grass was blotted with great bands
Of gladsome people, clad for holiday,
Like divers-coloured flowers; and, all around,
Dark eager faces of ten thousand folk—
Men, women, children—made a sunlit throng
So thick, so talk-full, on the asphodel,
The frightened eagles fled their crags—the snake
Slid to his hole, the wolf and panther hid
Ashamed of blood. But gentle things of Earth,—
The crowned lark, and the dove, and mountain-hare,
'Ware of some new good word thro' man to them—
Listened in thickets. And the Morning donned
Amice of summer gold—her loveliest—
To meet His holy footsteps on the Hill.
And there, from that fair Sīnā', with voice
Sweeter than Morning's breath—He gave to us
The New Commandments.

"Eight are blest—He taught—
Of that dim Kingdom,—which men thought would march
In worldly pomp, bringing Māšīah girt
With the Mār's sword, triumphant; His right hand
Teaching Him terrible things; all Earth to hail
Israel re-throned with scarlet and with gold;
The Sea to pour her pearls and corals forth
At foot of David's Heir! And, lo! the truth!—
The Kingdom come on that soft mountain-slope,

Not with the battle-trumpets, not with neigh
Of war-horse flecked with purple foam, and neck
Clothed with the thunder; but by this mild voice
Telling how lowly souls shall be the Mārs
Of the New Kingdom; and the sorrowful,
The meek, the seekers after righteousness,
The merciful, the just, the peacemakers,
And they who for their brother's sake, and Right,
Have suffered persecution. Oh, Sir! think;
In that one mountain morning—at one word—
All our World changed! Poverty rich! sick hearts
Comforted! those who weep to laugh and sing!
This Earth the Anteroom to neighbouring Heaven;
Wise souls its salt; pure souls its lamps, set high
Like cities upon hills, like candlesticks
Lighting the house! 'So let them shine,' He said:
'That men see your good works, and glorify
Your Father in the heavens!' Next He did teach
How the quick Spirit makes true living Law,
Under the letter: how the unkind thought
Hath, knifeless, murdered; how the altar-gift
Lies vain and hateful when the hand which gives
Hath wrought some brother wrong. 'Leave there' He said,
'Thy gift before the altar! go thy way,
Be reconciled with him: then bring thy gift!'
Deep in our midmost He laid bare the seeds
Of wrongfulness; bade us wrench root away,
Not idly pinch a blossom; since the eye
Which lusteth, and the wish that would, have wrought
The full sin, short of sinning. Therewithal,
Grave words of grace for women, marriage-bonds
Not to be lightly loosed: nay, and no oath
Oft-taken, since Truth's oath is 'Yea' and 'Nay,'
And all words spoken go to one great ear.
Next, sternly-sweet, he snatched the hasty blade
From black Revenge; bade vanquish Hate by Love;
Resist not evil; turn the other cheek
To whoso smites; cherish an enemy
That, peradventure, he may grow to friend;
If not,—then, being of our Father's mind
Who hath no enemies, but makes His dawns,

Each time He makes them, for the good and ill,
Giving to graceless ones, till they learn grace,
'Perfect, as He is perfect.' Then, He taught
Almsgiving modesty, simplicity
And solitude to praying: spake Himself
That *we* may speak upon our knees, and know
Enough is said to that Divinest mind
Which saw our needs, and did provide for them
Ere the lips stirred. Furthermore, soft He talked
Of this world's fleeting treasures 'where the moth
And rust corrupt; and thieves break thro', and steal,'
Counted beside true wealth of worthy deeds,
Of loving service rendered, and fair days
Lived blameless, like to sweet airs passing by.
Also, for foolish quest of fitful gain,
For meat, and drink, and raiment, and much heed
Of earthly gear, tenderly shamed He us,
Pointing with finger at those little birds
Perched nigh, or lightly flitting. 'See!' said He,
'Your Father feedeth them, who gather not,'
And, therewith, from his foot a scarlet stalk
Of martagon He plucked, with wind-flowers,—
(Oh, happy blossoms! blown to help Him teach)—
Bidding us mark how great King Shəlōmōh,
For all his glory, was not clad like those;
And how, if grass on the lone mountain-side
Grows unforgotten, garlanded so rich
From Heaven's full almonry; and thrush, and finch
Feed daily from Heaven's hands, it could not be
Man should go bare, poorer than fowls of air,
Sadder than field-blooms. 'Ye have need of these,'
Gently He said: 'and these things shall be given:
But seek ye first the Kingdom! seek ye first
The treasure of the Kingdom, righteousness!
Other things shall be added.'

"Therewithal,

He told how we should seek; not thrusting in
As if Heaven heard the loudest cry; as though
The gateway of the Kingdom must be forced,
And a path pushed over the fallen ones;

But foremost by Renunciation, first
By good will to be last, by help, not haste;
By eagerness not to be saved, but save.
'Judge not, that ye, too, be not judged!' He said:
'For, as ye judge ye must be judged.' And then,
Proclaimed how none seek vainly: soon or late
The seeker finds, the asker hath; the knock
Makes the latch lift, whose ever be the hand.
'Else'—tenderly He smiled, and wistful gazed
On mothers suckling black-eyed babes, and sires
Holding their brown boys high to see and hear,
Halving some barley-crusts—'else were you men
Being evil; and so gentle, not the less,
To these your children; kinder to bestow
Than the Bestower! more to praise than God!'
At this—as who well knew what idle things
Children will ask—and men—he drew, in light,
Plain as the Sun's long gold across the Lake,
Our road to follow: 'WHAT YE WOULD THAT MEN
SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE LIKEWISE TO THEM!
THE LAW IS THIS, THE PROPHETS THIS!'

"We came

Flocking behind Him, down that Mount's green side,
And through the Vale of Doves, past Ḥiṭṭīn's peak,
Over Bēt-Ṣaydā to Kəfar Nahūm,
A joyous people, heart-whole with His words;
Like sheep knowing their shepherd, gladly led
To fold from pasture.

"More than all He wrought

Journeying, or in His city, those dear words
Uttered upon the Mount, stripped my soul bare,
Showed me myself. Yet He would make us see
Power hand in hand with Wisdom and with Love:
For, next morn, down our silver Mere He sailed
To Nā'īn, by 'Ēn-Dōr; where a rugged road
Winds, under Tāvōr, to the village-gate,
By tangled sidra-trees, and sepulchres
Cut in the rock for the old dead and new.
And, when we neared the gateway, lo! a throng—

Wailing, with covered mouths, dust on their heads,
Clad in sad garments—bore a dead man forth,
The one son of a widow. She, *à-mort*,
Broke with such woe as hath no help on earth,
Followed the painted coffin where he lay
Who was her glory and her good in life,
With those young, helpful, loving hands tight-bound
Never to help again! and sweet boy-face
Swathed in the grave-cloth, sightless. But her eyes
Fixed on his face thro' the fast-trickling tears
Which still she wiped away, lest sorrow cheat
Love from one last dear moment of the Dead.
Whom Yēšūa‘ marked; and, while we held aloof,
(Since 'tis uncleanness if one touch a corpse,)
He laid His gentle palm upon the bier,
And bade its bearers stand. Then, speaking sweet
To that sad Mother, 'Weep no more!' He said,
And gazed upon the Dead—gazed—gathered up
Pity and Power and Grace in one great look,
Which beamed so tender and so masterful
Hardly we marvelled at what next befell:
For, while the hushed crowd closed, softly we heard,
'Arise, young Man! I say.' The Dead sate up,
And with his own hand drew the face-cloth off,
And stared; and murmured words; and reached his arms
To Yēšūa‘, and stepped, trembling, from the bier.
And, while fear fell upon us, lo! the Boy
Led, living, to his Mother, and her arms
Locked round him; not the dark walls of the Tomb!
But only Yēšūa‘ of that multitude
Silent, and calm, and smiling.

“Then I knew
My Master and Mārī, and, all my heart
Burned so with worship that the blessed flame
Purged it of sin, and shame, and sorrow,—left
Only the gold behind of grateful ache
To praise and thank and love and honour Him;
To follow Him with humblest service still
Through life and death. That night He lay at meat
In Simon’s house, in my own city here,—

It stands there yonder with the three white domes—
And, 'midst the others, I, too, entered in,
Bearing my box, the costliest thing I owned,
Holding much precious spikenard, subtly pressed
From flower and root of delicatest growth
By some far river in thy distant Hind.”

“I know”—the Buddhist said—“that sumbul tree,
The 'jatamansi.' And our Indian Bee
Stays in her flight, full-laden, but to plunge—
Honey-drunk in the perfumed wealth of it.”

“Sir! it is sweet as were all words from Him;
The pity of Heaven made fragrance! When I stood
Unnoticed at His feet, dropping hot tears
Which ran on them, wiping my tears away
With these unbraided hairs, ashamed to moist
Such sacred palms with water from such source,
I would not merely lift the seal of silk
That shut the casket's lid, and spill the spice,
Lest somewhere, afterwards, some others use
My box,—His box,—for something ill again.
But on the stones I broke the dainty work,
And from these ruined fragments poured forth all
Over His feet, with many a fervent kiss
Adoring, and anointing. Then, there spread
The long-imprisoned spirit of that balm
To every quickened nostril at the feast,
And he, that was its Master, spake—half-heard—
‘My guest, the Prophet, being such, should wist
Who and what manner of a wench it is
Which toucheth him, for she is Miryām!’
And I,—who in my pride and sin of old
Had cursed the Pārūsh {Pharisee}; grown wiser now,
Humbler, and conscious of my shame, and cleansed
From my seven devils—gathered meek these shards
And prayed him pardon, and was turned to go.”

“More grace thou hadst, fair Daughter! than thy Yəhūdī,”
Broke in the Indian.

“Nay, Sir! but I saw,
Blacker than Simon, how my sins must show

At those white feet! Then Mārī, piteously,
Gazed on me, took my wrist, and drew me back;
And, while I kneeled beside Him—glad to drop
My long black guilty hairs over mine eyes—
Searchingly spake He: ‘Simon! answer me!’

‘Rabbī! speak on,’ the Pārūsh replied.

“My sweet Mār said: ‘There lived a creditor
Had debtors twain: one owed five hundred pence;
The other fifty. Having nought to pay
He did forgive them both. How sayest thou;
Which debtor loved him best?’

“ ‘I shall suppose,’
Murmured the Feast-master: ‘ ’twas he to whom
The Creditor remitted most.’

“Mārī

Smiled and spake soft: ‘Aye, thou hast rightly judged!
Look on this woman well! I—being thy guest—
Lacked foot-water of thee; she made it good,
Washing my feet with tears: lacked linen cloths
To wipe them; and she made it good with locks
Of untressed hair: lacked guest-kiss on the cheek;
She with a hundred kisses made it good,
Rained on my feet, and then a hundred more;
Not ceasing from the time I entered in:
Lacked on my head that oil which should anoint,
But she upon my feet hath spilt the wealth
Of kingly spikenard. Wherefore, this I say;—
Her sins—her many sins—are wiped away,
Even as from these my feet her tears were wiped;
FOR SHE LOVED MUCH! But where forgivingness
Is little, love is little.’ Oh, with that,
Made He from Simon, and upon me bent
Those eyes that mastered Death at Nā’īn; those eyes
That melted at the children on the Mount;
Those eyes, like stars, with love for radiant beam.
And—ah!—beyond all music ever heard—
Fell dulcet on mine ears: ‘Go thou in peace!

Thy faith hath saved thee! Go in peace! Thy sins
Are all forgiven!'

“They who sate at meat
Muttered thereat: ‘Who is this Nāṣrātī
Also forgiveth sins! Who?——’

“But He turned
Tenderly once again; and spake again,
‘Thy faith hath saved thee! Go in peace! Thy sins
Are all forgiven!'

“And, from that glad hour,
Followed I Him, and ministered to Him;
And found myself alive who had been dead,
And saved by Love, who dwelt so lovelessly.”

1. The ground on which this singogah stood at Nāṣrat was for some time owned by the Author, with the purpose of establishing a hospital there, which but partially succeeded.
2. Taken from the letter of Lentulus.

BOOK IV.

THE PARABLES.

“OFTTIMES, dear Lady! while I listened close”—
Next morn, the Indian said:—“loath, by rash stop,
To mar such noble music—I had will
To tell thee how the great Tathāgata
Spake many things in one mind with thy Mār.
Methought I heard our holy Books unroll,
Line after line, as thou didstfeatfully
Recite those sayings on the Mount. He, too,
Bade us not hate, but love; and conquer Hate
With Love; and let light cares of Life go by
Careless, because it is a show, which cheats;
And earthly treasures fade; and he is rich
Who lays up riches, in the Realm beyond,
Of deeds done well, and gentle service wrought,
And days without injuriousness. Mark, too,
Our Buddha would not know of enemies
More than thy Master. He commanded us,
‘If one upon the left shall wound thy hand,
And one upon the right shall bathe thy hand
With sandal-oil, and kiss it, bear to each
The same mild heart! So shall the smiter love,
Or—if not—vainly hate thee!’ Charity,
Mercy, and meekness, taught he:—for Love’s sake
Utmost renunciation. Once, it fell
Buddh to a starving tigress gave his flesh;
Not fearing loss, for never can Love lose.
Yet, truly, nowise have we known before
“Wisdom so packed and perfect, as thy Mār’s,
Giving that Golden Rule that each shall do
Unto his fellow as he would have done
Unto himself; for, then, this Earth were Heaven,
And equity in every breast throned King.
Also, right joyous goes His doctrine; glad
’Mid Life’s sad charms, and swift vicissitudes,

And Death's unshunned and hard perplexities
Which make us bear to live. But, Buddha held
Life was long sorrow, ignorantly prized,
Grievously reassumed from change to change;
Whirling sad souls upon The Wheel, unsaved,
Until they stay it, staying lust of days;
Ceasing to drink the false salt wave which breeds
Worse thirst—a wilder *Trṣṇā*:—quit of quests,
And gliding, passionless and purged and sane,
Back to that Infinite where Silence lives.
OM MANI PADME HŪM!—‘from the lotus-leaf
The Dewdrop sliding to the shining Sea,
When Sunrise comes!’ ”

But Miryām's great eyes gleamed,
Crying: “Oh, Sir! in those good opening days
We were as glad as maids at marriage-time;
As jocund as the bird that hangs his heart—
Bursting with song—midway 'twixt Earth and Heaven,
And hath, to ravish it, the sky all his
Up to the utmost blue, and, green below,
The Earth his, down to that one dearest nook,
The little happy hollow in the grass
Where his mate listens on her warm grey eggs
In woven nest. So owned we two wide worlds,
Following behind Him, over Ha-Gālīl.
Nay, and those never knew my Master's mind,
Nor touched the golden hem of what He taught,
Nor tasted honied lesson of His lips,
Who drew not from the treasure of those lips
Joyance to make him glad to live or die!
Wistful and woeful may well go, I know,
The days of those who, driven by the winds
Of strife, and avarice, and lust of eye,
Chase, what shall never be attained on Earth,
Contentment with the joys which are of Earth.
Who knows, but Miryām of 'Migdalā,
How the red bubbles, bursting on the wine,
Foretell, at the cup's bottom, bitterness?
Truly, such souls are like our ‘gal-gal’¹ here—
If thou hast seen it,—the wild artichoke,

Which putteth forth brave branches in the spring,
Dying at autumn into dusty globes
That break, and fall, and roll, all helplessly,
Ten score together in a leaping crowd,
O'er hill and vale, bounding like things possessed;
Till the thorns take them, or the wrathful sea.
The Desert-rider reins his frightened beast,
As 'the accursëd' whirls, and cries in scorn:
'Oh! gal-gal! whither goest thou to lodge?'
And the dry, miserable, ball replies:
'Where the wind lodgeth for the night, I lie!'

"But we, who learned of Him the happy way,
Whom never once again Earth's winds can drive,
What is it if we die? whose eyes have seen
There is no Death! What is it if we live
A little woe-begone, when He hath passed
Patiently all our path, changing its stones
To rubies, and to rose blooms all its thorns,
"With bright blood of His vainly-wounded feet?
What lover of Him shall be sad again
Seeing the Father through Him, touching hands
Of that large love which reaches out from Heaven,
In His pierced palms? He told us not one bird
Folds failing wings, and shuts bright eyes to die,
But That which gave their stations to the stars,
And marked the Seas their limits, and the Sun
His shining road, signed soft decree for this,
And did in pity plan kind consequence.

'Yet you'—lightly He spake—'are of more worth
Than many sparrows!' Oh, good Friend! that soul
Hath done with sadness which knows Christós aright;
Not as Fear reads, but as quick Love reveals.
Also I think the worst shall scarcely miss
At end of evil, when Despair will lead
Souls to His feet, which would not come for Love.
Hardly, I hope, shall bloody Hērōdēs' fail,
Nor Judas, who betrayed Him with the kiss,
Nor Pilātus, who, for Caesar, saw Him slain;
Nor any, at the last; since Grace and Power

Unmeasured, which forbid men's hearts to hate,
Themselves can never hate, nor finally,
See their sweet purpose foiled.

“But, in those days,
We were the Children of the Bride-chamber,
That could not fast, nor weep! Joy walked with us!
Mark with thine eyes what Land this is in spring!
The meadows cloth of gold, damasked and decked
With silk-leaved country-blossoms, and the hills
Girt with green forests, and with budding vines;
Their feet set deep in barley-fields and groves
Of fig and olive; where another world;
Of sunshine-loving people live—the Doves,
The painted finches, and the crested larks,
Brook-tortoises, and storks, with busy swarms
Of banded bees, crickets, and creeping things,
Nowise forgotten, taking share of Earth.
He led us—Mär of lovely pastorals—
Through these fair paths, grown to seem Paradise,
Heaven being so near. Women and children drew—
Bright with the light of Love's new kingdom come—
Into His train; and gave Him laughing guards
Of little ones, who clustered round His knees—
Wiser and bolder than we others were—
Of dark-eyed wistful 'Ārammī wives and maids
Glad to be poor, because He loved the poor
And made them wealthy with His word. The Lake,
The lonely peaks, the valleys, lily-lit,
Were singogahs. The simplest sights we met—
The Sower flinging seed on loam and rock;
The darnel in the wheat; the mustard-tree
That hath its seed so little, and its boughs
Widespreading; and the wandering sheep; and nets
Shot in the wimpled waters,—drawing forth
Great fish and small:—these, and a hundred such,
Seen by us daily, never seen aright,
Were pictures for Him from the page of life,
Teaching by parable.

“For, nowise else,
Taught He the people; since a light is set
Safest in lanterns; and the things of Earth
Are copies of the things in Heaven, more close,
More clear, more near, more intricately linked,
More subtly, than men guess. Mysterious,—
Finger on lip,—whispering to wistful ears,—
Nature doth shadow Spirit. Subjects, kings,
Diversities, degrees, prophets, and poets:
Lovers, together drawn invisibly
Like orbs that cleave across the Void; the babe
Who, coming helpless, finds its mother’s breast,
Safe nursery and sweet food; the seed which dies
That it may live, laughing with lightsome blade
Death’s dread away; the Darkness which would daunt
Save that it shows—what Day concealed—the stars;
The sleep which gives us back the body’s strength,
But leaves the dreaming soul sleepless and ’ware;
Comforting nightly with grave’s counterfeit;
Death without dying—living, but not Life!
The steadfast onward-moving march of change
In use and beauty; yea! and what obstructs
Of harm and evil,—for our World must grow
By Love’s slow conquest of the stubborn will,
Free to will wrongly:—these be parables
For ever murmuring wider wonders, hints
Of what hides inner, deeper. What is Like
Is Likely; and the Life to come will be
Of such a fashion as this Life to-day
Writes in still symbols. Did we deem our fields
Tilled for no crop save what the sickle reaps?
He made them show how Heaven’s wise husbandry
Sets good seed growing; parts the tares and wheat;
Winnows the chaff away. Did some man find
Hid shekels in a field,—old buried gold
Forgot of mouldering owner in the tomb—
And buy the field, selling, for joy thereof,
All that he had? He made us therefrom see
How sweet it is to want all sweetesses,
Winning the Sweetest;² and how cheap to own
What’s priceless at a price; how light to part

With all we clove to once, gaming thereby
The treasure of the Kingdom. Did there come
Pearl-merchants out of Pārsa {Persia}, trafficking
All their white findings for one moonlight gem,
Fished fortunate in Hormuz, or by reef
Deadly and ragged, of the Sea of Sūf;
Meet to adorn the neck of Caesar's wife?
He made them teach us how to fling aside
Small pearls for great. That corn, sown secretly,
Unseen at eve, but, when we passed at morn,
Greening the headlands, 'twas His text to tell
How still and sure the good deed grows i' the dark;
And shall not fail of fruit in his full time.
The shepherd whom we met in Gádara
Joyously striding as he brought to fold
That one lost lamb out of the hundred sheep
On his own shoulders, leaving lone, meanwhile,
The ninety and nine, safe in fat pasturage,
Passed piping on, not knowing he was grown
Type for us of the Eternal Love which seeks
Strays of the flock; and will not have them lost
For all its saints, and will not spare its toil,
'Mid thorns and thickets, till it find, and save;
Then makes more joy in Heaven for one lost sheep
Brought home, than all the folded ewes and rams
Knee-deep in grass of Paradise. And, once—
New from Peraía, o'er the star-lit sea
Sailing with Simon to His city's gates—
We spied a marriage-party:—torch, and lamp,
And cresset, flaring with great cedar-knots,—
Dancing like fire-flies through Kəfar Nahūm
To jocund music of much pipe and drum.
But—for the Bridegroom tarried—certain maids
Had slumbered; let their lamps die; and their wail—
'Alalalai! no light! and, lo, he comes!'

Was loud, because the wedding-doors stood closed.
Small thought those slothful damsels had, their rout,
Hither and thither hurrying, gowns ungirt,
Lamps swinging lightless, and th' uncared-for cry,
'Oil! Sisters! Lend us oil!' should thesis give
For fable of the Wise and Foolish ones;

The souls that wait and watch; the souls that drowse,
Letting Life's wick burn down; till midnight comes,
And here's the Bridegroom, with his feastful friends,
But look! no light! and entrance quite forbid!
'Watch, therefore,' spake He, 'for ye know nor day,
Nor hour!'

"Yet most He loved to teach of Love.

Wherefore, when tale was of a certain man
Dwelling—(we knew him)—by Tiberiás,
That had two sons: and one, the Prodigal
Who asked his portion, gathered it, and went
To some far country, where he wasted all
In riotous living; till the ill-times fell,
And he had nought, and herded swine, and filled
His belly with the husks. Sitting at meat
In Simon's house, our Master took this tale,
And feathly decked it forth with Wisdom's wealth,
Relating how that son 'came to himself'
And cried: 'I will arise, and go unto
My Father, and will say that I have sinned,
Sinned against Heaven, and, Father! before thee,
And am not worthy to be called thy son,
Only thy hireling servant! Make me that!'
Then he arose, and came. And, oh! what heart
Throbbed not amongst us, while the Master told
Tenderly,—meaning all the World to hear,—
How—yet a long way off—his Father saw,
Saw him, and had compassion? Nay, he ran,
And fell upon his neck, and kissed the boy
Mouth to mouth; Father's lips on Son's lips pressed,
Staying his words of sorrowful self-blame
With dear impatience;—leading us to learn
That God's love runneth faster than our feet
To meet us stealing back to Him and peace,
And kisses dumb our shame, nay, and puts on
The best robe, bidding angels bring it forth,
While Heaven makes festival; for Angels' meat
Is happiness of Man.

“In such wise, He—
Plucking His themes, as Ārammī girls pull flowers,
To spell dear names and speak the gentlest words,
From common wayside things in Ha-Gālīl—
Taught us by Parable.”

The Indian cried,
“Thou Wise One! who didst sojourn in the Wild;
And feed the swine from fairest hands; and ache
With hunger for thine own fine food of Truth,
With waste of Love and Life; and didst arise,
And find forgiving arms, and take that kiss
Silencing shame! Now doth thy bright soul wear
A better beauty than dead Páppos saw,
Or love-sick Praetors! Whence are words to thank
These words which teach me where thy Yēšūa‘ filled
The leaf of wisdom in, and wrote for men
The name Lord Buddha would not say nor spell?
Sweet stories, nathless, might thy servant cite
From Buddha’s lips, teaching, as these do teach,—
By speech of Gaṅgā, not of Ha-Gālīl,—
How good seed grows to good, ill seed to ill,
Secretly; and the Treasure of the Law
How well it is to buy it at World’s cost
If all this World were chrysolite, and ours;
And how Death is not, being new life masked,
Lest we long overmuch to die, and lose
Purpose of Earth:—but Change, for ever Change!
From seed, by darkness, to the blade again;
From Life, by rest and recompense, to Life,
From forms, by Karma, to some other form;
Which wheel shall whirl, till the awakened soul
Like a caged callow eagle, passion-caught,
Knows itself; and, indignant, spreads its wings
For that unbounded Quiet where is Home.
Thus did Buddh teach; and high *Ahiṃsā*’s rule
To do no wrong, but bear wrongs patiently.
Yet this to conquer Ignorance; to break
From sense; to find that farther, truer World
Which shines—thou sayest it—beyond the seen.
Yea! this to serve the Self, and save the Soul,

Reaching Nirvāṇa, where, what seemed so dear,
Love, lieth dumb as Hate; Life dead as Death;
And the vast voice of endless Ecstasy
Is silence, and its Day eternal dream.
Who reigneth at that centre of the cirque
Him named he not, nor would he lift to Him
Prayers which were vain, if th' All-Knowing loves,
If th' All-Loving knows. Denying not,
Affirming not; but finding no word fit
Saving the Wordless, the Immeasurable:
But thou, reporting from thy Master's mouth,
On that Void stretching from thought's farthest flight
As far into the purple deeps of Night
As the last star—and farther—dost inscribe
This mighty name of 'Love,' and biddest believe
Not law, not fate, not fore-ordinēd course
Hath moulded what we are, and built the Worlds;
But living, regnant Love; dimly discerned
In glories of this house of Earth we own,
Paved with green meads and seas, and roofed with Heaven;
Dimly discerned in lovely shows that live
To whisper lovelier wonders; youth and strength,
The light of lustrous limbs, and laughing eyes;
Man's might and woman's beauty; clouds and flowers,
Jewels and birds, and all fair things for use.
Nor will thy matchless Master have this Love
Marred any way by evil; any whit
Hindered by hating. Hate and Evil hang,—
So must I gather—but as darkness hangs,
When Dawn, which broadens, is not rosy yet.
It shall not fail to gleam, dispelling glooms.
And, for the lingering of that Sun of Love
Which is to brighten all, 'tis Night! we dream!
And Time and Doubt portions of that false dream
Nor would thy Master have one little life
Forgotten of this Love Divine. He sees
His Father's universes clustering close
Round the poor bird which dies—to minister
With winds that fan it, and with dews that bathe;
Those viewless forces, holding worlds at work,
Subservient to the meanest thing, in life,

And death, and after dying. Therefore, more,
Much more to Man, Earth's Mār, and King of things,
Also, who enters, if I gather well—
Into this Kingdom, in thy Master's train,
Hath, for its secret, not to love himself;
Nor seek to save himself; nor—lonely—wend
Over dead duties and affections slain,
Towards such Nirvāṇa; but to cherish still
His neighbour as himself; and save his soul
By losing heed of it, in heedful care
That all his doings profit men, and help
The sorrowful to hope, the weak to stand:
With heart, soul, mind, and strength loving this God,
Whom yet I reach not, tho' the foot of thought
Treads step for step with Christós in Ha-Gālīl.
How fits with such a God the loveless strife
Of all things living? In the jungle, look!
What slaughter! and without it not a meal
For the young vultures, or the, tiger-cubs.
Nay, over all thy Realm of Love this rules;—
Each slays a slayer, and in turn is slain.
How fits, with Love, this, and the wrongs of men
Too desperate for any right to atone;
The woes too hard ever to recompense;
The dried, but dreadful, unforgotten, tears;
The agonies intolerable, yet seen,
Yet suffered (thou didst say so) by that Power
Who tends the little bird, but gives it o'er
Helpless and piping to the falcon's beak?
If these things need not be, doth He not play
With the poor Earth? Shall it not fling Him back
His after bliss, indignant? If aught lets
And He that made them cannot help His Worlds—
Or, only by slow schemes, and painful paths,—
Shall we not scorn to call Him powerful;
Or ask to see Him nearer, and know more?"

“Wise Friend! she sighed, “that which thou sayest to-day
Was—over-eager—said. One of our Twelve,—
One golden morning when the Earth seemed His—
By reason of those glorious works,—and Heaven
A Garden parted by the Blue, whose key

Hung at His girdle—pressed Him close, and spake:
‘Show us the Father, Mār!’ But He replied,
With grave eyes looking greatly past our light,
‘No man, at any time, hath seen Him! None!
Nor shall ye see Him nearer than by Me
Who am His Son!’ And, on another day,
Spake He: ‘So long hast thou been with Me here,
And not yet known Me, Pilīpos {Philip}? Who hath seen
Him that was sent, hath seen the Sender.’ Sir!
We did suppose,—what thy large learning holds,—
The Unnamed thereby shown the Infinite,
Incomprehensible, Unspeakable,
For ever and for ever unapproached,
And yet, for ever and for ever near
In loving immanence; revealed on earth
Doubtfully, as the minds of parents are
To ungrown children; most of all revealed
In days and deeds, in holy life and death,
And new life after death, of Christós Mārān {Christ our Lord}.
But manifest—so did we read Him—here,
In whatso mirrors Love, the nursing Dove
Fasting to feed her couplets; the lone ewe
Battling against the eagle for her lamb;
The eagle’s self, fierce to find meat to bear
Back to her nestlings; and the peasant-sires
Toiling that little ones fare well at home;
And mothers with the sucklings at their breasts,
And children tending joyously the old;
And he who helps the poor, and he that shares
Last measure of dates in the mid wilderness
With one that starves:—each tender deed and true,
Each word, thought, sacrifice, which helps the world,
By loving-kindness, use, and charity;
Nay, ‘even one cup of water,’ thus He said,
‘Given in My name,’ bring glimpse of God, and lead
Nearer and nearer to the Heart of Love.
Which shall be justified, when all is known,
And the Eternal Wisdom whispers,—glad,—
Its secret to the Soul, laughing to learn
Death was so friendly, and the toils of life
So fruitful for all living things; and pain

Seed of long pleasure; and our worst of woes
So like the foolish anguish of the Babe
Whereat the Mother, loving most, smiles most.

“Moreover, not by narrow Reason’s ray
Shall this be ever compassed, but by light
Larger and brighter, shining from the heart.
And, in the house once, at Kəfar Nahūm,—
His Twelve, disputing who was first, and chief—
He took a little child, knit holy arms
Round the brown, flower-soft boy; and smiled and said:
‘Here is the first and chiefest! If a man
Will be the greatest, see he make himself
Lowest and least; a servant unto all;
Meek as My small disciple here, who asks
No place, nor praise; but takes unquestioning
Love, as the river-lilies take the sun,
And pays it back with rosy folded palms
Clasped round My neck, and simple head reclined
On his Friend’s breast.’

“And, at another time,
When the pleased Mothers of the Lake would bring
Their infants to His knee; to touch that hand
Which touched the hands of Angels, and to take
Blessing from lips which spoke for Heaven;—those Twelve
Rebuked them, knowing not. But Yēšūa‘ said:
‘Suffer the little ones to come to Me!
Forbid them not! Heaven’s Kingdom is of such.’
And then went on: ‘Whoso shall not receive
The Kingdom as a little child, that Man
In no wise entereth in!’ Friend! should we err
Deeming He meant the simplest souls see most?
Is there not wisdom in the witless Babe?
New-coming to this life, so wonderful,
Finding, without his pains, without his will,
The tender Mother waiting; the sweet stream
Of breast-milk flowing; and his soft place made;
With sunlight for his days; and stars and moon
To gem the curtains of his sleep; and flowers
To tempt his feet to walk; and birds to teach
Carols of country joy when he would sing;

The child doth question nought, but takes this wealth
Lavished upon him in the dawn of life
With quiet opening heart, glad to be glad.
So doth he grow and learn, yet shall not learn
Ever a higher wisdom than to cling
Close to the loving bosom kept for him,
Content to trust, careless to understand.”

The grey sage said, with wrinkled brow bent low,
“Great is thy grace, oh, Lady Miryām!
Right surely hast thou won from those true lips
Learning’s last word! ’Tis written in our books
Of Parabrahman, to shame all pride of mind,
‘He is unknown to those who think they know;
And known to whoso know they know Him not.’
Yet, as thy fair speech ran, much wondered I
That, teaching how this heavenly Love hath heed
Of all flesh living; how we sons of men
Lie in its lap, all children, dear alike,
Elder and younger; near and far; white, black;
The Yəhūdī, Héllēn, ’Ārammī, and Sīdōnī,
Arab, Miṣrayim:—nay, and Indian;
Thy Yēšūa‘ did not quit, some little while,
His slender world shut here; those peasant-hearts
Poorly perceiving Him; those narrow brows
Knitted against Him in false Nāṣrat;
And that proud, bitter, murderer on the hill,
Slayer of Prophets, red al-Quds,—
Which, as we heard, did spill His blameless blood.
Why wended not His holy feet to them?
To us? to any? who had listened well;
And, glad with light of such bright missioning,
Crowned Him a King, indeed; and given Him Earth
To fill and foison with His Father’s will?”

She answered: “Once, from green Gennesaret
Passed He, with certain, to the neighbouring coasts
Of Ṣōr; and would not have that any knew,
But could not veil His greatness. Thou hast seen
Perchance,—or from far-travelled merchant heard—
How stately sits, how strong, how beautiful

That city on her Island of the Sea,
Tyre of the temples, girt with mighty walls,
Which glass themselves like rocks, majestical,
In the green wave laving their feet;—filled full
With ships that come and go,—white birds of the sea
Flown from the farthest verges of the earth,
Spreading or folding wing;—and noise of oars
And ropes, and singing of the merchantmen.
There stood He, on the stair of Melikértēs —
God of the City—while there came and went
Folk, as I think, from all the East and West;
Another world of men and women; loud
With traffick, and strange tumults, and new tongues;
And gay with many-coloured garbs. We saw
The thronged streets paved with coral; booths and shops
Bursting with store; long strings of camels; slaves
Bearing red jars of byssus, sealed for Rome;
Hewn cedar logs for Hellás {Greece}; honey, and oil,
Barley and balm and calamus; great bales
Of gum and cassia; with blue-broidered work.
And Tyrian girls danced by, before His eyes,
Clad in the purple peplums; beating skins
Of drum and cymbal; wreathed with myrtle flowers,
Singing their wild way down to 'Aštōret,
The hundred-breasted Goddess of the Moon,
Worshipped with blood. Mild stood the Master there
Watching the busy bright-hued heathen life,
With eyes like those sea-waters, showing half,
Half hiding the deep wonders underneath.
Whom, as He gazed, with, who shall tell what thoughts?
A woman, in the Héllēn dress, did accost
Plucking His robe, and crying: 'David's Son!
I know Thee masterful and merciful,
Have pity on my child! A devil rends
Her tender flesh; but Thou, if Thou would'st come,
Could'st heal, and bring Thy servants peace and weal.'
Then He, grieved for the gilded wickedness
Of that fair city, fain for Ha-Gālil;
Answered: 'First must the children's mouths be filled!
It is not well to take the children's bread,
And cast it to the dogs!' At that, her eyes

Flashed with quick wit of anguish, and she cried:
‘Truth, Lord! but crumbs fall, and the dogs may eat
The children’s leavings!’ Then beamed forth anew
That high look on His face, which comforted:
‘For this thy saying go in peace!’ He spake;
‘Thy little Maid is healed!’ ”

And she was healed!

AT TYRE.

BREAK off, a little (he, who sings, entreats)
To mark the Master treading Tyre’s proud streets;
For then, of all the days of all our years,
Since tale was kept of human hopes and fears,
Since first, through mists of eld, we mark Man climb
From flint and bronze to arts and aims sublime,
Subduing Earth, and stripping from the Sea,
By lordlier might, its power and mystery;
And gaining, race by race, with painful strife,
Slow steps to Law, and sweeter modes of life:—
Then, of all days, Times past and Times to be
Met—touched—and parted; taking silently
Such eye-glance as the Grecian boys might snatch,
One from another, in that antique match
When the enkindled torch went sparkling round,
And each fleet runner o’er the flying ground
Spent his last breath and strained his sinking limb
To bring it, safe and swiftly, on to him
Who—new, and girt and eager—waited near
That lighted brand one more quick stage to bear.
Then did this New Age from the Old Age take
Life’s flambeau up; and with strong fingers shake
The sinking fire, and strike away the ash
Of Pagan blackness; making fresh rays flash
Whiter and brighter than what erst had beamed
When Attic grace and Latin lordship seemed
To hold our Earth for ever. Ponder well
What this white Tyre was, when the Writings tell

Yēšū‘ stood silent in her crowded ways;
Master and Victor, more than if the blaze
Of steel-clad legionaries at His heels
Had burst her gates; and rattling chariot-wheels
Had borne Him, splashed with scarlet conquest, high
Over her purple Punic Empery.
See, in the Prophet’s scroll, how proud she sate,
Queen of the heathen, at her strong Sea-Gate:
“Oh thou!”—he saith—“at entrance of the Sea
Merchant for many peoples! haughtily
Wearing thy perfect beauty; with ships wrought
Of fir from Hermon, and of cedars brought
From Ləvānōn; and, for thine oars uncounted
Oak-trees of Bashan; and thy benches mounted
With ivories of Chittim; and thy sails
Sendal of Miṣrayim, bellying to the gales
With broidered fringe, and blue and purple, pressed
From býssos of Aiolia! Skilfullest
On all the waves thy timoneers in thee,
Thy grey-haired pilots, sailing every sea!
Sidon and ’Arwād made thee mariners;
Gəval thy caulkers; Lūd and Pūt and Pārsa;
And Gammādīm, thy men of battle tall,
Who hanged their helms and bucklers on the wall,
Gems for thy terrible beauty! Taršīš sent
Silver and tin to be thine ornament:
Yāwān and Tūvāl brought thee slaves, and brass
To mould thy market-vessels; those who pass
Out of Tōgarmah fetched thee, for thy fairs,
Mules and their riders; stallions stout and mares:
Dedan did traffick many a horn with thee
Of milky elephant, and ebony
From isles of Sūf; ‘Arām thronged trader, too,
For corals, emeralds, agates; and the blue
Of sea-fishes; thy mouth was fed with grain
Of Yəhūdāh, out of Minnīt’s golden plain;
With honey, oil, and balm; with spice from Hind;³
And green Dimashq would not be behind
For wine of Helvōn, and white wool; and Dān
Sent thee bright iron; and the Iōnios
Wine-pots and women-slaves. Qēdār did graze

Her flocks to feast thee: for thy power and praise
Shəvā' and Ra'māh poured forth gums and gold;
Hārān and Kannēh, 'Aššūr, Kilmad old,
Blue cloths and broidered work; and chests bound round
With cords—of cedar wood—wherein was found
Glorious apparel, wove with gilded thread,
And the worm's glistening film!"

So—it is said—

The ships did sing of her, on all the seas.
Lovely and strong, in her twin majesties
Of spear and oar, she shone upon her Isle,
Replenished, very splendid. But the toil
Of tearful captives drove her glittering keels
Swift o'er the waves; at mills and water-wheels
Lydós and Libyes slaves, to keep her great,
Groaned their lost lives away with tears and sweat;
And—dark and cruel—at the altar-stair
Of dread 'Aštōret, priests, their red arms bare,
For glory of the Goddess, pierced soft throats
Of Šōrī boys and girls; and,—girt with coats
Of sacrifice, mingling its wine and blood,—
Stained the white marble scarlet, where she stood.
And Woman had no place, nor parity,
Nor grace, with that lewd Lady of the Sea:
But, bought and sold, the maiden bloomed, to live
A Temple-thrall, and her dusk beauty give
Loveless, unloved. And the fierce statutes taught
Hatred to Foes; and vile advantage, wrought
By whatsoever wrong, or force, or fraud
Might spoil the Stranger.

In such midst Mārān

Patiently pacing, surely come to be
Gentle Destroyer of this Heathenry;
Teacher of truth, which, spreading slow, shall shake
The many-breasted Goddess down and make
The captives free, and tear the accursēd knife
From priestly grip; and change to Queen and Wife
The trafficked Temple-harlot; aye! and bring
The Roman to his last of governing;
The Héllēn—proud of his glorious Gods—to hear

Over Aigaion hills that voice of fear
Wailing “Great Pan is dead!” And from the tongue
Of Caesar’s self,—hereafter—shrewdly wrung
By scath and loss,—compel that yielding cry
Vicisti, Galilaei!

Now, go by

Those throngs of Sōrī,—the old ill deeds and days—
Heedless and unaware! seeing Him gaze
Wistfully from their Temple-steps. No thought
How the mild eyes and silent steps have brought
End and Beginning!

Yet hath come the End!
Hath dawned Beginning!

Doth no ear attend?—
The sea-waves, softlier in the harbour swinging,
Take part with the sea-breezes, lightly singing:

PEACE BEGINNING TO BE,
DEEP AS THE SLEEP OF THE SEA,
WHEN THE STARS THEIR FACES FIND
IN ITS BLUE TRANQUILLITY:
HEARTS OF MEN UPON EARTH,
THAT RESTED NOT FROM THEIR BIRTH,
TO REST AS THE WILD WATERS REST
WITH COLOURS OF HEAVEN ON THEIR BREAST.

LOVE, WHICH IS SUNLIGHT OF PEACE,
AGE BY AGE TO INCREASE,
TILL ANGERS AND HATREDS ARE DEAD,
AND SORROW AND DEATH SHALL CEASE.
“PEACE ON EARTH AND GOODWILL!”
SOULS THAT ARE GENTLE AND STILL
HEAR THE FIRST MUSIC OF THIS
FAR-OFF, INFINITE BLISS!

1. Called by the Arabs of Palestine *al-’akkūb*.

2. Cf. St. August. Confess., “*Quam suave mihi subito factum est carere suavitate, et quas amittere metus fuerat jam dimittere guadum erat; Oh Vera Tu, et Summa Suavitas!*” (“How sweet it suddenly became for me to be without sweetness; and those pleasures I had feared to lose—now it was a joy to release them. O Thou the True and Highest Sweetness!”)

3. “Pannag is, no doubt, the Sanscrit *pannāga*, meaning aromatic herbs.”

BOOK V.

THE LOVE OF GOD AND MAN.

NEXT day, within the House at 'Migdalā,
Sitting in fair discourse,—the Indian said:
“I know that thou must pass to bid me see
Thy Master done to death by evil men,
Blind to the light, in hard al-Quds;
I think that thou wilt tell how,—ere He died—
(Who could not die—thou sayest—and did not die,
If thou hast seen Him living, being slain;)
He took back, twice and thrice, those keys from Death
Which lock the gates of darkness on mankind,
Till when His own hour came, Death ministered,
Meek servitor, leading that holy soul
Thither where it must go; and willed to go,
So He might finish what He was to be:
In all things Man (thou sayest), yet in all things
Divinely touching Heaven, fulfilling life,
And conquering ('twas thy word) the Unconquerable.
Now, gracious Lady! since these things be strange,
And 'tis a new day which my dim eyes see
Broader and brighter than could shine, I deemed,
Till Buddh came back; humbly I pray of thee
Who dwelledst near this light, and hast this light
Large in thy happy eyes, and pure and clear
In thine assurēd spirit—make more plain
What was thy Master's teaching—with what Law
Set He the Old Law by? Whence take ye all—
Whose faces met His face,—the calm, the joy
Of such strong comfort as I mark, and praise,
And marvel at, and fain would understand?”

“Swift is the heart to seize,” Miryām replied—
“Slow is the tongue to utter things so high!
Hadst thou walked once with Him in Ha-Gālīl,
Seen His face once; once, from His lips divine

Heard those commanding, certain, kind, clear words
Which answered ere we dared to ask, and spake
Straight to the thought, as if our souls went stripped,
Or wore for raiment crystal;—thou hadst known—
As we did know who loved and followed Him—
He was in all things such as we were—Man;
Yet, being Man, in nowise like to us:
Oh! no more like, than yonder palm-blossom—
Dropping its sudden plumelet from the crown
To spread and feather into golden rain—
Is like the root, the stem, the branch, the leaf
Whence, all at once, it burgeoned. Thou hadst known
How speech must fail, seeking to circumscribe
The purport of His mighty message here
With unavailing words; as if one dipped
A hand to empty deep green Ha-Galil.
Only, if yet again that voice could sound,
Itself would be its own interpreter,
And lift thee to those heights of Love unseen
Where dwell our spirits, safe above the clouds;
Would light thy gladdened eyes with what lights ours,
Through Life, through Death, into the bliss beyond!

“Yet, for thy sake, and for His sweet Name’s praise,
I will essay:

“Once, at al-Quds,
While eager multitudes drank in His words,
The Ṣadūqīm {Sadducees} had questioned Him; and asked
Touching a Yəhūdī wife, whose husband died
Leaving no children; and, by Moses’ law,
The second brother took her: and, again
Dying, the third; and, so the fourth, and fifth,
Down to the seventh. Latest the woman dies
Childless by all—of all the equal spouse.
‘Whose wife at resurrection shall she be,
All seven wedding her, and issue nought?’
So posed they, mocking at the Life to come.
But Yēšūa‘ shamed them; showed them Holy Writ—
Forever in their false mouths—proving God
Lord not of dead but living; bade them know

Better His power, and plan, and mystery;
And multitudinous mansions of Love's House;
And this World little, and high Heaven so large
Where neither marriage is, nor mortal wish,
Nor selfish, lying tongues, speaking false speech
Of love; nor eyes that lose their lustrous light
With tears and vigils; nor the dread to part
Which, under warm gold of Love's folded wing,
Makes lovers shudder; nor true love mistook,
Nor ill love entertained; nor ever doubt,
Where destined spirits meet; nor ever death
Of love new-born, heart-holds abandoning,
But love undying, undivided, pure,
Perfect; in finer bonds, and nigher, bound,
Dearer delights and deeper joys; free souls
Linked as the Angels are, whose breath is Love,
And, for their sex another wonder.

“One,

Which was a Pārūsh, said,—tempting Him;
Or, haply, learning Moses shrunk too small
To fill the new vast splendours opened so—
‘Tell us the chief commandments of the Law!’
Then, as a jewel-merchant spreads forth gems,
And takes from all his treasures of the Deep,
The two great gleaming pearls of all the pearls
To set them, matchless, in the encircling gold
Shining apart;—from all their Law He plucked
These two chief precepts, sternly answering:

‘THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL
THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL
THY MIND.’

“ ‘This is the First and Great Command,’ He said,
‘And like unto it that which followeth it:

‘THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.’

“ ‘All the Law hangs, and all the Prophets hang,
On these commandments,’ spake He, ‘on these two!’ ”

“So did Mārān, out of their own mouths, judge
Those hypocrites. He told how this Life makes
Veil and dim vestibule of larger life,
Eternal, boundless; and what statutes twain
Sway the commingling Realms so manifest:
Wherein, who loves his brother, seen and known,
Loves God unseen, unknown; and who, by faith
Finds the far Father in the close sweet Son,
Is one with both. Yet Faith, oftentimes He taught,
Was nowise bare believing; since belief
Comes hard or easy, as minds go: and He—
Not once ungentle to bewildered minds
Seeking for truth, and fearful lest they take
A wrong road in the maze—spake graciously
Even to one who, craving mercy, cried:
‘Lord! I believe! help Thou mine unbelief!’
What Faith He asked of whoso entered in
The slave may have in bondage, if he lifts
Eyes of sad hope; th’ unlettered hind may have
Who, at his toil, hungers for better bread
Than what toil buys; the little child may have
Content to love and trust; all souls shall have
Which, when the light shines, turn themselves to light
As field-flowers do; and, like the flowers of the field,
Are glad of the great sun for the sun’s sake;
And, being evil, are for good; being weak
Will give what thews they own for Righteousness,
Will lay what gifts they may at Love’s fair feet,
And follow, with quick step or slow,—through faults,
Through failures, through discomfitures, through sins,—
The march of that majestic King whose flag,
Distant and dim, they hail, and with true hearts—
Though will be wilful and though flesh be weak—
Burn to obey. These are Heaven’s men-at-arms
In van or rear; informed or ignorant
Of whither battle rolls, and what shall prove
Its issue; and, for them, whether high spoils
Of Victory at last—the Leader’s eye
’Ware of their wounds—or some forgotten grave
Where they that gained Him glory sleep unnamed:
Always to orders loyal, standing fast

In what post be assigned; in life and death
Right-minded, but not blameless; loving God
With lowly heart, and earnest, striving soul
Which trusted, seeing darkly; loving man
For brotherhood, and God that lives in man;
Such have the faith, to such is much forgiven.

“It may be there shall come in after days—
When this Good Spell is spread—some later scribes,
Some far-off Pərūshīm, will take His law,—
Written with Love’s light fingers on the heart,
Not stamped on stone ’mid glare of lightning-fork—
Will take, and make it code incorporate;
And from its grace write grim phylacteries
To deck the head of dressed Authority;
And from its golden mysteries forge keys
To jingle in the belt of pious pride;
And change its heavenly cherishing tenderness
To warrant for the sword, the chain, the flame,
Lending hard Hate the sacred seals of Love,
And crying: ‘Who believes not, perishes!’
It may be some that heard Him day by day,
Lacking the ears to hear, or losing hold
Of larger thought—perplexed interpreters—
Shall, in the times to be, do Him much wrong
With right intent; saying our sweet Lord taught
Dark tangled schemes of sad salvation; God
Making Earth ill; which went awry; was lost
For sin; was forfeit to the wrath of Heaven;
Which—for it must exact a victim!—slew
The Son of Heaven Himself, willing and free;
And by His blood, self-shed and innocent,
Washes Earth’s sins away, propitiates
That hungry anger of the offended Law.
So I have known some teach—nay, faithful ones—
Reciting solemn sentences, and words
Of sorrowful foretelling, when He knew
How Love, for love of Love, must die, to prove
Love never dies; no more than Heaven extorts
Sin’s satisfaction from glad pangs of Love.
Nay! if ’twere John himself should teach such God

And call Him Christós', I should remember, too,
How,—when John bade Him call down lightning-bolts
Consuming those Shōmrōnīm who drove
Him and the Twelve away—He softly spake:
'I came to save men's lives, not to destroy!'
But, if it be; and from His darkest words
This passeth, that, albeit 'God is Love,'
As He did say, this thing was also said:
God, from the Guiltless drew the fine of guilt,
And, in constraining names of 'Just' and 'Good,'
Wrought red injustice, and dealt grievously;
Bethink thee of our race, a chosen race
From ancient days; but swaddled, suckled, nursed
In school of 'sacrifice:' at Passover
Sprinkling our doors with blood; at bearing-time
Buying our leave to enter once again
The Temple-courts, and show a child to God,
With butchery of those two soft turtle-doves;
Their pearly necks bleeding, while the mother kneels.
Also, in Tishrī, on 'Atonement Day,'
Our High-Priest, lifting up the Temple's veil,
Walks gory with his dripping knife in hand,
And,—slaughtering the bullock and the ram—
Comes with two goats; and one Jehovah hath
And one 'Azāzēl: winning each by lot
Cast in that shambles. And,—Jehovah's goat
Rightfully murdered—seven times must he dip
His fingers in the blood, and scatter it
Over the Mercy-Seat. 'Azāzēl's goat,—
Bearing the 'scarlet tongue' between its horns,
And laden with those sins beasts wot not of,—
One leads into the wilderness, to die
Innocent, for the people; die forlorn,
Famished, on fire with thirst, knee-deep in slime
And salt-crusts of the dreadful Sea of Death.
How should we learn, horribly nurtured so,
To cast no blood upon the Mercy-Seat
In this fresh Temple of the living Love?
Oh, Sir! the stream, so clear,—high on the Mount—
Takes colour from the hags and channel-stones
Whereby it hastens to the expectant plains;

And many winding ways this Heavenly flood
Must find, belike, before old Law no more
Stains the new crystal of its purity
With memory of bad, bitter, bloody, shrines
And savage Righteousness, and jealous Yāh!

“It may be this shall hap! How should I know?
Yet do we know, who loved and followed Him,
Never such hard words fell from those true lips,
Which would not have the young man call Him good,
Replying, ‘None is good! Not one, save God!’
Love’s glory—not Love’s gore—redeems the “Worlds!
The gateway of His Kingdom He did shut
On them who named His name, but let the sick
Lie helpless; and the naked go unclad;
The fatherless uncared-for; prisoners
Unvisited; the woe-begones of Earth
Unsuccoured;—vainly dreaming to love God
Who did not love their brothers; those who held
Talents, and wrapped them in the napkin; churls
Who—pardoned of great debts—took by the throat
A fellow-servant for some little due,
And narrowly exacted all; unkind,
Forgetting the Forgiver. But for Faith
Which—if it could—would cling; and—if it could—
Would comprehend; and, comprehending not,
Stumbled, yet loved and strove,—to that He flung
The golden doors wide open, crying: ‘Come,
Thrice blessèd of My Father! What ye did,
In that sweet secret doing of true heart,
Unto the least of these My brethren, ye
Have done it unto Me!

“ ‘Of true heart’—mark!
For, what were wrought in purpose of reward
Though the high goal be Heaven, wins us no Heaven,
Wins wages only of this World and men;
The portion of the hypocrites. To love
Our lovers, and to give to them that give;
And to bestow, and to abstain, for praise,
The sinners do it, and the publicans;

So would He teach. But, in our daily alms
And, in our prayers; to keep them maidenly,
Veiled; making private what poor grace they own,
Holding them secret 'twixt ourselves and Heaven;
Not letting this hand know what that hand doth;
And nowise ever to ask pay for Love,
Since Love is paid in loving. Yet, He taught,
Love could not lose by utmost sacrifice,
Nay, but that gain would come,—must come!—much gain!
And pleasures past all seeing of the eye,
Hearing of ear, imagining of mind
Quickened to topmost fancy. This, for sphere
Of spirit; where the things prepared for us—
Poorly foreshadowed in Earth's happiest Now—
Would daze the heart to know. Still, deem thou not
Our holy Master put the body by
As though 'twere clog and curse! Not mean, nor base,
But of Heaven's best upbuilding is this House
Fashioned for man; the city of nine gates,
Wonderful, subtle, sacred;—to be kept
Fair and well-garnished; graced with ornament
Outside and in; and wardened worthily
That, in its ordered precincts, Angels' wings
May float and fold; and body help the soul
As soul helps body. Never once with us
Scorned He the meats and drinks, sights and delights
Which flesh doth ask: 'Your Heavenly Father knows
Ye need these things,' He said; and oftentimes sate
At wedding-festival and banquet-board.
But, while the kind Earth hath a place for all,
Joys came unsought—He said—to whoso lives
Heedless of joy. 'Love thyself last! Drink deep
The nectared anodyne of selflessness!
Feast full upon the diet Angels eat—
Pity and Help and Vast Compassion! Seek
The pathway of the Kingdom;—finding that
Other things shall be added! Griefs shall come,
Pain, hardships, death, it may be,—on the path;—
Yet turn not back! hand once upon the plough,
Drive the brave furrow forward, eyes intent
On the share's point! trust Heaven for recompense

Forgetting recompense; trust God for due
Of bodily things, and for soul's due of peace
Foregoing both!' 'Some of you they shall put'—
Spake He—to death; and not one single hair
Shall perish of your heads!' "

The Buddhist said:

"I hear thee tell me plain how Yēśūa' taught
Life beyond this life, timeless, infinite;
As little parted from the world we see
As daytime is from dream-time, when we drowse,
And think 'tis night, with sunrise on our lids.
Taught that our sorrows are but children's frets
Because there bends, o'er seen things and unseen,—
Swaying that Kingdom, which hath Love for law,—
A Father's hand, bountiful, pitiful,—
Known by the Son's hand, which we reach and touch;—
His true Name being nameless; conquering
Slowly—for reasons—all things to Himself.
Likewise, that whoso will may enter in—
Now and forever—to full freedmanship
Of Love's fair Kingdom, having Faith, which is
Not wisdom, understanding, creed, belief,
Nor sinlessness—by Yogiś vainly sought
In deedlessness—but earnest will to stand
On Love's side; eager heart to see the Good
And serve the Good, and hail the Light, and help
The spreading of the Light; aiming to grow
'Perfect as He is perfect.' So the dew
Globes on a grass-blade; shaped as is the Star,
Shooting star-rays, obeying starlike laws!
Now do these lucent words kindle a lamp
Brighter than what we took from Buddha's lore;
He bade us spurn Self, set the Self aside—
Ahankāra—seek always to sink back
Safe to the Infinite; and, for such end,
Break from the sense, with all its sorceries;
Forego delights, disdain what most men prize,
Life's light allurements, tender things of Time,
Soft lips of love, sweet lisp of little ones
Making heart's music in the house; praise, fame,

Wealth, domination. But thou showest us
The subtle spirit, making good its way
From world of sense and self to selfless world,
Not by hard stress of lone philosophies,
Nor scorn of joys, nor sad disparagement
Of life and living things as shadows vain;
But—nearer road and new!—by heart to see
Heaven closest in this Earth we walk upon,
God plainest in the brother whom we pass,
Best solitudes 'mid busy multitudes,
Passions o'ercome, when master-passion springs
To serve and love and succour. Ah! the dream!
Full fair, could it but last in waking hours!
Could men but hear the Angels' song anew,
And learn to sing it, making 'Peace on Earth!' ”

“Sir! but it lasts! she said”—“with whoso sees
As we have seen and heard. No dream at all,
But simple, glad, and easy verity!
I pray thee note how He would call Himself
The ‘Son of Man.’ Is’t not the way with Kings
To bear for style and title—first and most—
Their kingdom’s name, prouder than crown or ring,
Or high imperial purple? This our King,
Who, had He willed, might sit in majesty
Out of all reach, in court invisible
Of undiscovered Paradise; unmoved,
’Mid Angels and Archangels ministering,
Throned Son of God; with archipelagos
Of orbs for silver islands of His Realm;—
Dwelled, seest thou this, with us in Ha-Gālil;
And, lowly, took for Empire ‘Men,’ a Man?
Consider what it is that He was Man!
If one proclaimed—the wisest and the best
That ever lived in all our lands, and years,—
‘The way to God is by the road of men;
Find thy far Heaven in near humanity;
Love thy seen brother as thyself! Thereby
Thou lovest Him unseen, Who is the All!’
What answer should we make? Should we not say,
‘Some few our eyes have seen, lovers and friends,

Tender and true; once, twice, and thrice we knew
Hearts gentle, just, and pure; and there have been—
If annals lie not—excellent good souls
Giving themselves for kindred, country, right;
Wise teachers, worthy soldiers, foremost minds
Whose names are sweet upon the lips of Time
For service dearly wrought and selfless deeds;
Yet, never was there none might say, at height
Of topmost virtue, “See in *Me* that God
Elsewise unseen! For *My* sake find in Man
Heaven’s glory hiding; and for *My* sake love
The least of these My brethren, since the least
Hath God in him—or shall have!” Oh, our best
Left us still sighing: ‘All this petty world
Is full of spoiled and spoilers; strangers, foes,
Hating and hated; rending each from each
By force or fraud the means to live; low souls
Base, void, unlovely! What should make us love
This poor forked fellow-worm, plagued with vile needs,
By savage passions scourged, whose brittle life,
Commenced in helplessness, runs its vain round
Of meats, drinks, sleeping, striving; then sinks back,
Helpless again, to that clay whence he came?
Where shall we find Heaven’s image in these brows
Ape-like and low? these faces foul with lusts?
Those hands with guiltless blood dyed red, those eyes
Aflame with greed and anger:—nay, and worse,
Those false, deceiving hearts that cog and cheat,
The smooth, reputed, hypocrites who smile
And, with the serpent’s glitter, drag his sting?
What peak, at loftiest, had our breed attained
Where we might stand and see the stars come close?
Where glowed one human glory bright enough
To feed the fond desire, the hopeless hope
That somewhere, at beginning, Man did touch
Divinity; and, somewhere, at his end,
Might pass—a purged thing—to the Infinite?

“This hath Mārī and Master satisfied!
This, from the mouths of doubters and unfaith,
Forever hath He taken! Ah! the worst,

Th' unworthiest creature of us, crawling Earth,
If he but knew what bliss hath happened here,
What sudden splendour of inheritance,
What unexpected purple, undeserved,
Hath lighted, making him the kith of Kings,
Would lift his head from the life-dust he licks,
And, in the sunshine of new, happy, hope,
Spread jewelled wings of joy—as when we see
The dull grey worm, hid in uncomely shell,
Burst it, and soar a lightsome butterfly
Burning and blossoming, all gold and blue.
I—even I—the wilful one, and wild,
Because He did forgive, because my feet
Are clean with treading in His steps, because
I heard His gracious words; and saw Him live,
And saw Him die, and saw Him after death
Alive, triumphant, Lord of Life and Death;
Come to His Kingdom, and not gone from us:
I—Miryām of ‘Migdalā—rejoice
With what exceeding joy thine eyes have marked,
Standing persuaded that no height, nor depth,
Nor present things, nor things to be, nor powers,
Nor pangs, shall separate us from His grace.
And, for myself, and all the Earth, and thee,
Have no grief left, and cannot suffer grief,
Being woman, and Mārī and God a Man.
For, listen yet again! This Godlike one,
This spotless, stainless, sinless, blameless Christós,
Whom none did once convince of one small swerve
From perfectness; nor ever shall!—so strong
The elements obeyed Him; so divine
The devils worshipped; so with virtue charged
The touch of Him was health; so masterful
The dead came back upon His call; so mild
The little children clustered at His knee,
And nestled trustful locks on that kind breast
Which leans to-day on God's—Consider, Sir!
A human heart beat there! a human brain
Pondered, and pitied, and was sorrowful
Behind that sovereign brow. The blood of us,—
Of women and of men—coursed, crimson, warm,

In those rich veins! Nay, and He ate our meats
And drank our drinks, and wore the dress we wore;
And His hair fluttered in the breeze which stirred
Peter's, and John's, and mine. So, now, henceforth
This wonder lasts, that what, in all the worlds,
Was highest, holiest, purest, noblest, best,
More taintless than the Morning-Star, more kin
To Heaven than light of Heaven, or proudest plumes
Of Angel and Archangel—That is Man!
That one supreme, consummate, faultless life,
It was a human life, begun with us,
Continued 'midst us, ended as we end
In woe and weakness, thence emerged to be
A Glory sitting equal in the sky
With God's own glory, everlasting
That by which we are judged, and that whereby
The race of Man claims place and patrimony;
Oh, more than all! that for whose holy sake,
By whose most sovereign grace, for whose sweet deed
The sins which reddened Earth are washed away
Whiter than wool, the debts which loaded Earth
Are paid by Love's kiss on the lips of Law,
Tenderly silenced. Now, the whole Earth hears
(Or shall hear—surely shall hear—at the last,
Though men delay, and doubt, and faint, and fail)
That promise faithful:—‘Fear not, little flock!
It is your Father's will and joy to give
To you the Kingdom!’

“Wherefore, if there live
Brothers too low to love, too base to serve,
Too evil to forgive; if aught in Man
So abject seem and so to brute allied
Nice natures scorn the kinship;—think that Christós
Knew also these, and measured these, and made
His daily sojourn 'midst them; and was swift
To succour them and cheer; and bore with them,
Never once holding any lowly soul
Less dear to Heaven than high and saintly souls,
Never conceding once that one stray sheep—
Lean, foul, and fleeceless in the thorns of Sin—

Should die, unfolded, for the safe flock's sake.
Thus, then, weakly I strive to answer thee:
Yēśū‘ Mārān hath lived and died and lived;
And, now, in Suns, and Stars, and amplest Heaven,
When Angels name us they must name Him, too,
Since He was Man—is Man. And for His sake
No more 'tis hard to love what He hath loved,
Nor strange to tread, in footmarks of His feet,
This path which leads, by love of Man, to where—
Through Earthly Service rendered, duties wrought
In meekness, purity, and charity—
Always our Helper, He awaits. Awaits
To tell what best He knew—the secret deep
How the Divine hides in the Undivine,
How near to good is evil. Waits to say:
'Enter ye in, who nursed Me, lying sick,
And fed Me, being hungered; gave Me robes
When I was naked, wiped My tears away
In heavy-hearted days, and pitied Me,
And helped Me, cast in prison with the thieves!
And, when we answer: 'Oh, dear Lord! but, how
Saw we Thee sick, or hungered, or unclad,
Or sad, or cast in prison?' Christós shall say:
'Inasmuch as ye did it to the least
Of these My brothers, it was done to Me!
Aye! 'twas to Me,—and 'twas to God through Me—
Ye gave that cup of water! I lay sick
With him ye succoured; I was languishing
In prison with the broken hearts ye cheered;
That was My nakedness ye covered up
Clothing My Poor; I was the babe ye fed;
I was that widow whom ye visited;
Share My joy now, who helped My Father then!
Enter ye in!'

“Moreover, Sir! I deem
We are so made we but discern what's high,
What's great, what's noble, what's best worthy love,
When it comes visible, incarnate, nigh:
Beauty were but a name, except it burned
Authentic in red glory of the Rose,

Or in loved form and face desirable:
And Virtue needs must put white raiment on,
And walk in sight, ere men bend knee to her.
Souls, ere they soar, ask help,—to spread a wing—
From firm ground here; th' ideal real, the dream
True in the daylight. But with Christós to love,—
With Him to show us what lay lost in us—
Man by His birth, God by His Deathlessness,—
For His sake all the race of men grows great,
Old laws are spent! what need command us more
With crash of Sínay's thunder, not to rob,
To murder, covet, bear false witness? Those
Were chains for Hatred; Love is done with them!
Love, standing with the children, at His knee,
 Spells the new lesson that the neighbour wronged,
The poor left comfortless, the foeman slain,
Were kinsmen used unkindly, lovers lost;
Being one household, with one Father, God,
One eldest brother, Christós. 'How often, Lord!
Shall one offend me, and shall I forgive?
Asked Peter: 'until seven times?' And He said:
'Seventy times seven pardon!'—Not the sin!
He made no peace with that! The pure in heart
Alone see God; and very terrible
Blazed His bright wrath 'gainst all the wrong-doers,
Oppressors of His poor, self-lovers, scribes
Who darken knowledge, sinners loving sin,
Impenitent. But, when he turns, turn thou!
And, if he shall not turn, hate him no more
As though Christós had not come, a second time
To break those Stones of Moses, and to write
On every shard of his enlarged Law
The new, great, golden statute: WHAT YE WOULD
THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE TO THEM!

"So taught Lord Buddh," the Indian said, "but I
Hail larger teaching here. It shall not be,
Henceforward, that the wise man reins his wrath
For quietness of mind, self-mastery,
Or high disdain of who offends,—being held
Only some shadow in the phantom-nauth

Of Māyā, some illusionary show
Of sense-life;—but, because Love's tolerance
Fulfils the law, and self would wrong itself
Hurting the wronger, who is kin to self,
So die all mortal strifes, wars without truce,
Quarrels unreconciled; the cruel feuds;
Of house with house, and tribe with tribe, and race
With neighbouring race, nursed darkly in dull veins
And handed down, a bloody heritage,
From age to age. Such ill shall cease, I deem,
Where this ray passeth of the nobler light.
Slowly shall dawn, I think, a broader time
When, punished worst by lofty clemency,
The manslayer shall learn he cannot slay
The slain one's right to pardon, nor Man's right
To pity and to comfort, while we kill.
The oppressor shall not so oppress himself
To shut his soul from share of better things
When justice reigns. Revenge shall sheathe his knife,
Leaving his private grief to public means,
Which, ceasing not to exact, shall know no hate.
Surely, herewith, a new World might begin
From this thy faultless Lord, showing all folk
His brothers; dear, for such high brotherhood,
And for what lurks like Him, hid in their clay.
Love, than Hate mightier, taking happy fire
From thy fair Christós, might kindle as times roll
In crores on crores of hearts,—the beam divine
Of that vast patience which is type of Heaven's,
Sending its sunshine upon good and ill.
Yet one point lacks! There shall not fall, at first,
Great earthly comfort here! Sheep among wolves,
Naked 'mid sharpened blades, His messengers
Must pass; and suffer bitterness; and be
Despised, reviled, brought to the cross and stake;
Losing this sweet seen Earth for Heav'n unseen.
It needed that He showed them,—showed to us—
More than a man may: proved it visible
This hidden World,—where wages shall be paid;—
No sleep, no dream, no mystic cheat to tempt
Souls deathwards, down the narrow Road of Right;

But verity—close, palpable, and clear—
If we had eyes to see,—plain certitude
As solid as the summer’s purple grapes,
As rich roast meats; as miser’s gold; as lips
Dewed with the honey of youth, rose-ripe and new,
For whose sake lovers let the world go by;
As likely as to-morrow,—not yet come,
But surely coming; nay,—more sure than that,
Since, if such be at all, it is to-day
And all days,—this abiding, fuller Life
Beyond, and round, and in, and under things,
Shut from us now by curtain of the flesh
Whose edge Death lifts. Saidst thou He took Death’s place
And pushed the black folds back; and made us know?”

She answered not, but, with obeisance, rose;
Passed swiftly through that latticed door which led
From the paved Court into the Women’s rooms;
And presently returned, holding the hand
Of a pale Maid, who wore the Hebrew dress
Sa’if and *Katōnet*—gown and gathered shirt—
Of fine Miṣrayim linen; all in white
Girt with an *avnēt*’ wove in gold and white,
Its tassels threaded pearls; and on her head
The *sānīf*, tied with pearls. But most you marked
The exceeding paleness of that grave fair face
Which was as if white marble breathed, and had
Black tresses banded on it, and large orbs
Of jetty gems inlaid for eyes; and lips
Carved of faint-coloured coral; and ever pressed
As though they held some secret word to say
And must not part, lest breath of it break forth:
Yet with her pallor, something strange of joy
In the bright glance revealed, and gentle mouth
Where—flitting under subtle-shadowed curves—
A light smile always played, so tender-sad
It seemed to mock at sadness. Calm and soft
Issued the Ārāmāyā of her speech
In salutation, while she bent, and said:
“Peace be with thee!” And the grey Māgus stood
Folding his palms across his breast; and gazed

With fear and wonder on her countenance
So secret-full, albeit so fresh and young;
Murmuring: “On thee be peace!”

“It dwells with her
Now, and for evermore”—quoth Miryām—
“Passing all understanding! She hath seen
What none else sees; and journeyed to a Land
Whence none returns, and heard with living ears
What the Dead say; for this is Yā’ir,
Whom Yēshūa‘ raised from death in Ha-Gālīl,
Daughter of Yā’ir. She lodgeth with us here,
His handmaid, and the friend of all His friends,
Living His Virgin, till He call her hence.”

Thereat fell silence, while the Indian sage
Gazed more intent; and Šəlōmīt’s great eyes
Roamed, searching in the sky for sights unseen.

Miryām went on: “Once, in Kəfar Nahūm,
He sate at meat with Matthew; and there came
The Rabbī Yā’ir—*Rōsh ha-Kəneset*—Chief
Of singogah; who fell before His feet,
Beseaching from His love and mightiness
Help for a daughter, twelve years old. She lay
Dying—by this time, peradventure, dead;—
His only daughter, dearer than heart’s blood
And Yēshūa‘ rose and went; we following.
But, while our throng threaded the long bazaars,—
Woe-begone Yā’ir leading the way; the folk
In booths and shops upstarting from their trades
And trafficking, to see their Rabbī’s hand
Clasped in the Master’s, and that hurrying crowd
Gather, from khān and well and singogah;—
Look! there runs up, wild with his grief and speed,
One from the Ruler’s house. Tears course adown;
He rends his skirt! he cries: ‘The Maid is dead!
Trouble no more the Master!’ Rabbī Yā’ir
Beats on his breast, and moans. But Yēshūa‘ said
‘Fear not! only believe! She shall be whole!’
And Yā’ir,—drear, gazing on the gracious lips

Which spake such comfort inconceivable—
Came to his gate. By this the wailing women
Screamed round the door, with flutes and drums, and flung
Dust on their heads, lamenting ‘*Wēy wēy lī!*
Ah, his resource! his glory! Oh, Gazelle!
That shalt not drink our water-brooks again,
Nor leave the lilies fairer for thy feet!
Oh, tender, broken, palm-tree! *Wēy wēy lī!*’
Thou knowest, Sir! how sorrowful is death.
But He, staying their clamour, gently said:
‘Weep not! she is not dead; she doth but sleep
I will awake her!’ This they laugh to scorn,
Well wotting she is dead. Then entered He
With Peter, John, and James; and, beside these,
The Rabbī with his wife. Our Šelōmīt
Lay on her pallet, white and still as snow,
The grave-cloth bound about her hair; the myrrh
Scattered upon her breasts; her little palms
Pressed meek together; pale lips done with breath;
Worn eyelids, weary with the fever, dropped
Shutting the eyes from life; black lashes laid
Close to cheek’s alabaster—surely dead!
Not hearing any more the Father’s cry:
‘My Šelōmīt! would I had died for thee!’
Not feeling any more the Mother’s tears
Passionate on her brow. But Yēšūa‘ touched
The chill and stiffening hands; looked steadfastly
In the still face; then giving soft command,
Stronger than Death’s, ‘Damsel, arise!’ He cries,
‘*Talīqā qūmī!*’ And her spirit came,
And she arose and walked; and ate of meat;
While those around laid hands upon their mouths,
Astonished with a great astonishment.”

Anew fell silence, while the Māgus drew
Nearer by paces three, to see this Maid
Living, that had been dead, who knew the things
Which no flesh knows, and bore them wistfully
In calm bright eyes, and placid smiling lips.

Then spake he: “Is it lawful if I ask
What memory holdest thou of that black time?”

Šəlōmīt, after pause, replied: “He bade
We should not greatly speak of what was wrought;
And, if I speak, something is wont to fall
Like a thick curtain, shutting off my mind,
With all it knows, from you that know it not.
I pray you give me grace if I speak nought!”

And Miryām said: “Beseech you pardon her!
She must not speak! It is not well for Life
To learn too soon the lovely secrets kept
For them that die. Look on her face, and see
What close content, and private peacefulness
Gleam through it from the lighted heart within!
Now hast thou witnessed what thou didst desire,
That other World shown visible and near;
Not sleep; not dream, not cheat, but verity!”

The Indian said: “I worship her, and praise
The greatness of thy potent Lord; and thank
Thy pains. Yet was it very Death, indeed,
Not trance, nor swoon? In closest moments here
Hath she told nought of those new things she saw?”

“Sometimes,” Miryām replied, “when we have walked
Amid the tombs, or seen go wailing by
The mourners with their painted bier, and noise
Of funeral music, Šəlōmīt will smile
And whisper to herself, in words half-caught,
Dreamily,—comforting the Dead, it seems:
‘Thou happy Sister: blessed Brother! safe!
Who will not hear His Voice! And yet, sweet!—sweet!—
Tender-sweet sounded it, although it called
My spirit back so far! Now, weep not so,
Ye living ones! Ye, too, shall pass! and, then
To grow so new and different!—What is ‘t?
Will men still call it ‘dead?’ We lie a-bed;
And sleep; and seem, on all our nights, to die;
But the soul wakes, and plays between the bars,

Like a caged bird. Afterwards, body wakes,
And soul's asleep, or hiding! What surprise
For these who go feet foremost to the grave,
To learn the dream was Daytime, Light was Night,
Gliding—soft-gliding—to that greater Life,
Which always was so near;—only a skin
To cast aside, like the enamelled snake,
And then—the fresh gold and the glittering blues!
Dear God! how wonderful those colours were
I had not marked before—and, yet, not new!
Those lands and seas I never saw before,
And, still,—'twas Ha-Gālīl and Gádara!
Those high kind faces never, surely, known;—
And yet,—I played with them before they 'died'—
Before I 'died!' to find them waiting me,
So many, and so many, and such joy!
So glad and natural!—Till that Voice rang
Gentle and mighty—which all worlds obey—
'*Talīṭā qūmī!*' 'Come back, Šəlōmīt!'
Then I obeyed, coming reluctantly,
And breathed this Earth again: He touching me!
Oh, Wailers! dance and sing for your wise dead
Who do not listen to '*Alālalai!*'
Ah, fair Lord! pardon mine unwilling feet!
Still I came back! and I will live, and hush,
Till Thou sayest: '*Talīṭā!*' 'Now, come again!'
"So have I heard her murmur," Miryām said.

But, when the Maid—low salutations paid—
Passed once again the latticed door, none spake.
And silently the Buddhist kissed the hem
Of Miryām's gown, departing silently.

BOOK VI.

THE GREAT CONSUMMATION.

“If Death”—the Indian said—“be dead, indeed,”—
(That sixth day in the House at ‘Migdalā)
“Be dead in knowing that one human soul
Once laid this flesh aside, and went, and came,
Taking it up again;—as she avers
Whose deep eyes stayed my speaking yesterday,
Then am I answered! Then thy Master wrought
Better than Buddh, showing the world beyond
Where men shall find their treasure of good works
Laid up in trust, awaiting; loss made gain;
The Kingdom come: unless, in truth, ’twere dream
Thy Maid had of the marvels and the Voice,
And thy Lord—of His knowledge—spake ‘She sleeps’
Such sleep, belike, not life nor death, but swoon—
In some dim region where the dying halt—
As locked the senses of thy Widow’s son
In Nain;—unto this wisest Master known
At eye-glance; and He did but break a trance.”

“Good Friend! I think Truth was the merchandise
Thy camels toiled to fetch this weary way
From Hind to Ha-Yardēn,” Miryām answered him,
“Else were I loath to say what I shall say
Telling thee farther of a living one
Healthful to-day, with colours of quick blood
Ruddying his cheek, and bright hair clustering;
No stronger step on Karmel’s steepest side!
No rower on our lake-wave lustier!
Who lay four nights a dead man in the tomb;
But on the Master’s call, came forth therefrom
Bound limb and loin with grave-cloths,—hands and feet,—
Forth from the pit, I say, into the Sun—
Bound with those bands, as we had laid him there
Four days before, to moulder with the worm;—

‘We!’ for this dead man,—living now, and hale—
Is El‘āzār of Bēt-‘Anyāh, well known
In all these parts—my Brother. And I saw
Those garments of the grave stripped swiftly off,
And what we put there—pale, and cold, and lean,
A body broke by ten days’ fever-fits—
Stride over that black threshold, fair and fresh,
Into the daylight, at my Master’s word.
Last year he sojourned long in ‘Migdalā;
Yet ’tis not well he should be marked! He walks
A wordless, gentle, wistful man, aware
Of more than may be said in any speech;
Not of our world, though in it, well-content
To wait Heaven’s way in all things. Time will be
The truth shall widely spread; now it is best
We seal our lips, and watch him silently
Coming and going, manifesting God.

“Yet, for thy sake, I speak,—more freely speak
Because what I must tell thee, at the close,
Of wonder, glory, conquest, comfort, joy
Of Consummation crowned, and passage pierced—
Blissful, triumphant—from high sacrifice
To heavenly peace and confirmation strong,
Destroying Doubt and Death,—cometh more sure
To thee, as heretofore to me and us,
With knowing this. We were in Gádara,
And—I remember—’twas a summer’s eve,
Amid the yellow daisies of the Lake
The children gathered round Him, brought from far
Only that He might touch them. ’Twas that hour
When He rebuked His Twelve, saying, ‘Suffer these
To come to Me! the Kingdom is of such!
Who shall receive it as a little child
Entereth therein.’ So sitting, with a babe
Asleep upon His breast, and on His knee
One round-eyed ‘Angel of the Kingdom,’ nursed
Full fatherly:—a shallop drove its keel
Sharp on the tinkling shingle, and thence gave
My Brother to our band. For I had told
At Bēt-‘Anyāh how great the Master was;

How wise, how holy, how compassionate.
And El'āzar sped, running through the reeds;
And thrust past peasants, mothers, and the Twelve;
And kneeled and prayed: 'Good Master! wherewithal
Shall I gain Life eternal?' Yēšūa' said:
'Call Me not "good!" None is all good save One!
Thou knowest the Commandments'—at those words
Reciting Moses. Quoth my Brother, then,
'All these have I observed from my youth up!'
And Yēšūa', seeing, loved him; kissed his head
As Rabbīs will when scholars answer well;
But bade him go his way, sell all his goods,
And give his shekels to the poor, and buy
Treasures in Heaven. Thereat El'āzar turned
Sad, for he was a Ruler, owning vines,
Milch-kine and olive-yards. Yet, that kind kiss
Lay strong upon him; and he did this thing,
And gave much wealth, and lived for better gold,
And grew the Master's friend, faithful and close,
Ministering, when we came to Bēt-'Anyāh.

"Thus fell it;—near to His last Passover—
That El'āzar lay sick; and we did send
Messengers saying: 'Lord! the man Thou lov'st
Lies sick to death.' But, that day came He not,
And that day died my Brother; and next day
He would not come: He had His purposes!
They told us how He said: 'El'āzar sleeps;
I go to waken him from sleep;' and, next,
When one made answer: 'Lord! but if he sleep
He shall do well!' the Master plainly said:
'Our friend is dead: for your sakes I am glad
I was not there, since now ye shall believe;
Let us rise up and go; and make him live!'

"But we, in Bēt-'Anyāh, had borne our dead
Unto his tomb. It was a cavern cut
On the hill's face, with winding steps let down
Into the darkness, to a sepulchre
Hewn chamber-wise out of the vaulted rock.
A great stone *gōlāl* sealed the entrance-place,

And shut him with his father's bones. Meseems,
When thou didst journey here to visit us,
Coming, by Bēt-Paggē, o'er Har ha-Zētīm—
Near to that point where proud al-Quds
Burns at the northward bend—all white and gold—
Thy beasts trod by the spot. And, being nigh
The City's gates, many Yəhūdīs came to us
For friendship, and to mingle tears o'er him.
Suddenly rumour grew the Lord drew near:
My sister rose to seek, and quick returned
Whispering, 'Yea, He is here, and calleth thee!'
And while we hastened—many following us—
She told me, on the road, all which had fall'n;
How she had said—distraught that, even now,
What He might ask God's power would grant to Him;
How Yēshūa' answered: 'He shall rise again!'
And she had sighed: 'True, Lord! I know, I know!
When end of all things comes; at the Last Day!'
On which He spake;—the words dwell in my heart!—

‘I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE; HE THAT BELIEVETH IN ME, THOUGH HE WERE DEAD, YET SHALL HE LIVE.

‘AND WHOSOEVER LIVETH AND BELIEVETH IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE.’

“Yet, then we understood not! And I fell
At those dear feet with no hope lightening
My heavy-burdened breast. Too late! Too late!
Why had He tarried, only seven leagues off,
Who might have healed; and El'āzar so loved?
‘Lord, hadst Thou but been here!’ brake from my lips,
‘My brother had not died!’ Then, as I think,
To see our tears, and all those mourning folk;
And know our lamentation one salt drop
In this World's brimful Sea of misery;
Bethinking how, by night and day; near, far,
Eyes stream, hearts crack, and homes are laid in waste
For terror of this secret-footed Death
Which comes unseen, and slayeth silently;

And hath not answered once, though myriads ask:
‘What art thou? Wilt thou give us back our Dead?’
Bethinking Him of this, compassionate,
Folding all human sorrows in His heart,
Our Heavenly Master groaned in spirit; shook,
A-tremble with that vast Love, gathering
Against His breast all such as weep on Earth.
‘Where have ye laid him?’ sighed He. When I said,
‘Lord! come and see!’ the gracious eyes were wet
With tears which comfort all tears.

“Yēšūa‘ wept.

“So, to the Tomb we came. The grey slab made
Its monstrous door, where tread of guest falls not,
Nor knock is answered, but the Dead within
Keep speechless company, and, in the dark—
With none to visit them save rat and worm;
Nothing befalling but a bone which drops;—
Moulder together, all a-dust and dry;
Saying no word,—disconsolate, undone,
Staring with empty eyes at olive-roots
Whose fruit they used to pluck—for others now!
Saying no word! Husband and Wife and Child,
Brother and Sister,—who were wont to mix
Lips, hands, and hearts in Earth’s warm fellowship,
Silent and separate, on noisome beds.
Oh, till He lived did we not dread our Dead
So still, so altered, so unlovely, so——?
Nay! when He spoke: ‘Roll Me this stone away!
My sister sobbed: ‘It may not be! dear Lord!
’Tis four days gone! by this time stinketh he!’

“ ‘Roll Me the stone away!’ He said again:
‘Spake I not unto thee that thou should’st see
The glory of God?’ Then, eight young men of thews,
With ox-yokes and the olive-poles, pushed back
The leaning rock; and the black adit gaped
As ’twere the mouth of Tōphet, horrible!
The throng drew off; the very sunshine seemed
Loath to re-enter, lighting first two steps

Of the dark stairway, and the hollowed roof
“Where a bat clung and cried, and spiders hung
In broken empty webs, and foul flies crept.
Next, Yēšūa‘, no more weeping, but His eyes
With pity and love and power irradiate,
Drew close, and set His holy fearless foot
On that grim threshold, and did pray this prayer:
‘Father! I thank Thee Thou hast heard Me here!
I know Thou hearest alway; but because
The people standing nigh shall hereby see
That Thou hast sent Me, I did ask, and Thou
Hast answered! Then from lowest notes, His voice
Rose clear, commanding: ‘El’āzar ! come forth!’
Cried He, imperious. Oh, and in that gloom
Ensued a stir,—a noise of rustled cloths,—
A footfall on the stairway! El’āzar —
The dead man—cometh forth! Like unto one
Who slumbers in his summer-room, and hears
Commingled with deep happy dreams, a tone
He knows and loves call him to play; and leaps
Upon his feet, and girds his coat, and hastens
With light steps,—laughing—and lids not yet wide;
So El’āzar ! so, half asleep to see,
Dazed, unexpectant; but alert, aware,
My Brother!—stumbling somewhat for his bonds,
And one free hand fumbling the face-cloth back
To spy the Master,—stepped forth lustily
Glowing with glad new life, wholesome, and fair;
The crimson of his lips and of his cheeks
Full-coloured; eyes alight, foot firm, voice strong,
Loud and assured. But we,—all dumb, for fear
And joy and thanks and wonder,—held our breaths,
Not moving, till we heard the Master say:
‘Loose him, and let him go! ’ ”

Next, day by day
She told the story of those later days,
How He did pass unto al-Quds,
Wending to die, because such death should bring
Fruit of His fair life, and high grace for men.
How, spying the proud City, as He rode

Meek, on an ass, with children for His guards,
And glad hosannahs wakening the hills,
He sorrowed for His splendid murderer
Throned on her rock, crowned with the great white Dome,
And girt with Kedron and the guardian hills;
Sighing: “al-Quds! al-Quds!
Slaying the Prophets, stoning those that come
Messengers to thee! If, in this thy day,
Thou hadst but known!—thou, Śiyyōn! hadst but heard
The things belonging to thy peace! How oft
I would have gathered all thy children in
As a hen clucks her chickens to her wings;
But thou would’st not! And, now behold thy House
Is left unto thee desolate!” She told
How to that House one last sad while He passed;
Sate in the Temple, saw its goodly Courts,
Its nine gates laid with gold; its corner-stones
Rose-red, and white and black, fetched from afar
For Yísrā’ēl’s {Israel} God, each block a desert-crag
Sculptured to beauty; and the golden grapes
Over the golden doors, each shining bunch
The stature of a man; its cedar-work;
Its alabaster stairs; that purple veil
Soon to be rent, shutting the “Holiest” in;
The Ark, the Kərūvīm {Cherubim} with shielding wings;
The vain, void, Altar whence the God was gone.
For, “seest thou these great buildings?” so He spake,
“One stone upon another doth not stand
Of all its stones which shall not be cast down
“In times that come! And, then—amid His friends—
Told she the sojourning at Bēt-‘Anyāh;
The last sleep on the breast of Har ha-Zētīm;
The treason of the man of Keriaoth,
Selling for thirty pieces that sweet blood
Which buys our bliss; the sad Last Supper set,
Secret and holy, in the City’s midst,
Where He did break them bread, and pour them wine,
And wash the feet of all the Twelve—even his
Who must betray Him,—his stained with new dust
Of coming from the house of Kaïáphas,
And counting out the shekels. For Love hath

No measure in his magnanimities,
And, "peradventure," Miryām said, "even he—
After self-loathing, and Aceldama—
Hath somewhere, by strange grace, some place again,
With bitter heart-pangs purged, near to his Lord;
Who chose him at the first, and at the last
Washed him, well-knowing of the wicked kiss.
For as the sin so is the suffering,
And Judas needs must ache with Yēshūa's cheek."
Next, she recited how, that last dread night—
Eve of the Cross—He passed, as all men pass,
Into His anguish—to Gath-shemannē.
"For, it were not to be a man," said she,
"If once, and briefly, and with trailing wings,
Soul did not bid the body fond farewell
At hour when soul comes to the throat, and flits
Glad of past days, and greatly moved to part.
One time must be, in all the lives which live,
When strength sinks into weakness, faith desponds,
And fair hope swoons, and—for a little while—
No star shows where the path winds; not one gleam
From all those promised Angels who have gone,
And know the way, and should be there to make
The Valley of the Shadow safe with hands
Familiar, at first touch, in thickest dark.
He, Sir!"—she said;—"ev'n He; for whom rayed Worlds
Watched, with unwinking silver eyelashes,
That sad night of their little sister-world;
He, who had twenty myriad Shining Ones
With golden plumes at poise, fluttering to fly
Swift—if it might have been—to wipe His brow
Clear of the bloody sweat, and comfort Him,
And catch Him to His Kingdom—prayed full sore:—
The God consenting while the Mortal shrank—
'Abba! all things are possible with Thee!
Sorrowful is My spirit, unto death!
If it may be, let this Cup pass from Me;
If this Cup may not pass away from Me
Except I drink it, let Thy will be done!" "

And, afterwards, the Treason;—the foul kiss—
“Hail, Master!”—and the tender answer, “Friend!
Betrayest thou Me with kissing?”—torches’ glare;
Swords, staves; as if to take a thief by night—
The Hour, and Power, of Darkness. “El’azar
Saw all,” she said; “he was the ‘young man’ there
Following for love, wearing that ‘linen cloth,’
Whom they did strip and seize.” On that, the Priests,
The Sanhedrīn, the Judgment,—(all she told
Hheretofore unto Pilātus)—Pilātus’ wrath;
The scourge; the mocking purple cloak; the crown
Jewelled with blood; the path to Gulgalta {Golgotha};
The cruel Cross (oh, Tree, which made its wood,
Who planted thee? Did birds nest in thy boughs,
And sunshine light thy leaves?)—the cruel Cross;
The savage rending nails; the scroll; the sponge;
The cry, “*Elōi lama sabacthani!*”—then,
His death-word, “It is finished,” and the death,
And spear-blade deep into His dead side plunged;
And the Centurion, crying: “Verily,
This was a Son of God!”

“Oh! we were fain
For sorrow and for shame”—said Miryām—
“Who stood to see Him die! Never so low
Bowed the bright Sun, stooping to bathe his gold
In whelming waves; never so meek, and lost,
Faded the splendour of the Morning-Star
Before that Morning which it heralded,
As He did humble and abjure Himself—
In moment of arriving majesty—
Consenting on the Cross to hang and die.
Had we not seen—did we not know Heaven’s might
Servant and succour to Him? plumēd bands
Of Presences invisible, intent,
Upon His lightest sighing, loyally
To go and come, bearing Him embassage?
Oh, measure what a love, if thou canst mete,
The immortal pity of that soul serene,
Pitiless only to its body, firm
To hold it uncomplaining, patient, still,

Close to the Cross; of one mind with the nails,
With the dull senseless wood—for sake of men,
And great salvation of all flesh to be.
Not summoning once, with one swift sinking thought,
The rescue that had rushed on wings of fire
From North and South and East and West, to aid.
Not suffering once—not when the fever raged
Worst in His veins, and thirst blackened His lips,
And those whom He had come to teach and save
Gave Him no better thanks than bitter gibes—
Not suffering Death,—who waited weepingly
For leave to strike—to hasten one small step
Quicker for Him, than for the thieves who hung
On either hand! All this to wring no word
From Him most innocent and pardoning
Except the tender mandate, sadly sighed
To Miryām Mother, wailing at His feet:
And the sick gasp, ‘I thirst!’ and spirit’s spasm,
‘Father! dost Thou forsake Me?’ and the cry
Of Victory’s anguish: ‘IT IS FINISHED!’

“And measure—if the mind can ever mete—
That sorrow of us standing by who saw
Our Master,—Master over Death and Pain,
Lord of all Angels, and all devils—droop
Unhelped; we who so loved Him, helplessly
Gazing far-off—held from His bleeding feet
By Pilātus’ spears, and guards of Kaiáphas,
And Roman soldiers casting lots to share
His sacred vestments: Measure what a pang
Tore us, and mocked our faith, and made our hopes
Fall, leaf by leaf; like last leaves, when the blast
Of winter strips the vineyard grey and bare!
Nay, but not mine! Truly I tell you, Sir!
I loved Him so!—I worshipped so! I knew
So well in inmost mind He could not die,
And would not die, and was not less than God;
And should make good to all, in His good time,
The meaning, and the means, and mystery;
And be that King they wrote Him on the scroll;
That while mine eyes ran tears too thick, to see

His dear face, and my fingers clenched themselves
Into my palms, as if they were the nails
Piercing His hands; I went not otherwise
Than full-assured it would be well at last.

“Yet, measure—if thy mind can measure this—
How lost we stood, defeated, abject, shamed,
Those Twelve—with Judas one; and all the rest
Fled at Gath-shemannē—and I; and she
Who bore Him; and the women ministering;
And some poor, few, sad, fearful friends aloof
Afraid to grieve, because of those stern spears;
Shut from the shaking Cross, whispering their woe
Lest Galilaōs {Galilean} country tongues bewray,
And they be known—like Peter—for His sheep.
Only this left of those high-nourished dreams
About the times to follow Ha-Gālīl
When He should sit upon His Kingdom’s throne,
And rule the land, and give to Israel—
The Roman Eagles driven screaming off—
Days of King David’s majesty again,
Shēlōmōh’s splendours—more than Shēlōmōh’s!
Only this left of larger phantasies
When we looked higher—saw Him judging Earth
At God’s right hand; aye! by those pleasant fields
Of Dalmanūthā, and the green sea-shores—
Drunk, like the children of the Bride-chamber,
With His new wine of love—begged for the seats
This side and that side of His Royalty,
Over the heads of Angels. And now this!
For our King’s drink the hyssop on the sponge!
For our King’s purple the slow-trickling blood!
For our King’s courtiers the writhing thieves
This side and that! for our King’s Ministers
Those legionaries with the savage spears!
For our King’s praises gibes of passers-by!
For our King’s throne the cruel torturing Tree!
We—who in those glad days of Ha-Gālīl
Left all and followed Him, certain and sure
The Angels’ song was true, Heaven’s joy was come
Visible, lovable, approachable,

In this sweet, well-belovéd Son of Man:
That we had seen and heard the Power of God
Made Mercy, made Forgivingness, made Peace;
And elemental enemies, and Death
Dropping their old ill masks to manifest
All things in all the spheres servants to Him,
Lovers of Man, and secret Ministers:—
We to stand weeping there—His sad, shamed, Church
The last scorned ruins of the large scheme planned
To take the whole world by the hand of Love,
And make all flesh One Father's family.
Ah, never since tears rolled—since human hearts
Beat quick with hope, to break in black despair,
Lay Love so wingless, Faith so quite forlorn
As that dread day, on guilty Gulgulta !”

She paused:—the great drops welling from her eyes—
But lit behind by such a ray as breaks
Across the April rain, and paints the Bow.

“Yet thou”—she said—“who knowest stars in Heaven,
Which are not gone because we see them not,
Shalt learn in that dark hour was clearest shown
The eternal lustre of Mārī's sweet Star.

“It was our Shabbāt-eve. By set of Sun
Arimathaean Yôsēf craved and gained
The grace to lay Him in his Sepulchre
Fresh-hewn, where no man ever yet was laid,
Shut in a garden. And did bring Him there
Tenderly taken from the bloody Cross,
Wrapped in fine sindon, and strewn round about
With myrrh and aloes—gifts for burial
From Naqdīmōn the Rabbi;—as much spice
As should a King's grave sweeten. And they set
A great stone to the entrance of the Tomb.
And I—with one more—watched them set the stone,
But might not come at Him, to make Him fair,
Because a guard of soldiers kept the place;
Also, it was the Shabbāt.

“So night passed;
And all that next slow day; and night, again.

“Then, while the first day of the week was dark,
Alone I wended to His Sepulchre,
Bearing fair water, and the frankincense,
And linen, that Mārī’s sweet body sleep
Well, in the rock. And, while my woeful feet
Passed through the gate, and up the paved ascent
Along the Second Wall, over the Hill,
Into that Garden, hard by Gulgalta,—
The morning brightened over Moab’s peaks,
Touched the great Temple’s dome with crimson fires,
Lit ‘Óphel and Mōriyyāh rosy-red,
Made Har ha-Zétm̄ all gold, and, on the pools
In Hinnom laid a sudden lance of flame.
And, from the thorn-trees brake the waking-songs
Of little birds; and every palm-tree’s top
Was full of doves that cooed, as knowing not
How Love was dead, and Life’s dear glory gone,
And World’s hope lay there in the Tomb with Him;
Which now I spied;—that hollow in the rock
Under the camphire leaves. Yet, no guards there
To help me roll the stone! nay, and no stone!
It lay apart, leaving the door a-gape,
And through the door, as I might dimly see,
The scattered wrappings of the Burial-night,
Pale gleams amidst the gloom. Not waiting, then,—
Deeming our treasure taken wickedly—
I sped; and came to Peter, and to John;
And cried: ‘Mārān is stolen from His grave,
And none to tell where He is borne away!’
Thereat, they ran together, came, and saw;
And entered in; and found the linen cloths
Scattered; the rock-bed empty; and, amazed,
Back to their house they went. But I drew nigh
A second time, alone; heart-broken now;
The bright day seeming blackest night to me,
The small birds mockers, and the City’s noise—
Waking within the walls—hateful and vain:
Why should Earth wake, the Son of Man asleep?

Or, that great guilty City rise and live,
With this dear Lord, dead, in her stony skirts?
Fled, too, my last fond hope, to lay Him fair,
And kiss His wounded feet, and wash the blood
From His pierced palms, and comb His tangled hair
To comeliness, and leave Him—like a King—
To His forgetful Angels. Weeping hard,
With these thoughts; like to snake-fangs, stinging me,
My left hand on the stone I laid, and shut
The eager sunshine off with my right hand,
Kneeling, and looking in the Sepulchre.
It was not dark within! I deemed, at first,
A lamp burned there, such radiance mild I saw
Lighting the hewn walls, and the linen-bands;
And in one corner, folded by itself,
The face-cloth. Coming closer, I espied
Two men who sate there,—very watchfully—
One at the head, the other at the foot
Of that stone table where Mārī had lain.
Oh!—I say ‘men’—I should have known no men
Had eyes like theirs, shapes so majestical,
Tongues tuned to such a music as the tone
Wherewith they questioned me:—‘Why weepest thou?’
‘Ah, Sir!’ I said: ‘Mārī is ta’en away,
Nor wot we whither!’ and thereat my tears
Blotted all seeing. So, I turned to wipe
The hot drops off: and, look! Another one
Standing behind me, and my foolish eyes
Hard gazing on Him, and not knowing Him!
Indeed, I deemed this was the Gardener
Keeping the Trees and Tomb, so was He flesh;
So living, natural, and made like man.
Albeit, if I had marked—if any ray
Of watchful hope had helped me—such a look,
Such Presence, beautiful and pure; such light
Of loveliest Compassion in His face,
Had told my beating heart and blinded eyes
WHO this must be. But I—my brow i’ the dust—
Heard Him say softly: ‘Wherefore weepest thou?
Whom seekest thou?’ A little marvelled I—
Still at His foot, too sorrowful to rise,—

He should ask this,—the void grave gaping near,
And He its watchman: yet His accents glad;
Nay, each word sweet with secret resonance
Of joy shut in it; and a tender note
Of lightness, like the gentle raillery
Which lovers use, dissembling happiness.
Nathless, not lifting up my foolish head,
'Sir!' said I, 'if 'tis thou hast borne Him hence,
Tell me where thou hast laid Him. Then will I
Bear Him away!'"

"What answer came to that?"
Fetching deep breath, the Indian asked,—

And she—

Her white arms wide outraught—as if she saw
His feet again to clasp; her true knee bent
As He were there to worship; her great eyes
Shining with glow of fearless, faithful love,
As if, once more, they looked Him in the face,
And drank divinest peace,—replied, elate:
"Ah, Friend! such answer that my sadness turned
To gladness, suddenly as grey is gold
When the Sun springs in glory! such a word
As made my mourning laugh itself to nought
Like a cloud melting to the Blue! such word
As, with more music than Earth ever heard,
Set my swift dancing veins full well aware
Why so the Day dawned, and the City stirred,
And the vast idle world went busy on,
And the birds carolled, and, in palm-tree tops,
The wise doves cooed of love! Oh, a dear word
Spoke first to me, and, after me, to all,
That all may always know He is the Lord,
And Death is dead, and new times come for men;
And Heaven's ways justified, and Christós alive,
Whom we saw die, nailed on the cruel Cross!
For, while I lay there, sobbing, at His feet,
The word He spake—Mārī! my King! My Christós!
Was my name:

'MIRYĀM!'

“If I say the Dead

Catch tone of some such melting tenderness
When first their lovers in the new Life flock
And greet and kiss them, telling them sweet things
Of bliss beyond, and Love crowned Conqueror;
If I should speak of children, dreaming ill,
And then grown 'ware it is the dear safe breast
Of their fond Mother which they fret upon:
If I should liken hopeless mariners
Snatched sudden from black gulfs; or men condemned
Ransomed from chains, and led to marriage-feasts;—
With the swift comfort of that instant change,
All must fall short! No language had I then;
No language have I now! Only I turned
My quick glance upward; saw Him; knew Him! sprang
Crying: ‘Rabbōnī!—Lord! Mārī! dear Lord!’ ”

Thereat, within the house in ‘Migdalā,
Fell silence,—Miryām on her knees at prayer
Lost for a little unto earthly things;
And he, who came so far, and came so late,
To know what setting had the fair white Star
Seen over Bêt Lehem—clasping dark palms
Across his breast, and humbly bowed to hail
Her, of all women—after one—most blest,
Most honoured, and most honourable; whose love,
Washing her sins away with holy chrism—
More precious than much spikenard,—won hereby
The first word ever spoke from Heaven’s own mouth
Plain to Earth’s ears, to tell us Death has died,
And Love shall save all that will trust in Him.

“Oh! thou most happy Lady!”—presently
The Indian said: “I praise and worship thee,
Messenger of thy Master to all Lands!
Surely thy name shall be, in times to come,
Sweet on the lips of all men; and thy sex,—

Thy sisters—lifted into larger grace,
For thy great sake, and for this mighty thing
Done to thy tenderness and constancy—
Laud thee, and joy in thee, who dost make known—
To saintliest souls not less than sinning souls—
The Woman's queenly part in this World's plan!
I do perceive—since Age, which dims the eye,
Opens the inward vision—there shall spread
News of these high 'Good Tidings,' growing gleams
Of this strange Star we followed to the fold.
I do discern that, forth from this fair Life,
And this meek Death, and thine arisen Christós,
Measureless things are wrought; a Thought-Dawn born
Which shall not cease to broaden, till its beam
Makes noon of knowledge for a gathered World,
Completing what our Buddha left unsaid;
Carpeting bright his noble Eight-fold Way
With fragrant blooms of all-renouncing love,
And bringing high Nirvāṇa nearer hope,
Easier and plainer! Spake thy living Lord
More than the name? Cam'st thou to touch of Him?"

Miryām replied: "It seems a little thing,
Now,—seest thou,—when so great a thing is told—
That, being a Son of God and Man, He knew
Life's hidden springs, and called the spirit back
At Nain, and after, at Kəfar Nahūm;
Or stayed the worm at work in Bēt-'Anyāh,
Where, for God's glory, He gave whole again
The bodily house, quick-mended, to His friend,
To El'āzar, my brother. But, mark well!
Here was the body of the life beyond
That we shall wear when flesh is laid aside;
Which these unworthy eyes did look upon!
No eye shall see it, save by mystery
Making flesh spirit, or the spiritual
Take fleshly shape awhile.

"When I was fain
To fling my arms around His knees, and pour
My hair upon His feet, and eat, eat, eat

His garment's hem with kissing; measuredly
He stayed me, saying: 'Touch Me not! not yet
Am I ascended to My Father! Go!
Speak to My brethren; say that I ascend
Unto My Father, and to yours,—My God,
And your God.' "

"Was He seen again of men?"
The Buddhist prayed.

"Many whiles!" answered she:
"Three times on that First Day, and, afterwards
In His old paths by silver Ha-Gālīl;
And on the Mountain,—where He met His own,
And made them cheer celestial. Last of all
He showed in full midst of al-Quds,
Amongst th' Eleven,—nail-marks on hands and feet
Rose-red, and spear-gash scarring the white side:
And ate of fish and honey from their board;
Then blessed, and led them forth to Har ha-Zētīm;
And passed—as if, they said, a waiting cloud
Received Him out of sight."

"Centurion!"
The Indian cried:—"set there to see Him die:—
Truly the 'Son of God!' "

PEACE BEGINNING TO BE,
DEEP AS THE SLEEP OF THE SEA,
WHEN THE STARS THEIR FACES GLASS
IN ITS BLUE TRANQUILLITY:
HEARTS OF MEN UPON EARTH,
NEVER ONCE STILL FROM THEIR BIRTH,
TO REST, AS THE WILD WATERS REST,
WITH THE COLOURS OF HEAVEN ON THEIR BREAST!

LOVE, WHICH IS SUNLIGHT OF PEACE,
AGE BY AGE TO INCREASE,
TILL ANGERS AND HATREDS ARE DEAD,
AND SORROW AND DEATH SHALL CEASE:

“PEACE ON EARTH AND GOODWILL!”
SOULS THAT ARE GENTLE AND STILL
HEAR THE FIRST MUSIC OF THIS
FAR-OFF, INFINITE BLISS!

THE END.

PEARLS OF THE FAITH

OF

ISLĀM'S ROSARY

BEING

THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLĀH
(ASMĀ' AL-ḤUSNĀ)

“With Comments in Verse from various Oriental Sources
(AS MADE BY AN INDIAN MUSLIM)

BY

EDWIN ARNOLD, C.S.I.

“Allāh hath most excellent names, therefore call upon Him by
the same.” *Qur'ān*, ch. vii. “*al-A'rāf*”

1883.

PREFACE.

IT is a custom of many pious Muslims to employ in their devotions a three-stringed chaplet, each string containing thirty-three beads, and each bead representing one of the “ninety-nine beautiful names of Allāh,” whenever this among many other religious uses—is made of it. The Qur’ān bids them “celebrate Allāh with an abundant celebration,” and on certain occasions—such as during the intervals of the Tarāwīh night service in Ramadān—the Faithful pass these ninety-nine beads of the rosary through their fingers, repeating with each “Name of God” an ejaculation of praise and worship. Such an exercise is called *Dhikr*, or “remembrance,” and the rosary *Masbahah*.

In the following pages of varied verse I have enumerated these ninety-nine “beautiful names,” and appended to each—from the point of view of an Indian Muslim—some illustrative legend, tradition, record, or comment, drawn from diverse Oriental sources; occasionally paraphrasing (as closely as possible) from the text of the Qur’ān itself, any particular passage containing the sacred Title, or casting light upon it. In this way it seemed possible to present the general spirit of Islām under a new and not unacceptable form; since almost every religious idea of the Qur’ān comes up in the long catalogue of attributives. Tender, as well as terrible; lofty in morality, albeit grim and stern in dogma, the “Perspicuous Book” is still, and must always be, replete with interest for Christendom, since, if Islām was born in the Desert, with Arab Sabā’ism for its mother and Judaism for its father, its foster-nurse was Eastern Christianity, and Muḥammad’s attitude towards Christós, and towards the religion which bears His name, is ever one of profound reverence and grateful recognition. Nor are the differences between the older and younger creed really so great as their similitudes in certain aspects. The soul of Islām is its declaration of the unity of God: its heart is the inculcation of an absolute resignation to His will. Not more sublime, therefore, in religious history appears the figure of Paul the tent-maker, proclaiming the “Unknown God” at Athens, than that of the camel-driver Muḥammad, son of ‘Abd Allāh and Āminah, abolishing all the idols of the Arabian Pantheon, except their chief—ALLĀH TA‘ĀLĀ, “God the Most High”—and under that ancient and well-received appellation establishing the oneness of the origin, government,

and life of the universe. Thereby that marvellous and gifted Teacher created a vast empire of new belief and new civilization, and prepared a sixth part of humanity for the developments and reconciliations which later times will bring. For Islām must be conciliated; it cannot be thrust scornfully aside or rooted out. It shares the task of the education of the world with its sister religions, and it will contribute its eventual portion to

“that far-off divine event,
Towards which the whole creation moves.”

Composed amid Scotch mountains during a brief summer-rest from politics, and with no library near at hand for references, my book has need to ask indulgence from the learned. It does but aim, however, to suggest (in poetic form) juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islām, of its founder, and of its votaries; employing the language of one among them, and thinking with his thoughts, since this alone permits the necessary sympathy.

I have thus at length finished the Oriental Trilogy which I designed. In my “Indian Song of Songs” I sought to transfer to English poetry a subtle and lovely Sanskrit idyll of the Hindu theology. In my “Light of Asia” I related the story and displayed the gentle and far-reaching doctrines of that great Hindu prince who founded Buddhism. I have tried to present here, in the simple, familiar, and credulous, but earnest spirit and manner of Islām—and from its own points of view—some of the thoughts and beliefs of the followers of the noble Prophet of Arabia.

EDWIN ARNOLD, C.S.I.

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“ALLĀH!” BI-SMI’LLĀH! SAY THAT GOD IS ONE,
LIVING, ETERNAL; AND BESIDES HIM NONE.

*Say ar-Rahmān! “The Merciful” Him call;
For He is full of mercy unto all.*

ONCE on a day, in Paradise,
Discourse indignant did arise
Amongst the Angels, seeing how
The sons of Ādam sinned below;
Albeit Allāh’s grace had sent
Prophets with much admonishment.
“Heedless and guilty race,” they cried,
“Whose penitence is set aside
At each temptation! Truth and Right
Ye know not!” Then a wondrous light
Fell on their brows—a mighty word
Sounded—the Presence of the Lord
Spake: “Of your number choose ye two
To go among mankind and do
‘Justice and Right,’ teaching them these.”
Therewith, from those bright companies,
Hārūt went and Mārūt went down
On earth, laying aside their crown
Of rays, and plumes of rainbow feather;
And on the judgment-seat together
Many long years they sate, and wrought
Just judgment upon each cause brought.

Until, before that justice-seat
There came a woman, fair and sweet,
So ravishing of form and mien
That great al-Zuhrah {Venus}, who is queen
Of the third planet, hath not eyes
As soft, nor mouth made in such wise.
And one whom she did wrong, besought
Sentence against her: she had nought
Of plea, but in her dazzling grace
Stood fearless in the audience-place;
Consuming hearts with hot desire
By subtle Beauty’s searching fire.

Then said Hārūt, forgetting Heaven,
“Pardon to such must, sure, be given.”
Whispered Mārūt, “If thou wilt be
Leman of mine, thou shalt go free.”
And for her love those two contended,
Till the false scene was sorely ended
With earthquake, and with lightning-flash,
And rolling thunder’s wrathful crash,
’Midst which the city and the folk
Passed from their ken, and a Voice spoke:
“Come unto judgment, ye who called
Allāh too merciful!”

Appalled

Hārūt lay and Mārūt lay prone
In Paradise, before the Throne;
Hearing that doom of God, which said:
“Until My trumpet calls the dead,
Dwell on the earth, where ye have learned
The just may unto sin be turned.”

*Merciful One and just! we bless
Thy name, and crave forgiveness.*

*Say ar-Rahīm! call Him “Compassionate,”
For He is pitiful to small and great.*

’TIS written that the serving-angels stand
Beside God’s throne, ten myriads on each hand,
Waiting, with wings outstretched and watchful eyes,
To do their Master’s heavenly embassies.
Quicker than thought His high commands they read,
Swifter than light to execute them speed;
Bearing the word of power from star to star
Some hither and some thither, near and far.
And unto these nought is too high or low,
To mean or mighty, if He wills it so;
Neither is any creature, great or small,
Beyond His pity; which embraceth all,
Because His eye beholdeth all which are;
Sees without search, and counteth without care,
Nor lies the babe nearer the nursing-place
Than Allāh’s smallest child to Allāh’s grace;
Nor any ocean roll so vast that He
Forgets one wave of all that restless sea.

Thus it is written; and moreover told
How Jabrā’il {Gabriel}, watching by the Gates of gold,
Heard from the Voice Ineffable this word
Of two-fold mandate uttered by the Lord:
“Go earthward! pass where Sulaymān hath made
His pleasure-house, and sitteth there arrayed,
Goodly and splendid—whom I crowned the king—
For at this hour My servant doth a thing
Unfitting: out of Nisibis there came
A thousand steeds with nostrils all a-flame
And limbs of swiftness, prizes of the fight;
Lo! these are led, for Sulaymān’s {Solomon} delight,
Before the palace, where he gazeth now
Filling his heart with pride at that brave show;
So taken with the snorting and the tramp
Of his war-horses, that Our silver lamp

Of eve is swung in vain, Our warning Sun
Will sink before his sunset-prayer's begun;
So shall the people say, 'This king, Mārān,
Loves more the long-maned trophies of his sword
Than the remembrance of his God?' Go in!
Save thou My faithful servant from such sin."

"Also, upon the slope of 'Arafāt,
Beneath a lote-tree which is fallen flat,
Toileth a yellow ant who carrieth home
Food for her nest, but so far hath she come
Her worn feet fail, and she will perish, caught
In the falling rain; but thou, make the way naught,
And help her to her people in the cleft
Of the black rock."

Silently Jabrā'īl left
The Presence, and prevented the king's sin,
And holp the little ant at entering in.

*O Thou whose love is wide and great,
We praise Thee, "The Compassionate."*

*Call Him “al-Malik,” King of all the kings,
Maker and Master of created things.*

THE Sultan of Dimashq {Damascus} found asleep
 The potter Ibn Salūl,
And bore him to the palace, where he waked
 In garments beautiful.

.

Consider! if a king should call thee “friend,”
 And lead thee to his court,
Roofed large with lazulite, and pavemented
 With flow’rs, on green floors wrought;

If he should bid thee sit at meat; and spread
 A table, served so fine
There lacked not any pleasant food or fruit
 But came at call of thine;

If he hung high a glorious golden lamp
 To shine where thy feet tread;
And stretched black ’broidered hangings, sown with gems,
 For curtains to thy bed;

If for thy heats he bade soft zephyrs blow;
 Sent, at thy thirst, sweet rains;
And filled the groves with minstrels, gayly garbed,
 To charm thee with their strains;

If, past the confines of his palace-grounds,
 He showed thee spacious seas,
Where, wafted o’er the dancing foam, might sail
 Thou and thine argosies;

If, for society in that fair place,
 He gave glad companies,
Kinsmen and friends and helpmates, and the bliss
 Of beauty’s lips and eyes;

With wisdom's scroll to study, and the ways
Of wondrous living things;
And lovely pleasure of all ornaments
That Nature's treasure brings,

Coral and pearl; turkis, and agate stones
Milk-white or rosy-veined;
Amber and ivory; jade; shawls wove with gold,
Scarves with sea-purple stained;

If the king gave thee these, and only wrote
Upon his inner door:
"Serve me and honor me and keep my laws,
And thus live evermore

In better bliss, when ye shall pass hereby,—
As surely pass ye must:—"Who is there would not praise that monarch's name
With forehead in the dust?
. . .

Lo! but He doeth this—Allāh our King,
His sky is lazulite;
His earth is paved with emerald-work; its stores
Are spread for man's delight;

His sun by day, His silver stars by night,
Shine for our sakes, His breeze
Cools us and wafts our ships; His pleasant lands
Are girdled with the seas

Which send the rain, and make the crystal bridge
Whereby man roams at will
Prom court to court of Allāh's pleasure-house;
Seeing that writing still

Upon the inner gate—which all must pass—
"Love me and keep my laws
That ye may live, since there is greater life
Beyond these darkened doors."
.
.

If Ibn Salūl, the potter, loved Him not
Whose kindness was so strong;
If Ibn Salūl kept not the palace laws,
Had not that Sultan wrong?

*O Sovereign Giver of good things,
We praise Thee, "Mālik" King of kings.*

*Allāh-al-Quddūs—the “Holy One” He is;
But purify thy speech, pronouncing this;*

FOR even Isrāfil,
Who waits in Heaven still
Nearest the Throne, and hath the voice of sweetness,
Before his face doth fold
The wings of feathered gold,
Saying “al-Quddūs;” and in supreme completeness

Of lowly reverence stands,
Laying his angel-hands
Over his lips, lest Allāh’s holiest name
Be lightly breathed on high;
And that white mystery
Pass, as if that and others were the same.

¹ Iblīs—’tis written—when
He heareth among men
The name of “Allāh” spoken, shrinks and flies;
But at the sound of this,
Uttered in realms of bliss,
The Djins and Angels, in their ranks, arise.

And what believer dares
Begin his morning prayers
Without “wudū’”—th’ ablution? who is seen
His Qur’ān to rehearse
But hath in mind its verse,
“Let none me touch, save such as are made clean?”

Lo! if with streams or sands
Ye lave the earnest hands
Lifted in prayer; and if ye wash the mouth
Which reads the sacred scroll,
Dare ye with sullied soul
Meditate this dread word, that shrines the truth

Of Allāh's purity?
Bethink! His great eyes see
The hearts of men unto their inmost core!
 Make clean your hearts within;
 Cast forth each inmost sin;
Then with bowed brows, say this name, and adore.

*Forgive, Thou Pure One!—Whom we bless—
Of our good deeds the sinfulness.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, cxiv. chapter "Of men."

*Thou Who art “Peace” and unto peace dost bring,
Allāh-as-Salām! we praise Thee, Judge and King!*

WHEN th’ unshunnēd Day arriveth, none of men shall doubt it come;
Into Hell some it will lower, and exalt to Heaven some.

When the earth with quakenings quaketh, and the mountains crumble flat,
Quick and dead shall be divided threefold; on this side, and that,

The Companions of the right hand (ah! how joyful they will be!)
The Companions of the left hand (oh! what misery to see!)

Such, moreover, as of old time, loved the truth and taught it well,
First in faith, they shall be foremost in reward: the rest to Hell!

But those souls attaining Allāh,—ah, the Gardens of good cheer
Kept to lodge them! yea, besides the “Faithful,” many will be there.

Lightly lying on soft couches, beautiful with broidered gold,
Friends with friends, they shall be served by youths immortal, who will hold

Akwāb, abārīq – cups and goblets – brimming with celestial wine –
Wine which hurts nor head nor stomach – this and fruits of Heaven which shine

Bright, desirable; and rich flesh of what birds they relish best;
Yea, and feasted, there shall soothe them damsels fairest, stateliest—

Damsels having eyes of wonder, large black eyes like hidden pearls,
Lulu’ al-Maknūn, Allāh grants them, for sweet love, those matchless
girls.

Never in that Garden hear they speech of folly, sin, or dread;
Only “Peace”—*as-Salām* only—that one word for ever said,

“Peace! Peace! Peace!” and the Companions of the right hand (ah! those bowers!)
They shall roam in thornless lote-groves, under mawz-trees hung with flowers;

Shaded, fed by flowing waters; near to fruits which never cloy,

Hanging always ripe for plucking; and at hand the tender joy
Of those maids of Heaven, the Houris: lo! to them We gave a birth
Specially creating, lo! they are not as the wives of earth;

Ever virginal and stainless, how so often they embrace,
Always young and loved and loving these are neither; is there grace

Like the grace and bliss the Black-eyed keep for you in Paradise,
O Companions of the right hand! O ye others that were wise!¹

*Giver of peace! when comes that day,
Set us within Thy sight, we pray.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lvi. chapter "Of the Inevitable."

*al-Mu'min! "Faithful," fast, and just is He,
And loveth such as live in verity.*

IBN SĀWQAĀ, Lord of Bahrayn {Bahrain}, in the field
Captured a Shaykh {Sheikh}, an Arab of the hills,
Sayyid Ibn al-Ṭā'if; and the king's oath was passed
That each tenth man of all the captives die
Together with their chieftains, for the war
Waxed fierce, and hearts of men were turned to flame.
So led they Sayyid forth before the camp
At Adhān; and a eunuch of the guard,
Savage and black, stood with his haick uprolled
Back to the armpit, and the shamshīr's {scimitar} edge
Naked to strike.

But suddenly the king
Inquired, "Art thou not he gave me to drink,
Hunting gazelles, before the war began?"
"Yea, I am he!" said Sayyid.

Quoth the king,
"Ask not thy life, but ask some other boon,
That I may pay my debt."

Sayyid replied,
"Death is not terrible to me who die
Red with this unbelieving blood of thine;
But there hath come a first-born in my tent;
Fain would I see my son's face for a day,
Before mine eyes are sealed. Lend me my life,
To hold as something borrowed from thy hand,
Which I will bring again."

"Ay!" laughed the king,
"If one should answer for it with his own.
Show me thy hostage!"

“Let me stand his bond,”
Spake one on whom the lot of mercy fell—
Ishāq al-Tā’ifī, a gallant youth and fair—
“I am his sister’s son; bind ye my arms,
And set free Sayyid, that he ride at speed,
And see his first-born’s face, and come again.”

So Sayyid went free again, seeking his home.
But in the camp they mocked that faithful friend,
Saying, “Lo! as a fool thou diest now,
Staking thy life upon an Arab’s word.
Why should he haste, to abide the bitter blade?
Will the scared jackal try the trap again;
The hawk once limed return unto the snare?
Cry to the desert-wind to turn and come,
But call not Sayyid.”

Ishāq only smiled,
And said, “He is a Muslim, he will come!”

The days passed, Sayyid came not, and they led
The hostage forth, for Ishāq now must die;
But still he smiled, saying, “Till sunset’s hour
Slay me not, for at sunset he will come.”

So fell it, for the sun had touched the palms,
And that black swordsman stood again in act
To strike, when Sayyid’s white mare, galloping in,
Drew steaming breath before the royal tent;
And Sayyid, leaping from the saddle, kissed
His kinsman’s eyes, and gently spake to all,
“*Labbayka! I am here.*”

Then said the king,
“Never before was known a deed like this
That one should stake his life upon a word;
The other ride to death as to a bride.
Live, and be friends of Ibn Sāwā, but speak!
Whence learned ye these high lessons?”

Ishāq spake,
“We are believers in the book which saith,
‘Fulfil your covenants, if ye covenant;
For God is witness! break no word with men
Which God hath heard; and surely he hears all.’ ”¹

That verse the king bade write in golden script
Over the palace gate; and he and his
Followed the Faith.

*Ya! Allāh-al-Maumin!
In truthfulness of act be our faith seen.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xvi. chapter “Of the Bee.”

*“Call Him Muhammin, “Help in danger’s hour,”
Protector of the true who trust His power.*

THE spider and the dove!—what thing is weak
If Allāh makes it strong?
The spider and the dove!—if He protect,
Fear thou not foeman’s wrong.

From Makkah {Mecca} to al-Madīnah fled Mārān,
The horsemen followed fast;
Into a cave to shun their murderous rage,
Muhammad, weary, passed.

Quoth Abū Bakr, “If they see, we die!”
Quoth Ibn Fuhayrah, “Away!”
The guide ‘Abd Allāh said, “The sand is deep,
Those footmarks will betray.”

Then spake Mārān, “We are not four, but Five;
‘He who protects’ is here.
Come! al-Muhaymin now will blind their eyes;
Enter, and have no fear.”

The band drew nigh; one of the Quraysh {Koreish} cried,
“Search ye out yonder cleft,
I see the print of sandalled feet which turn
Thither, upon the left!”

But when they drew unto the cavern’s mouth,
Lo! at its entering-in,
A ring-necked desert dove sate on her eggs;
The mate cooed soft within.

And right athwart the shadow of the cave
A spider’s web was spread;
The creature hung upon her net at watch;
Unbroken was each thread.

“By Tammūz’ blood, the unbelievers cried,
“Our toil and time are lost;
Where doves hatch and the spider spins her snare
No foot of man hath crossed!”

Thus did a desert bird and spider guard
The blessed Prophet then;
For all things serve their Maker and their God
Better than thankless men.

*Allāh-al-Muhaimin! shield and save
Us, for his sake within that cave.*

*Say al-'Azīz! He is the Mighty One!
Praise Him, and hear the great "Verse of the Throne."*

“ALLĀH! there is none other God but He,
The Living God, the Self-subsistent One;
Weariness cometh not to Him, nor sleep;
And whatso is belongs to Him alone
In heaven and earth; who is it intercedes
With Him, save if He please? He is aware
What is before them and what after them,
And they of all His knowledge nothing share
Save what He will vouchsafe. His throne's foundation
Sits splendid, high above the earth and sky.
Which to sustain gives Him no meditation:
Mightiest He is, Supreme in Majesty.”

*Ayatu- 'l-Koorsī! this we Muslims grave
On polished gem and painted architrave;
But thou, write its great letters on thy heart,
Lauding the Mighty One, whose work thou art.*

*The “All-Compelling!” golden is that verse,
Which doth His title—al-Jabbār—rehearse.*

SŪRAH the nine and fiftieth: “Fear ye God,
O true believers! and let every soul
Heed what it doth to-day, because to-morrow
The same thing it shall find gone forward there
To meet and make and judge it. Fear ye God,
For He knows whatsoever deeds ye do.
Be not as those who have forgotten Him,
For they are those who have forgot themselves;
They are the evil-doers: not for such,
And for the heritors of Paradise,

Shall it be equal; Paradise is kept
For those thrice blessed who have ears to hear.

Lo! had we sent “the Book” unto Our hills,
Our hills had bowed their crests in reverence,
And opened to the heart their breasts of rock
To take Heaven’s message. Fear ye Him who knows
Present, and Past, and Future: fear ye Him
Who is the Only, Holy, Faithful Lord,
Glorious and good, compelling to His will
All things, for all things He hath made and rules.

*So rule, al-Jabbār; make our wills
Bend, though more stubborn than the hills.*

*al-Mutakabbir! all the heavens declare
His majesty, Who makes them what they are.*

ĀZAR, of Ibrāhīm the father, spake
Unto his son, “Come! and thine offerings make
Before the gods whose images divine
In Nimrūd’s carved and painted temple shine.
Pay worship to the sun’s great orb of gold;
Adore the queen-moon’s silver state; behold
‘Uṭārid, al-Mushtarī, Suhayl, in their might,
Those stars of glory, those high lords of light.
These have we wrought, as fitteth gods alone,
In bronze and ivory and chiselled stone.
Obey, as did thy sires, these powers of Heaven
Which rule the world, throned in the circles seven.”

But Ibrāhīm said, “Did they not see the sun
Sink and grow darkened, when the days were done;
Did not the moon for them, too, wax and wane,
That they should pay her worship, false and vain?
Lo! all these stars have laws to rise and set—
‘Uṭārid, al-Mushtarī, Suhayl—wilt thou yet
Bid me praise gods who humbly come and go,
Lights that a Greater Light hath kindled? No!
I dare not bow the knee to one of these;
My Lord is He who (past the sky man sees)
Waxeth and waneth not, Unchanged of all,
Him only ‘God,’ Him only ‘Great,’ I call.”

*Well spak’st thou, Friend of Allāh! none
Is “great” except the Greatest One.*

*“Praise the Creator!” He who made us live,
Life everlasting unto us can give.*

BY the glorious Book We have sent! do they wonder a warner is come
Out from among themselves? do the misbelievers say
“This is a marvellous thing! what! when we are dead and dust
To live! to arise! see now, this hope is a hope far away!”

But what the grave shall consume, and what of the man it shall leave,
We know, for a roll is with Us where each soul’s order is set.
Will they call the truth a lie when it cometh to them, and dwell
Wrangling and foolish and fearful, confounding the matter? But yet

The heaven is above them to see how fair We have builded its arch,
Painted it golden and blue, finished it perfect and clear;
And the earth how We spread it forth, and planted the mountains thereon;
And made all the manifold trees and the beautiful blossoms appear.

Memorials are these to the wise, and a message to him who repents;
Moreover We drop from the clouds the blessing of water, the rain,
Whereby the cool gardens do grow, and the palms soaring up to the sky
With their date-laden branches and boughs, one over the other; and grain

To nourish the children of men. Lo! thus We have quickened dead clay
On the bosom of earth, and beneath her so, too, shall a quickening be.

.

What! deem they it wearied God to create?—that His power was spent?
They are fools, and they darken their eyes to that which He willeth them see.

We have fashioned man, and we know the thoughts of his innermost heart;
We are closer to him than his blood, more near than the vein of his throat;
At the right of ye all sits a watcher, a watcher sits at your left;
And whatso each speaketh or thinketh, those two have known it and note.

*al-Khālik! Fashioner Divine!
Finish Thy work and make us Thine!*

*al-Bāri! Moulder of each form and frame,
Pots praise the Potter, when we speak this name.*

PRAISE be to God, the Designer, Builder of earth and of Heaven!
Fashioned His Angels He hath, making them messengers still;
Two wings to some and four wings to some, and to some He hath given
Six and eight silver wings, making what marvels He will.

Verily mighty is He, and what He bestoweth of blessing
None can withhold; and none what He withholdeth can send;
Children of men! remember the mercies of Allāh towards ye,
Is there a Maker save this, is there another such Friend?

*Nowhere another one, we see,
Wondrous “Artificer!” like Thee.*

*al-Muṣawwir! the “Fashioner!” say thus;
Still lauding Him who hath compounded us.*

WHEN the Lord would fashion men,
Spake He in the Angels’ hearing,
“Lo! Our will is there shall be
On the earth a creature bearing
Rule and royalty. To-day
We will shape a man from clay.”

Spake the Angels, “Wilt Thou make
Man who must forget his Maker,
Working evil, shedding blood,
Of Thy precepts the forsaker?
But Thou knowest all, and we
Celebrate Thy majesty.”

Answered Allāh, “Yea! I know
What ye know not of this making;
Jabrā’il! Mīkā’il {Michael}! Isrāfil!
Go down to the earth, and taking
Seven clods of colors seven,
Bring them unto Me in Heaven.”

Then those holy Angels three
Spread their pinions and descended;
Seeking clods of diverse clay,
That all colors might be blended;
Yellow, tawny, dun, black, brown,
White and red, as men are known.

But the earth spake, sore afraid,
“Angels! of my substance take not;
Give me back my dust, and pray
That the dread Creator make not
Man, for he will sin, and bring
Wrath on me and suffering.”

Therefore empty-handed came
Jabrā'īl, Mīkā'īl, Isrāfil,
Saying, "Lord! Thy earth imploreth
Man may never on her dwell;
'He will sin and anger thee,
Give me back my clay!' cried she."

Spake the Lord to 'Azrā'īl,
"Go thou, who of wing art surest.
Tell my earth this shall be well;
Bring those clods, which thou procurest
From her bosom, unto Me;
Shape them as I order thee."

Thus 'tis written how the Lord
Fashioned Ādam for His glory,
Whom the Angels worshipped,
All save Iblīs; and this story
Teacheth wherefore 'Azrā'īl saith,
"Come thou!" at man's hour of death.

*Allāh! when he doth call us, take!
We are such clay as Thou did'st make.*

*al-Ghaffār, the “Forgiver,” praise thereby.
Thy Lord who is so full of clemency.*

ONCE, it is written, Ibrāhīm, “God’s Friend,” Angered his Lord; for there had ridden in Across the burning yellow desert-flats An aged man, haggard with two days’ drouth. The water-skin swung from his saddle-fork Wrinkled and dry; the dust clove to his lids, And clogged his beard; his parched tongue and black lips Moved to say, “Give me drink,” yet uttered nought; And that gaunt camel which he rode upon, Sank to the earth at entering of the camp, Too spent except to lay its neck along The sand, and moan.

To whom when they had given

The cool wet jar, asweat with diamond-drops Of sparkling life, that way-worn Arab laved The muzzle of his beast, and filled her mouth; Then westward turned with blood-shot, worshipping eyes, Pouring forth water to the setting orb: Next, would have drunk, but Ibrāhīm saw, and said, “Let not this unbeliever drink, who pours God’s gift of water forth unto the sun, Which is but creature of the living Lord.”

But while the man still clutched the precious jar, Striving to quaff, a form of grace drew nigh, Beauteous, majestic. If he came afoot, None knew, or if he glided from the sky. With gentle air he filled a gourd and gave The man to drink, and Ibrāhīm—in wrath That one should disobey him in his tents— Made to forbid; when full upon him smote Eyes of divine light, eyes of high rebuke— For this was Mīkā’il, Allāh’s messenger— “Lo! God reproveth thee, thou Friend of God! Forbiddest thou gift of the common stream

To this idolater, spent with the heat,
Who, in his utmost need, watered his beast,
And bowed the knee in reverence, ere he drank?
Allāh hath borne with him these threescore years,
Bestowed upon him corn and wine, and made
His household fruitful and his herds increase;
And find'st thou not patience to pity him
Whom God hath pitied, waiting for the end,
Since none save He wotteth what end will come,
Or who shall find the light. Thou art rebuked!
Seek pardon! for thou hast much need to seek.”

Thereat the Angel vanished, as he came;
But Ibrāhīm, with humbled countenance,
Kissed reverently the heathen’s hand, and spake—
Leading him to the chief seat in the tent—
“God pardon me, as He doth pardon thee!”

*Long-suffering Lord! ah, who should be
Forgiven, if Thou wert as we?*

*al-Qahhār call Him—“Dominant,” the King,
Who maketh, knoweth, ruleth everything.*

THE “Chapter of the Cattle:”¹ Heaven is whose,
And whose is earth? Say Allāh’s, That did choose
 On His own might to lay the law of mercy.
He, at the Resurrection, will not lose

One of His own. What falleth, night or day,
Falleth by His Almighty word alway.

 Wilt thou have any other Lord than Allāh,
Who is not fed, but feedeth all flesh? Say!

For if He visit thee with woe, none makes
The woe to cease save He; and if He takes
 Pleasure to send thee pleasure, He is Master
Over all gifts; nor doth His thought forsake

The creatures of the field, nor fowls that fly;
They are “a people” also: “These, too, I
 Have set,” the Lord saith, “in My book of record;
These shall be gathered to Me by and by.”

With Him of all things secret are the keys;
None other hath them, but He hath; and sees
 Whatever is in land, or air, or water,
Each bloom that blows, each foam-bell on the seas.

Nor is there any little hidden grain
Swelling beneath the sod, nor in the main
 Any small fish or shell, nor of the earth
Green things or dry things upon hill or plain,

But these are written in th’ unerring Book:
And what ye did by day, and when ye took
 Your slumbers, and the last sleep; then to Him
Is your return, and the account’s there!—look!

*al-Qahhār! All-embracing One!
Our trust is fixed on Thee alone.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, vi. chapter "Of the Cattle."

*Praise “the Bestower:” unto all that live
He giveth, and He loveth those who give.*

THE Imām ‘Alī, Lion of the Faith,
Have ye not heard his giving? what he had
The poor had, for he held his gold and goods
As Allāh’s almoner. ‘Alī it was
Who in the Makkah masjid {mosque} at evening prayer—
Being entreated by some needy one—
Would not break off, yet would not let the man
Ask him in vain for what he asked of God,
Favor and aid; wherefore—amid the words—
He drew his emerald, carved with Allāh’s praise,
From his third finger, giving it; and prayed
With face unturned.

If he had pieces ten,
He succored five score; if one dinar, then
Into ten dirhems he divided that,
And fed ten “people of the bench.” Mārān
(On whom be peace!) in all men’s hearing said,
“This is the Prince of Givers!”

Once it fell,
Being sore hungered in his house, he cried,
“Fātimah! thou daughter of the Prophet of God,
Find me to eat, if thou hast any food.”

And Fātimah said, “Father of Hassan! here
Not a dry date is left—not one—I swear
By Him besides Whom is none other God;
But in the corner of the tomb I laid
Six silver akchas: take them, if thou wilt,
And buy thee in the market food, and bring
Fruits for our boys, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.” Thus
‘Alī departed. On his way he spied
Two Muslims, of whom one rudely haled
The other, crying, “Pay thy debt, or come

Unto the prison where the smiter waits.”
And he who owed had nought, and wept amain,
Sighing, “Alas the day!” But ‘Alī asked,
“What is thy debt, my brother?” Then he moaned,
“Six akçe, for the lack of which the chains
Must load me.” “Nay!” spake ‘Alī, “they are here;
Take them and pay the man, and go in peace.”
So went that debtor free, but ‘Alī came
Empty in hand and belly home again
Unto his door, where Fātimah and the sons,
Hassan and Hussain, seeing him approach,
Ran joyous forth, crying, “He bringeth us
Dates now, and honey, and new camels’ milk;
Soon shall we feast.” But when they saw his cloth
Hang void, and troubled eyes, and heard him say,
“Upon my road I met a poorer man
Who, for six akçe, should have borne the chains;
To him I gave them, and I bring ye nought,”
Then the lads wept; but Fātimah smiled and spake:
“Well hast thou done, O servant of the Lord!
Weep not, ye sons of ‘Alī, though we fast;
Who feedeth Allāh’s children, feasts His own:
He, the ‘Bestower,’ will provide for us.”

But ‘Alī turned, heart-sore because the boys
Lacked meat, and Fātimah’s lovely eyes were sunk
Hollow with hunger. “I will go,” thought he,
“Unto the blessed Prophet, for, if one
Be burdened with a thousand woes, his word
Dismisses them and makes the sorrow joy.”
So bent he mournful steps thither, to tell
The Lord Muhammad of this strait, when—lo!
An Arab in mid path encountered him,
Of noble bearing, with a chieftain’s mien,
Leading a riding-camel by her string,
Black, with full teeth, the best beast ever foaled.
“Buy Wardah!—buy my desert rose,” quoth he;
“One hundred akçe make her thine, so thou
Shalt own the best in al-Hijāz, or at choice
Sell her for double money.” ‘Alī said,
“The beast is excellent! fain would I buy,

But have not in my scrip thy price.” “Go to,”
The Shaykh replied; “take her and bring thy gold,
When Allāh pleaseth, to the western gate;
I will await thee.”

‘Alī nodded; took
The nose-string, turning to the left to seek
The camel-merchants that should buy the beast;
Whom at the very entry of the Khān
Another Arab in the desert garb,
Lordly and gracious like his fellow, met,
And quick saluted, saying, “Peace with thee!
God send thee favor! wilt thou sell me now
Thy riding-camel with the great stag-eyes?
Here be three hundred akchas counted down,
Silver and gold, good money! Such an one
I sought, but found not, till I saw thee here.”
“If thou wilt buy,” quoth ‘Alī, “be it so!”
And thereupon that Bedawee counted out
Dinars and dirhems—little suns and moons
Of glittering gold and silver—in his cloth,
And took the beast; but ‘Alī, with one piece
Bought food and fruits, and, hastening home again,
Heard his lads laugh with joy to see the store
Poured forth;—white cakes and dates and amber grapes—
And smiled himself to mark Fātimah’s soft eyes
Gladden; then, having eaten, blessed the Lord,
Giver of gifts, “Bestower.”

So, once more
Made he to go unto the western gate
To pay his seller; but upon the street
The Prophet met him. Lightly smiled Mārān,
(On whom be comfort!) lightly questioned he,
Saying, “O ‘Alī! who was he did sell
Thy riding-camel, and to whom didst thou
Sell her again?” Quoth ‘Alī, “Only God
Knoweth, except thou knowest!” Spake Mārān,
“Yea, but I know! that was great Jabrā’īl,
Chief messenger of Heaven, from whom thou bought’st;
And he to whom thou sold’st was Isrāfil,

His heavenly fellow; and that beast did come
Forth from the pleasure-fields of Paradise,
And thither back is gone; for—look! my son,
Allāh hath recompensed thee fifty times
The goodly deed thou didst, giving thine all
To free the weeping debtor. Oh, He sees
And measures and bestows; but what is kept,
Beyond gifts here, for kindly hearts that love,
God only wotteth, and the Eternal Peace.”

*Bestower! grant us grace to see
Our gain is what we lose for Thee.*

*ar-Razzāq! the “Provider!” thus again
Praise Him who, having formed thee, doth sustain.*

BY the high dawn,
When the light of the sun is strong!
By the thick night,
When the darkness is deep and long!
He hath not forsook thee, nor hated!
By his mercies, I say,
The life which will come shall be better
Than the life of to-day,

In the latter days
The Lord thy “Provider” shall give;
When thou knowest His gift
Thou wilt not ask rather to live;
Look back! thou wert friendless and frameless,
He made thee from nought;
Look back! thou wert blinded and wandering,
To the light thou art brought!
Consider! shall Allāh forego thee
Since thus He hath wrought?¹

*The favor of thy Lord perpend,
And praise His mercies without end.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xciii. chapter “Of the Forenoon.”

*al-Fattāh! praise the “Opener!” and recite
The marvels of that “Journey of the Night.”¹*

OUR Lord Muḥammad lay upon the hill
Safā, whereby the holy city stands,
Asleep, wrapped in a robe of camels’ wool.
Dark was the night—that Night of grace—and still;
When all the seven spheres, by God’s commands,
Opened unto him, splendid and wonderful!

For Jabrā’īl, softly lighting, touched his side,
Saying, “Rise, thou enwrapped one! come and see
The things which be beyond. Lo! I have brought
Burāq, the horse of swiftness; mount and ride!”
Milk-white that steed was, with embroidery
Of pearls and emeralds in his long hair wrought.

Hooved like a mule he was, with a man’s face;
His eyes gleamed from his forelock, each a star
Of lucent hyacinth; the saddle-cloth
Was woven gold, which priceless work did grace!
The lightning goeth not so fast or far
As those broad pinions which he fluttered forth.

One heel he smote on Safā, and one heel
On Sīnā’ {Sinai}—where the dint is to this day.
Next at al-Quds {Jerusalem} lie neighed. Our Lord,
Descending with th’ Archangel there, did kneel
Making the midnight prayer; afterwards they
Tethered him to the Temple by a cord.

“Ascend!” spake Jabrā’īl; and behold! there fell
Out of the sky a ladder bright and great,
Whereby, with easy steps, on radiant stairs,
They mounted—past our earth and heaven and hell—
To the first sphere, where Ādam kept the gate,
Which was of vaporous gold and silvery squares

Here thronged the lesser Angels: some took charge
To fill the clouds with rain and speed them round,
And some to tend live creatures; for what's born
Hath guardians there in its own shape: a large
Beauteous white cock crowed matins, at the sound
Cocks in a thousand planets hailed the morn.

Unto the second sphere by that white slope
Ascended they, whereof Nūh {Noah} held the key;
And two-fold was the throng of Angels here;
But all so dazzling glowed its fretted cope,
Burning with beams, Muḥammad could not see
What manner of celestial folk were there.

The third sphere lay a thousand years beyond
If thou should'st journey as the sun-ray doth,
But in one *Fātiḥah* clomb they thitherward.
David and Sulaymān in union fond
Ruled at the entrance, keeping Sabaoth
Of ceaseless joy. The void was paven hard

With paven work of rubies—if there be
Jewels on earth to liken unto them
Which had such color as no goldsmith knows—
And here a vast Archangel they did see,
“Faithful of God” his name, whose diadem
Was set with peopled stars; wherefrom arose

Lauds to the glory of God, filling the blue
With lovely music, as rose-gardens fill
A land with essences; and young stars, shaking
Tresses of lovely light, gathered and grew
Under his mighty plumes, departing still
Like ships with crews and treasure, voyage-making.

So came they to the fourth sphere, where there sate
Enoch, who never tasted death; and there
Behind its portal awful ‘Azrā’īl writes;
The shadow of his brows compassionate
Made night across all worlds; our Lord felt fear,
Marking the stern eyes and the hand which smites.

For always on a scroll he sets the names
Of new-born beings, and from off the scroll
 He blotteth who must die; and holy tears
Roll down his cheeks, recording all our shames
 And sins and penalties; while of each soul
 Munkar and Nakīr reckon the arrears.

Next, at the fifth sphere's entry, they were 'ware
 Of a door built in sapphire, having graven
 Letters of flashing fire, the faith unfolding,
“THERE IS NO GOD SAVE GOD.” Aaron sate there
 Guarding the “region of the wrath of Heaven;”
 And Isrāfil behind, his trumpet holding,

His trumpet holding—which shall wake the dead
 And slay the living—all his cheek puffed out,
 Bursting to blow; for none knows Allāh's time,
Nor when the word of judgment shall be said:
 And darts, and chains of flame, lay all around,
 Terrible tortures for th' ungodly's crime.

When to the sixth sphere passed they, Mūsā sped
 Its bars of chrysoprase, and kissed our Lord,
 And spake full sweet, “Prophet of Allāh! thou
More souls of Ismael's tribes to truth hast led,
 Than I of Ishāq's {Isaak}.” Here the crystal sword
 Of Mīkā'il gave the light they journeyed through.

But at the seventh sphere that light which shone
 Hath not an earthly name, nor any voice
 Can tell its splendor, nay, nor any ear
Learn, if it listened; only he alone
 Who saw it, knows how there th' elect rejoice,
 Isa, and Ibrahim, and the souls most dear.

And he, the glorious regent of that sphere,
 Had seventy thousand heads; and every head
 As many countenances; and each face
As many mouths; and in each mouth there were
 Tongues seventy thousand, whereof each tongue said,
 Ever and ever, “Praise to Allāh! praise!”

Here, at the bound, is fixed that lotus-tree
SIDR, which none among the Angels pass;
And not great Jabrā'īl's self might farther wend:
Yet, led by presences too bright to see,
Too high to name, on paths like purple glass
Our Lord Muhammad journeyed to the end.

Alone! alone! through hosts of Cherubim
Crowding the infinite void with whispering vans,
From splendor unto splendor still he sped;
Across the “Lake of Gloom” they ferried him,
And then the “Sea of Glory:” mortal man's
Heart cannot hold the wonders witnessëd.

So to the “Region of the Veils” he came,
Which shut all times off from eternity,
The bars of being where thought cannot reach:
Ten thousand thousand are they, walls of flame
Lambent with loveliness and mystery,
Ramparts of utmost heaven, having no breach.

Then he SAW GOD! our Prophet saw THE THRONE!—
O Allāh! let these weak words be forgiven!—
Thou, the Supreme, “the Opener,” spake at last;
The Throne! the Throne! he saw;—our Lord alone!
Saw it and heard!—but the verse falls from heaven
Like a poised eagle, whom the lightnings blast.

And Jabrā'īl waiting by the tree he found;
And Burāq, tethered to the Temple porch;
He loosed the horse, and 'twixt its wings ascended.
One hoof it smote on Siyyon's {Zion} hallowed ground,
One upon Sīnā'; and the day-star's torch
Was not yet fading when the journey ended.

*al-Fāttā'h! “Opener!” we say
Thy name, and worship Thee alway.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xvii. chapter “Of the Night Journey.”

*al-'Alīm! the "All-Knower!" by this word
Praise Him Who sees th' unseen, and hears th' unheard.*

IF ye keep hidden your mind, if ye declare it aloud,
Equally God hath perceived, equally known is each thought:
If on your housetops ye sin, if in dark chambers ye shroud,
Equally God hath beheld, equally judgment is wrought.

He, without listing, doth know how many breathings ye make;
Numbereth the hairs of your heads, wotteth the beats of your blood;
Heareth the feet of the ant when she wanders by night in the brake;
Counteth the eggs of the snake and the cubs of the wolf in the wood.

Mute the al-Mu'aqqibāt¹ sit this side and that side of men,
One on the right noting good, and one on the left noting ill;
Each hath those Angels beside him who write with invisible pen
Whatso he doeth, or sayeth, or thinketh, recording it still.

Vast is the mercy of God, and when a man doeth aright,
Glad is the right-hand Angel, and setteth it quick on the roll;
Ten times he setteth it down in letters of heavenly light,
For one good deed ten deeds, and a hundred for ten on the scroll.

But when one doeth amiss the right-hand Angel doth lay
His palm on the left-hand Angel and whispers, "Forbear thy pen!
Peradventure in seven hours the man may repent him and pray;
At the end of the seventh hour, if it must be, witness it then."²

*al-'Alīm! Thou Who knowest all,
With hearts unveiled on Thee we call.*

1. These are the "Successors," or Angels of Record, who relieve each other in the duty of registering human actions, etc.

2. Cf. Qur'ān, xiii. chapter "Of thunder."

*Yaqbidu wa Yabsuṭu! heaven and hell
He closeth and uncloseth—and doth well!*¹

IN gold and silk and robes of pride
An evil-hearted monarch died;
Pampered and arrogant his soul
Quitted the grave. His eyes did roll
Hither and thither, deeming some
In that new world should surely come
To lead his spirit to a seat
Of state, for kingly merit meet.
What saw he? 'twas a hag so foul
There is no Afrit, Djin, or Ghoul
With countenance as vile, or mien
As fearful, and such terrors seen
In the fierce voice and hideous air,
Blood-dripping hands and matted hair.
“Allāh have mercy!” cried the king,
“Whence and what art thou, hateful thing?”
“Dost thou not know—who gav’st me birth?”
Replied the form; “thy sins on earth
In me embodied thus behold.
I am thy wicked work! unfold
Thine arms and clasp me, for we two
In hell must live thy sentence through.”

Then with a bitter cry, 'tis writ,
The king's soul passed unto the pit.

*al-Qābid! so He bars the gate
Against the unregenerate.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, ii. chapter “Of the Cow.”

*Yet He who shuts the gate, just wrath to wreak,
Unbars it, full of mercy, to the meek.*

THERE died upon the Mi'rāj night,
A man of Makkah, 'Amr height;
Faithful and true, patient and pure,
Had been his years; he did endure
In war five spear-wounds, and in peace
Long journeying for his tribe's increase;
And ever of his gains he gave
Unto poor brethren—kind as brave:
But these forsook, and age and toil
Drained the strong heart as flames drink oil;
Till, lone and friendless, gray and spent—
A thorn-tree's shadow for his tent,
And desert sand for dying-bed—
Amru the camel-man lay dead.

What is it that the Ḥadīth saith?
Even while the true eyes glazed in death,
And the warm heart wearied, and beat
The last drum of its long defeat,
An Angel, lighting on the sand,
Took 'Amr's spirit by the hand,
And gently spake, "Dear brother, come!
A sore road thou didst journey home;
But life's dry desert thou hast passed,
And Zamzam sparkles nigh at last."
Then with swift flight those twain did rise
Unto the gates of Paradise,
Which opened, and the Angel gave
A golden granate, saying, "Cleave
This fruit, my brother!" But its scent
So heavenly seemed, and so intent,
So rapt was 'Amr, to behold
The great fruit's rind of blushing gold
And emerald leaves—he dared not touch,
Murmuring, "O Malik! 'tis too much

That I am here, with eyes so dim,
And grace all fled." Then bade they him
Gaze in the stream which glided stilly,
'Mid water-roses and white lily,
Under those lawns and smiling skies
That make delight in Paradise;
When, lo! the presence imaged there
Was of such comeliness, no peer
Among those glorious Angels stood
To Amru, mirrored in the flood.

"I! is it I?" he cried in gladness,
"Am I so changed from toil and sadness?"
"This was thy hidden self," replied
The Angels. "So shalt thou abide
By our bright river evermore;
And in that fair fruit's secret core—
Which on the Tree of Life hath grown—
Another marvel shall be shown.
Ah, happy 'Amr! cleave!" He clove:—
Sweet miracle of bliss and love!
Forth from the pomegranate there grew,
As from its bud a rose breaks through,
A lovely, stately, lustrous maid,
Whose black orbs long silk lashes shade,
Whose beauty was so rich to see
No verse can tell it worthily;
Nor is there found in any place
One like her for the perfect grace
Of soft arms wreathed and ripe lips moving
In accents musical and loving;
For thus she spake: "Peace be to thee,
My 'Amr!" Then, with quick cry, he:
"Who art thou, blessed one? what name
Wearest thou? teach my tongue to frame
This worship of my heart." Said she,
"Thy good deeds gave me being: see,
If in my beauty thou hast pleasure,
How the Most High doth truly treasure
Joy for his servants. Murdiyah I—
She that doth love and satisfy—

And I am made by Allāh's hand
Of ambergris and musk, to stand
Beside thee, soothing thee, and tending
In comfort and in peace unending."

So hand in hand, 'tis writ, they went
To those bright bowers of high content.

*al-Bāsiṭ! thus He opens wide
His mercies to the justified.*

*al-Khāfid! the “Abaser!” praise hereby
Him Who doth mock at earthly majesty.*

HEARD ye of Nimrūd? Cities fell before him;
 Sin’ar, from Akkad to the Indian Sea,
His garden was; as God, men did adore him;
 Queens were his slaves, and kings his vassalry.

Eminent on his car of carven brass,
 Through foeman’s blood nave-deep he drove his wheel;
And not a lion in the river-grass
 Could keep its shaggy fell from Nimrūd’s steel.

But he scorned Allāh, schemed a tower to invade Him;
 Dreamed to scale Heaven, and measure might with God;
Heaped high the foolish clay wherefrom We made him,
 And built thereon his seven-fold house of the clod.

Therefore, the least Our messengers among,
 We sent;—a gray gnat dancing in the reeds:
Into his ear she crept, buzzing,—and stung.
 So perished mighty Nimrūd and his deeds.

*O Thou Abaser of all pride!
Mighty Thou art, and none beside.*

*ar-Rāfi! the “Exalter!” laud Him so
Who loves the humble and lifts up the low.*

WHOM hath He chosen for His priests and preachers,
Lords who were eminent, or men of might?
Nay, but consider how He seeks His teachers,
Hidden, like rubies unaware of light.

Ur of the Chaldees! what chance to discover
Th’ elect of Heaven in Āzar’s leathern tent?
But Allāh saw his child, and friend, and lover,
And Ibrāhīm was born, and sealed, and sent.

The babe committed to th’ Miṣrayim water!
Knew any that the tide of Nīlus laved
The hope of Israel there? yet Pharaoh’s daughter
Found the frail ark, and so was Mūsā saved.

Low lies the ’Ārammī town behind the mountain
Where Miryām, meek and spotless, knelt that morn,
And saw the splendid Angel by the fountain,
And heard his voice, “Lord ‘Isā {Yēšū‘ - Jesus} shall be born!”

Nay, and Muḥammad (blessed may he be!),
‘Abd Allāh’s and Āminah’s holy son,
Whom black Halīmah nursed, the Bedawee,
Where lived a lonelier or a humbler one?

Think how *he* led the camels of Khadījah,
Poor, but illumined by the light of Heaven;
Mightier than Nūḥ {Noah}, or Idrīs {Enoch}, or Ilyās {Elijah},
Our holy Prophet to ‘Arabiyyah {Arabia} given.

Man knew him not, wrapped in his cloth, and weeping
Lonely on Hirā’, all that wondrous night;
But Allāh for his own our Lord was keeping:—
“Rise, thou enwrapped one!” Jabrā’īl spake, “and write.”

*Save God there is none high at all,
Nor any low whom He doth call.*

*al-Mu'izz! by this title celebrate
The "Honorer" Whose favor maketh great.*

SAY “God,” say “Lord of all!
Kingdoms and kings Thou makest and unmakest,
This one Thou takest, that one Thou forsakest;
Alike are great and small;
Into Thy hand they fall.”

“In Thy dread hand they rest;
Their nights and days, their waking and their sleeping,
Their birth, and life, and death lie in Thy keeping;
'Be thus' to each Thou say'st,
And thus to be is best,

“Though it seem good or ill.
Islām!—to Thee our souls we do resign,
Turning our faces to the blessed shrine;
Seeking no honor still
Save from Thy will.”¹

*al-Mu'izz! only this we pray
To learn Thy will and to obey.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, iii. chapter “Of Imran's Family.”

*O, al-Mudhill! what if it be Thy will,
Having made man, to lead him into ill?*

SAITH the Perspicuous Book: “All things which be are of God; Neither, except by His word, falleth a leaf to the ground; If He will open He openeth, and whom He hath blinded He blindeth, Leading, misleading; to none liable, blamable, bound.”¹

Saith the Perspicuous Book: “Tied on the neck of a man Hangeth the scroll of his fate, not a line to be gainsaid or grudged; When the trumpet of Isrāfil thunders, the Angels will show it and say, Read there what thine own deeds have written; thyself by thyself shall be judged.”²

Wilt thou be wiser than God Who knoweth beginning and end? Wilt thou be juster than He whose balance is turned by a sigh? He sayeth, “It shall not be equal for the doers of right and of wrong.” “It shall not be equal,” He sayeth, “for them that accept and deny.”³

*al-Mudhill! lead us not astray!
Teach us to find the perfect way.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

2. Cf. Qur’ān, xvii. chapter “Of the Night Journey.”

3. Cf. Qur’ān, *eōdem locō* {In the same place}.

*as-Samī‘! O Thou Hearer! none can be
So far, his crying doth not come to Thee.*

WRITES in his *Masnavī*, *Jalāl al-Dīn*:

There came a man of al-Yaman, poor and old,
To Makkah, making pilgrimage; untaught,
A shepherd of the hills. Humble he trod
The six mīqāt, the stages of the Hadj;
Humbly indued the ihrām, garb of faith
Which hath no seam; made due ablutions, kissed
The black stone; then three times with hastening feet
Circled the Ka‘bah, and four times paced
With slackened gate the tawāf, as is due,
(For such observances the Mullā taught).
But, when he bowed before the Holy Place,
Thus brake his soul from him, knowing no prayer,
Full of God’s love, though ignorant of God:
“O Master! O my Shaykh! where tarriest Thou?
Show me Thy face that I may worship Thee,
May toil Thy servant, which I am in heart:
Ah! let me sew Thy shoes, anoint Thine hair,
Wash Thy soiled robes, and serve Thee daily up
My she-goats’ freshest milk—I love thee so!
Where hidest Thou, that I may kiss Thine hand,
Chafe Thy dear feet, and ere Thou takest rest—
In the gold sky, beside Thy sun, belike,
Among the soft-spread fleeces of Thy clouds—
Sweep out Thy chamber, O my joy, my King!”

Which hearing, they who kept the shrine, incensed,
Had haled him to the gateway, crying, “Dog!
What blasphemy is this thou utterest,
Saying such things of Him That hath no needs
Of nourishment, nor clothing, nor repose,
Nor hands, nor feet, nor any form or frame;
That thou, base keeper of the silly herd,
Shouldst proffer service to the All-Powerful?
Meet were it that we stoned thee dead with stones,

Who art accursed and injurious.
Beyond! these holy walls are not for thee.”

So, sore abashed, that shepherd made to go,
Silent and weeping; but our Prophet marked,
And with mild eyes smiled on the man; then spake
To those that drove him forth: “Ye, when ye pray
Outside this holy place, in distant lands,
Whither turn ye your faces?” Each one said,
“Unto the Ka‘bah.” “And when ye pray,
Within the blessed precincts, pilgrims here,
Which way lies Makkah?” “All is sacred here,”
They answered, “and it matters nought which way.”
“Lo! now ye reason well,” replied our Lord;
“Inside the Ka‘bah it matters nought
Whither men turn; and in the secret place
Of perfect love for God, words are as breath
And will is all. This simple shepherd’s prayer
Came unto Allāh’s ears clearer than yours,
Nathless his ignorance, because his heart—
Not tongue, not understanding—uttered it.
Make room for God’s poor lover nighest me;
Good fellowship hath any man with him
To whom Heaven’s ear as quick inclines itself
As doth a mother’s when her babe lisps love.”

Then were they sore ashamed in that hour.

*Hearer of hearts! as-Samī‘! so
Our love inspire, and Thine bestow.*

*al-Baṣīr! O Thou Seer! great and small
Live in Thy vision, which embraceth all.*

WERE it one wasted seed of water-grass,
Blown by the wind, or buried in the sand,
He seeth and ordaineth if it live;
Were it a wild bee questing honey-buds,
He seeth if she find, and how she comes
On busy winglets to her hollow tree.
The seeing of His eyes should not be told,
Though all the reeds in all the earth were cut
To writing-sticks, and all the seven seas
Were seven times multiplied, flowing with ink,
And seventy angels wrote. He beholds all
Which was, or is, or will be: yea, with Him
Is present vision of five secret things:
The day of Judgment; and the times of rain;
The child hid in the womb—is quickenring,
And whether male or female;—what will fall;
To-morrow (as ye know what did befall
Yesterday); and where every man shall die.¹

“Where every man shall die.” al-Bayḍāwī
Presenteth how there sate with Sulaymān
A prince of India, and there passed them by
‘Azrā’īl, Angel of Death, on shadowy plumes;
With great eyes gazing earnestly, as one
Who wonders, gazing. And, because the prince
Sate with the king, he saw what the king saw,
The Djins and Angels, and saw ‘Azrā’īl
Fixing on him those awful searching eyes.
“What name, I pray thee, wears yon messenger?”
So asked he of the king; and Sulaymān
Made answer, “It is ‘Azrā’īl, who calls
The souls of men.” “He seemed,” whispered the prince,
“To have an errand unto me;—bid now
That one among thy demon ministers
Waft me, upon the swiftest wing that beats,

To India, for I fear him.” Sulaymān
Issued command, and a swift Djin sprang forth
Bearing the prince aloft, so that he came
To Coromandel, ere the fruit—which fell
Out of the fig—had touched the marble floor.

Thereupon ‘Azrā’īl said to Sulaymān,
“I looked thus earnestly upon the man
In wonder, for my Lord spake, ‘Take his soul
In India;’ yet behold he talked with thee
Here in Yahūdā {Jūdaea}! Now, see! he hath gone
There where it was commanded he should die.”

Then followed ‘Azrā’īl. In that hour the prince
Died of a hurt, sitting in India.

*With Thee, Lord, be the time and place,
So that we die in Thy dear grace.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xxxi. chapter “Of Lokman.”

*al-Hakam! think upon the Day of Doom,
And fear “the Judge” before Whom all must come.*

WHEN the sun is withered up,
And the stars from Heaven roll;
When the mountains quake,
And ye let stray your she-camels, gone ten months in foal;
When wild beasts flock
With the people and the cattle
In terror, in amazement,
And the seas boil and rattle;
And the dead souls
For their bodies seek;
And the child vilely slain
Is bid to speak,
Being asked, “Who killed thee, little maid?
Tell us his name!”
While the books are unsealed,
And crimson flame
Flayeth the skin of the skies,
And Hell breaks ablaze;
And Paradise
Opens her beautiful gates to the gaze;—
Then shall each soul
Know the issues of the whole,
And the balance of its scroll.¹
Shall We swear by the stars
Which fade away?
By the Night drowned in darkness,
By the dead Day?
We swear not! a true thing is this;
It standeth sure,
He saw it and he heard, and Our word
Will endure!

.

When the sky cleaves asunder,
And the stars
Are scattered; and in thunder
All the bars
Of the seas burst, and all the graves are emptied
Like chests upturned,
Each soul shall see her doings, done and undone,
And what is earned.
The smiting, the smiting
Of that Day!
The horror, the splendor,
Who shall say?²
The Day when none shall answer for his brother;
The Day which is with God, and with none other.

*al-Ḥakam! Judge! Save by Thy power,
Who might abide that awful hour?*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxxi. chapter "Of the Folding Up."

2. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."

*al-Hādīl! O “Just Lord!” we magnify
Thy righteous Law, which shall the whole world try.*

GOD will roll up, when this world's end approacheth,
The broad blue spangled hangings of the sky,
Even as as-Sigill¹ rolleth up his record,
And seals and binds it when a man doth die.

Then the false worshippers, and what they follow,
Will to the pit, like “stones of hell,” descend;
But true believers shall hear Angels saying,
“This is your day; be joyous without end.”²

In that hour dust shall lie on many faces,
And may faces shall be glad and bright;³
Ye who believe, trust and be patient always,
Until God judges, for He judges right.⁴

*Give us to pass before Thy throne
Among the number of Thine own!*

1. A name of the Angel of Registration.

2. Cf. Qur'ān, xxi. chapter “Of the Prophets.”

3. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxx. chapter “Of the Frown.”

4. Cf. Qur'ān, x. chapter “Of Jonas.”

*Dread is His wrath, but boundless is His grace,
al-Laṭīf! Lord! show us Thy “favoring” face!*

MOST quick to pardon sins is He:
Who unto God draws near
One forward step, God taketh three
To meet, and quit his fear.

If ye will have of this world’s show,
God grants, while Angels weep;
If ye for Paradise will sow,
Right noble crops ye reap.¹

*Ah, Gracious One, we toil to reap:
The soil is hard, the way is steep!*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xlii. chapter “Of Counsel.”

*al-Khabīr! Thou Who art “aware” of all,
By this name also for Thy grace we call.*

ONE morning in al-Madīnah walked our Lord
Among the tombs: glad was the dawn, and broad
On headstones and on footstones sunshine lay;
Earth seemed so fair, 'twas hard to be away.
“O people of the graves!” Muḥammad said,
“Peace be with you! Your caravan of dead
Hath passed the defile, and we living ones
Forget what men ye were, of whom the sons,
And what your merchandise and where ye went;
But Allāh knows these things! Be ye content
Since Allāh is ‘aware.’ Ah! God forgive
Those that are dead, and us who briefly live.”

*Yea! pardon, Lord, since Thou dost know
To-morrow, now, and long ago.*

al-Halīm! “*Clement*” is our Lord above;
Magnify Allāh by this name of love.

YE know the ant that creeps upon the fig,
 The *dharrāh*, made so small,
 Until she moveth in the purple seeds
 She is not seen at all.

If, on the judgment-day, holding the scales—
 When all the trial’s done—
 The Angel of the Balance crieth, “Lord!
 The good deeds of this one

Outweigh his evil deeds, justly assessed,
 By half one *dharrāh*’s weight;”
 “Allāh will say, “Multiply good to him,
 And open Heaven’s gate!”

Not if thy work be worth a date-stone’s skin
 Shall it be overpast;
 Thus it is written in the Sacred Book,¹
 Thus will it be at last.

*Faithful and just, al-Halīm! we
 Take refuge in Thy clemency.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iv. chapter “Of Women.

*al-‘Azīm! “Strong and Sovereign” God, Thy hand
Is over all Thy works, holding command.*

MAKER of all ye truly call the Strong and Sovereign One,
Yet have ye read that verse which saith whereto His work was done?
Open “the Book,” and, heedful, look what weighty words are given
(The Chapter of al-Āḥqāf) concerning Earth and Heaven.

“The Heavens and earth,” al-Āḥqāf saith, “and whatso is between,
Think ye that We made these to be, and then—not to have been?
Think ye “We fashioned them in jest, without their times, and plan,
And purpose? Nay! accurst are they who judge of God by man.”¹

*O Higher, Wiser, than we know,
Let not Thy creatures judge Thee so.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xlvi. chapter “Of al-Āḥqāf.”

*He is the “Pardoner” and his Scripture hath—
 “Paradise is for them that check their wrath,
 And pardon sins; so Allāh doth with souls;
 He loveth best him who himself controls.”¹*

KNOW ye of Hassan’s slave? Hassan the son
 Of ‘Alī. In the camp at Ra’s al-Hadd
 He made a banquet unto Shaykhs and lords,
 Rich dressed and joyous; and a slave bore round,
 Smoking with new-cooked pillow, Bādhān’s dish
 Carved from rock-crystal, with the feet in gold,
 And garnets round the rim; but the boy slipped
 Against the tent-rope, and the precious dish
 Broke into shards of beauty on the board,
 Scalding the son of ‘Alī. One guest cried,
 “Dog! wert thou mine, for this thing thou shouldst howl!”
 Another, “Wretch! thou meritest to die.”
 And yet another, “Hassan! give me leave
 To smite away this swine’s head with my sword!”
 Even Ḥasan’s self was moved; but the boy fell
 Face to the earth and cried, “My lord! ’tis writ,
‘Paradise is for them that check their wrath.’”
 “ ’Tis writ so,” Ḥasan said; “I am not wroth.”
 “My lord!” the boy sobbed on, “also ’tis writ,
Pardon the trespasser.” Ḥasan replied,
 “ ’Tis written—I remember—I forgive.”
 “Now is the blessing of the Most High God
 On thee, dear master!” cried the happy slave,
 “For He—’tis writ—*loves the beneficent.*”
 “Yea! I remember, and I thank thee, slave,”
 Quoth Ḥasan;—“better is one noble verse
 Fetched from ‘the Book,’ than gold and crystal brought
 From al-Yaman’s hills. Lords! he hath marred the dish,
 But mended fault with wisdom. See, my slave!
 I give thee freedom, and this purse to buy
 The robe and turban of a Muslim freed.”

*al-Ghafūr! pardon us, as we
Forgive a brother's injury.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

*“Grateful”—ash-Shakūr—is He; praise Him so
Who thanketh men for that He did bestow.*

So much hast thou of thy hoard
As thou gavest to thy Lord;
Only this will bring thee in
Usance rich and free from sin:
Send thy silver on before,
Lending to His sick and poor.
Every dirham dropped in alms
Touches Allāh’s open palms,
Ere it fall into the hands
Of thy brother. Allāh stands
Begging of thee, when thy brother
Asketh help. Ah! if another
Proffered thee, for meat and drink,
Food upon al-Kawthar’s brink,¹
Shining Kawthar which doth flow
Sweet as honey, cool as snow,
White as milk, and smooth as cream,
Underneath its banks, which gleam—
Green and golden chrysolite,
In the Gardens of delight,
Whence who drinks never again
Tasteth sorrow, age, or pain—
Who would not make merchandise,
Buying bliss in Paradise,
Laying up his treasure where
Stores are safe and profits clear?
But ye lend at lower cost,
Whilst ash-Shakūr offers most,
Good returning seven times seven,
Paying gifts of earth with Heaven.

*Allāh, Who dost reward so well,
What maketh man in sin to dwell?*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, cviii.

*al-‘Halī! O believers, magnify
By this great name, Allāh, our Lord “Most High.”*

HE willed, and Heaven’s blue arch vaulted the air;
“Be!” said He—Earth!¹ and the round earth was made;
See! at the hour of late and early prayer
The very shadows worship Him, low laid.

*Most High! the lengthening shadows teach
Morning and evening prayer to each.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xvi. chapter “Of the Bee.”

*Praise Him, al-Kabīr, seated on “the Throne,”
The “Very Great,” the High-exalted One.*

SEVEN Heavens Allāh made:
First “Paradise,” the *Jannat al-Firdaws*;
The next, *al-Khuld*, “Gate of Eternity;”
The third, *Dār al-Salām*, the “Peaceful House;”
The fourth, *Dār al-Qarār*, “Felicity;”
The fifth was *‘Adn*, “Home of Golden Light;”
The sixth, *al-Na ‘īm*, “Garden of Delight;”
The seventh, *al-Illiyyūn*, “Footstool of the Throne;”
And, each and every one,
Sphere above sphere, and treasure over treasure,
The great decree of God made for reward and pleasure.

Saith the Perspicuous Book:¹
“Look up to Heaven! look!
Dost thou see flaw or fault
In that vast vault,
Spangled with silvery lamps of night,
Or gilded with glad light
Of sunrise, or of sunset, or warm noon?
Rounded He well the moon?
Kindled He wisely the red Lord of Day?
Look twice! look thrice, and say!”

Thy weak gaze fails;
Eyesight is drowned in yon abyss of blue;
Ye see the glory, but ye see not through:
God’s greatness veils
Its greatness by its greatness—all that wonder
Lieth the lowest of those Heavens under,
Beyond which Angels view
Allāh, and Allāh’s mighty works, asunder;
The thronged clouds whisper of it when they thunder.

*Allāh Kabīr! in silence we
Meditate on Thy majesty.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lxvii. chapter "Of the Kingdom."

*al-Hafîz! O “Preserver!” succor us
Who humbly trustful, cry unto Thee thus.*

BY the Sky and the Night star!
By al-Târiq the white star!
 Shining clear—
When darkness covers man and beast—
 To proclaim dawn near,
And the gold sun hastening from the east,
We have set a guard upon you, every one;
 Be ye not afraid!
Of seed from loins, and milk from bosom-bone,
 Ye were made:
We are able to remake you, when ye die,
 For cold death
Cometh forth from Us, as warm life cometh
 And gift of breath.
Do the darkness and the terror plot against you?
 We also plan;
They that love you are stronger than your haters
 Trust God, O man!¹

*“Ya Hafîz!” on your doors ye grave;
In your hearts, too, these scriptures have!*

1. Cf. Qur’ân, lxxxvi. chapter “Of the Night Star.”

*Praise al-Muqīt, the great “Maintainer!” He
Made us, and makes our sustenance to be.*

THE chapter of the “Inevitable:”¹ We gave
The life ye live; why doubt ye We can save
What once hath been from wasting—if We will—
When, like dry corn, man lieth in his grave?

Did ye cause seed to grow, or was it We,—
Wherfrom spring all the many lives that be?
Who stirred the pulse which couples man and maid,
And in the fruit hid that which forms the tree?

Ye go afield to scatter grain, and then
Sleep, while We change it into bread for men;
Have ye bethought why seed should shoot, not sand,
Granite, or gravel? Why the gentle rain

Falleth so clean and sweet from out Our sky,
Which might be salt and black and bitter? Why
The soft clouds gather it from off the seas
To spread it o'er the pastures by and by?

The flame ye strike rubbing Afār and Markh,²
Have ye considered that strange yellow spark?
Did ye conceive such marvel, or did We
Grant it, to warm and cheer men in the dark?

Not now, but when the soul comes to the neck.
The meaning of those mercies each shall reck.
Then are We nearest, though ye see it not;
Can ye that summoned spirit order back?

*Nay, al-Muqīt! in life and death
Thine are we: Truth Thy Scripture saith.*

1. Qur'ān, lvi.

2. The woods used by the ancient Arabs to kindle fire.

*Laud Him as “Reckoner,” casting up th’ account,
And making little merits largely mount.*

GIVE more than thou takest:
 If one shall salute thee,
 Saying, “Peace be upon thee,”
 The salute which thou makest,
 Speak it friendlier still,
 As beseemeth goodwill;
 Saying, “Peace, too, and love
 From Allāh above
 Be with thee:”—for heard
 Is each brotherly word;
 And it shall not be lost
 That thou gavest him most.¹

*Ya Ḥasīb! praise to Thee; for all
Our good deeds needs must be so small.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iv. chapter “Of Women.”

*al-Jamil! “the Benign;” ah, name most dear,
Which bids us low and worship without fear.*

Too much ye tremble, too much fear to feel
That yearning love which Allāh’s laws reveal;
Too oft forget—your troubled journey through—
He who is Power, is Grace and Beauty too,
And Clemency, and Pity, and Pure Rest,
The Highest and the Uttermost and Best;
Sweeter than honey, and more dear to see
Than any loveliness on land or sea
By bard or lover praised, or famed in story;
For these were shadows of His perfect glory;
Which is not told, because, who sees God near
Loseth the speech to speak, in loving fear,
So joyous is he, so astonishēd.

Hath there come to ye what the Dervish said
At Qaysariyyah, in the marble shrine,
Who woke from vision of the love divine?
“I have seen Allāh!” quoth he—all a-glow
With splendor of the dream which filled him so—
“Yea! I have paced the Garden of Delight,
And heard and known!”

“Impart to us thy light,”
His fellows cried.

He paused, and smiled, and spake:
“Fain would I say it, brothers, for your sake
For I have wandered in a sphere so bright,
Have heard such things, and witnessed such a sight,
That now I know whither all nature turns,
And what the love celestial is which burns,
At the great heart of all the world, ensuring
That griefs shall pass and joy be all enduring.
Yet ask me not! I am as one who came
Where, among roses, one bush, all aflame

By fragrant crimson blossoms, charged the air
With loveliness and perfume past compare.
Then had I thought to load my skirt with roses,
That ye might judge what wealth that land discloses;
And filled my robe, plucking the peerless blooms;
But ah! the scent so rich, so heavenly, comes;
So were my senses melted into bliss
With the intoxicating breath of this;
I let the border of my mantle fall—
“The roses slipped! I bring ye none at all.”

*Brothers! with other eyes must we
Behold the Roses on that Tree.*

*Allāh-al-Karīm! Bountiful Lord! we bless
By this good name Thy loving kindnesses.*

O MAN! what hath beguiled,
That thou shouldst stray
From the plain easy way
Of Allāh's service, being Allāh's child?
When thou wert not,
And when thou wast a clot,
He did foresee thee, and did fashion thee
From heel to nape,
Giving thee this fair shape,
Composing thee in wondrous symmetry—
More than thy mother—in the form thou wearest;
Nearer to thee than what on earth is nearest.
Kinder than kin is He—
Wilt thou forgetful be?¹

*Ya Karīm! since Thou lovest thus,
Quicken, ah, quicken love in us.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."

*Allāh-ar-Raqīb! praise ye “the Watchful One,”
Who noteth what men do and leave undone.*

THE book of the wicked is in Sijjīn,
A close-writ book:
A book to be unfolded on the Awful Day,
The day whereto men would not look.

What Sijjīn is
Who shall make thee know?
The Black Gaol. Under *Jahannam*,
Under *Laẓā*, the “red glow,”
Under *al-Ḥuṭamah*, “the fires which split;”
Beneath *Sa’ir*, the “Yellow Hell,”
And scorching Saqar, lieth it,
And *al-Jahīm*, where devils dwell:
Lower from light and bliss
Than *al-Hāwiyah*, the abyss:”
Sijjīn is this.

But the books of the righteous are in ‘Illiyyūn,
And what shall make thee see
The glory of that region, nigh to God,
Where those records be?
Joy shall make their portion: they shall lie
With the light of delight upon their faces,
On soft seats reclining
In peaceful places;
Drinking wine, pure wine, sealed wine,
Whose seal is musk and rose;
Allayed by the crystal waves that shine
In Tasmīn, which flows
From the golden throne of God:—at its brink
Angels drink.¹

*O “Watcher!” grant our names may be
In that Book lying near to Thee.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, lxxxiii. chapter “Of Short Weight.”

*Allāh-al-Mujīb, Who biddest men to pray,
And hearest prayer; thus praise we Thee alway.*

OUR Lord the Prophet (peace to him!) doth write—
Sūrah the seventeenth, intituled “Night:”—
“Pray at the noon, pray at the sinking sun,
In night-time pray; but most when night is done,
For daybreak’s prayer is surely borne on high
By Angels changing guard within the sky.”
And in another verse, “Dawn’s prayer is more
Than the wide world with all its treasured store.”

Therefore the Faithful, when the growing light.
Gives to discern a black hair from a white.
Haste to the masjid, and, bending Makkah-way,
Recite *al-Fātihah* while ’tis scarce yet day:
Praise be to Allāh, Lord of all that live.
Merciful King and Judge, to Thee we give
Worship and honor! Succor us and guide
Where those have walked who rest Thy Throne beside;
The way of peace, the way of truthful speech,
The way of righteousness. So we beseech.”
He who saith this, before the east is red,
A hundred prayers of Adhān hath he said.

Hear now this story of it—told, I ween,
For your soul’s comfort by Jelalu-’d-deen
In the great pages of the Mathnawī;
For therein, plain and certain, shall ye see
How precious is the prayer at break of day
In Allāh’s ears, and in His sight alway
How sweet are reverence and gentleness
Done to His creatures:—“ ‘Alī’ (whom I bless!),
The son of Abū Tālib—he, surnamed
“Lion of God,” in many battles famed,
The cousin of our Lord the Prophet (grace
Be his!), uprose betimes one morn, to pace,
As he was wont, unto the masjid, wherein

Our Lord (bliss live with him!) watched to begin
al-Fātiḥah. Darkling was the sky, and strait
The lane between the city and masjid-gate,
By rough stones broken and deep pools of rain;
And therethrough toilfully, with steps of pain,
Leaning upon his staff an old Yəhūdī went
To singogah, on pious errand bent;
For those be “People of the Book,” and some
Are chosen of Allāh’s will who have not come
Unto full light of knowledge; therefore, he,
‘Alī, the Caliph of proud days to be—
Knowing this good old man, and why he stirred
Thus early, ere the morning mills were heard—
Out of his nobleness and grace of soul
Would not thrust past, though the Yəhūdī blocked the whole
Breadth of the lane, slow hobbling. So they went,
That ancient first; and, in soft discontent,
After him ‘Alī, noting how the sun
Flared near, and fearing prayer might be begun;
Yet no command upraising, no harsh cry
To stand aside, because the dignity
Of silver hairs is much, and morning praise
Was precious to the Yəhūdī, too. Thus their ways
Wended the pair; great ‘Alī, sad and slow,
Following the graybeard, while the east, a-glow,
Blazed with bright spears of gold athwart the blue,
And the Muezzin’s call came, “*Lā ilāha
illā Allāh*” {There is no god but God! }

In the masjid, our Lord
(On whom be peace) stood by the mimbar-board,
In act to bow and *al-Fātiḥah* forth to say.
But, while his lips moved, some strong hand did lay
Over his mouth a palm invisible,
So that no voice on the assembly fell.
Yā Rabb al-‘Ālamīn {O Lord of all the worlds}
—thrice he tried
To read, and thrice the sound of reading died,
Stayed by this unseen touch. Thereat amazed,
Our Lord Muhammad turned, arose, and gazed,
And saw—alone of all within the shrine—

A splendid Presence, with large eyes divine
Beaming, and golden pinions folded down,
Their speed still tokened by the fluttered gown:
Jabrā'il he knew, the Spirit who doth stand
Chief of the Sons of Heav'n, at God's right hand;
"Jabrā'il! why stay'st thou me?" the Prophet said,
"Since at this hour *the al-Fātiḥah* should be read."
But the bright Presence, smiling, pointed where
'Alī towards the outer gate drew near,
Upon the threshold shaking off his shoes,
And giving "alms of entry," as men use.
"Yea!" spake th' Archangel, "sacred is the sound
Of morning praise, and worth the world's great round,
Though earth were pearl and silver; therefore I
Stayed thee, Muḥammad, in the act to cry.
Lest 'Alī, tarrying in the lane, should miss,
For his good deed, its blessing and its bliss."
Thereat the Archangel vanished, and our Lord
Read *al-Fātiḥah* forth beneath the mimbar-board.

*Us, too, Mujīb! in "hearing keep;
Better is prayer than food or sleep!*

*“All-Comprehending One” al-Wasi‘h! we
By this name also praise and honor Thee.*

TURN, wheresoe’er ye be, to Makkah’s stone,
For this is holy, and your Lord doth hear;
Thitherwards turn!—so hath all Islām one
Heart to its thought and harbor of its prayer.

But Allāh’s house eastwards and westwards lies,
Northwards and southwards. He is everywhere:
Whithersoever way ye bend your eyes,
Face to face are ye with al-Wāsi‘ there.

It is not righteousness to kneel aright
Fronting the *Qiblah*; but to rightly hold
Of God, and of His judgment, and the bright
Bands of His Angels: and what truth is told

In the sure Qur’ān by God’s holy Prophet;
To succor orphans, strangers, suppliants, kin;
Your gold and worldly treasure—to give of it
Ransom for captives, alms which mercy win:

To keep your covenants when ye covenant;
Your woes and sufferings patiently to bear,
Being the will of God:—this is to front
Straight for the *Qiblah*: this is faith and fear.¹

*Abounding Lord! in every place
Is built the Makkah of Thy grace.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, ii. chapter “Of the Cow.”

*al-Hakam! Judge of all the judges! show
Mercy to us and make us justice know.*

ONLY one Judge is just, for only One
Knoweth the hearts of men; and hearts alone
Are guilty or are guiltless. That which lied
Was not the tongue—he is a red dog tied.

And that which slew was not the hand ye saw
Grasping the knife—she is a slave whose law
The master gives, seated within the tent;
The hand was handle to the instrument;

The dark heart murdered. O believers! leave
Judgment to Heav'n—except ye do receive
Office and order to accomplish this;
Then honorable, and terrible, it is.

The Prophet said:¹ “At the great day of doom
Such fear on the most upright judge shall come
That he shall moan, ‘Ah! would to God that I
Had stood for trial, and not sate to try!' ”

He said: “The Angels of the Scales will bring
Just and unjust who judged before Heav'n's King,
Grasping them by the neck; and, if it be,
One hath adjudged his fellows wickedly,

“He shall be hurled to hell so vast a height
'Tis forty years' fierce journey ere he light;
But if one righteously hath borne the rod,
The Angels kiss those lips which spake for God.”

*Lord! make us just, that we may be
A little justified with Thee.*

1. Cf. the *Mishkāt-al-Māsābīh*.

*“The Loving”—al-Wadūd! ah, title dear,
Whereby Thy children praise Thee, free of fear.*

SWEET seem your wedded days; and dear and tender
Your children's talk; brave 'tis to hear the tramp
Of pastured horses; and to see the splendor
Of gold and silver plunder; and to camp

With goats and camels by the bubbling fountain;
And to drink fragrance from the desert wind,
And to sit silent on the mighty mountain;
And all the joys which make life bright and kind.

But ye have heard of streams more brightly flowing
Than those whereby ye wander; of a life
Glorious and glad and pure beyond earth's knowing;
Love without loss, and wealth without the strife.

Lo! we have told you of the golden Garden
Kept for the Faithful, where the soil is still
Wheat-flour and musk and camphire, and fruits harden
To what delicious savor each man will

Upon the Tooba tree which bends its cluster
To him that doth desire, bearing all meat;
And of the sparkling fountains which out-lustre
Diamonds and emeralds, running clear and sweet,

Tasmīn and Salsabīl, whose lucent waters
Are rich, delicious, undistracting wine;
And of the Hūr, pleasure's perfect daughters,
Virgins of Paradise, whose black eyes shine

Soul-deep with love and languor, having tresses
Night-dark, with scents of the gold-blooming date
And scarlet roses; lavishing caresses
That satisfy, but never satiate;

Whose looks refrain from any save their lover,
Whose peerless limbs and bosoms' ivory swell
Are like the ostrich egg which feathers cover
From stain and dust, so white and rounded well:

Dwelling in marvellous pavilions, builded
Of hollow pearls, wherethrough a great light shines—
Cooled by soft breezes and by glad suns gilded—
On the green pillows where the Blest reclines.

A rich reward it shall be, a full payment
For life's brief trials and sad virtue's stress,
When friends with friends, clad all in festal raiment,
Share in deep Heaven the Angels' happiness;

Nay, and full payment, though ye give those pleasures
Which make life dear, to fight and die for faith,
Rendering to God your wives and flocks and treasures,
That He may pay you tenfold after death.

For, if the bliss of Paradise, transcending
Delights of earth, should win ye to be bold,
Yet know, this glory hath its crown and ending
In Allāh's grace, which is the Joy untold,

The Utmost Bliss. Beyond the Happy River
The justified shall see God's face in Heaven,
Live in His sweet goodwill,¹ and taste for ever
al-Wadūd's² love, unto His children given.

*Yea! for high Heaven's felicity
Is but the shadow, Lord, of Thee.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, ix. chapter "Of Repentance."

2. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxxv. chapter "Of Zodiacal Signs."

*al-Majīd! Glorious Lord upon the Throne¹
With this great name we praise Thee, Sovereign One!*

BY the Heavens, walled with silver signs and towers!

By the Promised Day!

By the Witness and the Witnessed; and the Way
Of righteousness!—this glorious Book of ours

Lieth treasured up in Heaven,

As 'twas given

On the mighty “Night of Powers,”

And its easy bond is this,

The which to keep is bliss:

“*None save Glorious Allāh serve;*

Never from His precepts swerve;

Honor teacher, father, mother;

Unto him who is thy brother,

Unto kindred, friends also,

Orphans, suppliants, sad ones, show

Gentleness and help; to each

Speak with kind and courteous speech.

Give in alms that thou may'st spare,

And be constant in thy “prayer.”²

*Allāh al-Majīd! Thy favor grant,
That we may keep this covenant.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lxxxv. chapter “Of Celestial Signs.”

2. Cf. Qur'ān, ii. chapter “Of the Heifer.”

*al-Bā‘ith! Opener of the Tombs! We praise
Thy power, which unto life the dead can raise.*

IBLĪS spake to Ibrāhīm:
“What is this thy Lord hath told thee?
Shall the Resurrection be
When the mouldering clods enfold thee?
Nay! and if a man might rise,
Buried whole, in heedful wise,
See yon carcase, tempest-beaten—
Part the wandering fox hath eaten,
Part by fishes hath been torn,
Part the sea-fowl hence have borne;
Never back those fragments can
Come to him who was a man.”

Ibrāhīm spake unto his Lord:¹
“Show me how is wrought this wonder;
Can Thy resurrection be
When a man’s dust lies asunder?”

“Art thou therefore not believing,”
Allāh said, “because deceiving
Iblīs fills with lies thy heart?”
“Nay,” he answered, “but impart
Knowledge, Mightiest One and Best!
That my heart may be at rest.”

God said: “Take, thou doubting one!
Four birds from among My creatures;
Sever each bird’s head, and so
Mingle feathers, forms, and features,
That the fragments shall not be
Knowable to such as ye.
Into four divide the mass,
Then upon the mountains pass,
On four peaks a portion lay,
And, returning homeward, say,

‘By the name and power of God—
Who hath made men of the clod,
And hath said the dead shall rise—
Birds! fly hither in such wise
As ye lived.’ And they shall come,
Perfect, whole, and living, home.”

Thereupon al-Khalīl took
A raven, eagle, dove, and cock;
From their bodies shore the heads,
Cut the four fowl into shreds,
Mingled all their mass together,
Blood and bone, and flesh and feather;
Then dividing this four-wise,
Laid it where four peaks did rise
Two to south and two to north.
Then the dove’s head held he forth,
Crying, “Come!” Lo! at the word
Cooed at his feet the slaughtered bird.
“Come, raven!” spake he: as he spoke,
On glossy wing, with eager croak,
Flew round the raven. Then he said,
“Return! thou cock.” the cock obeyed.
Lastly the eagle summoned he,
Which circling came, on pinions free,
Restored and soaring to the sky,
With perfect plumes and undimmed eye.

So in the Holy Book ’tis writ
How Ibrāhīm’s heart at rest was set.

*Why should we fear to yield our breath,
To Thee That art the Lord of Death?*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, ii. chapter “Of the Heifer.”

*ash-Shahīd! God is “Witness!” and He took
Witness of us, ye People of the Book!*

THE spirits of the Prophets came at morn
To Sīnā’, summoned by their Lord’s command,
Singers and seers;—those born and those unborn,
The chosen souls of men, a solemn band.

The noble army ranged, in viewless might,
Around that mountain peak which pierces heaven;
Greater and lesser teachers, sons of light;
Their number was ten thousand score and seven.

Then Allāh took a covenant with His own,
Saying, “My wisdom and My word receive;
Speak of Me unto men, known or unknown,
Heard or unheard; bid such as will, believe.”

“And there shall come apostles, guiding ye,
Yēšūa’, Muḥammad: follow them and aid!
Are you resolved, and will you war for Me?”
“We are resolved, O Lord of all!” they said.

“Bear witness then!” spake Allāh, “souls most dear,
I am your Lord and ye heralds of Mine.”
Thenceforward through all lands His Prophets bear
The message of the mystery divine.¹

*Allāh-ash-Shahīd! make us to hear
The errand that Thy children bear.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

*O Thou, the Truth! when so Thy name we call,
All's said that need be said, sith Thou art all.*

TRUTH and all truth He is! serve Him alone
Who hath none other by nor near His Throne;
Unto all sins is Allāh's pardon given
Except what giveth Him partners in Heaven,¹
Being Apart, Exalted, Truth and Light,
Only and wholly—hold thou this aright!

*Ya Ḥaqq! true God! never with Thee
Can other or can equal be.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, iv. chapter "Of Women."

*Alai kul shay Wakīl!¹ Guardian of all!
By this name trustfully on Thee we call.*

VERILY God is guard!
What other hath created you, and made
Men gone before, and earth's foundations laid
 So broad and hard,
To be your dwelling-place;
And Heaven's star-jewelled face
Arched for your roof-top; and the tender rain
Sent down at the due season, whereby grain
 Groweth, and clustered gold
 Of dates, and grapes that hold
The purple and the amber honey-juice?
These for your use
 Your Lord and "Agent" gave.
Make Him no peers, nor other guardian have.

*Allāh-al-Wakīl! Thy wards are we;
Have us in Thy fidelity.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

*Thou mighty One! Whose mercy hath upraised
Mankind to praise Thee, be Thou hereby praised!*

CONSIDER them that serve
The false gods, how they lay in golden dishes
Honey and fruits and fishes
Before their idols; and the green fly comes,
Shoots through the guarded gates, and hums
Scorn of their offering, stealing what she will;
And none of these great gods the thief can kill,

So swift she is and small:

And none of all
Can make one little fly, for all their state;
So feeble are they, and so falsely great.¹
Ye people of the stocks and stones! herein
A parable is set against your sin.
But Allāh high doth rule
Whose hand made all things, being “Powerful.”

*al-Kawī! King of power and might!
Be Thy hand o'er us day and night!*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xxii. chapter “Of Believers.”

*Allāh-al-Matīn! “Firm” is our Lord and fast;
Praise Him Who doth uphold Thee to the last.*

BY the Angels ranged in ranks,
And the Rain-cloud Drivers,
And the Reciters of the word, “Thy God is one,”
Firm is our Lord!
Of the heavens the tent-pole,
al-Watad; and of earth
Habl-al-Matīn, the sure Cord:¹
By this thy soul
Holdeth, from birth:
Fast is the cord, and sure;
They only shall endure
Who dwell beneath the mighty tent upholderen
By *al-Watad*,² the Golden.

*Stay of Thy servants, al-Matīn!
In Thee is strong deliverance seen.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. chapter “Of the Family of Imran.”

2. Cf. Qur’ān, lxxviii. chapter “Of the Information.”

*al-Walī! Nearest of all friends, and Best,
So praise your Lord, Whose help is mightiest.*

CLOSE is He always to His faithful ones,
But closer dwelt they in the times of old.
Hath it come to ye what al-Baidhāwī
Presenteth of the days of Ibrāhīm,
Whom Allāh called His “Friend,” and like a friend
Softly entreated,¹ stooping out of Heaven
To help and comfort him so dear to God?
Oftimes the Angels of his Lord would light
Familiarly, with folded wings, before
The curtain of his tent, conversing there;
Oftimes, on thorny flats of wilderness,
Or in the parched pass, or the echoing cave,
The very voice of God would thrill his ears;
And he might answer, as a man with man,
Hearing and speaking things unspeakable.
Wherefore, no marvel that he gave his son
At Allāh’s bidding, and had back his son—
Patient and safe—when the wild goat came down
And hung amid the nebbuk by his horns,
On Thabīr, nigh to Makkah, in the vale
Of Minā;² and the knife of Ibrāhīm
Reddened with unwept blood.

There had fall’n drought
Upon the land, and all the mouths he fed
Hungered for meal; therefore al-Khalīl sent
Messengers unto Miṣrayim—to a lord
Wealthy and favorable, having store
Of grain and cattle by the banks of Ye’or.
“Give unto Ibrāhīm,” the message said,
“A little part for gold, yet more for love—
(As he had given, if the strait were thine)
Meal of the millet, lentil, wheat, and bean,
That he and his may live; for drought hath come
Upon our fields and pastures, and we pine.”

Spake the Egyptian lord, “Lo! now ye ask
O’ermuch of me for friendliness, and more
Than gold can buy, since dearth hath also come
Over our fields, and nothing is to spare.
Yet had it been to succor Ibrāhīm,
And them that dwell beneath his tent, the half
Of all we hold had filled your empty sacks.
But he will feed people we wot not of,
Poor folk, and hungry wanderers of the waste:
The which are nought to us, who have of such,
If there were surplusage. Therefore return;
Find food elsewhere!”

Then said the messengers
One to another, “If we shall return
With empty sacks, our master’s name, so great
For worship in the world, will suffer shame,
And men will say he asked and was denied.”
Therefore they filled their sacks with white sea-sand
Gathered by Ghazzah’s wave, and sorrowfully
Journeyed to Qēdār, where lay Ibrāhīm,
To whom full privately they told this thing,
Saying, “We filled the sacks with snow-white sand,
Lest thy great name be lessened ’mongst the folk,
Seeing us empty-handed; for the man
Denied thee corn; since thou wouldest give, quoth he,
To poor folk and to wanderers of the waste,
And there are hungry mouths enough by Ye’or.”

Then was the heart of Ibrāhīm sore, because
The people of his tribe drew round to share
The good food brought, and all the desert trooped
With large-eyed mothers and their pining babes,
Certain of succor if the Shaykh could help.
So did the spirit of al-Khalil sink
That into swoon he fell, and lay as one
Who hath not life. But Sarai, his wife—
That knew not—bade her maidens bring a sack,
Open its mouth, and knead some meal for cakes.
And when the sack was opened, there showed flour,
Fine, three times bolted, whiter than sea-sand;

Which in the trough they kneaded, rolling cakes,
And baking them over the crackling thorns;
So that the savor spread throughout the camp
Of new bread smoking, and the people drew
Closer and thicker, as ye see the herds
Throng—horn, and wool, and hoof—at watering-time,
When after fiery leagues, the wells are reached.

But Ibrāhīm, awaking, smelled the bread:
“Whence,” spake he unto Sarai, “hast thou meal,
Wife of my bosom? for the smell of bread
Riseth, and lo! I see the cakes are baked.”
“By God! Who is the only One,” she said,
“Whence should it come save from thy friend who sent,
The lord of Miṣrayim?” “Nay!” quoth Ibrāhīm,
And fell upon his face, low-worshipping,
“But this hath come from the dear mighty hands
Of Allāh—of the Lord of Miṣrayim’s lords—
My ‘Friend’ and King, and Helper: now my folk
Shall live and die not. Glory be to God!”

*He that hath Allāh for a friend,
To want and woe hath put the end.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iv. chapter “Of Women.”

2. Cf. Qur’ān, xxxvii. chapter “Of the Ranged.”

*Rich to reward your Lord is; oh, do ye
Praise al-Hamīd, the “Ever-praiseworthy!”*

PRAISE him by alms; and when ye help believers,
Mar not your gifts with grudging word or will;
Since ye at Allāh’s hands are free receivers,
Freely bestow. A garden on a hill

Is as a likeness of that fair compassion
Shown for the sake of God: the heavy rain
Descendeth, and the dew; and every fashion
Of good seed springs tenfold in fruit and grain.

The likeness of the evil heart, bestowing
That men may praise, is as the thin-clad peak,
Wherfrom the rain washes all soil for growing,
Leaving the hard rock naked, fruitless, bleak.

Say, will ye plant on rock or plenteous garden?
Grow nought, or grow green vines that shade afford?—
Forgive your brethren as ye ask for pardon;
Give as ye have received, and praise your Lord!¹

*Allāh-al-Hamīd! what tongue can tell
Thy goodness, ever-laudable?*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, ii. chapter “Of the Heifer.”

*“al-Mūshi! The “Accountant!” laud Him so
Who reckoneth up the deeds men do below.*

“IN GOD’S NAME, MERCIFUL, COMPASSIONATE!”

WHEN Earth shall quake with quaking,¹
And cast her burden forth
Of corpses; and live men
Shall ask—with terror shaking—
“What aileth Earth?” that day
She shall reply, and say
 That which her Lord commands:
 And men shall come in bands,
This side and that side, ranged to show
Their works, and the account to know.
And he that wrought of good a red ant’s weight
 Shall see it writ:
And who did evil, aye! as the skin of a date,
 Shall witness it.

*al-Muḥṣī! dread Accountant! look
In mercy on our judgment-book.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xcix. chapter “Of the Earthquake.”

*al-Mubdi'! praise Him by this holy name,
Who gave to all the spark which lights life's flame.*

WHENCE came ye; and the people of the groves;
The streams, the seas, the wilderness, the air;
Beasts, fishes, fowl; each with their lives and loves,
Each glad to be, each in its kind so fair?

“Begotten of their like?” Yea! But “their like,”
Who did devise that, and the hidden charm
Whereby—as flame from torch to torch doth strike—
The light of life shines on, bright, joyous, warm?

al-Mubdi' hath devised it! His decree
In the beginning shaped and ordered each,
Saying to all these things foreseen, “So be!”
And so they were, obeying Allāh's speech.

*al-Mubdi'! “Great Beginner!” take
Our praises, for life's pleasant sake!*

*He made life—and He takes it—but instead
Gives more; praise the Restorer, al-Mu‘id!*

HE who died at Azan sends
This to comfort faithful friends.

Faithful friends! it lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, “ ’Abd Allāh’s dead!”
Weeping at my feet and head;
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your cries and prayers;
Yet I smile, and whisper this—
“I am not that thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It *was* mine, it is not I.”

Sweet friends! what the women lave,
For its last bed in the grave,
Is a tent which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room;
The wearer, not the garb; the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from the splendid stars.

Loving friends! be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye;
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
’Tis an empty sea-shell, one
Out of which the pearl is gone;
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, and all, the soul, is here.
’Tis an earthen jar whose lid
Allāh sealed, the while it hid

That treasure of His treasury,
A mind which loved Him; let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in His store!

Allāh Mu‘īd, Allāh most good!
Now thy grace is understood;
Now my heart no longer wonders
What al-Barzakh¹ is, which sunders
Life from death, and death from Heaven;
Nor the “Paradieses Seven”
Which the happy dead inherit;
Nor those “birds” which bear each spirit
Towards the Throne, “green birds and white,”
Radiant, glorious, swift their flight!
Now the long, long darkness ends,
Yet ye wail, my foolish friends,
While the man whom ye call “dead”
In unbroken bliss instead
Lives, and loves you; lost, 'tis true
By any light which shines for you;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,
And enlarging Paradise,
Lives the life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.
I am gone before your face
A heart-beat's time, a gray ant's pace.
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will marvel why ye wept,
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain,
Sunshine still must follow rain!
Only not at death, for death—
Now I see is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, that is of all life centre.

Know ye Allāh's law is love,
Viewed from Allāh's Throne above:
Be ye firm of trust, and come
Faithful onward to your home!
“*Lā ilāha illā Allāh!* Yea,
Mu‘īd! Restorer! Sovereign!” say!

*He who died at Adhān gave
This to those that made his grave.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xxiii. chapter “Of Believers.”

*al'Muhyī! the “Quickener!” hereby
Praise Him Whom Angels praise eternally.*

“AND of His signs is this,”¹ saith the Great Book;
“Under the angry sun the slain earth—look!—
Dries up to dust; dies every growing thing;
Then blow we breaths of southern wind which bring
Rain-dropping clouds, and see! the dead earth lives,
And stirs, and swells; and every herb revives.
So shall the dead be quickened by His breath,
This is al-Muhyī’s sign,” the Great Book saith.

*O thou believer! shall it be
He saves the green thing, and not thee?*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xli. chapter “Of Signs Explained.”

*He quickeneth, but “He killeth:” blessed they
Who may abide in trust that final day!*

YEA! some have found right good to hear the summons of their Lord,
And gone as glad as warriors proud, who take up spear and sword
At sounding of the song of fight; as light of heart as those
For whom the bride unveileth her mouth of pearl and rose.

Jalāl al-Dīn, al-Rūmī, the saint of Balkh, the son
Of him surnamed “Flower of the Faith,” this was a chosen one,
To whom Death softly showed himself, Heaven’s gentle call to give;
For what word is it bids us die, save that which made us live?

Sick lay he there in Qūnyah; ’twas dawn; the golden stream
Of light, new springing in the east, on his thin lips did gleam—
Those lips which spake the praise of God all through his holy years,
And murmured now, with faith and hope unchanged, the morning prayers.

Then one who watched beside his bed, heard at the inner gate
A voice cry, “*Aftah!* ‘open!’ from far I come, and wait
To speak my message to Jalāl—a message that will bring
Peace and reward to him who lies the *al-Fātiḥah* murmuring.”

Thereat the watcher drew the bar which closed the chamber-door,
Wondering and ’feared, for ne’er was heard upon this earth before
Accents so sweet and comforting, nor ever eyes of men
Saw presence so majestic as his who entered then.

Entered with gliding footsteps a bright celestial youth,
Splendid and strange in beauty, past words to speak its truth;
Midnight is not so dark and deep as was his solemn gaze,
By love and pity lighted, as the night with silvery rays.

“What is thy name?” the watcher asked, “that I may tell my lord,
Thou fair and dreadful messenger! whose glance is as a sword;
Whose face is like the Heaven unveiled; whose tender searching voice
Maketh the heart cease beating, but bids the soul rejoice.”

“‘AZRĀ’IL ANA,” spake the shape, “I am the Spirit of Death;
And I am sent from Allāh’s throne to stay thy master’s breath.”
“Come in! come in! thou Bird of God,” cried joyously Jelāl,
“Fold down thy heavenly plumes and speak! – Islām! what shall be, shall.”

“Thou blessed one!” the Angel said, “I bring thy time of peace;
When I have touched thee on the eyes, life’s latest ache will cease;
God bade me come as I am seen amid the heavenly host,
No enemy of awful mould, but he who loveth most.”

“Dear Angel! do what thou art bid,” quoth Jelāl, smilingly,
“God willing, thou shalt find to-day a patient one in me;
Sweet is the cup of bitterness which cometh in such wise!”
With that he bowed his saintly brow,—and ‘Azrā’il kissed his eyes.

*al-Mumīt! “Slayer!” send Him thus,
In love, not anger, unto us.*

*Praise Him, al-Hayy! the “Ever-living” King,
Who to eternal life His own doth bring.*

SAITH the Book: “Count not as dead¹
Such as for the Faith have bled;
Stark and red their bodies lie,
But their souls are in the sky,
Resident with God, who grants
All for which the spirit pants.
Joyful are they, resting there
Free from sorrow, pain, or fear;
Watching us who, left in life,
Are not quit, as yet, of strife;
But shall soon attain, to share
Allāh’s mercies, and declare—
Side by side with those—that He
Showeth grace eternally,
And withholdeth not the pay
At the ending of the day.

*Ya Hayy! Thou ever-living Lord,
Be ours such work and such reward.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

*Magnify Him, al-Kaīyūm; and so call
The “Self-subsisting” God Who judgeth all.*

WHEN the trumpet shall sound,
 On that day,¹
The wicked, slow-gathering,
 Shall say,
“Is it long we have lain in our graves?
 For it seems as an hour!”
Then will Isrāfil call them to judgment;
 And none shall have power
To turn aside, this way or that;
 And their voices will sink
To silence, except for the sounding
 Of a noise, like the noise on the brink
Of the sea, when its stones
 Are dragged with a clatter and hiss
Down the shore, in the wild breakers’ roar:
 The sound of their woe shall be this!

Then they who denied
 That He liveth Eternal, “Self-made,”
Shall call to the mountains to crush them;
 Amazed and affrayed.

*Thou Self-subsistent, Living Lord!
Thy grace against that day afford.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xx. chapter “Of T.H.”

*al-Wājid! praise hereby that Watchful One
Whose eyes see all things underneath the sun.*

By the Ten holy eves and the Dawns of gold!¹
By the One and the Manifold!
By the deepening of the Darkness of the night!
(And these be oaths of might):
Hast thou considered what with 'Ād God wrought,
And whereunto He brought
Proud Iram of the pillared throne,
Whose like no other land did own;
And Thamūd's race, which hewed houses of rocks;
And Pharaoh, strong for shocks
As is a tent with tent-pegs driven deep?²
Lo! these their haughty state did keep,
And multiply their wickedness;
Till Allāh, who long-suffering hath,
Laid upon them the scourges of His wrath.

Verily, as a “watch-tower” is your Lord.
Lo! if ye knew this, would ye shut your hoard
When the poor cry; devour the weak; and love
Your riches more than treasures stored above?
Ho! when the earth's bones crack,
And, rank on rank, the angels gather,
And hell's black gates fly back,
How will each say, “Would God in life's fair weather,
I had bethought me of this storm of hell!”

But then it shall be well
For thee, thou soul! to-day uncomforted,
Who know'st that Allāh sees;
And patiently awaitest till He please
Call thee to comfort, praising Him and praised.
Joyous thou shalt be raised
To Paradise, hearing His angels say,
“Enter, and be exceeding glad to-day!”

*al-Wājid! “Watcher!” save by grace,
Who shall attain that happy place?*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, lxxxix. chapter “Of Daybreak.”
2. The Arabic word *Watad* bears this signification.

*Wāḥid! The “One!” ye faithful, say herein
Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ,¹ cleansing souls from sin.*

“IN GOD’S NAME, MERCIFUL, COMPASSIONATE!”

SAY: “He is God alone,
Eternal on the Throne.
Of none begotten, and begetting none,
Who hath not like unto Him any one!”²

*Ya Wāḥid! Holy! Only! we
Thus do declare Thy unity.*

1. This name is given to the Sūrah as “clearing oneself” from heresy.

2. Cf. Qur’ān, cxii. chapter “Of Unity.”

*as-Samad! the “Eternal!” by this name
Laud Him Who will be, was, and is the same.*

OF Heaven’s prodigious years man wotteth nought;
The “Everlasting!”—hast thou strained thy thought
Searching that depth, which numbs the seeking mind
As too much light the eager gaze doth blind?
The years of men are measured by the sun,
And were not, until he his course begun;
And will not be, when his gold dial dies:
But God lived while no sun shone in the skies;
And shall be living when all worlds are dead:
Yet hereof, though ye see the truth is said,
Ye take no more the meaning than one takes
Measure of ocean by the cup that slakes
His thirst, from rillet running to the sea.

Behind—before ye, shines Eternity,
Visible as the vault’s fathomless blue,
Which is so deep the glance goes never through,
Though nothing stays save depth: so is it seen
That Allāh must be ever, and hath been;
Seen, but not comprehended—for man’s wit
Knows this, yet knows—not understanding it.

Mete ye not Allāh’s times by man’s: life gives
No measure of the Life Divine which lives
Unending, uncommenced, having no stay
Of yesterday, to-morrow, or to-day;
Being forever one unbroken Now
Where past and future come not.

Heard’st thou how,
What time fair Siyyon was given to sword and flame,
‘Uzayr¹ the Yəhūdī upon his camel came
Over those hills which ring the sea of Lot,²
So that one footstep and—ye see her not,
And then another—and the city comes

Full upon view with all her milk-white domes.
But the Chaldean now had spoiled the place,
And desolate and waste was Siyyon's face,
Her proud abodes unpeopled, and her ways
Heaped with charred beams and lintels. 'Uzayr says,
"O Lord! who promised to al-Quds
Comfort and peace; and for her sons, to them
A glad return, how shall Thy word be kept
When fire and steel over these roofs have swept,
And she, that was a queen, lies dead and black,
A smoking ruin, where the jackals pack?
A hundred years were not enough to give
Life back to Siyyon! Can she ever live?"

But while he spake, the Angel of the Lord
Laid on his doubting front a fiery sword,
And 'Uzayr in that lonely desert spot
Fell prone, and lay—breathing and moving not—
One hundred years, while the great world rolled on,
And Siyyon rose, and mighty deeds were done.
And when the hundred years were flown, God said,
"Awake, 'Uzayr! how long hast tarriëd,
"Thinkest thou, here?" 'Uzayr replied, "A day,
Perchance, or half." The awful Voice said, "Nay!
But look upon thy camel." Of that beast
Nought save white bones was left: no sign, the least,
Of flesh, or hair, or hide: the desert grass
Was matted o'er its shanks, and roots did pass
From a gnarled fig-tree through the eye-pits twain,
And in and out its ribs grew the vervain.
But 'mid the moulderings of its saddle-bags
And crimson carpet, withered into rags,
A basket, full of new-picked dates, stood there
Beside a cruise of water, standing where
He set them fresh, twice fifty years ago;
And all the dates were golden with the glow
Of yestreen's sunset, and the cruise's rim
Sparkled with water to the very brim.
" 'Uzayr!" the awful Voice spake, "look on these!
He maketh and unmaketh what shall please;
Saves or destroys, restores or casts away;

And centuries to Him are as a day;
And cities all as easy to revive
As this thy camel here, which now shall live.”

Thereon the skull and bones together crept
From tangled weed and sand where they had slept;
The hide and hair came, and the flesh filled in,
The eyes returned their hollow pits within,
The saddle-bags upon its haunches hung,
The carpet on the saddle-horns was flung,
The nose-rope from the muzzle fell. The beast
Rose from its knees, and would have made to feast
On the green herbage where its bones had lain,
But that it heard bells of a caravan
Coming from Qidrōn, and with glad cry roared.
Then ‘Uzayr looked, and saw—newly restored—
Ṣiyyon’s fair walls and temples, and a crowd
Of citizens; and traffic rich and loud
In her white streets; and knew time should not be
Reckoned ’against Him who hath eternity.

*as-Ṣamad! Everlasting One!
Thy times are good: Thy will be done.*

1. Identified by some commentators with Ezra of Scripture.
2. The Dead Sea.

*al-Qādir! He is “Providence!” hereby
The Lord of all things living magnify.*

WHEN ye say *Kismat*, say it wittingly,
O true believers! under Allāh’s throne
Place is not left for those accursed three,
“Destiny,” “Fortune,” “Chance.” Allāh alone

Ruleth His children: *Kismat* ye shall deem
Each man’s “allotted portion,” from of old
Fixed for his part in the Eternal scheme
By those great Hands which all the worlds enfold.

Sayeth “the Book:” “There passeth no man’s soul
Except by God’s permission, and the Speech
Writ in the scroll determining the whole,
The times of all men, and the times for each.”¹

Also it sayeth: “If a man shall choose
This world’s reward, to him it shall be given;
And if a man shall dare his life to lose
For Paradise, he shall be paid in Heaven.”²

*Ya Qādir! “Ruler!” teach us still,
Islām, submission to Thy will.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

2. Cf. Qur’ān, ii. chapter “Of the Cow.”

*al-Muqtadir! the “Powerful!” by this
Praise we the Word, whence cometh woe and bliss.*

VERILY, all things—saith “the Book”¹—We made, Decreeing; and Our bidding was one word, Quick, as the twinkling of an eye; and all, Whatever things men do, stands in the scrolls, Where great and small alike are written down; And then shall surely come the Hour—the Hour! And bitter for the sinners it will be When they are dragged, upon their faces, down To hell, and taste the touch of fire; but sweet Will it be for the pious—these shall sit 'Mid streams and gardens in the seat of truth, Happy, near al-Muqtadir, the Mighty One.

*Grant us that seat of truth to see,
Almighty Allāh! nigh to Thee.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, liv. chapter “Of the Moon.”

*Mugaddim! Mu'akhhir! by these names still
Praise Him Who hath forewarned, and doth fulfil.*

WHEN the trumpet shall be ringing,
Then the threatened Day hath come,
Every soul to judgment bringing.¹

Each soul shall itself deliver
With two Angels, unto doom,
With a Witness and a Driver.

He that driveth shall say, “Vainly
Warned we thee, till this upholding
Of the veil: now thou seest plainly.”

And the Witness by his side,
He shall say, a scroll unfolding,
“This is what I testified.”

Loud shall sound th' award eternal:
“Hurl to hell the misbelievers,
Sinners, liars;—let infernal

“Torments seize perverse transgressors!”
Then will speak the wan deceivers,
Seeking pleas and intercessors.

But the awful Voice shall thunder,
“Wrangle not in Allāh's hearing!
Many a sign and many a wonder

“Did forewarn ye of repentance;²
Time is past for more forbearing;
Not with Us is change of sentence.”

Heaven shall say to Hell that morning,
“Art thou full?” Hell shall inquire,
“Hast thou others?” blackly yawning

With choked gullet. But believing
Souls will see, brought nigh and nigher,
Paradise's gates, receiving

Those to whom We promised Heaven.
“Patient ones! for ever striving
Towards the Merciful! forgiven

Are your falterings; enter ye
Into peace; now is arriving
The great Day of eternity.”

*Forewarner and Fulfiller! we
Confess with dread Thine equity.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, l. chapter “Of K.”
2. The text is, “I put forth unto you the menace.”

*Awwal! Ākhir! Thāhir! Bātin! These four
Be “Mothers of the Names;”¹ thy Lord adore,
Speaking such words as do Him truly call
Essence and Substance, First and Last in all.*

SŪRAH the seven and fiftieth:² there is writ
The holy verse which keeps the charge of it;
The verse which all the names of Allāh holdeth
As in one sky the silver stars all sit.

The chapter “of the Iron!”—and this script
Set on its forefront, as a hilt is tipped
With four-fold gold; or as a helm of steel
By some far-sparkling crest-gem is equipped.

“He is the First and Last”—this scripture shows—
“Outer and Inner, That which doth disclose,
And That which hides Itself; the Manifest,
The Secret; and all things and thoughts He knows.”

“In six days earth and heaven He made alone,
Then reascended the Eternal Throne;
What entereth earth and issueth thence He sees,
And what goes up and down the sky is known”

“To Allāh, Who is nigh where’er ye be,
And whatsoever deeds ye do doth see;
His is the kingdom of the earth and heaven;
All things return to Allāh finally.”

*Beginning! End! Without! Within!
We celebrate Thy praise herein.*

1. These four divine titles are known by the technical appellation of “The Mothers of the Names,” being regarded as fundamental and all-comprehensive.

2. Cf. Qur’ān, lvii. chapter “Of Iron,” v. 3.

*Laud Him who governs governors and kings,
Angels, and Djins, and men, and living things.*

WOT ye of Sulaymān's signet, graved of a sapphire in gold,
Graved with the great name of God, writ on the blue of the stone?
Wisdom and riches and power had he who that treasure did hold;
Safe in the strength of the signet he sate on his ivory throne.

Only King Sulaymān knew how the dread letters did flow,
What was the breathing of *Aleph*, where came the whispering *Yod*;
When he spake the ineffable Word, the sea-winds at bidding would blow;
And the hills yield their iron, and jewels, and gold, at the naming of God.

And out of the void of the sky, and up from the gulfs and the capes,
And forth from the caverns of earth, and down from the
mountains of flame,
Flocked Demons with wonderful wings, and Ifreet of horrible shape,
And Djins, with red eyes, made of fire; Divs, Peris, and Giants,
they came.

They came, at the call of *the name*, from Kāf, that engirdles the seas;
From the gloom of the tombs in the graveyard, from ruins on
desolate ground;
From the pool and the marsh and the forest; from poisonous blossoms
and trees;—
Monstrous or dwarfish,—constrained, enchained, subdued, by a
sound;

The sound of the title of Allāh, spoken so as the Angels speak:—
Nor spirits uncomely only, and evil; ethereal bands
Thronged down from their heavenly houses, the Great King's service
to seek,
Hearing that nameless Name which all things living commands.

And the fowl and the beasts were fain to gather, each creature by each,
When Sulaymān summoned hereby, pronouncing the mystical
words.
Moreover, their dumb mouths opened, and the fly and the bee had a speech;

And he knew the heart of the lions, and learned the mind of the birds.
Thus is it writ how he marched by Tayf from the Sūriyā land

Through the “Valley of Ants” and heard the cry of that people of clay,
“Hide ye! hide in the earth! for there passeth Sulaymān’s band;
We are many and wise, but we die, if the king’s foot cometh this way.”

And he laughed, but leaped to the ground, and bowed his forehead and said,
“O Lord God! grant me to learn from the ant the wit to be meek.
I am many and strong, and a king; yet Thou canst instantly tread
The pride of this earth to dust, and the strongest to Thee are but weak!”

Then he viewed the birds, and cried, “I see not amongst ye here
al-Hudhud, the crested lapwing; what doth she to linger away?
Ill shall it fall for her, who seeketh us water clear,
If she find not a fountain for prayers before the ending of day!

But they tarried not long until the whirr of her speckled wings
Brought unto Sulaymān’s feet the crested lapwing, who spake,
“I have seen a queen that is greater than any save thee, O King!
In Seba she reigneth majestic, and glorious kingship doth make.

“There hath she a marvellous throne of silver, figured with gold,
And the head of the throne is a moon in a jasper and emerald curve,
For her people worship the moon.” And Sulaymān answered, “Behold!
Little bird! if thou liest not, this queen shall the Merciful serve!”

Thereafter the message went from the servant of God, the king:
“Sulaymān, son of David, to Balqīs, queen of the south:
Peace be to them that follow the Name upon Sulaymān’s ring;
Yield thee, and worship Allāh; cursed is the idolatrous mouth.”

Then Balqīs sent him gifts, of gold bricks, yellow and red;
And beautiful slaves five hundred, with amber and musk; and a gem
Drilled with a crooked hole, which never a goldsmith could thread;
And a topaz of price, unpierced, and a diamond diadem.

He bade the sea-worm eat a way through the unpierced stone;
And the little ant carry a thread through the ruby’s crooked drill.
“Doth she offer to Sulaymān gifts?” quoth he, on his ivory throne,
“We are richer than Saba’ {Sheba, in Yemen} kingdom! By
Allāh!” said he, “I will

“That one of my slaves bring hither Queen Balqīs’ jewelled seat;
Thereby she shall learn that the glory is ours, and the knowledge
and might.”

Then Asaf the wise commanded, and a Djin spread his pinions fleet,
And brought the moon-throne thither, and set it before them aright.

In a guarded house she had shut it, which a thousand bowmen kept,
But when she was come to Shālēm, lo! Sulaymān the king
Sate there on her own gold seat, and Balqīs bowed her and wept,
Saying, “I pray thee, teach me the Name on thy signet ring!

“We have sinned against our souls, following lower Lords;
Our kingdom we give, and our goods, and our lives, and our spirits to
thine.”

Such worship had he of old who knew *al-Walī*’s words
Which rule the rulers, and knew the sound of the Name Divine.¹

*Ya Walī! Gracious Lord! impart
True knowledge of Thee, as Thou art.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xxvii. chapter “Of the Ant.”

*Praise Him, al-Muta 'ālī! Whose decree
Is wiser than the wit of man can see.*

'TIS written in the chapter "of the Cave,"¹
An Angel of the Lord, a minister,
Had errands upon earth, and Mūsā said,
"Grant me to wend with thee, that I may learn
God's ways with men." The Angel, answering, said,
"Thou canst not bear with me; thou wilt not have
Knowledge to judge; yet if thou followest me,
Question me not, whatever I shall do,
Until I tell thee."

Then they found a ship
On the sea-shore, wherefrom the Angel struck
Her boards and brake them. Mūsā said, "Wilt drown
The mariners? this is a strange thing wrought?"
"Did I not say thou couldst not bear with me?"
The Angel answered—"be thou silent now!"

Yet farther, and they met an Arab boy:
Upon his eyes with mouth invisible
The Angel breathed; and all his warm blood froze,
And, with a moan, he sank to earth and died.
"Then Mūsā said, "Slayest thou the innocent
Who did no wrong? this is a hard thing seen!"
"Did I not tell thee," said the Minister,
Thou wouldest not bear with me? question me not!"

Then came they to a village, where there stood
A lowly hut; the garden-fence thereof
Tumbled to fall: the Angel thrust it down,
A ruin of gray stones, and lime, and tiles,
Crushing the lentils, melons, saffron, beans,
The little harvest of the cottage folk.
"What hire," asked Mūsā, "hadst thou for this deed,
Seeming so evil?"

Then the Angel said,
“This is the parting betwixt me and thee;
Yet will I first make manifest the things
Thou couldst not bear, not knowing; that my Lord—
‘Exalted above all reproach’—be praised.
The ship I broke serveth poor fisher-folk
“Whose livelihood was lost, because there came
A king that way seizing all boats found whole;
Now have they peace. Touching the Arab boy:
In two moons he had slain his mother’s son,
Being perverse; but now his brother lives,
Whose life unto his tribe was more, and he
Dieth blood-guiltless. For the garden wall:
Two goodly youths dwell there, offspring of one
That loved his Lord, and underneath the stones
The father hid a treasure, which is theirs.
This shall they find, building their ruin up,
And joy will come upon their house! But thou,
Journey no more with me, because I do
Nought of myself, but all by Allāh’s will.

*al-Mutāhāl! Maker of men,
Exalted art Thou past our ken.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, xviii.

*Praise Him, al-Barr! Whose goodness is so great;
Who is so loving and compassionate.*

PITY! for He is Pitiful;—a king
Is likest Allāh, not in triumphing
'Mid enemies o'erthrown, nor seated high
On stately gold, nor if the echoing sky
Rings with his name, but when sweet mercy sways
His words and deeds. The very best man prays
For Allāh's help, since feeble are the best;
And never shall man reach th' angelic rest
Save by the vast compassion of Heaven's King.
Our Prophet once, 'Ā'ishah answering,
Spake this: "I shall not enter that pure place,
Even I, except through Allāh's covering grace."
Even our Lord (on him be peace!); oh, see!
If *he* besought the Sovereign Clemency,
How must we supplicate it? Truly thus
Great need there is of Allāh's grace for us,
And that we live compassionate!

Hast seen
The record written of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn
The Sultan? how he met, upon a day,
In his own city on the public way,
A woman whom they led to die. The veil
Was stripped from off her weeping face, and pale
Her shamed cheeks were, and wild her dark fixed eye,
And her lips drawn with terror at the cry
Of the harsh people, and the rugged stones
Borne in their hands to break her, flesh and bones;
For the law stood that sinners such as she
Perish by stoning, and this doom must be;
So went the wan adulteress to her death.
High noon it was, and the hot khamsin's breath
Blew from the desert sands and parched the town.
The crows gasped, and the kine went up and down
With lolling tongues; the camels moaned; a crowd

Pressed with their pitchers, wrangling high and loud,
About the tank; and one dog by a well,
Nigh dead with thirst, lay where he yelped and fell,
Glaring upon the water out of reach,
And praying succor in a silent speech,
So piteous were its eyes. Which when she saw,
This woman from her foot her shoe did draw,
Albeit death-sorrowful, and looping up
The long silk of her girdle, made a cup
Of the heel's hollow, and thus let it sink
Until it touched the cool black water's brink;
So filled th' embroidered shoe, and gave a draught
To the spent beast, which whined, and fawned, and quaffed
Her kind gift to the dregs; next licked her hand,
With such glad looks that all might understand
He held his life from her; then, at her feet
He followed close, all down the cruel street,
Her one friend in that city.

But the king,
Riding within his litter, marked this thing,
And how the woman, on her way to die,
Had such compassion for the misery
Of that parched hound: "Take off her chain, and place
The veil once more above the sinner's face,
And lead her to her house in peace!" he said,
"The law is that the people stone thee dead
For that which thou hast wrought; but there is come,
Fawning around thy feet, a witness dumb,
Not heard upon thy trial; this brute beast
Testifies for thee, sister! whose weak breast
Death could not make ungentle. I hold rule
In Allah's stead, who is 'the Merciful,'
And hope for mercy; therefore go thou free—
I dare not show less pity unto thee!"

*As we forgive—and more than we—
Ya Barr! good God! show clemency.*

*Praise Him, at-Tawwāb; if a soul repents,
Seven times and seventy times thy Lord relents.*

AT the gates of Paradise,
Whence the angry Angels drove him,
Ādam heard in gentle wise
Allāh's whisper, which forgave him:
“Go,” it said, “from this fair place,
Ye that sinned; yet not despairing;
Haply there shall come a grace
And a guidance; and in fearing
Me, and following My will,
Blessed shall your seed be still.”¹

Know ye not that God receives
Gladly back the soul which grieves?
Know ye not that He relents
Ere the sinner well repents?
Terribly His justice burns,
Easily His anger turns.²

Spake our Lord: “If one draw near
Unto God—with praise and prayer—
Half a cubit, God will go
Twenty leagues to meet him so.
He who walketh unto God,
God will run upon the road,
All the quicklier to forgive
One who learns at last to live.”

*Ya Tawwāb! for Thy mercy's sake,
Us to sweet peace and pity take.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, ii. chapter “Of the Heifer,” v. 35.

2. Cf. Qur'ān, ix. chapter “Of Repentance.”

*“Forgiver!” and “Avenger!” worship Him
By these two names, Ghafür and Muntaqim.*

¹ O MEN, of dry clay moulded, as the potter moulds the jars;
O Djins, that We have fashioned from the smokeless fire of stars:
What terror of the Lord will ye abide?

He is Lord of east and west, He is Lord of south and north;
And the seas obey the limits which He set them, pouring forth:
What terror of the Lord will ye abide?

Their white pearls, large and small, are the handiwork of Him;
And the ships, with towering sails, by His winds and waters swim:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But the earth and all her creatures shall die and be decayed;
Only the face of Allāh will never change nor fade:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

The face of Allāh ruling in glorious array;
For all things look unto Him, and He governs day by day:
Which terror of your Lord, will ye abide?

Yet will He find good leisure, ye twain! ye Djins and Men,
To judge you at the judgment, O Clay and Flame! What then?
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

If ye can pass His gateways, east, west, and south and north—
Which shut in earth and heaven—hasten ye! pass ye forth:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But Life and Death enclose ye; by no way shall ye pass;
A fence of flame shall stay ye, and a moat of molten brass:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

And when the sky is rended, red like a new-ripped hide,
There shall be no accusing, admitted or denied:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

No yea nor nay! no questions! the sinner's brand is sin;
Thereby shall he be known, and flung Hell's blazing walls within:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

"Flung by the forelock and the feet: " 'This Hell existed not,'
Ye said. Now broil! and when ye thirst, drink sulphur scalding hot:"
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But sweet for him who was faithful, and fearēd the face of his God,
Are the Gardens of joy preparing, and the gates of the Golden Abode:
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

With leafy branching fruit-trees are set those Gardens twain,
And softly the streamlets warble, and brightly the fountains rain:
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

And the fruit of the Golden Gardens swings delicate, near to reach.
Where they rest on their 'broidered couches, hearing delightful speech:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?

Therein are the shy-faced maidens, refraining their night-black eyes
From any save that glad lover whose joy is their Paradise:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?

From any but that glad lover, that happy lord for whom
Their mouths of pearl rain kisses, their lips of ruby bloom:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?

Shall the wages of righteous-doing be less than the promise given?
Nay! but by God, the Glorious, the debt shall be paid in heaven!
What bounty of their Lord shall they deny?

*O man! fear Him, magnify Him;
al-Ghafūr and al-Muntaqim.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful."

*Praise Him, ar-Ra'īf, Just and Kind alway,
Who knoweth how He made us of the day.*

“SAY, “Lord of all, to Thee
Goeth our road;
Require not of our souls
Too much, dear God!
Thou wilt not! what was earned
Thou dost defray;
And what was done amiss
That we must pay;
But ah! be not extreme
With what’s forgot,
With error, or small sin.
And load us not
With burdens which we cannot carry, Lord!
But favor, help, forgiveness afford.”¹

Tender His answers are:—
(The “Chapter of the Star.”²
Āyāt the Thirty-Third): The heavens and earth
To Us pertain, and We
Will deal, assuredly,
Well with the good, but with the ill in wrath.
Yet not for each offence,
Errors of flesh or sense,
Shall there be judgment, children of the loam!
Our mercy reacheth far;
We know ye what ye are,
And knew ye while ye lay clots in the womb;
Sin, and be sorry, and amend:
Who seeketh God shall find Him in the end.”

*Ever-indulgent Maker! we
Praise for these words Thy clemency.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, ii. chapter “Of the Heifer.”

2. Cf. Qur’ān, liii.

*King of all kingdoms! only Thou art crowned,
Whose throne is heaven, and earth Thy footstool's round.*

*Yā Mālik! Yā Quddūs! Wa-Yā Salām!
O King! O Holy One! O Peace-giver!
Yā 'Aziz! Yā Muhamīn! Yā Mū'min!
O Mighty! O Protector! Faithful ever!
Yā Jabbār! O Thou Sovereign, All-compelling!
Yā Mutakabbir! O Thou Lord excelling!*

Exalted art Thou over utmost praise;
Accurst are those who graven idols raise
Beside Thee; unto them fall plagues and shames!
To Thee alone belong “the comely names.”¹

*King of all kings! we celebrate
With endless praise Thy glorious state.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lix. chapter “Of the Emigration.”

*O “Lord of awfulness and honor!” we
Lack wit and words in fitly naming Thee.*

ALL things-shall die and decay, but the kingdom of Allāh endureth,
Changeless in honor and might, changeless in glory and grace;
Blessed be He who is Lord, possessed of all beauty and greatness;
All things die and decay; only endureth His face.¹

*Dhu 'l jalāl wa 'l ikrām! thus ever
Praise we Thy Throne which fadeth never.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful," vv. 26, 78.

*al-Muqsit! “Equitable!” make us know,
As men have wrought, they shall be wrought with so.*

THREE days before our Lord Muḥammad passed,
They bore him to the masjid, where he uprose—
Painfully leaning upon ‘Ómer’s neck—
The fever burning in his cheeks, his mouth
Dry with the wind of death, and that knit brow
Shadowed with ‘Azrā’il’s overhanging wings.
One thin hand on the mimbar-rail he laid,
Speaking sweet words of guidance, precious words,
The last which ever fell from those lit lips,
Teaching his Faithful.

Then he gazed around,
And said, “Ye men of Makkah, where I lived,
Going and coming, testifying God,
I shall die soon; I pray ye answer me,
Is there among ye here one I have wronged?
I have borne rule, judging in Allāh’s name,
That am a man and sinful; have I judged
Unrighteously, or wrathfully, or pressed
Too hard in the amend? Let who saith ‘Yea,’
Make his ‘Yea’ good before my people here,
And I will bare my back that he may smite.
I have borne testimony for the truth,
Not sparing sinners; speak, if there be here
One visited unjustly; let him shame
His Prophet now, telling the sin I wrought
Before the assembly. I have gathered dues;
Declare if I defrauded any here
Buying or selling.”

And no answer came,
Except the sound of sobs and falling tears
From stern breasts and the eyes of bearded men,
Because our Lord would pass.

But one arose,
A hamal, with his cord across his back
And porter's knot, who cried, " 'Abd Allāh's son!
Three drachms of silver owest thou to me
For wood I bore thee after 'Ramadān!' "

"Good friend, I thank thee," softly said our Lord,
"Because thou didst demand thy money here,
And not before the judgment seat of God:
Ill is it if men thither carry debts!"
Therewith he paid his debt, kissing the hand
Wherein the dirhems dropped; and so went home
To die upon the lap of 'Ā'ishah,
With glad face fixed on high, and holy lips
That murmured, "Allāh! pardon me my sins!"

O ye believers! if our Lord did thus,
Consider well! leave no unrighted wrongs
Against the ill time when the Angels come,
Munker and Nakīr, gliding through the dark,
And set ye up for question in the grave;
When Isrāfil his dreadful trumpet blows,
Summoning to judgment; when the skies roll back
Like a scorched scroll, and o'er the gulf of hell
al-Širāt stretches, "thinner than a hair
And sharper than a sword," and yet to cross!
Ah, then! what good one wrought, he hath of help
Even to a date-stone; what of ill he wrought,
Of hindrance, to a date-stone; for your God
Is righteous, and the distribution just.

*O just "Distributor!" incline
Our hearts to keep Thy laws divine.*

*al-Jāmi‘! praise “the Gatherer,” Who divides
Evil and good unto their proper sides.*

YE who believe, stand ye steadfast in justice,
“Witnessing true though it be to displease;
Heed not your patrons, nor parents, nor kinsmen,
Allāh is nearer and richer than these.

Sit ye not down in the seat of the scornful,
Hear not the tales which the hypocrites tell;
On the day when His children are folded together
al-Jāmi‘ shall scatter the sinners to hell.¹

*We take Thee for our Shepherd; keep
Safe in the fold Thy foolish sheep.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iv. chapter “Of Women,” v. 139.

*We praise Thee; but no need of praise Thou hast,
al-Ghaniyy! in Thy glory bright and vast.*

MIGHTY is He and forgiving.¹
One soul did He first create,
Then He made therefrom a mate:
And to help man in his living,
Gave him herds, each with the other,
Camels, oxen, goats and sheep.
Think how Allāh wakes from sleep
The babe, close folded in its mother!
In three darknesses He shrouds it;
Wonder upon wonder clouds it.
He is Maker: can ye see
All these tokens and still be
Thankless? Yet, if so ye are,
Not beholden to your care
Is al-Ghaniyy: self-sufficing
Lives high Allāh, recognizing
Gladly all His creatures' love
In a changeless peace above.
Judge ye each for each; with God;
No man bears another's load.
Unto Him is your return,
Then shall every spirit learn
What it wrought, and what is due;
For He knows the hearts of you.

*Ah, Self-sufficing One! we seek
To praise Thee well, but words are weak.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xxxix. chapter "Of Troops."

*He is sufficient, and He makes suffice;
Praise thus again thy Lord, mighty and wise.*

GOD is enough! thou, who in hope and fear
Toilest through desert-sands of life, sore-tried,
Climb trustful over death's black ridge, for near
The bright wells shine: thou wilt be satisfied.

God doth suffice! O thou, the patient one,
Who puttest faith in Him, and none beside,
Bear yet thy load; under the setting sun
The glad tents gleam: thou wilt be satisfied.

By God's gold Afternoon!¹ peace ye shall have:
Man is in loss except he live aright,
And help his fellow to be firm and brave,
Faithful and patient: then the restful night!

*al-Mughnī! best Rewarder! we
Endure; putting our trust in Thee.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, ciii. chapter "Of the Afternoon."

*Mu'htī and Māni ! Heav'n Thou mad'st, and Hell,
Providing and withholding—and didst well.*

WHEN God fashioned Paradise,¹
Spake He unto Jabrā'il:
“See this place which We created,
Where the justified will dwell.”¹
Jabrā'il said, “My Lord! I swear
By Thy glory, none of men
Ever of its joys shall hear
But will strive to enter in.”

Round about His Paradise
God set sorrows and denials;
Laid the pathway steep and strait,
Hard to find and full of trials.
“Look again!” God said; and he
Looked, and came, and sadly spake:
“By Thy glorious majesty,
Not one man will entrance make!”

Then the Lord created Hell,
Set ablaze its ache and grieving;
Saying unto Jabrā'il,
“This is for the unbelieving.”
Jabrā'il looked and said, “I swear,
By Thy splendor, not a mortal,¹
When of hell-fire he shall hear,
Ever will approach its portal.”

Round about those awful gates
Allāh set soft sins and pleasures;
Made the pathway broad and plain,
Rich with joys and gifts and treasures.
“Look again,” said God; and he
Saw; and spake, “Save by Thy blessing,
O my Lord! there will not be
One that must not love transgressing.”

*Lord of the two-fold roads, we pray
Lead us upon the rightful way.*

1. Cf. “The Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ.”

*“Propitious” is He unto those that show
Compassion to His creatures; praise Him so.*

“No beast of earth, no fowl that flies with wings,”
Saith the great Book, “but is a people, too;
From Allāh sprang their life, and unto Him
They shall return: with such heed what ye do!”

There came before our Lord a certain one
Who said, “O Prophet! as I passed the wood,
I heard the voice of youngling doves which cried,
While near the nest their pearl-necked mother cooed.”

“Then in my cloth I tied those fledglings twain,
But all the way the mother fluttered nigh;
See! she hath followed hither!” Spake our Lord:
“Open thy knotted cloth, and stand thou by.”

But when she spied her nestlings, from the palm
Down flew the dove, of peril unfeared
So she might succor these. “Seest thou not,”
Our Lord said, “how the heart of this poor bird

“Grows, by her love, greater than his who rides
Full-face against the spear-blades? thinkest thou
Such fire divine was kindled to be quenched?
I tell ye nay! Put back upon the bough

The nest she claimeth thus. I tell ye nay!
From Allāh’s self cometh this wondrous love:
Yea! and I swear by Him who sent me here,
He is more tender than a nursing dove,

“More pitiful to men than she to these.
Therefore fear God in whatsoe’er ye deal
With the dumb peoples of the wing and hoof.
Yours are they; yet whene’er ye lift the steel

“To slay for meat, name first the name of God,
Saying ‘Bi-smi’llāh! God judge thee and me!
God give thee patience to endure to-day
The portion that He hath allotted thee.’

“So shall ye eat and sin not; else the blood
“Crieth against you. Thus our Prophet spake,
And Islām doeth it, naming God’s name
Before the slaughter,—for that white dove’s sake.

*By those dumb mouths be ye forgiven,
Ere ye are heard pleading with Heaven.*

*ad-Dārr! “Harmful” He is to them that sin
Mocking the truth; O man! fear Him herein.*

SHADDĀD, the son of ‘Ād, of Hadramaut,
Idolater, lord of the land and sea,
Hath it come to ye how he mocked at Heaven,
Saying the idols of the coast were best—
Sākia that makes the rain, and Hāfizah
The Thunderer, Razzāq who gives grain to men,
And Sālema, lady of life and death?—
And how he sware an oath by those four gods,
Drinking the palm-wine deep at Hadramaut,
That he would build a better Paradise
Than Allāh’s, and be Lord and God therein;
With earthly Houris fairer than those maids
Wrought of the musk and ambergris, who have
The great immortal breasts and black-pearl eyes;
With sweeter streams than Salsabīl,¹ and trees
Richer in fruit than Tūbā;² this he sware,
Abiding not the judgment, nor the blasts
Of Isrāfil, nor weighing of the scales.
Wherefore he gave command that there be built
In Akhaf, on the hills, beyond the sand—
Within a hollow vale walled by wild peaks—
A pleasure-house—beautiful with white courts
Of levelled marble, and in every court
A fountain, sparkling from a tank inlaid
With amber, nacre, coral; and around,
In every court, cloisters of columns carved
With reeded shafts and frontals, wonderful
For beast and bird and fish and leaf and flower.
And round about this pleasure-house he bade
A lovely garden bloom, terraced by lanes
Bosky with blossoming trees and rose-thickets,
Where hidden streamlets murmured and gold fruit
Loaded the boughs, and all the air was balm.
He gave command, moreover, that there rise
Hard by, with streets and markets, a fair town

Peopled by ministers of pleasure, and walled
With ramparts of the rose and pomegranate;
Wherethrough there led a double folding gate,
Fashioned of fragrant woods, and set with stars
Of silver, opening downwards to the vale,
Inscribed "The Paradise of King Shaddād."

And when the house was made, and all the courts
Were girdled with the carven shafts, and cooled
With leaping fountains; and the roses, blown,
Filled the green vale with sweetness; and the town
Was heaped with grain and wine, and people moved
Busy and glad about its new fair streets,
Shaddād set forth. A shining line of spears,
League-long, wound first upon the mountain-path;
And after them the camel-litters, decked
With silk and gold, and poles of silver, came
Bearing the Houris of his Paradise;
And next the Prince amid his lords: so clomb
The gay march up the sandy steeps, or streamed
Down the gray wadis. At the head of all
Rode one who held a flag of yellow silk,
Which had for its device, "*Amid his gods,*
Shaddād, the son of 'Ād, of Hadramaut,
Unasked of Allāh, wends to Paradise."

That night they entered at the silver gate,
Making bold cheer; and sweet the garden was,
And green the groves, and bright the pleasure-house
Lit with a thousand scented lamps, and loud
With dance and cymbal and the beat of drum.
But when the golden horse-shoe of the moon
Waned in the west, there came into the sky
Three clouds; and one was white and had the shape
Of a winged angel; one was red and burned
Across the planets like a blazing sword;
And one, thick black, gathered around the head
Of a bare hollow mountain, seamed with gaps
And caverns, wherefrom—full upon their feast—
Brake, of a sudden, flame and cataracts
Of blood-red molten rock, with pitchy smoke

Veiling the heavens, and rain of blinding dust,
All pierced by livid lightning-spears, and driven
By fierce winds, hotter than the breath of hell;
Which sucked the streams, and parched the trees, and dried
Life from the body, as a furnace draws
The moisture from the potter's clay, while earth
Rocked, quaking; and the thunder's vengeful voice
Rolled horrible from crag to crag, and mocked
The death-cry of those choked idolaters:
Whereof, when the sun rose, there breathed not one;
Nor any green thing lingered in the vale;
Nor road nor gate appeared; nor might a man
Say where the garden of King Shaddād stood:
So were the ways upturn, and that fair sin
Blotted from vision by the wrath of God.

Yet to this day there lurketh—lost to view
Of all men, hardly found by wandering wolf,
Spied seldom by the vulture's hungry eye—
The remnant of the garden of Iram.
Deep in the wilderness of Aden, hid
Behind wild peaks, and fenced with burning sands,
The perished relics of that pleasaunce lie
Which Shaddād made, mocking the power of God:
And one who tended camels in the land,
‘Abd Allāh ibn Kalāba, seeking there
A beast estrayed, followed her footmarks up
Into a gorge, which split a cliff in twain
From sky to sand, dark as the heart of night,
With thickets at its mouth and jutting rocks.
Therethrough he pushed, and when the light once more
Glimmered and grew, he spied a hollow, shut
In the gaunt barren peaks, with black dust strewn,
And piled with cindery crags and bladdered slag,
In midst of which lay—plain to see—the bones
Of Shaddād's city and his pleasure-house;
All with their withered gardens, and the gate
Rusted and ruined; and the cloistered courts
Swathed in the death-drift, and the marble tanks
Choked to their brims; the carven columns fall'n
Or thrust awry; the bright pavilions foul

With ashes, and with remnants of the dead:
For ibn Kalāba passed into the place,
And saw the valley thronged with carcases
Of men and women and the townspeople—
Not mouldered, as is wont, to whitened bone,
But dried, by the hot blasts of that dread night,
Unto a life in death; the skin and flesh
Yet clinging, and the robes of festival
Still gay of color; all those sinful ones
Slain in their sin even where the whirlwind struck:
So that he saw the dancers as they fell
With dancing-dress and timbrels; and the ring
Of watchers round them; and the slaves who made
Their music; and the bearers bringing wine,
Each by his shrivelled wineskin, dead and dry.
Also within the courts, lay corpses slim,
Rich-clad and delicate, with jewelled necks,
The Houris of that ruined Paradise.
The sunken eyes stared, and the drawn lips grinned
Under dead rose-crowns, and the shapely limbs
Were grown too lean for the loose tarnished gold
Of armlet and of anklet; dusty lay
Strings of dulled jewels on their shrunken breasts;
And brimmed with dust the cups were which they clasped
In stiff discolored fingers, In their midst
Sate, all a-gape, King Shaddād, for a throne
Propped his dead form, and round the waist of it
A sword hung, in a belt of gold and silk,
Hilted with pearls and rubies. This he took—
The camel-man—and glided, terrified,
Back from that City of the Dead; and found
The night-black gorge, and groped his way, and brought
The sword and sword-hilt into Hadramaut,
Telling the dread things seen of Allāh's wrath
Wrought on the misbelievers; and their streets
Wrecked, and their painted courts, peopled with dead.
Such awful end came on the men of 'Ād,
Who made the House of Iram; and their lord.

But no foot since hath found that road again,
Nor shall; till Isrāfil sets to his lips
The trumpet, and ad-Ḍārr will bid him blow.

*O Harmful unto mockers! we
Know and adore Thy majesty.*

1. A stream of Paradise.
2. The Tree of Happiness, which grows from Muḥammad's pavilion in Paradise.

*an-Nūr! “The Light” that lightens all who live!
By this great name to Allāh glory give.*

OF earth and heaven God is the Light.¹
As when a lamp upon a height
Is set within a niche, and gleams
From forth the glittering glass, and seems
A star,—wide fall the rays of it:—
So shines His glory, and 'tis lit
With holy oil was never pressed
From olive tree in east or west.
It burneth without touch of flame,
A light beyond all light: the same
Guideth the feet of men, and still
He leadeth by it whom He will.

*Light of the world! an-Nūr! illume
Our darkling pathway to the tomb.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xxiv. chapter “Of Light.”

*al-Hādī! Lord! the way is hard, and we,
Thy creatures, have none other “Guide” than Thee.*

BY many names and guides doth God
Lead men along the upward road;
He, unto each land under Heaven,
A prophet of its own hath given:
Hūd, Idrīs, Ayyūb, Mūsā,—all
Upon the self-same Lord did call;
Seeing there is no way besides
His way, the Guider of the guides;
Nor any light to mortals known
Except al-Hādī—His alone.

’Tis told, nigh to a city-gate
Four fellow-travellers hungry sate,
An Arab, Pārsa, Turk, and Héllēn;
And one was chosen forth, to seek
Their evening meal, with dirhems thrown
Into a common scrip; but none
Could with his fellows there agree
What meat therewith should purchased be.
“Buy *iüzüm*,” quoth the Turk, “which food
Is cheaper, sweeter, or so good?”
“Not so,” the Arab cried, “I say
Buy ‘anab, and the most ye may.”
“Name not thy trash!” the Pārsa said,
“Who knoweth *iüzüm* or ‘anab?
Bring *angūr*, for the country’s store
Is ripe and rich.” The Héllēn, who bore
Their dirhems, clamored, “What ill thing
Is *angūr*? Surely I will bring
Staphylion green, *staphylion* black,
And a fair meal we shall not lack.”
Thus wrangled they, and set to try
With blows what provend he should buy,
When, lo! before their eyes did pass,
Laden with grapes, a gardener’s ass.

Sprang to his feet each man, and showed
With eager hand, that purple load.
“See *üzüm!*” said the Turk; and “See
Angûr!” the Pârsa; “what should be
Better?” “Nay, ‘anab! ‘anab ’tis!”
The Arab cried. The Héllén said, “This
Is my *staphylion!*” Then they bought
Their grapes in peace.

Hence be ye taught!

*But unto us Thy changeless name
Is Allâh—praisëd be the same.*

*al-Azalī! al-Bāqī! praise to Thee
 Who wast before Beginning, and will be
 After the Ending. From Thy mercy came
 Man's breath, and unto Thee returns the same.*

AL-A‘RĀF¹ saith the seventh of “the Book:”—
 In the Beginning God from Ādām took
 All who should be his seed, and bade them bear
 Witness upon themselves, putting His fear
 And knowledge in the hearts of all to be,
 As salt is set in all the waves of the sea.
 A countless, nameless, throng there gathered they,
 That unborn multitude; and God did say,
 “Testify! Am I not your Lord?” And those
 Rep lied, “Yea, Lord! we testify!” Propose
 Never, then, Man! to say, “we did not have
 Guidance;” it shall be answered, “Allāh gave
 With life that light which leadeth to the grave.”

And in the chapter of “Yā-Sīn”² it saith—
 Read in the Muslim’s ear at hour of death:³—
 A blast! and then another blast! and, lo!
 At summons of the trumpet, all shall go
 Forth from their grave-beds, thronging once again
 Unto their Lord; and some, in fear and pain,
 “Shall cry, “Woe, woe! what waketh us? Is this
 God’s word come true?” and some, in joy and bliss,
 Shall say, “Now, praise to God! His prophets spake
 Truth unto us.” For all mankind shall wake
 Together, at the trumpet; and shall wend
 Together, to the Judgment, in the end.

And no soul shall be wronged in that dread place
 For aught not wrought; nor any soul find grace
 Except for what it wrought; and there shall fall
 Endless delight in Paradise on all
 Who kept that witness! happy they shall be
 Reclining with sweet consorts, ’neath the Tree

Which bears all fruits, and groweth by the Throne.
And they shall hear the Lord say to His own,
“PEACE!”—they shall hear the Merciful say so.

But to the sinners shall be thundered, “Go!
Divide herefrom! did not ye testify?”
“Yea, dreadful Lord!”—thus shall they make reply,
Descending into Hell.

*Thy mercy send,
Thou, the Beginning and the End!*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, chapter vii. verse 172.

2. Qur’ān, chapter xxxvi.

3. This Sūrah is recited at the death-beds of Muslims.

*Inheritor! all things proceed from Thee,
And re-committed to Thy hands shall be.*

THE chapter of al-Hajar.¹ There is nought
But from the treasury of God was brought;
 Such and so much He lends them; winds and waters;
Have *ye* the store of these things, or of aught?;

Did *ye* set in the sky the starry band,
Or pile the mountain peaks upon the land?

 Verily He hath made and will unmake them,
And all these shall return into His hand.

“O Rose!” the Dewdrop said, “whence didst thou spring,
That art so sweet and proud and fair a thing?”

“From dust I sprang,” she said, “and ere to-morrow
Back to the dust I shall be mouldering.”

“O Dewdrop!” said the Rose, “where didst thou gain
This light, that like a gem on me hath lain?”

“A cloud,” he said, “uplifted me from ocean,
And I must trickle to the deep again.”

The Bulbul heard; “O Allāh’s rose!” it said,
“The air is fragrant with thee, being dead;

 O Allāh’s Dewdrop! ere the sea did suck thee,
She was the fairer; be thou comforted!”

For saith the chapter of al-Hajar: “Tell
My servants I have made the heavens well,
 And the earth well, and with a steadfast purpose;
And Paradise is Mine, and Mine is Hell.”²

*Inheritor! all things are Thine;
al-Wārith! O Thou might Divine!*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, chapter xv. verse 21.

2. Cf. Qur’ān, xv. vv.49, 85.

*Earth knows, heaven shows; the holy scriptures say,
How righteous and “unerring” is Thy way.*

“WE sent it down upon the ‘Night of Power,’¹
The Book which ‘doth declare’
In all the year that night is best: one hour
Thereof, in praise and prayer,

“Is worth a thousand days of joy; for then
The Angels bear commands,
Bringing the will of al-Rashīd to men;
Descending on all lands.

“Peace ruleth till the rising of that dawn,
While Allāh doth ordain
How many souls those twelve moons shall be born,
How many shall attain.

“His mercy; for the books are brought of these,
And each account is cast;
And Allāh maketh ‘the allowances,’
Accepting souls at last.”

Thus spake our Lord, and Ayesha replied,²
“O Prophet! are there none
Accepted, save by mercy?” “None!” he cried,
By God! I say not one!”

“Not thou!—not even thou!—*thou* not to go,
Unquestioned, into heaven,
Who walked with Allāh’s Angels, and below
Taught us the message given?”—

He drew his cloth across his bended face
And thrice he spake to her:
“Except God’s mercy cover me with grace,
I shall not enter there!”

*O al-Rashīd! and if not he,
Increase to us Thy clemency.*

1. Cf. Qur'ān, xcvi. chapter "Of Power."

2. Cf. the Mishkat-el-Māsābīh.

*O loving-kind, “long suffering” Lord! once more
We praise Thee, magnifying az-Zabūr.*

PATIENT is Allāh, and He loveth well
The patient, saith “the Book,”¹ and such as dwell
 In kindness, asking pardon of their sins
Each dawn, and pardoning the blamable.

Islām! this is the Faith! thyself resign,
Soul, mind, and body, to the will divine:
 The kingdom and the glory and the power
Are God’s, and God’s the government,—not thine!

THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD! and He is All;
And whatso doth befall ye doth befall
 By His decree: therefore, with fear and love
Upon His glorious names devoutly call.

*Allāh! His holy will be done!
Islām!—we bow before His throne.*

1. Cf. Qur’ān, iii. v. 15, chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

THE END.

NOTES.

Page 15, line 17.—One version of this legend says that Soharah (or Zoharah) herself, the spirit of the planet Venus, descended to tempt the two Angels. Hārūt and Mārūt are fabled to be confined still in the vicinity of Babel, where a man may go to learn sorcery of them, hearing their voices, but never seeing their forms.

Page 17, line 20.—Jabrā'īl, or Jibraīl, is called in Arabian theology *Rū' h-el-Amīn*, “the Faithful Spirit,” or *Rū' h-el-Kuddūs*, “the Holy Spirit.” It was he who delivered the Qur’ān to Muḥammad.

Page 18, line 3.—A commentator on this legend writes: “Some say that Sulaymān brought these horses, being a thousand in number, from Dimashq and Nisibis, which cities he had taken; others say that they were left him by his father, who took them from the Amalekites; while others, who prefer the marvellous, pretend that they came up out of the sea, and had wings. However, Sulaymān, having one day a mind to view the horses, ordered them to be brought before him, and was so taken up with them that he spent the remainder of the day, till after sunset, in looking on them; by which means he almost neglected the prayer, which ought to have been said at that time, till it was too late: but when he perceived his omission, he was so greatly concerned at it, that ordering the horses to be brought back, he killed them all as an offering to God, except only a hundred of the best of them. But God made him ample amends for the loss, by giving him dominion over the winds.”

Page 18, line 17.—‘Arafāt is a mountain near Makkah, so named from the tradition that Ādam, upon his repentance, was reunited there to Eve, after a separation of two hundred years.

Page 22, line 1.—Isrāfil is one of the Archangels, who will sound the last trumpet at the resurrection. He has “the sweetest voice of all God’s creatures.”

Page 22, line 13.—Iblīs, “He who despairs,” is Shaitān, or Satan, who fell from Heaven on account of arrogantly refusing to pay reverence to Ādam at the creation, when all the other Angels worshipped the first man.

Page 23, line 1.—*Wuzu 'h*, or washing (either with actual water, or by imitating the process with sand, etc.), must precede all those prayers, which are *farz*, or “incumbent.” These are commenced in a standing attitude, *Kiyām*, the thumbs touching the lobes of the ears and the face turning towards Makkah.

Page 24, line 9.—The “Companions of the right hand” are so called because they will have the book of their good deeds put into their right hands in token of salvation; while evil-doers will have their scroll of condemnation, at the last day, thrust into their left hands.

Page 24, line 13.—“Such, moreover, as of old time,” etc. These are the early prophets and holy teachers in all nations. The text of the Qur’ān calls them “the leaders, the leaders!” that emphatic repetition denoting their dignity, and the assurance of their prominence in the final reward.

Page 25, line 23.—“Mawz-trees.” The original word *talh'* may mean either the plantain, or that acacia which has small round golden blossoms.

Page 26, line 1.—Sale has a citation upon these privileged attributes of the Houris. “Allāh has created them purposely of finer materials than the females of this world, and subject to none of those inconveniences which are natural to the sex. Some understand this passage of the beautiful women; who, though they died old and ill-favored, shall yet all be restored to their youth and beauty in Paradise.”

Page 27, line 8.—“at Adhān.” The time of the call to prayer, and especially after the sun has begun to decline.

Page 31, line 13.—“And spider.” One of the Sūrahs of the Qur’ān, the 29th, is named after this insect.

Page 32.—“The Verse of the Throne.” This (which is often engraved on seal rings in the East) is so called from the word *Koorsīy*,

the “chair or throne” of Allāh, which occurs in the sublime passage cited. In the judgment of Muhammedans {Muslims} the “Throne-Verse” is one of the noblest portions of the Qur’ān, surpassing in majesty of diction all other human compositions. It is taken from the 2d Sūrah, verse 256, and is rendered very exactly, as below, by Mr. Redhouse (to whose most learned and laborious article in the “Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,” January, 1880, my indebtedness has been extremely great):

“God, save whom there is no God, is the Living, the Self-existing One. Drowsiness overcometh Him not, nor sleep. Unto Him belongeth whatever is in the heavens, and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that shall make intercession with Him, save by His permission? He knoweth whatever is before them, and whatever is behind them; and they comprehend not a single matter of His knowledge, save only that which He hath willed. His firmament spans the heavens and the earth, the preservation whereof doth not distress Him. And He is the Most High, the Most Supreme.”

N.B.—Each chapter of the Qur’ān is called a *Sūrah*, a term signifying a course of bricks in a wall; and the Sūrahs are divided into ‘āyāt, verses, or more literally “signs.”

Page 33.—This Sūrah, 59, is known as the chapter “Of the Emigration.”

Page 34, line 1.—The Muslim doctors call the scriptural Terah, the father of Ibrāhīm, by the name of Azar. This was also the title of the god of the planet Mars. Ibrāhīm’s father is moreover styled Zarah in the Talmud, and Athar also, by Eusebius.

Page 34, line 25.—“Friend of Allāh.” The Muslims so denominate Ibrāhīm, *al-Khalīl*.

Page 37.—This is suggested from Sūrah 35, the chapter “Of the Angels,” or “Of the Originator.” The Archangel Jabrā’īl is said to have appeared to Muhammed, on the night of his journey to Heaven, having no less than three hundred pairs of wings!

Page 38, line 15.—“Mīkā’īl,” or Mikā’īl. The Archangel here named was especially the guardian of the Yəhūdīs. The Israelites of Makkah told Muhammed that they would have received his Qur’ān, if Mīkā’īl instead of Jabrā’īl had revealed it.

Page 39, line 15.—“Azrāēl.” The Archangel of Death.

Page 40, line 1.—“God’s Friend.” *Vide* note on page 35, *line 15.*

Page 44, line 16.—“People of the bench.” This was the name given to the poor persons whom the Prophet sustained by alms every day, and who used to wait for his gifts, sitting upon the bench outside Muḥammad’s house at al-Madīnah.

Page 49.—The very remarkable Sūrah quoted here, entitled sometimes “The Brightness,” came to the prophet thus: “It is related that no revelation having been vouchsafed to Muḥammad for several days, in answer to some questions put to him by the Koreish, because he had confidently promised to resolve them the next day, without adding the exception, *if it please God*, or because he had repulsed an importunate beggar, or else because a dead puppy lay under his seat, or for some other reason; his enemies said that God had left him: whereupon this chapter was sent down for his consolation.”

Page 50.—“The Journey of the Night.” “It is a dispute,” writes Sale, “among the Muhammedan {Muslim} divines, whether their Prophet’s night-journey was really performed by him corporally, or whether it was only a dream or vision. Some think the whole was no more than a vision; and allege an express tradition of Moāwiyah, one of Muḥammad’s successors, to that purpose. Others suppose he was carried bodily to al-Quds, but no farther; and that he ascended thence to Heaven in spirit only. But the received opinion is, that it was no vision, but that he was actually transported in the body to his journey’s end; and if any impossibility be objected, they think it a sufficient answer to say, that it might easily be effected by an omnipotent agent.”

Page 51, line 25.—“One *Fātiḥah.*” The name of the opening prayer of Muhammedans.

Page 52, line 22.—“Monker and Nakīr” are the two Angels who conduct “the examination of the Tomb.” They come to a man directly he is laid in his grave, and catechise him as to his faith. If he repeats quickly and gladly the formula of Islām, they cause him to repose in peace; but if he is uncertain or heterodox, they belabor him with iron clubs, till his cries are so bitter that they are heard all through the earth, except by men and Djins. Then the two black Ministers press the clay

down upon the corpse, and leave it to be wasted and consumed till the time of resurrection.

Page 59, line 15.—“ ’Hadīth.” The traditional sayings which supplement the Qur’ān.

Page 60, line 2.—“Zem-Zem.” This is the holy well at Makkah, within the sacred precincts, believed to be that very spring which was revealed to Hagar when she fled with Ishmael.

Page 62.—This legend of Nimrūd is alluded to in Sūrah 21 of the Qur’ān, entitled the “Chapter of Prophets.”

Page 63, line 19.—“Black Halīmah.” The Prophet was suckled by a Bedouin foster-nurse.

Page 64, line 6.—“Hirā.” A wild and solitary mountain near Makkah.

Page 68, line 5.—“Mikāt.” These are the last six stages on the journey to Makkah. The *i’hrām*, or “garb of sanctity,” consists of two wrappers without seams, one bound round the waist, the other passed over the shoulders. The *tawāf* is the seven-fold circuit of the Ka’bah, made three times quickly, and four times slowly, by all pilgrims.

Page 73, line 4.—“Ye let stray your she-camels.” Nothing is held more valuable among the goods of an Arab than a she camel near to foaling.

Page 73, line 13.—“Who killed thee, little maid?” This alludes to the ancient practice of infanticide among the Arabs, which Muḥammad strenuously denounced.

Page 74, line 7.—“He saw it and he heard.” Alluding to the Prophet and his journey to Heaven.

Page 79, line 7.—“*al-Akhāf*” is the plural of *Hekf*, and signifies “lands which lie in a winding or narrow boundary,” specially applied to a district in the province of Hadramaut.

Page 82, line 14.—“*al-Kāuthar.*” This word signifies *abundance*, especially of *good*, and thence *the gift of wisdom and prophecy*. Or it may mean *abundance of wealth, followers*, and the like. It is here used of a river in Paradise, whence the water is derived into Muḥammad’s pond, of which the blessed are to drink before their admission. According to a tradition of the Prophet, this river, wherein his Lord promised him abundant good, is sweeter than honey, whiter than milk, cooler than snow, and smoother than cream; its banks are of chrysolites, and those who drink of it shall never thirst.

Page 87, line 2.—“*al-Tārek*” is the “star that appears” by night, *i.e.*, the morning star.

Page 89, line 1.—“When the soul comes to the neck.” A Qur’ānic phrase for the last gasp of death.

Page 92, line 20.—“The roses on that tree.” In the mystic language of the East, the rose is the symbol of that Divine beauty which is the object of the soul’s love.

Page 94, line 16.—“*Hilliyyūn.*” This means literally “exalted places.”

Page 95, line 4.—“*Tasmīn.*” A stream in Paradise, so called because it waters the highest regions there.

Page 96, line 12.—“*al-Fātīhah.*” This is the 1st chapter of the Qur’ān, which is also a prayer, and held in great veneration by the Muhammedans {Muslims}, who give it many honorable titles; as the chapter of *prayer, of praise, of thanksgiving, of treasure, etc.* They regard it as the quintessence of the whole Qur’ān, and often repeat it in their devotions both public and private, as Christians do the Lord’s Prayer.

Page 96, line 24.—“The morning mills.” At daybreak in Eastern countries almost the first sound of awaking domestic life is the noise of the stones used to grind meal.

Page 98, line 6.—“The time for prayer,” says Professor Palmer, “is called from the minarets of the masjids by Muezzins or criers, in the following words: ‘God is great’ (4 times); ‘I bear witness that there is

no God but God' (twice); I bear witness that Muḥammad is the apostle of God' (twice); 'Come hither to prayers' (twice); 'Come hither to salvation' (twice); 'God is just!' 'There is no other God than God!' In the early morning the Muezzin adds, 'Prayer is better than sleep!' "

Page 101 (note).—“The *Mishkāt-al-Māsābīh*.” The book of the conversations of the Prophet.

Page 106, line 7.—*Lailat-al-Kadr*, “The Night of Power,” was that on which the Qur’ān was declared to have been revealed.

Page 123, line 18.—“al-Barsakh.” The Qur’ān says, “Behind them shall be a bar, until the day of resurrection.” Upon this Sale writes: “The original word *barzakh*, here translated ‘bar’ primarily signifies any partition, or interstice, which divides one thing from another; but is used by the Arabs not always in the same, and sometimes in an obscure sense. They seem generally to express by it what the Héllēns did by the word Hades; one while using it for the place of the dead, another while for the time of their continuance in that state, and another while for the state itself. It is defined by their critics to be the interval or space between this world and the next, or between death and the resurrection; every person who dies being said to enter into *al-Barzakh*. The commentators on this passage expound it as a barrier, or invincible obstacle, cutting off all possibility of return into the world, after death.”

Page 123, line 22.—“Birds.” If the departed person was a believer, the Muslims say two Angels meet his soul, and convey it to Heaven, that its place there may be assigned, according to its merit and degree. They distinguish the souls of the Faithful into three classes: the first of prophets, whose souls are admitted into Paradise immediately; the second of martyrs, whose spirits, according to a tradition of Muḥammad, rest in the crops of green birds which eat of the fruits and drink of the rivers of Paradise; and the third of other believers, concerning the state of whose souls before the resurrection there are various opinions. Some say they stay near the sepulchres, with liberty, however, of going wherever they please; which they confirm from Muḥammad’s manner of saluting the dead, alluded to elsewhere.

Page 131, line 1.—The “ten holy eves” are the first ten nights of the sacred month of *Dhu'l Hejjeh*.

Page 131, line 7.—“Iram” was the name of the palace and pleasure-garden built by Shaddād, son of ‘Ād, in the desert of Aden. The story is related on another page.

Page 131, line 9.—The Thamudites of the Hadramaut having killed their prophet, were utterly destroyed by tempests, and their city depopulated.

Page 146, line 11.—“al-Hudhud.” The Arab historians, Sale says, tell us that Sulaymān, having finished the temple of al-Quds, went in pilgrimage to Makkah, where, having stayed as long as he pleased, he proceeded towards Yaman; and leaving Makkah in the morning, he arrived by noon at Sanaa, and being extremely delighted with the country, rested there; but wanting water to make the ablution, he looked among the birds for the lapwing, called by the Arabs *al-Hudhud*, whose business it was to find it; for it is pretended she was sagacious or sharp-sighted enough to discover water underground, which the devils used to draw, after she had marked the place by digging with her bill: they add, that this bird was then taking a tour in the air, whence, seeing one of her companions alighting, she descended also, and having had a description given her by the other of the city of Saba, whence she was just arrived, they both went together to take a view of the place, and returned soon after Sulaymān had made the inquiry which occasioned what follows.

“It may be proper to mention here what the Eastern writers fable of the manner of Sulaymān’s travelling. They say that he had a carpet of green silk, on which his throne was placed, being of a prodigious length and breadth, and sufficient for all his forces to stand on, the men placing themselves on his right hand, and the spirits on his left; and that when all were in order, the wind, at his command, took up the carpet, and transported it, with all that were upon it, wherever he pleased; the army of birds at the same time flying over their heads, and forming a kind of canopy, to shade them from the sun.”

Page 147, lines 17-20.—“The sea-worm and the ant.” The legend is that Sulaymān used the *teredo* to bore his topaz, and, by filling the winding hole of the ruby with sugar and water, tempted an ant to draw a silk thread through it.

Page 165, line 26.—“Monker and Nakīr.” These are the two Angels who visit the dead immediately after burial, and having set them

upright in the grave, question them as to their faith and actions, as before described.

Page 165, line 31.—“al-Sirāt.” The narrow bridge which all must cross from this to the next world, “finer than a hair and sharper than a razor.”

“This bridge,” it is written, “is beset on each side with briars and hooked thorns; which will, however, be no impediment to the good, for they shall pass with wonderful ease and swiftness, like lightning or the wind, Muḥammad and his Muslims leading the way; whereas the wicked, what with the slipperiness and extreme narrowness of the path, the entangling of the thorns, and the extinction of the light, which directed the former to Paradise, will soon miss their footing, and fall down headlong into hell, which is gaping beneath them.”

“Muḥammad seems to have borrowed this from the Magians, who teach that on the last day all mankind will be obliged to pass a bridge called Pūl Chīnāvād, that is, *the strait bridge*, leading directly into the other world on the midst of which the Angels appointed by God will stand, who will require of every one a strict account of his actions. The Yəhūdīs speak likewise of the bridge of hell, which they say is no broader than a thread.”

Page 168, line 9.—“Three darknesses.” The body, the womb, and the amnion.

Page 174, line 15.—This is the origin of the *Hallal*, a custom of Muslim hunters and butchers, who pronounce the formula of excuse and pity before slaying any animal.

Page 184, line 1.—“al-Aarāf.” The partition between Heaven and Hell. The chapter quoted says, “And betwixt the two there is a wall, and they shall cry out to the companions of Paradise, ‘Peace be upon you,’ but they cannot enter it, although they so desire.”