

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Charlotte Elizabeth

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Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

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-

TO MRS . HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM ,

IN adopting a nearly obsolete custom, and prefixing a dedication to my little work, I shelter myself behind individual obscurity and insignificance; and instead of marking the volume with my own name, desire to embellish it with yours.

But, strong as are the feelings that swell in my heart while so doing—feelings of personal affection and gratitude—of veneration for your truly Christian character, of admiring respect for the talents bestowed upon you, and yet more for the uninterrupted consecration of those talents to the glory of God; yet I dare not address you in the language of panegyric; for were I to do so, you would assuredly reply to me in that of reproof: and referring all to Him who worketh in us both to will and to do, tell me, in the words of your admired Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

And this grace, my dear Madam, has not been bestowed in vain. You have laboured abundantly; and as the season of your rest approaches, we behold in you a delightful encouragement to go and do likewise. Under all the infirmities that length of days must naturally bring to these earth-born bodies of ours, and all the severe pains that your Heavenly Father in His love sees meet for a time to chasten you with, we find you in patience possessing your soul, supported by the power of the everlasting arm, and with tranquil joy anticipating the call that shall bid you receive an imperishable crown, and cast it down before the throne of your Redeemer.

In the midst of temporal afflictions, occasionally aggravated by ill health, has this trifling volume been completed for the press. Like its author, it is one of the weak things of the world; but it is sent forth with much prayer for that blessing which can render the weakest effectual. Should it arrest the attention of one thoughtless reader, disposing him to inquire after the things that belong unto his peace; should it excite in one mind an emotion of sympathy for the many millions in heathen lands among whom the ray of the Gospel has not shone, nor the call to awake and arise been addressed to the souls dead in trespasses and sins; and should that emotion lead to one additional effort in the great cause of Missions, the prayer will be answered, and the writer satisfied.

With equal affection and respect, I subscribe myself, My dear Madam,

Your grateful friend

and servant,

THE AUTHOR.

**OSRIC,
A
Missionary Tale.**

'TIS eve:—ascending high, the ocean storm
Spreads in dark volumes his portentous form;
His hollow breezes, bursting from the clouds,
Now reach the sail, and whistle through the shrouds.
Roused by the roar of elemental strife,
The swelling waters tremble into life;
Lo! through the billows of that raging sea,
The storm beat vessel labours on her way,
With bending mast, rent sail, and straining sides,
High on the foaming precipice she rides,
Then reeling onward with descending prow,
In giddy sweep, glides to the gulf below:
Her fragile form conflicting billows rock,
Her timbers echo to the frequent shock,
While bursting o'er the deck, each roaring wave
Bears some new victim to a hideous grave.
The thunder-bolt rives the opposing blast,
And the blue death-fire plays upon the mast,
Nor mortal force, nor practised art avail,
The vessel drives, abandoned to the gale.
Above, more darkly frowns the brow of night,
Beneath, the waters glow more fiercely bright;
Ploughing a track of mingled foam and fire,
Fast flies the ship before the tempest's ire,
While reeling to and fro, the hapless crew,
Gaze on the wild abyss, and shudder at the view.

Dread was the night: but oh! how doubly dread
That scene, when tinged with morning's dusky red.
There, where her headlong course the vessel bends,
One rugged line of frowning rocks ascends,
In giant height, magnificently steep,
They rear their towering forms above the deep;
Wild and fantastic, bleak and black they rise,
And pile their mighty masses to the skies:
No friendly port that awful wall divides,
But one impervious bulwark spurns the tides.

To heap new horrors on the yawning grave,
A bounding iceberg glitters on the wave:
In wild dismay the mimic town they rear,
Where lofty spires and pinnacles appear:

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High and majestic gleams its snow-capped head,
And wide beneath the main its fatal base is spread.
Retiring at the glance of cheerful day,
Far to the west the tempest rolls away,
Yet with faint hands and sinking hearts the crew,
Speed to their posts, and trim the ship anew,
For still the frozen isle with threatening sweep,
Hangs on their path, and thunders through the deep:
No skill can save them:—on that icy rock
The vessel strikes, and staggers from the shock,
The glassy base no kind support affords,
While waves rush fiercely through the severed boards,
Sinking apace, with tottering hull she floats,
Till the sad crew could loose the ready boats,
And loud the cry of desolation rose,
When o'er the lofty mast they saw the billows close.

They strain the oars, and spread their puny sails,
To catch the breathing of the softened gales:
Coasting all day along the rocky shore,
Some opening creek for shelter to explore,
Deeming that wild and rugged steep must own
An inlet to Columbia's mountain throne.
As fades the day, the angry breakers rise,
And many an echo to their roar replies;
Warned by such sound, and by the rustling breeze,
They furl the sail, the diving oar they seize—
In vain—for, hurled upon the ruthless stone,
One boat, with all her little band, is gone!
Through the unclouded azure of the sky,
Resplendent and full-orbed, the moon rides high;
But bitter is the wind, and in the wave
The toil-worn seamen view their destined grave;
Behind the summit of a towering height,
Pale Cynthia seems to veil her from the sight;
While a curled billow rears his crest of pride,
And whelms the last frail bark beneath the tide.

"Mysterious Fate! O wherefore dost thou give
A wretch, so thankless for thy grace, to live?
O'er the fond sire, the spouse of faithful soul,
The duteous son, those spreading waters roll:
Such ties thou hast dissolved, remorseless sea—
Why waste thy idle clemency on me?"
So spake the sole survivor of the train
Whose breathless forms were tossed upon the main;
From the tall rock the wide expanse he viewed,
And thus his melancholy theme pursued:—
"There rode our gallant ship, while flattering gales

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The painted streamers kissed, and fanned the sails;
There, round her path, the wanton waves would play,
As proud to bear her on her prosperous way.
Ocean, thou art the world's epitome,
Its friendship and its faith reside in thee;
When Fortune's favouring breezes ceased to blow,
Dark grew thy face, and ruffled was thy brow;
Those very tides that bent beneath her tread,
Roll in exulting malice o'er her head."

A passing smile of bitter irony
Gleamed, as his front was lifted to the sky—
"And thou, O fickle Moon, that roll'st above,
Thy wandering splendour is the light of love;
How sweetly on our peaceful track, erewhile,
Shone the soft ray of that endearing smile!
But where, kind Goddess, was thy silver beam
When the rock frowned, and death was in the stream?"

His soul had early writhed beneath the smart
Of base ingratitude, and treacherous art;
But late, surrounded by a listening throng,
Theme of the sage's pen, the poet's song;
Best of the good, and boldest of the brave,
Then, a forgotten exile on the wave;
And now, to name, to home, to country lost,
A cast-away upon a desert coast!
'Tis on the fairest bud, the tenderest flower,
The canker-worm displays its venom'd power;
'Tis on the mighty oak, the spreading ash,
The thunder-bolt is hurled, and bent the flash.
The flower has lost its tint of early bloom,
Yet its torn fragments breathe a rich perfume:—
Lopped are the boughs, and gone the robe of green,
But still the towering trunk speaks what the tree has been.

OSRIC had felt the arrow in his heart,
And proudly rose, superior to the smart;
Still, in the glances of his eagle eye,
Shone inward peace, and calm philosophy;
By temperance nurtured, on his native soil,
His hardy frame defied disease and toil:—
Oft when luxurious viands steamed around,
The hermit's fare his simple meal had crowned;
He knew the wants of nature to supply,
Those wants unsatisfied, to smile and die.
What lacked he yet?—he lacked the heaven-taught lore,
Prospering to bend, and chastened to adore.

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His pliant mind, in philosophic schools,
Was warped to systems formed by specious rules;
With reason's dim, unaided eye, he saw
Creation swayed by one unchanging law;
Evil and good promiscuously he found;
Rapture and woe trod their alternate round—
Man seemed the sport of Fortune, made in vain,
His life, a bark launched on the treacherous main;
Reason his pilot, fickle chance the breeze,
Death the sole port on those uncertain seas;
Thence, landing on an undiscovered shore,
The disembodied spirit might explore
Regions, in more than earthly splendour bright,
Or scenes of darkness, and eternal night;
But all was wrapped in one mysterious shroud,
Nor reason's keenest gaze could pierce the cloud.

Yet deemed he not but some Eternal Cause
Formed the high scheme, and fixed the wond'rous laws;
Wheeled the round earth, upon her viewless pole,
And gave the planetary spheres to roll;
Called Nature, blooming from her annual grave,
Swelled the dark tide, and curbed the rising wave;
Gave man the soul that sparkles in his eye,
And formed that soul for immortality:
Creator infinite, and Judge alone,
This God should summon them before his throne,
And speak a doom of bliss or woe on all,
Equal and just, and fixed beyond recal.
Yet more, he knew that, pitying mortal woe,
God's Son, incarnate, had sojourned below;
Had lived in poverty, and guiltless died,
For wretched man some blessing to provide.
But darkly were these living truths impressed,
With dubious outline, upon Osric's breast.
What marvel, then, God's work so faintly known,
Osric should rest his hope upon his own,
And build a towering castle on the sand,
And glory in the labours of his hand?
But clouds unlooked—for veil his summer skies,
The rain descends, the stormy winds arise,
And wave, succeeding wave, must yet assail,
Ere the strong fabric of his hope shall fail;
Show him the vengeance of a righteous God,
And leave him shelterless beneath the rod;
While the stern voice of Justice, from the sky,
Proclaims, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Ask not the long dark story of his woes,

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But view the sufferer, wrapped in sweet repose,
Beneath a crag, with dripping sea-weed hung,
His weary frame the cast-away hath flung;
Ev'n ruthless Memory slumbers o'er the tale,
And Fancy's unsubstantial mockeries fail;
No longer summoned, by her idle wand,
Unreal phantoms live at her command—
Shadows of joys for ever passed away,
Mistrustful bodings of the coming day,
Or visionary bliss, that Reason spurns,
Though the fond heart to such illusions turns,
As, deadly like the sun's untempered ray,
Strike to the brain, and while they dazzle, slay,
Quaffing unseen the moisture that supplies
Life's fragile stem, they dance, while the poor victim dies.
But all were banished now, and slumber spread
Her darkest, dreamless mantle, o'er his head,
Till morning's ray gleamed o'er the gilded wave,
And cheered the rude apartment of his cave.
The sunbeam resting on the sleeper's eye,
Roused him once more to life and memory:
He felt that strange, mysterious, waking pain,
That thrills the heart, and presses on the brain,
When some deep anguish of the former night,
But half remembered, floats before the sight;
The sickening soul turns inward from the view
Of deprivations terrible and new—
A loved-one whose expiring sigh is o'er,
Or living, parted—to return no more.

Osric arose, and gazed upon the scene;
No vestige told where death had lately been;
No corpse was cast upon the stony steep;
No wreck appeared upon the azure deep;
The wind was hushed, and leisurely the wave
Rolled, with soft dirges, o'er the seaman's grave;
And lo! he sees the fatal iceberg ride,
With languid motion, stealing o'er the tide.
Wonder and grief with admiration swell,
While his moist eyes upon its movements dwell;
It seemed as broken rocks and ruined towers,
Together met, were clad by snowy showers,
While here and there, a lovely palace shone
In crystal, gemmed with many a brilliant stone;
For in transparent ice he might survey
Prismatic hues, lent by the morning's ray,
So beauteous and so terrible, it glows
With summer tints, and frowns with winter snows.
Its frozen bulk seemed destined to retain
A giant strength, coeval with the main;

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But suddenly, arrested in its course,
It paused, as owning some superior force,
Then trembling rose, with unexpected swell,
And in ten thousand glittering fragments fell,
Bursting, self-rent, with such tremendous roar,
Redoubled thunders echoed from the shore;
A sweeping whirlwind seemed to plough the tide,
And bid the agitated waves divide;
Engulfed in ocean's bed those fragments lie,
And all is tranquil sea, and cloudless sky.

An exclamation, in a tongue unknown,
Now told the wanderer he was not alone;
He turned, and started, to behold so near,
A band of swarthy Indians in the rear:
Half menacing they stood, with sullen air,
But what can daunt the courage of despair?
Hunger and toil had faded Osric's eye,
Yet could not quell his inborn majesty:
Equal to him the doom, or life, or death—
His native speech he deemed were idle breath:
With brow unruffled, and with lips unclosed,
On their dark visages his look reposed,
Admiring while they held their low debate,
In harsh deep accents, on the captive's fate.

Equipped for chase, yet well prepared for strife,
Each holds the hunter's spear, the warrior's knife;
A bear's rough hide, that from the neck depends,
Across the shoulder to the knee descends;
A slighter vest, with gay embroidery graced,
In plenteous folds, is gathered round the waist;
A belt was furnished by the slaughtered deer,
Where the broad axe and tomahawk appear;
While a young otter's undivided skin
Contains the hunter's simple stores within:
The garment's lower edge strong buskins meet,
And well-constructed sandals graced the feet.
Nor Europe's pale, nor Afric's sable stain,
O'er the strong features of the Indian reign;
Small, dark, and exquisitely formed, the eye
Darts forth an eagle glance of scrutiny;
The long straight hair, and thin o'erarching brow,
Are ebon black; the teeth as driven snow.
In every countenance might Osric trace
A semblance to the wild Egyptian race,
Or those who, groaning under Egypt's rod,
Were succoured by the arm of Jacob's God.

While yet the strange and warlike group he scanned,
The seeming chief approached him from the band,
And soon, in pleased astonishment, he hung
On the loved accents of his native tongue:
With speech imperfect, but in friendly tone,
The Indian bade him make his purpose known—
Unfruitful was the scene; why wander there?
What was his country? and his comrades where?
Short was the tale, and barely was it said,
Ere with rude haste the barren ground they spread.
Sweet as the manna, and the rock-born wave,
That God's free bounty in the desert gave
To famished Israel, was that simple feast
His mercy furnished for a thankless guest;
Thankless to Him, whose all-sufficient care
Feeds the unthinking wanderers of the air;
Thankless to Him who snatched him from the tide,
Preserved his being, and his wants supplied.
Their master's crib the very oxen know,
But man considers not from whom his blessings flow.

Osric in early youth had loved to store
His comprehensive mind with classic lore;
With glowing hope, and ardour unsubdued,
The opening vista of the world he viewed;
From academic shades and rural bowers,
That prospect seemed a wilderness of flowers;
He tried the path that bloomed so falsely fair,
The noxious reptile and the thorn were there;
Some foul deception, or some piercing grief,
In ambush lurked behind each fragrant leaf,
And all that shone with such alluring glow,
Three words comprised—vice, vanity, and woe.
Where was the view sublime, the mighty plan,
That almost deified the soul of man?
The flame that lightened o'er the lofty page
Of Grecian poet, philosophic sage?
Was Virtue from the world for ever flown,
Or only banished to some clime unknown?
Interest could wear her semblance for a while,
And Falsehood, robed like Truth, could stab and smile.
But he had seen each vizard rent away,
And their dark forms unveiled in open day,
Till, heart-sick and ashamed, he half believed
The poet senseless, and the sage deceived.
Yet would the pride of his unhumbled mind
Reject a view so mean of human kind:
He hoped the arts of luxury and gain
Alone had fixed the deep unwonted stain,

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And nought of such corruption had defiled
The poor untutored offspring of the wild.
Oft had he mused on this consoling theme,
Beside the windings of his native stream;
And exiled now from his paternal land,
Disowned by those who grew beneath his hand,
Houseless and friendless, on a foreign shore,
When the rude Indian gave his little store,
And strove, with untaught hospitable wile,
His hopes to nourish, and his woes beguile,
It seemed as Fate had spread before his view
A living proof that stamped his system true;
And while new joys his ardent soul expand,
He links his fortunes to the roving band,
With them to traverse mountain, wood, and swamp,
And seek a welcome in their distant camp.
To rest they dedicate the passing day,
The morrow speeds them on their weary way.

In Osric's heart what strong emotions swell,
When wafting to the main his last farewell,
And when, receding from the rocky shore,
In distance he has lost the solemn roar,
And entered on a scene so wildly strange,
It seemed as magic art produced the change.
Since earliest break of morn they had pursued
A narrow pathway through the tangled wood;
In one unbroken mass above their heads,
The interlacing canopy was spread,
So closely blended, that the noon-tide ray
Died as the glance of faint departing day.;
Crossed and recrossing still, on every side,
A thousand ways the endless paths divide,
That he who ventured in the maze, nor knew
The secret symbols and mysterious clue,
Should in a cheerless labyrinth wander on,
Till strength and courage, hope and life were gone,
But, bold and confident, the Indian guide
Pressed on his way, and plucked the boughs aside;
Oft where he passed, his knife, with tempered blade,
In the strong bark the quick incision made;
With keen, cool eye, unhesitating tread,
Through the long day th' unvarying march he led,
And now, at evening's golden horn, they stood
Upon the farther confines of the wood.
O! never had fair Albion's bright domains,
Her fertile fields, and cultivated plains,
Her graceful hills, rich groves, and shining streams,
And harvests, ripening in autumnal beams,
Thrilled Osric's bosom with such full delight,

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As the wild scene now bursting on his sight.
The farewell tints of day, retiring slow,
Reflected on a crystal surface, glow;
The sportive windings of that lake display
The pigmy harbour, and the mimic bay;
A thousand wave-born flowers, in naval pride,
Spread their broad leaves, and rest upon the tide:
Here on the bank, in rival grace, are seen
The little painted offspring of the green;
There the huge granite rocks abruptly rise,
And sparkle bright, in variegated dyes;
While far above, a nodding grove is spread,
Like the proud plumage on a warrior's head;
The lofty cedar, and majestic pine,
And fragrant spruce, their towering shade combine;
Of giant growth, the maple spreads around,
Distilling honey from the casual wound;
The changeful beechen tree, and mellow larch,
And silver birch, that broken craig o'erarch;
The endless garland of the woodland vine,
Round each tall trunk aspires, with graceful twine,
Then flings the light festoon from spray to spray,
And bends, with playful sweep, her downward way,
Falls on the frowning precipice beneath,
And decks its rugged brow with verdant wreath.
While from the frequent fissure slow distils,
With whispering note, the streams of lesser rills,
A broad cascade foams down the mountain side,
Springs from the rock, and plunges in the tide.

Soft melancholy stole o'er Osric's breast,
As the fond thought arose—"here could I rest!"
And when at night the trembling moonbeam played
On the far bosom of the white cascade,
Whose mighty murmurs, half in distance drowned,
Scarce called an echo from the rocks around,
Where leafy shades, expanding deep and wide,
Waved in rich contrast to the shining tide:
Oh, then he felt, as they can feel alone
Who bear some sorrow, to the world unknown,
And shun, with sickly jealousy refined,
The cold, half sympathy of human kind,
Yet fancy every idle breeze that blows,
Sighs in compassion, and partakes their woes:
Dreaming of unsubstantial solace here,
They cannot rise beyond their native sphere.
Though heaven-born Mercy gives the mild command
To rest each weight upon Jehovah's hand,
Although Omnipotence would stoop to bear
Our puny burdens, and to soothe our care,

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The lofty littleness of wayward man
Cleaves to his own, and scorns his Maker's plan,
Endures, with stubborn hardihood, the rod,
But hears not the appointing voice of God,
Nor listens to that long-enduring cry,
"Turn, thoughtless one—Oh wherefore wilt thou die!"

Still had the musing wanderer held his way
Beneath the spangled sky, and soothing ray,
But now, with sudden burst of splendour, blazed
The crackling pile his Indian friends had raised
To scare the prowling wolf—the crimson glow
Flashed on the lake, and dyed the mountain's brow.
Where is the beam that robed erewhile the hill
In silvery beauty? It is shining still,
But seen no more. From man's dark bosom driven,
How oft will earth-born flames chase the pure light of heaven.

The morn arose, and many a morning sun
Must rise, ere yet their changeful task be done;
To wind through woody solitudes their way,
Or bide on shadeless plains the sultry ray:
To pause, with some expansive lake in view,
And fell the tree, and form the slight canoe,
Launch that frail bark upon the level tide,
And fleeter than the circling swallow glide;
Then draw their vessel to the farther strand,
Poise its light form, and bear it o'er the land.
With panting breath, and weary foot, to climb
Where more than Alpine summits tower sublime;
Or, with deliberate, cautious step, to pass
The verdant treachery of the deep morass,
Where flowers, in wild uncultured beauty blow,
To shade the watery death that yawns below:
Fed by the liquid store, they shoot on high
To court the gaze of an unclouded sky,
And tints so glowing, forms so passing fair,
Had never crowned the florist's choice parterre;
So frail the sod that bears those living gems,
It trembles underneath their waving stems,
Where snakes, in vest of painted armour gay,
Amid the glossy foliage glide away:
The humming-bird steals to the flower's embrace,
Loveliest and least of all the feathered race,
Reclined in silken bells, concealed from view,
Feasts on perfumes and sips the honied dew,
Then spreads the azure wing, and tiny crest,
And seems a blossom severed from the rest,
And stolen by the breeze, who came to bear

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Some velvet trophy from a scene so fair.
Such was the morn, and when the closing night
Called from repose the winged bands of light,
The sparkling fire-fly tribes, and bade them rise
A brilliant transcript, of the starry skies,
Spangling the leaf, and sporting round the flower,
Cheering, with mimic ray, the moonless hour,
While here the ruby, there the topaz glowed,
And emerald tints a glassy lustre showed,
Where, darting through the gloom, they rose on high,
As bearing some mysterious embassy
To distant shrubs, and o'er the glittering plain
Returned, in busy idleness, again:
A scene so wild, so beautiful, so new,
And so intangible—to Osric's view
It seemed the very book of fate displayed,
Destruction's self in witchery arrayed;
And all the sullen joy the cynic knows
Shone in his eye, as rapid thoughts arose
Of flowery snares, that lure mankind to pass
O'er the deep hollows of the world's morass,
Where noiseless ruin unsuspected lies
To watch her victim, and secure the prize.

The Indian guide, Ayuta, long had sate
In solemn councils, skilled in deep debate;
For wily prudence famed, by close intrigue
To form, with stronger tribes, the favouring league;—
Oft when some angry nation came from far,
To lift the ruthless tomahawk of war,
Ayuta's policy would hush the storm,
And raging foes to glad allies transform,
Above the dreadful hatchet close the ground,
And hand the calumet of peace around.
His fluent tongue could echo every tone,
And call each various dialect its own;
Nor could the eye of keen observance trace
One changeful passion in his studious face.
Late had he travelled through the eastern lands,
Long colonized by European bands,
And when in woods of game their journey lay,
And wide dispersed, the hunters sought their prey,
Ayuta would recline by Osric's side,
Where the dark spruce a fragrant shade supplied,
And tell how first to that unconquered shore
A floating house the white invaders bore,
Who craved a shelter from the piercing gale,
Till Spring's young breath should waft their homeward sail.
Preserved by Indian pity, they surveyed
The goodly land, and their kind hosts betrayed.

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Departing with the Spring, ere Autumn fell,
Once more upon the coast, their streamers swell,
A various crew; by numbers bolder grown,
They claimed a tract of country for their own,
And when repulsed, from tubes, with sulphurous breath,
They bade fierce thunder roar, and scattered death.
Back to his woods the fear-struck native fled,
Whose labyrinths long defied the stranger's tread;
While these, increasing to a countless band,
Spread deep and wide, and triumphed o'er the land.
To ampler bounds their growing hosts aspire,
While far, and farther still, the hapless tribes retire.
Remote from ocean, toward the rosy west,
A mighty space the Indian yet possessed,
And leagued in amity the nations stood,
To guard the spreading lake, the sheltering wood;
But European policy would strive
To keep each petty discord long alive;
The white-man's plan had sad experience shown,
First to divide, then conquer them alone;
But the Great Spirit, foe to wrong and ill,
Loved his red children, and preserved them still.

So told the chief, and keen resentful smart
Thrilled every vein in Osric's rising heart:
"These are thy trophies, proud enlightened man;
This is thy high design, thy generous plan;
This grateful meed the artless Indian won,
By Christian piety these deeds are done!
Far nobler light illumed the savage breast,
That unsuspecting warmed a viperous guest,
Than spread religion's pageant o'er the sod,
Where ruffians ravaged in the name of God!"

Thus vaunts Philosophy; and she were right
If Belial's troop could pass for sons of light:
Religion owns them not: they bear the brand
Of Mammon on their front, and in their hand:
Go, view the record—he who runs may read—
What says it? Ye shall know them by their deed.
O who can tell the horrors of their lot,
When the stern judge exclaims, "I know ye not!"
Woe, double woe, be to the souls that lay
A stumbling-stone across a brother's way!
Woe, treble woe, to those who give a theme
That bids the vaunting enemy blaspheme,
While deeds of rage, and avarice, and shame,
Mar the sweet savour of the Christian name!

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

A mountain's brow the travellers had won,
And lo! their weary pilgrimage was done.
Borne from the deep recesses of the glen,
Ascending sounds told the abode of men;
And there, o'er-canopied with living green,
Low and uncouth, the Indian huts were seen,
Where lofty pine, and oak with spreading arm,
Joined, as to shield their feebler guests from harm.
Of conic form the lowly dwellings stood,
Detached, and scattered through the sheltering wood,
Built of rude stems, with beechen bark o'erlaid,
And boughs yet mantled in their leafy shade.
A broad, deep river, bending to the right,
Swelled in a lake, and rounded on the sight.
Beyond the spacious stream blue mountains rose,
Stretched in the majesty of calm repose.
The scene was natural and wild, as man
Had feared to trespass on creation's plan:
No patient hand had smoothed the rugged soil,
No harvest crowned the labourer's early toil;
Though female industry perchance might raise
On vacant spot, some patch of yellow maize,
Slight care to these the untaught farmer gave:
Canoes unnumbered dancing on the wave,
And nets of curious work, spread forth to dry,
Told where the Indian gained his best supply;
While hunting—spears, and trophies of the chase,
The rude interior of each dwelling grace.

When day's last beam was fading from the west,
Ayuta's hut received his willing guest;
With native fare the rugged board was spread,
And fragrant leaves composed the stranger's bed.
Visions of peace on Osric's fancy stole;
A current of unruffled years to roll,
Calm as the stream that softly murmured near,
And soothed, with plaintive note, his dreaming ear,
Free as the zephyr of the wood, that swept
The open hut, and fanned him while he slept.
And let him sleep—such visionary theme
May best befit the fabric of a dream.

Where'er thine eye can turn, or foot can tread,
Behold, O man! the books of knowledge spread.
Thy reason cons the lesson they impart,
But God alone can grave it on thy heart.
Thou seest the blossom open to the day,
Bloom for a little space, and fade away;

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Thou seest the verdant leaf, like silken vest,
Clothe the dark tree, and shade the songster's nest,
Then pine and perish.—Not a breeze can blow
But tells thee all is vanity below,
While, rending some poor insect's web away,
It mars the labour of a summer day.
That breeze, if tainted by infectious breath,
May to thy bosom waft the seeds of death;
Or, swelled by angry storms, the ocean sweep,
And whelm thy trusted treasures in the deep.

In vain the page of wisdom courts thine eyes—
Though always learning, thou art never wise.
While all is changing, fading, dying round,
Thou dream'st some favoured spot may yet be found,
Where cloudless suns on flowers unfading shine,
To form a perfect lot, and that be thine.
Welcome each vision folly can pourtray,
So it beguile thee of the passing day,
Hide from thy guilty sight the threatening rod,
And drown that awful cry, "Prepare to meet thy God!"

How sped our Osric, in his ardent chace
Of virtuous bliss among the savage race?
The fleeting hours of summer—bloom are past,
And winter's dreariest night approaches fast;
The camp is black with wreaths of eddying smoke,
And tempests whistle through the leafless oak,
Rocking the hut where Osric courts repose,
A death—doomed captive, guarded by his foes.

Long had he basked beneath the specious smile
Of Indian faith, nor deemed such friendship guile.
He wore their garb, and bent his towering thought
To each rude task his wild instructors taught.
Farewel the polished lore of Rome and Greece!
The dance of war, the calumet of peace,
The rapid chace, the archer's deadly aim,
Divide his moments and his efforts claim,
On each traditionary tale that tells
Of Indian deeds, his pleased attention dwells,
While his eventful years of sorrow seem
A passing thought, a half forgotten dream.

Yet one there was, who, with prophetic fear,
Would breathe the frequent caution in his ear;
And Osric marvelled when young Zaila spoke

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Of reeds that bowed beneath the hand, and broke;
Of icy plains formed on the level wave,
That tempt the step, then yield a liquid grave;
While the keen glance of her expressive eye
Would in mute eloquence the tale apply.

An aged chief had mourned a valiant son,
And now in Zaila blessed his only one;
The brightest plumage, he would cull, to deck
The raven hair that flowed upon her neck;
The costly bead and precious metal graced
Her well-turned arm, and bound her slender waist;
But Nature's hand, more bounteous than his own,
The spell of beauty round the maid had thrown.
Upon her brow, in simple majesty,
Peace reigned, and meekness in her downcast eye;
A pensive contemplation marked her mein,
As though she communed with some world unseen.
And Osric heard the sigh, and saw the tear,
When vice or folly urged their wild career;
And oft her firm rebuke their madness quelled,
If not convinced, yet humbled and repelled.

Months rolled away; and still Ayuta's guest
Abode in peace, confiding and caressed.
At length an embassy from far appears,
Of chiefs in war renowned, and sage with years.
The leaders of the camp in council meet,
With solemn words of amity to greet
The martial tribe, whose measured steps are led
Where mats and skins, in circling order spread,
Receive their wearied frames. With looks profound,
Silent and motionless, they sat around:
The vapour of the peaceful pipe arose,
And Osric, fearless of impending woes,
Pleased with the novel scene, attentive viewed
The savage pomp displayed by men so rude.

The elder chieftain of the stranger band
Rose, with a belt of wampum in his hand,
Of doubtful hue, as though his nation's mind
To peace or war was equally inclined.
Grave was his gesture, and his accent slow,
Tranquillity sat on his furrowed brow,
Though half-quelled flashes from his eagle eye
Bespoke a spirit martial, stern, and high.
The steady curb of politic controul
Restrained the swell of an impatient soul.

"Tribe of the Valley! hearken and behold—
This wampum—belt your brother's hands unfold,
In token that your brethren of the hill
With ancient amity would greet ye still.
When yonder sun rose from the briny deep,
He saw our steps descend our native steep,
And when he sank beneath the mount again,
He left us journeying o'er the dreary plain:
Rising and falling, still from day to day,
He marked us pacing on our lengthened way.
Our feet have bent the grass, impressed the sand,
Been laved by streams, bruised by the stony strand—
And wherefore this? Brethren, a voice was borne
On the strong breezes of the opening morn;
It told of leagues, and calumets of peace
With white invaders; of your camp's increase
By foreign bands. We credit not the tale:
We love our younger brethren of the vale,
But fear them not. Behold! your hands are free
To raise the tomahawk, or plant the tree."

He said, and waving his uplifted hand,
With dauntless eye surveyed the circling band,
Resumed his matted seat, and calmly spread
His wampum—strings, of sable, white, and red.
Short was the silence, for Ayuta stood,
With looks of peace, and their attention wooed:
Breathing, in terms of long accustomed art,
The guileful purpose of his faithless heart.

"Fathers, attend—your ancient brethren view—
Your hills have echoed to a voice untrue:
Not ours the deed to give a treacherous hand,
And greet the foreign spoilers of the land,
Who pluck the rose our country which adorns,
And pierce her children with the naked thorns.
A morning mist hath led your mind astray,
The sun shall rise, and banish it away.
Behold a stranger of that evil race
Who hunt our nation like a beast of chase:
We lured him to the snare, we soothed his soul,
We made him joyous with the juicy bowl,
Nourished with care, and trained with Indian skill—
Lo! Fathers, bear him to your distant hill;
And while his lingering death—pangs feed your view,
Confess your brethren of the vale are true.
The calumet receive, and aid our toil

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

To hide the hatchet in our native soil;
The peaceful tree, raised by united hands,
And fed with white man's blood, shall shade our mingled bands!"

While yet he spoke, the unsuspected foes
In double files their hapless prey enclose,
With spears and arrows pointed at his breast,
He deemed it all a vision or a jest—
Throughout his frame one chill of horror ran,
Then bitterly he smiled, "Aye, such is man!—
Strangers, ye bear the aspect and the name
Of fathers, statesmen, chiefs of conquering fame:
Can perfidy uphold, and fraud defend
A nation's glory? Will ye thus extend
The sanction of your age, your high applause,
To the foul breach of hospitable laws?
Is such dishonest triumph meet to crown
The brightness of your martial tribe's renown?
I came—no foe, in warlike garb arrayed,
Armed with the fiery tube, or burnished blade,
But a defenceless stranger, wooed to share
The social board, nor deeming it a snare."

The Chief rejoined, "Let prudence be confessed,
Rapacious wolves our peaceful camp molest;
We capture one—say, must the fact be proved,
That he erewhile, with ravening purpose, roved?
No—he's a wolf; no fuller charge we need,
He dies for crimes committed by the breed.
'Tis self-defence, the same instinctive plan
That guards the reptile's nest, the home of man:
It teaches thee to spend thy fleeting breath,
Pleading for life, and us to will thy death."

Midnight arrives;—no careful hand supplies
The lingering flame, that all unnoticed dies;
Yet falling fragments yield a transient blaze,
While on the rugged hearth the fire decays,
Too feeble now to pierce the distant shade
Where the poor captive's care-worn limbs are laid.
His savage guards had watched from twilight's hour,
In all the stern security of power,
Yet wakeful and alert; each grasped the spear,
The quiver and the well-strung bow were near,
And oft a lowering glance, with keen survey,
Explored the couch of skins where Osric lay.
A sullen calm had hushed the stormy swells
Of his indignant thought, and memory dwells

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

On many a strange vicissitude of woe,
That marked the windings of his path below.
The sceptic doubt, the glowing hope, in turn
Would cloud his soul, or bid his spirit burn.
No guiding Providence could he survey
Through the wild lab'rinth of his chequered way;
Then wherefore deem that aught of love divine
Should on his last dark hour of anguish shine,
Or bid the disembodied spirit rest
In the unclouded mansions of the blest?
Again, his conscience, unawakened, saw
No flagrant breach of his Creator's law,
In his short life; yet, with unsparing hand,
The scourge had followed him by sea and land,
And justice would require a blissful doom
Of peace and rapture in the world to come,
But all was speculation wild and vain
Within, and all without was feverish pain,
Rest, thou afflicted one! a Saviour's love
Hath willed thy glory in the realms above:
He girded thee, although thou hast not known
His saving strength, and He will seal thee yet His own.

Three warriors from the stranger tribe combined,
An ample guard, with false Ayuta joined.
No thought of rescue or escape had cheered
The captive's mind, no human hope appeared,
He knew their Indian watchfulness could keep
At wondrous bay the leaden wand of sleep,
But now, each fitful flash of light that played
On the dark group, their slumbering state betrayed:
With sudden start, the swarthy hand would clasp
The spear, and then relax its eager grasp;
At length Ayuta to the entrance crept,
Stretched his tall form across the door, and slept;
While, in a deep, unwonted torpor, near,
Each warrior bent upon his trusty spear,
Reclined, then sunk unconscious to the ground,
And dark oblivion shed her mantle round.
Osric beheld, and kindling, half arose
From his low couch, and gazed upon his foes;
He longed from false Ayuta's side to wrest
The knife he bore, and plunge it in his breast—
To brave the hazard of uncertain strife,
And dearly part with a devoted life.

While yet he pondered on the daring thought,
A rustling sound his quick attention caught,
From the low ragged roof—again it came,

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Frequent and near,—Oh for one glancing flame
To gleam upon the spot! His head he raised,
And vainly through the deepening darkness gazed;
Few moments passed, till on his wondering eye
Shone the soft azure of a moonlight sky,
While through the breath he saw a figure bend,
And heard the words, "Be silent, and ascend."
A cord of solid strength is flung below,
The bending figure beckons him to go,
And could he pause? The cooling air of heaven
That kissed his brow, had new existence given—
He springs to freedom, from the gloomy cell,
And bids his sleeping guards a glad farewell.

The lonely hut, that formed his prison, stood
Midway between the camp and neighbouring wood;
Two silent guides appear, his steps to lead,
And swiftly from the haunts of man they speed:
No voice or sound the cautious stillness broke,
Till on the wood's dark confines Osric spoke—
"Ere yet we pierce the shade, your purpose say,
And whither ye conduct my dubious way?"
"To safety and to peace thou goest," replied,
In gentle accents, his more youthful guide.
He started—'twas a well-remembered tone—
Yet urged again, "Nay, make your object known."
"Osric! we censure not thy doubting mind,
By sad experience taught, thou know'st mankind,
And Indian faith hast proved; yet fear not now,
For treachery ne'er lurked on Zaila's brow;
This heart abhors the wile. I set thee free—
My life upon thy safety. Follow me."

With grateful wonder, with confiding love,
He followed through the mazes of the grove,
Wrapped in a rayless gloom, so deep and dread,
Some angel seemed to guide the Maiden's tread
In the wild path, and to her timid heart
A more than mortal energy impart;
While through the dreary wilderness around
The savage howls of hungry wolves resound;
The fox barks fiercely through the trembling brake,
And at their feet uncoils the hissing snake;
But onward they pursue their steadfast way,
Till, pale and feeble, gleams a distant ray;
Brighter it smiles, and soon their gladdened view
Rests on an open stream and slight canoe.
They pause, and Zaila motions with her hand
To launch the fragile bark, and leave the land:—

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

"Osric, farewell! thou freely may'st confide
In the firm faith of this thy future guide;
His care will lead thee to a safe retreat,
Where Christian love shall bathe thy weary feet;
And when thou offerest up thy grateful prayer,
Oh let the Indian Maid thy benediction share!"

A tear is bursting from the Wanderer's eye,
While his soothed bosom prompts the fond reply:—
"Zaila! a poor unfriended Exile gives
The only gift his wayward fortune leaves,
A heart, long steeled by stern adversity,
Now won, and softened into love by thee.
O let thy unprotected steps no more
The haunts of that inhuman gang explore,
Lest the deep thunderbolt of vengeance dread
Fall on thy gentle and defenceless head!
Share thou my lot; the Christian race will give
The means for patient industry to live;
Be mine—and sweet will seem the daily toil
That tills for Zaila the penurious soil,
Pursues the flying deer through tangled woods,
Or snares the gliding tenant of the floods.
In boyhood's days, in wild impetuous youth,
And riper years, I sought the phantom Truth;
My fancy robed a form in rainbow dyes,
And fondly chaced the visionary prize,
Till, weary of delusion, vice, and woe,
I deemed she never could reside below.
When Hope had spread her pinions to depart,
I find the treasure lodged in Zaila's heart.
Thou gav'st the caution, when my heedless ear,
Held it the language of ungenerous fear;
Thy pity came, to succour and to save
The dupe who scorned thee, from a well-earned grave;—
Reject me not; my grateful soul shall rest
On the pure truth of thy unspotted breast:
Let summer friends, like summer blossoms, fly—
Thy faith, an evergreen, can brave the winter sky."

The Maid a moment stood, as unresolved
To speak the thought that in her mind revolved;
Then from her lip the solemn accents part—
"Can such deliverance move thy stubborn heart?
Light was the risk, to drug thy treacherous foes
With drowsy herbs, and the low roof unclose;
Poor is the boon—a few uncertain years
Of lengthened progress in a vale of tears.
Thy love devote, thy praises breathe to Him

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Who took the cup, kissed the o'erflowing brim,
And drained the very dregs of woe and wrath,
To save thy soul from everlasting death?
I see thou marvell'st how these wilds have heard
The joyful tidings of salvation's word—
Nay, rather blush they were not heard from thee—
Thy mind was fearless, and thy speech was free.
But no compassion in thy heart was found
For souls unnumbered perishing around,
Thy fellow-men, who drew their natal breath
In lands of darkness, and the shades of death,
Bound in the chain of ignorance and sin,
No help without, and not a hope within.
Thine had it been to see the day-star rise
On the deep gloom of these benighted skies,
To lift on high the banner of the Word,
And wield with dauntless hand the Spirit's sword,
Champion of heaven;—O hadst thou thus been found,
A thousand seraphs had encamped around
Thy shining path; the everlasting arms
Supported, led, and guarded thee from harms,
For He who bade through every nation preach
The Gospel, and his free salvation teach,
Had been thy shield, thy counsellor, and friend,
'Lo I am with you, even to the end!'"

"Zaila, that sacred privilege is given
To holy men, the ministers of heaven;
The solemn truths of such mysterious theme
Would ill my uncommissioned lips beseem."

"Nay, rather say those truths could never rest
In the dark cell of an unholy breast.
If in thy path a bleeding wretch be found,
Wilt thou refuse to staunch the flowing wound,
Nor seek with pitying hand to soothe the smart,
Because unlicensed in the healing art?
But fare thee well! may God direct thy feet
In peace and safety to a far retreat,
A sandy vale, where life's glad river flows,
A wilderness that blossoms as the rose;
'Twas there the heav'n-born ray of light divine,
Burst upon Zaila's soul—O may it gladden thine!"

Wondering, ashamed, and half-displeased, he stood,
Till that light form was lost within the wood,
Then slowly turned him to the stream, whose wave
To the pale ray a faint reflection gave;

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

The shallow boat was rocking on the tide,
And there the Indian stood, his future guide,
Whose folded hands and eye upraised, declare
The deep devotion of a mental prayer.
Unusual was the sight, and Osric saw,
With peevish scorn, half-quelled by solemn awe;
His conscience told that simple prayer was said
For him, a thankless wretch, who never prayed;
And Zaila's keen reproof had lodged a dart
Of strange disquiet in his swelling heart:
To meet the humbling guest high thoughts arose,
What! should the soul that scorned a thousand foes,
That through the world, defying and defied,
Bore high the banner of unvanquished pride,
Before such puny arms that banner furl?
A praying savage, and a preaching girl!
In haughty silence to the bank he drew,
A rough warm bear-skin lined the light canoe;
Gladly he stretched him on the narrow bed,
Another hide the careful Indian spread,
His little bark then hastened to unmoor,
And, nicely poising, paddled from the shore.

How sweet and soothing is the moonlight beam
That breaks the cloud, and smiles upon the stream!
How soft the calm that stills a throbbing breast,
When toil and anguish yield to tranquil rest!
And oh, how pleasant is the breeze that blows
Across the cheek where new-born freedom glows!
Osric confessed the charm, and soon subside
The angry waves of discontent and pride;
Beneath the still solemnity of night,
The shifting scene, robed in a silvery light,
Presents more varied beauties to his view
Than fancy's airy pencil ever drew.
Now, swiftly gliding on their liquid way,
Through the entangling wood their progress lay,
Whose bending stems inclined from either side,
And bowed to commune o'er the darkened tide.
And now they pass, where to the struggling wave
Unwilling rocks a scanty passage gave,
And, sternly frowning, overhung the bed,
Their giant sides with rugged heather spread;
While birds of night, with heavy pinion, soar,
And, screaming, ask who dares their haunt explore.
And now, retiring to a wider bound,
The rocks in ample crescent sweep around,
A grassy lawn slopes to the river's brink,
Where graceful willows bend the head, and drink,
While fading stalks of many a flower declare

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

How bright the summer garb that flourished there.
Enriched by frequent streams the current grows
To more majestic width, and freely flows.
But now the moon steals down the shaded sky,
And gentle sleep hath sealed the wanderer's eye.

A lovelier morning—beam had never smiled,
To gild a spot so beauteous and so wild,
Than that soft ray which through the foliage broke,
And cheered the lonely scene where Osric woke.
A bank, adorned with all the forest's pride,
Rose in a gradual slope on either side;
Mixed with the fir, and cedar, ever green,
Some leafless stems of oak and birch were seen,
And all the rich variety of hue
That cultivated woodlands never knew;
While dew—drops, small as clustered diamonds, gleam
Beneath the splendour of the rising beam.
With soothing sound the gurgling waters roll,
But sweeter notes along their surface stole,
When from the Indian's lip, in artless lays,
Rose to the Lord his morning hymn of praise.
Soft was the tone, not meant for mortal ear,
Too faint for earth to mark, but not for heaven to hear.
Yet Osric in such fixed attention hung,
He caught the meaning of the words he sung:—
"O Thou! who, through the perils of the night,
Hast safely brought us to the morning light,
While thousands have resigned their vital breath,
And all unsuccoured, slept the sleep of death,
Lord, what are we, that thou should'st thus display
Thy wondrous love, and guard us on our way?
Bidding the tempest of the winter cease,
And saying to the troubled waters, 'Peace!'
Touched with a feeling of our wants and woes,
Why ever thus thy pitying love disclose,
If not to lead us to a gracious throne,
To make our deeper need and sorrow known,
To mourn the curse of sin's polluting stain,
Pardon, and peace, and strengthening help to gain,
Thy covenant, O Lord, with night and day
Unbroken stands, while ages roll away;
The better covenant thy blood secures
Through time and through eternity endures.
O seal that promise on our inmost soul,
There write thy law, there fix thy firm controul,
And since thy word the sweet assurance gave
That 'twas thy chosen work to seek and save,
Lord, let the sun of righteousness arise,
With healing on his wings, to glad those darkened eyes."

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He turned with gentle look, and, gazing, wept
O'er the poor wanderer, who in semblance slept,
Then the light oar with double speed he plied,
And urged his bark along the glittering tide.

Now to the stream a crisper curl was given,
And clouds were drifted o'er the face of heaven;
Deep folds of grey, tinged with a dusky red,
Above the eastern hills ascending spread;
Each following gust more piercing cold became,
Striking a painful chill through Osric's frame.
His pilot marked, with ever-watchful eye,
The quick transitions of the wave and sky,
Then spoke—"How close those gathering vapours crowd!
A tempest rides upon yon eastern cloud:
To-morrow's dawn may see an icy chain
Check this bold tide, now speeding to the main.
'Tis meet we find some sheltering spot, and form
A timely shelter 'gainst the coming storm,
Sure tokens of the falling snow appear,
A wintry visit, sudden and severe."
The first fair landing place the travellers seize,
And hide their little boat among the trees;
For Jacob (such the Indian's chosen name,
When to the sacred font erewhile he came,)
Feared lest the baffled foe might yet pursue,
And trace their cautious route by that canoe.
His careful hand his comrade then supplied
With hatchet, musket, and a bear's black hide.
A light repast they took, and onward went
To cross the wood, and climb the near ascent.
The summit gained, they find the rugged ground
With mountain-pines, and towering birch-trees crowned.
No fit retreat their anxious eyes survey,
While through the tangling shrubs they rend their way:
But downward slopes bespeak a neighbouring vale,
Whence rough and broken sounds the ear assail;
Those welcome notes rejoiced the Indian guide,
"Hear'st thou the roaring of that mountain tide?
Urge we the quick descent, secure to breathe
From our long labour, in the vale beneath."

Now mingled with the stately pine, they view
The lowlier fir, and beech of varying hue,
While in a smoother course, they lightly pass
O'er many-coloured moss, and velvet grass,
Till, issuing from the grove, in liquid light
The torrent bursts upon their dazzled sight.
Steep was the path, and wide the rocky bed

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Where on their eager chace the billows sped:
Huge broken fragments in the channel lay,
To fret, but not impede its forceful way,
Above their heads the sparkling waters bound
Then in a dark deep eddy whirl around,
Now for a tranquil space forget to rove,
Now leap another rock, and curl the foaming wave.
The countless, undiscovered springs, that rise
Among the hills, combine their large supplies,
And here, engaged in never-ending race,
The dancing currents hold their noisy chace,
And seem among their native wilds to raise
Proud songs of liberty, and joyous hymns of praise;
While bowing woods, robed in eternal green,
Echo the sound, and smile upon the scene.
The rocks, that scarce that headlong stream confine,
Dripping with spray, like polished marble shine;
The trees, luxuriant, wear a brighter hue,
For ever freshened by the scattered dew:
Abruptly rising from the further side,
A lofty mountain waves its leafy pride;
Th' opposing bank presents a softer shade,
A swelling hill more sparingly arrayed;
And here, in silent joy, the pilgrims stood,
Tracing the progress of the mighty flood,
Which, bounding on its way with ceaseless roar,
Passed a rude angle, and was seen no more.
Still on the breeze tumultuous murmurs rose,
Till died the cadence in a distant close.

Behind a little plain, on sloping ground,
A clump of trees the travellers' search had found,
Whose taper stems, in native order placed,
A small rude circle sheltered and embraced.
Within the narrow bound they first proceed
To clear the brushwood and intrusive weed,
Then mounting high on two inclining trees,
With straining arm each bushy top they seize,
These firmly bound present a crested dome;
And next by several paths the builders roam,
From birchen trunks the pliant rind they tear,
And spreading branches to their dwelling bear;
Wove with the circling stems, and overlaid
With moss and twisted bands, the fence was made,
While solid bark, warm, light, and water-proof,
Patched the rude fabric, and secured the roof.
Smote by the axe, the neighbouring branches shed
For fuel, wood, and leaves to form a bed.

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Osric with glowing smile the dwelling eyed—
"Thus, and so soon, are nature's wants supplied!
Yet senseless man inhales the tainted breath
In crowded dens of folly, shame, and death,
And scorns the richest boons his God has given,
The simple fruits of earth, the beam of heaven,
The stately canopies of waving woods,
The solemn music of the rolling floods,
The note of feathered harmony, the rest
So dear and sacred to the reas'ning breast.
Free as the air by birth, by choice a slave,
He spurns a native throne to clasp a painted grave.
Throughout creation's wide and wondrous plan,
The speck, the blemish of the work, is man."

"And is there then," the thoughtful Indian cried,
"No balm in Gilead for the wounds of pride?
Pride is the deep-struck malady within,
The root of sorrow, and the gate of sin:
God's word was this, 'Transgress, and ye shall die;'
'Transgress, and be as Gods,' the tempters cry;
Pride heard, nor feared Jehovah's wrath to prove,
And pride rejects the message of His love.
Pride brought the ills thy hasty words condemn,
And pride hath wrought on thee to censure them.
Plain is my speech, and slight the lore I know,
Yet can my lips the latent evil show,
For long I bowed beneath the yoke of sin,
And served that tyrant lord, enthroned within;
The voice of conscience and of God defied,
In all the daring impotence of pride.
Chief of a num'rous tribe, in war renowned,
My name was echoed through the lands around;
Placed on a giddy eminence I stood,
By nature bold, by men accounted good,
For from this lofty station glancing down,
My heart condemned all vices but its own.
And deemed itself a pure and hallowed spot,
A bright exception from the general blot.
But God in mercy drew me to the cross,
And showed my richest gain to be but loss.
He bade me pray, heard the imperfect prayer,
Raised my sad soul from darkness and despair;
His hand the quickening stream of life hath given,
And fed me with the living bread from heaven,
Though round my course conflicting billows roar,
He guards and guides me to the happy shore,
And gives an anchor that can never fail,
Moored to the mighty Rock, and fixed within the veil."

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

A glow of hope, a gleam of holy joy,
Tinged his dark cheek, and sparkled in his eye.
But now the dreary night comes on apace,
And blacker clouds the scowling sky deface,
The torrent rages with a louder swell,
And sweeping blasts th' approaching storm foretel.
Their fire the wanderers rouse, but slowly came
From the damp wood a pale reluctant flame;
Sparely they diet on their slender store,
And form with pointed stakes a nightly door,
On either side the central fire they spread,
A bear-skin mantle on each leafy bed,
Nor can the raving of the tempest keep
From lids so wearied the repose of sleep.

The morning comes, but clouds of falling snow
Obscure the beam, and veil the wonted glow,
While not a feature nor a tint remains
Of all that marked the hills, the woods, the plains,
Save where between the banks of dazzling white
The rapid torrent bounds from height to height;
But dark and dingy dyes the waters bear,
The sparkling spray appears no longer fair,
For all is black, contrasted with the hue
Of glaring white that palls the sickening view.
Beneath that snowy mass the groves have sunk,
It loads the boughs, and drifts upon the trunk,
Hems round the strangers in their narrow home,
And crowns the pigmy hut with alabaster dome.
While Osric viewed the scene with pensive eye,
The Indian came, a comment to supply.
"Praise be to Him, the prayer of faith who heard,
For wind and storm fulfil his awful word,
And He alone the burdened cloud restrained,
Till thou, poor captive, hadst deliverance gained.
How had thine own, or Zaila's gentle tread,
O'er yielding snow all undiscovered sped?
How could my frail canoe the blast abide,
Or stem the fury of the storm-lashed tide?
Smooth thy bent brow, and breathe the voice of praise
To Him whose mercy crowns thy thankless days;
And spares thee yet, to learn the joyful song
Of ransomed souls that in His temple throng."

Osric rejoined, with mingled pride and shame,
"Know'st thou not, Chief, I bear the Christian name?
My earliest steps that sacred temple trod,
My lisping tongue confessed the living God,

The cross was signed upon my infant brow,
And riper judgment ratified the vow,
To Him whose will my thread of being twined,
And Him, the bleeding Saviour of mankind.
No other hope, no other faith I own,
But seek eternal life through Him alone,
For He, my righteous Judge and pitying Lord,
The sin will pardon, and the good reward.
Such is the creed my native land receives,
Each tongue proclaims it, and each heart believes,
But why thine own and Zaila's faith agree
With God's pure word, I yet must learn from thee."

Now to their cold but needful task they go,
To clear a pathway through the drifted snow,
And seek the cowering game in covert near,
By man uninjured yet, and void of fear.
But when the early shades of evening came,
Again they rested by the cheerful flame;
While Jacob tells how the good shepherd sought,
And to the fold his Indian wanderers brought.

"My former state 'twere needless to describe;
I reigned sole chieftain of a warlike tribe,
And when I saw my nation's foes increase,
I fought, and purchased a victorious peace.
Youthful in years, but deemed in counsel sage,
Renown and power my every thought engage;
Still seeking, still of all I sought possess,
An aching void was yawning in my breast,
The craving of a soul that never dies,
And cannot live on earthly vanities.
While, goaded by disquiet, I pursued
With feverish haste what seemed the public good,
Restless, and driven like the changeful wind,
I thought 'twas zeal to benefit mankind.
Applauding throngs would press upon my tread,
To war or council when the way I led,
Or bowed in impious rites my reason scorned—
Within all vile, and all without adorned.

"Such was my state, when first the man of God
Alone, unarmed, our martial valley trod.
Round his sweet home the eastern billow rolls,
But love impelled him here, the love of souls.
Not his to praise a God obscurely known,
Or with a Saviour's merits blend his own,
Not his of virtue and reward to dream,

Far other thoughts inspired his lofty theme.
He spoke of man, rebellious, ruined, lost,
His pardon purchased at a countless cost,
So dearly purchased, yet so freely given
By Him who vanquished hell and opened heaven.
He told, that as the branch, the leaf, the fruit,
All draw their being from the living root,
And severed from that root are worthless, spurned,
Bound in a bundle for the flames, and burned,
So nourished, so supported, and allied,
In Christ, their root, His branches must abide;
He, the true vine, the mystic sap conveys;
Unfed by Him the drooping bough decays;
And man's best work, in his Creator's eye,
Is but a shrivelled leaf, a dead deformity.

" 'Go,' he would say, 'and in the forest near
Plant the dry polished shaft of yonder spear,
There bid the rootless stem to life expand,
And wave luxuriant branches o'er the land:
The hope were vain—closed is each pliant pore,
The circling juice revisits them no more.
By guilt dissevered from the living tree,
Through Adam's fault, so dead and dry are we;
Nor profitless alone, for tainting sin
Pollutes our lives, defiles our hearts within;
Jehovah's purity our race disclaims,
His justice dooms us to eternal flames:
But mercy hath revealed an open path,
A covert from the tempest of His wrath.'
And day by day the oft-repeated strain
We heard, 'Repent, believe, be born again.'
With inward joy I listened to the sound,
And deemed it well applied to all around;
My conscience loathed the crimes I daily saw,
My mind did homage to the moral law;
Pleased with the code that heav'n-sent preacher taught,
Oft by his side the lowly hut I sought,
Approving, while he urged his message home,
'Forsake your sins—flee from the wrath to come.'
The law and reason to my view had shown
Their deep corruptions—Satan veiled my own.

"Ardent in all my schemes, I purposed now
To plight in public my baptismal vow.
I knew a thousand voices would combine
To echo promptly back the tones of mine,
For I was loved:—my heart will not forget,
I loved them well—and well I love them yet."

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

While to his brow his dark-brown hands he prest,
A stealing tear relieved the chieftain's breast,
And all the tides of troubled memory roll
In melting sadness over Osric's soul;
Short was the pause, returning peace illumed
The Indian's mind, and calmly he resumed.

"Soon to the Preachers dwelling I repaired,
Revealed my purpose, and my hope declared,
With boastful smile; I paused for his reply.
No answering hope beamed in his downcast eye;
Deep solemn thought was teeming in his look,
And strong emotion struggled while he spoke:
His form he raised, his open brow displayed,
In truth's unbending majesty arrayed,
Awful, as one commissioned from above,
Tender, as yearning with a brother's love,
Calm, as unheeding aught that man could do,
But kindling while his theme to deeper import grew.

" I grieve, O chief, thy infant plan to blight,
Praiseworthy is thy wish, thy purpose right
To banish idols, and to build a shrine,
For purer worship formed, and rites divine,
And thus thy nation by example draw
To own Jehovah's name, and keep his law.
And if indeed the strict command He gave
To sinful man, could justify and save;
If outward washing could remove the stain,
And blanch to pristine purity again,
My willing hand the cleansing stream should give,
My joyful lips proclaim, obey, and live;
But vain such empty rite, and vain the thought
To keep the holy law by Moses taught,
For though the mind assent, and call it good,
Alas! We cannot do the things we would;
For we are carnal, vile, self-sold to sin,
Offences multiply, lust wars within,
While for one tarnish of corruption's breath
The righteous law condemns, and thunders death.
O think not the baptismal stream is given,
That man by pious works may merit heaven!
I cannot cause iniquity to cease,
I will not soothe you in a treacherous peace,
Nor dare I seek my Master's fold to fill
With flocks that do not heed his voice and will.
To heal a healthy soul He was not sent,
Nor call the just and righteous to repent,
Nor o'er the rags of pride to which we cling,

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

A veil of specious holiness to fling:
He heals the sick; He bids the outcast come
To find a welcome in his Father's home;
He clothes the naked in a spotless dress,
The garment of imputed righteousness,
And those who madly would exalt their own,
Despise the word that makes his mercy known.
Hast thou, O chief, through heavenly teaching seen
That thou art sick, and naked, and unclean?
And wouldst thou come, and lead thy kindred race,
Poor helpless suppliants, to the throne of grace,
And casting all self-confidence away,
Live on that unbought grace from day to day,
And seek through faith alone the blessings given,
A heart renewed, and purged from ancient leaven,
Direction for the mazy road of life,
Strength for the race, and courage for the strife?
The race, the strife, where fierce malignant foes,
Unseen, shall cross thy path, thy way oppose.
If this be thy desire, my hand shall shed
Th' appointed stream upon thy favoured head,
And may the Lord before thy spirit place
The laver of regenerating grace!
May new creation to thy soul be given,
Born of the Holy Ghost, and sealed an heir of heaven!
But if thou com'st to act the trifler's part,
Content to change thy creed, but not thy heart,
If policy would make the rite her own,
Ordained for penitence and faith alone,
Oh what am I, that I should dare degrade
Jehovah's mission to a sordid trade,
And with a hollow vain illusion snare
Th' immortal souls of men, that claim my deepest care!

"Offended and amazed, I turned away,
Though with mild tone he wooed my longer stay,
Withdrawn beneath the forest's twilight shade,
His words I pondered, and my soul surveyed.
I asked, could such deception dwell within?
Condemning sinners, could I cherish sin?
Dishonour and disgrace the name I loved,
And violate the law my mind approved?
The barb had struck; I felt the burning smart,
And deep conviction laboured in my heart.
My spotless fame and boasted virtues seem
The mocking shadows of a feverish dream,
My outward deed, my secret thought, I saw
Weighed in the balance of a perfect law,
While conscience, bursting through the riven veil,
Viewed TEKEL written on the mounting scale.

When meted by the sinful race around,
Righteous and pure my every act was found,
But to the spirit of the law applied,
I called for rocks my guilty head to hide.
Who can declare the agonizing smart,
The keen disquiet of a sin-sick heart,
When God, the way of mercy to prepare,
Reveals the hidden nest of vipers there!
The embryo crimes that hourly spring to life,
Malice, and lust, and blasphemy, and strife,
Crush one with vig'rous hand; ere that be dead,
Another and another rears the head,
And to the tortured soul, with poisoned breath,
Each whispers judgment and eternal death.

"Slowly, but surely, thus the Lord withdrew
The mist of nature that obscured my view,
And many a day reluctant pride confined
From mortal eye the anguish of my mind;
Till, racked and wearied with accusing thought,
Once more the slighted man of God I sought
In his far hut, whose little lonely light
Guided my footsteps through the gloom of night.
Methought that narrow spot of sacred ground
Diffused a halo of repose around,
For when I gained the meek abode of peace,
I felt the tumult in my bosom cease.
Wishing unmarked the dwelling to explore,
With noiseless step I reached th' unfastened door.
The teacher sate—upon his knee there lay
The chart that guided his mysterious way,
The word inspired:—a glimmering taper shed
Its downward ray upon the page he read,
But purer light upon his spirit beamed,
A holy joy in every feature gleamed,
And as the starry diadem of night
In ebon darkness glows more dearly bright,
That Christian's soul, illumed with peace divine,
By contrast deepened all the gloom of mine.
Anon his lifted hand he slowly spread,
And raised with sudden smile his bending head,
Full on his broad fair brow the taper shone—
I gazed, and listened to the low-breathed tone;
First indistinct, then swelled in triumph high,
While expectation sparkled in his eye.

" Lord of all lords, of kings the mighty King!
Saviour, to thee the lands shall incense bring—
Yes, from the rising to the setting flame

The Gentiles shall adore, and magnify thy name!

"He ceased; with throbbing breast I nearer drew,
And still reluctant met his wondering view,
My humble guise his glad attention won,
Ere my o'erburdened heart the tale begun:
But oh the rapture of the smile that played
Across his furrowed cheek when all was said!
Awhile he probed the wound with needful care,
Lest aught of dark deceit might fester there,
But when he saw the self-abhorring shame
That rent my conscience, and my soul o'ercame,
While to myself my stubborn nature seemed
Too hard to melt, too vile to be redeemed;
With every winning call his mind had stored
From God's own Book, he drew me to the Lord.
'Behold the Lamb! the spotless sacrifice,
For thee he suffers, and for thee He dies!
Lo, the rich stream that murderous malice drains
Is the last drop from those exhausted veins,
Shall in a tide of mercy o'er thee roll
And wash and purify thy guilty soul.
His dying agony thy pardon wins,
He bore thy sorrows, and sustained thy sins.
His stripes have healed thee, He was bruised to save,
For thee the Lord of life hath slumbered in the grave.
With glory fraught, behold the conqueror rise,
While shouting seraphs throng the bending skies,
Captivity is bound in captive chains,
Vanquished are death and hell, and Jesus reigns!
For rebel man receiving gifts divine,
Hark! he invites thee: sinner they are thine.
He makes repentance, faith, and hope thy own,
Thy pardon seals, removes the heart of stone,
And gives, while confidence and love increase,
The spirit of adoption, grace, and peace:
With God's whole armour girds thee for the fight,
And bids thee more than conqueror in His might;
Stedfast through Him, thy everlasting friend,
Pledged to uphold, and keep thee to the end.
With tenderest accent thy regard he wins,—
'Come ye who groan beneath a weight of sins,
My hand shall ease ye from your labouring care,
My yoke is mild, my burden light to bear.'
Ye homeless crew, to want and woe resigned,
Naked, and poor, and hungry, maimed and blind,
No longer through the lanes and hedges tread,
Slain is the victim, and the feast is spread:
The King invites you to His royal home,
The Spirit and the Bride re-echo, come,

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Let him who hears repeat the joyous sound,
Bear it, ye gales, the circling globe around!
The stream of life is flowing broad and free,
Poor parching soul, it flows to nourish thee!"

Soothed and assured by God's unchanging word,
My fainting heart found refuge in the Lord.
And soon, surrounded by the gazing crowd
With contrite tears before the font I bowed,
Nor from the frowning throng disguised I ought
Of what Jehovah's pardoning love had wrought.
Tho' many heard me with a stern disdain,
A few more favoured listened not in vain;
A little flock was gathered to the fold;
But rumour's voice of rising faction told
Had I, whom conquest to my tribe endeared,
With warrior boldness at the font appeared
In regal pride, they had been lightly freed
From the frail trammels of their careless creed.
But when I bent a mourning sinner there,
My guilt and God's compassion to declare,
Fiercely against the Gospel's humbling plan
Rose all the in-born enmity of man.
Awhile in stifled murmurs they complained,
As though disgrace the Indian name had stain'd;
And long with every soothing word I strove
To win their souls, and to regain their love;
But now revolt grew loud—the council sate,
And discord triumphed in the hot debate:
Intestine war was nigh: the choice was mine
To yield the sceptre, or the cross resign;
The Lord forsook me not; I bade farewell
To the blue mountains and the verdant dell,
The flowery chains that bind the heart to home,—
What were they, balanced with the joys to come?
We wandered forth, a little exiled band,
And found a dwelling in a distant land.
Pilgrims and strangers on this rolling sphere,
Why seeks frail man a habitation here?
Enough—too much—if we possess a shed,
Where Jesus had no shelter for His head.
Let it, O Lord, our portion ever be
Cheerly to take the cross, and follow thee;
Content, if through the wilds of woe and pain
The power of thine arm our feebleness sustain!"

The midnight tempest raged, but all was rest
Within that patient Indian's peaceful breast,
Sleeps he not well, who knows the Lord has spread

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

A guard of angels round his lowly bed?
Nor smile, ye scoffing ones, as though the thought
By folly or presuming pride were taught;
The hosts of heaven, God's written word declares,
Go forth to tend upon salvation's heirs.
Seest thou a Christian, outcast and forlorn,
Exposed to hatred, calumny and scorn?
Know, though embattled worlds conspire to wound
The angel of the Lord encamps around
That child of woe; and brings deliverance near,
In the dread moment of distressful fear.
Why doubt ye this? because the carnal mind
By nature dark, incredulous, and blind,
Shrinks from the Gospel light that would expose
The cowering ambush of infernal foes,
And, reckless of their number, craft and rage
Would in its own good strength the battle wage,
And dreams it yet unaided shall prevail,—
A feather warring with the driving gale!

Even such our Osric was, and long he braved
With courage undismayed, each storm that raved,
Man was his study, nature all his book
Whence his dark view of humankind he took,
And haughtily maintained his towering place
The self-appointed censor of the race.
But warily his comrade had supplied
With skilful hand a caustic to his pride;
He, an unlettered Indian of the wood,
On the same fancied eminence had stood,
And in the sketch that simple tale had shown
Of Jacob's mind, the wanderer viewed his own,
He strove to trace him through his blissful change,
But all was dark, and intricate, and strange.
Amid conflicting feelings, undefined,
One clear impression dwelt upon his mind;
The deed, the purport of his Indian friend
Sprung from a motive—pointed to an end—
His motive was untarnished, pure, sublime,
His object fixed beyond the grasp of time,
And all the tenor of his upright plan
To God was glory, and good-will to man—
To his own soul contentment and repose,
A life of usefulness, a tranquil close,
While more than hope seemed to his spirit given
A calm assurance of the joys of heaven.
What was his own design? through certain woe
To chace imaginary bliss below.
His life a vision, and impervious gloom
Shrouding the wide domain beyond the tomb.

Restless, he pondered through the stormy night,
And gladly hailed the welcome blush of light.
The tumult of the elements was lost
In the still, deep intensity of frost;
No swarthy clouds repelled the heav'nward view,
The pleasant vault above was clear and blue,
And half transparent shone the dancing tide,
While sparkling crystal fringed each stony side.
Now the keen frost that bound the truant spray
Arrests the little streams that steal away,
Transfixed on rocky fragments ere they pass,
They rise in slender pinnacles of glass,
In feathery plumage seem to nod above
In wreaths depend, spread in a mimic grove,
Or fling the pigmy arch of triumph wide,
Brittle as fame, and vain as human pride.
The sharp rude air more vigorous life supplies,
Bidding the nerves contract, the spirits rise;
Emboldened now, the various game around
From covert move and try the frozen ground;
The bear unwieldy, and gigantic deer,
With cautious step, at their invaders peer,
Then fleetly speed away, and as they go
Dash from the trembling woods a storm of snow.
The startled birds from forth the branches spring,
And for new shelter spread the shivering wing;
Braced by the air, enlivened by the beam,
Gaily they float and flutter near the stream,
And yield, their little pains and pleasures o'er,
Victims to swell our traveller's needful store.
These while pursuing their uncertain prey,
With cheerful converse sped the short-lived day,
And Osric found they journeyed to behold
The British Pastor and his Indian fold,
Who far from warring tribes a spot possess,
That piety and peace combine to bless,
A plain whose soil a rich abundance yields,
Where patient labour tills the fertile fields,
While circling hills a native bulwark raise,
And every cave resounds Jehovah's praise.

"Here Zaila, with her wounded sire had fled,
While raging foes pursued their doubtful tread;
A hunter, beating through the woods around
The fainting fugitives exhausted found,
Supplied their craving wants with glad relief,
And to the Pastor led the bleeding chief.
And as beside its captive dam, the fawn

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Unshackled trips, by filial fondness drawn,
So fraught with young simplicity and grace,
His Zaila tends upon her father's pace.
The wounds were rude, and tedious was the cure,
But native courage armed him to endure,
And native stubbornness alas! could blind,
To the clear Gospel ray that chieftain's mind.
Like the deaf adder, from the charmer's tongue,
Frowning he turned away: but Zaila hung
On every tone that sought her heart to move
With the sweet theme of her Redeemer's love;
Yet secretly believing, she repress
Before her sire, the zeal that warmed her breast.
'Twas so the preacher counselled, for a while,
Until the Lord with pitying grace should smile
On prayer unceasing, that besought His might,
To turn that sinner's darkness into light.
Homeward at length he wills his way to wend,
And Zaila on his step will still attend.
His stern displeasure into silence awed
The timid voice that wooed him to the Lord,
With lamb-like meekness bending to his frown,
She took the cross, sure prelude to the crown.
Her heart was sad, yet all resigned her mein—
But wherefore thus describe what thou hast seen,
What thou hast loved? She dwelt for many a day,
A harmless dove among the birds of prey,
And on th' unhallowed spot where Satan reigned,
A secret worshipper of Christ remained.
Thou cam'st, an honoured guest, and Zaila deemed
The light revealed from heaven would then have beamed
On her dark country: for she simply thought
The white man's lip must of his God have taught.
The hope was vain—yet pity was awake
O'er thy misfortunes, for her teacher's sake;
His countryman thou wert and well she knew
Her tribe was hollow, and their heart untrue;
Their selfish policy, unjustly wise,
Beheld in thee some future sacrifice,
And prized thee well. A secret envoy sought
Our peaceful plain, and Zaila's greeting brought;
Told of thy state, and her foreboding fear
Of treachery within, and danger near.
I came, and while our doubtful schemes we planned,
From distant hills arrived that warlike band.
'Twas Zaila freed thee. To the Lord alone
Be praise, for all the mercies He hath shown."

Osric his guide with growing friendship viewed;
Humility had softened, not subdued

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

The native ardour of the Indian's look,
And noble candour breathed in all he spoke;
Manly and firm, in peril undismayed,
Yet mild and pleasing as the noon-tide shade.
Strange to his breast was that self-righteous pride,
Unseemly boast conveying, "Stand aside,
For I am holier far." Ye favoured race,
Of faith partakers, and renewed by grace,
Take heed, lest oft ye lay a stumbling-stone
Between the sinner and a Saviour's throne;
Thankful that ye are not as others are,
The Pharisee remember, and, beware.
Where should the leaven, where the light be found,
But leavening the lump, shining on darkness round?
Each blending with its contrast, each with good
Quelling the evil mind, the sullen mood:
The chilling aspect of rebuke austere
May blight the budding promise of the year.
Commend with joy, reluctantly reprove,
By sufferance win, and overcome by love.
O for the gentleness of Paul, who prest
His wayward nurslings to a fostering breast!
Whose heart, to yearning tenderness awake,
A curse could welcome for his brethren's sake,
Excusing others, while himself he paints
The chief of sinners, and the least of saints.

Now Jacob deems, that, from obstruction freed,
The frost-bound earth invites them to proceed:
Equipments meet they hasten to prepare,
The smoke-tanned covering of the slaughtered bear,
To form a double guard from piercing cold,—
Hard pointed staves their sliding steps t' uphold,
Wide spreading shoes to cross the yielding snow,
Where dangerous hollows might be veiled below,
A store of flints, and pouches well supplied
With game, or newly dressed, or firmly dried.
A few short days, and they forsake the spot,
Yet turn to gaze upon their snow-capped cot,
And list once more to the enlivening sound
Of the rude waters that unheeding bound;
Whence come the pangs that Osric's heart assail?
What linked him to that narrow frozen vale?
Who taught their rugged dwelling-place to wear
Aspect so sweet? The son of peace was there;
And such the charm of heaven-descended peace,
Her breathing bids the war of passion cease
In rebel hearts that pass her quiet cell,
While half they sigh, "Here it were good to dwell!"

Now sterner tasks the travellers' strength demand,
With slippery step they mount the frozen land,
Or through the mazy forest labouring go,
Surrounded, bedded, canopied with snow.
Unequal paths deceive their sinking tread,
And crystal showers descend upon their head,
For when they pluck th' opposing branches by,
Ten thousand spars fall glittering from on high.
While from each pore the toil-drawn moisture steals,
It turns to frost; their very breath congeals;
No respite must relieve that panting breath,
They may not pause, for here repose were death;
Yet nought from Osric's lip one murmur drew,
To him 'twas welcome all, for all was new.

As evening fell, a warmer spot they found,
Where firs of fadeless green stood clustering round.
Each loaded bough its feathery freight resigns,
Bends to their will, and in a fence entwines;
They clear the narrow ground, extend the skin,
And slowly raise the lingering flame within,
Then take a short repose, and speed their way,
Long ere the mellowing east proclaims the day.
A mighty plain before their sight is spread,
Heav'n's spangled arch is stretched above their head,
The moon is hovering on the distant west,
And more than half-extinguished glides to rest,
Revealing where a ridge of mountains high,
In dark, dim outline, breaks upon the sky.
Through frosty ether viewed, the stars appear
Intensely brilliant, and more closely near:
It seemed as that resplendent vault would show
Her new-born myriads to the world below,
The blazing orbs their shifting rays combine,
In throngs so vast, and lustre so divine.
Yet no increase was there of native light,
Ether more pure unveiled them to the sight.
So, in Jehovah's great accounting day,
When each delusive mist is purged away,
And truth, unclouded, bursts on mortal eyes,
How many to eternal joy shall rise,
And sparkle like the stars, who now pursue
Their willing task, obscured from public view,
And, like the stream that glides beneath the ground,
Bid the rich fruits of righteousness abound,
Themselves unseen—unnoticed they depart,
And no man lays their destiny to heart;
Yet in the Lord they rest, for they are His,
Their works shall follow to the world of bliss,

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And though the earth be wrapped in endless night,
Their splendour shall abide in everlasting light.

How wistfully the mourner's tearful eye
Rests on the softness of the starry sky!
Those gentle fires so kindly, brightly glow,
Contrasted with this cold, dark world of woe,
The pensive soul such sacred music hears
In the majestic movement of the spheres,
The wounded heart so opes to drink the balm
Distilling in this little hour of calm,
I would not bid a human voice intrude
At such mute season, with reflection rude,
But seek the Lord, in deep and silent prayer,
To meet the heaven-ward gaze, and fix it there,
And lead it on, by paths to man unknown,
Through the bright barrier to the brighter throne.

While countless fires above our pilgrims glow,
Unsullied whiteness veils the plain below,
A mimic sea, whose every hillock gave
The semblance of an undulating wave,
And tracks where rapid deer had ploughed their way,
Rose like a curling ridge of foamy spray.
The western hills supplied a rocky coast,
The rest was in the dim horizon lost.
It seemed a desert, where no vital breath
Could long abide; the very realm of death.
Day came and went, and night returning, found
Our patient travellers near the utmost bound
Of that wide plain; Aurora's northern beam
Breaks on their path with light and changeful gleam,
A tall and radiant column first it stood,
Whose base was resting on the darksome wood,
Then, quickly spreading on the dazzled sight,
O'er the broad heaven expands a sheet of light;
Now in a thousand forms evolving parts,
In glittering spear and blazing arrow darts,
Now in a yellow lambent flame decays,
Then emulates the sun, and sets in vivid rays.

For ever lonely, and for ever new,
Oh how can nature pall upon the view!
How at her charms can sickly fashion sneer,
The worldly slight them, or the pious fear?
Though some there be, by rigid scruples taught,
To deem even flowers and stars with peril fraught,
Go thou, and learn of David to descry

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The glories of the firmament on high,
God's works and wonders in the mighty deep,
In earth, and all that on her surface creep;
Yea, wisely ponder in thy frequent thought,
How fearfully he hath thy body wrought;
And learn of David's Son the lesson given,
In lilies of the field, and fowls of heaven,
Creation typifies redemption's plan,
God gave his marvels to be marked by man;
He who beholds them with regardless eyes,
Contemns the hand that formed them as unwise.

So thought the Indian Chief, and aptly drew
Some sweet instruction from each passing view.
Philosophy and native taste combined,
Enriched with all their treasures Osric's mind,
But Jacob's spirit, taught by God alone,
With light so pure, and joy so holy shone,
Such glowing thoughts his simple faith inspired,
His wondering comrade listened and admired,
And bore unconscious witness to the word
Of holy writ, "who teacheth like the Lord?"

Succeeding suns in watery splendour rose,
Ere their long task was tending to a close.
Then smilingly the Indian spoke—"At length,
One trial more of courage and of strength
Will place us on a safe and pleasant road,
Whose windings open on our sweet abode.
To-morrow's dawn upon our sight will beam
In bright reflection from a mighty stream,
Whose frost-bound surface shall our steps uphold;
That past, three steeps will bring us to the fold."
Short seemed the fleeting day that cheerly led
Through a thin forest their enlivened tread,
But Jacob inly trembled, when he saw
Unwelcome tokens of the humid thaw;
The crystal rind that wrapped the branches round
Bursting untouched, was strewed upon the ground,
Unwonted dew stood on the fingery leaf
Of each green spruce, as in prophetic grief,
And, for the biting breeze that sharply came,
Uneasy languor steals upon the frame.
"Haste, with redoubled speed," the Indian cried,
"This moisture will unchain th' impatient tide.
A short delay, all art and strength are vain,
Our only prospect now, the stream to gain,
Ere from their brittle bound the waves find vent—
No game is here—our slender stores are spent:

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Onward, with speed:" —they urged their rapid way,
Nor paused for respite at the close of day:
And while the night in gloomy blackness reigned,
Wearied and sad, the river's brink they gained;
To the dark east they turned their steadfast gaze,
And, sleepless, watched to greet its lingering rays.

Abode of sin and woe, polluted earth!
Thy palaces resound with guilty mirth;
Thy cities echo to the mingled cries
Of lamentable want, and shameless vice;
Crime, disappointment, fear, and sorrow, stain
The rural cottage and the sylvan plain;
Unbridled cruelty, and lust, and blood,
Fix the deep dye upon the savage wood:
Sin fetters all who draw the vital breath,
And flings the captives to his follower, Death,
Who gnaws the fondest ties with ruthless fang,
Bursts the divided heart, and triumphs in the pang.
And can it be, that, to so dark a scene,
So hateful, so rebellious, and unclean,
The kind regards of pitying love are given
By the unsullied, blissful hosts of heaven?
Yes, angels hover o'er this dying world,
Where floats redemption's banner wide unfurled;
And when some guilty mortal turns to look
In faith on Him the sinner's form who took,
Strains of new joy through God's high dwelling sound,
And angels hymn, "A long-lost child is found!"
And when that ransomed one, with failing breath,
Bends to the stingless dart of conquered Death,
The seraph guards their dying charge enclose,
A fiery bulwark from assaulting foes,
Catch the low whisper of his parting moan,
And bear the spirit to Jehovah's throne.

That shining host in bright array were drawn,
Where Jacob waited for the early morn.
While many a brow encircled by a crown
Was racked by furies, on a couch of down,
The radiance of celestial peace o'erspread
The snow that pillowed that poor Indian's head;
And sweet communion with the Lord he loved
Assured his soul, and every fear removed.
Cheerly he rose, at morning's feeble beam,
And hastened to explore the treacherous stream.

In summer-tide, when light-winged zephyrs blow,

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Those waters rolled majestically slow;
And, lashed by autumn's gales, with prouder force,
Yet all unruffled, held their silent course;
But when rough winter would their speed restrain,
Indignantly they spurned his frosty chain,
Rising in wrath, and swelling to oppose
The hand that seized the billows where they rose,
And fettered them in ice: the waters breathe
Their angry murmurs in the depths beneath,
And raging to resume their wonted sway,
With ceaseless friction wear the links away;
And if the humid air awhile befriend,
In fierce revolt their prison bars they rend,
Scatter the broken wrecks, and gushing rise,
With loud acclaim, to greet the favouring skies,
In triumph premature; the despot reign
Of iron frost awards a firmer chain;
But long the fissure and the gap will show
That lurking peril still abides below,
Warning the venturous pilgrim to forbear,
Nor rashly plant a step unguarded there.

With folded arms, the pensive Indian eyed
The yet unbroken surface of the tide,
With heedful ear he caught the hollow sound,
Gazed on the heavy mist that floated round,
Then, while submission marked his placid look,
To Osric turned, and, sadly smiling, spoke:—
"Still on the water floods Jehovah reigns,
The hollow of his hand their bulk contains;
At his command they spring from depths below,
Stand when he speaks, and at his breathing flow:
'Tis He alone the pliant stream employs,
When life it nurtures, or that life destroys;
And as He wills to bind or loose the wave,
This river yields a passage or a grave.
'Tis ours with care the prudent path to choose,
His to direct, and bless the means we use;
Deliverance may attend our onward way,
Destruction surely triumphs in delay."
Now struggling in the east, the rising beam
Athwart the vapour shoots a dusky gleam,
The mist ascends, yet long the landscape shrouds
Beneath a canopy of curling clouds.
The steadfast gaze might dimly trace below
A dubious line, a broken ridge of snow;
Unequal, indistinct, that outline gave
The utmost boundary of the frozen wave:
No farther view would the dull morn unfold,
'Twas vapour all, in swelling volumes rolled.

Towers not a mountain there, in lofty grace,
While vassal clouds are floating round its base?
The mountain disappears, the clouds unite,
And new illusions mock the wearied sight,
While Jacob seeks a landmark, meet to guide
Their dark and vent'rous way across the tide.

As warily along the bank they go,
The Indian spoke—"Such is man's path below!
Before his reckless foot a gulf is spread,
And mists impervious roll around his head.
No guide, no guard, through the dim maze is given,
Save the unclouded beam revealed from heaven,
And He who bade the light from darkness shine,
Has promised, 'seek it, and it shall be thine.'
That word unknown, neglected, or forgot,
Man will not seek it, for he loves it not.
Yet on he fares, self-confident and proud,
Embodies and adorns some fleeting cloud
With fancied good, gives it a sounding name,
And calls it honour, pleasure, virtue, fame,
Keeps the deceptive shadow in his eyes,
And, hopeless, in the fond illusion dies,
Dies in his sin:—as fails his struggling breath,
The armed law drives home the sting of death,
And shows the phantom he had served so well
A painted mask upon the mouth of hell.
The mighty, and the noble, and the wise,
Truth's lowly garb and simple speech despise;
And soon, dread retribution! such shall hear,
From mocking fiends, the everlasting jeer,
While tempting forms of glory and delight,
In gay succession, dance before their sight,
And the loud cry by withering anguish wrung,
'One liquid drop to cool this flaming tongue!'
Is answered by the fierce tormentors' jest,
And distant hallelujah's of the blest."

With sudden pause his listening friend he eyed,
"Lo, here we venture on the brittle tide!
Perchance ere yet the sun yon mist o'erpowers,
Death, judgment, and eternity are ours."
Osric undaunted smiled; "Then farewell life,
Farewell to disappointment; pain and strife!
Clad in a thousand forms, from day to day,
Hath the grim tyrant scowled upon my way,
And still unmoved I gazed upon his brow;
I feared him not, nor do I fear him now.
Wegged in the ice above, or whelmed beneath,

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A few short gaspings, and we cease to breathe;
Nature, our mother, yields a peaceful grave,
And cradles us within the rocking wave;
Our lofty funeral vault, the spacious sky,
The whispering breeze our endless lullaby.
Let thundering tempests rave in upper air,
They cannot break our quiet slumbers there,
While the slow moving finger of decay,
Defacing, steals each lineament away.
Well may the wearied frame, the care-worn breast,
Hail such serene repose, and deep unbroken rest!"

"Can dreams so wild thy parting spirit cheer?
Con wisdom's earliest lesson, learn to fear.
Is death a silent sleep, a closing night?
No, 'tis the flashing of eternal light
On the astonished soul, when rent away
From its dark tenement of breathing clay,
It launches forth on space, without a bound,
Ten thousand legions of immortals round
To gaze upon the guest: a thronging band
Of stern accusers, who their prey demand,
Here spreading in our path the wily snare,
Proclaiming each forgotten trespass there.
Poor naked soul! canst thou Jehovah meet,
In flaming fire upon the judgment seat,
When earth and ocean all their dead resign,
And trembling flee away before that face divine!
Can thy stout heart endure, when forth is brought
The long full roll of each unhallowed thought,
Each deed of darkness, all thy words of pride,
Thy squandered time, and talent misapplied?
Know'st thou for whom expands the gulf of hell?
For whom yon waiting bands of demons yell?
That place, by angels and by men abhorred,
Burns for the people who forget the Lord.
Of God's presumptuous foes the common spot
Is, their Creator they remembered not.
And if a fiercer flame, a keener pang,
Be yet reserved, theirs is the trebled pang
Whose unbelief a Saviour's name withstood,
Despised His cross, and trampled on His blood.
Less wretched they of Sodom's sulph'rous fire,
Of impious Sidon, and of purple Tyre,
Than those who turn away their heedless gaze
When Christ the banner of his love displays,
Resist the grace His striving Spirit brings,
And grovel in the mire of earthly things.
No more with dauntless front thy Maker brave,
But know thyself, a sinner and a slave.

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Cast down thy rebel arms, and bow the knee
To Him, whose blood alone can cleanse and set thee free.
O that the conqu'ror, with resistless hand,
Would bend that stubborn neck to His command,
Flash on thy spirit with conviction bright,
And on thy darkness pour the fount of light!
He hath not met thee in the stormy blast,
Nor in the fire, nor rocking earthquake passed:
Perchance the whisper of the still small tone
May reach thee yet, and there the Lord be shown;
And if thy quailing heart no more desire
To brave almighty wrath, untempered fire,
Kneel, ere the path of peril yet be trod,
And cast thy soul upon the Son of God,
Jesus, the sinner's hope." Then bending low
In the deep hollows of the softening snow,
While Osric, in despite of swelling pride,
Abashed, with head declining, knelt beside,
He prayed—"O Thou, the Everlasting One,
Thy name be hallowed, and thy will be done.
From men below, and shining hosts above,
Eternal praise be to redeeming love!
'Tis to that love alone we make appeal,
O be it thine to pardon and to heal!
And may the Spirit, with unuttered groan,
Waft our weak cry to thy celestial throne,
And bid the sweet response our bosom fill,
'Fear not, thou worm, for I will help thee still.'
Be with us while we cross the treacherous stream,
And if it be thy will, our lives redeem;
But if entombed beneath the gushing wave,
Stay from the pit, and rescue from the grave,
The forfeit souls, that know no hope, no plea
But the high ransom paid, thou bleeding Lamb, by thee."

Now with the quick despatch of anxious care
The stake they sharpen, and the thong prepare;
Broad even slips, cleft from the stoutest hide,
Selected warily, and firmly tied,
They coil, and fix upon the lengthy pole,
And soon beneath their tread the sullen waters roll.
The Indian leads the way, his piercing eye
And cautious foot the rugged surface try,
On tiptoe raised, he drives with forceful blow
His trusty staff deep through the drifted snow;
And still the stubborn ice repels the shock,
Unmoved, unbroken as the solid rock.
Slow but secure, they gain the central way,
And the long line of distant shore survey,
That banks the mighty stream; the stone is bare,

And trickling waters find a channel there.
The Indian strikes, and marks with boding pain
A murmuring echo rise—he strikes again,
More loud and hollow comes th' unwelcome sound,
The ice in faint vibration trembles round,
In that still pause which ventures not to breathe
He hears the struggling current chafe beneath,
And notes that in the distance gurgling swell
A tale of deeper fear, and wilder peril tell.
Then Osric spoke, "Delay is idle here,
Speed with swift pace the sheltering shore to near;
Brittle, but yet uncleft, the frozen plain
May the light form and rapid step sustain."
"It cannot be," the Indian cried, "for lo,
Beneath yon bank the stealing waters flow,
And infancy itself, with playful bound,
Would pierce the surface of the deep profound—
Hark to that sudden swell!" and while he spoke,
With echoing crash the frail enclosure broke,
As smote by giant arm; it bends, divides,
And high upon the heaving waters rides.
The rugged fragments whitened, crushed, and riven,
In wild confusion by the torrent driven,
Form many a scattered heap, and fresh between
Bending their circling course, the victor waves are seen.
The giddy wrecks opposing currents hurl,
Tossed on the tide, and swallowed in the whirl.

Now elemental war is raging loud,
A storm of hail breaks from the sweeping cloud,
That blinding deluge hides the friendly shore,
Beats on the rattling ice, and swells the roar.
Still had our pilgrim's firmer wedge withstood
The fierce assault of each succeeding flood,
Though angry waters, raving as they pass,
Tear the thin edge from the diminished mass,
But hark! a louder crash—and gliding slow,
Borne on the rolling cataract they go,
Poising their frozen raft, which, deep and wide,
Unwilling floats upon the conquering tide.
No word they spoke; for who shall ut'trance dare
When God's tremendous outstretched arm is bare?
When He in thunder speaks His sovereign will,
Man, lordly man, must tremble, and be still.
And still are they: in awful pause they stand
Beneath the shadow of Jehovah's hand,
Which girds them round, and holds at fearful bay
The spirits of the deep, that clamour for their prey.
On goes the crystal bark, with gratings hoarse,
An unseen pilot guides its reeling course;

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In vain the roaring waters chafe around,
In vain the frequent wreck, with thund'ring sound,
Is dashed and rent upon its plunging sides;
The wave it masters, and the shock derides,
The adamant keel, with changeless form,
Still cuts a broad dark furrow through the storm.

The clouds, disburthened of their liquid store,
Receding now, unveil the welcome shore,
And brighter beams to the glad sight display
The firm enclosure of an icy bay,
Where all subdued a limpid current glides,
To lave with silent stream the massive sides.
Across their way the friendly crescent bends,
And an arresting arm so wide extends,
They cannot fail, when slowly drifting nigh,
By one bold feat to gain the land and liberty.

Each sparkling glance the glowing thought bespeaks,
And Hope's young smile half dimples on their cheeks;
But far that spreading bay and shore appear,
And succour is remote, and danger near;
For still the fretful eddies wheel around,
The waters gush, the whirling fragments bound,
And the choked stream still threatens to delay
Their labouring course, and bear their onward way.
And now the raft is turned with wavering sweep,
And now it rests, among a shapeless heap
Of frozen wrecks, in thick disorder piled,
Rising like mountain-crag, abrupt and wild,
And forming, as by sight unpractised scanned,
A rude but solid pathway to the land.

Then first the voice of man unfettered broke
Through the loud wat'ry tumult, Osric spoke—
"Amid the choice of perils how decide?
To scale this rocky bridge, or here abide?
Yon tumbling spars, that crowd with clashing din,
Ere long shall wedge our brittle bulwark in,
And lingering death ensues;—what brave we more
Than speedier death, if hasting to the shore?"

"Tempt not that faithless bridge!—the shattered mass
Will part, and plunge thee headlong ere thou pass.
Fresh eddies shall engulf, and currents strew
Those lesser blocks of ice, and thus renew
Our slow but certain progress: here abide

With patient mind; the Lord will yet provide."

"Then rest thou here, and mark while I explore
Yon path, inviting to the rocky shore;
If haply thou behold'st me rescued there,
Then follow me, and if I fall forbear.
Oppose me not:—bold enterprise may gain
The meed that timid caution seeks in vain;
Or failing, this unfruitful life of mine
Shall be a willing forfeiture for thine,
Blest to preserve thy being's useful span:
True servant of the Lord, and friend of man,
Farewell!"—and bounding o'er the narrow deep,
With venturous step he mounts the frozen heap.

The Indian marks the deed with flushing brow,
"And shall I pause, and see thee perish now?
In darkest peril Zaila's charge forsake?
Gen'rous and rash! thy doom I must partake."
His heavy mantle at his feet he flings,
Poising his staff aloft, and highly springs.
Fleet as the mountain goat he bounds along,
And hurls with nervous arm the whizzing thong
In Osric's path: he turns his wond'ring view
Where the bold Indian's steps his course pursue,
Who passing smiles, "Subdue thy roving pride,
And deign to follow:—I am still thy guide."

Through the wide maze their winding path they wreathe,
The loose, unsteady fragments quake beneath;
And from their base the growling murmurs creep,
As roused, unwilling, from a short-lived sleep.
And now they glide afar, and parting show
The wild and gloomy gulfs that gape below,
Unlike the frozen raft, a glassy field,
Those rolling blocks no equal surface yield,
Awhile they shine above, then dive away,
Like the huge monsters of the dark blue sea;
And barely can the rapid step speed on,
Ere the last moment's frail support is gone.
Lo! where the panting travellers, side by side,
Press one weak block:—it breaks, and they divide!
And where is Jacob? In an eddy strong,
Borne on a whirling wreck, he spins along,
And disappears. Osric, with desperate leap,
Of life regardless, springs from heap to heap,
Stung by remorse, and goaded by despair,
His only wish the Indian's fate to share:—

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Reckless where lies his path, each nerve he strains,
And the firm ground, unmoved and thankless, gains,
Mounting a rock, whose rising peak displays
The widest range to his impatient gaze.

Abruptly darting through his cloudy screen,
The sun now breaks upon the dazzling scene,
Shows rainbow tints upon the crystal wrecks,
And with a silvery foil the water decks.
Nor tint nor beam was fair to Osric's view,
One lone dark speck his fixed attention drew:
And is it life? or doth fond fancy give
Creative power, to bid that object live?
It moves—it heaves;—down from the rock's moist side
Once more he launches on th' imprisoned tide,
That bears him well, and still the cheering ray
Illumes and guides him on his eager way,
To where, with pallid brow and gasping breath,
The Indian meekly waits the barb of death.
Rent in the mighty crash, that spot reveals
Where through a narrow cleft the water steals,
And here a transient rest the Chieftain found
From his wild conflict with the waves around;
For long, with dauntless mind and daring hand,
He bore them down, and struggled for the land;
By wary skill oft shunned th' impending blow,
Bent the wide circuit round, or dived below;
And oft to board that frozen plain essayed,
But still the brittle verge his grasp betrayed,
And mocked his hope; till, wounded and o'erspent,
He gained the sheltering creek that fissure bent.
Firm in his teeth retained, the stubborn thong
Had drawn a remnant of his staff along,
And now across the narrow streamlet spread,
That rod sustains his arm and drooping head,
Propped on the solid ice; and, thus upraised,
While with calm eye on heav'n's clear vault he gazed,
Yet half engulfed beneath the greedy wave,
He seemed a living tenant of the grave.

With what triumphant joy our Osric bore
His faint and wondering comrade to the shore,
Whose soul, already winged, and blithe to go,
Seemed loath to turn, and tarry yet below,
Till with reviving sense, the Wanderer's need
Within his gen'rous bosom rose to plead,
With strong appeal, while through the scattered grove
In hot impatience he beheld him rove,
And dash away the snow, and rudely seize

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The quivering branches of the bending trees,
To form a bower—the silvery birch—bark peel,
And shower the hasty sparks from flashing steel,
Before the rising flame his mantle spread,
Chafe the cold limb, and smooth the rugged bed,
Disguising many a throe of boding fear
Beneath the smile of hope, the tone of cheer,
And, breathless, bending with enquiring eye,
To catch the whisper of the faint reply.

So sped the day; and now the wintry King
Comes, borne by Night upon her ebon wing,
Asserts his sway despotic, and again
O'er earth and water flings the crystal chain;
And all is sleep, save in that slender bower
Where the lone pilgrims pass the wakeful hour;
Yet rest was there, and hope, and glowing joy,
And holy triumph, bliss without alloy;
The peace of him who feels his course is done,
His faith established, and the battle won,
And lightly flings the spotted garment down,
To take th' unsullied robe, the destined crown.
His dewy brow and pallid lip betray
How soon that battered frame shall melt away;
But the bright tenant lingered yet to raise
The prayer of patient faith, the note of praise,
And Osric deemed that, through the darksome night,
Heaven's shining gates stood open to his sight,
And bending seraphs listened to the tone
That breathed celestial fire, and echoed back their own.
Deep and majestic as a mighty stream,
His language bore the impress of his theme,
A lofty prelude to that thundering swell,
Where golden harps and ransomed tongues shall tell
Th' eternal praises of the great I AM,
And learn the mingled song of Moses and the Lamb.

As morning lent her pale and feeble glance,
Calm slumber sealed him in a deathlike trance,
While Osric gazed upon the leaden eye,
And deemed each heavy breath the parting sigh.
But sweetly he reposed; and when the sun
Had half his short diurnal circuit run,
Once more the eye—beam shone with native fires,
That latest flash which brightens and expires.
He smiled upon his friend, and bowed to sip
The welcome draught that cooled his parching lip:—
"Thanks for thy care, albeit thou canst not save
This mouldering body from a frozen grave;

But grieve not thou—the spirit pants to go—
Enshrine my relics in the drifted snow;
Then to the Christian tribe with speed repair,
My fate record, my last fond blessing bear,
And there abide. O be it thine to own
The Lord hath led thee by a way unknown,
Straightened thy crooked paths, and deigned to shine
Upon thy darkened eye with rays divine!
Thine may it be, through rolling years, to grace
With brighter gifts, my vacant dwelling—place,
With shepherd care my little flock to keep,
And where I sowed, do thou the harvest reap.
Then follow me. Methinks I can survey
The dawn that ushers in salvation's day;
That beam is rising in thy troubled breast—
The Lord hath blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed.
Snatched from an idol world, preserved to prove
Redeeming mercy and chastising love,
The dewy showers of grace shall melt thy soul,
Made willing in the day of His supreme controul."

Again the silent earth is wrapped in night,
And heaven is spangled with her lamps of light.
Their twinkling beams have glanced on Jacob's bed,
And half revived he rears his dying head.
"Now bear me forth; these lonesome shores have rung
To many a wild disdainful death—song, sung
By warrior captives: 'neath this scanty wood
The dwellings of a warlike nation stood,
And here the fiends who joy in mortals' woe,
Have bade the lip blaspheme, the life—blood flow;
The victor and the vanquished here supplied
With racking cruelty, and hell—born pride:—
Oh let one Indian Chief his death—song raise
In these bleak regions, to Jehovah's praise!"

Borne from the narrow hut, he lies reclined,
His dark hair streaming on the midnight wind,
Earth sky, and water, spread before his view,
While thus he greets them with a calm adieu:—
"Ye roiling tides, that heave the crystal wave,
Ye rocks that glitter, and ye woods that wave,
Farewell:—your little day will soon be o'er,
And liquid flame your crackling wrecks devour.
And ye, resplendent orbs, who still proclaim
Throughout this heedless ball th' eternal name,
And, eloquently mute, to all below,
Declare His glory, and His wonders show,
Ev'n ye shall fade—these heav'ns shall pass away,
And nature one terrific blank display,
Reft of her gorgeous majesty and pride,

And, like a tattered garment, cast aside.
Nought shall survive of this stupendous plan,
Nought but the naked soul of trembling man:
And where shall I, a helpless sinner, flee?
O let me find my hiding-place in Thee!
On Thee, O Lord, my burthened spirit cast,
My Alpha and Omega, first and last.
Before this earth emerged from pristine shade,
Ere the foundations of the hills were laid,
Then, Lord, wert Thou; the Father's best delight,
Dwelling in rays insufferably bright,
Each bending angel, as thy praise he sings,
Conceals his dazzled eye beneath his wings.
Ye seraphs turn, unveil the wondering gaze,
Suspend the song, and pause in deep amaze,
For He, erewhile in heavenly power arrayed,
Is now a mortal babe, in a rude manger laid.
There, for the hallelujahs of the sky,
The pale, fair Virgin chaunts her lullaby,
And strives with feeble arm to ward away
The rough intruders from his couch of hay;
For rudely pressing nigh, the hungry beast
Claims from that narrow crib his wonted feast.
No more from cherub lips, the hymns resound,
But oxen low, and camels snort around;—
And wherefore thus?—why on thy creature earth,
A wand'ring outcast from thy mystic birth,
Lord of unnumber'd worlds!—why hast thou borne
The barb of calumny, the jeer of scorn,
The fierce temptation, and the pang of woe,
The shudd'ring dread, the agonizing throe,
The wile of treachery, the felon's doom,
The buffet and the scourge, the cross and tomb?
Had not thy slightest beck, thy glancing eye,
Summoned a thousand legions from the sky,
And the stern fiat of thy bidding hurled,
Down to the deep—most hell this rebel world—
If such thy will?—but thou hast bowed the head
And drain'd the cup, and slumbered with the dead,
And rose.—Ye heav'ns repeat the joyful strain,
Echo thou earth, the Lord is ris'n again!
Behold the mighty victor homeward ride—
Unbar th' eternal gates and fling them wide,
And who shall close them now? I come, I come,
Through that broad entrance, to my Father's home.
Heir of immortal life, through faith revealed,
Bought by thy blood, and with thy spirit sealed,
My Lord, I come.—O let my failing breath
Resound thy name ev'n in the gasp of death,
Jesus—Redeemer!"—and the soul had flown,
To meet the Lord of life, in that triumphant tone.

The glazing eye was closed, and Osric lay
Immoveable as that unconscious clay:
A deep and fearful awe, a sullen grief,
Spurned far the aid of slumbers soft relief.
The flame expired, the hours unnoticed rolled,
A loneliness so drear, a chill so cold
Pressed on his aching heart, that nought beside
Might claim a feeling, or a glance divide,
Till dawn appeared with mournful pace, to shed
Her blue sepulchral light upon the dead.

If thou would'st blunt the edge, and calm the smart,
Of disappointment's fang and sorrow's dart,
Quell mortal fear, disgrace and want abide,
Shame thy rude lusts, controul thy daring pride,
And still the war of passion's angry breath,
Go gaze upon the leaden brow of death.
It is a book of wisdom, written plain
By Him who never traced a line in vain.
Deck as thou wilt that stern and ghastly hue,
Disguise with laurels, or with roses strew;
In silken gear the rigid limbs unfold,
O'ertop with waving plumes, and crisp with gold—
'Tis yet the face of death, and yet must thrill
Through thy cowed spirit with a boding chill.
The sweetest tongue that ever knew to pour
The flood of eloquence from learning's store,
In all the flow of breath, could never speak
So well, so wisely as a clay-cold cheek;—
And when the glance of morning, chill and pale,
Pourtrayed in livid lines that awful tale
On the fixed traits of death, and feebly shone
To light the earthly house whose guest was gone;
That scene so deeply stamped, in Osric's thought,
The seal of life on every truth he taught,
It seemed as though his heav'n-appointed guide,
Who lived to teach, had to enforce them died.

With heavy step the silent wand'rer goes,
A grave to hollow in the firmest snows
Beneath a bank: then from the lifeless breast
Strips the broad girdle and th' embroidered vest;
His rugged mantle wraps around the dead,
And gently sinks him in his lonely bed.
One last, long, farewell look:—and must he part?
Resistless grief is heaving in his heart;
And yet, amid the struggles of despair,

A new triumphant joy is rising there.
Half-oped within his soul, Faith's infant eye
Kens the bright mansions of eternity;
Can they be Osric's? Yestereve he heard
Incredulous his friend's prophetic word,
Aug'ring the good he willed; but now desire
Kindles to prayer, and hope augments the fire.
Behold, he prays! beside the lowly grave,
He calls on One omnipotent to save.
O louder far than echoing thunders, roll
The feeblest wailings of a new-born soul
On the great Father's ear: that cry can quell
Satanic rage, and daunt the hosts of hell.
The contrite sinner's prayer a tone hath given
Of melody more full to all the songs of heaven.

Sweet is the Sabbath eve, to those who tread
The Temples of the Lord, and love to spread
Their wants and woes before his footstool there,
Confess his bounty, and his praise declare.
A little flock, led by their Shepherd's hand,
Who know his voice, and bow to his command;
And such a fold of simple sheep was found
On the wide plain, by hills encompass'd round;
And such a Pastor as the Lord approved,
Raised holy hands amid the flock he loved,
And scattered on the calm unruffled air
Th' accepted incense of his evening prayer,
Within a homely fane.—The moon's young light
Was softly stealing round the brow of night—
But stronger rays the oily tapers shed,
Where the rich stores of wisdom lay outspread,
And one of darker hue and Indian speech,
The truths of that pure record rose to teach.
Beside, with cheek reclined upon his hand,
Sate the white father of the swarthy band,
Who travailed for their souls: his eye of blue,
And shining front, and locks of silver hue,
Bespoke the ancient Missionary guest,
The Indian's friend, Apostle of the West.
With pensive smile, and meek declining head,
He listened while his dark-haired pupil read,
And seemed to say, as those glad accents cease,
"Lord, now thy servant can depart in peace,
Since to the Gentile lands thy light is shown,
Thy truth proclaimed, and thy salvation known."
Slowly he rose, the portion to divide;
To every case and every soul applied
The sustenance of life—and mildly gave,
The warning uttered, and the counsel gave.

No breath was audible; no motion broke
The deepening stillness while the Teacher spoke;
The balmy softness of his theme distils
Like Hermon's dew on Zion's circling hills;
A while he dwelt upon th' eternal word,
Then humbly kneeled, "now let us seek the Lord."

He prayed for all, but chief for one beloved,
Who far amid the wintry desert roved
To find a wandering sheep—to Him he prayed
Who came to seek and save the flock that strayed,
That he would guard the pilgrims through the wood,
Safe from the foe, the tempest and the flood,
Unharm'd conduct them to that sacred dome,
And gather them to a celestial home.
Whence came that stifled sob? down many a cheek
The rolling tears a brother's love bespeak,
But one there is, low in a shaded place,
Who deeply in his mantle veils his face—
A stranger he—his hand and chesnut hair
An alien to the Indian race declare;
Yet from his breast the struggling sorrow breaks,
And all his frame with keen emotion shakes.
And now, the patriarchal blessing given,
Slowly the aged minister of heaven
Moves through the filial throng, a broader light
Shews the advancing wanderer to his sight,
And they have met—the gazing crowd divide,
And now enclose them in a circle wide,
Boding some ill unknown: but not a note
Can yet find vent from Osric's swelling throat.
He hastes upon the simple bench to lay
The girdle and the vest, and turns away.
Near and more near, each awe-struck Indian draws,
But yet no voice hath broke the solemn pause—
Though Osric's trembling lip and panting breath,
Too well and truly tell the tale of death.
The Pastor's cheek hath turned to ashy white,
Those well-known objects swim upon his sight;
Now his thin hands are raised in silent woe,
And now they clasp upon his silvery brow,
While the unfettered sigh is bursting loud,
And low lamentings echo from the crowd.
The Pastor turns, their rising griefs to quell,
And bids a hymn of holy triumph swell
To Him who rent away th' envenomed sting,
And crushed the conquests of the gloomy king.

Now Osric welcomes each enquiring eye,

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To each fond querist gives the full reply,
And all have parted, in their huts to dwell
On the sad tale of him they loved so well.
The wanderer in the Pastor's tranquil home
Recounts the fate that led his steps to roam—
The shipwreck and the coast his lips describe,
His long sojourn among the savage tribe;
Ayuta's falsehood, Zaila's vent'rous deed,
And Jacob's faith, in rapid speech succeed.
And last, and half reluctant, came behind
The new convictions of his wakening mind.
With tearful smile, the good old Pastor hung
On sounds so long unheard; his native tongue
By native taste refined, and wondering viewed
The mighty vanquished, and the proud subdued,
While each event, his labouring thoughts retrace,
And yield new glory to the God of grace.

A band of Christian brothers have withdrawn
Tow'rd the wide river with the earliest dawn;
Marshalled in willing pilgrimage they go,
To bear their chieftain from his grave of snow,
And give, in his lamenting people's sight,
The last sad honours of the fun'ral rite.
The spot they know; and Osric stays to rest
His worn and weary frame, the Pastor's guest,
Whose converse time redeems with sacred skill,
While love and wisdom from his lips distil.

Joyous he tells, how, led by patient toil,
Hath teeming plenty crowned that snow-clad soil.
Where dinted rocks the long defiance rung
Ere from the softened earth a harvest sprung.
These, from their sandy beds reluctant torn,
In sculpture rude the sylvan town adorn,
To the light hut a firm foundation yield,
Restrain the tide, or bound the narrow field.
"Down yonder slope, with smiling cots arrayed,
A tangled forest frowned in twilight shade;
Where gardens bloom in cultured beauty fair,
The serpent bred, and foxes formed the lair
On noisome weeds: the she-wolf growling trod
Where that light dome o'ertops the fane of God.

But sweeter yet, the rose of love adorns
A soil where sprung contentions briery thorns:
Subdued by potent grace, no more abide
The glooms of hate, the stubborn rocks of pride.

No longer thrive the noxious weeds of sin,
The desert smiles, and all is calm within.
Infernal tyrants quelled, and peace restored,
Man's heart can yield a temple to the Lord,
The heart that still, in nature's hand, had been
A den of vipers and of beasts unclean."

"Say, wherefore doth resistless sin controul
The high aspirings of a deathless soul?
And evil in her serpent folds embrace
With wide polluting stain our lordly race;
Tells not the form erect, the musing eye,
Of loftier birth, and prouder destiny,
Than the dark fortunes of each earth-born slave;
A captive in the womb—a victim in the grave!"

"A little lower than the angels found,
Yet with superior glory man was crowned;
Pure in his nature, royal in his birth,
He rose, sole monarch of the new-made earth.
The brightest seraph in Jehovah's train
Was formed a servant—man was born to reign.
Stamped with the image of th' eternal mind,
When the first parent of the human kind
In native majesty unsullied stood,
The Lord beheld him, and pronounced him *good* .
'Me as thy God and Father still obey,
And rule the earth with undisputed sway.'
'Twas in such terms the high commission ran
From heaven's great King to his vicegerent man.
Turn to the sacred page—let that unfold
How wretched Adam his possession sold;
Sold,—for such bribe as man may blush to tell,—
His reign to Satan, and his soul to hell,
Dooming sad myriads with his tainted breath
To inborn guilt and everlasting death:
For all our race in Adam was contained,
And fell in him, with one transgression stained.
The light of holiness was quenched by sin,
The foe admitted fixed his throne within;
The sire a bond-slave could the sons be free?
Grow wholesome fruits upon a pois'nous tree?
That foul rebellion into ruin hurled
Creation's work, and wrecked a beauteous world:
Bade dark corruption like a deluge roll
On nature's form, and man's immortal soul,
The impress of the God it dared efface,
While evil, only evil, filled His place."

"If helpless thus, from every good estranged,
Divorced from God, and to a demon changed,
Ere yet the mind can list to reason's voice,
Ponder the end, and fit the awful choice,
Why chides the Lord? his creature can fulfil
Nought but the dictates of his sovereign will."

"Hush to thy proud retort! O man beware,
The tempter lures thee to a deadly snare:
Would'st thou explore, with dim and blinking eye,
God's fathomless decrees? to HIM reply:
Thine erring reason's flimsy web forego;
The Lord hath said it, and it must be so."

Yet mark, how dawning sense, throughout our race
The bondage seals, confirms the deep disgrace.
See wayward infancy its monarch choose,
Prefer the evil and the good refuse.
Ere from its lip the lispng phrase can flow,
See malice, envy, flush the polished brow.
See baby lust extend its eager grasp,
The one forbidden toy intent to clasp,
Impatience, rage, and dark rebellion shroud
The cherub features in a sullen cloud.
Go Disputant, and in the cradle scan
Each embryo wickedness of fallen man.

Or leave thy fellow's heart, and view thine own,
Canst thou the tyrant's willing chain disown?
Who first on thine enamoured sight unfurled
The gorgeous banner of this painted world,
And bid the worthless toys of sense and time,
Outweigh the treasures of a heavenly clime?
Was it not he who turned thy youthful gaze
From the bright beams of truth's meridian blaze,
And bade thee choose the false and meteor glare
Of human wisdom, fancy, folly, care?
Was it not he who drugg'd the sickening draught
Of mortal tenderness thy lip hath quaffed,
And wrung the poison in that honied bowl,
Sweet to the lip, but anguish in the soul?
And when thy Eden of delight was lost,
Who sent thee idling to a foreign coast,
To seek a shade? and when Jehovah's hand
Snatched from the wreck and borne thee to the land;
Who closed the lip, strung the unbending limb,
That could not move in gratitude to Him,

Thy Lord, thy Saviour—shame on human pride!
Who filled with perfidy thine Indian guide,
Mocked thy proud hopes, procured that shameful doom
And thought to close thee in a sudden tomb,
And bear thy spirit to the dark domain,
Where victims like thyself gnaw the eternal chain?
The Lord hath saved thee from the fowler's snare,
The Lord hath led thee with a father's care,
He reined the storm, dispersed the tainted breath
Of pestilence, and marred the aim of death;
And yet how long thou wrought'st thy stubborn will,
Preserved by miracle to brave him still!
And oh, how long the slighted voice of love
Thrilled on thy ear, and sought thy soul to move,
Ere thou wouldst turn, forsake the beaten road,
And view the gate that led thee to thy God!
Yes, man is vile, a self-devoted tool
In Satan's hand; his purchase and his fool—
But man may rise from ruin: thou hast viewed
One in the image of his God renewed,
And seen, in that believer's parting breath,
How faith can triumph over sin and death.

In martial might, in human virtue proud,
Our Jacob tower'd above the savage crowd:
Each kindlier feeling dwelt within his breast,
A native produce or a welcome guest;
Adoring throngs his every deed approve,
Light of their eyes, and centre of their love;
He fought, and conquest sate upon his spear;
He counselled, and prosperity was near.
Ambition ruled his soul; he joyed to reign
The prince, the father of his native plain,
And rather had he heard the knell of death,
Than the low hum of disaffection's breath.

O ne'er can the remembrance fade away,
Of the stern gaze, the menacing array,
The bristling spears, the nicely balanced dart,
Winged for the flight and all prepared to part,
The narrowing ring that round the chieftain pressed,
When the baptismal stream was trickling on his breast.
The self-abasing portraiture he drew
Had roused their rage: they could not brook to view
In him, the good, the noble, and the brave,
A pardoned sinner and a ransomed slave.
His people were his all, no other tie
Twined round his heart or shone upon his eye;
They were his heritage, his regal dome,
His father, mother, children, wife and home;
And them he gave; his graceful head he bowed

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Beneath the clamours of the raging crowd,
And when a faithful band their will made known
To quell th' opposers and restore his throne,
A secret fugitive he sped away—
Yet more titan conqu'ror—from the ripening fray,
Lest eager friends and stubborn foes should roll
The charge of blood upon his shrinking soul.

O wond'rous power, a stony heart to change,
And man from all his native self estrange!
Had the proud chief, ere yet by grace subdued,
In glory or in love a rival viewed;
His soul had kindled into vengeful ire,
And blood alone had quenched the scorching fire;
Yet when he heard thy pleading lips declare
Thy love to Zaila, his revenge was prayer.
Through midnight shades he saw the maid depart,
The lone defenceless treasure of his heart,
And broke a murmur forth, as then he bore
Thee, his unconscious rival, from the shore?
Or did a deed, a word, a glance betray
One jealous pang upon thy lengthened way?
This last great triumph over self was given,
To crown the fight, and ripen him for heaven.

O friend so gently kind, so meekly sage,
The staff, the solace of my bending age,
And shall my failing eyes no more behold
Thy shepherd love amid this weeping fold?
Wilt thou no more my awful burden share,
Trim the weak lamp of faith, and raise the hand of prayer,
Wilt thou no more my wandering thoughts recal,
Cheer when I droop, and lift me when I fall?
No more to rouse my slumbering soul withdraw
The veil, and shew the terrors of the law?
With sweet assurance all my doubts remove,
Or pour the cordial of a Saviour's love?
Wilt thou no more—ye sinful sorrows, peace:
Lord, bid my hope revive, my murmurs cease,
Dare I rebuke thee? thou hast claimed thine own,
And placed that priestly king on an eternal throne.

His was a lot above the common race,
A sterner conflict and abounding grace:
Yet many, in the humble flock around,
If theirs the trial, were as constant found;
Heirs of a faith as pure, a hope as bright,
And meet partakers with the saints in light.

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O let me, Lord, in wondering joy adore
Thy name, who led me from my native shore!
Taught by thy spirit by thy love constrained,
And by thine everlasting arm sustained,
Ere I could from the mighty rend the prey,
And bear the captives freed by thee away.
Thrice blessed privilege! for thee to feel
Hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and steel,
The dreary wilderness for thee explore;
And where the living surges wildly roar,
To cast the Gospel net, and to thy hand
Present the tribute of a heathen land!
The first fruits offering—Lord, before our sight,
The fields are turning, and the harvest white;
And shall it fall, and perish on the ground,
For lack of reapers? bid the summons sound;
Send forth a missioned band, ordained of thee,
And let the armies of the mighty flee
Before the beauteous feet of him who brings
Tidings of peace and joy from thee, the King of kings.
When shall the tide of soft compassion flow
O'er the sad story of a brother's woe,
Throughout the polished race? oh when shall love
To human kind, the selfish bosom move,
And musing crowds in solemn wonder scan
The priceless value of the soul of man!
Av'rice would ope his chest, and folly pour
Her glittering trinkets in the sacred store,
And send, where Christian foot hath never trod
A peaceful host to fight the battles of their God.

On us be all the peril, shame, and toil,
But let thy household, Lord, divide the spoil,
And the broad blessing share: O now inspire
Thy gathered churches with intense desire,
And fervent supplication; bid them pray
For us, who bear the burden of the day,
The brunt and fury of the combat prove,
Far from the soothings of the friends we love,
Far from the hallowed house of thine abode,
And sweet communion with the saints of God,
To them so free:—O tell them we explore
The dens that echo to the lion's roar,
Our foe and thine:—we come to wrest away
From his terrific grasp the helpless prey.
Ourselves as weak, as impotent to save,
Frail as the leaf, unstable as the wave.
O tell them how on burning sands we trail
The blistered limb, and drink the poisoned gale;
Pant in the shadeless ray, and crawl to sip

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The stagnant drop that curdles on the lip;
Or count, in weariness, and want, and woe,
A night of months beneath a dome of snow:
While, still beset with unbelief and sin,
A sadder, drearier winter glooms within;
The strong temptation and the fiery dart,
At hand to wear the flesh, and wound the heart,
Let them in thought our wasted forms survey,
And think they hear us murmur, 'Brethren, pray.'
And do thou hear, in heaven thy dwelling-place,
And pour unmeasured forth the golden stream of grace!"

Six days are gone; the sun retiring throws
A glance of light upon the sparkling snows:
The gathered groupe are sadly gazing still,
On the pale outline of the eastern hill;
For there a distant speck the semblance gave
Of a dark sea-bird on the crested wave.
And plainer now, the deepening line extends,
And down the sloping path-way slowly wends.
Each on his fellows gazed, no word was spoke,
The thought was seen, the soul was in the look,
With one consent they form in long array;
Close by their path the Pastor's dwelling lay,
They pause not there, but passing wave the hand,
Full well he knows the purport of the band;
Fast in his aged eyes the tear-drops swell,
Yet for a smile he struggles, "It is well,"
And while he totters forth on Osric's arm,
The Christian's hope would human grief disarm;
Oft from his lip the broken accents fall,
Of meek submission; "He is Lord of all.—
He lent, and shall he not resume?—The same
In mercy—judgment—glory to His name!—
It is His children's privilege to lay
Their all on Him, and trust Him though he slay;
The chastening rod is felt by every son;—
It is the Lord, and may His will be done!"
Thus in short phrase the soothing word he speaks,
But hectic pain is flushing on his cheeks;
And often, as the winding train he spies,
The lip will quiver, and the sob will rise.
Approaching now, the low lament they hear,
In soft sad cadence breathing on the ear;
And as the plaint in measured numbers flows,
The sighing breeze responds each lingering close.

"No more we speed thy bounding step to meet,
Light as the roe, and as thine arrow fleet;

Nor deck thy lowly cot with grateful care—
A dark, a lonesome dwelling we prepare!
For ever closed from our reluctant sight,
We yield thy form to solitude and night.
Alas! how soon upon thy blooming day
The wind hath blown, and bade thee fade away,
The sweetest flower that graced the dewy morn,
Beneath the blast of eve untimely shorn.
And oft, regardful of our weeping song,
The plain and valley shall the wail prolong,
And bid the hills with solemn echo tell,
How in the dreary wild their pride and beauty fell."

Lamenting thus, the mountains foot they gain,
And meet their Pastor on the darkening plain.
The bier they rest, and mutely parting shew
The cold still object of their artless woe.
O'er that pale form the aged mourner bent,
"My son, my son!" no other word found vent.
His streaming tears the faded visage steep;
A glad relief; but Osric could not weep.
His burning hand upon his brow he pressed,
And self-accusing anguish wrung his breast.
That inward pang the pitying tribe could read;
They raised the bier and motioned to proceed;
And while they bore the sacred freight along,
In mingled chorus rose a loftier song,
The silver moon-beam brightening on the plain,
Crests the tall trees that bow responsive to the strain.

"Hail to the conqueror, whose unearthly sword
The combat dared, and triumphed in the Lord!
Called to receive an everlasting crown,
Before the Lamb he casts the trophy down.
Tho' loved and lost, we sorrow not as those
Whose earth-born grief no heavenly balsam knows,
For when the trumpet's awful note shall sound,
The dead to summon from the teeming ground,
Ev'n these, the mortal wrecks that pain the eye
Shall rise to life and immortality.
Hid in the kindred dust from whence they came,
Sown in corruption, weakness, and in shame,
We know these feeble clods of earth shall shine,
Pure, incorruptible, immortal and divine.
Where is thy triumph Grave? and where thy sting
O sullen Death? what terror canst thou bring?
We burst thine iron bands and soar on high;
Glory to Christ the Lord, who brings us victory!"

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Full many a rolling year hath pass'd away
Since rose upon the breeze that funeral lay,
And childrens' children press upon the sod
Where sweetly sleeps the old white man of God.
But if thou will'st to list the simple tale
Of the dark Patriarchs in that lonely vale,
Their falt'ring lips in broken speech can tell
Of one who ruled them long, and loved them well;
Whose life reflected, like a lucid stream,
The splendours of his ever-during theme.
Whose arms of love through all the nation reached,
Whose lowly spirit bore the cross he preached,
Whose glowing zeal, in mission ardour bold,
Assembled many in that sylvan fold.
He lived to feed, to shelter, and to guide
That cherished flock, and in their bosom died.
Then will they guide thee to a broken crag,
Where waves the woodland vine her verdant flag,
And bid a turf-clad mound thy notice claim,
And rudely sculptured rock, impressed with Osric's name.

And canst Thou pause, while sin and wrath abound,
And darkness reigns, and souls are dying round?
Canst thou with close and niggard hand withhold
The slender pittance of thy snaring gold,
Whose rust may as a canker eat away
Thy lingering hope in the tremendous day
When conscience re-awakens at the word
Of stern appeal "What ow'st thou to my Lord?"
Where are the two prolific Talents, given
To store thy coffers in the bank of heaven?
Those Talents with abundant produce fraught,
Thy TIME and MEANS, what int'rest have they brought?
Turn not—from this appeal thou may'st not flee,
The solemn query is addressed to Thee.
To Thee who readest, Thee who hear'st the tale;
To Thee whose every earthly stay must fail;
Whose present joys, the baubles of an hour,
And secret griefs that now thy peace devour,
Shall fade to nothing:—thou, who soon must stand
Before the Lord, with that unnumbered band
Of souls that battle in the glorious strife,
And souls that perish for the bread of life,
And souls that for a toy their birth-right sell,
And slumbering souls, that dream till they awake in hell.

O may the Lord, who yet shall conquer sin,

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Whose strong right hand shall yet the battle win,
May He with thundering call thy bulwarks shake;
And if thou yet art sleeping bid thee wake;
And if thou hast poured forth thy scanty store,
Bid thee increase, abounding more and more;"
And if thy secret prayer ascends on high,
Swell that weak murmur to a mighty cry.
O for the startling call of faith! that knows
To rouse the Lord, and give Him no repose
Till the resplendent stream that issues forth
From His high throne o'erspread the yielding earth:
And as in lunar tides the sounding sea
O'er barren sands holds its majestic way,
The ocean billows of His glory roll,
And His salvation's song resound from pole to pole.

THE END.

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

THE GARDEN.

THE GARDEN.

HERE will I rest me, on the mossy bank,
While the soft breeze that rustles through the boughs
Of this antique and well-remembered beech
Shall sadly commune with me of the dead.
It was her favorite spot; but she is gone
Whose presence was the soul that lighted up
Each beauteous prospect into double life:
She came to this fair scene a poor recluse,
To hide her head from an unfeeling world,
And sink in calm oblivion to the grave:
A gentle summons reached her from her Lord,
A messenger of love, who warned her home
Along a painful path by slow degrees,
And cheerfully she went: she did not ask
For length of days in such a weary world,
But bore the cross, the anchor of her hope,
Badge of her faith, and pledge of her salvation;
And whensoever she bent beneath its weight
She called upon the Lord, mighty to save,
And felt the everlasting arms beneath,
Supporting and defending. She possessed
A mind whose chords, like the Æolian harp
Responded to the lightest breeze that sighed.
And once she made her Paradise on earth,
Loving its transitory bliss too well,
Until the brittle reeds whereon she leaned
Broke, and the fragments pierced her. Then she turned
To Him who cannot fail: upon the rock
Her fortress building, and reposing there,
In patient expectation of the call
That summoned her to everlasting peace.
The voice of former days perchance, would come
As the low cadence of the distant hymn
Steals o'er the evening sea, and faintly shone
The memory of their joys, like the pale beam
That glances all unfelt upon the tide.
Long had the blazing ray, the blackening cloud,
In rapid alternation triumphed there,
And storms had ploughed the troubled surface oft,
Till he who walked the Galilean sea
Passed o'er the toiling waves, and bade them rest,
In deep unbroken calm; revealing nought
Save the reflection of a promised heaven.
Quenched was the meteor beam of earthly hope,
But still the pole-star of the Gospel shone,
And glowed more brightly through the shade.—

She knew

This spacious world had not a joy for her,
Save those, which, planted by the hand of faith,
Might rise indeed on earth, but could no more
Till death transplanted them to bloom in heaven.
Yes, she is gone:—but shrouded in my heart
As in a living sepulchre, she lies,
And in the silent solitary hour
Methinks I could unlock the sepulchre,
And gaze upon my treasure—fair in death,
Like the cropped rose decaying on the stalk,
And fragrant as the scattered leaves. I love
The meanest object that her eye has scanned,
Above the splendours of the brightest scene
That never caught its glances. All are here,
All that she loved to gaze on—they remain
Unchanged and smiling yet: the little flowers
That gem the grassy slope, and waving shine
With mimic beauty in the stream that glows
With their reflected blushes: roses, pinks,
And flaunting pionies, and tulips gay,
With the dark foliage of the classic leaf,
Laurel and bay; and willow drooping sad,
Wooing the idle wave that ripples on,
Unmindful of her charms, and then expands,
Rolling with broader bend through yonder mead,
And laves the base of a majestic pile
Glorious in ruin, where in sterner days
The arm of feudal might rested secure,
And centuries in their sweep have scarcely hurled
Half of the ponderous fabric to the dust.
One heavy mass, the fragment of an arch,
Rent by explosion, to the river fell,
And turned the waters from their native bed
With separating force; the streams divide,
And either speeds unwillingly alone,
Till, far beyond, they meet and part no more.

There dwelt some chord unbroken in her heart
That vibrated to such a theme as this,
And owned a sad similitude within;
Some pang untold, or only told to Him
Who bent beneath the burden of our woes,
That He might solace us with sacred balm,
And tell us all we should resign on earth,
In meek obedience to His holy will,
His treasury would repay a thousand fold.
Oft have I seen her look upon the tides,
Pursuing them in thin divided course,
Till tides responsive swelled in either eye,

And heard her breathe in such a mournful tone
As echoed to the cadence of the stream
The thought that rose within her as she gazed.
Ev'n now all lonely as I sit, and list
To the soft rolling of the stream, methinks
I hear her gentle accents mingle there.
She loved the watery world; the humblest spring
That creeps along the vale, had charms for her,
But in the grandeur of the mighty main
Her very soul seemed wrapt—and when the storm
Heaved the vast billows from their dark abyss,
And hurled them to the sky, nor roaring wind,
Nor thunders peal, could fright her from the scene,
She called it nature's majesty, which man
Could never yet depose—his impious hand
Had spoiled the earth of many a goodly grace,
Levelled the mountain, felled the towering oak,
And rent the bowels of the peaceful soil.
He binds a galling fetter on the neck
Of all that breathes below; from the poor worm
That dies in torture on the barbed hook,
To the strong bull, whose mangled lip must yield
Diversion meet for his unpitying eye,
The noble steed that sinks beneath the lash,
The lordly lion pining in his chain,
And man himself, in shameless barter sold
To slavery, and cruelty, and death,
To glut his fellow's avarice and pride.
This fair creation writhes in bitter throes,
Beneath his sway, and for deliverance groans,
But ocean scorns him.—Lo, the billows rise,
And roar defiance on his shrinking ear;
In conscious impotence the tyrant speeds
From the incursive wave, or wildly tossed
In some frail bark upon that boiling surge,
Reads in the volume of the sheeted foam
A tale of swift destruction. Where is now
Thy boasted charter? whither wilt thou turn
For glad deliverance now? where but to Him
Who winds his pathway through that awful deep,
Who rides the ocean as a steed, and lays
A curbing hand upon his tossing mane,
And chides him into peace? wouldst thou be heard
And succoured, in the helpless hour of need?
Oh, then beware! hold thy permitted rule
In gentleness: the merciful alone
May look for mercy at the hand of Him
Who knows the measure that ye mete withal,
And seals in vengeful wrath the tyrant's doom.
Amid the shining attributes, that blend
A living rainbow round the throne of God,

The emerald still prevails; the soothing tint
That clothes the summer landscape: 'tis the hue
Of mercy that embraces earth and heaven;
And as the distant flock on yonder hill
Crop from the verdant sod a full repast,
Or slumber unmolested in the shade
Of the green spreading bough, so mercy yields
The food, the shelter, to our mortal frames,
And nourishes the soul to endless life.
That flock hath furnished many a moving theme
For converse on the love of Him who spreads
His tender mercies over all his works.
Poor simple pensioners! how oft they flee
The careful hand, outstretched to fix the seal
That marks them his:—how prone to wander forth
From the safe pasture to the howling waste,
And when recovered by the swain, and borne
On his kind shoulder, how the thankless fool
Will strive and bleat, as though his tender limbs
Were writhing underneath the lion's paw!
Oft have I seen my loved companion smile,
By glad experience taught to bless the arm
That folds the flock, and leads the wanderer home.
O rest, thou wilful truant, she would say,
Thy shepherd bears thee by a path unknown;
A way thy straggling steps could never find;
He bears thee from a sullen wilderness,
Where thirsty sands abound, and pois'nous weeds,
To a fair pasture, shaded from the heat,
And sheltered from the storm: to verdant meads,
Where the mean'dring streamlet glides along:
No ravening beast of prey can enter there,
No secret venom work:—the rescued flock
Snatched from the lion's jaws, and gathered home,
Dwell there secure beneath the shepherd's eye,
Whose presence glads them, and whose tender love
Forms the sweet sunshine of their cloudless day.
O let not then the weak believer strive,
Though rent from all his erring nature deemed
Most fair to view, most meet to rest upon,
And borne along a new mysterious path,
Through gloomy deserts, over barren rocks,
And cross the thundering torrents that o'erwhelm
With desolating sweep the works of man.
Let him not shrink, nor tremble at the scene;
His Shepherd bears him:—round his feeble form
Th' Almighty, everlasting arms are spread;
The foot which treads that desert cannot err;
The bosom where he rests has bled for him,
And the eternal Word, whose fiat brought
Light from primeval darkness, life from death;

Is pledged to guide him safely to the fold.

Woe to the hireling! woe to him who deals
With niggard hand, the stipulated dole
On each returning Sabbath, and surveys
With cold indiff'rence the neglected flock;
Assembled to receive the bread of life,
And fed with husks, or scantily supplied
With better nutriment, then left to roam
Unnoticed through the week; to crop the blade
Of specious poisons on the world's dark waste,
And wander heedless in the lion's haunts,
A prey to his devouring rage. Attend
Ye hirelings; listen to the awful threats
Israel's Great Shepherd has recorded—'Woe
To them who feed themselves, and not the flock!
Ye eat the fat, and clothe you in the wool,
But tend them not; nor strengthen the diseased,
Nor heat the sick, nor bind the smarting wound;
That which was chased away ye bring not back,
Nor seek the wanderer—they are straggling wide
On the bleak hills, a prey to every foe.'
Ye faithless shepherds, hear Jehovah's word.
Is this the flock I purchased with my blood,
And bade you feed? and shall my vengeance sleep
While famine wastes them, and the prowling wolf
Scatters, and tears them? tremble at the sword
That glitters o'er your guilty heads! the eye
That pitied not my sheep shall waste away,
My thunderbolt shall blast the cruel arm
That would not gather them. How will ye face
That fearful hour, when, at the bar of heaven
They testify against you, and display
Their famished forms, their fleeces stained and torn,
Unmeet to enter the celestial gates
Where nought defiled can come: will ye endure
To hear that question from the Judge's lip—
'Where is the flock I gave; thy beauteous flock?'
How will ye bear the overwhelming weight
Of blood upon your heads! the blood of souls!
The screams of anguish the exulting taunts
Of friends that plunge them in the lake of fire,
While through the hollow regions of despair,
Reproaches endless, never-ceasing groans,
Echo from tortured spirits—lost through you!

Oh that they would consider, and be wise,
And feel the lofty privilege they bear,
Ambassadors for Christ, who gives to them

The reconciling ministry; by them
Beseeching guilty man to turn, and live!
And some there are, thrice blessed of the Lord;
Whose meat and drink it is to do His will;
Who love their Master's sheep, and would resign
Their very lives to feed and nourish them.
And e'en with such a shepherd have I walked
Through the green valley where his flock was spread,
And sweet it was to mark his tender love
For every feeble lambkin in the fold:
He knew them all, and warily he watched
To shield them from the perils of the world,
To turn their steps from every devious way,
And lead them to the still pure stream of life.
He wept in secret o'er the wayward bent
Of their corrupted nature;—oft he fell
Before the footstool of the Lord, and prayed
With all the fervour of a wrestling soul,
That He would send His potent breath to breathe,
Upon these withering bones, and bid them live:
And then refreshed by prayer, and strong in faith
He sallied forth upon his daily task,
Seeking each lowly shed, and from his heart
Sending the Gospel salutation—'Peace.'
Sometimes perchance the son of peace was there,
And there the blessing rested, there diffused
A softer calm throughout the poor abode,
Where the disciple of his Lord sojourned.
But some polluted walls could not afford
A spot to court the dove's unsullied foot,
And then the peace returned, and nestled close
In the kind bosom which had sent it forth.
Like the thin vapour, by the earth exhaled,
Which rises to the sky, and finding there
No certain habitation, falls again
In fertilizing rain, and dews the ground
From whence it sprung, yielding a rich increase
Of cool refreshment in the hour of drought.

With what a patient spirit he endured
The contradiction of a sinful race!
Precept on precept, line on line he gave,
That shewed like sketches traced upon the sand,
By the next billow rudely swept away.
Grieving, but not discouraged, he pursued
His sacred office; working to the Lord;
And many a seed cast on the thankless soil,
Though seemingly in vain, some silent shower
Of grace unnoticed may have sunk beneath
The barren surface; caused it there to swell,

And vegetate, and bear a golden crop,
To glad the wondering husbandman, and form
A crown of joy in the great harvest day.

How oft he placed him on the lowly couch,
And bent in silent sympathy to hear
The feeble plaint of querulous disease,
Moistened the parching lip; with gentle hand
Wiped the cold dew-drop from the throbbing brow,
And spoke of hope and comfort: soon he led,
With skilful wile, to that inspiring theme
Which dwelt within his heart, and longed to rise
In glowing words to his persuasive tongue:
He told the sick man of a broken law,
A sinful nature, and offended God,
A throne of judgment, and a scene of woe:
Then bade him raise his drooping head and view
The cross on Calvary's mount: the Son of God
Bearing our countless sins upon the tree
In His own spotless body; 'Oh behold
The thorns that rend His brow! the trickling tide
That issues from His hands and feet; the sponge
Of vinegar and gall, so rudely forced
On His pale quivering lip. Hark to the cry
Wrung from the Father's well-beloved Son,
"My God, my God, hast thou forsaken me?"
Now mark the fountain opened in His side;
And hear Him by his Spirit calling thee
To cleanse thy soul from each polluting stain,
By bathing it in a Redeemer's blood.
What wilt thou give, to know thy pardon sealed
In heaven, and an eternal crown thine own?
Alas! my brother, thou hast nought to give;
Nor would ten thousand worlds suffice to buy
One gleam of hope. Behold, the gift is thine!
Bought at a price too great to be conceived,
And freely given. Believe, and thou art saved;
Repent; thy sins shall all be blotted out.
Soon shall the soul-refreshing season come
From God's own presence, breathing peace and joy.'
Then to the sacred page he turned, and shewed
His high credentials; proved the message sent
From Him whose footstool is the highest heaven,
Down to the low abode of sinful man.
But, trusting not to all the eloquence
Of men and angels, kneeling he besought
A blessing on the word he had declared;
With demonstration of the Spirit's power
To rouse a sleeping sinner, new-create
A being born in guilt and bear a soul

On faith's strong pinion to the gates of heaven.

Nor was his active ministry confined
To the poor inmate of a cottage wall;
The lofty dome that echoed to the notes
Of revelry, has heard his mild reproof;
And painted folly in her mad career.
Has paused to list the unaccustomed sound
Of Gospel truth: has gazed in silent awe,
On the smooth open brow, where God's own seal
Of inward peace was stamped so legibly,
That mirth's unthinking votaries would sigh,
And envy what they could not comprehend.
'Twas lovely, to behold the bloom of morn,
With evening's sweet solemnity combined.
Vice shrunk abashed from looks that still proclaimed
A vessel unto honour, sanctified
And set apart for the great Master's use.

Methinks e'en now I see the dark trees wave
Shading his modest church; where the long grass
Bends to the wind, and decks the hollow ground
That oft has echoed to his pensive tread.
There rest the mouldering bodies that await
Th' Archangel's awful summons to arise
And meet their pastor at the throne of God.
I've known him dwell on the tremendous hour,
Till tears suffused his eyes, and bitter grief
Found vent in words; he has condemned himself
As an unfaithful steward, indolent,
Unprofitable to his Lord, and meet
For everlasting woe:—for some there were,
Some burning brands he *could* not pluck away
From Satan's fires. He warned them oft, and long
Besought them to be reconciled, and held
The fearful doom of sinners to their view,
But all, alas! in vain: they mocked his care,
And perished: Surely on their impious heads
Rests their own blood; the watchman gave th' alarm,
From day to day admonished them; and he
Is clear, and shall be cleared before the world.
But many a naked, hungry, captive soul,
Clothed, fed, delivered through his ministry,
Shall bear a glorious witness in that hour;
And many a willing cup his hand has given
In a disciple's name, shall then receive
A blessed recompence—the crown of life
Placed on his head; the palm of victory
That marks him more than conqueror through Christ,

Who loved and conquered for him, and the sound
Of smiling welcome by the Judge proclaimed,
'Well done thou good and faithful servant: come,
Enter with joy the kingdom of thy Lord.'

Yes, such a kingdom, such a joy there is,
As man's fond heart, with all its golden dreams
Of pleasures unalloyed, could ne'er conceive,
A kingdom where the elements of earth
Shall pass away, and all be made anew.
No wave of trouble rolls upon the shore,
Of that celestial Canaan: Jordan passed,
No other water but the stream of life
Greet the blest denizen: no sound of woe
Floats on the balmy breath of heav'n: no tear
The cheek defiles; no sorrow heaves the heart;
Nor pain, nor death, can enter there, for sin,
The black prolific parent of the race,
Is slain; and with her all her brood expire.
The temple of the Lord is open flung,
The veil is rent, and from His mercy-seat
Beams forth the light ineffable that sheds
Throughout that boundless realm eternal day.
Then who, with reason's privilege endued
To shun the greater ill and bear the less,
And by a present momentary pang,
The tasting of a bitter potion, gain
Unnumbered years of ease and smiling health,
Oh who would screen him from the strife of tongues,
The little cloud of man's contemptuous frown,
The peevish buffeting of pigmy spite,
Or ruder pelting of misfortune's storm,
Fierce, but coeval only with his breath,
And leave his naked, helpless soul exposed
To the undying worm, and quenchless flame,
The fearful thunders of Jehovah's wrath,
The blasting of the breath of His displeasure,
And withering glance, transfixing it in hell!
Go, ye who list, and barter endless joy
For the world's harlot smile, that inly mocks
The fool her painted blandishments allures.
Go, strut upon the crowded stage, and turn
An eye of scorn, and shower the polished darts
Of calumny and envy-born dislike,
And sneering pity, on the wiser few
Who wear the pilgrim's heart without his garb,
And taking silently their Master's cross,
Bid your vain resting-place farewell, and seek
A more abiding city, founded sure,
Whose architect is God. O be it mine

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

To follow, in the footsteps of the flock,
To the Good Shepherd's fold—His word my light,
His staff my sole defence, His rod my guide,
Forward I press to reach the glorious prize,
Nor heed the shadows of the darksome vale.
A line of lustre streaks the distant hill,
On that I gaze, by that I shape my course,
And though death's sullen portal intervene
I shrink not, for the Lord hath passed it through
And left the gleanings of his presence there.
In vain embattled hosts my path beset,
I gird me in the armour of my God.
His truth surrounds my loins, His righteousness
Yields a firm breastplate: His salvation shines
An adamantine helm upon my head,
Shod with the Gospel of His peace, I step
O'er pointed thorns, and crush them. Even I
Can dare a thousand foes, for He hath taught
My feeble hand to wield the Spirit's sword;
While weak as leaves that scatter the scared turf
In the autumnal wood, the fiery darts
Innoxious fall; recoiling from the touch
Of faith's broad shield, they tremble and expire.

O bright reality of future bliss!
All else a shadow: though the flesh will feel
And shudder underneath the probing knife,
And dread the hand that lops the limb away,
The spirit can rejoicing cry, "Ev'n so
Father; for so it seemeth good to thee."

The tear must trickle while remembrance wakes
At every breath that sighs among the shades
Where the soft echo to the loved one's voice
Responds no more; but faith can steal away
The falling drops, and gild them with a smile.
Amid those ancient trees, whose stately heads
With dark, unbroken, undulating line,
Like mountain summits stretch along the sky,
To giant growth attaining, broad, beneath,
Rounding in leafy swell, thence tapering up
In nature's line of grace, the beauteous curve,
Rearing their equal tufts, and from above
Seeming in guardian majesty to smile
On the soft scene, they shelter, a fond pair
Of doves, embosomed in the verdant shade,
Had built their nest, and warmed the young to life.
We loved to mark the Turtle as he cheered
His mate with the soft cooing of his voice,

Or took her station, and encouraged her
To rove awhile beneath the morning sun,
Soothing the little ones till her return,
Then sallying forth to cull the plenteous spoil
And satisfy their cravings. One sad eve,
When ranging o'er the neighb'ring fields, a shot,
Winged by the hand of wanton murder, pierced
His harmless breast, and stained his silver plumes
With crimson spot; he felt the hand of death,
Yet strained his fainting wing to reach his home,
And fluttered o'er the tree—then fell, and died.
With terrified surprise his mate beheld,
And called him with her loudest, sweetest tones,
But called in vain; then wheeling round the spot
She 'lighted near, and gazed upon the corse,
And pecked him with impatient agony:
Then to her nest returning, called again
With piteous lamentation; came once more
And seemed to chide his strange indifference,
Unheedful of her plaints.—It was a sight
That might suffuse a stoic eye with tears.
I bore the little victim from the spot,
With silent sad foreboding, that the woe
Of such bereavement should ere long be mine.

Too well I know the agonizing pang:
Mine was a life of partings: I have wrung
The very dregs of that most bitter cup,
Beside the dying bed, and on the shore
Of seas that soon should roll between the hearts
Linked in the bands of love. The last and best
Is severed now; but ne'er to be forgot
While in this bosom throbs one vital pulse.
For she was fraught with gentle sympathy,
As generous and true as he who wept
O'er persecuted David. When the world,
The fickle world, slid from my feeble grasp,
And left me nothing but the empty name
Of friendship and of faith, then she appeared,
A flower still blooming in the wilderness
When all were withered round; and sweeter far
Than those that shone so gay, and died so soon.
She bore with patient and forbearing love
The fretfulness a wounded spirit shewed,
And when in dark despondency I mourned
My joys all blighted, and my hope cut off,
With sweet reproof she pointed to the cross,
And told me of the Lord, who freely gave
His own, His only Son, to die for me,
A costly pledge that He would ne'er withhold

Aught of inferior blessing. He it was
Who now with His mysterious hand prepared
A pathway strewed with thorns, yet opening
On endless life, and everlasting peace.
How oft she taught my stubborn will to bow,
And kiss the rod I murmured at before!
She cheered the gloominess of sorrow's night,
Pure, mild and soothing as the lunar ray:
I rested in that light, till I forgot
It was but borrowed from the glorious Sun
Of Righteousness, and soon to be withdrawn;
The sooner that I prized it over—much.
For He who calls himself a jealous God,
Will brook no rival in his creature's heart.
I made an idol of the staff He lent,
And half o'erlooked the donor in the gift;
Therefore the Lord resumed it for awhile,
But not for ever.—When these mortal frames,
Dissolved in dust, shall rise all spiritual,
And this now earthy bear the heavenly stamp,
The love of God supreme pervading all,
And in celestial harmony combined
One note of triumph breathe from every soul,
O then the kindred spirits shall unite
In the sweet task of all—adoring praise,
And wondering contemplation of the work
That saved, and purified, and brought them there,
Recounting oft their trials, and the tears
By God's own hand for ever wiped away.
Then shall it be perceived how merciful
Was every stroke of his chastising scourge;
And still new hallelujahs shall succeed
Each retrospect of that amazing plan—
The ransom, the salvation of a soul.
It was the very bitterness of death
To part with such a friend, and wander on
This long and weary pilgrimage alone.
What will the rapture be to meet again,
Glorious immortal spirits, freed from sin,
To die no more—to weep—to part no more,
But dwell for ever with the Lord our God!

Welcome thou soft and inobtrusive orb,
Whose silent pace hath stolen unperceived
Upon my musing hours. The sun has dipped
His golden wheel beneath the main, that laves
The rocky base of yonder western hill,
Unseen from hence, but not unheard at eve
When stronger breezes curl the rippling tides;
And bid their deep and measured murmur break

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

On nature's sleeping pause: a solemn dirge,
Well suited to the scene, and most to me.
And now it swells, and now it falls again;
While zephyr freshened by the briny wave
Her passing wing hath brushed, salutes the trees
With rougher play, and heaves the lofty boughs
In mimic billows—there the shifting ray
Steals through the moving foliage, and adorns
With frosted silver half the sod beneath;
But pours a broad unbroken stream of light
O'er the parterre, and sparkles on the leaves
Of polished laurel, and the thousand gems
Of glittering dews, that bathe the sleeping flowers.

How pleasant is the modest lamp of night,
In brightness walking, to the sorrowing eyes
Of friends by fate and distance severed far,
Still meeting on her orb, as on a point
Of common union—happier, if their souls
Meet at the ever-beaming theme of grace,
In the sweet harmony of praise and prayer.
Nor rolling years, nor widening space, affect
The tie that centres there: though death himself
Should intervene, his stern, divorcing grasp
May from its kindred body rend the soul,
But cannot touch the consecrated bond
That links believing spirits; one in Christ.
I do but linger here my little day
Of fading life, to gaze upon the scenes.
Once vocal to the voice I loved, now wrapt
In deep sepulchral silence: yet they smile,
And yet display the handy work of God,
And call on me to lend the tongue of praise.
To their mute adoration. Be it mine
To work my Master's will while day endures,
And peacefully beneath the darkening shade
Of night compose me, till the welcome voice,
The Bridegroom's call, breaks on my listening ear,
'Behold I come!' O may my soul respond
The glad "Amen. Lord Jesus quickly come!"

THE IVY.

O deem not while my pensive eye
Dwells upon yonder ruined towers,
That sorrow breathes the rising sigh,
Or memory pines o'er fairer bowers.

I love the wild uncultured scene,
The broken arch, the crumbling stone,
The graceful vest of Ivy green,
O'er yon grey wall so lightly thrown:

And if from rude unhallowed mirth,
From swelling pride, thy heart be free,
Rest on this mound of sacred earth,
And ponder o'er the scene with me.

Recal the days of other years,
When feudal power unvanquished trod,
And where the browsing kid appears
The pampered war-horse shook the sod.

When turrets high, and banners gay,
O'erlooked the stream that murmurs by,
And sculptured roofs, long passed away,
Rang to the notes of revelry.

But when the neighbouring tombs had closed
Above the bold, the gay, the fair,
When in these vaults the bat reposed,
And time had pressed his signet there,

When all was desolate and mute,
And human step the dwelling fled,
Appeared yon Ivy's infant shoot,
And slowly reared its hermit head.

Unscathed by frosts of winter keen,
Unharm'd by summer's parching ray,
Robed in unfading changeless green,
The silent guest pursued its way.
And oh that rich luxuriant wreath

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

Crowning in solemn grace the tower,
Blooming on high, while low beneath
Are strewed the wrecks of fame and power.
Those fibrous arms, with strong embrace,
Support the crumbling wall they bind;
And canst thou no resemblance trace
To cheer the Christian's pensive mind?
Yes:—when each mortal hope is fled
When earthly bulwarks ruined lie
Triumphant Faith uprears her head,
Glorying in man's infirmity.

THE HYACINTH ROOTS.

HEALTH and peace await my friend!
Let her prize the gift I send,
Where, beneath a mystic veil,
Stands impressed a glorious tale,
Graven by th' eternal hand,
When this shapeless mass it spanned,
And the Spirit, breathing warm,
Charm'd creation into form,
Through the realm of ancient night
Glanced, and lo, the world had light;
Yonder vault of azure spread,
Poured the waves in ocean's bed,
Raised the mountain, smoothed the plain,
Clothed the forest, waved the grain,
Hung the kindling lamp of day,
Rolled the planets on their way,
Brought from dust the living birth,
Peopling ocean, air, and earth,
Breathed a blessing through the whole,
But gave to Man a deathless soul.

Glorious work! stupendous love!
Wonder of the hosts above.
Ah, how quickly entered in
Sin by man, and death by sin!
God's all-gracious purpose cross'd,
Earth is curs'd, and heaven is lost.
Cheer me not, for I will weep
O'er the wreck so vast and deep;
Sorrow, shame, and cruelty
Stalk abroad with ruthless eye.
Man, a blind and willing prey,
Bends his soul to Satan's sway:
Life but hovers o'er the tomb,
All within is silent gloom,
All beyond is dark despair,
Wrath and vengeance triumph there.

Oh my friend, how many a time
We have mourned for Adam's crime;
While our hearts have warred within,
Captives to the law of sin;
Or the pang of mortal woe
Caused the bitter tear to flow;
Or disease, with labouring breath,

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Bowed us nigh the gates of death.
We have felt the dark controul,
Eden blighted in the soul.

Weep no more—a blaze of light
Bursts upon this tenfold night.
In a word the tale is said,
"Christ is risen from the dead."
Christ hath suffered,—all is done,
Christ is risen—all is won.

Now my simple gift behold,
Rugged garbs the gems enfold:
Shapeless and uncouth to view,
Earthy, and decaying too.
Bury them in kindred dust,
Yet with patience wait and trust:
Soon a lovely form shall rise,
Tending upward to the skies;
Not a trace shall there remain
Of deformity or stain;
In majestic beauty standing,
To the noontide blaze expanding,
Bathe in heaven's nectareous dews,
Glowing in celestial hues,
Robed by workmanship divine,
'Tis thy prototype and mine.
Let us seek supplies of grace,
Let us run the heavenly race,
Let us yield our fleeting breath,
Smiling on the shaft of death,
Let these mortal frames decay,
And our memory fade away,
Christ is risen—we shall rise,
Flowers to bloom in Paradise.

THE WINTER ROSE.

Hail, and farewell, thou lovely guest,
I may not woo thy stay,
The hues that paint thy blushing vest
Are fading fast away,
Like the retiring tints that die
At evening from the western sky,
And melt in misty grey.

The morning sun thy beauties hailed,
Fresh from their mossy cell,
At eve his beam, in sorrow veiled,
Bade thee a sad farewell:
To-morrow's ray shall gild the spot
Where loosened from their fairy knot
The withering petals fell.

Alas! on thy forsaken stem
My heart shall long recline,
And mourn the transitory gem,
And make the story mine:
So on my joyless wintry hour
Hath oped some bright and fragrant flower,
With tints as soft as thine.

Like thee the vision came and went,
Like thee it bloomed and fell,
In momentary pity sent
Of fairer climes to tell.
So frail its form, so short its stay,
That nought the lingering heart could say
But hail, and fare thee well!

THE EVENING PRIMROSE.

Flower of eve, the sun is sinking
Far beneath the western main,
Thirsty shrubs the night dews drinking,
Moon-beams stealing o'er the plain,
Stars are trembling through the sky,
Flower of evening, ope thine eye.

Now with bending heads the roses
Slumber in their perfumed bower,
Not a bud its leaf discloses
To salute the silent hour,
Not an eye is near but mine,
Watching to encounter thine.

Gem of eve, I love to view thee,
While thy velvet petals spread,
Fearfully my looks pursue thee
As thou rear'st thy golden head;
Sleep may rest on other eyes,
Ours shall commune with the skies.

Praise to Him who fixed His dwelling
Unapproachable in light!
Now the lofty tale is telling
Through the spangled vault of night;
Speech nor language issues thence,
All is silent eloquence.

Every star confirms the story,
Every bending flower agrees,
Solomon, in all his glory,
Was not robed like one of these;
Those Jehovah's power express,
Glorious, awful, numberless.

Lo, in ceaseless praise, the ocean
Lifts his voice and hands on high,
Breathes the hymn in calm devotion,
Or in thunder greets the sky.
With creation rose the song,
Destined to endure as long.

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While the speaking scene around me
Tells of one stupendous plan,
Wonder, fear, and shame confound me,
As I utter what is man!
Glory, honour, wreath a brow,
Flower of eve, as frail as thou.

Yet, beneath the glance of morning
Fading, thou'lt for ever die;
I, to kindred earth returning,
Then commence eternity:
Thou must fall, but I shall rise
Denizen of yonder skies.

May my spirit rest, confiding
In the hand that nurtured thee;
And for thy short span providing
Formed thee to admonish me.
Graving on the frailest flower
Such a tale of love and power.

THE VALLISNERIA.

"OFFSPRING of the waters, tell
By what undiscovered spell,
Thou art taught unmoved to rest
On the wave's inconstant breast?
When the river's gushing tide,
Rising high, and ranging wide,
Threats with overwhelming force
All that meets her headlong course,
Still appears thy fragile head,
Still thy flowers the wave o'erspread.
Though the stream be sucked away
By the summer's thirsty ray,
Till the meadow's children round
Wither on the parching ground,
Yet thy peaceful cheek I find
On its liquid couch reclined;—
Whence the charm, concealed and strange,
Suiting thee to every change?"

"Lady, He who bade us dwell
Where the troubled waters swell,
Lent our stem a spiral power,
Precious in the needful hour.
Though to earth our root be given,
Still we fix our view on heaven.
When the tides begin to rise,
Nearer we approach the skies:—
How can waters overflow,
If the Lord support bestow?"

As the rolling floods retire,
Slowly coils the living wire;
Still contracting while we sink
Far beneath the grassy brink,
All unmoved our heads can rest
On the streamlet's shallow breast:—
Lady, how can we be dry,
If the Lord our need supply?"

"Favoured flowret, from my heart
Never may the lesson part!
Ne'er shall threat'ning waves of woe
O'er the humble Christian flow;
God can bid the storm be still,

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Or impart the needful skill,
In confiding strength to ride
Buoyant on the furious tide.
Never shall the streams of grace
Fail, in their appointed place,
While, relying on His word,
Man undoubting trusts the Lord."

FORGET-ME-NOT.

FORGET me not, friend of my choice,
When mute is the breath of my sigh,
And silent the tones of this tremulous voice,
And quenched the faint beam of the eye;
When the zephyr, now fanning my cheek,
Shall wave the long grass o'er my head,
And morn in her blushes unheedingly streak
The sullen abode of the dead.

Oh forget not: this azure eyed flower
Shall yet thy remembrance be,
Shall lift its meek head from the moss of thy bower,
And look like a vestige of me.
Thy soul will unconsciously prize
The dream that was soothing to mine,
And a weed of the wilderness fair in these eyes
Will ever be lovely to thine.

How sweetly with delicate blue
This infant of nature is graced,
How tenderly marked, yet how equal and true,
The lines on its surface are traced!
Ev'n so in thy bosom shall blend
Remembrance with ling'ring regret,
When the flower shall recal the pale shade of thy friend,
And whisper thee not to forget.

THE Missionary, *WOLFF* , met at Jerusalem with some aged Jews, who came from Poland to die there. One of them said to him, "It is not pleasant now to *live* in Palestine, but it is pleasant to *die* in this land, and all of us here have come to *die in the land of Israel* ."

RETURNING from a stranger land,
We come, a feeble, aged band,
To linger out life's fading hours
Beside our ruined Salem's towers;
Where once exulting myriads trod
To throng the fane of Judah's God;
With trembling pace her exiles creep,
Lean on the way-worn staff, and weep.

The spicy breath of Lebanon
Our welcome sighs, and passes on;

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

We stand on Olivet's ascent,
Where royal David weeping went,
Behold yon spot, profaned by foes,
'Twas there our beauteous Temple rose;
But not a vestige, not a stone,
Tells where Jehovah's dwelling shone!

Unmeet it were for us to dwell
Where Pagan hymns through Zion swell;
And day by day, with callous eye,
Gaze on her faded majesty;
And view the gorgeous Mosque arise,
Where blaz'd her holiest sacrifice.
Beneath the Crescent's impious pride
It is not meet that we abide.

But oh, how pleasant 'tis *to die*
Where Israel's ruin'd glories lie!
How sweet to bid her children's bones
Blend with the dust of Salem's stones!
Her's is the mould beneath them spread,
And her's the sod above their head.
E'en the cold worm with slimy coil,
Is welcome, bred in Judah's soil.

Soon shall these weary frames of ours
Dissolve like Salem's crumbling towers;
Her outcast tribes no longer come
To greet her as their hallowed home;
But sadly joy to lay their head
Beneath her foes' insulting tread;
To fall by her they could not save;
Their glory once, and now their grave!

Say, Christian, can'st thou hear that plaintive strain
Breathe o'er Judea's desolated plain;
While the sad Exiles, worn with age and woe,
With faltering step, and swelling bosom go;
Where erst, descending from the Olive steep,
One mightier far than David paus'd to weep?
O can'st thou hear nor ask an eagle's wing,
An angel's tongue, the tale of peace to bring?
From the high mount to send the joyful word,
"O comfort ye my people," saith the Lord.
Say not, thou trembling one, that I am gone,
That all my loving mercies are withdrawn.
What mother can forget the infant, prest

In helplessness to her supporting breast?
She *may* forget him, smiling on her knee,
But I, the Lord, will yet remember thee!
Still in my sight the mighty Bulwark stands,
And still thy name is graven on my hands.
What though from age to age the bitter draught
Of wrath unmix'd thy quivering lip hath quaff'd,
'Twas, Sin expos'd thee to that wrath divine—
My ways are straight—but how unequal thine!
Draw near, my people, with your Maker plead;
Produce your cause, and vindicate the deed;
Retrace the gloomy wilderness of time,
Raise the dim veil, and contemplate your crime.
Lo! in the centre of yon scoffing crew,
Say what Majestic Victim meets the view?
O fools and blind! ye raise the murd'rous knife
Against the Son of God, the Lord of Life;
The promis'd Prince, the Saviour of your line,
The Branch of Jesse's root, Messiah, King Divine!
A Man of woes, rejected and unknown,
Press'd by a weight of sins, but not his own;
Guiltless and uncondemn'd the Suff'rer stands,
Mute as the sheep beneath her spoiler's hands.
Turn to the record of your ancient Seer,
The shadow there behold—the substance here.
In vain—the heart is harden'd, clos'd the eye,
And He—the very Paschal Lamb—must die!
Hark to the import of that fearful strain,—
"On us and on our race His blood remain!"
The word is past—the awful doom is given!
And Israel stands accurs'd before the God of Heav'n!

O thou afflicted, worn, and tempest-toss'd,
How hath my thund'ring scourge thy path-way cross'd!
Hungry and weary, desolate and sad,
Fed with my fury, by my vengeance clad;
Victim of mocking hope and fruitless toil,
The scorn of nations and the people's spoil;
Where'er thy wand'ring feet assay to pass,
The field is iron, and the sky is brass.
The beauteous land, thy glory and delight,
Devour'd by Pagan foes before thy sight!
But deeper woes thy tainted soul hath known.
Thy conscience sear'd with fire, thy heart a stone.
Thine eye is dark beneath the day-beam's blaze;
Thine ear is deafen'd to the song of praise;
Thy back is bowed, thy table is a snare;
Thy piety a sin, thy hope despair!
"And will the Lord of Mercy ne'er forgive?"
Oh turn to me, my people, turn and live!

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My Israel, turn! thy murder'd Lord survey,
I rend the veil, and wash thy guilt away.
My own, my ransom'd Judah, doomed to prove
A moment's wrath, and everlasting love!
I, even I, will wipe thy streaming tears,
And raise thy drooping head, and dissipate thy fears.
I am thy God—thy Husband—thou art mine;
Thy glory shall return—arise, and shine!
From burning flames thy life do I redeem,
My hand upholds thee through the swelling stream.
Thy darkest night with noontide splendour glows,
Thy howling desert blossoms as the rose;
Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody,
Burst from thy lip, and echo through the sky;
As, Zion—bound, thy homeward footsteps tread,
With everlasting joy upon thy head!
Thou wert a chosen Vine, supremely fair,
Placed by my hand and nourished by my care.
With watchful love I built a fortress round,
Beam'd on thy head, and fertiliz'd the ground;
But barren, wild, unprofitable still,
No ripening fruit repaid my patient skill.
In wrath I turned, and smote thy spreading boughs,
Gave the wild cattle on thy leaves to browse;
On thy bare trunk my storms and tempests hurled,
A monument of vengeance to the world!
But I will graft thee with a nobler shoot,
And with heaven's dews revive the fainting root;
The wondering nations in thy shade shall meet.
To quaff the streams that murmur at thy feet;
Thy Moon the brightness of the Sun display,
While sevenfold lustre gilds the solar ray;
And thou, far lovelier, dearer than before,
Beneath Jehovah's smile shalt bloom for evermore."

THOUGHTS AT NIGHT.

O THOU , whose piercing glance pervades
The noon-tide blaze, the midnight shades,
Encompassing the path I tread,
 Beneath the cheerful beam of day,
And watching o'er my lonely bed,
With broad ethereal buckler spread
 To chace each lurking foe away;
Lord of my life! be with me now
While sleep forsakes my throbbing brow,
And in resistless billows lost,
My weary soul seems tempest-tost.

Be with me now: for thou hast been
My guard through every chequered scene,
Where memory lingers yet and weeps
 O'er the wild maze my feet have trod,
And still her faithful record keeps
Of deepening dells, and toilsome steeps,
 And storms that drove me to my God.
Beneath a strange and fearful lot
My blinded spirit saw thee not:
I deemed it harsh to dash away
 The brimming cup of earthly joy,
And on the bloom of life's young May
Bid the remorseless whirlwinds play
 To ravage and destroy.

Could this be love? to bid me know
The very bitterness of woe,
To lead me in a desert path,
Dark with the deepest frowns of wrath,
To rend the bosom's dearest ties,
To hide me from the kindred eyes
 With tenderness and pity beaming
No smile of sympathy to cheer,
No gentle hand to dry the tear
 Of solitary anguish streaming;
Or, if a gleam of mercy shone
In mortal mould, how quickly gone!
A meteor on the midnight sky,
Just born to glimmer and to die;
While years of sorrow sadly told,
Still gathered blackness as they rolled.
Could it be love that thus o'ercast
The glow of nature where I passed,

And with an icy frown repressed
Each joyous throb that warmed my breast;
Flinging a stern untimely blight
On all the blossoms of delight?

Yes, it was love.—Thou, Lord, wert near
To treasure up each secret tear,
And on the softened heart engrave
A lesson to reclaim and save.
My every earthly prop o'erthrown,
I learned to rest on thee alone:
And oh the hope, the joy, the peace,
Thy love upon my path hath shed,
Since thou hast bade my doubting cease.
And dried the tear, and raised the head.
The cloud, the tempest, still endure,
And warring elements engage,
But on Salvation's Rock secure
I smile upon their feeble rage;
For oh, my Lord! I know thee now;—
The blast may rush, the billow rave,
But who can harm the soul which thou
Art swift to hear, and strong to save?
The records of thy praise unfold
Thy love and faithfulness of old;
Firmer than giant rocks, that shoot
Through earth their adamant root,
Thy truth and thy redeeming grace
Unchanged, unchangably abide,
And thou hast sworn thou wilt not chace
One contrite sinner from the place
Of safety by thy side.
Let earthly comfort's feeble ray
Like shooting stars to darkness fall,
But thou—the fount of endless day,—
My Saviour, thou art all in all.
And since thy saving health I know,
I would not bend to mortal woe:
From rising fears, that fain would blight
The moment's peace, oh set me free!
Why should yon pale soft lamp of night
That shines on all, not shine for me,
And beam upon me from above
The tale of providential love,
That swells her warning orb anew,
Feeding it with exhaustless ray,
And guiding with direction true
Upon her pathless way.
Why should I turn a sickening eye
From scenes thy bounteous fingers deck?

Osric: a Missionary Tale; with The Garden, and Other Poems.

The gleams of pristine majesty,
 Yet lingering on creation's wreck.
While all thy works bespeak thy praise,
'Tis meet a thankful song to raise;
'Tis meet, O Lord, to cast my care
On thee, who wilt the burden bear,
And own the ills I now survey
Sufficient to the passing day.
And should a darker season lour,
 And fiercer storms upon me burst,
I trust thy love, I trust thy power,
To answer in that helpless hour,
 The hope thy promise nursed.

THE END.
