

However, his words rushed back to her. "All gone, The fortune you brought me!" And eyes that were dim With soft tears she upraised: but those tears were for *him*. "Gone! my husband?" she said, "tell me all! see! I need, To sober this rapture, so selfish indeed, Fuller sense of affliction." "Poor innocent child!" He kissed her fair forehead, and mournfully smiled, As he told her the tale he had heard, —something more The gain found in loss of what gain lost of yore. "Rest, my heart, and my brain, and my right hand for you; And with these, my Matilda, what may I not do?" You know not, I knew not myself till this hour, Which so sternly revealed it, my nature's full power." "And I too," she murmured, "I too am no more The mere infant at heart you have known me before. I have suffered since then. I have learned much in life. O take, with the faith I have pledged as a wife, [to feel! The heart I have learned as a woman For I—love you, my husband!" As though to conceal Less from him, than herself, what that motion expressed, She dropped her bright head, and hid all on his breast. "O lovely as woman, beloved as wife! Evening star of my heart, light forever my life! If from eyes fixed too long on this base earth thus far You have missed your due homage, dear guardian star, Believe that, uplifting those eyes unto heaven,

There I see you, and know you, and bless the light given To lead me to life's late achievement; my own, My blessing, my treasure, my *all* things in one!"

XII.

How lovely she looked in the lovely moonlight, That streamed through the pane from the blue balmy night! How lovely she looked in her own lovely youth, As she clung to his side full of trust, and of truth! How lovely to *him* as he tenderly pressed Her young head on his bosom, and sadly caressed The glittering tresses which now shaken loose Showered gold in his hand, as he smoothed them!

XIII.

O Muse, Interpose not one pulse of thine own beating heart 'Twixt these two silent souls! There's a joy beyond art, And beyond sound the music it makes in the breast.

XIV.

Here were lovers twice wed, that were happy at least! No music, save such as the nightingales sung, Breathed their bridal abroad; and no cresset, uphung, Lit that festival hour, save what soft light was given From the pure stars that peopled the deep-purple heaven. He opened the casement: he led her with him, Hushed in heart, to the terrace, dipped cool in the dim Lustrous gloom of the shadowy laurels. They heard Aloof the invisible, rapturous bird,

With her wild note bewildering the woodlands: they saw Not unheard, afar off, the hill-rivulet draw His long ripple of moon-kindled wavelets with cheer From the throat of the vale; o'er the dark-sapphire sphere The mild, multitudinous lights lay asleep, Pastured free on the midnight, and bright as the sheep Of Apollo in pastoral Thrace; from unknown Hollow glooms freshened odors around them were blown Intermittingly; then the moon dropped from their sight, Immersed in the mountains, and put out the light Which no longer they needed to read on the face Of each other's life's last revelation. The place Slept sumptuous round them; and Nature, that never Sleeps, but waking reposes, with patient endeavor Continued about them, unheeded, unseen, [green Her old, quiet toil in the heart of the Summer silence, preparing new buds for new blossoms, And stealing a finger of change o'er the bosoms Of the unconscious woodlands; and Time, that halts not His forces, how lovely soever the spot Where their march lies,—the wary, gray strategist, Time, With the armies of Life, lay encamped,—Grief and Crime, Love and Faith, in the darkness unheeded; maturing, For his great war with man, new surprises; securing All outlets, pursuing and pushing his foe To his last narrow refuge,—the

XV.

Sweetly though Smiled the stars like new hopes out of heaven, and sweetly Their hearts beat thanksgiving for all things, completely Confiding in that yet untrodden existence Over which they were pausing. Tomorrow, resistance And struggle; to-night, Love his hallowed device Hung forth, and proclaimed his serene armistice.

CANTO V.

I.

WHEN Lucile left Matilda, she sat for long hours In her chamber, fatigued by long overwrought powers, 'Mid the signs of departure, about to turn back To her old vacant life, on her old homeless track. She felt her heart falter within her. She sat Like some poor player, gazing dejectedly at The insignia of royalty worn for a night; Exhausted, fatigued, with the dazzle and light, And the effort of passionate feigning; who thinks Of her own meagre, rush-lighted garret, and shrinks From the chill of the change that awaits her.

II.

From these Oppressive, and comfortless, blank reveries, Unable to sleep, she descended the stair That led from her room to the garden.

The air,
With the chill of the dawn, yet un-
risen, but at hand,
Strangely smote on her feverish fore-
head. The land
Lay in darkness and change, like a
world in its grave :
No sound, save the voice of the long
river wave, [night !
And the crickets that sing all the
She stood still,
Vaguely watching the thin cloud that
curled on the hill.
Emotions, long pent in her breast,
were at stir,
And the deeps of the spirit were
troubled in her.
Ah, pale woman ! what, with that
heart-broken look,
Didst thou read then in nature's
weird heart-breaking book ?
Have the wild rains of heaven a
father ? and who
Hath in pity begotten the drops of
the dew ?
Orion, Arcturus, who pilots them
both ?
What leads forth in his season the
bright Mazaroth ?
Hath the darkness a dwelling,—save
there, in those eyes ?
And what name hath that half-re-
vealed hope in the skies ?
Ay, question, and listen ! What an-
swer ?
The sound
Of the long river wave through its
stone-troubled bound,
And the crickets that sing all the
night.

There are hours
Which belong to unknown, super-
natural powers,
Whose sudden and solemn sugges-
tions are all
That to this race of worms—stinging
creatures, that crawl,
Lie, and fear, and die daily, beneath
their own stings—
Can excuse the blind boast of inher-
ited wings.

When the soul, on the impulse of
anguish, hath passed
Beyond anguish, and risen into rap-
ture at last ;
When she traverses nature and
space, till she stands
In the Chamber of Fate ; where,
through tremulous hands,
Hum the threads from an old-fash-
ioned distaff uncurled,
And those three blind old women sit
spinning the world.

III.

The dark was blanched wan, over-
head. One green star
Was slipping from sight in the pale
void afar ;
The spirits of change, and of awe,
with faint breath
Were shifting the midnight, above
and beneath.
The spirits of awe and of change
were around,
And about, and upon her.
A dull muffled sound,
And a hand on her hand, like a
ghostly surprise,
And she felt herself fixed by the hot
hollow eyes
Of the Frenchman before her : those
eyes seemed to burn,
And scorch out the darkness between
them, and turn
Into fire as they fixed her. He looked
like the shade
Of a creature by fancy from solitude
made,
And sent forth by the darkness to
scare and oppress
Some soul of a monk in a waste
wilderness.

IV.

“ At last, then,—at last, and alone,—
I and thou,
Lucile de Nevers, have we met ?
“ Hush ! I know
Not for me was the tryst. Never
mind ! it is mine ;
And whatever led hither those proud
steps of thine,

They remove not, until we have
spoken. My hour
Is come ; and it holds thee and me
in its power,
As the darkness holds both the hori-
zons. 'Tis well !
The timidest maiden that e'er to the
spell
Of her first lover's vows listened,
hushed with delight,
When soft stars were brightly up-
hanging the night,
Never listened, I swear, more un-
questioningly
Than thy fate hath compelled thee
to listen to me !”
To the sound of his voice, as though
out of a dream,
She appeared with a start to awaken.
The stream,
When he ceased, took the night with
its moaning again,
Like the voices of spirits departing
in pain.
“ Continue,” he answered, “ I listen
to hear.”
For a moment he did not reply.
Through the drear
And dim light between them, she
saw that his face
Was disturbed. To and fro he con-
tinued to pace,
With his arms folded close, and the
low restless stride
Of a panther, in circles around her,
first wide,
Then narrower, nearer, and quicker.
At last
He stood still, and one long look
upon her he cast.
“ Lucile, dost thou dare to look into
my face ?
Is the sight so repugnant ? ha, well !
Canst thou trace
One word of thy writing in this
wicked scroll,
With thine own name scrawled
through it, defacing a soul ?”
In his face there was something so
wrathful and wild,
That the sight of it scared her.

He saw it, and smiled,
And then turned him from her, re-
newing again
That short, restless stride ; as though
searching in vain
For the point of some purpose within
him.

“ Lucile,
You shudder to look in my face : do
you feel
No reproach when you look in your
own heart ?”
“ No, Duke,
In my conscience I do not deserve
your rebuke :
Not yours !” she replied.
“ No,” he muttered again,
“ Gentle justice ! you first bid Life
hope not, and then
To Despair you say ‘ Act not !’ ”

V.

He watched her awhile
With a chill sort of restless and suf-
fering smile.
They stood by the wall of the garden.
The skies.
Dark, sombre, were troubled with
vague prophecies
Of the dawn yet far distant. The
moon had long set,
And all in a glimmering light, pale,
and wet
With the night-dews, the white roses
sullenly loomed
Round about her. She spoke not.
At length he resumed.
“ Wretched creatures we are ! I and
thou,—one and all !
Only able to injure each other, and
fall
Soon or late, in that void which our-
selves we prepare
For the souls that we boast of ! weak
insects we are !
O heaven ! and what has become of
them ? all
Those instincts of Eden surviving
the Fall :
That glorious faith in inherited
things :

That sense in the soul of the length
of her wings ;
Gone ! all gone ! and the wail of the
night-wind sounds human,
Bewailing those once nightly visit-
ants ! Woman,
Woman, what hast thou done with
my youth ? Give again,
Give me back the young heart that
I gave thee . . . in vain !”
“Duke !” she faltered.
“Yes, yes !” he went on, “I was
not
Always thus ! what I once was, I
have not forgot.”

VI.

As the wind that heaps sand in a
desert, there stirred
Through his voice an emotion that
swept every word
Into one angry wail ; as, with fever-
ish change,
He continued his monologue, fitful
and strange.
“Woe to him, in whose nature, once
kindled, the torch
Of Passion burns downward to black-
en and scorch !
But shame, shame and sorrow, O
woman, to thee
Whose hand sowed the seed of de-
struction in me !
Whose lip taught the lesson of false-
hood to mine !
Whose looks made me doubt lies that
looked so divine !
My soul by thy beauty was slain in
its sleep :
And if tears I mistrust, 'tis that thou
too canst weep !
Well ! . . . how utter soever it be,
one mistake
In the love of a man, what more
change need it make
In the steps of his soul through the
course love began,
Than all other mistakes in the life
of a man ?
And I said to myself, ‘I am young
yet : too young

To have wholly survived my own
portion among
The great needs of man's life, or ex-
hausted its joys ;
What is broken ? one only of youth's
pleasant toys ;
Shall I be the less welcome, where-
ever I go,
For one passion survived ? No ! the
roses will blow
As of yore, as of yore will the night-
ingales sing,
Not less sweetly for one blossom can-
celled from Spring !
Hast thou loved, O my heart ? to
thy love yet remains
All the wide loving-kindness of
nature. The plains
And the hills with each summer
their verdure renew.
Wouldst thou be as they are ? do
thou then as they do,
Let the dead sleep in peace. Would
the living divine
Where they slumber ? Let only new
flowers be the sign !
“Vain ! all vain ! . . . For when,
laughing, the wine I would
quaff,
I remembered too well all it cost me
to laugh.
Through the revel it was but the old
song I heard,
Through the crowd the old footsteps
behind me they stirred,
In the night-wind, the starlight, the
murmurs of even,
In the ardors of earth, and the lan-
guors of heaven,
I could trace nothing more, nothing
more through the spheres,
But the sound of old sobs, and the
tracks of old tears !
It was with me the night long in
dreaming or waking,
It abided in loathing, when daylight
was breaking,
The burden of the bitterness in me !
Behold,
All my days were become as a tale
that is told.

And I said to my sight, ‘No good
thing shalt thou see,
For the noonday is turned to dark-
ness in me.
In the house of Oblivion my bed I
have made.’
And I said to the grave, ‘Lo, my
father !’ and said
To the worm, ‘Lo, my sister !’ The
dust to the dust,
And one end to the wicked shall be
with the just !”

VII.

He ceased, as a wind that wails out
on the night,
And moans itself mute. Through
the indistinct light
A voice clear, and tender, and pure
with a tone
Of ineffable pity replied to his own.
“And say you, and deem you, that
I wrecked your life ?
Alas ! Duc de Luvois, had I been
your wife
By a fraud of the heart which could
yield you alone
For the love in your nature a lie in
my own,
Should I not, in deceiving, have in-
jured you worse ?
Yes, I then should have merited
justly your curse,
For I then should have wronged
you !”
“Wronged ! ah, is it so ?
You could never have loved me ?”
“Duke !”
“Never ? O no !”
(He broke into a fierce, angry laugh,
as he said)
“Yet, lady, you knew that I loved
you : you led
My love on to lay to its heart, hour
by hour,
All the pale, cruel, beautiful, passion-
less power
Shut up in that cold face of yours !
was this well ?
But enough, not on you would I vent
the wild hell

Which has grown in my heart. O
that man, first and last
He tramples in triumph my life ! he
has cast
His shadow 'twixt me and the sun
. . . let it pass !
My hate yet may find him !”
She murmured, “Alas !
These words, at least, spare me the
pain of reply.
Enough, Duc de Luvois ! farewell.
I shall try [every sight
To forget every word I have heard,
That has grieved and appalled me in
this wretched night
Which must witness our final fare-
well. May you, Duke,
Never know greater cause your own
heart to rebuke
Than mine thus to wrong and afflict
you have had !
Adieu !”
“Stay, Lucile, stay !” . . . he
groaned, . . . “I am mad,
Brutalized, blind with pain ! I know
not what I said,
I meant it not. But” (he moaned,
drooping his head)
“Forgive me ! I—have I so wrong-
ed you, Lucile ?
I . . . have I . . . forgive me, for-
give me !”
“I feel
Only sad, very sad to the soul,” she
said, “far,
Far too sad for resentment.”
“Yet stand as you are
One moment,” he murmured. “I
think, could I gaze
Thus awhile on your face, the old in-
nocent days
Would come back upon me, and this
scorching heart
Free itself in hot tears. Do not, do
not depart
Thus, Lucile ! stay one moment. I
know why you shrink,
Why you shudder ; I read in your
face what you think.
Do not speak to me of it. And yet,
if you will,

Whatever you say, my own lips shall be still.
 I lied. And the truth, now, could justify naught.
 There are battles, it may be, in which to have fought
 Is more shameful than, simply, to fail. Yet, Lucile,
 Had you helped me to bear what you forced me to feel—
 "Could I help you," she murmured, "but what can I say
 That your life will respond to?"
 "My life?" he sighed. "Nay,
 My life hath brought forth only evil,
 and there
 The wild wind hath planted the wild weed : yet ere
 You exclaim, 'Fling the weed to the flames,' think again
 Why the field is so barren. With all other men [only goes
 First love, though it perish from life,
 Like the primrose that falls to make way for the rose.
 For a man, at least most men, may love on through life :
 Love in fame ; love in knowledge ; in work : earth is rife
 With labor, and therefore with love, for a man.
 If one love fails, another succeeds, and the plan
 Of man's life includes love in all objects ! But I ?
 All such loves from my life through its whole destiny
 Fate excluded. The love that I gave you, alas !
 Was the sole love that life gave to me. Let that pass !
 It perished, and all perished with it. Ambition ?
 Wealth left nothing to add to my social condition.
 Fame ? But fame in itself presupposes some great
 Field wherein to pursue and attain it. The State ?
 I, to cringe to an upstart ? The Camp ? I, to draw

From its sheath the old sword of the Dukes of Luvois
 To defend usurpation ? Books, then ? Science, Art ?
 But, alas ! I was fashioned for action : my heart,
 Withered thing though it be, I should hardly compress
 'Twixt the leaves of a treatise on Statics : life's stress
 Needs scope, not contraction ! what rests ? to wear out
 At some dark northern court an existence, no doubt,
 In wretched and paltry intrigues for a cause
 As hopeless as is my own life ! By the laws [dispute,
 Of a fate I can neither control nor I am what I am !"

VIII.

For a while she was mute.
 Then she answered, "We are our own fates. Our own deeds
 Are our doomsmen. Man's life was made not for men's creeds,
 But men's actions. And, Duc de Luvois, I might say
 That all life attests, that 'the will makes the way.'
 Is the land of our birth less the land of our birth,
 Or its claim the less strong, or its cause the less worth
 Our upholding, because the white lily no more
 Is as sacred as all that it bloomed for of yore ?
 Yet be that as it may be ; I cannot perchance
 Judge this matter I am but a woman, and France
 Has for me simpler duties. Large hope, though, Eugène
 De Luvois, should be yours. There is purpose in pain,
 Otherwise it were devilish. I trust in my soul
 That the great master hand which sweeps over the whole

Of this deep harp of life, if at moments it stretch
 To shrill tension some one wailing nerve, means to fetch
 Its response the truest, most stringent, and smart,
 Its pathos the purest, from out the wrung heart,
 Whose faculties, flaccid it may be, if less
 Sharply strung, sharply smitten, had failed to express
 Just the one note the great final harmony needs.
 And what best proves there's life in a heart?—that it bleeds !
 Grant a cause to remove, grant an end to attain,
 Grant both to be just, and what mercy in pain !
 Cease the sin with the sorrow ! See morning begin !
 Pain must burn itself out if not fuelled by sin.
 There is hope in yon hill-tops, and love in yon light.
 Let hate and despondency die with the night !"

He was moved by her words. As some poor wretch confined
 In cells loud with meaningless laughter, whose mind
 Wanders trackless amidst its own ruins, may hear
 A voice heard long since, silenced many a year,
 And now, 'mid mad ravings recaptured again,
 Singing through the caged lattice a once well-known strain,
 Which brings back his boyhood upon it, until
 The mind's ruined crevices graciously fill
 With music and memory, and, as it were,
 The long-troubled spirit grows slowly aware
 Of the mockery round it, and shrinks from each thing

It once sought,—the poor idiot who passed for a king,
 Hard by, with his squalid straw crown, now confessed
 A madman more painfully mad than the rest,—
 So the sound of her voice, as it there wandered o'er
 His echoing heart, seemed in part to restore
 The forces of thought : he recaptured the whole
 Of his life by the light which, in passing, her soul
 Reflected on his : he appeared to awake
 From a dream, and perceived he had dreamed a mistake :
 His spirit was softened, yet troubled in him :
 He felt his lips falter, his eyesight grow dim,
 But he murmured . . .
 "Lucile, not for me that sun's light
 Which reveals—not restores—the wild havoc of night.
 There are some creatures born for the night, not the day.
 Broken-hearted the nightingale hides in the spray,
 And the owl's moody mind in his own hollow tower
 Dwells muffled. Be darkness henceforward my dower.
 Light, be sure, in that darkness there dwells, by which eyes
 Grown familiar with ruins may yet recognize
 Enough desolation."

IX.

"The pride that claims here
 On earth to itself (howsoever severe
 To itself it may be) God's dread office
 and right
 Of punishing sin, is a sin in heaven's sight,
 And against heaven's service.
 "Eugène de Luvois,
 Leave the judgment to Him who
 alone knows the law.

Surely no man can be his own judge,
least of all
His own doomsman."

Her words seemed to fall
With the weight of tears in them.

He looked up, and saw
That sad serene countenance, mourn-
ful as law

And tender as pity, bowed o'er him:
and heard
In some thicket the matinal chirp of
a bird.

x.

"Vulgar natures alone suffer vainly.
"Eugène,"

She continued, "in life we have met
once again,

And once more life parts us. Yon
day-spring for me
Lifts the veil of a future in which it
may be

We shall meet nevermore. Grant,
O grant to me yet

The belief that it is not in vain we
have met!

I plead for the future. A new horo-
scope

I would cast: will you read it? I
plead for a hope:

I plead for a memory; yours, yours
alone,

To restore or to spare. Let the hope
be your own,
Be the memory mine.

"Once of yore, when for man
Faith yet lived, ere this age of the
sluggard began,

Men, aroused to the knowledge of
evil, fled far

From the fading rose-gardens of
sense, to the war

With the Pagan, the cave in the
desert, and sought

Not repose, but employment in action
or thought,

Life's strong earnest, in all things!
O think not of me,

But yourself! for I plead for your
own destiny:

I plead for your life, with its duties
undone,

With its claims unappeased, and its
trophies unwon;

And in pleading for life's fair fulfil-
ment, I plead

For all that you miss, and for all that
you need."

XI.

Through the calm crystal air, faint
and far, as she spoke,

A clear, chilly chime from a church-
turret broke;

And the sound of her voice, with the
sound of the bell,

On his ear, where he kneeled, softly,
soothingly fell.

All within him was wild and con-
fused, as within

A chamber deserted in some roadside
inn,

Where, passing, wild travellers
paused, over-night,

To quaff and carouse; in each socket
each light

Is extinct; crashed the glasses, and
scrawled is the wall

With wild ribald ballads: serenely
o'er all,

For the first time perceived, where
the dawn-light creeps faint

Through the wrecks of that orgy, the
face of a saint,

Seen through some broken frame,
appears noting meanwhile

The ruin all round with a sorrowful
smile.

And he gazed round. The curtains
of Darkness half drawn

Oped behind her; and pure as the
pure light of dawn,

She stood, bathed in morning, and
seemed to his eyes

From their sight to be melting away
in the skies

That expanded around her.

XII.

There passed through his head
A fancy,—a vision. That woman
was dead

He had loved long ago,—loved and
lost! dead to him,

Dead to all the life left him; but
there, in the dim

Dewy light of the dawn, stood a
spirit; 'twas hers;

And he said to the soul of Lucile de
Nevers: [away!

"O soul to its sources departing
Pray for mine, if one soul for anothe-
r may pray.

I to ask have no right, thou to give
hast no power,

One hope to my heart. But in this
parting hour

I name not my heart, and I speak
not to thine.

Answer, soul of Lucile, to this dark
soul of mine,

Does not soul owe to soul, what to
heart heart denies,

Hope, when hope is salvation? Be-
hold, in yon skies,

This wild night is passing away while
I speak:

Lo, above us, the day-spring begin-
ning to break!

Something wakens within me, and
warms to the beam.

Is it hope that awakens? or do I but
dream?

I know not. It may be, perchance,
the first spark

Of a new light within me to solace
the dark

Unto which I return; or perchance
it may be

The last spark of fires half extin-
guished in me.

I know not. Thou goest thy way: I
my own:

For good or for evil, I know not.
Alone

This I know; we are parting. I
wished to say more,

But no matter! 'twill pass. All be-
tween us is o'er.

Forget the wild words of to-night.
'Twas the pain

For long years hoarded up, that rush-
ed from me again.

I was unjust: forgive me. Spare
now to improve

Other words, other deeds. It was
madness, not love,

That you thwarted this night. What
is done is now done.

Death remains to avenge it, or life to
atone.

I was maddened, delirious! I saw
you return

To him—not to me; and I felt my
heart burn

With a fierce thirst for vengeance—
and thus . . . let it pass!

Long thoughts these, and so brief
the moments, alas!

Thou goest thy way, and I mine. I
suppose

'Tis to meet nevermore. Is it not
so? Who knows,

Or who heeds, where the exile from
Paradise flies?

Or what altars of his in the desert
may rise?

Is it not so, Lucile? Well, well!
Thus then we part

Once again, soul from soul, as before
heart from heart!"

XIII.

And again, clearer far than the chime
of the bell,

That voice on his sense softly, sooth-
ingly fell.

"Our two paths must part us, Eu-
gène; for my own

Seems no more through that world
in which henceforth alone

You must work out (as now I believe
that you will)

The hope which you speak of. That
work I shall still

(If I live) watch and welcome, and
bless far away.

Doubt not this. But mistake not the
thought, if I say,

That the great moral combat between
human life

And each human soul must be single.
The strife

None can share, though by all its re-
sults may be known.

When the soul arms for battle, she goes forth alone.
I say not, indeed, we shall meet nevermore,
For I know not. But meet, as we have met of yore,
I know that we cannot. Perchance we may meet
By the death-bed, the tomb, in the crowd, in the street,
Or in solitude even, but never again shall we meet from henceforth as we have met, Eugène.
For we know not the way we are going, nor yet
Where our two ways may meet, or may cross. Life hath set
No landmarks before us. But this, this alone,
I will promise : whatever your path, or my own,
If, for once in the conflict before you, it chance
That the Dragon prevail, and with cleft shield, and lance
Lost or shattered, borne down by the stress of the war,
You falter and hesitate, if from afar I, still watching (unknown to yourself, it may be)
O'er the conflict to which I conjure you, should see
That my presence could rescue, support you, or guide,
In the hour of that need I shall be at your side,
To warn, if you will, or incite, or control ;
And again, once again, we shall meet, soul to soul !”

XIV.

The voice ceased.
He uplifted his eyes.
All alone
He stood on the bare edge of dawn.
She was gone.
Like a star, when up bay after bay of the night,
Ripples in, wave on wave, the broad ocean of light.

And at once, in her place, was the Sunrise ! It rose
In its sumptuous splendor and solemn repose,
The supreme revelation of light. Domes of gold,
Realms of rose, in the Orient ! And breathless, and bold,
While the great gates of heaven rolled back one by one,
The bright herald angel stood stern in the sun !
Thrice holy Eospheros ! Light's reign began
In the heaven, on the earth, in the heart of the man.
The dawn on the mountains ! the dawn everywhere !
Light ! silence ! the fresh innovations of air !
O earth, and O ether ! A butterfly breeze
Floated up, fluttered down, and poised blithe on the trees.
Through the revelling woods, o'er the sharp-rippled stream,
Up the vale slow uncoiling itself out of dream,
Around the brown meadows, adown the hill-slope,
The spirits of morning were whispering, “*Hope !*”

XV.

He uplifted his eyes. In the place where she stood
But a moment before, and where now rolled the flood
Of the sunrise all golden, he seemed to behold,
In the young light of sunrise, an image unfold
Of his own youth,—its ardors,—its promise of fame,—
Its ancestral ambition ; and France by the name
Of his sires seemed to call him
There, hovered in light,
That image aloft, o'er the shapeless and bright

And Aurean clouds, which themselves seemed to be
Brilliant fragments of that golden world, wherein he
Had once dwelt, a native !
There, rooted and bound
To the earth, stood the man, gazing at it ! Around
The rims of the sunrise it hovered and shone
Transcendent, that type of a youth that was gone ;
And he,—as the body may yearn for the soul,
So he yearned to embody that image.
His whole
Heart arose to regain it.
“*And is it too late ?*”
No ! For time is a fiction, and limits not fate.
Thought alone is eternal. Time thralls it in vain.
For the thought that springs upward and yearns to regain
The pure source of spirit, there is no
TOO LATE.
As the stream to its first mountain levels, elate
In the fountain arises, the spirit in him
Arose to that image. The image waned dim
Into heaven ; and heavenward with it, to melt
As it melted, in day's broad expansion, he felt
With a thrill, sweet and strange, and intense,—awed, amazed,—
Something soar and ascend in his soul, as he gazed.

CANTO VI.

I.

MAN is born on a battle-field. Round him, to rend
Or resist, the dread Powers he displaces attend,
By the cradle which Nature, amidst the stern shocks

That have shattered creation, and shapen it, rocks.
He leaps with a wail into being ; and lo !
His own mother, fierce Nature herself, is his foe.
Her whirlwinds are roused into wrath o'er his head :
'Neath his feet roll her earthquakes : her solitudes spread
To daunt him : her forces dispute his command :
Her snows fall to freeze him : her suns burn to brand :
Her seas yawn to engulf him : her rocks rise to crush :
And the lion and leopard, allied, lurk to rush
On their startled invader.
In lone Malabar,
Where the infinite forest spreads breathless and far,
'Mid the cruel of eye and the stealthy of claw
(Striped and spotted destroyers !) he sees, pale with awe,
On the menacing edge of a fiery sky
Grim Doorga, blue-limbed and red-handed, go by, [Terror.
And the first thing he worships is Anon,
Still impelled by necessity hungrily on,
He conquers the realms of his own self-reliance,
And the last cry of fear wakes the first of defiance.
From the serpent he crushes its poisonous soul :
Smitten down in his path see the dead lion roll !
On toward Heaven the son of Almena strides high on
The heads of the Hydra, the spoils of the lion :
And man, conquering Terror, is worshipped by man.
A camp has this world been since first it began !
From his tents sweeps the roving Arabian ; at peace,