

succumbing frailty of him that undertook the task, the world and its wise men having come to the belief that in thwackings there was ignominy to the soul of man, and a tarnish on the lustre of heroes. On that score, hear the words of the poet, a vain protest :

Ye that nourish hopes of fame!
Ye who would be known in song!
Ponder old history, and duly frame
Your souls to meek acceptance of the thong.

Lo! of hundreds who aspire,
Eighties perish — nineties tire!
They who bear up, in spite of wrecks and wracks,
Were season'd by celestial hail of thwacks.

Fortune in this mortal race
Builds on thwackings for its base;
Thus the All-Wise doth make a flail a staff,
And separates his heavenly corn from chaff.

Think ye, had he never known
Noorna a belabouring crone,
Shibli Bagarag would have shaved Shagpát?
The unthwack'd lives in chronicle a rat!

'T is the thwacking in this den
Maketh lions of true men!
So are we nerved to break the clinging mesh
Which tames the noblest efforts of poor flesh.

Feshnavat became the Master's Vizier, and Abarak remained at the right hand of Shibli Bagarag, his slave in great adventure. No other condition than bondage gave peace to Abarak. He was of the class enumerated by the sage :

Who, with the strength of giants, are but tools,
The weighty hands which serve selected fools.

Now, this was how it was in the case of Baba Mustapha, and the four Kings, and Feshnavat, and Abarak, and Ravaloke, and Kadza, together with Shagpat; but, in the case of Noorna bin Noorka, surely she was withering from a sting of the scorpion shot against her bosom, but the Seven Sons of Aklis gave her a pass into Aklis on the wings of Koorookh, and Gulrevaz, the daughter of Aklis, tended her, she that was alone capable of restoring her, and coun-