

SADI; OR THE TRUE DEATH.

storm suddenly went murmuring, like a restless spirit, to his resting-place, and a rainbow started up on the plain of battle, and the evening sun shone mildly over theesperides: and the universe was mantled in a garment of glory—bright and ineffable. It was this for the death of the Good, the Beautiful and the Great! fit time for the leap of the imprisoned flame, to join its kindred Fire. He leaned against a cypress, and the drooping boughs threw a melancholy shadow in the garden where flowers and castles and gentle hills lay in a circle of majestic mountains, whose brows were bathed in the deep crimson of sunset. That garden was the work of his hand had created the Paradise: it was his glorious thought expressed by other means than language: it was the God-like Ideal expressed in the lower, but not worthless material.

He had come forth to die—the Good, the Beautiful and the Great! His faint hands held a harp, dark with centuries—a harp swept by the fingers of a hundred bards whom Sadi was about to leave behind their star-lit abodes. Its tones wild and wonderful, as the shout of many voices, had startled the souls of generations since passed away—roused the bondman from his slumbers—enchanted a world, and had opened new vistas into the weird future. And he was the last one who might sweep its strings with loved chords. Mournful and yet glad were the emotions which shook the soul of the mighty bard.

Suddenly a sweet, low music stole through the air: and the flowers and the cascades and hills, seemed to thrill in unison. Sadi looked up, and saw the garden tenanted by spirits of light and loveliness, who were bending their mild but radiant eyes upon his own. They wore long flowing robes of intense white, and their lofty brows were crowned with stars, unlike those of earth, and behind each inferior but still lovely creature, bearing a halo that flashed as though they were enamelled with diamonds more lustrous than the finest stars. And Sadi knew his visitants. He saw the originals of those venerated portraits which were suspended in the great temple of Ildee. *These were the hundred bards.* Simultaneously the harp-bearers handed the instruments to the minstrels. Simultaneously burst forth the entrancing music of Heaven from their lyres. It was first loud and deep and massive as the march of a midnight storm over the mountains of Idora: then it gradual-

ly sunk into a breeze-like whisper; then, slowly gaining greater volume, it rolled out in clear, triumphant tones, ascending higher and higher, until the heavens received the final vibration. The music ceased as the sun sank behind the west.

"Sadi!" exclaimed the hundred, in accents sweet and low as the rustling of an angel's wing around the couches of the young, when dying. "Sadi! are you ready?" And the poet bowed his head. A quick murmur went through the bright host, like a word of joy.—Again they struck their harps, and, as evening threw his last ray upon the altar of night, the spirits vanished from the eyes of Sadi.

And night came out into the blue infinitude—night, with her star-plumes as brilliant, her wings as far-stretching, and her countenance wearing a look as quiet and grand as when she first bent her coal-black eyes on our orb, four thousand years before: and in her shadow lay the earth like a wearied goddess slumbering.

Sadi sang his last hymn, for he felt the dews of death clustering upon his brow. Then did he grasp his old friend, the harp, still closer to his bosom; and casting his eyes over that Paradise and up to the embattled orbs on high, his companions for years one-score-and-ten—the poet heaved a deep sigh. He thought of his fame; he thought of the laurels that he had won; he thought of *life; was Sadi ready now!* Was the vision of the hundred bards already forgotten? Was the music of the cascade sweeter than theirs? Did his laurel glow brighter than the unearthly garlands which circled their lofty brows? "Oh, earth, thou—thou art *very* beautiful!" whispered the dying bard. He heard a rustling by his side, and, turning, beheld a form more resplendent than imagination had ever shaped in his most holy dreams.

"Who art thou?" asked Sadi.

"Thy guardian angel!" exclaimed the form, in a melancholy voice. "Dost thou still wish to linger on this earth?" Sadi was silent; but a blush of shame rested for an instant on his pallid cheek. "Answer me!" cried the spirit, in a stern voice.

"Memory opens the tomb of the past; and from the marble portals I see issuing many forms with whom I fain would dwell," replied the bard.

"And doth not Hope flash her torch over the future?" asked the spirit. The features of Sadi wore, for a moment, a lustre such as might gleam through the ivory gates of the blest, upon the face of a penitent.