

wandering along the terraces, where under the ripening pomegranates roses of *Shar n blossom*, an l watching the ponds where fishes bask amid the water-lilies,—we can imagine him retiring from the sunshine into that grotto which fed these reservoirs from its fountain sealed; or in the spacious parlor, whose fluttering lattice cooled, and whose cedar wainscot embathed the flowing summer, sitting down to indite a poem, in which celestial love should overmaster and replace the earthly passion which supplied its imagery. Dipping his pen by turns in heaven's rainbow, and in the prismatic depths of his own felicity, with joy's own ink this Prince of Peace inscribed that *Sorg of Songs* which is Solomon's.

It was June in Hebrew history—the top-tide of a nation's happiness. Sitting, like an empress, between the Eastern and Western oceans, the navies of three continents poured their treasures at her feet; and, awed by her commanding name, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah brought spontaneous tributes of spice, and silver, and precious stones. To build her palaces, the shaggy brows of Lebanon had been scalped of their cedars, and Ophir had bled its richest gold. At the magical voice of the Sovereign, fountains native to distant hills, rippled down the slopes of Zion; and miraculous cities, like Palmyra, started up from the sandy waste. And whilst peace, and commerce, and the law's protection, made gold like brass, and silver shekels like stones of the street, Palestine was a haleynest suspended betwixt the calm wave and the warm sky; Jerusalem was a royal infant, whose silken cradle soft winds rock high up on a castle tower: all was serene magnificence and opulent security.

Just as the aloe shoots, and in one stately blossom pours forth the life which has been calmly collecting for a century, so would it appear as if nations were destined to pour forth their accumulated qualities in some characteristic man, and then they droop away. Macedonia blossomed, and Alexander was the flower of Greece; fiery and effeminate, voluptuous in his valor, and full of chivalrous relents amidst his wild revenge. Rome shot up in a spike of glory, and revealed Augustus—so stern and so sumptuous, so vast in his conceptions, so unquailing in his projects, so fearless of the world, and so fond of the seven-hilled city—the Imperial nest-builder. Mediæval, martial Europe blossomed, and Godfrey and Richard were the twin-flowers of chivalry—Godfrey the captor of Rome and King of Jerusalem; Richard of the lion-heart, Richard of the hammer-hand. And modern France developed in one Frenchman, the concentration of a people vain and ambitious, restless and rapid, brilliant in sentiment, and brave in battle; and having flowered the fated once, the Gallic aloe can yield no more Napoleons. So with

Palestine at the time we speak of. Half-way between the call of Abraham and the final capture of Jerusalem, it was the high summer of Jewish story, and Hebrew mind unfolded in this pre-eminent Hebrew. Full of sublime devotion, equally full of practical sagacity; the extemporizer of the loftiest litany in existence, withal the author of the pungent Proverbs; able to mount up on Rapture's ethereal pinion to the region of the seraphim, but keenly alive to all the details of business, and shrewd in his human intercourse; zealous in collecting gold, yet lavish in expending it; sumptuous in his tastes, and splendid in costume; and, except in so far as intellectual vastitude necessitated a certain catholicity—the patriot intense, the Israelite indeed; like a Colossus on a mountain top, his sunward side was the glory toward which one Millennium of his nation had all along been climbing,—his darker side, with its overlapping beams, is still the mightiest object in that nation's memory.

You have seen a blight in summer. The sky is overcast, and yet there are no clouds; nothing but a dry and stifling obscurity—as if the mouth of some pestilent volcano had opened, or as it sulphur mingled with the sunbeams. "The beasts groan; the cattle are oppressed." From the trees the embryo fruits and the remaining blossoms fall in an unnoticed shower, and the foliage curls and crumples. And whilst creation looks disconsolate, in the hedgerows the heavy moths begin to flutter, and ominous owlets cry from the ruin. Such a blight came over the Hebrew summer. By every calculation it ought to have been high noon; but the sun no longer smiled on Israel's dial. There was a dark discomfort in the air. The people murmured. The monarch wheeled along with greater pomp than ever; but the popular prince had soured into the despot, and the crown set defiant on his moody brow; and stiff were the obeisances, heartless the hosannas, which hailed him as he passed. The ways of Zion mourned; and whilst grass was sprouting in the temple-courts, mysterious groves and impious shrines were rising everywhere; and whilst lust defiled the palace, Chemosh and Astaroth, and other Gentile abominations, defiled the Holy Land. And in the disastrous eclipse, beasts of the forest crept abroad. From his lurking-place in Egypt, Hadad ventured out, and became a life-long torment to the God-forsaken monarch. And Rezon pounced on Damascus, and made Syria his own. And from the Pagan palaces of Thebes and Memphis harscories were heard ever and anon, Pharaoh and Jeroboam taking council together, screeching forth their threatening, and hooting insults, at which Solomon could laugh no longer. For amidst all the gloom and misery a message comes from God; the kingdom is rent; and whilst Solomon's successor will only have a fag end and a fragment, by right Divine ten