

ABRAHAM AT MACHPELAH.

DENSELY wrapped in shades
 Olive and terebinth, its vaulted door
 Flecked with the untrained vine and matted grass,
 Behold Machpelah's cave.

Hark ! hear we not
 A voice of weeping ? Lo, yon aged man
 Bendeth beside his dead. Wave after wave
 Of memory rises, till his lonely heart
 Sees all its treasures floating on the flood
 Like rootless weeds.

The earliest dawn of love
 Is present with him, and a form of grace
 Whose beauty held him ever in its thrall :
 And then the morn of marriage, gorgeous robes
 And dulcet music and the rites that bless
 The Eastern bride. Full many a glowing scene
 Made happy by her tenderness, returns
 To mock his solitude.

Again their home
 Gleams through the oaks of Mamre. There he sat
 Rendering due rites of hospitality
 To guests who bore the folded wing of Heaven
 Beneath their vestments. And her smile was there
 Among the angels.

When her clustering curls
 Wore Time's chill hoar frost, with what glad surprise
 What holy triumphs of exulting faith
 He saw, fresh blooming in her withered arms,
 A fair young babe, the heir of all his wealth,
 For ever blending with that speechless joy
 Which thrilled his soul when first a father's name
 Fell on his ear, is that pale, placid brow
 O'er which he weeps.

Yet had he seen it wear
 Another semblance, tinged with hues of thought
 Perchance, unlovely in that trial hour
 When to sad Hagar's mute reproachful eyes
 He answered nought, but on her shoulder bound
 The cruse of water and the loaf, and sent
 Her and her son unfriended wanderers forth
 Into the wilderness.

Say, who can mourn
 Over the smitten idol, by long years
 Cemented with his being, yet perceive
 No dark remembrance that he fain would blot,
 Troubling the tear ? If there were no kind deed