

V.

I weep, though I know it is in vain For my sorrow is so great that I breathe only tears, terrors, anguish and cries of lamentation.

VI.

The whole universe is moved by my sorrow, for I am the most faithful of lovers. Lo! all creation weeps for my lot—man, beasts, fishes and birds.

VII.

As long as my life lasts, I will follow thy wandering shade—yea, though water, fire, earth and air should attempt to stand in my way!"

If these two poems are at all representative of the poetic genius and expression of the more advanced of the native nations and tribes, one would think that out of the relics that cruelty, ignorance, and fanaticism have spared, there might be compiled an American anthology which would not be unworthy of the majestic grandeur and varied beauties of our great continent.

THE SEMITIC FAMILY.

About 2000 B.C., the first conquest of which monumental history informs us, was made by a Semite over a Tiranian tongue. The Accadians, who inhabited the valley of the Euphrates, had made considerable progress in civilization, had a literature of their own, and comprised adroit workers in various arts and industries. To them (as already hinted) we are, in all likelihood, indebted, indirectly, for our alphabet. But, having imparted valuable knowledge to their Semite conquerors, the Accadians adopted the language of the latter and became practically a Semitic people. It is a curious evidence of the vitality of language, and of the strong but often unseen links which unite "all nations that on earth do dwell," and the past with the present, that a word which is familiar to every Christian child, a word which, in its Hellenistic form and meaning, may have been hallowed by our Saviour's use, a word which Mohammed said he was taught to repeat by the Angel Gabriel, a word which, through successive ages, has been associated with all that is holiest, most hopeful, most consoling, by Jews, by Christians, and by Mohammedans, the word "Amen," was, in its original form, employed millenniums ago by those ancient Accadian scribes, the recovery of whose compositions was one of the proudest rewards of modern exploration. Of the literature which sprang from the united intellectual resources of the two distinct races thus brought into contact, the late George Smith, of the British Museum, and his fellow-workers and successors in Babylonian research, have deciphered some of the most important remains. Among them are a hymn to Samas (Shemesh, or the Sun), and the Chaldean account of the Deluge, included among what are called "the Izdhubar Legends." The Babylonians and Assyrians have a peculiar interest for Christendom from their connection with the history of the Israelites and Jews in the Old Testament; and the Semitic group of races to which they belong, is too well known to need any particular description. With those races the languages of the group do not clearly correspond, some of the peoples using Semitic tongues being assigned by some philologists to non-Semitic races. On that