

thought, my griefs find no redress ; they inward prey, like gangren'd wounds, immedicable grown.

MICAH.—Matchless in might ! once Israel's glory, now her grief ! we come (thy friends well known) to visit thee.

SAMSON.—Welcome, my friends !

MICAH.—Which shall we first bewail, thy bondage or lost sight ?

SAMSON.—Oh, loss of sight ! of thee I most complain. Oh, worse than beggary, old age, or chains ! My very soul in real darkness dwells !

AIR.

Total eclipse ! no sun, no moon, all dark amidst the blaze of noon ! O glorious light ! no cheering ray to glad my eyes with welcome day ! Why thus depriv'd thy prime decree ? Sun, moon and stars are dark to me.

CHORUS.

ISRAELITES.—O first-created beam, and thou, great word, let there be light ! and light was over all ; One heav'nly blaze shone round this earthly ball to thy dark servant life by light afford.

MANOAH.—Brethren and men of Dan, say where's my son Samson, fond Israel's boast ? Inform my age.

MICAH.—As signal now in low dejected state, as in the height of pow'r : see where he lies.

RECITATIVE (accompanied).

MANOAH.—The good we wish for oft. proves our bane ; I prayed for children and I gained a son, and such a son as all men hailed me happy ; but who'd be now a father in my stead ? The blessing drew a scorpion's tail behind : this plant, select and sacred, for awhile the miracle of men, was in an hour ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound, his foes' derision, captive, poor and blind.

AIR.

Thy glorious deeds inspir'd my tongue, whilst airs of joy from thence did flow ; to sorrows now I tune my song, and set my harp to notes of woe.

RECITATIVE (accompanied).

SAMSON.—Justly these evils have befall'n thy son. Sole author I, sole cause. My grief for this forbid mine eyes to close, or thoughts to rest ; but now the strife shall end ; me overthrown, Dagon presumes to enter lists with God ; who thus provok'd will not connive, but rouse His fury soon, and His great name assert. Dagon shall stoop, ere long be quite despoil'd of all these boasted trophies won on me.

AIR.

Why does the God of Israel sleep ? Arise with dreadful sound, with clouds encompass'd round, then shall the heathen hear Thy thunder deep. The tempest of Thy wrath now raise, in whirlwinds them pursue, full fraught with vengeance due, till shame and trouble all Thy foes shall seize.