

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

BY T. K. HERVEY.

The burning East hath caught a sign,
 Upon the brow of night,
 And starts the sage to see it shine
 O'er all the morning light ;
 A stranger with his step of fire,
 Upon the starry way,
 And wings that tarnish not, nor tire,
 Amid the blaze of day,
 But keeping still his flashing eye
 Unshut, amid the sun-bright day

He is not of the stars who sang,*
 At that primæval birth,
 When all their lyres with music rang,
 To hail the young bright earth ;
 When swelled the earth's high anthem out,
 And pealed the spheres abroad,
 And one wide pean met the shout,
 From all the "Sons of God!"
 He fought not with the starry train †
 That fought on Kishon's ancient plain ;

Whence comes that glorious messenger ?
 Why came he not before ?
 Chaldea hath no form so fair,
 In all her planet-lore :—
 The Gheber knoweth not that star,
 Amid his creed of fire ;
 Nor hath its beauty hailed from far,
 The mariner of Tyre,
 When midnight with her spirit-train,
 Looked o'er the Idumæan main !

It prophesieth in the skies ;—
 Oh ! Where hath it been hid,
 For ages ; mid the myriad eyes
 That watch the pyramid !
 The Persian, with his starry wit,
 He cannot speak its name ;
 And who shall read the story writ
 Upon its brow of flame !
 It hath no page in Grecian art,
 Nor sign on Zoroaster's chart !

It spreadeth forth its glittering wing,
 And beckoneth to the west,
 And circleth, like a living thing,
 In haste—that may not rest :—
 The sage hath watched its course afar,
 And pondered it apart,
 Till, lo ! the story of that star

* Job 38, 7.—When all the morning stars
 sang, &c. † Judges 5, 20.

Beams in upon his heart—
 And brightly rises on his soul,
 The legend of its burning scroll !

'Tis he ! 'tis he ! the light of whom
 Those ancient prophets told,
 The star that should from Jacob come,*
 To shine on Judah's fold !
 The East shall offer odours sweet,
 To meet its rising smiles,
 And kings bring presents to his feet
 From Tarshish and the Isles, †—
 And Sheba from the desert far,
 Be summoned by that herald star.

The angel, with his sword of flame.
 Who watched on Eden's towers,
 When Adam in his hour of shame,
 Went weeping from its bowers,—
 Perchance to that same shining power
 The gentle task is given,
 To point, in this redeeming hour,
 The pathway back to heaven,—
 And keep the new and better road
 That opens to the tree of God.

Along the wild like ships at sea,
 The pilgrim camel rides,
 And through the heavens silently
 That glorious banner glides :
 The desert fiend, with breathless haste,
 Stalks faint and far away,
 And like a garden blooms the waste,
 Beneath the holy ray,—
 When they who weary not, nor rest,
 Are travelling, star-led, to the west.

When Judah heard the voice of God,
 On Egypt's hostile plain,
 And shook again her hair abroad,
 And flung away her chain,—
 She followed through the desert-way,
 Alternate gloom and light,
 And that was, still, a shade, by day,
 Which gleamed a fire, by night ;
 And morning saw the Godhead shroud
 Behind the Pillar of the Cloud !

But onward, onward gliding, still,
 Afar and yet afar,
 By day and night—o'er plain and hill
 Looks out yon golden star !

* Numbers 24, 17. † Psalm 72, 10.