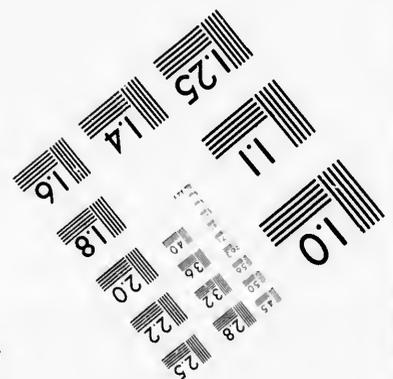
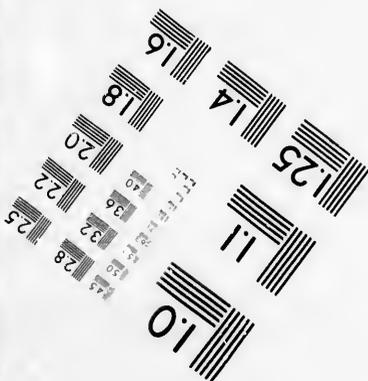
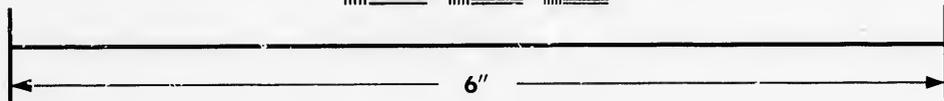
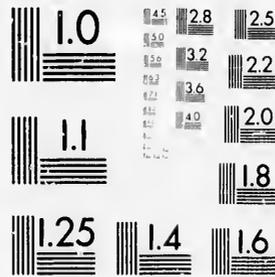


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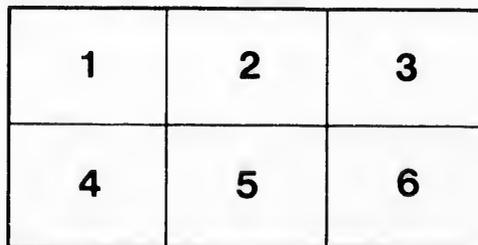
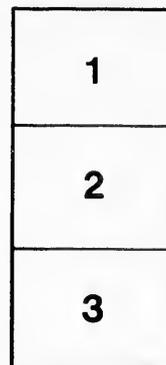
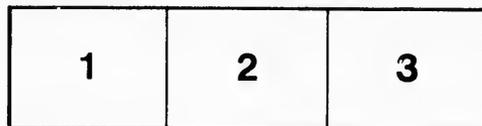
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THE HERO

OF THE

DRAMA OF GENESIS.

AN EPIC OF SACRED STORY.

BY

REV. J. HARRY KING.

HALIFAX, N. S.:
NOVA SCOTIA PRINTING COMPANY.
1895.

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Agriculture,
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Dedication.

TO THE
BELOVED COMPANION
OF MY
YOUTH AND EARLY STRUGGLES;
THE SHARER OF
MY EVERY AMBITION AND EFFORT,
FOR THE
WELFARE OF MEN;
MY AFFECTIONATE WIFE,
THIS VOLUME IS
DEDICATED

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PREFACE.

AS to the title, let no one infer from it that the author doubts the authenticity of the Scripture involved. For he accepts it as the revealed and inspired Word of God.

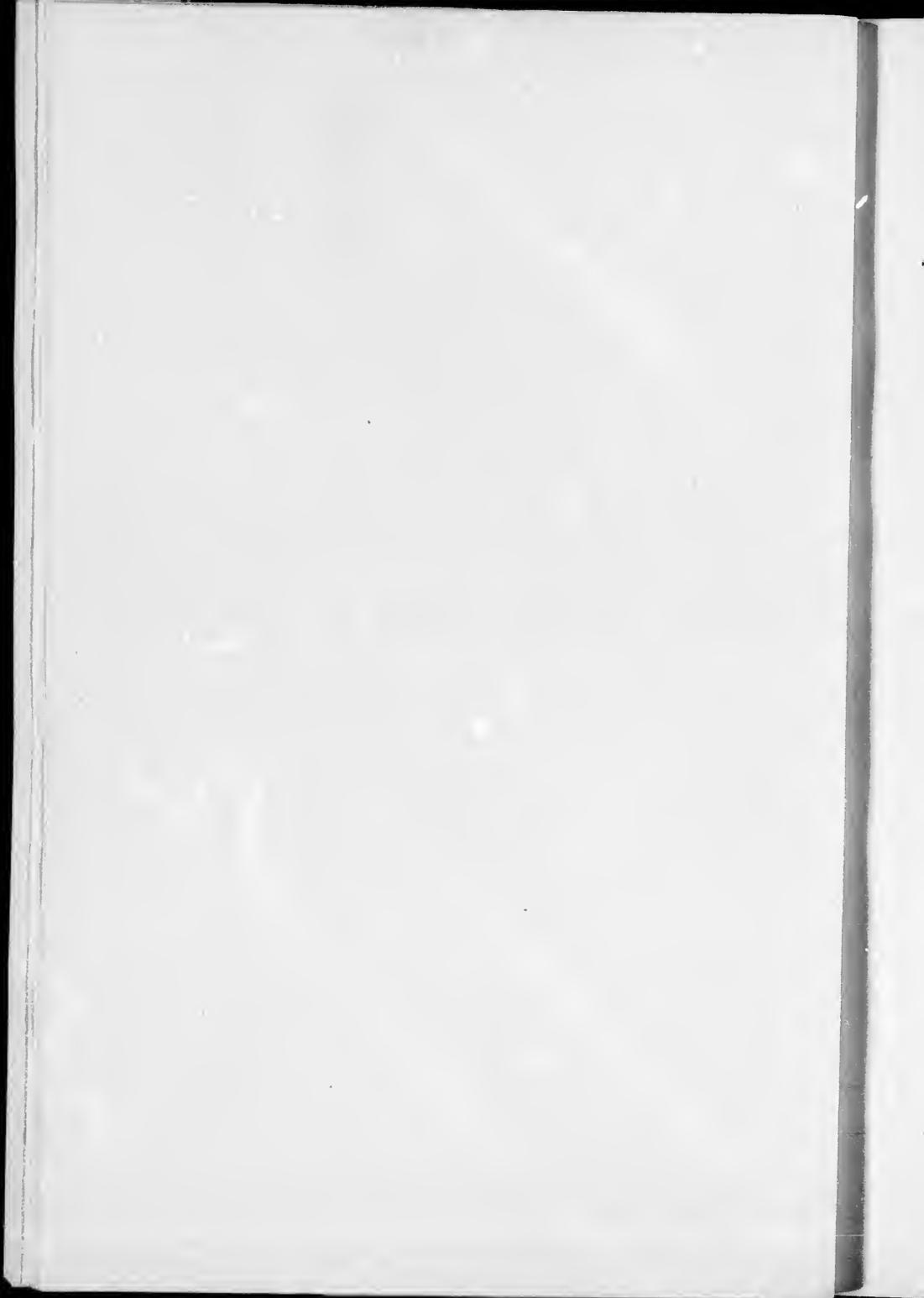
The scenes and incidents in the life of Joseph are so interesting and connected, and lead to such a striking result, that the title is thought to be justifiable.

“There are three points in Theology, about which all other things naturally revolve;—a supernatural book, a supernatural life, and a supernatural destiny.” Such a sublime and important truth is beautifully illustrated by the life of our hero.

The author presents it in verse, with the aim of interestingly disclosing a divine purpose in the affairs of men; and of arousing a greater interest in Sacred literature.

No attempt is made to merely please the æsthetic taste of the critics, many of whom are better able to destroy than to create. No claim is made to proficiency in versification. With due regard for Sacred truth, and conscious of defect, the life of our hero is portrayed from the shepherd's crook to the nation's sceptre, with the prayer that it may be a blessing and inspiration to many.

J. H. K.



THE HERO OF THE DRAMA OF GENESIS.

AN EPIC OF SACRED STORY.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

IN time primeval ere abodes of men,
Were harassed with the surging of the throngs,
That now press hard upon each fair retreat,
That fill the world with passion, strife, and toil,
There dwelt in sacred Canaan, Israel.
'Midst scenes of nature in themselves adorned
With all the art of God, and hallowed by
His footprints and His presence oft, revealed ;
The Patriarch revered and served the Lord.
His was the land, to him bequeathed by Heaven,
By Heaven reserved for his posterity.
The heritage with milk and honey flowed,
And nourished on its bosom Israel's sons,
Who, stalwart, roving shepherds soon became,
And in their flocks and herds were much increased.

II.

Of hoary age was Israel, and yet
His heart was young, replete with hope and joy,
For God had in his latter days revealed,
His tender love in Joseph's birth, who, as
An angel sent his pilgrimage to cheer ;
Imparted solace to his fleeting life.
Jehovah had him blessed with many sons,
And crowned him with the honors of His grace,
But Joseph was his joy and evening star.
While yet a babe, the father loved him more,
Than all his other sons, and day on day,
Of sweet companionship confirmed the bond,
That bound the hearts of ripening age and youth.
Rachel, she also fondly loved the child,
His life the tendrils of her heart entwined ;
Her God had granted respite by his birth,
And crowned her with the bliss of motherhood.
Sometimes when Israel would worship God,
With staff in hand and Joseph by his side,
He oft, was known the hill-tops to ascend,
Where, in the verdant groves, his son was taught
The " God of Jacob " to adore and love.
Thus loved and nourished in his tender years,
And taught the path of rectitude and life,
The lad increased in purity of heart,
While heavenly favour rested on his brow.

III.

Now Israel, in Joseph's countenance,
Beheld the loving face of his deceased,
And long beloved Rachel, who, had died,
When Benjamin was born, and left his soul,
Depressed with grief and utter loneliness.
And so he watched the youth with jealous care,
And ne'er refused to manifest his love,
Amidst the clamour of his elder sons ;
But clothed him with a robe of varied hues,
Significant of favor and regard.
From youth the elder sons of Israel,
Were prone to thoughtlessness and evil ways,
And could not be restrained by love or hate.
So when this seeming injudicious sign
Of love, provoked their anger and ill-will,
Ere long a jealous demon was aroused,
To goad their hearts with hate and envy foul.
And when at home or with the flocks afield,
Should Joseph chance the company to share,
They treated him with envy and reproach ;
Nor did they e'er speak peaceably to him.
O cruel Envy, could thy power be seized,
And banished from the heart, how much
Of sin and discord would the world be saved !
How peacefully would children of one blood,
With one another dwell and honour worth,
Which often in their fellows is revealed !

'Tis not injustice makes us discontent,
Nor honour shown to those who earn reward,
So much as envy rampant in the heart,
Which veils from view the worth of noble souls,
And magnifies the littleness of self.
The poor by poverty are not made mean,
The rich by gain are seldom satisfied,
For discontent and envy rule the heart ;
More than contentedness and gratitude.

IV.

The rustic habits of young Joseph's life,
Imparted to his soul an earnest mood,
Of contemplation on the works of God :
And oft, alone among the gentle flocks,
That grazed the verdant slopes, and drank
The babbling brooks, by Nature's voice constrained,
To heaven his spirit soared on wings of faith
And adoration pure of Him, who framed
The myriad spheres. Thus was his soul engaged
With lofty themes by day and night, thus did
He hold sweet fellowship with God, who sent
His angels to encamp him 'round about,
While gently sleeping 'neath the silent stars ;
And to reveal to him in visions bright,
The mysteries that lurked about his life.
One lovely night as shone the golden worlds,

And gentle zephyrs floated o'er the land,
Quite wearied, Joseph sought repose in sleep.
The heat, the toil, the envy of the day,
In phantom forms preyed thick upon his mind,
Till horrid darkness spread him 'round, and hope
Of breaking day and beauteous scenes were lost
When, suddenly, the darkness disappeared,
And spectres fled before the full-orbed light,
Which angels flashed upon their revelry ;
And clear before his startled vision rose
A harvest scene. Beneath the azure skies,
He with his brethren bound the golden sheaves,
While songs of plenty floated in the air ;
And lo ! his sheaf stood upright in the midst
Of theirs, which made obeisance 'round about,
As subjects bow submission to their king ;
And then, the vision faded from his view,
And soon in Slumber's arms he fell asleep.

V.

He did not wake till daylight streaked the sky,
And rose the sun above the Orient ;
But vividly the nightly scene returned,
The memory of it occupied his mind.
And lost in wonderment of its intent,
His brethren sought, and made it known to them.
They were astounded at the things revealed,
And quick of heart their meaning to divine,

Denounced him as a visionary knave,
And then impeached him with a vain design
To gain supreme dominion over them,
And hated him the more in consequence.
He, innocent of any ill-design,
Was much perplexed and disappointed that
His brethren mocked his frankness, and maligned
Him for his good intentions to discern
The will of God concerning destiny.
The more his brethren fed the envious flame
That burned within their heart, by evil thoughts,
The more estranged to Joseph they became.
But Joseph found in Nature's varied forms
Companions—full respondent to his soul ;
The sun, the moon, the stars he studied long,
And traced their orbits in the studded sky,
Till lost, his soul would tread The Milky Way,
Enraptured with the music of the spheres,
Which in their courses hymned the praise of God.
Why wonder that his soul while thus engaged
Should ever and anon enraptured be
With visions far transcending earthly things ?
Why wonder, that Jehovah should ordain,
The things familiar to himself, to be
The medium by which to prophesy ;
Events that should transpire in his day ?

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

THAT soul that would behold fair scenes and rise
Above this mundane sphere where cares prevail,
Must muse on heavenly things, and contemplate
The spiritual ; must hold communion sweet
With God, and converse with His wondrous works,
Which demonstrate His character to man.
Beyond the realms of human sight, there are
Resplendent scenes, which, when the soul beholds
The spirit world becomes enhanced and true,
And earthly charms depreciate the more.
To some, the mountains blaze with chariots,
All marshalled to the order of the skies ;
To others, they are but confusion wild,
In which the moaning winds hold carnival.
Divine effulgence, is to him displayed,
Who, with his senses keen is found engaged
In penetrating all the human mist
That broods upon the surface of the world.
The eyes that are engrossed with earthly joys,
That gloat on evil sights do never see
The glories of the skies ; and he that treads
A path by conscience hedged, may not discern
The Angel of the Lord with flaming sword
In hand, to intercept his stubborn way.

II.

All up and down the valley Joseph led
His timid flock, nor wished for happier lot,
And when at eventide the setting sun
Emblazoned all the scene that girt him 'round,
And nightfall wrapt the hill-tops o'er with gloom ;
He oft was wont to bow and worship God.
As ebb'd one toilsome day, while thus engaged,
Resplendent worlds arose upon his sight
'Midst realms of ether bright with Heaven's glow,
On which was keenly turned his transfixed gaze ;
Then Sun, and Moon, and Stars encircled him,
And rendered homage to himself, their King ;
While in the hazy distance of the scene
Ten thousand stood in readiness to serve.
But ere the spectacle was understood,
It vanished 'midst the ether lurid grown,
And left him to his thoughts of loneliness.
This vision, so akin to that before,
His spirit troubled with foreboding strange ;
And though their meaning vague began to dawn
Upon his mind, yet wrapt in mystery
Remained, the purpose they involved.
But when the morning dawned, by sleep refreshed,
He straightway journeyed to his father's home,
Who, glad to see his favourite son once more,
Embraced him with affection and impressed
A faithful kiss upon his ruddy cheek.

And then they sat them down like lovers fond
While Joseph told the visions of the night.
His father listened with profound concern,
And marvelled at the things the youth rehearsed,
Yet did not trace in them the Hand Divine,
So gently hushed him with a mild rebuke,
But meditated much on that revealed.

III.

As soon as Joseph's brethren heard the dream,
Their anger was enkindled yet the more,
For it to them the former dream confirmed,
And strengthened their surmises of his aims,
And rankled in their hearts with bitterness.
So Israel, suspicious of their hearts,
And longing for his son's companionship,
Kept Joseph for a season from the fields,
And sent to Shechem all his other sons
To guard the flocks and herds in pasturage.
Thus for a season, Joseph was relieved
From envious taunt and cherished treachery,
And happily abode with Israel :
Who, long bereft of Rachel's love and care,
Clung to his favourite son tenaciously.
But after many days had fled away
He wished for tidings from his other sons,
So calling Joseph said, " My son depart
To Shechem, where thy brethren feed the flocks,

And learn if all is well, then come in haste
To bring me word, for they have tarried long,
And I regarding them am much concerned.”
In readiness was Joseph to be gone
To execute his father’s plain command ;
So with a parting blessing from his lips,
Upon his mission entered light and gay,
Just as the morning sunbeams tipped the hills,
That rose in grandeur from the sheltered vale,
Through which meandered on its rugged way,
A sparkling stream kissed by the rising sun
That strangely murmured as he passed, “ farewell.
Naught did he know that he would ne’er return
For many years, that he was passing on,
To hardship and distress ; or he had turned
E’en from a course begun with prospect bright.
Ah ! could we sometimes, when our path
Leads us from home, with supernatural sight,
Presage what at our destination lies ;
Our steps would falter and our hearts grow faint,
And fireside and loved ones would prevail
Upon us to remain with them content.
But only step by step our path is known,
Beyond is wrapt in mystery divine,
And yet when guided by our Father’s Hand,
We often step upon the seeming void,
To find the rock of certainty beneath.

IV.

Before the sun had reached the western hills,
Arrived at Shechem, Joseph cast about
To find his brethren, and to ascertain
Their state, but they had gone with tents and flocks.
Just then by chance a stranger ventured near,
And Joseph having questioned him, he said,
"Thy brethren have to Dothan journeyed with
Their flocks, to seek for better pasturage."
So Joseph, grateful for his guiding word,
Renewed his journey with a hopeful heart,
And soon the fertile plains of Dothan neared.
Now ere he reached his brethren they espied
His brilliant robe, and graceful form, and cried,
"Behold! That dreamer comes our peace to mar!"
And hastily in council joined, to judge
What should be done to rid them of their curse.
Ne'er did more fiendish hate unveil itself
In human breast, than that which was revealed,
While they conspired 'gainst their brother's life.
With brawny arms they beat the air and railed
For vengeance. With contemptuous taunt and sneer
They mocked his dreams, and would not be assuaged;
Till Reuben interposed on his behalf,
And cried, "Cease, cease, my brethren, your demands
For Joseph's life! I earnestly implore,
Shed not his blood, but obviate our plight,

By casting him alone into the pit
Of yon ravine, where he will likely die !
And thus we shall be rid of him for good,
And palliate our punishment for wrong !”
But this he said, that he might rescue him,
And send him to his father safe and well.

V.

His words prevailed and they were pacified,
Ere unsuspecting Joseph came in hail ;
His gentle mein, their purpose did not change,
Nor yet his innocence their anger quell,
So seizing him with brawny arms they stripped
Him of his gorgeous robe ; then bound him fast,
And hurried him away, e'en though he pled
Most earnestly, and raised a helpless wail
Against their inhumanity to him.
“ My brethren, what mean ye ?” he loudly cried,
“ By mercilessly stripping off my robe,
And binding me with cords ! I pray you think
Of our brotherhood, and father's love ;
By whose command I come to learn your state ;
Before foul rashness plunge you into shame
And self-reproach !” But pleading was in vain,
Away they bore him to the horrid pit,
And cast him helpless down, and left him there
Alone to die in anguish, while they sat
About its mouth, to eat ill-gotten bread ;
And feast themselves upon their hellish feat.

Ere they had done as if dismayed with fear,
Or intent on alluring from the scene,
His brother Reuben rose, and soon was with
His flocks away to execute his scheme
To rescue Joseph from his sad estate.
In him was subtlety acute and strange,
But as in life's dilemmas often fails,
When courage most is needed to be shown ;
It failed with him for o'er the distant slope
A caravan of Merchantmen appeared,
And rapidly drew near the horrid pit,
Where Joseph lay bemoaning his said fate.

CANTO THE THIRD.

I.

"FATHER of Abraham," he cried, "Why am
I here entombed to die in wretchedness !
O save me from this pit and guide me back
To Israel and home ! Thou seest that
My brethren have no mercy on my soul ;
Nor yet regard my pleadings for my life !
O hear my humble cry and save me now,
For Israel's and thine own mercy's sake !"
His brethren faintly heard his plaintive cry,
And rousing from their meal with fear appalled
Were sore perplexed to know what next to do :

When, harrassed in his conscience, Judah cried,
“ What profit shall there be, if Joseph dies !
We can't conceal our guilt, nor flee remorse !
Come, let us sell him to the Merchantmen,
Then we shall from his presence be relieved ;
And have reward in gold, and thus be free,
From blood and infamy, and he shall live !”
This saying pleased them all, they gave consent,
And when the Merchantmen drew near, up from
The gloomy pit they Joseph drew, and sold
Him to them as a slave without reserve.

II.

In wonderment what next should him befall,
He stood within their midst with heart distressed,
But soon divined that he must join the band
Of Merchantmen, and cast with them his fate.
The scenes of home rushed vividly to mind,
'Midst which his youth so fondly had been spent,
His mother's and his father's face with love
And tender smile turned longingly to him,
And then his heart with hot emotion swelled,
And turning to his brethren cried, “ Think ye
That God doth not behold your sin, or that
Our noble father shall thy wicked deed
Not know, and charge my blood to other hands
Ah no ! I now impeach you with the guilt
Of my betrayal into stranger's hands,

Against my long entreaties to be spared
Such grief and shame, and to him yet return,
To share his latter pilgrimage! Rogues! knaves!
I, and high Heaven, yet shall be appeased,
On this injustice and base treachery!
I plead once more the ties that bind our hearts,
The prestige and the honour of our name;
Our father's age and godly character,
To be relieved from shame and bondman's chain!"
But stolid and unmoved his brethren stood
Before the eloquence of his appeal;
And soon the Merchantmen, their toilsome course
Resumed in haste, with Joseph in their train.

III.

They scarce had gone, when Reuben hot with haste,
And full of hope returned, to seek alone,
The pit where Joseph had been cast. Amazed!
To find him not, he madly rent his clothes,
Then wailed his cowardice, and brother's fate.
The eldest son, he felt responsible,
And like a culprit, now bemoaned his lot.
"The child is not!" he cried, "And whither shall
I flee to hide from vengeance just and sure!
Oh would that I had dared to rescue him,
Or even shared his fate, then no remorse
Would pierce my soul to punish my neglect!"

As evil hearts like company, so, Guilt combined,
Adheres in those who cower 'neath its ban ;
And willingly joins hands to be concealed.
With friend and foe it arbitrates, and soon
They're reconciled to share each other's fate ;
Though honour be dethroned and truth annulled ;
And innocence be outraged by their deeds.
So Joseph's brethren quick a council held,
And readily among them 'twas agreed
To slay a kid, and with the blood to mar
His robe with fatal signs, and bind themselves
By solemn oath the secret to conceal ;
Then journey to the home of Israel,
And bear with them the favourite robe, to show
Him the unquestioned proof that he was slain
Not by the hands of men, but rudely torn
Asunder by some evil hungry beast.

IV.

So like a mourning funeral they came,
To Israel with visage mocking sad,
And rendered him the bloody favourite robe
With due solemnity, and meekly said,
"This have we found, but cannot ascertain
Whether it be fond Joseph's robe or not,
But dearest father thou canst tell it sure
And so explain a dreaded mystery.

We fear that evil hath befallen him,
And that calamity shall fall on all ;
And sink thy spirit long in grief for him !”
The father seized the robe with trembling hands,
Then staggered at the sight of rent and blood ;
His sight grew dim, but knew too well the robe
With which he vested Joseph long before.
So bitter was his grief he rent his clothes,
And overcome with blank astonishment :
In horror cried, “ It is ! It is his coat !
An evil beast hath slain him on his way,
To bring me tidings from you in the field !
With anguish I reproach myself that e'er
I sent him on a mission fraught with ill
And awful doom ! Such rashness on my part
Was heinous crime ! Forgive me, O my son !
My favourite son, fond Joseph thou art lost ;
And I am left to sorrow and remorse !
’Tis well thy mother Rachel hath been spared
The anguish that such dreadful tidings cause,
And rests from human pain in Paradise,
And even now, while we lament our loss,
Rejoices to be joined by one so fond !”

V.

His sons and daughters rose to comfort him,
But all their words seemed mockery and pain.
The more they tried to soothe, the greater did
His grief become, and mournfully he cried,

“Down to the grave I'll go with grief for him,
O God of Abraham, my father's God,
Why hath such dreadful ill befallen us !
A consolation was the youth to me,
But now thy servant's soul is stricken sore ;
With sad bereavement of its earthly joy !
Yet, let thy will be done, and give me grace
With Providence my heart to reconcile,
And greet fond Joseph in the future world !”
Now, when the days of mourning were fulfilled,
The sons resumed their wand'rings with the flocks
Contented that their stratagem was wise.
But haunted by the spirit of their crime,
Which ever and anon disturbed their peace
When near the horrid pit, or gazing on the scene
Where council had been held to murder him.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

I.

ON marched the Merchantmen to Egypt far,
And only halted when the desert spring
Or waving palm invited them to rest,
And be refreshed upon their toilsome way.
With aching heart had Joseph left the scenes
Of Canaan, so delightful to his soul ;
And when the mountain peaks were lost to view
And all before his eyes was desert waste,

A sense of utter loneliness stole o'er
His anguished mind, which caused
The tears to flow, that, by compulsion, he
Was borne away from those he loved.
But presently, the visions of the past,
Full bright as mirage of the desert lone,
Rose clear before his weary tear-dimmed eyes ;
And so enraptured all his wand'ring thoughts ;
That very soon his grief had fled, and quick
Revived his heart with hope, that God
Would guide his steps and guard his unknown way ;
By angels, who, before had hedged him 'round,
When with the flocks by night on Canaan's plains.
God often moves in secrecy, His schemes
To execute, and oft, the path that leads away
From what we deem the best, is proximate,
Himself and our weal, that His designs
With us concerned, might glorify His Name,
And honour us with faith to bide the tests
Of life ; for all His children requisite.
Take thou His Hand, so tenderly revealed
In all the visitations of His love.
With firmest confidence pursue thy course,
For He will lead thee on, come good or ill,
Extend His watchcare and in love conduct
Thee in the path, the wisest and the best,
And which will finally merge into peace.

II.

The Merchantmen, had noticed Joseph's mien,
They soon observed he was of noble birth,
And felt concerned regarding his estate;
So while they journeyed on began to scheme
What should be done to make a heartless deal
Turn to their own advantage and his good,
And yet conceal the plot of all concerned.
Soon they arrived in Egypt, and agreed
To barter him to honoured Potiphar,
An officer of Pharaoh's Royal Guard,
For many times the value they had paid;
Assured that all would now be well with him
While in the hands of one of eminence.
The honoured Potiphar, with insight keen,
Observed in Joseph many qualities,
Commendable and frank, and learned to love
Him with affection strong; and soon he placed
Large confidence in him, and set him o'er
His house and vast estates. Naught that he had
Concerned him more, but relegated all
To Joseph, for whose sake the Lord had blest
His house with all he had, and caused the land
To yield a rich abundance for his good.
Now Joseph, was in ways most amiable,
In countenance most beautiful to all;
And many times with flattery indulged;

But none could lure him with their artful words,
Nor move him from his long integrity :
And yet there fell to him an evil day,
A time of sorest trial and disgrace ;
Just when his way was bright and sky serene.
The wife of Potiphar was sensual,
And cherished secretly unholy love
For Joseph, who was virtuous and true ;
And when entreaties were by him despised,
And noble purpose bound him to his God,
And Potiphar, and to escape her ill designs
He fled, his robe, to which she firmly clung,
She raised a cry, then charged him with the crime
Herself was guilty of in base intent.
Then forthwith Potiphar became enraged,
Conceived his treach'rous wife was innocent,
And banished Joseph to the prison gloom
Against his innocence and faithfulness.

III.

Ah ! feted Crime, by evil art concealed
Within the heart of passion and design ;
Could we but fathom thy malignity,
And know the demon skill thou dost employ,
When intent on another's ill, that thou
Shouldst never be betrayed ; we ne'er would give
Thee quarter in our thoughts, much less a seat
Within the secret councils of our hearts,

There to deliberate and win us to
Thy base designs allured by golden crowns.
Thus Joseph outraged, and to shame consigned,
In sorrow cried, " Misfortune hath once more
Against me turned her cruel hand, and I
Am sore disgraced within these prison walls ;
Companions to the felons of the laud !
Would that in Dothan's pit I had remained
To die, instead of consigned here, but soon
To come to shameful doom, with none to plead
My cause, nor vindicate my innocence !"
But even there the Hand of God was shown
To him. Destined to rule, the Chief soon gave
Him the command of all within the walls,
And first authority o'er all the works.
Now many, confidant of Joseph made,
And often sought him to relate their ills,
To hear him discourse on the works of God,
And learn of all that had befallen him.

IV.

Thus passed his days, till servants of the King,
The Butler and the Baker by misdeeds
Displeased their lord and shared a common fate
With him in ward, and soon despondent grew.
But Joseph, who, his trials bore with cheer
And fortitude, solicitous for all,
Enquired whence their visage was so marred ;

And soon he learned that visions very strange
And troublesome had been their lot at night,
And no one could be found their dreams to hear,
Nor to elucidate their mysteries.
Then Joseph said, "Lift up your drooping heads,
Interpretations surely are the Lord's,
And He has given me an insight keen
In things pertaining to man's earthly state ;
So pray tell me the nature of your dreams."
And then the Butler chief declared, "Behold !
Before me grew a vine, which, branches three
Contained with buds and blossoms full, and soon
Ripe grapes brought forth, whose juice I gently pressed
In Pharaoh's cup, then handed it to him."
Now Joseph rich in wisdom of the Lord
Declared, "The branches three are but three days,
And yet within the same, thy head in joy
Shall Pharaoh raise, and thou shall be restored
In honour to thy former place, and bear
His cup again. But when thou art restored,
And all is well, I pray thee think of me,
And if thou canst the heart of Pharaoh move
For my release from shame and servitude ;
My heart shall turn in gratitude to thee !"

V.

Then when the Baker chief observed the skill
Which Joseph manifested in his words,

He said, "Behold! I had three baskets white
Upon my head; the uppermost all kinds
Of meats contained for Pharaoh's varied whims
And lo! the birds devoured them complete
And left me standing stricken through with grief."
Then Joseph answer'ing said, "The baskets three
Are but three days, and yet within the same
Shall Pharaoh hang thee on a tree, and birds
Shall eat thy flesh as Pharaoh ate thy meats;
This is the dire import of thy dream!"
Thus Joseph spake, and thus it was, that on
King Pharaoh's gala day, the Butler was
Restored, and on a tree the Baker hanged.
Ah, what a wisdom rare divine, that was
Within the heart of one so young, that he
The dreams of strangers should expound!
And yet alone was Joseph left in ward,
Forgotten by the one whose dream he told,
Who, when again in Pharaoh's confidence
Ungrateful to his benefactor proved.
Ingratitude, is base, it mocks the good
Bestowed by hands concerned in others weal.
It broods in selfishness, to vaunt the head
With absolute forgetfulness of those
By whose endeavours many gain the heights
They oft attain. It is the hidden cause
Of ill-reward and inequality
Of many noble well deserving souls.

If man were grateful for the half of life,
And half the lavish mercies which the Hand
Of God bestowes, his heart would quickly yield
Him rightful service, and his life flow on
In one sweet song of praise, nor good nor ill
Would ever operate to win him from the One,
Who knoweth best the course his life should take.

VI.

Thus destined yet to share captivity
And labour of the ward for two full years
Was Joseph left, while others light and gay
Rejoiced in liberty and kingly fare.
But patiently he bore reproach against
The day of triumph and well earned reward,
Which faintly dawned upon his darkened mind,
And gave himself to every ar'dous task,
With fortitude resigned to Providence:
Till Pharaoh on his throne was sorely vexed
With visions of perplexing dread, and soon
Bestirred himself to know their full import,
By summoning the wisest of the realm
Before his royal seat With priestly pomp,
With magic wand, all brilliantly arrayed,
And followed by a train of courtiers,
The Wise Men and Magicians at his call
In haste repaired to stand before the King,
Who, restless, told the visions of his head.

But none were found among the pageantry
Who could reveal the secrets they contained,
Or clear the gloom that hung upon his mind.
Then much bewildered in his soul, he sought
The Butler, who, ungracious proved to him
Who yet in bondage was. He, conscience-struck,
Exclaimed, " I do remember my misdeeds,
And one of divination rare profound,
Who, when thy servant was in custody,
Declared to him the secrets of a dream
Relating to his own and good estate !"

CANTO THE FIFTH.

I.

THEN Pharaoh sent and Joseph quickly called
Into his august presence, where there stood
The great and courtly of his kingdom all.
But undismayed was Joseph, who with steps
Of hope and expectation quick and light,
Came in before the wondering array
Like one of princely blood and modesty.
The King saluted him as sent from God,
And straightway said, " Of rarest heavenly skill
And wisdom I am told thou art possessed ;
If so, then hear thou my perplexing dream."

Then Joseph stretching forth his hand, declared,
 'All hail! O King, my God shall give thee peace!
 'Tis not of me this wisdom is, but Him,
 Who art the King of kings and Lord of lords?"

Then Pharaoh, pleased, with grace and patience said,
 "Behold! there rose from yonder flowing stream
 Full seven favoured kine, which fed upon
 The grassy banks thereof; then seven more
 Ill-favoured kine came forth and ate the rest.
 And then, behold! there grew full seven ears
 Of corn, both fat and good, upon one stalk,
 Then seven ears, by blasting winds made thin,
 Sprang up and quickly ate the fat and good.
 All this I dreamed and am confounded sore
 So summoned these Magicians here, but they're
 Confounded too. Canst thou the wonder solve?"

II.

Then Joseph answ'ring said, "Thy dreams are one,
 And God by them declares His purpose grand
 To thee. The seven kine are seven years,
 The seven ears are seven years each in
 Themselves significant. The fat of years
 Of plenty in the land, the lean and weak,
 Of famine and distress. The plent'ous years
 Shall in the days of famine be unknown,
 And want and dearth shall ravage all the land;
 Great King! this is the import of thy dream,
 And verily that soon will come to pass
 Which God in two-fold vision hath declared.

Now, therefore, be thou warned and provident,
And choose a man who, both discreet and wise,
Shall o'er the land preside and gather safe,
In every city granary the food
And corn, which surplus shall be found in all
The fruitful years. Thus shall the land be saved,
And life shall be preserved in all thy realm."
Thus Joseph spake in true humility,
And Pharaoh gratified beyond content,
With kingly wisdom said : " Thou art in all
The land the most discreet, and hast in thee
The Spirit of thy God. Thou shalt be Chief
In all my house, and all of Egypt rule
According to thine own decree, and but
Upon the throne shall I exceed thyself."

III.

Thus spake the gracious King, then called him forth
Before the startled company, and placed
Upon his hand the royal signet ring,
And 'round about his neck a golden chain ;
Then clothed him with the finest linen robe
To signify the princely right bestowed ;
And there confirmed by all his officers,
Who promptly hailed their wise deliverer,
And honoured him with acclamations loud.
Then forthwith came the Captains of the host,
In martial pomp and dignity arrayed,

To escort Joseph in a chariot
 Throughout the land, while speedy heralds cried
 To all, " Rejoice ! Behold the means of life !
 All people bow the knee and honour him
 Whom Pharaoh hath installed as Governor
 Supreme throughout our loved and favoured land !"
 The people cried, " All hail ! huzza ! huzza !
 To Pharaoh's Prince and Governor supreme !"
 Thus rode the favoured son of Israel
 O'er all the kingdom wide, with honour crowned.
 But other honours Pharaoh had reserved
 To be conferred upon the one he loved,
 And gave him Asinath, the daughter of
 The greatest priest of Heliopolis,
 To be his honoured wife, and called him by
 The name Zaphnathpaaneah—the bread
 Of life—or ruler of the Living One.

IV.

And yet withal, the son of Israel
 Thought well upon his ways, and earnestly
 In heart cleaved unto God, who, in his love,
 Exalted him from humble shepherd's life,
 From pit, from ward, and foul malignity,
 To rule a nation and ingratiate
 Himself with King and subjects great and small.
 Thus was the shepherd's crook in turn exchanged
 For Egypt's mighty sceptre, and thus will
 Integrity receive reward in all
 Who nobly act their part upon life's stage.

Prosperity among the sons of men
Is oft, abused by those who win her crown
By right and stealth ; and thus the way to her
Is not with flowers strewn, but rough and thorned,
To prove the hearts of all who seek her goal.
And yet full many gain her high estate,
Who, soon intoxicated with her wine,
Become her slaves. Could man, by Heaven's grace,
Make her to serve the ends of God, who grants
To men her power, she would, with winning smiles,
Commend her fortunate to great and small
And lead her votaries to serve their God.

V.

Now Joseph, when installed in Pharaoh's court,
Assiduously gave himself to save
Abundant stores from all the plenteous years
To serve against the rav'nous times of want,
And ere the dreaded blight on Egypt fell,
And spread abroad to fruitful Canaan's land,
His task was done, and soon from far and near
The people came for bread at Joseph's hands.
From up the land there went a piteous wail,
But all improvident were soon supplied
From Egypt's granaries, and sold their flocks,
Their herds, and lands, to be sustained.
Now, far away in Canaan, want was keen,
And Israel leaned hard upon his staff,
O'erstooped with age and his infirmities.

He with his sons were faint and famished sore,
So that he longed to be in Paradise,
And with the faithful gathered to their rest.
But still his spirit stirred and hope revived,
And calling all his troubled sons he said :
“ Ye know that famine devastates the land,
Hence, vacillate no longer o'er our plight,
Nor look in vain for one another's help ;
But journey down to Egypt, where I hear
There is of corn a rich abundant store,
And bring for us lest very soon we die.
Go then, my sons, but Benjamin must here
With me abide, lest there befall him ill,
And you should ne'er return, thus leaving me
Alone to die ; and may God's blessing go
Along with you ; and may you soon return
To cheer our fainting hearts and bless our house
With bread to nourish us and make us glad.”

CANTO THE SIXTH.

I.

Soon ready for the march, sage Israel's sons—
Their father bade farewell, and journeyed on
To Egypt o'er the desert wild, along
The self-same trail the Merchantmen had passed,
When, many years before, young Joseph had
To them been sold a captive from his home.

And though they hastened on, reluctant did
Their hearts restrain them from the toilsome way,
For strange forebodings hung upon their mind ;
And when at night they sought repose upon
The desert lone, strange thoughts their rest disturbed,
As though upon their path foul treason lurked.
And yet they journeyed on, till Egypt far
Was reached, and soon in Joseph's presence stood,
Though ignorant of it. With humble grace
They 'round about him stood, and made their low
Salams, then craved that he would grant them bread
To save their families from want and death.
Thus was the dream of Joseph years before,
God's purpose and His will concerning him,
Fulfilled before their eyes, thus was their scorn
Of his solicitude and destiny
All put to naught by strange coincidence.

II.

God's Purpose, like the silent energies
Of all the universe, move grandly on,
Sublimely interwoven with mankind;
Who, like so many insects of the deep,
Rear up the columns of His temple grand,
Then yield their place to those who, in their turn,
Shall act their part and consummate His will.
Tremendous thought ! that there inheres in man
The power to resist the Hand of God,

And oft, he sets himself at variance
With Him, and with rebellious neck pursues
His headlong course to ruin and dismay.
And yet withal, His purpose stands unchanged,
And He is ne'er defeated in His schemes,
Which comprehend in infinite detail
The whims the vacillation, and the sin,
The selfishness, the intrigues, and the good ;
Of all who move within the universe.
Vain man may madly strive against His Hand,
And in his vanity hold petty sway,
But God shall have him in derision wild,
And sweep him from the path his chariot
Triumphantly pursues through floods and flames,
To execute His will as Time rolls on.

III.

"Ah Benjamin," said Israel, "'tis well
That thou hast tarried here to share my lot,
For o'er me steals a sad uneasiness.
Thy brethren have to Egypt journeyed far,
And on their way may meet calamity
From robbers bold or roaming evil beast,
As Joseph did, when sent to Shechem's fields
Full eighteen years ago, and day on day
Since that ill-fated time my soul has mourned
For him. Oft, have I sat beneath these oaks
And scanned yon hillside long for his return.

It may be childlike thus to speak, but Hope
Has lured me on, and even now doth speak
To me a peace so calm, I can't explain.
But Benjamin, that Joseph's gone, and now
Thy brethren too; I cling to thee, stay thou
Near by my side to comfort me, nor stray
Afar from home e'en to attend the flocks,
Lest evil should befall thee in the way,
And I be left to die in loneliness."

IV.

Now Joseph looked upon the embassy,
From Canaan, with a strange, profound concern,
And soon with ready insight ascertained
They were his brethren, and though filled with thoughts
That rent his soul, concealed it from their hearts,
To subject them to scrutiny and test.
"Whence come ye?" was his salutation bold,
"You're come as spies!" he charged in mock disdain,
"And wish the land's dread nakedness to know."
They pleaded, "Nay, my lord, for food alone
Are now thy servants come, for all our land
Is famished sore. We are in all twelve sons
Of one aged man, who, with the youngest, dwells
In Canaan now, but one of us is not."
Then Joseph said, "Hereby ye shall be proved,
I swear by Pharaoh's life, all shall not go
To Canaan till your youngest brother come.

If ye are noble men, let one be bound
 As hostage to the King ; the rest may go
 To Canaan with their bread and then return,
 The youngest with them soon, or never shall
 Ye see my face and live ; for I fear God.
 Hence to the prison gloom, ye cunning spies,
 Until I call ye forth to me again !”

V.

Then like so many culprits bowed with shame,
 They shrank with conscience smitten to the ward
 Where Joseph had himself in bondage been ;
 And soon were left companions with their thoughts,
 Which in a dialogue were soon declared.
 “ We’re guilty of our brother’s infamy.”
 Now one and then another sadly said,
 “ And now his blood returns upon our heads.
 Ah ! if his bitter anguish had our hearts
 Restrained, when intent on such barb’rous ill,
 We would not now be sunken in distress.
 Our evil day hath come, we shall receive
 From other hands full penalty for guilt,
 That still our evil conscience on us lays.”
 Then Reuben, like a coward in defence,
 While still of hope and refuge destitute,
 Appealed to them, “ Did I not plead of you
 Sin not against the child, and yet ye would
 Not heed ; therefore his precious blood demands
 Just punishment on us of base desert.”

Thus by themselves accused and self-condemned
The guilty ten reproached themselves in vain,
And in suspense awaited Joseph's call.

VI.

Now, when three days had dragged themselves away,
In Joseph's presence once again they came,
With visage strangely marred and spirit pained ;
And so concerned were they about their fate,
They ne'er restrained their thoughts, but clamoured out,
As when in bondage held. When Joseph saw
Their grief, his soul was moved to tears and turned
Himself away alone to sob aloud ; but when
His troubled soul was calmed, he soon returned
To them again, and forthwith Simeon bound
Before their eyes, and ordered him to ward.
And then he gave command to fill their sacks,
But secretly their money to restore
Within the sack of every man, and then
To send them well-provisioned on their way.
Thus Joseph lavished on them of his stores,
They empty came, but filled they went away.
And just as dusky eventide approached,
They halted at a wayside Inn to rest ;
Where, one, by chance, his provender unbound,
To feed his ass, when lo ! to his dismay,
His gold espied within the sack enclosed ;
And suddenly they all were filled with fear

Lest God should visit them with quick revenge,
For guilt they realized within their hearts.
Ah! cowering fear doth not invade the heart,
Which, in integrity is bold and brave,
But coward makes of him, whose guilt and shame
Enslave his heart when all around is well.
Such is the power of guilt within the heart,
That every sound and omen terrifies,
And everything becomes a mirror clear,
In which are seen the secrets of the soul.
The guilty one is always self-accused,
And often his endeavour to conceal
His sin exposes it the more, and he
Is left to flee from wrath and punishment;
Yet cannot hide in earth's remotest place,
Nor yet in Heaven, or Hell, for God is there;
And sin's remorse shall harass all the soul,
Till full atonement hath for it been made.

CANTO THE SEVENTH.

I.

Soon from the Inn they hastened on their way,
And after toilsome journey all arrived
In Canaan safe, and told to Israel
The strange events which had befallen them.
He was rejoiced that they returned with bread,

But troubled in his heart when gold was found
In every sack, and Simeon was held
As surety that Benjamin would come ;
And loud lamenting cried, " Ye have bereaved
Me of two sons, yet are not satisfied :
Ye will take Benjamin away, and thus
Add woe to pain. These things against my soul
Conspire to drive me to the grave, bereft
Of every joy with bowed and hoary head !"
So, not till by necessity compelled,
And Judah had his surety become,
Did Israel consent that Benjamin
Should with them seek the Prince to purchase bread.
Then with sagacious foresight Israel
Prepared a gift of peace for Egypt's Prince,
And bade them take the money back again.
" May God all-gracious grant you mercy great
Before the Prince, and bring you home again,"
Were Israel's parting words as all his sons
Upon their journey set with hopeful hearts.

II.

Ere long they once again to Egypt came,
And soon an audience with Joseph gained,
To lay before him all their hearts concern.
Then Joseph called the Ruler of his house,
And charged him to prepare a sumptuous feast,
Then called his brethren all with him to dine.

But they were all with consternation seized,
Though with the utmost courtesy enshrined,
And all the while their hearts were ill at ease,
Lest mischief was designed by Pharaoh's Prince.
When Joseph viewed the presents they had brought,
And anxiously enquired of I-rael,
Fond recollections of his far-off home
Rushed vividly upon his longing mind.
And now with Benjamin his mother's son,
And all his brethren near, the passions of
His soul were hotly stirred, and overcome
He sought his inner chamber, where, alone
With God, he found relief in many tears.
When these had spent their force, his soul refreshed,
His purpose firm, he reappeared to dine,
With all the sons of Israel in state.

III.

Meek Simeon, he had released from bonds,
And double favour shown to Benjamin,
Then when they all his repast fully shared,
Just as the morning light broke o'er the sky,
He sent them on their way with sacks of corn,
As much as they could bear, but strictly charged
His Steward to replace their gold, and in
The sack of Benjamin conceal his cup,
By intrigue thus to call them back again.
So ere they had at length pursued their way,
The Steward overtook them crying, " Halt !

My lord's own favourite cup you have concealed
Within your pack, to do him injury,
For all the good he hath on you bestowed!"
But quick they cried, "Nay! Nay! let God be judge
That we are innocent of such a charge,
And he with whom the Prince's cup is found,
Shall surely die and we shall be his slaves!"
Thus, rashly spake the sons of Israel,
And all their sacks were searched from first to last,
When Benjamin's contained the fated cup.
'Twas all in vain he pled his innocence,
And begged his stricken brethren for redress,
The oath they gave, now bound them firmly fast,
And all surprised, dumb-founded, rent their clothes,
Then cursed themselves the day that gave them birth,
But turned unto the city once again,
With spirits bowed with shame and slavish dread,
And all bewildered at the actions strange
Of Egypt's Prince, they to him quick appealed.

IV.

Thus Joseph had by many wise intrigues,
His own identity concealed that he
Their character might prove, and bring them to
A knowledge of their crime 'gainst him and Heaven,
And to them all reveal the Hand of God;
Which though they had determined ill and shame,
Was mightily displayed to grant them life.
When Joseph with a dignifying mien,

With wounded search looked sharp into their eyes,
Before him all upon their faces fell.

"What evil deed is this you've done," he cried,

"Know ye not that I can men's hearts divine ?

Here at my hands rich bounty you have shared,

And all your needs I've graciously supplied,

To be but mocked by crime and knavery."

Then Judah said : "My lord, what shall we say,

How shall we free ourselves ? For God hath found

Iniquity within thy servants hearts,

And we shall take His justice from thy hands.

Behold ! we are thy slaves thy will to do !"

V.

But Joseph said, "Not so, let God forbid,

Let him in whose polluted hands my cup

Was found, my bondman be, but let the rest

All journey home." Then Judah nearer draw,

And said, "Let not thine anger burn with me

My lord, for thou art as thy King supreme,

Yet I beseech thee hear me patiently.

As thou didst us abjure, we've done and brought

Our youngest brother here, for whom, I am

A surety to Israel our father lone,

Well-stricken now in years and knit to him,

Since Joseph left him in an evil day :

Wherefore, I pray thee, let thy servant here

Abide, and Benjamin return to share

His father's feeble age, lest he should die

Of grief, and we be charged with treachery !"

When he had ceased his pleading with the Prince,
In one another's face they speechless gazed,
And solemn silence fell upon the scene ;
E'en as the calm before impending storm.
Then Joseph by his passion overcome,
Could not refrain himself from weeping loud,
And ordered every man to be removed,
While to his brethren he declared himself.

CANTO THE EIGHTH.

I.

BEFORE the humbled group of criminals
He stood erect, e'en as his dream declared,
When but a youth among the rugged hills
Of Canaan fair. Then stretching forth his hand,
He passionately cried, " List, list to me !
Ye are the sons of Israel, conceal it not ;
And I am Joseph, his beloved one,
Long sundered from him in this foreign land !
And Israel our father yet survives
To realize the gladness of this day ?
My soul shall ever magnify the Lord !"
But with his presence they were terrified,
And stood dumfounded 'neath a magic spell ;
Then shrank and cowered at his countenance.
But quick he cried : " Fear not, but venture near,

I am verily your brother whom ye sold
In Egypt years ago. But be not grieved,
Nor angry with yourselves for such a deed ;
If ye are humbled now and penitent :
For God hath sent me hither to preserve
And nourish you, with all the nations 'round
Throughout these years of famine and distress.
At such a revelation all were dazed,
But scene on scene of all the mystic past,
In quick succession rushed upon their sight ;
And suddenly the truth broke on their minds ;
Their hearts almost dissolved, their knees were struck
With fear ; but Joseph fell upon the neck
Of Benjamin and wept aloud for joy.

II.

Then Reuben cried, " Marvel of marvels this !
We scarcely can receive such joyful news !
We are not worthy to be shown such love
And mercy from the hands of one so wronged !
We do deplore our sin, thy pardon crave,
And now reproach ourselves with keen regret,
And plead that Heaven may forgive our crime !"
Then Joseph with embrace and loving kiss,
Received them all within his gracious heart,
While 'round them hovered Heaven's angels bright,
Who, peace and love declared in accents mild.

“I scarce had hoped to see this day,” he cried,
“Though longing in my heart; but now my soul
Doth overflow with joy, and praise the Lord,
That we so long and painfully estranged,
Are brought together in one loving bond!”
Thus, having spake, their hearts were quickly calmed,
And all in tones subdued conversed with him.
Sweet was the council all their souls enjoyed,
While thus united after many years,
And Joseph mindful of his father lone,
Enquired tenderly of him and said,
“My brethren haste! To Canaan quick repair,
And tell our father all the glory here,
That I am ruler over all this land,
And bid him journey here with all his house,
For I will nourish you, your flocks and herds,
And children’s children in this bounteous land.”
When Joseph rode in triumph through the realm,
A scene of splendor dazzled every eye,
But that, before his brethren, weeping full
Forgiveness he had yearned so long to give,
Transcended all that royalty displayed.

III.

Forgiveness is God’s own prerogative,
But joined to Him are those who exercise
Its benign power o’er their friends and foes.
Without it, Heaven’s portals would be closed
Against the purest of the world, and earth

Itself would soon be Hell presided o'er
By those relentless to all just appeal,
And desperate to excel in vengeance foul.
The malefactor's base before the world,
And often by himself is much abhorred,
But is he not as low, who won't forgive
With just and ready hand, the one who does
Him ill, when honestly repented of ?
Full thrice more ill is his, whose guilty heart
Cannot forgive itself for evil done,
Than his, who may receive the cruel wrong,
And groan beneath a burden rife with pain.
Could we but read the secret history
Of our enemies, in each one's life ;
We would discovery misery enough
To quite disarm us of hostility,
And cause us to be kind and merciful.

IV.

Ere long the joyful tidings spread abroad,
And Pharaoh overjoyed for Joseph's sake,
Most heartily with all his plans concurred ;
And soon the happy sons of Israel
Were homeward bound to bring their families,
And all they had to Egypt's plenteous stores.
Now Israel, for them had waited long,
And weary grew as day on day dragged on
To lengthen his suspense. But one fair eve,
While sitting lone beneath a spreading oak,

He lifted up his eyes, and 'midst the haze,
Far distant saw his sons with rapid steps
Approaching in the vale. "They come!" he cried,
And joyfully arose to hail them home.
"Glad tidings reverend father do we bring
For thee and all thy kin! For Joseph have
We found in Egypt's land, and he is there
The Governor supreme, the very one
Who strangely treated us; and now by his
Command we come for thee and all we have
To journey down again, and with him dwell
There to be nourished through these years of need."
And then upon their faces all they fell
To piteously bewail their heinous sin,
And beg forgiveness at his trembling hands.
Now Israel, though by a trance enthralled,
Recovered, and arousing him declared
With loud exultant cry, "It is enough!
Your sin so long deep buried in the past,
And shrouded in the gloom of secrecy,
But now confessed in truth and penitence,
Elucidates a dreaded mystery!
You are forgiven by my weeping heart,
Though often pierced with many sorrows through,
And I shall Joseph once again behold,
Yet clasp him to my aching aged heart
Before I pass the bourn that leads to rest?
Father of Abraham, I thee adore,
That yet within my latter days I'll see

My long lost son, and yet rejoice in him,
And prove thy many promises to me !”
Thus Israel, with father's tend'rest love,
Absolved his sons of all their wrong to him,
And Joseph his beloved whom they sold ;
To rid them of his presence when a lad ;
And now the strange antipathy that barred
The hearts of all from fellowship so long,
Was all removed, and once again they loved,
And were restored to fullest confidence.

V.

Bright shone the sun from out the azure sky,
And flung his beams upon the seared vale,
Bereft of promise of abundant yield ;
When Israel with all his sons and kin,
Set hard upon their journey to the south.
Ere all the scenes familiar to him long,
Had full receded from the range of sight,
He paused, and backward turned his weary gaze
For one long farewell look ; then deeply sighed
His soul's regret to leave the favoured land,
His heritage so long with Heaven's smiles.
But hope soon urged him with alacrity,
Begotten of a soul of younger years
Upon his way ; until loved Beersheba
Was gained, where, gladly halted for the night,
They rested from their toil and worshipped God,

Who, in the midnight hour, in love appeared
To Israel, and reassured him of
His tender care and purpose to recall
His children to their own inheritance,
When all concerning them had been fulfilled.
At daybreak, once again they journeyed on,
All confident of Heaven's watchful care.
And day on day their courage was renewed,
To hie upon their course o'er desert waste
Till Egypt was attained with thankfulness.

CANTO THE NINTH.

I.

Now Joseph, had their advent waited long,
And hastened in his chariot to greet
Them with a princely heart, within the land
Of Goshen and appoint them all their home.
Sublime and touching was the meeting scene
Of aged Patriarch and son renowned,
Assundered for the space of twenty years.
He saw his sainted father stooped with age,
And read the sorrow in his patient face,
Then flung himself upon his neck in tears.
While thus in fond embrace they lingered long,
Sorrow and joy long pent within their hearts
Unbidden rushed to grant them sweet relief
In loudest sobs of love unspeakable.
“Now that I do thy countenance behold,”

Said Israel, "And thou art still alive,
It is enough to satisfy my soul,
And let me die at peace with Heaven and earth!"
Then Joseph said, "My soul doth magnify
The Lord, that we are spared to see this day,
And marvel at His grace on us bestowed,
Through intervening years of hope and fear:
With such our hearts shall alternate no more,
But rest with grief assuaged in unity;
Beneath high Heaven's smiles, and yet enjoy
The fruitage of the toil of by-gone years."
With courtesy and love he greeted all,
And some presented to the nation's King,
With Israel, who, blest him on his throne,
And praised him for his favour to his son.

II.

Thus Israel, with all his family host,
Was by the Hand of God, with Joseph linked
In destiny sublime, and by him loved
And nourished through the years of widespread ill;
That visited the nations far and wide.
And thus, the latter days of Israel,
Instead of dragging out 'mid earthly gloom,
Were in fruition spent, and when the days
Of exit to the Spirit Land drew on,
'Twas hailed with joy and met with faith serene,
Triumphant in the promises of God.

With feet already in the stream of death,
His mind reverted to his cherished land,
And calling Joseph to his side, declared
His wish to rest with all his fathers there.
Life's winding path leads to the silent tomb, [shade ;
Through flowers and thorns, the sunshine and the
Borne on the wings of Time, along it rush
A surging throng, ignoble and sublime
In character ; beloved and abhorred
By all related to their brief career,
Each in his turn must pass life's bounds to Death,
Depart from those he loves and all he hath
On earth ; to penetrate the light or gloom
Of vast Eternity, in which his state
Eternally unaltered shall remain.
As pass the years allotted us on earth,
How thoughtlessly we live, how full of glee,
We sport upon Death's brink quite unalarmed,
Till by some visitation we awake ;
Till at our hand without a warning call,
Our thrifty fellows fall beneath the sword
Of Death, which flames above the heads of great
And small, of young and old, in rapid turn,
To execute the sentence of mankind !

III.

The Angel of the Covenant had watched
The Patriarch through all his pilgrimage,
And when the closing scene drew gently on,
He hovered very near to cheer his soul,

And animate him for his farewell words
To all his sons, who 'round about him stood
With bowed heads, with trembling hearts and hands,
To hear the declarations of the Lord
Relating to their life and destiny.
From Reuben down to Benjamin he spake,
And skilfully portrayed in striking lines
Their character, and vividly revealed
To each the varied things that should befall
Them and their race within the latter times.
" Reuben, thou art my first begotten son,
In strength and dignity supreme, yet thou
Shalt not excel, because irresolute
In soul, and did'st not hesitate to sin,
Nor yet to desecrate thy father's name.
Levi and Simeon are leagued as one,
And instruments of cruelty remain
In their abode. O soul of mine come not
Within their secret snares, mine honor with
Their councils be not joined; for anger caused
Their hands to slay a man, and stubborn will,
To wound their oxen in the field of toil!
Now cursed be their anger which was fierce,
In Jacob I shall all their host divide,
And scatter them abroad in Israel.
Judah, thou art the one who shall be feared
By all thy brethren now and evermore,
Thy hand shall rest upon the wilful neck

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Of all thy foes, and all the children of
Thy father shall be subject to thy rule.
Thou art a mighty lion in the fray,
And from thee shall the sceptre not depart,
Nor yet a legal ruler abdicate ;
Till Shiloh come, to gather to Himself
The chosen of the world in righteousness."

IV.

" Brave Zebulum, shall dwell along the shores
Of Sidon, and become a haven safe,
For hardy mariners by tempest tossed.
And Issachar, though strong to bear a load,
Shall soon through ease and idleness become
The slave of others famed in mastery.
But Dan shall judge his people with a strong
And stealthy hand ; and be a serpent in
The way, to slyly bite the horse's heels,
And cast his rider helpless to the earth.
Lo ! Gad shall yield before a conqu'ring host,
Yet troops shall from him spring and overcome
His enemies, with fatal sword at last.
Now Asher shall in bread be rich and fat,
And yield his choicest dainties to the world ;
While Naphtali shall be a hind let loose,
Full satisfied and free with Heaven's good,
And shall bequeath to men his goodly words.
And Benjamin shall raven as a wolf,
To gather prey and be increased in goods,

But shall at eventide divide the spoil.
Of Joseph and his race he proudly said,
"Thou art a fruitful bow beside a well,
Whose branches hang the wall, the Archers have
Thee tried and sorely grieved with arrows and
Reproach : but still thy bow retained its strength,
Thy arms remained confirmed by Jacob's God.
From thee the shepherd and the destiny
And stone of Israel shall come ; ordained
By Jacob's God, who shall thy household bless
With Heaven's grace, with earthly good,
And offspring strong and great. The blessings of
Thy fathers have prevailed upon thy head,
O'er his progenitors, and to the bounds
Of everlasting hills on Joseph's head,
And royal crown shall they in praise abide."

V.

Thus Israel of Joseph fondly spake,
Then raised his hands to Heaven and confirmed
His blessing on them all in accents low ;
Just as Death's angel summoned him away,
To join his fathers ransomed from the world ;
While Joseph fell upon his lifeless form
And fondly kissed him as he wept aloud,
And all his brethren raised a wailing cry.
When all the days of mourning were fulfilled,
The sons of Israel and Egypt's great,
In royal pomp and solemn dignity,

Repaired to sacred Canaan to inter
The mortal form of Israel, as was
Designed, within the cave of Macphela.
Thus closed the life of Israel on earth,
And Joseph in the providence of God,
When he had lingered long 'mid childhood's scenes,
With all his splendid retinue, returned
To Egypt to resume the kingdom's rule.
And when his brethren still by guilt distressed,
Were overawed at his authority,
And craved protection from his faithful hands,
Bemoaning once again their evil deeds ;
He wept in pain, that they should e'er suspect
His tender heart gave place to ill intent :
Then earnestly assured them that the Lord,
In spite of evil had designed that he
Should be a saviour to His favoured race ;
And when a mighty host should lead them forth
To victory and rich inheritance.

CANTO THE TENTH.

I.

For three score years and more all Pharaoh's realm
Was 'neath the sway of Joseph, greatly blest,
And all his brethren prospered by his care
Exceedingly, and rose to usefulness,
Which gave them eminence throughout the land.
And when his head was silvered with the years
That lengthened out his life in sweet repose,
From many burdens of his princely state ;
He was so tender and affectionate,

That oft, he sought the children's company,
And fondled them with all a father's pride.
The wife of his affection shared his joys ;
She entered into all his state concerns,
And honoured him with rarest constancy :
And as life's last declivity they trod,
Both nearer to Jehovah fondly drew.
Oft, when alone secluded from the world
His soul would muse on Canaan's happy scenes,
And then on wings of faith soar up to God,
In rapt'rous contemplation of the time
When Heaven's portals would admit him to
The goal of everlasting life and rest.
To many struggling with the cares of life,
And wrestling with the forces of the world,
That crowd them into limitations quite
Against their iron will and lofty aims ;
The life and large achievements of the great
Seem to present the unattainable :
And oft, with fainting heart they turn away,
To brood upon the mis'ry of their lot,
And mourn their deeds as insignificant.
But true success and honour in the world
Are just as surely his, who in his lot
And full capacity performs the will of God ;
As theirs who gain the greater heights of fame ;
E'en should he die unhonoured and unsung,
By those beyond the sphere in which he moved.

II.

One lovely eve, as sank the golden sun,
With rare refulgent beams athwart the sky,
And shadows ushered in the gloaming calm ;
A host commissioned by the heavenly courts,

Appeared to Joseph when alone in prayer,
And bade him lay his earthly sceptre down,
For an immortal crown and high reward.
With joy he hailed the summons from the skies,
And set his house in order to depart ;
So 'round him stood his brethren and his house,
To solace him, to hear his last commands,
And watch his noble spirit hie away.
"I die," said he, "but God will visit you
With great deliverance, and lead you forth
From Egypt's land to that by oath secured,
To all the seed of Abraham elect.
When that eventful day shall come, I charge
You strictly to remove my mortal form,
Hence to repose within our father's tomb,
And may the blessing of my father's God
Abide with all the house of Israel."

III.

Thus, having spake, he yielded up the ghost,
And fled to join his fathers in their rest,
Attended by a ministering host.
Up to the shining realms in joyful haste,
The angels fled to bear his soul released,
While from his palace went a wailing cry,
Which, caught by all who dwelt within the land,
Was raised to Heaven day on day for him ;
Who long had swayed his sceptre o'er their hearts.
The house of Pharaoh mourned for many days,
And summoned all the Nobles of the land
To pay full kingly honour to the Prince
Who governed the kingdom long and well.
Ne'er since the proudest Monarch passed away,

Who had in glory sat on Egypt's throne,
 Had all the honoured of the kingdom wide,
 Assembled to attest the dignity
 Of one so patriotic and divine.
 The Royal House, all mournfully arrayed,
 The Priests, adorned in sad habiliments,
 Were marshalled with the host of every class,
 That in a measured tread accompanied
 The sacred bier unto the hallowed stream,
 That flowed between the living and the dead.

IV.

When solemn tread and requiem had ceased,
 Before the Judges at the river's brink,
 Who sat above the throng with visage sad,
 As was their wont, to hear if any charge
 Could be preferred against the one deceased ;
 To publicly refuse his spirit rest :
 So righteous was the spirit of his rule,
 That ne'er a voice was heard in strange appeal,
 From any wronged, oppressed, or malcontent.
 And then a joyful murmur broke the spell,
 And loudest acclamations filled the air,
 From all the throng, that one so much revered
 Should mingle with the joys of future life.
 And then the Sacred Barge, with Joseph's form,
 Proceeded to the regions of the dead,
 Where, silently within a royal tomb,
 It found repose while all the world surged on.
 Thus, like the Saviour of the world Himself,
 Was Joseph by his own betrayed and sold
 Into the hands of evil men, that he
 Might be the saviour of his race, the means
 Of stablishing them in a foreign land,

Where, for a time in servitude they should
Be taught of God, and learn the finest arts
In order to be mighty as a race,
When He should lead them forth into the land,
Which by the covenant with Abraham
Was theirs and their posterities' for aye.

V.

Full often we are placed in custody
To circumstances, fraught with vast concern
To other's interests and God's designs ;
Yet all too slowly grasp their full import,
And struggle to evade environments,
Which seem to militate against our good,
God makes us span the breach, though darkened with
Uncertainty, that others might be saved ;
That men in turn might know the mystery
Involved in many of His mighty schemes,
To benefit the children of His care,
And bring them to eternal blessedness.
A nation, or a world enthralled, cannot
Emancipated be, lest souls are found
Heroic for the task, and yield themselves
To God's directing Hand to work His will.
Do thou thy given work, it shall succeed,
In thine or in thy fellow's ripened day,
E'en should'st thou be a martyr to His cause,
For every human life supplied complete ;
To make the chain of service complete ;
And everyone shall just reward receive,
From Him who fashioneth immortal crowns,
And placeth them upon each victor's brow.

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