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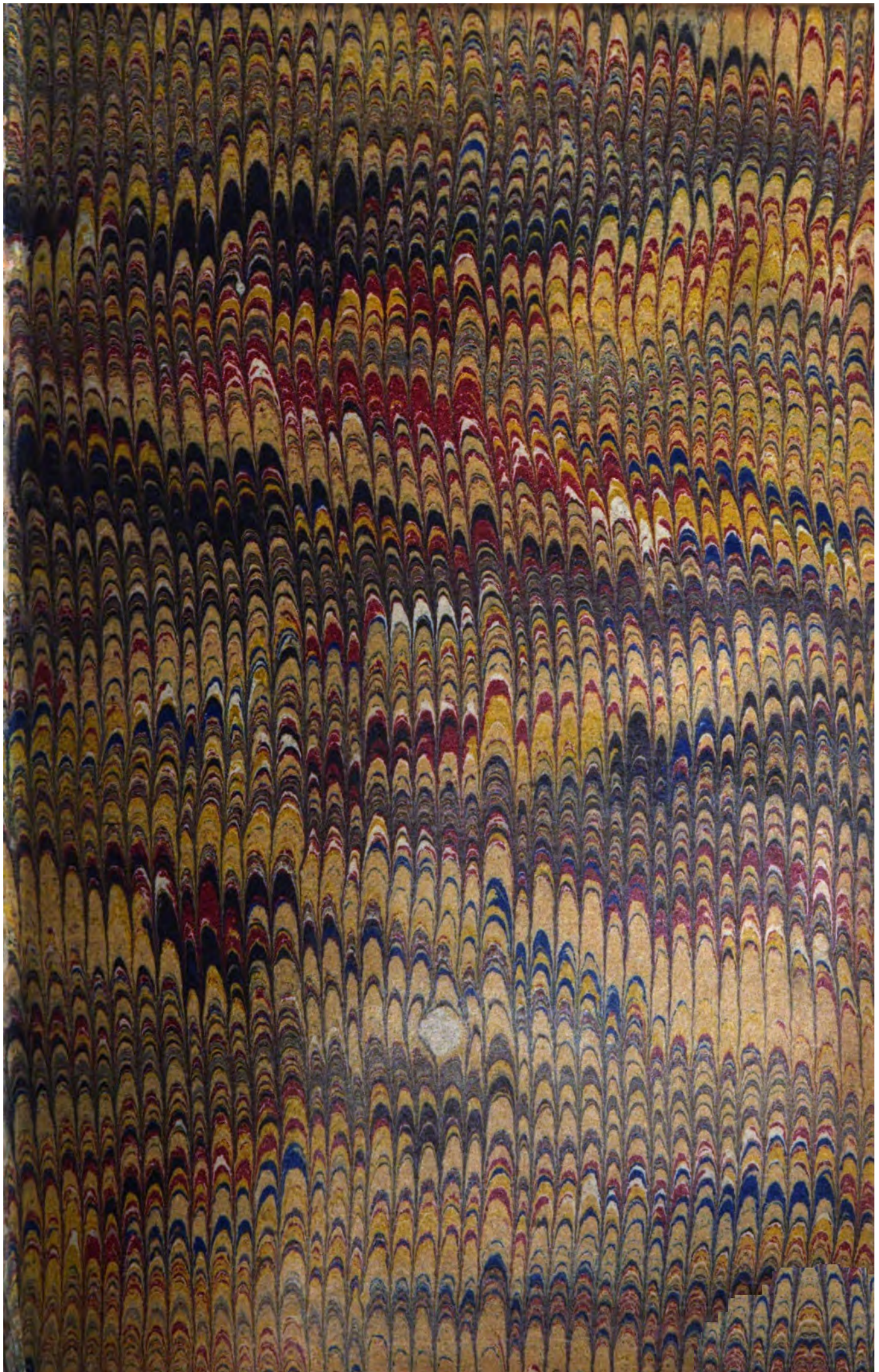


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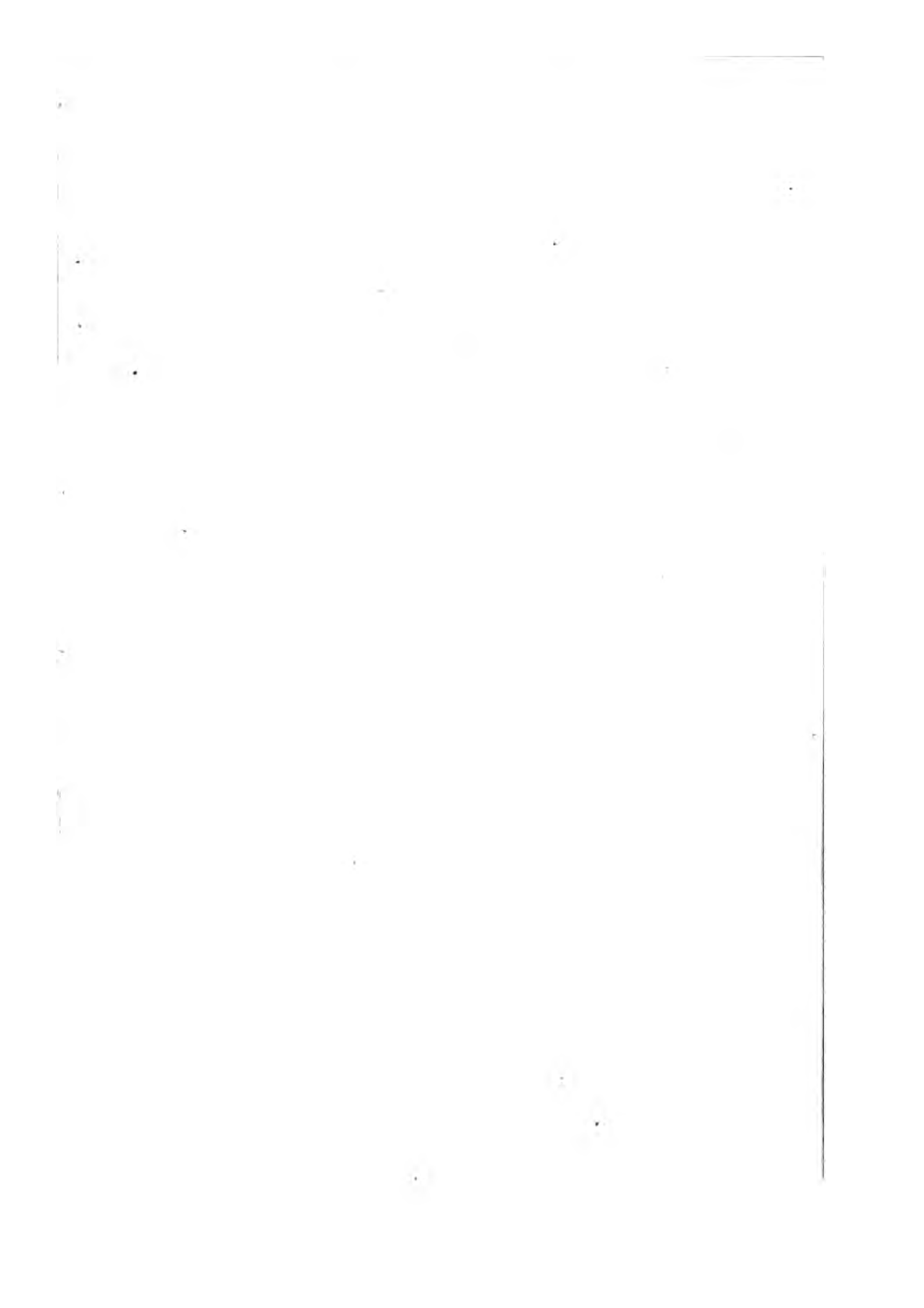
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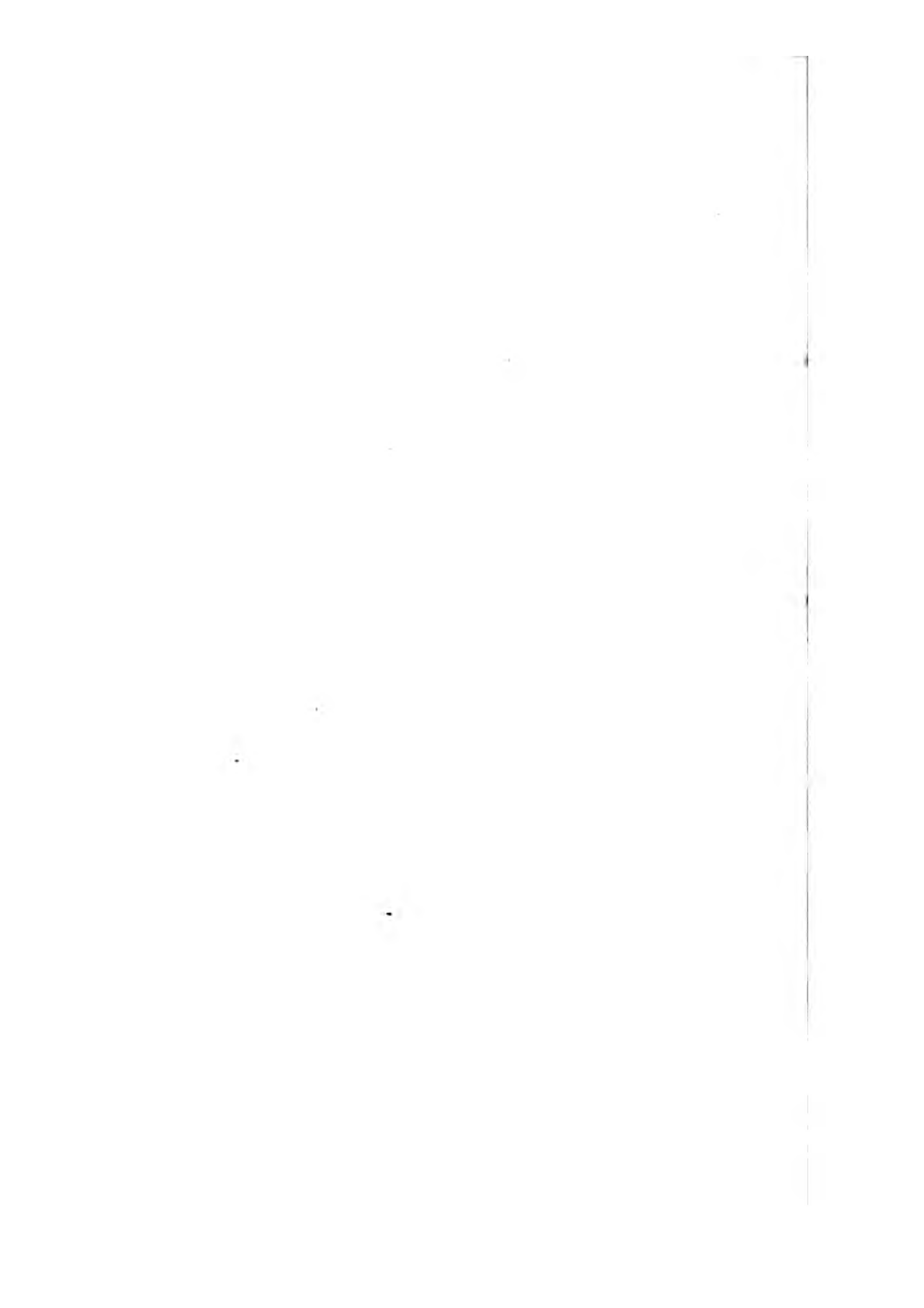
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ERNEST;
OR,
POLITICAL REGENERATION.

Damit das gute wirke wachse, fromme,
Damit der tag des edlen endlich komme,

TO THE MEMORY
OF
MILTON,
THE POET, THE DIVINE, AND THE REPUBLICAN,
THIS WORK
WRITTEN IN THE LIGHT
OF HIS GLORIOUS COUNTENANCE
IS DEDICATED.



INTRODUCTION.

I.

THEY told me, Poesy, thou wert a thing
Of God-like aims and glorious energies ;
A swelling spirit, wakening each string
Of man's wild heart to heavenly harmonies.
Cheering what else were cold, and quickening
Faintness with the warm blood of enterprize :
They told me thou wert great and good and free ;
• And truly I believed, and humbly worshipped thee.

II.

And the wild charactery thou hast writ,
And all the soul of thy aspiring song,
I took it to my heart and cherished it,
Studying deep and meditating long :
Alas ! the weakness of my simple wit !
Believing so in that fantastic throng,
Truly to be what their false show did seem—
And then I woke, and lo ! they were a by-gone dream.

III.

And there I stood as the lone Laplander,
When that his northern fairy lights are gone ;
Shuddering at the aspect cold and drear,
Of the unlovely land he looks upon.

Yes! thou too hast a flame, such as might cheer
 With light and warmth earth's barren region;
 Virtue most gracious, might electrical!
 But in vain lightning gleams still dost thou spend it all.

IV.

What! was thy childhood manlier than is
 Thy full and manly age? There was a time
 (Alas! how distant and dim-seen from this,)
 When he, the ancient high-soul'd bard sublime,
 Made of thy breathings a harmonious bliss,
 Creating order from a waste of crime:
 And then thy spirit was the breath of life
 To man's society; composing it from strife,

V.

Charming the soul of froward savageness
 To civil union and fair ordinance.
 Such in old time thou wert, and now no less,
 If thy good grace were in good governance.
 If only thy right scope thou would'st redress
 From idle aims and silly dalliance;
 From their distempered vain imaginings,
 Who call thy glories down on conquerors and kings.

VI.

And, oh! as many such have prayed to thee,
 And thou hast condescended to their prayer;
 So hear me now, thy latest votary,
 And rise with me to realms of purer air:
 And shed thy lustre on the majesty
 Of a great hero, great beyond compare;
 The sovereign people—arise, redress his wrong;
 He were a hero, indeed well worthy of thy song.

VII.

But wherefore rake the vile historic heap
 To find a soul: their glory doth but shine
 Foully, as charnel filth; no, let them sleep
 In darkness, only take them not for thine.
 'Tis from a purer fount, holy and deep,
 That thou must draw thy effluence divine:
 Nor look for life among the dead, who then
 When living, cared nor did ought for their fellow-men.

VIII.

And how should good spring from their memories?
 Oh, no! but we must take another aim
 Unto another end. 'Tis from the skies
 Thou shalt achieve an everlasting flame
 That fable old truly to realize.
 And with a fiery spirit shalt thou frame
 To wondrous energy man's passive clay—
 And spread the truth abroad till its dawn grow to day.

IX.

E'en as God erst, of his Almighty will
 Breathed through his prophets the poetic fire;
 So be the hand-maid of religion still,
 And flash a holy lightning from thy lyre.
 So thy high destinies thou shalt fulfil—
 For therefore with thy love doth God inspire
 Each state of man, savage and skilled, that so
 Uprising with thy wings, to greatness he may grow.

X.

Yes, Poetry, I know thee, and thou art
 The harbinger of faith: thou should'st controul,
 Thou genius of all good, fleshly heart, man's
 Fitting it for a spiritual soul.

Ah, wherefore are ye two so long apart?
But now, e'en now at length, into one whole
Be blent each wild poetic melody,
Full streaming in a deep religious harmony.

XI.

Making one truth of many phantasies,
Of many various colours one pure light—
One soul of many sensibilities—
One high-throned reason to rule all aright.
That peace and joy may crown man's destinies,
And glory be to God in Heaven's height;
A righteous consummation! Hence along
Fair poesy, and breathe thy soul through my high song.

BOOK I.

The storm is in the sky—drear is the night—
Distinction lost in darkness—not a star
To stand in Heaven for sign of hope. The face
Of the earth as gloomy as its central gloom,
And all the world a viewless wilderness.
Meantime doth nature shed her sadness forth
In showery dissolution. The winds howl
Most ravenously through the waste of night,
Bearding the hoary sea—tearing their crest
Down from the mountain tops—ruin is rife; 10
Destruction leagued with darkness—woe to thee,
Thou traveller in such a time as this,
A dreary time—where darkness grows to doubt;
And what was doubt, sinks in a deeper slough,
And so becomes despair. For not alone
The outward sense is subject to the night;
Cloaked in its dismal pall; but e'en the heart,
Surface alike and centre, is subdued
To the cloudy usurpation. Then, oh! then 20
The spirit sits brooding within the breast
Like the cold fog on the fen; the man plods on
Disconsolate, with downcast eye, and heart
Cleaving unto the mire; no heart indeed
But mere despondency; and as he turns
His dripping head askance, once and again,
Looking for comfort where no comfort is,
E'en in the void and waste of misery;
And feels himself alone, where, save himself,
Nought feels beside, nor owns the gentle touch
And kin of sympathy; then envies he 30

Each stock and stone, each stubborn plant and thing,
 For feeling nothing, and would fain unman
 His high prerogative to the base clay
 He treads beneath his feet; and so present
 A blank to all the shafts of wantonness,
 Wearying their warfare out; blunting their spite
 With a brute recklessness. So fared it then
 With a lone man wandering through that waste,
 Frederick Hess, weary and woe-begone,
 And faintly struggling with the grievous night. 40
 But grief and joy are bastards of the soul,
 O'erweening slips of idlesse: weeds—no more—
 Self springing here and there from the rank soil:
 O'erflowings of the lust, of that same mind,
 Whose proper issue and determinate end,
 When wedded to the love of things divine,
 Is peace, complacency, and happiness.
 Away then grief and joy—the master mind
 Knows ye not, and the soil whereon ye grow
 Breeding such sickly things, were all as good 50
 If it were barren. This is truth confest,
 And he, the wanderer, truly felt it so;
 "Henceforth I am a stranger to this mood;
 For I've a feat to do, and that same feat
 Must be done strongly, or fail utterly:
 And who faintly begins augurs an end,
 To die of that same faintness a weak death,
 Being quite dissolved that were most womanish:
 Therefore my heart beat not so languidly,
 But rouse thee, why should'st not? I trust in God; 60
 And in that trust I feel a privilege
 Against all fear." He spoke, and as good cheer,
 Is oftentimes the herald of good chance,
 So was it then—for as his sight sped on,
 Suddenly showed itself a cottage light,
 Coyly, one moment seen, then vanishing,
 Feeble and faint—but to his weary sense,

Livelier than the sun when liveliest,
 And welcomer—long had he looked for it ;
 But the long grievousness of that delay, 70
 Was lost in gladness of the one moments' sight,
 When first he saw it—for it spoke to his heart,
 Of joys familiar, and home happiness,
 Dear at each season, and then most of all,
 In that his forlorn plight—there stood the house ;
 And there the housewife sate by her brisk hearth,
 Plying the needle's point ; watching anon,
 Her children play ; rocking her cradled charge,
 To still forgetfulness ; or listening, 80
 The unfoldure of some holy history,
 From Lucy her first born. Meantime the blaze,
 Fitfully streaming from the high piled heap,
 Kis't each coy nook—enriching the walls round,
 With golden gladness—the old oaken chest,
 Was softened to a smiling radiance :
 Crackled the wood, and the huge chimney growled,
 As some churl mastiff o'er his mumbled bones,
 It's gruff complacence. The familiar cat,
 Purred there at ease, basking with dozy eyes,
 In the homely sunshine—all is happy here, 90
 As happiness itself had lit the lamp,
 And shed its soul around—all save the wife.
 Yet sure she too, compassed with ambient bliss,
 Should feel its touch, and render up her soul
 To that soft influence—e'en as her mate
 Takes sorrow home, and mirrors on his soul
 The sad reflected sky—reason t'were thus
 Prompture there is, and argument enough
 In such suggestion—nature wills it so ;
 But thought must ever play its tyrant tricks, 100
 Over our sense : marring its simple joys
 With a considerate grief : looking away
 From present bliss, and with sheer wilfulness
 Forth issuing to meet each coming ill.

Herein the simple wit, the very child,
 Whose heart is open like a flower in the sun
 To all immediate kindly influence ;
 Taking nature's provision as a babe,
 Is wiser than the wisdom of the sage,
 Studious oftimes but to ill prejudice. 110
 Self crost with care, subliming his sound food
 To curious vapour and thence distilling tears,
 Curst Alchemy—e'en as that loving wife
 Misdemed the happiness that wooed her there
 In very certainty and shapes of sense,
 And sent her moody speculation forth,
 To dwell in the dark with goblins : so in words,
 Most woeful she gave utterance to her thoughts—
 "Where art thou my husband ? And didst't thou not say,
 That sure I should see thee ere fall of the day ? 120
 And the sun is far down, and high up is the moon ;
 And thou wide away, oh ! turn to me soon
 Go look forth my Lucy, look forth in the air :
 Is the storm yet abroad ? Is the night foul or fair ?"
 "Alas dearest mother, I looked but e'en now ;
 And yet the night vapor is chill on my brow ;
 And I marked when I told you, you sighed as in pain ;
 And why should I make you such sorrow again ?
 "Ah ! well hast thou said child, and so had I thought ;
 But we who feel sorely bethink us of nought. 130
 And thou too my infant, how sadly would show
 My widow's dark weeds on thy vesture of snow !
 Oh grief is not only in coldness and hate ;
 Love too hath its anguish, and haply as great.
 Yet sure it is grievous that thus I must rue
 My wedded affection, so warm and so true.
 But list there, ah ! vainly would I hearken or see,
 My heart beats so wildly, oh heaven it is he !"
 The latch was raised ; he entered, and they met,
 But who shall lay such load upon his wit 140
 To paint their meeting ; happy they who feel

And all as irksome he who would fain tell.
 And they are breathing warm, soul into soul,
 Confused in spiritual joy; locked in embrace
 As though they held their world of happiness
 By that dear clasp. Where is it fled, the woe,
 That late o'erwhelmed them? Nay, what heightens bliss
 Call it not woe; for our ills do but wait,
 Upon our blessings as the Ethiop
 Swart eunuch on the sultan's sunless fair, 150
 Making grace goodlier. Praised be Providence
 That it hath so distinguished our dark life
 With stars of joy and light constellative.
 E'en so that loving pair were then made glad,
 From out their gloom: there stood the man, fordone
 With travel, wet as was the night, and mir'd
 Like wintry ways; shrinking from the embrace
 Lest that his fondness should infect her too
 Of his eager wife; while yet his inmost heart
 Tumultuous rose to meet it, "Stay, dear soul, 160
 Thy welcome is too warm: befits thee not,
 Nursed as thou art in household tenderness,
 To cherish such ill chance,—so—one more kiss,
 Then to thy chair; for much have I to tell:
 A tale of sore endurance: oh it storm'd,
 As it would storm the mountains from their place
 And drive the stars, ablast. But I am here.
 Here, and with thee—this evens all my odds;
 Out of a thousand griefs making one joy,
 A blessed one." He spoke, and would full fain 170
 Have rested there in his accustomed seat
 By the fireside: but she his careful wife,
 Loving his presence much, but his health more,
 Forbad him. "Nay, 'tis but a minute's cost
 To put thy ill dress off, and clothe thee afresh
 In comfort. Therefore having 'scaped one ill,
 Peril not now another, and yet worse.
 Thy chamber is prepared, linen set forth

And fire alight : go then and so refreshed
 Return to us." So counselled and so done, 180
 The good man rose, and strode wearily up,
 Marking with miry note each several step,
 To his chamber's height. There his broad frame he bared,
 And doffed the clinging mischief of his clothes ;
 Next with the freshening element washed away
 His faint obstruction, and foul weathery stains ;
 Then like the eagle plumed to a new youth
 Came forth freshly arrayed, lightsome of step,
 Glad change : as glad to encounter him uprose
 His conjugal dear comfort, beaming forth 190
 From her countenance the fire's reflected light,
 And yet a kinder radiance of her own,
 Lit from the lamp of love. Then wanted not
 Embraces mutual, joy in disarray
 Conflict tumultuous : long e'er he freed
 His wife from the soft bond of his embrace
 And turned away, there to distribute his love
 Where 'twas next due : redoubling kiss on kiss
 Mong prattling lips : asking and answering
 All in one breath. But she, the wife, meantime, 200
 As is her sex, more lively changeable,
 O'erpowerd by the warm gush of her own heart,
 Sank on her chair in silent pensiveness
 Of prayer ; then her soul, deep from within,
 Breathed itself forth pure as from angel lips ;
 And her thanksgiving doubled to her heart
 The blessing that it owed. Duty well done,
 Is joy well earned ; and a glad wife was she,
 When, her devotion o'er, she rose again,
 To do what e'er her husband's hungry need 210
 Demanded done : for not till now had she spread
 Her board, as loth his presence to presume,
 And rue him so, being absent, all the more :
 For disappointment with a viperous scourge
 Scores out the account of hope, and love is still

A fearful prophet. But now all being ripe,
 And expectation substacked into bliss ;
 Her nimble spirits ran through every act,
 O'erquickening the delay ; serving each need,
 With fairy-skilful noiseless ministry : 220
 The work prompt as the will : what though the fiend,
 Of gluttony bestrode not their slight board
 With heavy oppression : though no sweltering spilth
 Were there, to drown the spiritual soul,
 And choak the throat of utterance : no lamps
 Drunk with their oily swill, flaring away
 Above the guests, in rival bravery :
 Yet had they all that happiness would have,
 And fail not having it : plenty, and peace,
 And comfort. Parent brows smoothed in that warmth. 230
 And childish faces gazing on the fire,
 E'en as its facination held them fast,
 Smiling they knew not why ; as the young smile,
 And the old despond. Anon the kettle breathed
 Its invitation to familiar rites ;
 First gently murmuring with rise and fall
 And stop, as who preludes before he plays :
 Then blowing a more moody and deeper blast,
 As summoning its strength, 'till at the last,
 Brooking no more delay, it boils amain 240
 Impatient, as the enthusiast Pythoness,
 Of its hot fumes. The housewife heard well pleased
 That challenge, and forthwith gave to flow forth
 It's rash tumultuous incontinence
 Into a vessel of more richer art,
 Silver—a precious stuff—and wrought to a price.—
 Yet costlier than its own—her grandsire's gift,
 When on her bridal day he sent her forth,
 Enriched with this, and with his blessing more,
 Could it have been : a gift memorial 250
 Of happier years and wealthier circumstance,
 Not to be known again—or only when

Those artful leaves and tendril luxuries,
 Outvying truth with curious mockery,
 Shall bud to very fruit! the sudden steam,
 Breathing a breath too hot for purity,
 Dimmed the bright vase: meantime that careful dame,
 The purifying influence outpoured,
 In every cup, passing from each to each,
 Lustration due—then from the cupboard nook 260
 Produced a chest whose odorous potency
 Might shame the cedar's boast—its lid disclosed,
 Forth flew the fragrant spirit on airy wing,
 Joyous and free. Then did the wife dole out
 Her chary herbage, pondering, spoon by spoon,
 As prizing right its precious quality,
 To the vase's gaping void—stooping anon
 To scent its pleasantness, incense as sweet
 As ever breathed to Heaven: this done, on the heap,
 Piled in her present joy higher than wont, 270
 She poured the liquid penetrative heat
 Once, and again renewed—then a short pause
 By talk made shorter e'er she 'gan dispense
 Her gracious drink; that gracious drink transfused
 Into its cognate cups of far Cathay,
 And blended there with cream, soft temperature,
 Its virgin harshness changed to a gentler kind,
 Inviting taste—nor needed urgency
 To strain the invitation; as when erst
 Mad revelry, with stress that more beseems 280
 The hangman's office and the poisoned cup,
 Would force its swilling potion down the throat
 Of the abject drunkard. Hail, thou blessed plant;
 Sacred to comfort and complacency,
 Gentle refreshment! sure some providence,
 Wiser than Pallas and more loving far,
 Created thee to countervail the curse
 Of that luxurious vine, whose first effect
 (Type of its proofs in all futurity,)

Redounded to its Patriarch Author's shame ; 290
 Perverting reverence and pious dues
 To ribald leer and rank obscenity ;
 Clean against nature. Then must grace go out
 When riot rules : but thou dost still repress
 Each passion in its dark cell of the brain,
 There to lie still ; whispering in the ear
 Of mad distemperature a voice of calm,
 Rebuking all misrule. Sure it was thou,
 Though strangely named, didst once reform the crew
 Of old Ulysses to humanity 300
 From bestial lewdness, so reclaiming back
 By thy mild potency those haggard souls ;
 And rendering them to their reason again,
 Forgotten and foregone. Then was joy rife,
 'Neath that poor thatch--and the minutes winged their way
 Like a glad dream--sportive as fairy sprites
 Dancing at eve with feet that but provoke
 The springy grass to rise against their tread,
 Leaving no trace. Their joy blazed as a star,
 Needing nought else to feed it--from each brow 310
 To each reflected, glancing eye from eye,
 Well had it lusted every nook of the room,
 Though light beside were none. Howled the fierce storm,
 Shaking the stanchions, beating 'gainst the door,
 Like to a maniac ; aye howl away
 In frustrate fury, for that din the more
 Endears our warm security within ;
 To think what we might be, doubles the bliss
 Of what we are. So did their mirth long hold
 Its holiday, for childish revelry, 320
 Once kindled, lightly finds whereon to feed ;
 Finds, or else fancies it. But age hath cares,
 And cares will cloud the brow ; as they did then
 That man's—and as the fire he gazed upon,
 Subsided from its blaze to a darkling heap ;
 So did his temperature and pitch of soul

Fall from its height ; nor did she not take note,
 That loving anxious wife of what she saw,
 But nothing, yet spoke not her sense of it,
 As hoping well that cloud, haply chance-strayed, 330
 Across his light, might pass as quickly away,
 And all be clear. So she essayed awhile
 By matter new and question manifold,
 Graced with her lively cheer, to give the spur
 To his sinking spirit—but vainly—for the cloak
 Discloses not what it conceals within,
 To the gentle lamp that doth solicit it.
 She saw and knew, and thus in winning wise,
 “ What ails thee, Frederick, tell me now,
 And why this darkness on thy brow ? 340
 I could but mark thy alter’d cheer,
 E’en as I sate all idly here :
 For scarce could childish mirth beguile,
 Their father’s sadness to a smile :
 Nor our heathblaze with cheerful play,
 Chase sorrow from thy front away.
 Oh, thou art wont at night to rest,
 Thy weariness upon my breast :
 E’en so thy soul should now repose
 On my true bosom all its woes ; 350
 For wherefore hast thou chosen me,
 Thy own dear wedded wife to be,
 But that each one should so partake,
 All sorrow for the others’ sake ?
 Thy hopes and fears, thy woe and weal,
 Or whate’er else thou hast to feel ;
 It is not all thine own to bear,
 But I thy consort claim my share ;
 Then be my husband now indeed,
 And tell me all thy utmost need ; 360
 Confess thy sorrow in my ear,
 And be absolved from further fear :
 That so our grief may be our gain,
 Soften’d in sympathy our pain,

Such faith is the one happy thing ;
 The jewel of the marriage ring.
 But wherefore should I wander thus ?
 Distrust can ne'er belong to us ;
 Nor by this warm and loving kiss,
 I know thee all too well for this : 370
 And thou wert e'en in act to say,
 What chance hath fallen thee this day."
 " Yes, dearest wife, thou judgest well :
 And I was e'en in act to tell.
 But thou wert happy sitting here,
 And loath I was to mar thy cheer ;
 And for the cause thou'st guess'd it true ;
 As he good faith is like to do,
 Who argues, in a world like this,
 Full often bane and seldom bliss. 380
 Yes, the storm bellow'd o'er my path,
 Like a departing devil's wrath,
 The tempest fiends were all abroad :
 But 'twas not that made drear my road.
 No it resides not in the air,
 The mind alone makes foul or fair.
 For home affection is a charm
 That rapt me from all sense of harm ;
 And round about me played the while
 This hearth's glad blaze and thy sweet smile : 390
 I knew my toil would soon be past,
 And all is well that's well at last.
 But now storm 'scaped as I sit here,
 With nought to cross and all to cheer ;
 A darker cloud is o'er me still,
 The shadow of a coming ill :
 For know it all, it is thy due,
 Know what my forethought ever knew :
 Our gentle pastor hath sent down
 His pastoral mandate to the town, 400

Denouncing law and breathing flame,
 'Gainst all who dare withstand his claim :
 Aye faith 'tis e'en in such disguise
 This dove descends upon our eyes ;
 As like a rascal robber kite,
 As ever stooped from Harzberg height,
 But Hermann wherefore tarries he ?
 'Twas ne'er his wont so long to be.
 Lucy my love look up and say,
 Was not his promise for this day ?" 410
 He asked but she who should have answered him,
 The simple maid, confused of faculty,
 As one who flings away, on sudden assault,
 His arms, so did she render her sense, surprised
 To a rosy shame—such shame as showed itself
 Enamoured of its cause—blushes and smiles,
 Contending for the prize of that fair face,
 Outvying each the other—a bridal strife,
 Love against virgin coyness—such a look,
 As she who dares not own, nor will deny, 420
 The impression of her heart, the sign and seal
 Of her very hope, tricked from her custody,
 By some sly malice, and in sudden show,
 Urged home upon her conscience—must needs wear.
 Wear it, as did the queen of beauty and love
 Her meshy vest, captive confusedly,
 Struggling in her sweet shame—for so disguise,
 Doth ever hamper, and perplex itself
 In the folds of its own cloak ; to speak she essayed,
 But vainly : for her words swayed to and fro, 430
 In that wild fluctuation of her soul,
 Knew not to shape their course—but stood at fault
 There on the point of act. She paused—and when
 Her father with kind speech would fill that pause,
 Another voice than his, and dearer yet
 To her ears was heard suddenly at the door,
 Craving admission from the storm without.

Twas he—Hermann indeed—his coming shone
 Like a fresh billet flung among the brands,
 Reluming the spent fire.—Oh then was haste, 440
 And pressure of the hands, and loving looks
 Claiming like pressure for commutual lips !
 Bliss not to be—for love hath oft long toil,
 With nought but hope for his hire; outlengthening,
 The Patriarch's service, though that Patriarch's span
 Of life, wherefrom his service draws supply,
 Is shrunk from centuries to scores of years,
 Sad minishment—so creeping age usurps
 The hope of youth, and acts that duly done
 Should have prevented noon, are clouded o'er 450
 With evening shades—virginity is staled
 By sufferance—destined a virgin still,
 Without all quickening stir of married hopes,
 Even after marriage rites. Ruin most sad
 Of the past; and what's to come, for fruitfulness
 Presaging mere decay. No living spring
 But a standing pool, all issues to take in,
 And render none again —Oh if such waste
 Were the wont of the world, supply would shut its womb
 And growth be dried to a mummy. The very force 460
 And front of manhood stand but on one rank,
 Till that one rank be dwindled to one man,
 And death over his lateat meal say grace,
 "No more"—dying himself upon that word
 For lack of food—and nought else left behind,
 Only a black oblivion.—They loved true,
 That gentle pair: but for they had no home,
 No hearth domestic, that might serve their love
 For his altar, therefore the pure flame they brought
 Availed them not: and all they offered him
 Being but sighs and hopes and promises, 470
 He wafted coldly on them back again.
 Leaving them, 'stead of joy, to feed upon
 Their own sad patience—yet that youthful guest,

If any vulgar judge had rated him,
 Had no such fascination in his form
 To fix love's eager and unquiet eye
 To constancy—changing all passion so
 To mere devotion; chastening the rash blood
 To brook delay, and dream the interval
 As in a conscious trance—a prize so high, 480
 As like a far lamp through the pitchy dark
 Makes itself present to the wishful sight,
 Destroying sense of distance. There he stood
 Wearing no natural stamp of sovereignty,
 Nor mark of greatness on the outward man;
 No radiance of beauty to light up
 Love's torch with secret-darting sympathy,
 Stately nor strong, but rather feeble of frame,
 Feebler than were the fellows of his youth:
 And stooping in such wise as his own weight 490
 Oerwhelmed the spirit within him. At each fair
 And festival, where thronging manhood meets,
 'Mong thousands you might see him, and each one
 For feat of strength and rustic exercise
 Likelier than he—who had looked hastily
 Had so esteemed him—but the sager eye
 Saw that within him which shone clearer forth
 And nobler, like the worth of a native gem,
 From closer view—a vase most delicate
 And pure—and its lamp flamed so lustrously 500
 As threw all o'er it a yet paler show
 To seem more virginlike and frail than it was.
 And yet it was a burning blazing lamp,
 Though pure and heavenly, yet very intense,
 Like lightning, where it blazes, there it blasts:
 Take heed of it—oh 'tis a perilous thing
 When the proud soul rebels 'gainst the poor bounds
 That would confine it—and, for it disdains
 To be barred by them, rather dares all risk
 To be 'whelmed under them—such was his state. 510

For he mas come of lowly parentage
 Low as the root of all—a Peasant sire,
 But one not so enslaved unto his toil,
 As to bedrudge his spirit—a man not bound
 Serflike to the glebe; but duly rendering
 To his daily need, the tribute of his toil,
 And all that of himself remained to him,
 His remnant time, giving to scriptural lore
 A gladsome gift—there where the heartspring flows,
 The grass is green, promise luxuriates, 520
 And produce passes hope—so says old use,
 And so he proved it. Thus did his mind wax
 As his years wasted; and long time between,
 His work and will he did divide himself,
 To each its due: enduring what he must,
 Enjoying what he might. But will is fate;
 And this our drift and energy within,
 Like the earth's bias, silent but very strong,
 Makes its own orbit. So when vacancy
 Gave his hope room and rumour quoted him 530
 From every tongue, as worthy of his wish,
 That wish came home to him; he left his plough
 To do its office 'neath another's sway;
 Severed himself from the society
 Of his slow oxen-team, and in their stead
 He took on him the rule and mastery
 Of village urchins. There in grave estate
 Among his rueful scholars he would sit,
 But lived among his books; forging quaint forms
 In his quick fancy; torturing plain sense 540
 To mystic meanings, as usurpers use,
 Unwont to rule, and plagued with ceaseless itch
 To prove their power: turning all settlement
 To a most troubled stir: old things to new;
 Season to importunity; and use
 To utter strangeness; ever fain to catch
 The popular vain gaze with changefulness,

And questioning with jealous picking points
 What ancient and successive sovereignty
 Had left to bide in state ; racking the truth 550
 But never proving it : such was the sire,
 A brain fermented to one maggot mass ;
 But such was not the son. His father's mind
 Belike on some conceit was gone astray
 When he begot him ; for his body and soul
 Owned not one parentage. That diet of books
 Was surfiet to his taste—physic not food.—
 He left the dark impenetrable wood
 And strayed to look for flowers : many he found
 Wreathed into garlands fair by Poetry : 560
 Aand many an old romantic warlike tale
 Or lay of love, turned all his natural soul
 To a spirit of fire—such fuel did he find,
 There in that ancient hall, which from yon woods,
 Proud as the family that dwelt in it,
 Looks down on its domain. But that house then
 Owned a base lord—for high place draws not up
 The soul to its height, and wealth doth oft bely
 Most grossly with self-speaking evidence
 The stamp that gives it worth. Young Hermann went 570
 With that squire's sons to hold companionship,
 To be the comrade of their gamesomeness,
 One of themselves : and for their studious need
 To serve them for a lantern in their path,
 And help them grope their way ; that so through him
 Their heaviness might buoy itself to hope,
 Their tardiness usurp the forward way,
 And the feat they had long failed do it at last
 By seeing it done : then their dull vaporious spirit
 Kindled by him, touched by his qaickening light, 580
 Might burst into a blaze. So their fond sire
 Had framed his hope, and orderly success
 Gave substance to the shape : their darkness oped
 Its slumberous dullard eyes, and became dawn,

Presaging day. Meantime that boy, well pleased,
 Wore the rich habit of his daily life,
 And in its various brightness pranked himself,
 As 'twere his proper native quality,
 No less than to the leopard its gay skin,
 So born and so to die : alas for him 590
 And his fond dream ! for trust, since Paradise
 Was never wisdom. On a time it chanced,
 As the stream is swiftest and most foaming rash
 At the fountain head ; and so in boyish blood
 E'en as the humour stirs doth the tongue speak,
 And the hand strike : a fit of moodiness,
 'Twixt him and one or other of his mates,
 Blew their old friendship up—to it they went
 Pell mell, as was the instinct of their rage,
 Confounding all the fair and loving past 600
 With momentary passion. That old boast
 Of blood, is but opinion's idle brag,
 And nature knows no scutcheons—in this truth
 Was the arrogant young squire batter'd and bruised
 To a raw monster, that his mother met,
 And meeting, knew him not in that foul face.
 Such was their boyish broil,—but the sire's wrath
 Upon his son's so pitiful disgrace,
 Rose to a boiling pitch. Base dunghill cur,
 And starveling beggar's brat—this, and yet more, 610
 The din of oaths and lash of vengeful whips,
 Such was the gratulation and triumph loud
 That hailed the victor home. Against that storm
 He stood like a dull tortoise in its shell,
 Biding all proof of it ; with passiveness
 Defying wrath to the worst—for his heart drew
 All feeling to itself, full to o'erflow
 With rush of its proud blood. But the brunt o'er,
 When that his patience had fulfilled its task,
 His rage took turn ; shaking his frame all through, 620
 Body and soul ; and then he hied him forth

Like a wild beast broken from out its cage ;
 Not knowing where—no forethought and no sense,
 Save only of its keeper's hateful rod
 And threatening voice: purposed to feed hell flames
 Rather than turn again, thus conscience cursed
 He wandered, branded worse than was Cain's brow,
 A deep heart-brand; out facing the rude storm,
 Daring the desperation of the blast
 To sweep him clear away. Oh, how he longed
 To change his manhood with the rover hawk, 630
 Wheeling above his head—owning no Lord,
 Knowing no fellowship; calling none friend,
 But waging war with all—for his home he loathed
 For the base tale that he must needs tell there
 Of that most shameful scourge. But where need rules,
 Nature must slave, and penury of bread
 Starving the spirit, it could not else subdue
 Beggared him back again: home he returned,
 If home it be, where love is all abroad,
 And hate keeps house. No sense of kin for him, 640
 No kindness: that lying life was gone
 For ever, and only its dark shadow left;
 And in that shade he lived—curse on the dream
 That tricked him with a thousand vanities
 And nothing true. Oh then, how fondly he wished,
 Since that he could not be what he fain would,
 E'en to be nothing, blotted from the world,
 And quite undone, flinging the thorny stem
 After the flower. So ever doth grief build
 Its most enduring and stern monuments 650
 Upon the site of what was once our joy,
 Now ruinous. Thus did the serpent plague
 Gnaw his fine nerves with a most venomous tooth,
 And still he suffered on, feeding his pest
 With his life, and taking silence for the nurse
 Of shame. But old experience sees more
 Than pride will say, and a kind man there was,

His father's kinsman, who did note the cloud
 That rose to his surface and sad countenance,
 From his soul's troubled depths. That man was poor, 660
 In hopeless poverty, for he had kept
 Long time a shop in a starved market town,
 Wherein he ministered to the small need
 His neighbours knew of books and almanacks,
 And writing gear, and such like furniture ;
 Need soon unneeded and requiting ill, 665
 Him that supplies it. That good kinsman sued
 Young Hermann, and prevailed with him at last
 To serve his turn in that same scanty shop,
 In hope to fill his void when he should die 670
 And stand successive there. Thither he went,
 Not willingly but wilfully indeed,
 Hiding him in obscurity from scorn,
 And making a monk's cell of that small shop
 For lonely stillness. The young mind grows best
 Planted in shade, and the hot ray's garishness
 Doth oft distort the sight to see asquint
 What nature in strait scope presents to it :
 And so doth use into perverseness grow
 Astray from truth—but there his spirit sate 680
 Working in idle semblance most effect,
 Darkly, abroad upon its elements,
 Combining all to one. Oh, for the joy
 Of the young mind, then, when its food is fresh
 To the palate, and the palate to its food,
 And love doth rule the feast ; then what is great
 And good draws to it the ingenuous soul,
 E'en as the opening eye waked freshly up,
 Looks to the sun. Then tales of old romance,
 Hot as the Afric sands and barren too ; 690
 Wars and distressful love, and chivalry
 Victorious o'er caitiff villainy ;
 These glories, and more glorious yet than these
 The worth of Greece and Rome, exhibited

To its full stature and most towering height,
 So in fresh life upstarting from the page
 Of the old Chæronean once again ;
 These did he love so deeply as man should love
 His God alone : and in that love he read
 The dawn into noon day, the noon to night, 700
 As one who felt his soul must perish else
 For lack of food. Then again suddenly
 Would he roam forth and be the child once more
 That erst he loved to be: for in past time,
 E'en from his childhood's earliest consciousness,
 His mould of mind was the great universe ;
 The skyey vault, and region mountainous
 Where nature first did own him. Man is made
 Of many essences ; each sight and sound
 And thing of sense doth spiritually conspire 710
 To make him what he is—the mind grows on
 E'en in its own despite, and 'twas his lot
 To feed his fill on such fine influence,
 As gave his spirit wings. There would he roam
 Alone upon the mountain top with God,
 Free from contagion ; and with the yearningness
 Of a babe for its mother's breast, resign himself
 Most freely to the full communion
 Of ambient nature—making the hills and woods
 His loving comrades, questioning the brook 720
 In its most secret haunts ; listing the voice
 Of the down rushing desperate waterfall ;
 Then would his heart exult as he looked down
 From his ascendancy on other hills
 Less high than he ; and shout and clap his hands,
 Glad as a bird uncaged—" here am I free,
 None to lord over me,"—and then again
 Would exultation sink to deep still thought,
 And all he'd read of late, high images,
 Virtuous aspirations, all he saw 730
 Around him, and felt fervently within,

Out of these elements he made himself
 A fresh creation, fresh and glorious,
 Stead of this world, and of men's abject life
 That dwells in it ; so many times did he brood
 O'er many fancies and brought one to form—
 A sage development—the fellowship
 Of free conspiring souls framed into one,
 To do what all desired—such his design.

740

Surely, the very one wisdom would choose,
 If e'er she came on earth and needed means
 To such an end ; for truly union
 Is not itself alone—no, 'tis strength, too,
 Stronger than any else—but where's the bond
 Wherewith to bind so furious a beast,
 So manifold a being as man is ?
 Made up of countless contrarities,
 A million passions and perversities,
 'Stead of one instinct—such a bond as that
 If any such there be, 'tis heaven born,
 Showing and proving itself here on earth,

750

But as a miracle—yes, 'twas e'en so.
 He lit his torch from heaven, and with that torch
 Kindled all hearts—the poor look gladly on high ;
 Having no comfort here—first, one of them
 And then another he did strongly essay,
 'Till he assembled some to hear his word,
 A simple congregation and a small,
 But a godly preacher—for as the light poured
 In his soul, so did he pour it forth again,

760

A glorious warm flood, a lustrous power ;
 Native and pure e'en as it came from God :
 Shaming all artifice as the sun shames
 Those earthly lights that shine only at night
 By the darkness that surrounds them : therefore they
 Who hold those lights would close our shutters up,
 Making a doubtful semblance and dark show.
 That we may need them. Oh, but they were blest

The souls that waited on young Hermann then
 To drink of his pure doctrine—nay not so :
 But rather to be bathed in the fount of life 770
 That he did open—heart and soul refreshed
 Till life was angel-winged to a spirit of joy,
 Earth blent with heaven. And this change wrought on them
 But as the light works its effect on earth,
 Simple and pure; creating no new thing
 But only showing truly truth herself
 In her own loveliness; scattering vain fears
 And monstrous fancies: faith; the gospel and love;
 These three he preached, leaving the mysteries
 Devised by man, for God's simplicity, 780
 And viewing in the earth one commonwealth
 Level as is the ocean—so his word
 Waxed and took wings and flew forth wondrously,
 An angel of good tidings; and he hoped
 To win all hearts with peace and gentleness;
 That even privilege having that hope
 Of better things graced with a higher grace,
 Would know its worth how vain, and strip itself
 To the bare man; so to hold fellowship
 On a free level, and forget what was 790
 For a gaudy dream. 'Alas! poor hope, thou'rt but
 A simple dove against the serpent guile
 That doth infest thee; yet it matters not,
 For 'tis not they who trick thee win at last,
 But thou who art confessed from 'mong their tricks
 An honourable truth. Such was the man
 Who cheered himself by that familiar fire,
 Hermann—a kingly soul—for whom a throne
 Of loftier verse than this were worthier,
 There to hold state, and rule immortally, 800
 Over the farthest realms of memory,
 As far as time can reach. Oh! be his soul
 The spirit of this song, e'en as this song
 Is but the echo of his high renown.

There was security and plenteous cheer,
 The blaze of the full fire and loving hearts
 To make its warmth still warmer : sure if joy
 Be not found here 'tis no where else on earth,
 But clean escaped to Heaven—haply 'tis so.
 This only is sure, despite their household cheer, 810
 Small comfort had the inmates of that cot :
 For the sad tale their father had just told
 Of the despiteous law troubled them so
 That they must look away from their bliss there
 To speculate upon a far-off woe :
 Aversion bad and speculation worse.
 Dark was their close of day, dismal their gloom
 E'en as the night itself—Oh had that night
 'Stead of just sweeping o'er them with her train, 820
 And so disclosing them again to day,
 And daily care, hurried them sheer away,
 Enveloped in her mantle's darksome fold,
 To go with her revolving wheel along
 Nor see the sun once more—so had it been,
 Such an extinction were more happier
 Than the happiest of their life ; then were their dreams
 Black as the thought that bare them ; yet no less
 Did the new day most brightly dawn on them ;
 As glad each thought of darkness to drive o'er
 With darknes self ; so loving nature could 830
 But we will not. Alas ! that perverse man
 Should rather choose strangely to vex himself
 Than love his Maker : and in that one love
 Forget all forms of spite and hatefulness. 834

BOOK II.

There is a loveliness in the young day
Surpassing sense : bright in its purity
As is an infant angel, yet deep souled :
As nature from her rest had risen up
In the refreshment of some heavenly dream
That she had dreamt, and waking streams from her eyes
O'er earth and air that dreamy radiance.
And can there be of all mankind, one man
Would doze the prime of his young life away
Never to be a youth? The freshening stir 10
Of the early stream, knowing, nor feeling not ;
But when its course is wearied, its full flow
Settled to the stagnation of a pool,
Then to be flung in it, and struggle his way
Through the dull scum of life : none would do this,
But whoso flings away his morning pearl
Doth all as strange a thing, making a blotch
Of that most beauteous gentle radiance
With self-engendered darkness ; lagging out 20
The freshness and the newborn fragrancy,
The silvery light and glistening dewiness,
The contemplative calm of the young dawn,
Till its pure life be tainted a death taint
In dust, and heat, and din of the noon day.
When man is rife, and nature all fordone,
Blent with his troublous being seems almost
To lose her own—but thou, be not so foul,
But spring up gladly, and look forth and breathe,
And walk abroad in peaceful blessedness—
Oh, 'tis most sad such bliss as all might have

The many know not. What? think ye to see
 Visions of green fields, waters and deep woods
 In the charnel-house, when death shall fling ye there
 For a nuisance as ye are out of the way,
 To lie and rot? No; but your time is short,
 And only provident use can lengthen it.
 Oh then fling wide the portals of your sight;
 But first, open your souls and learn to love,
 'Tis the best learning: for the love you pay
 To nature, she requites a thousand fold
 With joy and blessedness: look to her then,
 And do her suit as a subject, dutiful,
 With early duty: awake, arise: nor sell
 The privilege, and first-born hope of the day,
 For a foul mess of dreams—up and away
 To the heavenly inspiration of fresh air,
 So shall ye rise in nature's purity,
 'Bove the weak taint of man; e'en as they did,
 Hermann and Hess, forth issuing that day
 From their hot beds into the natural air,
 The garden's lively cool luxuriance,
 There to drink in the morn; and in the light
 And gentle countenance of the eastern sun,
 To pace their pleasant path: communing things
 That startled e'en the ear of privacy,
 They were so fearful—"Hermann," thus began
 The host, "for that I knew thee just and true,
 A man not all of clay, but such a one
 As walks the world forthright to his own end,
 Scorning to follow in blind vassalage
 The error of its ways, shining so strong
 As doth the diamond from the vile dust
 That would obscure it. Truly thou art a soul
 Of quality, so soaring as transcends
 The very sight and not the scope alone
 Of vulgar faculties? I greet thee as such:
 And hold thee therefore worthy to hear that

40

60

Which sure hath much of terror in the sound,
 And danger in the act. Hermann, thou lov'st
 My daughter; nay, no word of compliment; 70
 The certainty of sense hath told it me;
 For ever the young soul speaks forth by signs
 Truer than any tongue—better 'twere so:
 For if thou lov'st her not, then hast thou been
 (Since that thy use first haunted this our hearth,
 Familiarly, in wont of dearest guest,
 A livelong lie: beseems thee better then
 The prompture of rash blood, a flagrancy
 Proper to youth, than the cold serpent guile
 That issues from cold hearts: beshrew thy life! 80
 Well, is she worth the price thou prizest her.
 Needs no fair phrase to set thy judgment right,
 That ne'er had wrong, enough and more of this:
 Nor had I touched it in so light a key,
 But that I deemed it good, ere thou tak'st course
 To point thy course's scope—to warn thee well
 In what a far and weary waste of night
 (Might task an angel's wing) that star doth shine
 In whose faint ray thy hope doth cheer itself;
 Know then her life and mine linked in one chain 90
 As strong as fate e'er forged: constraint too stern
 For that her nature's soft condition:
 And 'tis that chain hath dragged me down thus low,
 As here I lie—trust me, an iron weight,
 For body and soul, heavy and hard to uphold,
 As heaven's own hate—he were a man indeed,
 Could master it.—Arthur would'st hear thy part?
 Behoves thee then, thou tender youth, to be,
 More than or fiend or angel—look thou here.
 Thou hast attached, in fond simplicity, 100
 Thy fortunes to a home, which how it stands,
 How grounded, furnished, whence inhabited,
 And who they are, thou knowest not—no more.
 Than if some fairy sleight had whirled thee away,

Within a Tartar's hut ; thence to look forth,
 And ask the stars for counsel, where thou wert,
 And with whom mated : such is all thy sum
 Of suretyship—though for the blab which fame
 Blows from her idle wind-conceiving cheeks,
 Here in our hap, she hath outdone herself, 140
 And made a thousand of her hundred tongues,
 And each a liar—houseless runaways,
 Loose bankrupt loons, felons whose subtle wit
 O'er reached the dull thick walls should hold then in ;
 Forgers of coin, writers who used the name,
 Of other men in such a venturous sort,
 That now they must be strangers to their own ;
 And briefly all the styles and qualities,
 That Newgate knows, cling to us here like the clod, 120
 That caps yon mountain head—darkening the truth,
 With fanciful surmise. But thou methinks,
 Art not so minded as to found thy faith
 Upon an old wife's tongue. Howbeit the truth,
 Though men misdeem it much, is yet itself,
 And now in the act to speak—listen and hear.
 Thou see'st me now a man of many griefs,
 Broken and bowed to the ground : t'was not so once.
 I look, and muse, and wonder at myself,
 How such a change should be—sure I dreamt then.
 Or else dream now the being that I seem, 130
 So shrunk from the old man—as sad in age,
 As was my early time, frolic and free,
 When sunshine filled all space. My spendthrift life,
 Foam'd over, and fail'd, wastefully foredone,
 Ere half its act was o'er—but t'was not that,
 Another flow might well retrieve that ebb,
 Recovering the bare strand—we had been friends,
 Fortune and I, and yet we were not foes :
 Nor had disorder so unstated me, 140
 But timely thrift could set me up again,
 Firmer from that my fall. I could have paid,
 The price of folly, and been so content ;

As knowing well what rashness plucks in the flower,
 It ne'er can taste in fruit—then had I given,
 My remnant faculty a surer scope,
 Bid thrift eke out what folly had made scant,
 And having purged the dross of viciousness,
 From out of my loose nature, set in fine
 Upon its bulk, purer from minishment,
 Virtue's strong stamp. Yes ; well I could have borne 150
 This and worse ruin, and called it all my due,
 But that the fiend oppression stretched me arack,
 Rivetting its strong fetters in the flesh,
 And through to the soul. Goodness is worse than bad,
 Being corrupted, and the fallen angel,
 Most damned of fiends—so is the virtuous law,
 Albeit heaven born, hateful as hell itself,
 When wrested from its guardian quality,
 To subornation of such wrong as the knife
 Of the Assassin were more merciful,
 And no less just. E'en such was the sharp stroke, 160
 That dashed me from the happy pedestal,
 Whereon my fortune stood : so sudden swift,
 That like the clown afield, smitten to earth
 With the lightning flash, and to one senseless heap
 Confounded with his oxen and his plough.
 I rose half stunned, and looked strangely round
 If it were very truth. Now of that stroke,
 This was the manner and the cause of it :
 The heritage my father left to me,
 It was my charge to till—faith 'twas a farm 170
 Might make the city usurer pack his bags
 And wed a country life. I cherished it
 As though my happiness grew there alone.
 Household upon the spot, and still methought,
 Ever as I did visit it, its face
 Would wear a smile, and brighten in my eye,
 And like a fruitful and most loving wife,
 Full well did it requite my husbandry.

But Paradise were not itself indeed,
Unless a devil should haunt it. Such a one, 180
As soon we found him in most bitter sort,
Though to our simple seemings long disguised,
Did walk among as our minister,
In robes of peace. Know you the place my friend ?
Holyheim, a glorious country, a deep soil,
That nursed our longcome stock from sire to son
Through far tradition. The more curse on him
That drove me thence and tore me body and branch
Uprooted—now beshrew me, but I think
That horn of plenty was no idle tale, 190
And there 'tis emptied out ; wood, meadow, and corn
Orchard and garden, and that tendrill plant
O'erpeeping more the vine in beauteous show,
Than yielding to it in poetic vaunt
And gracious use : and many a river and brook
Runs winding there in many a circled round,
As loth to quit the land. There you may see
(And 'twere a time well spent, thither to go 200
And see nought else) full many a fieldside path,
Of memory old stealing on timidly,
And half o'ergrown, and doubtful of itself,
Lest that some Lord or Squire, jealous belike
Of nature, that she loves the common good,
And gives not all her blessing to themselves,
Should start some trick of law, and so shut out
From the poor dust-choked peasant the one way
That leads him on to commune with his God
There where God stands livingly, still confest
In nature's wild and solemn loneliness.
Howbeit such paths there were and many such ; 210
Too many by one ; so thought our minister,
And so he said ; and thought and saying too
Strove to make good in act ; for he wasted not
The love that to his neighbours he denied,
But spent it all on himself : he 'stablished him

There in the parsonage, and set his soul
 So earnestly to frame it to his will,
 As though 'twere his eternal all in all
 And heaven but a fool's tale. Certain green fields,
 To be an ample skirt and train of state
 For that erewhile so modest parsonage,
 He had laid in to the glebe. Pleasant they were
 To the eye, and to the mind of mindful man :
 For they did look toward the vital south 230
 Rising in gentle slope to meet the sun
 And take him to their bosom ; there to bask
 At his midday pause, o'er toiled—and still would they
 Filled with his gracious force, show in due time
 Most teemingly the token of his love,
 Fruitful with herb and flower. Such a lone path
 As I have said threaded those pleasant fields,
 Not in strait speed, as bent to expedite
 The haste of toil or traffic to their end ;
 But sauntering on unknowing of its scope, 240
 Purposed to take its pleasure, and in vague
 Careless diversion most indefinite,
 Fulfill its sense of the scene. Oh I have trod
 That path from child to man times beyond count,
 And followed through it the still varying year
 From spring to summer. Had it led to Heaven
 I could not love it more—and all the folk
 That owned our parish church, aged and young,
 Loved it no less ; the child for its own sake,
 And for his pleasant use of it—the old, 250
 For that 'twas once to them a lover's walk,
 And now in darkness and decline of age
 A tender memory—but what was this
 And all the soul of gentleness beside,
 To the cold spirit that only loves itself,
 And hates whate'er may baulk it in self-love ?
 The way was needless, and its solitude
 Might tempt the loiterer to do a deed

He would rue done. Courtship hath safest speed
 Under the elder's eye—and idle haunts 260
 Beget an idle life. Enough—so said
 Our ghostly guide whose holy quietness
 Brooked no disturbing step—and first by hints
 Of scope ambiguous, then by fair words,
 He hoped to win his way ; and failing this
 Darkly he surmised of rectorial rights,
 And what the law might give him means to do,
 If this were left undone: but when all else,
 Promises threats and courtesies alike,
 Fell to one waste—then did his wilfulness 270
 Swallow up all the rest, and fill their space
 Most giantlike—confiding so alone
 To break all bars, and force adown our throats
 The bitter bile of our despitefulness.
 Straightway he crossed the path with fence and gate,
 Sight never seen before, and even then
 Seen but so long as served to make report
 And smite it down: 'twas a stout sort of us
 That put our hands to the work. I stood at the head,
 Stood—nay—I stirred me 'faith, aye and them too 280
 Till their hot zeal boiled over. Down it came
 In a heap—and such a shout upon its fall,
 As drowned the crash that caused it—and again
 Wide open as the sea to each free sail
 The pathway stood ; e'en as it still shall stand,
 Greeting the comer. This was nobly done ;
 The nobler, that it ran a dangerous risk,
 To be paid heinously: the farm I tilled
 Was franchised by old use from due of tithe,
 That tribute paid indeed to Antichrist 290
 Though meant for God ; whereby the arch-enemy
 (Compact most serpent-subtile and malign)
 Gives over to the parson his base pelf,
 And takes for his own share the peace, and love,
 And Charity, that should have blest mankind,

To make his sport of them : leaving the church
 A thing of stone, soul-less and void of grace,
 A mere oppression on the groaning land
 That doth uphold it. 'Tis a galling ill
 To many, and was a crushing one for me : 300
 For other engine of his malice none
 Did he, my spiritual father, find
 So ready and apt to his hand ; he touched the spring
 Of the law, and set the whole machine amove,
 Which like the Indian monster car moves not,
 Save o'er those wretches, whose strange senselessness
 Hath set them in its path. 'Tis a short tale.
 He challenged my exemption from his due :
 Would have my proofs set forth : and I who knew
 Nor had no title save by ancient use 310
 From sire remote delivered down to son ;
 And plain good faith and price of privilege
 Paid to the height of its worth : I poor lost soul,
 Was e'en so mad to seek surety from law,
 Grace out of Hell, and 'gainst his heavy assault
 To buckle such a crazy armour on,
 As did but cripple me ; till buffeted
 In that strange turmoil out of strength and sight,
 I would fain rid me of such sore defence
 And so have done : but death and fury ! it stuck 320
 E'en to my substance like a venomous shirt,
 And parted not but with my very flesh,
 Leaving me bare to the bone ; my wealth ground down
 And scattered to the winds ; my being swept
 From the face of that fair land where it had birth ;
 Myself beggared to rags ; my home laid waste
 And if my fortune run her course to the end
 Even as she hath channel'd it thns far ;
 My sons turned thief, my daughters prostitute.
 Oh if you have a heart for sympathy, 330
 Prithee laugh with me as the fiend doth now,
 At such a merry turn ; such trick of love

From shepherd to his sheep. Oh yes, good church
 I'll give thee all thy due; if I withhold
 One curse of those I owe thee, may hell pains
 Embrace me body and soul! but these are words,
 Wild as the wrath that tempests them in.
 Listen a sadder strain: so when the damp
 Of the prison had quite put out my spirit of health,
 And in its place set a strange fever up, 340
 To ride aspur, and quicken my poor blood
 To a mad heat, till nature sank perforce
 Hopeless to rise again; then the kind souls
 Seeing the vampire had so sucked my veins,
 And left me but the shell of my old self
 Pithhollowed, then, when as their cruelty,
 With one stroke more had given the stroke of grace,
 And so been mercy indeed! they gave it not,
 But sent me forth, outcast, to beg my bread
 Or starve for lack of it. See'st thou yon books? 350
 The one lone precious remnant of that wreck—
 Aye, take them them down; read, learn, and cherish them
 For they are such as priests and rulers hate,
 And free souls love: my father's counsellors
 Erewhile, who first imbued my taste with them,
 Now mine. No matter whose. Such, as I've said,
 Thou see'st me here; a naked man, no more;
 And half unmanned beside! with beggary
 For my utmost vaunt! a blank for all my hope;
 Rate me e'en so; and then bethink thee well. 360
 Is it a house like this, so bare, and waste,
 Open to all assaults of misery,
 Through breaches of most ruinous beggary!
 E'en from the roof to the foundation stone,
 Conflicted with all elements of wrath!
 That thou wouldst trust to hold a dog of thine,
 For one half hour; much less thy livelong hopes,
 The delicate ware of thy most precious peace,
 Thy wife and babes and all. Ah well! I see 370

The warm assurance beaming from thine eye,
 And lighting what were else most miserable,
 With a strange lustre of joy : yes 'tis nought else,
 Usurping love hath so possessed thy soul,
 It leaves no space for fear. Well, be it so,
 But stay, one word—one that may give thee pause :
 Thou hast heard much of ill, but not the worst :
 Listen it now. Fortune hath hunted me
 To this my last poor hold, the heart of my home
 And stabbed me there. Look now around and see 380
 How blithe the cheer she has left me ! come what will
 She's still my foe : her hate lives rancorously
 Unto my death. But, Hermann, mark me this,
 She visits me home no more : so help me Heaven,
 I'll leave my house to the rats, and march forthright
 To meet her soldierly at some far point
 She little wots of. For mark me once again :
 I've wrestled with the law, and that same law
 Hath flung me a shrewd fall, but yet not so,
 Like the Angel with the Patriarch of old, 390
 As my sinews to unstring ; no, 'twas sheer strength
 Laid me thus low, and by sheer strength again
 I think to raise me up. Lo ! here I stand
 A flaming energy : what though the breath
 Of fortune dally with my sail no more,
 Yet may the blast of passion and fierce hate,
 Speed me as well ; raising a surge so high,
 And stormy, as may bear my enterprize
 Above the sands and shallows that long use
 And ancient idleness have gathered there 400
 To bar free way, heaping obstruction up,
 And naming it law. What's that, a name—no more,
 And scarce so much ; for surely such a name
 Sounds holy and good, and so can ne'er belong
 To cankered age, and hollow rottenness ;
 But wherefore this to thee. Thou, my young friend,
 Know'st not my sense of woe ; the griefs that gnaw

So venomously all my inmost heart,
 Are strange to thee ; so much the wilder then,
 Thou wilt esteem these workings, that thou see'st 410
 But on the surface ; yet forgive it me !
 The fountain that men stir to its darkest depth,
 Will show its vent in foam. Now if you will
 Attend me, (see passion hath clenched my fist,
 But I disclose it thus ; read thou the lines
 Unfolded to thy view), 'tis long time since
 I set my life and fortunes, all my state,
 At a straw's worth ; e'en so—and glad I were
 To the height of brimming and tumultuous joy,
 To set both ends of that same straw a-fire, 420
 Could I but kindle so a mighty blaze
 Should light the country up. Oh 'tis most true,
 The elastic spirit works the stronger power,
 Still in the smaller space ; when that my state
 Lived in a larger sphere, it did but flag,
 In the bounds it might not fill. Now doth my spirit
 Shrunk on itself, like embers thrown a-heap,
 Gather its forceful virtue to a heart,
 Of pulse so mighty as shall speed its blood
 Through the universal man. Feel thou my hand, 430
 Methinks I'm grown to stuff of adamant,
 Or is it but my spirit that so sets
 Each sinew on the strain ? Nay, 'tis much more ;
 For the fierce trials that I have endured,
 Have burnt each weaker element to smoke,
 And left me a man of proof. What wouldst thou say ?
 Haply 'tis madness or a fit of the spleen,
 That throws a year's sound strength into an hour
 Of raging impotence ? Well, be it so,
 Call it what name you will,—frenzy, or bile, 440
 Envy or towering pride, such is the spirit
 Hurries me on to war against the world,
 And set my life at stake. But I am one,
 And many such were need as good as I,

To fill the scope of this great enterprize :
 An enterprize that from the east to the west,
 Shall spread its angel wings o'er the wide world,
 Visiting all, scattering light and truth,
 Blessing where'er it goes. But what are words
 Written on water ; what is truth to him 450
 Who hath a soul of such loose quality
 As may not take its seal? Tell me then first,
 How art thou tempered, does thy spirit aspire,
 Thy blood run warm? Hast thou a heart to dare,
 A hand to do? and that for the deed's sake,
 The common good of man and glory of God ;
 Not for self-love? if thou sayst no—I say,
 Get thee another wife to nurse thee at home,
 'Thou graffest not thyself upon my stock,
 Being of such a strain.—For I am one, 460
 Will have no spirit come within my range
 But such as work my will—observe my scope,
 And by it shape their own. Well it behoves,
 Where all is war without, to hold within,
 The bond of peace and fit dependency.
 But lest that passion blind thee, and hot blood
 Hurry thee to rush on in ignorance,
 Where wariness had paused to weigh the pain,
 And price of the act against the worth of it ;
 I'll give thy judgment footing where to stand, 470
 And take her measure. If hope have space enough,
 To build, and means withal prompt to her hand,
 Or else despair be wisdom—much I've said,
 Now, and long since of dangerous conceits ;
 Figures erewhile exhibited to thee,
 But in their shadows, now without all guile,
 I'll show them their in substance as they are.
 Thou'st wondered what strange chance should fling me here,
 Like a lone bird stormed by the hurricane,
 Clean from its course, and winged fellowship, 480
 To pine on the ocean rock.—The dry leaf drifts

As the wind drives it—that is very truth :
And if thou wert a stranger to my faith,
So would I foil thy question—but what needs,
Disguise where hearts are true. Briefly 'twas pride,
That brought me to this haunt of poverty :
I would not hang my rags on that same staff,
Whence my brave silken luxury ere-while,
Lorded it o'er the air. That were good cause,
Though else were none—for man's but a child still, 490
Within opinion's sway : behoves him first,
To emancipate him from her fast drawn chains,
And be what he is called.—Thoughts too I had,
Deeper than this and of a wider scope,
That moved me hither : in my flow'ry age,
When nature being new is loveliest,
I had dwelt long among such hills as these,
Only yet loftier—and their dear forms,
Filled a large space within my memory ;
Pourtraying many a pleasant landscape there, 500
Of sunny sweetness—and since that blest time,
Full often has my fancy for relief,
From worldly weariness, flung herself there,
Upon their shadowy side, lived the old life,
And dreamed her cares away. Then too while yet
My wrongs and griefs were heaviest on my heart,
And passion with the very knife in his hand,
Prompted me to revenge—then did I think,
How that full often I had heard men say,
That no where else than in this selfsame spot, 510
Of all our famous land, did more love wait,
Upon the gospel and its ministry ;
Nor more of bitter hate haunt the false thing,
That men miscall the church. Here then methought,
For the fulfilment of that work of mine,
Is sympathy of will and common hate,
More forceful for all purposes of act,
As nature most perverse will have it so,

Than common love. Here is a field far spread,
 Where I may sow my seed and watch it spring 520
 From blade to ear, and reap my bosom full,
 At the ripe time ; if but occasion serve,
 And fortune stand my friend : and now for the feat,
 The compass and the drift of our design,
 Its hope of good, its method and its means,
 What is the promise should invite thee on,
 To dare the travail for the birth of it,
 And what the words of fear may bid thee halt,
 'Tis now my scope to say.—But first my friend,
 Behoves us look around and circle our view, 530
 That so we may beware of the present point,
 Whence all our project moves. Most surely then,
 I see no comfort in the things that are,
 But only a far hope of what may be,
 If manhood second the determinate mind,
 And wish ascend to will—for look but forth,
 And see how as this world hath grown in years,
 So by consumption sure as the course of time,
 Hath human happiness 'lost its life-blood,
 Shrunk to a shade—fallen away to the waste, 540
 Of what it was. Trust me man makes or mars
 His proper paradise. In the old time,
 Ere rapine was yet rife within the world,
 Each had his own—each man enjoyed and held,
 And by tradition handed to his sons,
 Whate'er his proper care and skill had reared,
 Or his hand wrought—his herds his household gear,
 Wine, corn, and oil, with implements of use,
 And things of wear—reason and right was so ;
 That each should labour for his own behoof, 550
 And so assert for himself what else were not,
 But for his toil—that industry might be,
 A servant to herself, not a poor slave,
 To minister the soft capricious couch
 Of idleness and swollen luxury.

And so life waxed and waned. At nature's hands,
Man took her liberal largess well content,
E'en as she gave it—took it for his use,
Until that use were satisfied, and then,
Quitted it all as free to who came next.

560

Nor yet had self-love stealthily at first,
And then in its own usurpation armed,
Bold and more bold, and proudly confident
In strength of what it stole, claimed right to have,
Against the need of other landless men,

More than its hand could hold, or present use,
Turn to its profit ;—so diswarranting,
His neighbour's right and God's most earnest law,
That man shall buy his daily bread by sweat

570

Of his own brow—throwing to industry,
But the husk of the fair fruit herself had set,
And reared and gathered up.—Thus in the veins,
Exhausted most by toil, and where most needs,
Bounteous supply, starving the weakly blood,

Almost to water : and what penury,
Had so diminished from most needful use,
And from desert of patient industry,
Heaping it all into the listless lap

Of luxury, that thinks but how to waste,
In whims that idly haunt her vacancy,

580

What toil had hardly won : till in her lap,
Riches o'erheaped, turn but to rottenness,
Stinking in their fastidious mistress' sense,
Choking the issues of activity,

And swamping the life-blood that nature willed
Ever to run with a most sprightly stream,
To a dull pool. Oh ! how this giant world,
Most like a craftsman of besotted soul,
Reels drunkenly from passionate excess,

To lack of bread and household beggary ;
Swilling, in one most beastly hour, the weal
Whence honest labour had been homely glad

590

For a month's space—staggering from end to end,
 Never to hold the main! yes, since the time
 When the old bible patriarchs held sway,
 And nature in the earth, and water, and air,
 Was free to all—when each man of the first,
 As of the latter too, had what his use,
 Could hold and asked no more; since that blest time,
 Hath selfish arrogance ne'er ceased her work, 600
 Making the progress of each several step
 Her footing for the next, and in the name
 Of vain prerogative, usurping all
 Her insolence would have, and to that end,
 Narrowing the of rights man, till at the last,
 He's born a stranger to his mother earth,
 Forbid to draw his proper sustenance,
 From her full bosom—but ordained by pride,
 To toil a weary life that she may sit,
 And sate her with his fruitage to the full, 610
 Leaving him stone and husk: so day by day,
 His life, a compound hardship, toil and want,
 Barren as sand, hopeless as slavery,
 Grows to the grave, and death composes him
 From his long fever, a late comforter.
 But who shall say such things as these should be?
 If any, call him not a man, unless
 Proud selfishness be called humanity,
 Selfishness puffed to pride by oppression's foot,
 Which o'er this vain and wind inflated world, 620
 Crushing the more part down raises the rest,
 To bloated pomp and ill pre-eminence.—
 Oh! I have grieved at this, till grief became
 The very soul and essence of myself.
 Yes, Hermann, the whole heart of the land is sick,
 And the head faint; would but God grant to us
 Instead of patience to endure our wrongs,
 Courage to right them—but to wish is weak, 630
 And womanly—the earnest will it is,

Ceaseless until it satisfy itself,
That marks the man : then thus—all things do grow,
Since witchcraft left its work and nature thence
Through the wide world was mistress of herself,
From a small point to full developement :
Therefore behoves us a beginning first,
To be the germ of the end. But where to find
The man and place, and time and circumstance
Of such a fit concurrence all in one, 640
As suits our scope? Where is the precious stone,
Of so enduring pure a quality,
To serve our revolutionary wheels,
For centre and for stay? Lo—I am here ;
You see the man I am, and such is he,
Who will abide all chance, outface all foes,
Strive against hope and destiny itself,
Aye and go snatch his purpose from hell fire,
Rather than miss it. Sure, being so set,
And drawn to the head with such a forceful bent, 650
Never to fail unless the string snap short,
And life fail first: you see, 'tis a brave will,
Could I but find the way—nay that same way
Shall wait on that same will; which often-times,
With issue quick strait and determinate,
E'en as a spider shooting on its game,
Out of itself doth frame itself a path,
And so defeat impossibility,
Fooling surmise, leaving security
Aghast, and ancient wonderment agape, 660
Joining contrarious ends, and with safe pass,
Bridging vacuity.—Trust me, the soul
Of all success is in the swelling heart
That will so have it—and if this be true,
Then truly am I born to fill this world,
E'en with the giant fulness of my name,
Begotten of my deeds—crush out of form,
The artificial fabric of man's life,

And frame it all afresh—darken the throne,
 Of kings with shadow of a giant force, 670
 Striding amain to his end—shuffle the fates
 Of prince and peasant most confusedly,
 Then deal them out anew—and last of all,
 Set up the gospel for life's governance,
 Upon the ruins of that charnel church,
 Wherein it lay entombed 'mong skulls and bones,
 Itself as those false preachers set it forth,
 As soul-less and as dry. But spirit will breathe,
 And light will shine, and so, e'er the end come,
 Truth ever gives the token of herself, 680
 And makes her blaze of the false rubbish-pile,
 Wherewith obstruction would have stifled her,
 Never to speak again. What say'st thou boy?
 And is not this a project fit to sound
 In the ear of God? a purpose holier,
 Than prayer, an odour of a coming good,
 More grateful than all incense? Nay, no word,
 I see full well the burden your mind bears;
 And what your tongue should have delivered,
 Your looks have played the midwife's part instead, 690
 And brought it forth—you tell me, 'tis a deed,
 Brimfull of danger, past all reason e'en
 To think of it, and for the act beyond
 Madness itself, as well might the mole strive,
 To unsettle yonder mountain from its base,
 And build another a hundred fold more high,
 As I to rear a fabric such as this,
 Up to the full proportion of my dreams,
 Whitt my best power—power nay feebleness,
 A feebleness arrayed 'gainst giant strength, 700
 On the other side—such adverse barrier,
 As dwarfs by its height, the highest enterprize
 That daring ever dreamed of—and bids him,
 Whoe'er would tempt it first go scale the stars,
 And storm Heaven's citadel for a foreproof

To whet him for his work : a work to be wrought
 Against all precedent, in the very eyes
 And teeth of ancient power and privilege,
 And of that massive wealth which lends its weight
 To the edge of energy, and so drives home 710
 Many an impulse, which else, howsoe'er
 Pointed and aimed, were but a feathery reed
 Launched 'gainst a tower of brass. So much for the hope
 Of prosperous success—which howe'er
 She strain her eye, e'en to the utmost verge
 And boundary of possibility,
 Reason discerns not—only in reason's spite,
 Presumptuous passion must needs have it so ;
 Vouching for proof her idle phantasies,
 The which with all their flashing bravery, 720
 Shine but in opposition to the truth,
 As northern lights to the sun : visions of bliss,
 Plenty and peace, love and equality,
 Such as ne'er had fulfilment here with man,
 Nor e'er are like to have—unless this earth,
 Could start at will from its appointed sphere,
 And rise to the height of heaven—so would'st thou,
 I see it well, blow all my hopes to air,
 With such a sweeping phrase, as privilege,
 By old corruption bloated out of rule, 730
 Doth ever swagger and puff out itself
 Magniloquent ; and with a cloud of words,
 Darkens the matter : having for all strength,
 Of sinew but a windy emptiness,
 Like to some spavined jade—touch her but there,
 Where, being most unsound, she least abides
 The searching hand—strait she begins to snort,
 And kick and fling amain : as knowing well
 When power is 'stablished on possession,
 Needs but a brazen forehead and strong lungs, 740
 Breathing damnation on whoe'er dissents,

To abash her gainsayers ; and scare away
The speculative eye that would fain look
Into her right and title, how derived,
And whence and to what end—thus for all plea,
Huffing the honesty of question,
And holding it well answered in such sort,
Beyond its best desert : but words are words,
Howe'er the breath of pride may sound them forth,
Mimicking thunder. Well if they must blare, 750
Why we can bellow too, and with a voice,
Shall speak our strength, and trumpet our design
As loud as theirs—base knaves, they warrant us,
Scum of sedition, itchy malcontents,
That must needs prate to show they have a tongue,
And yet no brains—fellows whose only wit
Is their most bitter and distempered will,
Hate of their betters, mere perversity,
And nought beside. Well such a storm as this
We can abide it in our naked skin, 760
And take no harm : only when once 'tis past,
We'll give them back as good : gorbellied drones,
Funguses preying on all active life,
Leeches that cling to the throat of industry,
Leaving the patient labourer but his sweat,
And sucking up his blood, vile counterfeits,
That making a full show of Gospel faith,
Would rather see their brethren die in the streets,
Than bate a feather of their luxury!
Methinks, such phrase is plumed as full as theirs, 770
And bears as sharp a point. Now then to works,
Since words on either side are spent in vain.

BOOK III.

THAT host held on the tenor of his speech,
And his guest listened him—it was a flood
Of wormwood bitterness, and it flowed thus :
“ I’ve said, the scope I aim at is no less
Than happiness to universal man,
In all that laws, or social ordinance,
Make for his good or ill—so to build up
Behoves me from the very ground to build :
For Hermann, mark me this, much have they erred,
The patchers of our crazy polity, 10
In that they looked to several hopes and fears,
More than the good of the whole—taking no care,
Ever as fresh materials came to hand,
By growth of men and wealth, commerce and arts,
To frame them in after the primal plan ;
Lopping the rank luxuriance of excess ;
Down to proportion and fair ordinance ;
Reducing all to the first author’s rule,
Whate’er accrued : and so, their hand on the work,
Keeping their eye still on the central point, 20
Whence all proportion grew ; but stead of this
They looked with beetle eyes, deeming it well,
Could they but ward the point of the instant press,
Aimed at their safety ; and so reckoning
As nought the generations without end,
Wherewith this one is pregnant ; crowding them
Most heedlessly, within a cipher’s round,
To stand for nothing ; and attributing ;
Sottishly stupid, more to favour and fear
Than to the main good. So each man brought in 30

By right or wrong, materials whence he could,
 And framed them where he would,
 Or bringing nought filling the space,
 Yet claimed all for himself,
 That had sufficed a thousand worthier needs
 With his single usurpation ; so abuse
 Grew on till the uptowering giant pile
 Strong in the bulk of its oppressiveness,
 Defied the hate it did look down upon,
 To move it from its seat ; and thus is man 40
 A body plagued with boils, bloating themselves,
 Starving the sinews, till the native force
 That should be life to the whole is wholly gone,
 And strength in dissolution sunk and lost.
 These are the faults that in their crookedness
 Shall serve me for a rule, whereby to make
 My line of project strait ; therefore in brief
 It is my purpose, not as statesmen use
 The dotards of old custom, to grope on 50
 Their ever aimless and most tortuous way,
 Sidelong, aslant, forward, or round-about,
 As their craft finds convenience ; but to trace
 The long successive error of the past
 Back to the primal point—the starting place
 Whence man set out erewhile in frustrate hope,
 And now shall speed again ; surer to win
 In the dear wisdom of experience,
 Than if he had ne'er lost. Now then away
 With saws of ancient use ; bury the dead,
 And let the quick go forth : give heed no more 60
 To blear-eyed custom that would fain pluck back
 Our forwardness to suit his cripple pace ;
 Make level every fence of privilege,
 And boil our cankered constitution up
 To fervency and fullness of young blood
 In the fierce cauldron of democracy.
 But, hold ; lest thou should'st say so high a sound

Betokens nought but hollowness : look then
 And see the substance ; first, 'tis need we lay
 The basis of our work both wide and deep ; 70
 Marry as wide as our land's utmost width,
 As low and all as liberal, as is
 The common throng that do inhabit it :
 For how should revolution have its end
 If that the commons have not their free will
 Who first set it astir—no, till such time,
 'Tis but an errant revolution still
 To whirl without all stay ; trust me 'twas so
 They missed their aim, the philosophic fools
 Who stamped ere-while, their character on France, 80
 Marring a precious metal ; there, as here
 Would'st have the people take their steadfast stand,
 Give them the soil : given but once, no fear
 Lest old prescription wrest it back from them,
 Or frame another fraud, having no ground
 But only the thin air to build upon.
 But they, the dolts, wise but in words alone,
 Set for a bolt, a feather on their string,
 And shot their chance away ; the commons came
 To that loud call, and conquered ere they came. 90
 But when at last, none had a crust the more
 Of bread for his belly, or a rag for his back,
 Each looked at the other, and saw fruitless hope
 And rage, reflected from his brother's face
 Upon his own ; then the vain promises
 And windy diet taken in fair words,
 They did throw back in curses, leaving all
 They had done, for whoso listed to undo,
 Their zeal all fooled, their shouts a hiss of scorn ;
 Till liberty, fluttering awhile in vain, 100
 Fell for mere emptiness, and lack of all
 Should give her wings their purchase ; but this lack
 Now in this land shall be no more itself ;
 But gorging the old wealth shall so become

More plenteous than plenty was before,
 Feeding its bareness fat : therefore I say
 That for the restoration of plain right,
 And furtherance of zeal for our just cause,
 The usurpation of old privilege
 Shall cease and be no more, only a tale 100
 Traditive, for our sons to wonder at.
 Justice shall speak in the universal shout,
 Startling the noisy din of arrogance
 To a most quiet fear, drowning all else,
 Curses, complaints, and raging impotence
 In its fierce utterance of the people's will.
 And only in such out-break have we hope:
 For what the custom and long course of law
 Have grieved us, that same law is liker far
 To aggravate yet sorer than to cure. 120
 But thus shall nature vindicate herself
 To her free state ; and this our bounteous earth
 Wide as the air, open to common use,
 Rejoice to feel her energies unchained ;
 The incubus of selfish ownership
 Disburthened from her breast : and she herself
 Free to dispense, duly and gratefully,
 Her wealth to those whose labour woos her love ;
 Not to the usurper of God's general gift,
 Who looks but on, feeding with the salt sweat 130
 Of serfs the humour of his idleness,
 Slaving their toil to his pride. Then for this end
 Be it proclaimed, that whoso heretofore
 Laboured the land but for a lord's behoof
 Shall eat what he hath earned : cramming the soil
 Down the disnated and most greedy throat
 Of whosoe'er dares claim it for his own,
 'Gainst the creator's law ; starving him so
 With the glut of his own will ; and this achieved,
 Then shall the giant aristocracy 140
 Dissevered from the earth which bred him first,
 And feeds him to this hour ; whereon indeed

Is his dependence and his very life,
Shall die perforce, clutched in the people's claws,
Cursing his soul away. But mark me this,
Such tardy due and right retributive,
Cleaves only to the soil, the common-wealth
That nature gave in largess to all men ;
It touches nought beside, for so to spoil
Industry of the wages it hath earned, 150
Giving creation form and so well nigh
Passing creation's self, and being indeed
Another maker second only to him,
Who first made all of nothing,—such a spoil
Were a sin, no less than is their selfishness,
Who would usurp the earth ; no, but let right
Be done even to those who challenge it
Against the example of their proper wrong ;
And so let every man who hath gained aught
Of cattle, stores, gold, or mechanic gear, 160
Thus winning to the common-wealth, what else
Would ne'er have been, or being had no use ;
So let him keep it still, freely to have,
And give as free. So toil shall bid us speed,
And think no ill, and so the artificer
Shall ply his daily labour, well content
Not to possess, but to enjoy the land
In its full fruit, disfettered and dearth-free,
Buying two loaves of the honest husbandman
For the imperious landlord's price of one ; 170
So making that same plenty, once as strange
As an angelic vision upon earth,
To be his housemate, and familiar,
Homely as the good-wife that sweeps his hearth ;
Nor craving aught beside. This were a feat
Indeed, not to trim here and there a bough,
But strike at the root of all ; what seems to the eye
Of doubt most hard, is easiest to the hand
Of stubborn strong determination,

For safety dwells not in the shallow sands, 180
 But in the very deepest ocean depth
 Where fools do fancy danger. Yes, oft-times
 Security is like that famed princess,
 Pent up in the heart of peril's strongest hold,
 And only thence to be won. Strike, I say, strike
 To the heart, and every limb droops to the ground,
 Stricken a death stroke ; grapple the wild bull
 By the horns if thou would'st hurl him to the earth
 And hold him there ; so doth experience speak
 Anciently wise ; will ye be ruled by her ? 190
 Then with strong hand must ye drag privilege
 From its high throne and set up right instead ;
 Without all parley will it please or no ?
 All this to do, is but to free the soil,
 Glorious enfranchisement ! that industry
 Long passive, may be stirred by that rich hope
 To rise and ply amain its thousand arms,
 Thrashing all opposition into chaff,
 And scattering it to wind. Then shall this land
 Discumbered of the parson and the squire, 200
 A kind of men kin to the cankerworm ;
 Tramp down the accurst corn-law that bids the poor
 Starve 'mid the plenty piled by their own hands
 To a full heap ; oh, most dire penalty !
 Direr than any truth else known on earth,
 And only matched by what poetic dreams
 Fable of hell ; a law that to our use
 Brands with the barrenness of the sea sand,
 All the earth save one poor nook. Then will we spread
 Our hands and open all our portals wide, 210
 Inviting strangers to bring in to our need
 Freely, their natural wealth, and take in turn
 The wares our skilful artifice hath wrought,
 Balancing worth ; and then for the end of all
 And glorious consummation, this our church
 The monument of christianity,

That stands but to commemorate the death
Of the thing whose name it bears, and the spirit gone,
Shall be again a temple of the Lord,
Re-edified in simple lowliness, 220
Abated from its height, but all the more
Extended in its width and larger scope,
Lovingly to embrace all christian souls
That call upon the Lord. Oh, look and see,
Was ever since the dawn of Paradise,
Or the thousand years of bliss the prophet saw,
A sight more holy gracious than this one
Blending the earth with Heaven? Such is my end,
And to that end the means that lead to it
Behoves we make them sure ; but these same means 230
Say where do they inhabit? how and whence
To call such potent sprites, that they must come
Forth from the void? Ho! there's a force in man
For all his needs. Hermann, I say, there dwells
A very witchcraft in the vehement will,
That brings all to its suit: sailing the sea
In a cockle-shell, and riding the thin air
On a straw's point ; whoso is impotent
To make his means, neither, when made to his hand
Can he use them to great ends: means, I have none, 240
But I will make them ; yes, I will make men
To serve for them, for Hermann, hearts there are
Of zealous temper that I know and trust,
Such as make hazard their best hope and hold
The greatest daring for the goodliest deed:
Deeming no height above their enterprise,
No proof too shrewdly strained, if but the prize,
Warrant the peril ; and by religion's power
They are transformed outright from sense to faith,
That in their hearts already they hold the end, 250
Ere the beginning ; now, like herds with like :
And those I know of such a quality
May draw in others of their bias, and bent,

To bide one chance with them. So it were well
 And so my circle spreads: yet haply hope
 Belies me, whispering that the brotherhood
 Is common with me in my holy cause.
 Say, is that hope a liar; thou well knowest?
 Oh, were they mine, then would such men, so linked,
 Shiver each edge and point of the adverse sword 260
 Like a mail coat; so speaks my confidence,
 And that same confidence were steeled to proof
 If thou wilt choose be one: for such a one
 Makes many more. Thou art young, and should'st be bold;
 And in thy eloquence thou hast a gift
 To raise dead souls to life: so do men say,
 And so I've found thee—this, and more than this,
 A spirit towering to arduous height,
 Above the world, prone rather to dare all
 Than leave undone what duty is called to do 270
 By its country's claim; with this, thou hast good means
 Such as thy reverend function gives to thee,
 To impress thy stamp and image on those souls
 Who hold thee for their very seal of faith;
 Nor own themselves, nor credit their own worth,
 But in thy likeness. Oh, then execute
 That function to the glory of that God
 To whom its dedication is most due,
 And bid the gospel live and breathe again
 From the dead book, it is. Take to thyself 280
 The cross of this great trial, holiest
 (Since that our Saviour bent beneath his load)
 Of any endured by man. Be thou but one,
 And many others shall make up the host
 To a full power, hasting like mighty winds
 To fill our void. Then shall this happy land
 Hold the effulgence of its freedom up,
 To be a standard for all nations else,
 To conquer in that sign, and the fierce blast
 That we will blow shall echo through all earth, 290

In its results betokening the effect
 Of its first voice. At the sound kings shall step down,
 Each from his throne, and hide his sceptre away
 For fear of coming wrath, glad to lose that
 Which to retain were but to lose himself
 And life, and all. Then too shall privilege,
 Shamed of its silly, vain solemnity,
 Helpless and senseless as an owl in the sun,
 Put off its ancient self; loathing to live
 Like a crazed jade, flaunting in tawdriness, 300
 The children's mock—and waive its vanity,
 And beg to be a man, and so become
 Regenerate to a new health and strength
 Among its fellows. He is dead indeed,
 If any such there be, as sure there's not,
 Who in the spirit of such hope as this,
 Starts not to a fresh fervency of soul,
 Feeling the thing he is, the simple man,
 Blent in one being with the general life,
 To commune with mankind. So christian love 310
 Shall be the essence and reality
 Of the name that it is now. But tell me not
 The hazard is beyond all reach of hope;
 The means but straws, and the utmost use of them
 To make a forlorn blaze in dead of night,
 Showing the path of darkness, and again
 After that show to be darkly devoured.
 Nay, construe me not so, rather say thus.
 All other means and trials have been had,
 Manifold forms, wanting substance alone 320
 To satisfy man's good: and trial has failed
 Till hope has pined to a ghost, and wonder 'twere
 If 'twere ought else; for truly so to plan
 The public good on the base of privilege,
 Were a conceit as wise as who should set
 A pyramid upon its taper end,
 And look to see it stand. Perish such fools,

E'en as their dreams have perished heretofore,
 And so had their desert ; but for new ends
 Behoves us a new aim, and when old hopes 320
 Have been essayed, and proved to worthlessness,
 Their very shadows as they fleet away,
 Point to the substance of what's left behind
 To give it trial. Aye, substance it is :
 Who builds upon the base of the broad earth,
 Nor he nor yet his structure doth belong
 Unto the world of dreams. I am the first
 To call the people to set up themselves ;
 Bidding them on their own most rightful soil
 Become the architects of their own good : 330
 Leaving vain lies, issue of privilege,
 To chase each other like the clouds away,
 And no man heed them : helping each his need
 With his own hands, scoffing at ancient wont,
 For an old witch, approving that alone
 Whatever sense in its simplicity
 Doth hold for sure ; blasting with but their shout,
 And no more trial of force, those crazy walls
 That do but stand in idle sufferance
 And not by their own strength, being indeed 340
 But a memorial of the old power
 That now is not ; serving prerogative
 To mark its limits fondly in vain show ;
 But powerless as is a wizard's straw,
 To keep invasion out. Now for my sum.
 Whoso doth enter first on the right way,
 Reason and use do jointly warrant him,
 That he shall first succeed to the right end,
 And here's my first of hope, the which to bring
 To fulness of its fruit needs nothing more, 350
 Only to stir the leaven through man's mind,
 Raising the mass ; for what the people will
 That God wills too : and stern necessity
 Cries out, it shall be done. Thou hast heard all ;

And are thy ears the portal of thy soul,
 Or but a sink of waste? As patiently
 As thou has listened to the word of hope,
 Wilt thou act the deed as brave and forwardly?
 Enough of this our talk; a single breath
 Kindles the aspiring spark, and that same one 360
 Blows its dull fellow out; for how shall words
 Framed though they be in finest artifice,
 Prevail with such a man whose sense is dead
 To the sight of such a glowing enterprise?
 Oh look but on and see, and sure thy soul
 With all its faculties of will and act,
 Eager as the wild falcon for its game
 Will follow on the view. Honour to thee
 And thine, and the renowned inheritance 370
 Of such a name as nations shall extol
 Next to their God. Welfare, and peace, and hope,
 Blent with the air we breathe, ta'en by the earth
 Into its very bosom. Oh, say thou art
 A man indeed, will'ng to dedicate
 Thy soul to such an holiness of aim
 Or else confess thyself a very beast,
 Born but to fatten, and die, and rot away,
 And so thy duty done. Well, as it will,
 Be it even so; I too have done my part;
 Thus much being said; and mark me, I would not take 380
 Unto myself, having set forth my scope,
 One tittle of the glory and the grace
 That should belong to thy own forward will,
 By urgency and prompture more than needs
 To a free spirit; as I were the only man,
 And thou a block—no—but be thou thyself
 Unto thyself thy soul of enterprise;
 For other counsellor thou needest none
 Being the man thou art. Go, and fare well:
 Briefly we meet again; thou in mean time 390
 Ponder my words, and pondered, tell me then

How in thy scale of judgment they do weigh ?”
 So spoke the unbending stern republican :
 And those his words conceived in the quick mind
 Of him who heard them, therein suddenly
 Grew to most shapeless and tumultuous thoughts :
 Such as the soul herself that gave them birth,
 Could do nought else but cast them off from her,
 And call them monsters ! He their sire, meantime
 Having once sown their seed, cared not a whit 400
 To foster them to their development :
 But, as he did his office, left them so,
 To grow or perish where he scattered them,
 As chance would have it: further question
 Did he abide, but with his latest word,
 Sudden as parting ghost its tale being told,
 Turned back, with but a clasp of his guest’s hand,
 No other phrase: man, various of mood
 Clear or else clouded, gay or sorrowful
 Doth to his fellow intimate himself; 410
 And stern as was the example of his host,
 And self collected, so did Hermann too
 Go homeward his lone way, betraying nought
 In outward show, of what he was within ;
 But wearing his old wont. Then as he went
 Many and fierce passions contrarious
 Forth issued in the darkness of his soul,
 Like Lions from their lair, glaring around,
 Where save their glare, nought else might be descried
 In the huge wild--ambition first of all, 420
 Pointing to the height of Heaven, as though no more
 Were need, but to stretch out the arrogant hand,
 And grasp the stars, showing visions afar,
 Vain ostentation--but yet gorgeous,
 As is the horizontal cloudy ridge
 Where the sun sets--and still puffing the ear
 With sounds that serve but to fill emptiness
 Of glory and state, till that the silly soul,

Is blown to a bubble in its vain conceit,
 To float with every breath: then in quick suit 430
 (As ever passion is most prompt to change)
 E'en as the spirit had mounted to its height,
 Downward it sank as deep; and on its fall,
 Danger upreared his giant hideousness,
 Growing in stature like a thunder cloud,
 Sudden and strange; till he had darkened all,
 And left no space for hope. "Yes, true it is,
 Long time I've studied to frame life afresh
 And give to man his proper mastery:
 But with fair means, and suasive gentleness, 440
 Abhorrent from all force, with the light of truth
 By knowledge lit, burning so heavenly bright,
 That men must follow it; working its change
 Most like the sun with a mild energy,
 But nothing violent--such was my hope.
 But such a swoop as this; why 'tis more wild,
 Than e'er my dreams when they were highest pitched,
 E'er dreamt--I thought to win by righteousness,
 And christian love, and faith, and purity,
 And if these serve not, how should robbery 450
 Fulfil their service? robbery and rank
 Rebellion, the rash humour of a sore
 Foully discharged: true they are heavy and strong,
 And numerous, the mass he reckons on,
 And of vast bulk; 'tis true, they are all this,
 And so is the sea sand, but for it lacks
 Common intent, and firm consistency,
 Men may not build with it. With it, oh no,
 Nor yet upon it, 'tis too clear for words,
 This cause must lose both for its viciousness, 460
 And for the foolishness of its weak means,
 Though 'twere most virtuous. No more of it,
 What's uttered is too much:" so he despaired,
 Not long, for be the clouds black as they may,
 The sun will shine at last, and all the more

Forthrising from that dark and stormy void
 Did love's warm light excel in loveliness.
 It looked upon him like a gentle star,
 Shining alone at night, and well he deemed, 470
 He could endure a peril worse than e'er
 Yawned in the surging wave or growled in the blast,
 Beneath the radiance and guiding hope
 Of such a comforter. Oh they're a pair
 Danger and love, well matched in rivalry,
 A sport for Kings to see; but ere their strife
 They held awhile their parley in his breast,
 Setting up him to be their arbiter,
 For whom they did contend. Wild were their words,
 And in this spirit did they breathe them forth. 480

"Dost deem me a stranger
 To spurn me aside ;
 What doubt'st thou of danger,
 With love for thy guide ?
 See my torch blazes brightly,
 A spirit of fire ;
 So cheerly and lightly,—
 Rise up and aspire."
 " Look on the clouds embattled o'er thee.
 Hark to the war-blast of the wind : 490
 Turn from the raging flood before thee,
 Then view the peace thou'st left behind.
 Gaze on the gulf that roars below,
 Till dizzy horror dim thine eyes :
 For thee and thine it rages so,
 Look once and be for ever wise."
 "That cloud shall pass over ;
 And then the clear sky,
 That its curtain doth cover,
 Shall gladden thine eye :
 And the flood that thou fearest,
 Shall lend thee its force : 500

Wheresoever thou steerest,
 Still speeding thy course."
 "But, oh! the world's a giant thing;
 And what art thou to dare its wrath?
 An atom idly combating,
 To stay its parent planet's path.
 Yes when yon shadowy clouds shall grow
 Into a solid mountain mass : 510
 And be indeed the thing they show,
 Then shall thy dreams be brought to pass."
 "And wilt thou for fear of the chance that may fall,
 Leave thy love basely here, thy glory and all?
 My torch's pure flame shall I quench it in dust,
 And shall thy bright name, be but canker and rust?
 Oh no! thou'rt known and tried; it may not be,
 To speak of baseness in one breath with thee.
 Such fire as thine, when adverse blasts do blow,
 Stirred in their spirit all the more doth glow. 520
 Why is the young blood warm, the spirit high!
 But to dare all, and do what ne'er shall die?
 Go then assert thy privilege of youth,
 Tread custom down in the high march of truth:
 For see, ambition, love and fiery hope,
 All urge thy speed and point thee to thy scope,
 What though that scope be distant? look and see;
 We love yon sunny hills, though far they be,
 We love them more than all we see around,
 These dreary vapours, and this iron ground. 530
 And for thy life, its highest worth is this,
 To set at stake against such hope of bliss.
 Then brave thy fate—nor heed what dastards say,
 Such fire as thine will ever force its way.
 And, oh! that maiden, couldst thou live and see,
 A bolder rival's love preferred to thee?
 Bolder than thou to dare and to endure
 All perils prompted by a soul so pure,

A soul so pure as justifies the wrong
 And sanctifies the right where'er it doth belong. 540
 Yes thou couldst bear her hate—but oh! her scorn,
 So deemed of her thou wert indeed forlorn."
 Such were the thoughts (changeful and shadowy,
 As the vicissitudes of sun and clouds
 Chasing each other o'er some vernal mead)
 That hope and fear, opposing counsellors,
 Whispered into his soul. Oh who can tell,
 When love with duty meets at enmity
 How fierce the war they wage? till that the heart,
 Like to a citadel in act of storm, 550
 Riven and shattered by their rivalry,
 Who with such outrage do contend for it,
 Perishes in the encounter of their rage,
 Leaving a wreck to the hot vanquisher,
 For all his prize. Meantime that troublous youth,
 Went on his way fitful and heedlessly
 Deaf of his ears, blind of each idle eye,
 And every sense lost in his depth of soul:
 As needs he must whose passion and fierce thoughts,
 Forth issuing with rush impetuous, 560
 Do bear encounter down, and bar the approach
 Of sight and sound, those instant messengers,
 That tell their varied tale of outward things,
 Reporting nature home. But he straitway
 Resolves creation to a blank again,
 Who lives but in his mind—so he paced on,
 Hurriedly, but with many a pause between,
 Marking his mind at stay—nor knew nor cared
 Aught of the way he went. Ere this the sun
 Had climbed the ascent of heaven, and there paused, 570
 Rejoicing in his power, as one glad
 To look from his height on lowly happiness,
 And feel the warm reflection of his beams,
 Thrown back upon himself from the wide world,

That he did bless. But Hermann suddenly
Made pause, as he who hunted long by cares
Unto exhaustion, stands at length a-bay:—
And sat him down upon a little knoll,
Planted with five tall trees and ever green,
Both with the cool protection of their shade, 580
And the refreshment of a secret fount,
That had its birth there in the depth below,
And gave that verdant token of its life,
Unseen but not unfelt. Thence was he wont,
Erewhile, what haste soe'er might urge him on,
To look with silent pleasure on the scene
That spread before him its rich amplitude
Far as the eye could reach : stealing her thoughts
From the tired soul, and lending in their stead
Such images as sweeten solitude. 590
There in that vale, loosely stretched out at length,
Dame Nature lay, as on her genial couch,
Soliciting the due of husbandry
To quicken her rich womb, and the far hills
So graciously opposed their boundary,
As who should say, look there and sate your sense,
Where wonderment may well exhaust itself,
Nor ask for more. There was the village spire,
Pointing to Heaven in high significance,
For those, the few, who see with other eyes 600
Than those of sense ; and there the church-yard lay,
Sloping so gently and so sunnily,
It seemed to say, " Come take your rest with me,
And make the grave your pillow "—all alike,
Meadow and wood, and the clear sky above
Was blended in a harmony of joy,
Save where perchance man's spirit mixed itself,
To jar the glad accord with its own grief.
Oh manhood what a fallen thing thou art !
The crowning glory, the great miracle, 610
Of the creator's hand, added o'er all

For the accomplishment of blessedness,
 And the perfection of the glorious work,
 Thou dost but mar the whole, sad is the truth ;
 And none e'er felt its sadness trulier,
 Than did that lonely youth. He looked and saw,
 And wished his sight seared to the very quick,
 So he might see no more. That golden light
 Served but to show his gloom yet gloomier,
 E'en as the sun, startling the murderer 620
 With his own shadow ; ofttimes was he wont,
 When that his haste had reached where then he stood,
 And but an eye-shot kept him from his home,
 To stay fond gazing ; and send on his sight
 To gather in the first fruits of his joy,
 And fill his heart. There was the homely thatch,
 The orchard and small garden, and rude porch,
 Whereon the climbing rose and eglantine,
 Like artless flowers upon a village maid,
 Did show more sweet decking rusticity : 630
 And there they stood gladsome and smilingly,
 As was their wont—nor to their loveliness,
 Did there lack aught save the glad radiance,
 That the beholder's soul should minister,
 Consenting with them. Alas ! where that should be,
 Was but a void—a dreary void—for there,
 The sum of all his joy was swallowed up,
 To be no more—his spirit drooped to the earth ;
 And in that selfsame bias droopingly,
 He laid his weary body down at length. 640
 “ Yes, yes far mountains, ye are still the same,
 And I have loved your sight in days bygone,
 But then there was a soul within your frame,
 And now 'tis a cold corse I gaze upon.
 Nature a queen thou seemest, and art none,
 For 'tis not thou, but fancy queen's it still.
 Thou waitest as a vassal at her throne,
 And she doth grace thee, and disgrace at will,

Oh! ye false friends, of little faithfulness,
Yet looked ye, as your love could know no change, 650
But now I seek ye home in my distress,
And find ye cold and heartless as things strange.
Yes the soul grieves when pleasure doth depart,
And when pain comes then doth it grieve again,
But most it grieves, when with most traitorous art,
What once was pleasure is transformed to pain.
And love I chose thee for my guiding light,
To be my hope and joy unto the end ;
Then wherefore hast thou quenched thy torch so bright,
And art my foe, that wert profest my friend ? 660
For thou could'st rule me in all amity,
Both of the lord and of the liegeman too :
Then why so prove thy power in tyranny,
On me who was always thy subject true ?
For 'tis not that the peril I do fear,
Of this or other perilous emprize,
But that her happiness I hold most dear,
Who is indeed the jewel of my eyes.
And I could dare all danger to the death,
Bidding to fear defiance for her love : 670
But that my spirit inly shuddereth,
To send among the storms that gentle dove,
Where is no olive branch nor sheltering ark :
And but a fearful hope a lightning gleam,
To point our passage through the trackless dark,
Where life is not itself, but a damn'd dream.
Alas in loving her, that I must hate
Myself, and know my love repaid with scorn !
Oh most perverse misprision and hard fate,
But come what may it shall be bravely borne. 680
Away ambition, much I cherish thee,
But may not trust thee with her happiness :
Honour and truth I make my league with ye,
And yield my love, since ye will have no less." 684

BOOK IV.

So did that youth choose duty before love,
And so determination drove away
The doubts that held him in contrarious check,
Wavering : the life-blood of our faculties,
Runs in the channel, and the course of act,
Or else being stagnant straightway is corrupt,
To monstrous births and vaporous noisomeness :
Newfangling the one healthful life it was
Into a thousand most distempered forms
That live indeed, but in such hideous sort, 10
As death itself were welcome to blot out
Their hateful perverse scrawls. Long did that youth,
Like to a stranded ship lie buffeted,
By the fierce conflicting waves, helpless to do,
And suffering all the more.—But as that ship,
Through lustiness and manhood of her crew,
Sudden by a strong effort against hope,
Uprising from her passive couch bears up
Against the surging breakers boldly ahead,
Hurling herself over the wavy heaps, 20
Like a war chariot, so bounding on,
And making the fierce winds her ministers,
To fill her sails and swell her airy pomp,
In course of triumph ; thus it fared with him,
As with a start he raised him from his lair,
And went his way. Then did his forceful mind,
Having set up its scope, and, stablished it,
Fly to that scope forthright, so leaving all,
Aye, and e'n love itself, for conscience sake,
To do what he held due. Happy the man 30

Who knows the holy comfort that it is,
To be for once, and oh ! if once for all,
Righteous and true : to speed as angels do,
Strait to their aim, and embassy of good,
And feel the while an angel's spirit and wings,
Lighting our way, leaving far down below,
The mazes of this world, for the right path
That conscience rules, and there walks steadfastly
In faith, of strict and sure simplicity.

But wherefore talk to worldlings of such bliss, 40
As but pure spirits know or show him pearls,
Whose soul dwells in the mire ? grovelling there,
For all that it esteems of beauty and worth.

And such a one is man : sure he who erst,
As fables tell us, fabling haply a truth,
Stole fire from heaven to animate our clay
Was but a scanty thief, who having spent
His daring on that danger, lacked at last
The spirit to stretch forth his hand for the prize,
And fled dispurposed by preposterous fear, 50
Leaving his work half done, and bringing down,

But some sad ashes where all fire was dead,
And only a poor lingering warmth o'erlived,
To be our being's soul : else had that fire
Been but itself, and held its quality,
Oh what a thing were man ! surpassing all
He aspires in hope or feels in consciousness,
Far as the star that glorifies all heaven,
Excels the marshborn vaporous meteor.

But truly whoso first devised that tale 60
Told it not for a memory of things done,
But for a hope of what remains to do :
That so regret of an old dream might prompt
A new desire to compass the thing dreamt :
Pointing to nature what she needeth most :
Not what she hath—that man so stirred might rise,
Aspiringly, up to the height of heaven,

And have the spirit he lacks, by exercise
 Of Heavenly visions high contemplative,
 Such as draw down by their communion, 70
 The holy flame to his soul, the flame that erst
 Prophets did use, and patriots must use now,
 Or die in the dark ; themselves and all their hopes
 And the commonwealth of man. But why this waste,
 Of wholesome words ; sooner shall the dull earth
 That we do walk, ourselves as dull and dead,
 Pause in its ceaseless and most eager whirl,
 To list the holy music of the spheres,
 Than man in the moil and burry of this life
 Give wisdom but a moment's audience, 80
 Though but to show her high credentials
 The God she came from, no— each man doth tread
 The path his father trod long ages back,
 So wearing for themselves a track so deep
 That they can see nought else save the dull mound,
 That bars them in ; so ever at the heels
 Of use and old example, a damned pair,
 Plodding their weary life hopeless of good,
 Endless of ill—nor thinking once to turn
 Aside, and well consider the sure chart, 90
 That wisdom from its height contemplative
 Viewing at large, sets forth to save their pains,
 And expedite their end—but thereto first
 Needs rectitude of soul and counsel too,
 And next such stirring fiery temperature
 As may enforce that visionary right
 To a reality. Hermann had both :
 But yet in such a sort as they did burn
 Only within the temple of his mind
 And gave no light without ; for balancing 100
 Hope against fear, he deemed this present time
 Was not the hour of act, or if it were,
 Yet must some other actor than himself
 Execute this great work, for how should he

Thrust himself through the bold presumptuous throng
 That claimed the higher place, being indeed
 Men of high mark, statesmen by heritage,
 Armed with each badge and ensign of long rule,
 To vouch their right ; how should he put them by,
 And take to himself the steerage of this world, 110
 Say rather this huge hulk, that like the old ark
 Drifts ceaselessly about with wind or tide,
 And they within whom most it doth import,
 All witless of its way : for evermore
 Its pilots mindful only of their pelf,
 In straits and shallows keep it craftily,
 Pretending show of danger on each hand,
 Lest some bold spirits jealous of the guile
 That ancient office should disauthorize,
 Put their own hands to the work, and set the ship 120
 Ahead to the main sea, crowding all sail,
 Leaving those shallow perils far behind,
 And hold so boldly on their prosperous course,
 E'en to the end—pity such fraud should be:
 But since 'twas so, and fate had knit our threads
 Of policy in such malignant knot,
 Behoved a stronger hand than his to wield
 The violent sword that could alone cut through,
 What was so bound—this and the ruinous wreck,
 That he saw lowering in the enterprize 130
 Both on his own and on his loved one's house,
 'Stablished him in denial, as right sure
 That such an engine, how true aimed soe'er,
 Like to the silly cannon of a child,
 Portended danger, not to the opposite
 But to the fool that fir'd it : in such thought,
 More cheerful since his soul had taken wing
 To a determined point, even and straight,
 Onward he sped—and now his calmer mood
 Imaged the landscape's gay reflection 140
 In chequered brightness rich : as is a shawl

From far Cashmere spread to the wondering eyes
 Of village maiden. Inly he thanked his God,
 That he could feel the season's graciousness,
 Darkened to him of late by his soul's cloud ;
 Nor only feel, but render what he felt
 To him who gave it, in like grace again,
 E'en with the spirit of adoring love.
 And now he felt the air breathe tenderly,
 As from his home ; he passed the village through, 150
 Straggling and far between, broken with wood,
 Orchard, and garden trim and pastures green,
 Betokening plenty and ; from door to door
 Still as he past, he scattered from his heart
 The largess of his words, prized not the less
 For their small cost, but bearing still a rate
 Of friendliness and grace and of good will,
 Such as o'erpeers all price. His dewy words
 As best beseems a preacher of God's grace,
 Fell every where. The old dame out of doors 160
 Basking in the sun beside her spinning wheel,
 Intent on work, but yet not so intent
 As not to greet him coming with blithe phrase,
 And bless him parting for his ministry,
 Whereby he wrought on her and other souls
 Such saving worth :—the old shepherd, who best loves
 Serious talk, and she who needs it most,
 The simple maid, pert in her prettiness,
 O'erweening of herself. All had their turn
 Of question, or kind word, or kinder smile, 170
 As each one crost his way—so on he past,
 Glad with the radiance of that sweet scene,
 And gladder still in sunshine of his heart,
 Until well nigh before his consciousness,
 He reached his father's house. Him, there he found,
 'Scaped from his scholars impish noisomeness,
 Taking his solace in the sunny ground
 He tilled with his own hands—and tilled it so,

That scarce could a born peasant of them all
Better his work : faith, if he only wrought 180
His scholars' minds to the like pregnancy,
They past all praise. It seem'd some kindly sprite
Had ta'en a turn at the delightful task,
To show how best 'twere done. The rounded beds
Were swelling to the birth, the stately flowers
Rose daintily, as ladies of the soil,
Clean from the level mould. The gravelled path
Showed like a golden stream, bright glistering
In the rich day. The earth smelt gratefully :
The hedges in their shapeliness of trim 190
Presented a smooth couch, where the hot sun
Might take his mid-day rest. Through the whole space
The soul of summer shed its influence,
And not a weed was there, foully to mar
The sweet society of herbs and flowers.
Hermann viewed all in thoughtful consciousness,
And inly thus he said,—“ Old man, thou'rt blest
Both in thy toil, and in the fruit of it,
And I, in thy example, were blest too,
Did but the sire descend unto the son, 200
As like should gender like—but oh ! harsh Fate,
And harsher Love ! ” So as he thought, he paced
Evermore on in silent thoughtfulness,
'Till at the sound of his step, the old man turned
Hastily, and with like haste, thus began :
“ My Son ! welcome once more—give me thy hand.
My own is all toil-stiffened, yet I feel
Its stiffness soften in this pressure of thine ;
Truly a gladsome grasp—for my boys, long since
I gave them riddance—and 'twas better so— 210
For such a spirit as mine, so wandering,
Knows not to teach or rule. But pri'thee say
Why art thus late—nay, 'tis no matter of that—
Look up my son—look, 'tis a clear blue sky,
And not a cloud. Would it were so with me,

Alas 'tis not : but this is a dark theme,
 Fit for the shade Come then, yon beach by the brook,
 With foliage high o'erarched and silently
 Sequestered, be it our seat—there sit we down,
 And thou receive the o'erflowings of my heart 220
 Into thy own : for much would I fain say ;
 Much that thou know'st already, and much more.
 That we were happier both, had'st thou ne'er known
 Nor I e'er done—my son, 'tis such a tale,
 As the echo frightens me at every word,
 Con'founding with the fear of what is said
 All that remains to say. Not a man else,
 No, not at my death's hour, shall be to me
 So dear a confidant, to hear one word
 Of that I whisper thee. But thou'rt my son— 230
 And in that title hast thou a just right
 To be myself again—aye even so,
 E'en to my deepest conscience. Thou hast marked,
 I know it, for thou hast a soul sees well,
 And truly reads, and every man to thee
 Is as his inward self, not as his show
 And semblance gives report—Thou hast known, I say,
 How that since many days I've been a thing
 Contrarious as is a madman's spleen ;
 Fickle and spiteful as the elements 240
 That go to an April day—yes, days have grown
 To weeks and months, passing on silently,
 But still this spirit hath a biding home
 In my innermost of heart—a changeful thing,
 Or truly nothing save mere changefulness.
 Now what hath so diseased my wont of health,
 And made me a monster, I will truly say,
 And thou may'st learn. Impulse unnatural
 I've felt, and communed with some spiritual guest,
 Devil or angel, be it as it may ; 250
 For frankly, all conjecture drowns itself
 In bottoming the truth.—I know not which,

Only it is not man, for sure none such,
Though he had all the fiends of hell behind
To back his manhood, had prevailed with me
So mightily as this strange horrible thing
Hath wrought its way. A spirit—but it takes
A fleshly form to serve its functions:
And that same form it takes, is he—the man—
The father of the daughter whom thou lov'st. 260
They call him Hess—truly, his very name.
They know the best, who know hell's muster-roll,
How devils answer call. Long hath he been
A tyrant o'er my thoughts, filling my eyes,
Haunting my dreams, and, by some devilish sleight,
He did transfuse himself into my soul,
And stamp his image there—faintly indeed,
Yet e'en that faintness is most foul to me,
More forceful than my wish doth warrant it;
And I would purge it wholly, and be redeemed 270
To the being I once was. Now hear the aim
He doth affect. Briefly to tell thee that
Which only fiends should know, 'tis order and peace
Aye, and the holy right of property.
That in its sanctity as yet hath power,
Without all other aid, to still the rage
Of appetite, make neediness keep sphere,
And force forget itself. This is his game,
And on this game he lets his hellhounds loose,
Being the lustful passions of the mob 280
That he doth hold in slip—that they may sweep
Earth like a whirlwind, and heap up on high
All that mad strength can slay, ravish, or rob,
Into a reeking quarry. Look around:
Oh! do but look, and see how plenteous
And beautiful in plenty, is this earth,
And how she doth give freely all she hath,
Redoubling gift on gift. And shall her sons
For all the token of their gratitude,

Leaving to enjoy, gladly and quietly, 290
 What graciously she gave, in hubbub wild,
 Monstered from men, cut each his brother's throat
 On such a mother's bosom? My dear son,
 Others may marvel at this, if it be not
 Indeed a thing past wonder—others than I—
 But I myself who have thought the very act
 And sworn an oath to do it, I, alas,
 Can only wonder at my bestial self
 Which I do now put off—loathing its thought
 Like pested rags. Oh late when I did start 300
 Up from my sleep in sudden consciousness,
 And knew myself, not as I weened of late,
 But as I was—the lamp that burned by me
 I seared this finger in it to the bone
 For proof if I were not a very fiend;
 And so patient of flame. But why thus mix
 Fancy with truth, and so by taint of one
 Defame the other? I tell thee he came here
 First as a stranger, then as a far friend,
 And next, as his insinuated guile 310
 Won entry to my heart, he did profess
 The friendship of two souls knit into one,
 In thorough constancy. Then was his talk,
 Oft as our converse would o'erlive the night
 Into the following day, and the ember heap
 Die a cold death, ere yet our spirits were chill,
 First of such things as touched not him nor me,
 No more than our particular title and share
 In the general world. Tillage and crops and fruits,
 Changes and haps and neighbourly surmise, 320
 A gossip's store—briefly such images
 As that most lively mirror of his mind
 Reflected from the surfaces of things
 In changeful show—next was our talk of books
 And that held long. And there would I have stayed
 In that safe stay I knew and loved the best,

But he would not. Then was the commonweal
Searched with irreverent eyes—what man might hold
For a sure rule, or wisdom must reject
In Church and State—last having tried his ground, 330
And proved me at all points for his assault,
Where weak and where most strong—he laid his siege
With most deliberate craft, day after day,
Against my constancy and better mind :
Using all sleight of reason, hope or fear,
As best might serve his turn—stirring my bile
By presentation of the parson's tithe ;
Beggaring my poor lot—puffing my pride to the height,
With swift suggestion how my power might work
On those whose reason bowed unto my own 340
In things of learned proof: stuffing me full
Of perilous conceits, till that my mind,
Like to a cursed shell, by the engineer
Crammed with all havoc, waited but the spark
That should explode the devilry within ;
Bursting itself in its most raging lust
To wrack all round it. But the screw wrought slow
That wrought me up thus to the topmost round.
And this high point I reached ; 'twas not one spring
But many slow degrees helped me thereto. 350
So did I sip my danger as a dram,
Loathing it much at first, but soon much more.
Needing the poignant spirit, that, bosomed once,
Howe'er we strive to enforce its banishment,
Doth ever leave a memory behind
Importunate, and with most ceaseless stir
Crying for its recall. Thou know'st me well,
Me and my converse and my thoughts and all
For long years past—so dost thou know that he
Spoke ever to my sense, truest and best, 360
Who spoke the popular right and sovereignty
With loudest breath. And when that cursed act,
Framed but to glut the landlord's greediness,

And frustrate Nature's bounteousness of bread,
Made famine law, I strove to quit them home,
And make rebellion duty—then I rang
In the ears of all my audience such a peal
As the very clash of weapons and of war
Had sounded peaceful after it.—Then too,
When that our parson, most extortionate, 370
Would grasp his flock, not with a gentle hand,
To guide them, but to spoil and pluck them bare,
Then did I give my counsel and my aid
To the chief of the revolt, and stood in front,
Braving all chance might come: this thou canst vouch,
Therefore thou hast a pledge that all I've done,
Aye, and forborne to do, stood but on ground
Of public good, and that ground failing it,
Why, it hath no more being. So the truth 380
Proclaims itself through all my active life,
Idling all words—then, for my constant faith,
Be the past a token for the time to come.
Now look my son how that just Heaven holds rule
E'en o'er Hell deeds; making of craft a snare
To trick itself—suborning violence
To dash its brains in the dust by the mad sway
Of its own sword, and pushing treason on
By circumstance beside its scope of act,
To blast its issue and defeat itself, 390
Being a public traitor in design,
But in true deed, whetting its secret edge
Against its proper life—he urged me on,
Giving the promised glory all to me;
Making a giant of my faculty.
For this great act, what I could do myself,
And how make others work my proper end;
Risking their means. Briefly he sued to me
To be the foremost and first man of all
Where'er our light should shine; the very head 400
To the huge body of our enterprise.

And surely had he holden that first aim,
 Then had hit the mark : and the old rule,
 Wherein this land is aged to dotingness,
 Were but a dream. Then had old things past off,
 And a new life come on ; a living dawn
 Upon the antient dulness of that night,
 Bright as a beacon flame : to be caught up,
 And sped around, even till the starred sky
 Had marvelled at the brightness of the earth,
 Shaming its own. Yes 'tis most surely true. 410
 I've said, and for the truth's sake say again,
 I only, of all men, bore in my brain
 The seeds of human hope and happiness ;
 Sure in that soil to flourish and bear fruit ;
 Aye, and as sure, elsewhere, in the slight sand
 Of other souls, to give but surface growth
 And wither away. But this truth hath a taste
 That doth but raise the bile of other men,
 And most of those whom it behoveth least :
 Therefore they love it not—yes, hoy, that man 420
 Whom it was truly ordained that I should lead
 And he but follow me—that man, that Hess,
 What think you ? why when late I claimed my due,
 What did he then, but in most shallow sort
 Open strange eyes, and lend a wondering ear
 To my plain truth ? Liking my service well,
 So 'twere sheer service to his Lordship slaved,
 But taking nor allowing it at all
 After the rate I tendered. Why that dolt
 Were crowned to his full worth, being but placed 430
 In the rear rank of the poorest enterprise,
 To push the hindlings on ; being indeed
 Nought else but bones and sinews, a brute strength,
 With but one spark to serve it for all soul
 And mark it from the clay that fouls my feet
 To tread upon. But now forsooth this man
 Must be our leader—yes, he would rule all,

And some there are so base would suffer him ;
 Aye, raise him on their necks. Well, let who list,
 So it be not I. Sooner shall yonder sun 440
 Stoop from his sovereignty obsequious
 To the silly mazes of the will-o'wisp
 That haunts the marsh, than I render him suit,
 Save in such wise as he who hunts his foe
 Unto the death. And now what thinkest thou
 He hath in purpose? Hear me, and I'll tell :
 'Tis this puts on the crown on his conceit,
 Making him king of madman. Yes, the fool
 Would fain build up his structure on a dream,
 Clothe his abortions in the cast off cloak 450
 Of Gospel faith and Christianity ;
 That cloak so worn to threadbare quality,
 That every eye, save bleared dotingness,
 Looks through its falsehood and its flimsiness
 Clear as the light—lasting but in disuse,
 Hanging like an old 'scutcheon on the wall,
 For the gaze, and not the touch—falling to dust,
 If but once handled. Oh 'tis a fair speed
 That flies with wings like these—sure such a wit
 Outfools the cap and bells—shames me to think 460
 Such sorry mess was dabbled by a man,
 One of my proper kind ; so to cram down
 Our stomachs the old stuff they've long spued up,
 And bid us thrive by it : no, let us first
 To the lean gipsies for our oracles ;
 Take counsel of our cards ; humble our faith
 Before the old relic bones ; Heaven save—" Oh yes
 My father," so the filial reverence
 Broke in upon his words, " save me and thee
 From such an utterance and such audience, 470
 Wherein the fever that thou hast in it
 Doth but the more chill me with shuddering fear,
 For what may be the issue. Oh, thy words
 Blow with a reckless and most violent wind,

Whelming the vessel it would fain waft on
To hold one course with it. Nay breathe not aught
Of our religion save religiously.

For all the evil thou canst say of it
Doth but enhance its purity the more,
Being in truth but black detraction, 480
Flung on a robe of white, showing what's fair
More lovely in foulness of its opposite.

Father, I owe thee much, my life, and all
That makes that life a thing worthy to live,
And thus I would requite thee. Come and share
This precious comfort with me if thou wilt ;
Put on this faith, wear it, and walk in it,
As in a vest that beggars all things else,
Even the highest plumed honors and pomp,
To the baseness of a rag. But if thou'rt slaved, 490

Out of the gentle service of our Lord,
Into a newer bondage, hard to bear,
And hardest to shake off an iron yoke,
That wears itself into the impatient neck
Of those that toss the head ; so 'stablishing
Its power upon their pain. If such thou art.
And, oh Heaven ; grant that thou may'st be so blest
To be far other ! then I ask of thee

What thou art nothing minished to impart.
But I most rich to have it—leave me at least 500
This faith which is indeed my soul of life,
And take away whate'er thy bounteousness
Hath given to eke out my scanty means,

Covering what else were bare. Behoves us not,
Father and son to wrangle with fierce words ;
Therefore, whate'er my soul prompts me to say,
I set the seal of silence on my lips,
And oh, do thou the like—to the public ear
As to mine own. Forgive me, oh God, that I
Contend not 'gainst my sire on thy behalf ; 510
And thou much more, my sire, forgive me again,

If I oppose not God and God's own truth,
 To humour thy stray will. Thou knowest me now,
 Would I could know thee too, not as thou art,
 But as my will would have thee—so wert thou
 A man renewed in happiness, and I,
 More blest than ever yet, in hope and faith,
 Sharing them both with thee." "Well, as thou wilt,"
 The father to his son hotly replied,
 "Twere all as hopeful to go beat the wind, 520
 And look for proof of conquest, as thus strive
 To free the possess'd soul from its fantasies.
 By force of truth : who makes a merit of faith
 Makes reason a fool ; go then, drink hellebore
 And purge the bile that sends its fumes to the brain ;
 Dimming thine eyes ; clear first thy sight from its mist,
 And then the season will be early enough
 To show others the truth : so much for thee.
 Now for myself—to gather in one sum
 All I have said, my purpose is fast fixed 530
 To leave yon crafty madman and his crew
 As I've good cause ; first, the most subtle guile
 Wherein he took the sceptre of the emprize
 Forth from my grasp, and tendered a poor staff
 To handle in its stead ; such a dull thing
 As sure the veriest peasant would wield best ;
 The vulgar weapon of one who hath no head
 To privilege his hands from drudgery,
 But this were little—then for the next thing
 He would abase our free philosophy, 540
 Disauthorise her simple rule of right,
 And patch the old priestcraft up, fooling mankind
 Back to mere childishness ; last, to sum all,
 I brand with my deep curse him and his cause,
 For that his best of faith is perfidy,
 His veriest truth a lie ; of which foul spirit
 Each act from the first outset to the end,
 Doth bear his taint—and that same taint must spread

E'en to the life blood of our enterprize
 Poisoning it at heart. Truly, my son, 550
 I were the abjectest of castaways,
 Wearing a life too vile for a manly death,
 If I would league with him. No: my best aim
 Being gone with them thus far is to go on ;
 Redeeming so to virtue my past wrong,
 Through use of what were sin being employed
 'Gainst other men, but godliness 'gainst them ;
 And still bewraying by most crooked ways
 Their right line of success, till at the last 560
 I vanish like a meteor of the marsh,
 Leaving my followers floundered in the bog
 Whither I tempted them. Beshrew their hearts
 But they shall feel me for their chiefest foe,
 Who had been their fastest friend. Oh could I force
 Into my tongue the hate that's in my heart,
 Each word were poison ! yet I tell thee again
 I wished their issue well, and my best act
 Went with the wish—the thought of the enterprize
 Glowed in my heart, making a furnace there 570
 With its glow ; and at such time, while yet my zeal
 Kept its first flame, something I whispered thee
 Of that our aim, and thou didst answer me
 In words of chilly temper. Now, my son,
 What then thou didst think ill, much more by this
 Thou wilt abhor ; if that thou hast a heart,
 And natural love withal, as sure thou hast
 Issuing from it—Oh ! then, answer me
 To the echo of my call—much cans't thou do,
 And much behoves me done. Be then my son,
 And not a renegade to the warm blood 580
 That did beget thee ; or if thou carest not
 Of these my griefs, to avenge them or redress,
 Bethink thee, 'tis not I am greived alone,
 But thou no less. They love thee well, that man
 And his fair daughter, as thou readest them

And if that love were for thy sake alone,
 So should they have my thanks—but how is the truth?
 Why truly, their affection holds such aim
 As selfishness is wont in other men,
 Making thee but the means to serve their end, 590
 And then flung by—fooling thy honesty
 With the precious lure that they hold forth to it—
 Their daughter's beauty. But that lure is spread
 (Doubtless as their most liberal goodwill
 Would see two men made happy rather than one)
 To other lusts than thine.—Nay! start not so,
 But look into the truth with earnest eyes,
 Though it do blast thy sight. Mark them, I say,
 Mark them, and that young Linsingen, mark him!
 Needs no more said—only attend the truth, 600
 And be not wilful blind: then what thou see'st,
 If it fall short one hair of what I've said,
 Forswear me for thy father, write me down
 A liar, and hold them in thy closest faith,
 Giving him, on my forfeit, all the love
 Thou owest me." So spake the aged man,
 And ended so his speech, nor so had failed
 But nature failed him first; for his faculties
 Were strained beyond, their strength. Motionless there
 He sate in mere exhaustion, till tears came 610
 And did refresh the fever of his soul,
 Parched up by passion. His much wondering son
 Had watched him through the maze of his discourse,
 And saw the glistening snake fiery and bright
 And swollen to the full with venomous pride
 Unfold its close collected tortuousness,
 Developement most hateful—eager he was
 To break the cursed frame of that discourse
 Ere it had spent itself—yet he forbore;
 As having still, even in his despair, 620
 A little ray of hope, that the end might be
 Better than the outset gave him warranty;

And then those tears, so falling down a face
 Long wont for him to wear a smile of love,
 Quite vanquished him.—Swift he sprung up and grasped
 The old man's hand so warmly as brought back
 The blood to the cold veins whence it had ebbed,
 As if to flow no more. Remorse of a sight
 So piteous had choaked up all reproach,
 And turned his current back. "Oh! my dear sire, 630
 Oh, how much better doth humility,
 And such a sorrow as thou seem'st to wear,
 Become thy age and reverend attributes
 Than the passion that e'en now spoke from thy lips,
 Whirling out reason as the hurricane
 Blasts a torchlight away. Oh! I do joy
 That such a spirit is gone forth from thee,
 Only take heed that thou close up its way,
 Lest it come back, and so thy latter state
 Be worse than was thy first. That thou dost turn 640
 From the steep ruin of this enterprise
 I impeach thee not at all, rather thyself
 Thou dost impeach herein thy former plague
 Betokening health restored, but sure the heat
 Of this new zeal might find a better use
 Than so to brand those of late sworn with it,
 For what itself did once partake with them.
 Sir, in plain utterance, this is not well ;—
 Nay, rather at thy going part from them
 In such a seeming, and with so mild phrase 650
 As haply may invite them after thee ;
 That danger may be curbed by thy rebuke,
 At its very moment, and its act of spring
 And force defeat itself : but for thy aim,
 Being thyself their guide, to shape their course
 To ruinous issue, rather than the end
 Whereto ye are compacted each with each,
 To us all means to attain it—what is this
 But to wind round their solemn trust of thee,

E'en as a halter round about their necks ? 660
 For the comrades' function thou did'st promise them,
 Doing the hangman's. Oh, 'tis such a deed
 As chokes all honest faith to utter it ;
 And being done—but why discourse of it,
 As of a thing that hath substance and form
 To bear surmise ? 'tis a mere monster, and so
 It should be strangled in its utterance
 Without all name or note—for thy fellow's fault
 It is none else than the heat wherewith they urge
 What urged aright were then most righteous : 670
 Therefore soft words winning o'er wilfulness
 Is the fit way to slack their eagerness,
 Not the sharp edge of the axe. And be it they err—
 Men use not to knock error on the head,
 Lest that it die, and be but error still,
 When as kind words might breathe a soul in it
 Unto salvation. Father, I know well
 Thine eye is ever to the public good :
 Yet hath it now a mote within its orb
 That thou should'st rid away, else will it vex 680
 Thy function still with irritation sore,
 To viewing all things awry : and pardon me,
 If thus, perchance, I show my love to thee
 In most unlovely wise—nor prithee so
 Misdemean me as to deem that I lack ought
 Of reverence and duty in thy behalf,
 For that I tender thus my counsel unasked
 Against thy bent of will ; no, 'tis but truth
 Prompts me to the office, and that truth hath but
 Itself and its own conscience for all thanks, 690
 And due of service ; such is still man's use.
 For when the iron is so raging hot,
 He who would pour on it the cooling stream,
 Let him beware his danger—all I've said
 Is but thus much ; hold thyself at the rate
 Others do prize thee, who best know thy worth,

So shalt thou please me well ; and whatsoe'er
Having called in thy reason to thy aid
Thou shalt herein determine were best done.
Believe me, aye, and know me, and trust me too, 700
For one who never will hold back his foot
While thou advancest thine ; daring the height
Of the highest enterprise, so much the more
As the more danger shall frown forth from it." 704

BOOK V.

So did the sire and son hold their discourse—
Meeting in love, parting as those whose hope
And dearest wish is ne'er to meet again,
Lest that their love being in substance lost,
Should lose in their contention e'en to its show,
Sinking from chill to cold—meeting but so
As shadows meet, darkly and silently,
And so pass scowling by. Oh! who can look
Upon such passages in life as this,
'Strangement of blood from blood, father 'gainst son, 10
Nor wish to be vilest of those vile things
That have no feeling; change humanity
For an ape's grin, and bide whate'er may chance
To be no more a slave in the social gang,
Manacled to companionship, where each
Being bound by such shrewd ties as cut to the quick
Where'er they bind, must bear both gall and jar
When that his fellow starting from Caprice,
Or swerving from his line and rightful way
Or flinging himself foully on the path, 20
Drags the whole chain awry. Oh! who was he,
The shallow fool, that would fain have his soul
Gifted with observation and sure sight
Of the human heart? Such sight as his eye hath
For things of outward form; that sight once seen
In all its foulness, and its hideousness,
'Twere a bold man would look on it again—
Much rather would he tear the memory
From his mind, and fling it to the winds away
For a devil's charm. Truly, far lovelier 30
Were the aspect of the Libyan wilderness,

Bare of all else but teeming with strange shapes,
 Whose venom is their life; who but would fly
 From such a horror to his darkest dreams,
 And think them heaven? For to look once on it
 Were to put out with tears the light of our eyes,
 And weep all joy away. Such were our life,
 Being itself alone; if man's whole hope
 Rested but only on his fellow men :
 But when that hope is perished, then comes faith 40
 The angel guide, showing where refuge is
 From the world to God, making all smooth where all
 Was rough before; visiting home the heart
 Of the sad pilgrim—lightening the way
 And pointing to the end: blest be that faith
 As they are blest that do partake of it.
 They in mean time, the stranger family
 Were busied with much care.—Hermann that morn
 In tremulous hurry had bidden them farewell,
 And homeward sped his course; faith a short stay 50
 For one whose heart through every fibre and nerve
 Was rooted to the spot, wherefore such haste,
 And why so sudden did he urge it on?
 Was it that time was long within those walls,
 And therefore he would shorten it, or stress
 Of needful care did it constrain his will,
 Claiming him for itself, or did the brow
 Of that fair maiden frown upon him then,
 Erewhile so gracious; or the radiance
 Of one yet fairer did it light his hope 60
 Another way? No matter; little avails
 To guess what none may know, only he's gone,
 And if that parting hour to him was sad,
 'Twas all as sorrowful.
 The careful dame marked her fair daughter's brow
 Woefully drooping, and thus spoke to her.
 " Lucy the sun is golden bright,
 The sky is silver clear,

And all is full of joy and light,
Oh be of better cheer.

70

And tell me whither hast thou been
To find thy silent care ?

For in thee only is it seen,

And all is gay elsewhere.

Prithee is aught upon thy heart,

For sure if crosses fall,

A simple maiden as thou art,

Should tell her mother all."

"Mother, thou knowest all I know,

For oft I've heard thee say,

80

There's many a cloud that will not go,

For brightness of the day :

And sometimes we are apt to smile,

And then again to cry ;

Joying or grieving all the while,

And yet we know not why.

And I felt something of distress,

Some dark and distant fear ;

And for I knew it foolishness,

I came to hide it here."

90

"Nay Lucy hide whatelse you will,

But hide not truth from me ;

For truth beseems a maiden still,

Whate'er the matter be.

For thou hast wept, and in thine eye,

I see the glistening tear :

And when a maid weeps silently,

A mother must needs fear.

The clouds upon a virgin face,

Full lightly come and go :

100

But tears are of a deeper place,

Whenever they do flow."

"Yes mother I will tell thee true,

And I have wept full sore :

And let me weep, 'tis sorrow's due ;

Or I must grieve the more,"

" Ah ! is it love ? yes sure 'tis so,—
 For nought but love could bow
 A pretty maidens heart so low,
 As thine is bent e'en now. 110
 But when did love become a crime,
 A thing of shame and scorn?
 'Twas not so rated in my time,
 Or thou hadst ne'er been born.
 And other maiden hearts are light,
 And why shouldst thou despair ;
 With brow so smooth and eye so bright,
 And golden flowing hair ?
 And soon will Linsingen be here 120
 And he hath much to say
 Will sound like music in thine ear,
 And grief will then away."
 " But he is come of ancient line,
 And courteous though he be,
 Yet never can I call him mine,
 He may not stoop to me.
 No ! never can he share our lot,
 Then wherefore dream in vain :
 Oh leave me to this lowly cot,
 And name him not again." 130

The maiden ceased, the mother looked on her
 With such a look as through the encountering eye
 Pierces to the heart in penetration keen ;
 Angrily at the first, then earnestly ;
 So to discern by the significance,
 Featured in that most pure and guileless face
 If that her speech were sooth—much did she fear,
 (For much had she suspected of long time,
 Since that the maiden neither talked nor wept,
 While yet her spirit dwelt within a cloud,) 140
 That there lay something lodged within her heart
 Too deep for words. Oft had that dame discoursed,

(For misery from its darkness loves to look,
 Up to the merest chink that lets light in,
 And with it hope) of the young Linsingen,
 His youth, his beauty, his wealth and parentage,
 All that commends a man, both to the eyes
 And judgment too—she spake, and Lucy heard,
 And haply listened ; but it might well be
 Felt not at all, or whatsoe'er she felt, 150
 'Twas not the pulse of love.—Nor matters what ;
 The truth will speak itself in her after acts,
 Clearer than words—only thus much is sure,
 That this most prudent dame, knowing full well,
 How love when poor is but a beggar boy,
 And like his kind, wretched in beggary,
 Wretched the more, as waking from rich dreams ;
 This having learned, as use taught her the truth,
 Not knowingly alone, but feelingly,
 In daily desolation of her heart ; 160
 Fain would she compensate her own sad chance
 With a golden fortune for her child achieved :
 Its substance for her child, and for herself
 Its warm reflected golden radiance,
 To be the comfort of her later life.
 Therefore on Hermann, in that scope of thought
 Her countenance was cold, as being one
 Whose industry was all his faculty
 To push his fortune on ; and his high hopes
 O'erlooking worldly aims, were winged to a mark 170
 Though beauteous, yet distant, bare, and cold,
 As a far glacier, rich with many rills
 To fertilize and bless the nether earth,
 But barren for itself. From such a man
 Her eager eyes would turn to Linsingen
 As to an angel, that should take the hand
 Of her child and lead her forth to paradise,
 There to be blest, and from her fathers house,
 Bringing her virtues to a worthier home,

Would leave that house a blessing in her stead, 180
 Rich as herself. So did the mother hope,
 And as she hoped so trusted a long time ;
 In confidence that her most gentle girl
 Was to her will, but as a gentle boat
 Is to a wilful stream, that goes nor stirs
 But as the stream will have it : else she had deemed ,
 If that the maid should choose of her own choice,
 A very miracle were sprung to life,
 Shocking old use—so had security
 Set up its habit for the very truth, 190
 Rating all else that likelihood did urge,
 At a dream's rate; nor e'er imagining
 That the young eye seeing but by itself,
 Not with the artifice and glass of age,
 Eager, but nothing curious of search,
 Doth oft forerun expedience with desire,
 Taking a glitter of sand for very gold,
 A hope for a sure good.—Such is man's law,
 But for that law is nowhere writ in brass,
 Nor trumpeted abroad with brazen sound 200
 The hopeful matron took no note of it,
 When 'twere most need. But yet something ere this
 Had she misdoubted of the things she saw,
 As caution gave the alarm ; and this new doubt
 Forth issuing from her daughter's cloudiness
 And covert phrase, sudden with violent start,
 Burst ope the door where surety lay asleep,
 And let suspicion in ; she addressed herself
 Forthwith to wring the spongy secret out.
 And so had done ; for in such circumstance 210
 A parent's heart is hard, and maiden souls
 Are all as soft ; and what she could she would,
 Though with it she had wrung the life blood forth
 To its last drop : but he on whose behalf
 She was solicitous, sudden appeared
 While yet his noble name was in their ears,

Himself more nobly present to their eyes,
 Her hope, her joy, the gallant Linsingen.
 His coming was unseen—but ere he came,
 His shadow crost their path; that was enough 220
 To give them note of him; for the dame's mind
 With his loved image was possess'd so full,
 That whatsoe'er she had seen of human shape,
 She had deemed it none but him: then were glad looks
 And words made kinder than their import was,
 By the voice that breathed of the heart; greetings and smiles
 Profuse, as from a mother to her son,
 Long lost and late restored: high is the worth
 That such sweet tokens of affection bear;
 And yet, as Linsingen did value them, 230
 One single jewel tear, glittering in the eye
 Of the soft maiden that stood silent there,
 O'erpriced them all. That tear rose suddenly
 Like to a bubble from the troubled heart
 Betokening inward stir; but of that stir
 Showing no sign wherefore or whence it came,
 Arguing but itself: yet 'twas a tear
 Such as bedews the torrid cheek of love,
 And being such, to Linsingen's belief 240
 It was not such alone, but the very same,
 As love would have it. Well, hail to thee faith,
 For thou art happiness; thou giv'st to the hand
 What Hope doth point but to the eye far off
 And he who hath thee is blest—blest spite of sense
 And certainty; as Linsingen was then.
 For he was of a temper to fly on
 To the issue of his hope—using the wings
 Of fancy, rather than the plodding feet
 Wherewith experience holds on her march
 Patient and sure. Such was his spirit of faith; 250
 And truly, had desert been harbinger
 Of prosperous issue to man's enterprise,
 His faith had been fulfilled; nor only in this,

But all things else.—Fortune, if by some chance
The bandage had once fallen from her eyes,
Could show no surer proof of blindness changed
Into discernment and considerate sense,
Than by her sanction of a man like him,
Crowning his highest hopes : and in that crown
Redeeming with one right a thousand wrongs, 260
Done aforetime.—Truly he was a man
Of high nobility, and yet withal,
Simple as is the simplest shepherd's boy,
And careless of himself, weening no more
Of his proud ancestors than they of him
While mouldering in their tombs, giving much grace
To his high house, but taking none therefrom,
As being arrayed in that pure lustre of light,
That puts the false to shame. And so he stood,
Scorning the farfetched memory of names, 270
And usurpation of another's praise,
A simple man, great in simplicity.
Prouder without his plume ; true he had felt
Erewhile the gripe of penury, and they
Whose duty then was friendliness of aid,
Left him to fight against her iron claws
With his bare hand, as though their common blood
Were but the water of the common pool,
And kindred but a name for their cold breath
To blow away and care no more of it. 280
So they were nought to him, nor he to them ;
And in his bitterness oft his heart yearned
To make nobility through all the world
The blank it bore in his eyes ; but hate and scorn
Though well they nurse themselves in the inmost heart,
Keep not the body warm : nor drive the wolf
From the door—nay, rather sharpen his keen fangs
And whet his rage. So having spent his all,
Save one poor plank whereon to scape the wreck,

To that same plank he did commit himself, 290
 To sink or swim : leaving behind him nought
 Save emptiness for who came after him,
 And curses for his kin—so did he part ;
 Wishing nought more 'twixt him and those he left,
 Save a far space. And on a little farm
 That in its littleness had been o'erlooked
 When ruin struck the rest, he made his home :
 Reckless as any banished thief of the world
 He left behind.—Then he flung clean away
 The memory of what so late he had been, 300
 As one just waked from a dream of nobleess ;
 And brought his spirit to keep even wing
 With the level of his place ; and having thrown
 His vain imaginations off from him,
 'Stead of the puffed and feathery thing he was
 Stood armed in manhood : till being unthralled
 From the base beggary of idleness,
 And poor dependence on another's hands,
 For uses that his own might well have wrought,
 He found his loss the greatest gain of all, 310
 Richer than his old wealth : nor lacked he aught,
 Whether of field, orchard, or garden growth,
 Only what now he had, he enjoyed the more,
 As earned by his strong toil ; nor yet his sports
 Did he not urge, and pastimes of old wont ;
 Changed but in this, that the same active means
 Which erst he used to cut off his slow hours,
 Stragglers and lagsters from Time's tedious march,
 Wasting the old enemy to minishment ;
 He did employ those selfsame weapons now, 320
 Not to consume but fructify his life,
 With fruits whence it might live ; so marrying sport
 To toil, and raising up a goodly growth
 Of plenty, health, contentment and what else
 Springs of that parentage : so did he range
 With but his dog and gun, for ministers

The wilderness that else had been a waste,
And made it fruitful for his sustenance,
Scattering a leaden seed : so he fared on ;
Pursuing questionless his wilful way, 330
O'er wilds that bore no mark of ownership
Nor trace of toil ; till on a luckless time,
There came among the mountains a strange man,
And claimed them to be his, as 'twere a babe
Crying to have its toy ; as truly his own,
As they were first God's who created them.
And he was asked how were these mountains his,
More than the sea or sky who ne'er had tilled
Nor e'en trodden them : and then he showed
For all his answer an old withered skin, 340
O'erwritten with strange words, which as he said
Had virtue 'gainst all reason and all rule,
Nature and rights of man to make that his
Which they did note for him ; and who said nay,
Such a denial were best kept in words,
Not acted out. All this to Linsingen
Seemed strange, as to a waking man his dreams,
Nor better worth a thought.—So on he held,
Heeding no more such stay than if a witch
Had set a straw across his wonted path, 350
To bar him there, but danger when least deemed,
Her deadliest weapons oftentimes doth wear
'Neath a silly disguise. And those ill words,
Were pregnant with worse acts, for wilfulness
Though it do much for pleasure of its will,
Must suffer more ; the law, subtle and sharp
As a snare of wire, caught him in the open act
And held him fast, spite of his hands and teeth ;
Till he had satisfied her utmost due.
A heavy burden made yet heavier, 360
By his strife to fling it off. There was a stress
That wrung him sore ; and the after thought of it
Was very bitterness.—So did his hate

Gendering with his pride, bring issue forth,
 Hatefully proud ; and the old quarrel, a stock
 That else were dead long since, left to itself
 Now to luxuriance pruned by the laws knife,
 Sprung up with many sprouts ; he made himself
 Companion to the reckless and the wild,
 Whose deeds were not of day, but such as gave 370
 To night a darker colour than its own,
 Poachers by river, wood or the hill side
 As the chance prompted them : smugglers, or they
 Who shared the smuggler's risk of loss or gain ;
 Selling uncustomed wares ; these and the like
 He took to be his mates, not for themselves,
 But for the sake of the despite they wrought
 Making license their law. So he lived long,
 And all that life was but a breach of the law,
 Confounding rule with riot : and in that breach, 380
 He dared the worst of danger day by day,
 Till daring grew to a daily appetite,
 With danger for its diet. So high-strained
 Is but short-lived ; and crime and punishment
 Crossing so often must needs meet at last ;
 As he, ere long, had proved it—but the sun
 Suddenly shone upon him from the clouds,
 Chasing them all away : all else save those
 That his spleen gendered. Fortune, who still joys
 To scatter her seed on the full harvestage 390
 Where nought can grow to good, showered down on him,
 Now that his life lacked nothing she could give,
 Riches so plenteous, as 'twere in spite
 To mock their penury who needed them—
 Perilling his course of life by hasty glut
 To o'erswell its banks. Then did that sudden turn
 Of fortune turn his spirit as suddenly
 To take another aim. His wealth's increase
 He studied so to use and practise it,
 Not as a lever whence to raise himself 400

Up to their level whom he erst did hate,
 And hated now all the more bitterly
 Since hate had force and means to wreak itself ;
 But for an engine to pull down their pride,
 Mixing them in the mass—making them serve
 With all their levity of feather and straw
 To temper common clay—and all his means,
 Fortunes and friends and utmost faculties,
 He flung them in that channel freely in,
 To make a flood: such was the man who then
 Left treason for a while, to urge Love's suit.

410

“Honoured dame, and maiden dear.

I have sought ye far and near,
 Orchard house and garden round,
 Sought ye far, but nowhere found.
 First, they told me you were gone
 By the woodside wandering on,
 For wild flowers and berry fruit :
 Thither then I sped my suit.

Next I should find you without fail

420

With the old widow in the vale ;
 Last—but no—it matters not,
 Here I greet you on this spot.

So it is, where'er we roam,
 Still we leave our joy at home.
 Strange that I could be so near
 Nor yet know and feel you here.
 But since now I've found my aim,
 Maiden dear and honoured dame,

Humbly I present to ye

430

Homage on my bended knee.
 And oh treat not with despite
 Service of so good a knight :
 See how dauntlessly I stand
 With my pointed stake in hand ;
 Which to prove my courage true,
 And to gain my knighthood's due,

I have splintered on the side
 Of the steed I did bestride ;
 Surely a most gallant steed 440
 As e'er served a gipseys' need.
 And my page doth follow me,
 Hope and flower of chivalry,
 Who, for ladies' love but now,
 Left most loyally his plough,
 Spurring, without fail or fear,
 On his pannier'd donkey here.
 But 'tis time we should be gone,
 See the hours are speeding on ;
 And the sun and summery sky 450
 Speak more winningly than I.
 We shall find our baskets spread
 There by the lone fountain's head,
 And this pony safely tried,
 Lucy, 'tis for thee to ride.
 Only ere the close of day,
 This one guerdon shalt thou pay.
 As we go, of hill and sky,
 To ask their hospitality ;
 Playing so the gipsies' part, 460
 Look thou prove their mystic art :
 Read my fate, my fortune tell,
 Thou alone dost know it well ;
 And thou hast a greater skill
 To frame that fortune at thy will."

So did he speak, partly to sense of both,
 Partly for what concerned her most, in the ear
 Of his dear maid. Yet had he put those words
 Into a trumpet blast, and sounded them,
 'Till echo's self were stunned, not so had he told 470
 His tale more clearly to the matron's ear,
 Than by that soft suppression, that betrays
 By silence surer than the fullest sound.
 There is a sympathy in things of love
 'Twixt mother and her child, that what one hears,

The other feels, a chord that doth outlive
 The severance of birth, binding the two
 Making both one. Communion happy indeed,
 When common will meets in one kindly bond,
 With common knowledge. Else if they stand off— 480
 Disjoined, as oft betides, and wholly averse,
 Most comfortless. Oh! love, where wer't thou schooled?
 Who taught thee such a stretch of tyranny
 That thou must prove thy strength against their peace
 Before whose reverend attributes that strength
 Should bow itself, and be weak as a babe,
 Biding correction? wherefore dost set up
 Fathers and dear friends for thy opposites,
 Only to strike them down? triumphing so
 Therein most wantonly, where pity were 490
 Indeed but nature, and the unnatural
 Only are pitiless? pluming thy pride
 E'en with those tender plumes which the parent birds
 Plucked from their breasts for the familiar home
 Which thou dost scatter in air. Away, thou hast
 A whirlwind for thy spirit, avaunt, away:
 Or change thee to another than thou art.
 Ere this, the sun was high, and the time ripe
 They should set forth. So forth gaily they set,
 The mother, and the daughter, and the sire, 500
 One family; but oh, how various minds!
 With them the old serving-man, grafted long since
 Upon their stock, when the sun shone on them,
 And growing still, despite the season's change,
 As native there. Nor went they all alone;
 For kindness loves communion of its joy;
 But in their troop by neighbourly request,
 Three simple village maids pranked in their best,
 And five stout youths, unfashioned yet with hearts
 Warm as the ruddy colour of their cheeks, 510
 And courage all as true; brothers, or yet
 Dearer to them than brothers, for love's sake:

In faith a joyous train ; enough of glee,
 Already to fulfil the festive day,
 Though it should bring none else. So they sped forth
 Afoot, astride, or on the pannier'd ass,
 As chance would have it. A throng as various
 As the Bohemian gipsy wanderers,
 Changing the present ever and still on,
 With careless change. " My friends " said Linsingen, 520
 Shouting above their jovial dissonance,
 "'Tis mirth is now the matter of our day,
 And music is mirth's kin ; but music's self
 In these wild hills were not itself indeed,
 If the harp were wanting. To the harper's then :
 'Tis but a brief while round, and the old man
 Deserves a longer way." So said, so done ;
 There lay the hovel in sight, and soon that space
 Was swallowed by their speed. The old man sate
 In his trim garden, glad of the sun's warmth 530
 Vital, as to his flowers, so to him,
 In his chill age. He heard their mirth afar,
 Strangely, for mirth, and he were strange long since
 And wondered what it meant. Nor wondered long :
 For Linsingen, forth spurring, in few words
 Spake his kind sense, and the old man answered him—
 " Yes, gladly will I go with thee,
 For master thou art dear to me ;
 And be it sun or be it snow,
 With thee full gladly will I go. 540
 For ever cheerly do I play,
 When thou dost listen to my lay
 And there my fancy's liveliest,
 Where thou art bidden for a guest.
 For thou art come of high degree,
 A royal spirit breathes from thee ;
 And lines of kingship I might trace
 Ere vision failed me in thy face.
 Then on that face I loved to look,
 Like reading in an ancient book : 550

And now I love thy voice to hear,
It tells old stories to my ear.
And be the strain whate'er it may,
Still thou dost feel as I do play ;
For thou hast fire wi' bin thine heart,
But others are not as thou art.
For though full many a one doth call
The lonely harper to his hall ;
That he may be a stranger's show,
Yet master, is he loath to go. 560
For 'tis not that they love my skill,
But so their pride must have its will :
And they would welcome me as well,
Though nought I knew of ancient spell.
Nor e'er as they sit idly by,
Doth the fire kindle in their eye ;
They would but mock the gifted glance,
Of the wild spirit in its trance.
For though such tale be strange to tell,
I know it, for a truth full well : 570
There dwells a spirit in these strings,
And when I strike the spirit sings.
It sings, and if the guests among,
It find an answer to its song,
Oh then how raptured is the lay !
Else must it sink and die away,
And when, it dies, then all is dead,
My heart within me is as lead :
My fingers like the idiot lad,
Play idly while my soul is sad. 580
Yes in the corner be it flung,
This harp, where hearts are loosely strung ;
For sooner fire may live in snow,
Than Harper breathe his spirit so.
Oh then my soul was blithe and gay,
When Honour spirited my lay :

And every silver piece I told
 Was changed by courtesy to gold.
 But I am not in honour now,
 And thou my harp, yes even thou, 590
 In my disgrace must bear thy part,
 Oh shame on them who scorn our art.
 Their largess is a very loss,
 Their choicest gifts to me are dross
 For poor I am, yet proud of soul,
 And brook not well their beggar's dole.
 They flout me like a crazy wife,
 For my attire and wandering life.
 Sure I were better in its stead
 To break my harp and beg my bread. 600
 Oh gentle sir, thy heart had glowed,
 To see our festivals of o'd !
 A hundred harpers in the hall,
 And I was crowned the chief of all.
 Now perished is the mark should be,
 Twixt simple men and high degree :
 The nobles cherish us no more,
 Than did the veriest churl of yore.
 Nobles, ah no, for they are gone,
 And only churlish blood lives on : 610
 And men who know not their own sires,
 Now lord it from their furnace fires,
 Our breezes speak not of their fame,
 Our mountains answer not their name :
 In blood and tongue and spirit strange,
 Oh what sad chance hath brought this change.
 They love not mountain, tower, or rill,
 They care not of the harper's skill :
 And though they prized it e'er so much,
 Yet not for them is its true touch. 620
 But oh for one such stirring strain,
 To wake the dead to life again ;
 That they might rise and claim their own,
 And spirit live from out the stone.

And kindle patriot souls like thee,
 To raise their country to be free,
 Free as the burst of my own song,
 As the wild torrent pours along.
 Then though the sight were but a dream,
 If only it might truly seem:
 Oh then full gladly would we die,
 And rest in joy, my harp and I."

630

The old man ceased and as he ceased, his tears,
 Like gentle rain when that the gust is stilled,
 'Gan fill his furrowed face—genuine tears,
 Not such as dotards weep, but fresh from the heart,
 Proving the youthful spirit that lodged there,
 In that old tenement. His listener
 Stood fixed in wonder that so aged a trunk,
 Should put forth leaves so green; he had hearkened him 640
 Through all that fitful passion of discourse.
 Nor hearkened only, but the words he heard,
 He felt them as their griefs had been his own
 Stamped on his heart. There is full often a soul
 In silence, and the words that feeling speaks
 Are of so penetrative quality,
 That the heart echoes them not back in words,
 But without question takes them to itself,
 As to their proper home, being its kin,
 To entertain them there—thus silently 650
 Surrendering itself to sympathy,
 Felt but not said.—So Linsingen spoke not
 When the old man's flooding passion filled his soul,
 But pondered all within how his high name
 Might further his high ends—for it concerned
 His fancy much and his ambition more
 If hope should e'er bear fruit; but time is swift
 And dreams are lingering things: then Linsingen
 Ere their vague wings had quite o'ershadowed him,
 Dispersed them with a start of energy 660
 Urging the old man's haste; and so straitway

They fled amain, like ghosts at the cock-crow,
 Betokening active day.—Then all trooped on
 The young o'erbrimming with their natural glee,
 The old rejoicing in their children's joy,
 Since their own source was spent, sweet was the scene
 As they passed onward o'er the russet hills,
 Those hills that smiled in sunshine, a warm smile
 To welcome them. All looked and all were pleased;
 Some that they felt sorrow more soothingly,
 And other some, pleasure more pleasingly, 670
 For nature like a holy mother looks
 Upon her children with a tempering look,
 Calming all passion; and whate'er they feel,
 Subduing it to take a gentler tone,
 Whether of joy or grief: still doth she wear
 Some touch of sadness in her sweetest smile;
 As knowing all must fade, how bright soe'er
 That she brings forth to life, and what she knows
 Others do feel, who feel her influence, 680
 And so partake her mood. Thus they went on,
 Now in strait scope, now with slow winding march,
 As the hills barred or opened them a way,
 Nature's stern warders—here obsequious
 To some swift stream, pleasant in its caprice,
 There toiling up the steep, painful and hard,
 Doubtful of footing, and that footing lost,
 Sure of a ruin down in the depth below,
 Thundering on together, horse and man,
 Both crushed in one. That height hardly attained, 690
 With many a suspiration of strong breath
 And aching bones, straining on sullenly,
 As all unwilling and nigh powerless,
 To do their due in such unwonted wise
 Then would they halt awhile, halt and look forth,
 Far as the eye could dart itself in space,
 Holding distinction of the things it saw,
 Till the end confounded all; towers and spires

Looking in grey and ancient constancy
 Oer the rich corn-fields changeful livery; 700
 Ruins amid nature's enduring green,
 Wide waving forests frowning o'er the whole;
 Orchards and gardens, towns and villages,
 Scattered abroad like ships in the vast sea,
 Showing greatness more great in their contrast
 Of littleness.—Théy looked and looked again
 As then from blindness gifted first with sight
 With a delight o'erreaching still itself,
 Redoubling wave on wave—they looked their fill.
 Then turned, in the eagerness of others eyes, 710
 And fellowship of joyous sympathy,
 To find fresh appetite and warranty
 For fresh delight: like as a thirsty man
 Drinks in the spring, greedily, draught on draught,
 His much demanding more: that pure thin air
 Coursed like a subtile spirit through their veins,
 Playing its frolic touches on each nerve
 Buoying each heart; with a glee beyond the breast
 To hold it in they laughed and clapped their hands,
 And age was youth and youth was boyishness, 720
 Bubbling and foaming in wild revelry,
 As at the fountain head. So fared they all,
 All save that pensive maid. young love men say
 Is fanciful, and still holds on his course,
 Contrarious to all currents save his own;
 Wild as the wind, mixing sunshine with tears
 And making thousand colours of the two,
 To frame his airy bow, having in sooth
 No constant will, but only wilfulness.
 And such was Lucy's mood, as her mother hoped, 730
 If a mother's hope be truth. But such surmise
 The wise are ever slow to warrant it,
 So let it pass. Long did they tarry there,
 Though shortening much the length by gamesomeness;
 Till their exuberance from its rash foam

Was nigh spent down. Onward was then their wish,
 And peering eyes looked down o'er the descent
 To see which way were best; jealously then
 They addressed their footing to the nether steep,
 All as precipitous as erst the ascent 740
 Was arduous to their proof. Such craggy heights
 Have craggy falls: ambition knows no mean
 But still to mount or stoop. So envying
 The bee his humming winged security,
 As from the heath-flower his sweet diet he sucked,
 They stepped from mound to mound, from stone to stone,
 Where the green hassocks sprung to meet their feet,
 Patient of pressure; or the bushy heath
 Gave aid to the hand, where else the turf though soft
 Yet slippery, had played traitor to the foot, 750
 Beguiling with smooth show. Love is himself
 Then most, and his spirit then awakes to fire,
 When he hath charge to be up in arms and ward
 Loveliness from all harm. Then is he swift
 As his own shafts, zealous yet tender of act,
 A gentle flame: then too mostbeauteous
 Is beauty, and grace most gracious of aspect,
 When like a dove to the warm bosom it flies
 Where it hath set its trust, and made its home
 For refuge against ill. Laughter and screams 760
 Confounded each with each, confusion strange,
 Belying the outset with the end: and shout,
 And frolic fun, offspring of innocence,
 Dallying with danger. Such were the swift sports
 That did accompany their downward way,
 Possessing all their souls. At the hubbub wild
 Hushed was the stonechat as by a hawk o'erhead;
 And the lark stayed to trust its note to the air,
 Frenzied so strangely. The old shepherd dog
 Astart, sprang from his lair, pricked his wild ears, 770
 Pointing his muzzle keen, and keener eye,
 Observant of the throng: as doubtful if

'Twere cause of fear, or idle foolery,
 A noise, but no alarm. There stood the flock
 Collected in one front, gazing aloof,
 Turning each fit of folly and merriment
 To a sage doubt. Now o'er the last morass
 They had picked their fearful path, and the steep hill
 From his haughtiness began to condescend,
 Parleying with the plain ; where his right was 780
 And where his bounds : then in like grade their course,
 So late a cripple, ran into a race,
 Descent smooth without stay. Onward they past,
 Their shadows now leaning upon the hill ;
 Anon crossing the vale, and threading next
 The curious idle error of the brook.
 Till sudden at a turn young Linsingen
 Upheaved his hat, and waivng it o'erhead
 Shouted so streng till the hills echoed back,
 What seemed a madman's shout. " Look, there it is 790
 Barely five minutes space ; Lucy look up
 And bring a laugh into that pensive look
 To greet our journey's end." They looked and saw
 The spot as their young guide pointed it out,
 But such a spot as seemed most meet to hail
 With quiet admiration and still love,
 Rather than that loud uproar. 'Twas a point
 Of green distinction on the hill's bare side ;
 And there were trees, many, of various hue,
 Stunted the most, and dwarf, but wearing still 800
 An ample cloak of most rich foliage,
 Their ragged trunks' disguise ; with here and there
 Two or three rising sovereign o'er the rest,
 To give the copse a crown. Some tower of strength
 And trenches compassing that strength around
 Did signalize that spot in the old time
 With warlike stamp. But time the subtle ally
 Of nature and the elements 'gainst man
 Had bared that body first to a skeleton,

And then mouldered the bones : confounding all 810
 Its ancient glory into one rude heap,
 To serve for trophy of its own defeat,
 Leaving the painter few scant memories,
 But many to the poet, who lacks not
 A monument to freshen his images,
 But what once was, calls it to life again
 In lively fresh creation. A small spring
 Parent of the soft verdure that lived there,
 A virgin life, in sequestration sweet,
 Springing of yore for use of the chivalry 820
 That held the fortress in their strength of arms,
 Now nourished but the brambles and low copse
 That grew by favour of so kind a nurse,
 To fill the trenches with their spread of growth,
 Usurping all around. 'Twas there they met
 Sweet trysting-place. They and a fellowship
 Of many other friends from far and near:
 Repose and quiet and all joy to them all. 828

BOOK VI.

Nature! they wrong thee much, and they wrong truth,
Who hold thee to be only that name alone,
The birth of things, creative energy :
Nor know thee for ought else. They wrong thee much,
And much I pity them for such their wrong:
Thou art not only this, but peace and truth,
And tenderness, and joy, and happiness ;
These are thy spirit as is the world thy work.
The spirit wherein thy work is wrought, and he
Who doth partake thy spirit, partakes them ; 10
And whoso loves thee most in greatest share.
Oh happy whoe'er ! happy in that he is,
And happier yet in that he hopes to be ;
Most happy in the contrast of those men
Who in their worldliness resemble him least.
For thou art still a mother to each one
Who will be a son to thee. Speaking to such
Most motherly, the language of soft love
And kindly looks, and gentle confidence,
Such language as speeds home, needing no ear 20
To carry its sweet message to the soul,
But in its silence saying many things.
Yes, there is a home spirit that thou hast,
Breathing with such a breath as makes the air
An atmosphere of joy to the vexed soul ;
A golden flood wherein to purge itself
From all ill sense to purity again.
Oh ! e'en the thought is blest, and the very bliss
Such as makes man an angel. Yet man lives
Unmindful as a stock of this great good, 30

And careless to be aught above himself,
 Earth savouring as earth-born ; and being thus
 Severed from nature's rich communion,
 Becomes a thing dry, spiritless, and dead,
 A stake torn from its soil, fit for base use,
 But nothing capable of upward growth,
 Or genial enlargement of itself,
 To spread a blessing round. Oh ! then, that man
 Would strip his life sometimes of artifice,
 Living the less to himself, to nature more, 40
 And do as did his fathers in old time,
 Shaking the manacles of custom off,
 And walking freely abroad : leaving his home
 By reason destined for a weather fence,
 But made by luxury a prison house,
 Where she doth keep her prisoners in strait chains,
 Captive from nature, and enuring so
 Our souls to bondage from our tender years,
 Till that they shrink from the high quality,
 And inborn instinct felt expansively, 50
 (That else had swelled through all the vault of heaven)
 To the poor proportions of a chamber or two :
 Growing but to the bar above our heads,
 And stunted there.—For the high sentiment
 Is native 'mong high sights, and majesty
 Must enter the young soul first through the sense,
 Dilating so its poor capacity
 By glorious images to be at length
 A tabernacle fit for glorious thoughts.
 And wouldst thou rise to a lofty pitch of soul ? 60
 Go, dwell in some lone cot—whence thou may'st yearn
 Toward nature, and with nature blend thyself
 Expansive to the universal frame,
 While pride in its own palace feeds itself
 On contemplation of its self-conceits,
 Up to its cornice height. Being indeed,
 If great and vile can hold comparison,

To the spirit that hath nature for its home
 As that proud palace to the universe—
 Puny elaboration ! Hast thou a heart? 70
 When nature smiles go fling thee in her arms
 Like her own child, visit her solitude ;
 As of a mother who hath given thee all,
 Claiming for her wide bounty but one due,
 Her children's love—such due as doth enrich
 The payer when paid, and makes a beggar of him
 Who would withhold it. Go then drink thy fill
 From the fount springing in that solitude,
 Which, but to barren minds, is barrenness.
 Then turning home bring with thee a large heart, 80
 As sure thou wilt from such society,
 To fill that home with kindness, and joy,
 And holy comfort. Oh ! that thou had'st seen
 (For nature in her own aspect is best
 Commended, better far than by fair words)
 The glorious things that circled them all round
 That company. The sky one brilliancy,
 The sun shining so bright in that clear blue
 As 'twere his first and latest day to shine, 90
 The one sample of himself: the air so glad
 Of its warmth as though it felt that warmth to be
 The life-blood of his body, speeding through
 With gentle insinuated influence,
 Till its capacity could hold no more,
 And riches ran to waste—mountain, and wood,
 Pasture, and corn, cattle and rivulet,
 And much beside that language utters not
 Powerless of colours. All in the warm air
 Attempered to a feeling tenderness
 The breath of heavenly love. Oh ! 'twas a sight 100
 Might force a painter to forswear himself,
 Flinging away pallet and pencil both,
 For that their mimic fondness did but mar
 The thing it aped. And such as the day was

The spirit of their souls was even so,
 Cheerful and glad. Whoso had seen it all
 Would marvel man should build his home of bricks,
 And have his sullen household there within ;
 Being strange to nature—strange e'en at that time
 When in her pride of season she doth bid 110
 Her guests most graciously to her rich feast,
 Heavenly adorned ; there did they take their ease
 Joyously, and their feelings tuned so full,
 Made music most delicious to their souls.
 And mirth, and innocence, and happiness,
 Though none had bidden them, came ne'ertheless
 To make the circle full. Surest to come
 When least solicited—laughter, and fun,
 And frolic-talk mingled with dance and song,
 Made minutes of their hours ; and the old tower 120
 Started at his own voice unheard so long,
 Echoing their mirth ; then from the rivulet
 When shortening shadows marked the hour of meal,
 And their keen spirit had quickened appetite,
 They drew them water from its mountain source,
 Pure as an infant soul ; the eager throng
 Hailed their return as bringers of much good,
 And flasks forthwith, hidden before, flew out
 Like evil spirits at the sight of grace,
 To mar her by the encounter. Then was nought 130
 But hurry and clatter, cloaks spread out agrass,
 Service of awkward lackeys inexpert ;
 Paniers disburthening their various birth,
 Querulous mirth and merry plaintiveness,
 All humours mixed in one, and glee o'er all
 Sparkling on the surface ; but sharp appetite
 Doth make short feast, and soon those viands rich ,
 Though for their growth costly of time and means,
 Vanished as the wide earth had ope'd her jaws
 To swallow them. Then is the spirit of glee 140
 Ever most full in fullness of the flesh ;

Nor ever doth he raise his jocund voice
Till hunger is stilled. Then o'er his fallen foe
Loud triumphing. So wassail had his time,
And healths, and merry tales of substance none,
Tripped light from tongue to ear : but the harper old
Long dolorous as to look upon his face,
And while their mirth was young, like a dead tree
'Mid the green copse, strange to that pleasant scene 150
In aspect, and in spirit stranger yet,
Now that the potent mixture of his cups,
Had blended its rash spirit with his blood,
Upstarted to new life ; rapt in that hot
And heady current 'gainst his course of years
Back to his fountain head, the fount of youth
And native freshness, and bright fantasies.
Alas ! that he must never see it again,
But in the sudden momentary dream,
Such as e'en now quick flashed across his eye, 160
Lighting the old scene from darkness up again,
And bidding the dead live. So midst their mirth,
Sudden as though the spirit of song from high
Had stooped on him and seized his soul entire,
Sweeping away in its rushing influence
All careful hinderance, and swelling out
His breast to such a fulness as bards feel:
He caught his harp in his hands, and without phrase
Or prelude, or a word of preface said,
Launched forth his spirit on his strain of song— 170

I love thee well thou ancient tower,
For I have known thee long ;
And gathered from thee many a flower,
And sung thee many a song.
And I have brought my children dear
On many a sunny day ,
And 'mong thy giant masses here,
Thou gav'st them leave to play.

I love thee for thy ancient fame,
 From darkness gleaming down; 180
 I love thee for thy later shame,
 Dear as thy old renown.
 I love thee for my strength is past
 And even so is thine;
 And all thy frame is wasting fast
 In fellowship with mine.
 Yes, dear to me is thy decay—
 For sure 'twere better far,
 That thou should'st fall in dust away,
 Than see the things that are. 190
 See the proud stranger hold command,
 Our pleasant hills among;
 The harp forgotten from our land,
 And mute our ancient tongue.
 Yes, I shall love and cherish thee
 E'en to the utmost end:
 Old wont hath made thee unto me,
 For a familiar friend.
 And I can draw thy echoes out
 As none beside me can, 200
 Thou heed'st my whisper more than shout
 Of any other man.
 For ever I have felt for thee
 More than my fellows may:
 So for thy bard thou choosest me,
 And lov'st my ancient lay.
 But ye the sons of stalwart sires
 From mountain, vale, and hill,
 Ye ashes of forgotten fires,
 Say, are ye lifeless still? 210
 Oh! there's a soul in all we see,
 A spirit in this stone;
 Yon murmuring brook runs feelingly,
 But ye are dead alone.
 Yet could ye but once feel as I,
 Then surely were it done:

But ye are many standing by,
 And I am only one.
 And still ye strive to please your lords,
 But care not to be free : 220
 Oh, who can say such shame in words,
 And must it ever be ?
 Then lay it low that ancient tower,
 Nor let one record stand
 Of native strength or native power,
 The glory of our land.
 The glory of our father's land—
 But oh! our own disgrace,
 Ill doth the coward heart, and hand,
 Suit such high dwelling-place. 230
 Then never harp or harper's name
 Henceforth be heard again ;
 Wretch who would take his country's shame
 For burden of his strain ?
 'Tis only the poor spirit that men scorn,
 Boldness hath ever praise, or, if not praise,
 Wonder, and earnestness of still regard ;
 And so the old man, albeit of bearing strange,
 Yet was his strangeness of so high a soul
 The vulgar stooped to him, and gave him space, 240
 And silence to fulfil his purposes.
 Fulfilled each hearer looked in the others' face,
 Distrustful of himself, till at the last
 Did admiration murmur itself forth
 In utterance more of spirit than of words,
 And all was still again : stillness, not such
 As throws her cloak over vacuity,
 But she the brooding mother of deep thoughts,
 Not yet matured. Something had each man known
 By hearing some, and some in consciousness 250
 Privy to the act, of surly discontent,
 That the harper's breath should blow into a blaze,
 And more than that of dark conspiracy,

Daggered, and cloaked, and masked ; standing in wait
 With its match in hand to fire the desperate train
 Whene'er its bell should toll—something they knew,
 And those who knew not all, fancied much more ;
 As ever a dark hint stirs more the soul
 Than full display and storied circumstance,
 And still imagination hath lynx eyes, 260
 Liveliest by dusk. So their thoughts wrought in them
 As 'twas their leader's purpose that they should ;
 For thus, the leaven must ferment awhile
 Ere it can raise the mass, and cleared too soon,
 Is marred for ever, a distempered drink
 Racking whoe'er doth taste it. As the old man
 Had made an end and sate him down again,
 Sobbing in spirit, and half-veiled by his harp,
 His hands mantling his head, sudden there shone,
 A glory from on high, as though the sun
 His mighty blazing banner would unfurl
 To stream abroad the sky. Sudden it shone :
 So sudden that surprise came over all. 270
 Struck by that gleamy shaft—then Linsingen,
 " Gladly I accept the augury" he said,
 " The sun hath shone and the harper hath said truth
 And light avoucheth light. Hail thou old man,
 And hail thy honoured skill—though 'tis not the harp
 But the very heart-strings of each one of us,
 Thy skill hath touched. Long may'st thou live until 280
 Thy hope be perfected to happiness ;
 Till this thy land be in full freedom blest,
 And thou in her ; and now, drink we my friends
 To the harper's health, and the health of all his hopes
 Both his and our's—aye, and our country's too.
 And as I spill this remnant drop in the dust,
 E'en so his blood be spilt in sorrow and shame,
 Who fears to give it freely and gloriously
 To the common good.—Ah, well—I like it well,
 That shout came from the heart. Yes, my good friends, 290
 'Tis bravely voiced, and now to our dance again,

Why, it would challenge night a second round,
 Ere it were weary itself." So much he said
 But said not all he meant, for his mind was
 To whet their appetite with but a taste
 Of his aim, and then turn seriousness to sport,
 Showing them a dim light; lest certainty
 Should dull the spirit of zeal rising on clouds
 And sinking in clear air. Question he eschewed
 Lest being satisfied, it should pall so, 300
 But left imagination there astrain
 Its shaft upon its string. Quick at his word
 The merry throng made of that word their act,
 And framed their gamesomeness into a dance,
 Thrice happy of such harmless league but those
 Dark few, the leaders first and after them
 In broken bands the whole conscious plot, fall off
 From the main and shape their way apart o'er the hill,
 As minded there to linger, and give their sight
 A larger sway. They've gained the ridge, and on
 Stalking against the horizon giant-like, 310
 And ever on. But why such greedy haste
 Frustrating the enjoyment of the eye
 To feed itself at ease? sure, such a scene,
 While man with nature shall hold sympathy,
 And yet one bond bind to the mother her sons,
 Were worth a longer stay. Yet they sped on
 Noiseless, as o'er the heath the scudding clouds,
 And all as careless of the things they o'ersped,
 Nor wonder, for the mind noting its own
 Character, those of nature doth efface, 320
 Fairness with a vile scrawl, and inward strife
 Regards not loveliness of outward things.
 But makes e'en paradise only a place
 Of flaming vengeful words. So forth they fared
 As though that beauty around them were a blank
 Communing high designs—nor stopping save
 When fiery controversy or question fierce

Drew itself up, pausing with sudden check
 To strike its sentence home ; upward or down,
 As the hills caprice governed their course of way ; 330
 A course so craggy, and cross, and difficult,
 Perplexed with bog and briar, peril, and doubt
 As imaged to the life their purposed act,
 Had they so heeded it; the omen to read
 As it was written there. Ere this the sun
 Past his mid height, and verging to descent
 Poured himself on the earth in fiercer heat
 Of his headlong downward course. The still air throbbed
 Visibly in the fever of his fire,
 And nature crouching down beneath the rage 340
 Of the blazing tyrant lay as still as a bird
 Fearful of the hawk's pounce; uttering no voice,
 Breathing no breath; yet did they win no less,
 Their toilsome way to where a wide pine wood
 Darkened and shagged the brow of a mighty hill
 Else bare. That wood frowned his defiance forth
 Sullenly in despite of the warm sun
 That made of all the air one brilliant blaze,
 Save there alone. "Hark ye my friends" said Hess,
 "The marrow of youth is yet within your bones, 350
 But mine are hard and dry: therefore rest here,
 The respite that I need, may please you well
 Who need it not. Here let us sit in the shade
 And look into the sun—a luxury
 Of nature such as costliest artifice
 Can give no higher: or if you will, to the house
 By the brook-side, where the old fisher dwells:
 He of our brotherhood—ye know him well!
 And hear what news—whether our venture yet
 Be noised abroad—how uttered and how deemed, 360
 Or, if its fame be dumb." "Aye, thither on"
 Cried Linsingen; "behoves him well who goes
 On such a perilous errand as our's is,
 To keep his foot astir. We have a world
 To win with only our zeal and fiery will,

To help us win it ; therefore stay we there
 Where our stay gives us surety of some good
 To make each minute stand a figure of count
 Unto our profit ; and he, I know him long ;
 His wish is with us, though his strength of arm 370
 Is past its working time, and what we need
 Of counsel true and safe advertisement,
 If the common eye look cold upon our cause,
 Or if we may hope comfort hereabout,
 Whate'er it be, he'll say it as truth's self
 Had given him the warrant. On, away,
 'Tis scantly a-half mile." He had sprung up
 Ere this, and gave the example ere the word ;
 And as he did, his comrades followed him
 To do the like. A stiff descent half briar,
 Half bog, and then a brook by an old tree bridged ;
 And these impediments being o'erpast 380
 They reached the fisher's home—entered therein,
 A ragged boy carried his grandsire word
 Of the strangers come. Nor stayed the old man long
 To greet his guests. " Gentles, I had felt shame,
 But that my shame in sorrow is all drowned
 To give you welcome in so poor a hut ;
 I who have oft crost hands with you ere now
 Over the threshold of a worthier house, 390
 Fit for such guests. But be it as it is :
 I am no worse a man who suffer this,
 Nor he a better who makes me suffer it.
 Time and God's grace will do us right at last
 Though our own means fail"—" And who dare's say they
 shall ?"
 Thus Linsingen broke in upon the word
 " Who talks of failure when his hopes are full,
 With wealth and strength to warrant them each one
 To its utmost worth. No, my good man, God's aid 400
 Is for him only who dares aid himself
 In spite of danger ; arms we have, and hands,
 But have we hearts withal to give them a soul,

Or do we mock the manhood we pretend,
 Being but apes of men? No spirit elsewhere,
 Save only in words? No, we are not so vile—
 By heaven I'd hew them down and stamp them in mire,
 These, my two comrades, in whose life I live,
 Ere I would rate them so." The old man looked up,
 Surprized, and looked, and smiled, and shook his head, 410
 "Aye, master, youth is warm and full of hope;
 And once my head, as yours, was golden bright,
 But age turns all to grey—'tis not my will
 But the sharp stress of need makes me so sad.
 Oh do but show me a light, I'll follow it
 Through fire and water. Aye, Sir, think what 'tis
 To be an honest householder one day,
 And a prison-rogue the next,—to be dragged off—
 My fishing gear and all whereby I lived
 Being seized before my face. Mere beggary; 420
 Homeless and breadless—and not I alone,
 But these poor children too, who have done no harm,
 But to be come of me—that they must starve,
 And I must fail them now—and be their shame
 'Stead of their blessing. Oh! 'twere a blest job
 Could I but dig their graves. Sir, you're book-learned—
 And tell me, is it sinful to wish death
 In such a ruin as this? Grant it be not,—
 For if it be, then I'm a sinner too
 On the heap of all my wretchedness. Aye, bairns, 430
 Well may you look, for oncome such as this
 You never saw in your old Grandsire yet,
 And when you see the like of it again,
 You'll see what e'en must break the heart of me,
 If it come often." More had he outpoured,
 For his passion swept along in a full flood;
 But Linsingen snatched from his pouch a flask—
 "And true it is," he said, "we've all our griefs,
 But we've strength too, thank God, for their redress,
 And that same strength were purposed to put forth 440

For all our sakes: what you have borne, I, too,
 Have borne the like, and all must bear yet worse,
 Or else on adverse fortune lay strong hands
 To muzzle and gag her.—Here my old friend, drink this
 'Tis freely born, free as the dew on the hills;
 No curst exciseman for its godfather,
 But a brave lawless spirit—drink it down,
 And drink perdition to such laws as those
 And they who made them.” Old age is infancy—
 Changeful of mood, and apt to shape itself 450
 To a stronger spirit's sway. That aged man
 Straightway forgot himself, and was full fain
 To do the jovial bidding of his guests:
 A changeling to their humour—much they asked,
 And heard yet more, and still rejoiced to hear;
 For he told them that the hearts of the whole folk
 Were as the Autumn heather, a-hill side,
 Needing no more to burst into a blaze
 But only a kindling touch: o'er eyes and ears
 They were immersed in current of their talk, 460
 Unwitting of all else, when, on the door,
 Sudden there smote a strong and heavy hand
 That the house quaked to hear;—Hermann rose up,
 As his place prompted him, nearest the door,
 And drew it open. There the old Shepherd stood,
 Shaggy and wild; yet thoughtful of aspect,
 For a large spirit dwelt in his ample brow:
 Stood as a wooden image grown to the ground,
 Without or sound or stir. “Sir, from the hills
 I saw you,” so his voice at length found way, 470
 Brokenly, 'twixt the catches of his breath,
 “I saw you, and I knew you for none else;
 And down I sped in haste to tell such news
 As never heard were better for your peace:
 But truth must speak—for she's a spirit of light
 Speaking, but a dumb devil if kept in,
 As late you taught us so. Sir, to speak plain,

Your father hath another rule of faith
 Than you and I : and what he joined to do,
 That he would now break up, ere it be done,— 480
 The frame, first thing, and then the framers' heads,
 With its broken bits. Now sir, for our main work ;
 I know not if ye stand our friend, or if
 The plot have reached no further than your ear.
 But hear thus much—if ye be one of us
 Then meet this mischief for the sake of all :
 Or if your safety be not bound to ours,
 But only your secret faith, then, for faith's sake,
 Look that your father do not such a deed
 As needs must shame his son ; he hath been with me, 490
 That I should vouch him 'fore the magistrate
 For the truth of what he said, but I would not ;
 Nay, rather would I brain him with this crook,
 And hang for it after. Oh ! sir, I'm o'er warm ;
 But thou art of an upright spirit, and knowest
 The workings well of such another one.
 I meant not quite so much. Sir, the folk now
 Is gathered on the hill side ; and the young squire
 He and his stranger friend were bound to me,
 To see me in my lowly dwelling first 500
 Ere they made common presence with the main ;
 And then I meant to tell them what thou hast heard.
 But seeing thee one of their company,
 Methought such hearing would best suit thy ear—
 Imparted privily. Sir, I have told
 My tale as in my conscience I deemed best,
 Do thou what needs thereon ; soon shall we meet,
 Meantime, take home the matter to thy mind."
 He spake and went his way : but Hermann there,
 Struck with the palsy of his wonderment 510
 Stood fixed to the spot—passion oft speeds the soul
 To energy of act by its swift stream ;
 But there it came in such a rushing flood
 As quite o'erwhelmed the wheels it should drive on,

Clashing them each 'gainst each. Long time he stood
 Like to a lion bayed by many hounds,
 Doubtful which first; then did his vehemence,
 Frantic awhile, collect itself in strength,
 To be hurled at once, forcefully, all in all
 Upon his destined point: so grew his thoughts 520
 To issue, and flashed forth in fiery words.

“ Yes, 'tis e'en so—

The deed is done, and stricken is the blow;
 Come then, I know thee well, thou fatal hour—
 Come to thine own;

E'en as a reed before thy stormy power
 I bow me down;

'Tis thy stern shadow that I see,
 It deepens still; all hail to thee!
 Hark! I hear thy rushing pinion; 530

I bend me to thy dark dominion:
 Come, and sweep me hence away,
 In thy full, resistless sway.

I am thine, both sense and soul,
 Take thy slave to thy controul.
 Once I strove, but strive no longer,
 For I am weak, and thou confest the stronger.

But tell me, wherefore art thou so
 Tricked in Hope's delusive show?
 Ah no! I see thee, truly, what thou art! 540

And lo! my breast I bare;
 And we are met, and never shall we part—
 I and despair.

And thou hast done all this, my sire, e'en thou!
 Oh how could thou fall off, oh tell me how;

Was it in the battle fray,
 Was it in the face of day,
 Was it in the front of men?
 Alas, I could have borne it then.

There is a majesty and might 550
 In the high-swaying vengeful sword;

But poisoned shaft, and traitrous sleight,
 E'en by the tempter is abhorr'd.
 The rebel may be bold and true,
 And he may bear a glorious name :
 But such as thou ! to doom due
 Is shameful death, and deathless shame.
 Oh 'tis indeed a fortune most forlorn,
 Where fain we would love well ;
 To feel our love disnatured into scorn, 560
 Our heart, our home, turned to a very hell.
 But no ! thou art my father still,
 And I must love thee 'gainst my will—
 Till the severance of our tie,
 Then thou art free and so am I.
 Aye, be it so ; and so be each as free
 As is the branch I tear from this lone tree :
 Tear it off, and fling it far,
 To lie wide sever'd, as we are :
 See, it is done ; 570
 Alas ! vain fool, thou'rt still thy father's son.—
 Oh ! who will be my friend,
 E'en to the utmost end ;
 See here I bare mine arm, come, bare thy knife,
 And coldly drain
 Each shrinking vein
 Of its rich flood of crimson life.
 That my sire's blood may pour its hideous blot
 There on that heather, and I own it not.
 Curse on ye all, ye dreams of idleness, 580
 I know ye not,—back to your nothingness.
 No ; I will redeem the shame
 Of our vile, dishonoured name ;
 Now that name throughout the land
 Is charactered in felon brand ;
 Soon it shall be pure and bright,
 Written in a sunbeam's light

Uttered in the thunder's voice—
 Hear it and quake, my foes, and ye, my friends, rejoice:
 For there shall live a spirit in that name 590
 Who breathes it forth shall breathe a fiery flame:
 Evermore proclaim'd aloud
 In the council and the crowd:
 Strong to comfort and to save,
 To cheer the faint, to steel the brave:
 Soul of the battle shout,
 Rallying here and scattering there in rout.
 But what strange cloud o'erhung my brow,
 That I was blind till even now?
 I saw it not, yet was it there, 600
 That precious truth so heavenly fair.
 All in vain did Love and Hope
 Point me to this glorious scope,
 Till another counsel came,
 Muttered in my ear by shame.
 Yes, Honour, unto thee
 I bow my knee,
 To redeem the foul disgrace
 Lowering o'er my name and race:
 Thy bidding have I done, 610
 So be the Sire forgotten in the Son.
 Oh! yes, a thousand thanks my sire to thee,
 'Tis all thy gift the glory that I see;
 Not now a vision, but a truth indeed,
 For fate's own hand hath written what I read.
 I see it all, I see the opening sky,
 Oh! yet a moment, ere the scene pass by—
 All is one blazing truth before my eyes,
 Cleansed from old custom, purg'd of priestly lies;
 The giant people, the all-sovereign sun 620
 Waked up in glory, his glad course to run;
 Quenching the chilly lustre of each star
 That ruled the sky while yet he was afar.

Claiming our homage, though they shine but so
 Their own vain glory 'mid the night to show,
 Their glory and the general gloom of man,
 But who shall chase that gloom—they neither care nor can :
 Nor light nor warmth is theirs, and earth and sky
 Must bide in darkness while they sit on high.
 Bide darkling still that they may shine more bright ; 630
 Then come thou Sovereign Sun and re-assert thy right,
 Give the warm grace those lordly things deny,
 And bid them fade before thy fiery eye.
 Fade in avoidance like a fummy dream :
 They know thy power, they tremble as they gleam,
 See, darkness faints in day—the pitchy night
 Bursts into brilliance at one touch of light :
 And mid that light doth Truth ascend her throne,
 And points to man, and man asserts his own.
 Wondering to see where erst he was so blind, 640
 A clayey mass enlightened to a mind.
 And what he wills, that will is now the Lord,
 And what he says, the act obeys the word ;
 Kings tremble and crouch down, for he hath drawn
 his sword. }
 Then doth resistance vainly faint away,
 E'en as those darksome clouds dissolv'd in day ;
 Threatening the eye, and thundering on the ear,
 But to the touch a foolish empty fear—
 So right is 'stablished, and old wrongs redrest,
 The few abated, and the many blest. 650
 But oh ! the joy, the tumult. the surprize,
 One voice, one will, one world in ecstasies,
 Oh swell not so my heart ; oh veil ye my fond eyes.
 Yes, 'tis decreed—
 I've seen the sight, and now to do the deed !"
 As thus he spake his glove was in his hand ;
 And—for his spirit lent itself to the act—
 He flung that badge of his defiance down
 So sharp, that the earth rang with the sharp stroke

As of an iron mass.—“ I fling thee there,
Let who will take thee up ; from this time forth
This hand is bare till it hath done its work,
E'en till the crown consummate the work done.”
He said, and entered in ; and thus to his men—
“ My friends, the loud occasion summons us
As with a trumpet blast ; no tarrying time
Have we here. Up then, to the hills ! discourse what needs,
We'll frame it by the way.” Their talk e'en then
Was rooted deeply in an earnest ground ;
But such a soaring spirit spake from his lips 670
As did o'errule them to hear nought beside
Only itself ; none answered him a word,
But each man looked first in the speaker's face,
Then in his fellows', wondering whence that soul
So gentle, had found wings to fly withal,
And to such towering pitch. But the high mind
Rules from its height ; and so their weaker will
Bowed to the sterner sovereignty of his,
That they should do his bidding. Forth they went,
Leaving the old fisherman to follow them, 680
As best he might, in tardiness of years.
Silently they strode on, lest a light word
Should cross some issue of momentous birth,
Shutting conception in. They had cleared the brook,
And eyes were strained to see the multitude
Barely by a sharp ridge hindered from their sight,
When Hermann, whose quick haste as goaded on
By an inner spur his fellows had forevanded,
Suddenly turning, stayed them, front to front,
And thus began :—“ My friends, we go to hear, 690
And utter, and if that alone, 'tis much—
But why not more, say then to act, what then ?
Good faith, that latest word pleases me best,
For sure it speaks a strong and daring sense
Akin to our spirit. Aye, now ye wonder me,
And reason that ye should : ye see me changed,

E'en so ; what late I was, ye knew me well,
 But now ye look upon another man—
 A change that wears no blush. For it turns not
 On centre of self, but ever hath respect 700
 To the main good ; and now I tell ye all—
 The sum without the account, for our cause stands EVEN
 On the sword's point, and reason is our talk
 Should hold no larger space. We are betrayed !
 Nay, start not, for the danger of that word
 Demands a sterner front than that of fear ;
 And we must strain our sinews all the more,
 And knit our brows. I say we are betrayed !
 And he who hath done it—ask me not who he is
 Lest the name choak me in the utterance : 710
 Only thus much, I will atone the deed
 With my best life and dearest faculties,
 Being his son. But mark me this, my friends,
 Doubtless his aim is level to his end,
 And we in dangerous range : yet to that end
 Behoves a double treason, he 'gainst us
 And we against ourselves ; if we flinch now,
 Then we were all as well each man of us
 To make a halter of his handkerchief
 There on that tree. But we have hearts, I trow, 720
 And there's no spell need bind us to sit still [more ?
 While the headsman whets his knife ; then what needs
 To the cannon's mouth and slay the cannoneer
 With the match in his hand. Go play at brag with fate,
 Outbrave each danger, and o'ertop it still
 With a yet louder and more daring one :
 Else must we die the death—as traitors ta'en
 With the sword half out of sheath, short of the act,
 But past all hope of pardon for the thought.
 Oh bare it then at once our brave design, EVEN [730
 And let it flash through the air in all mens' eyes,
 Joyous to start from its dark scabbard forth—
 And see the light : if that you dare thus much

There is hope to do it. Certain justicemen
 Are ware of us ; and they in their conceits,
 If my trust lies not, would fain take us here,
 And make our treason a fool. Oh ! but we'll crush
 Their fingers in their own most cunning trap,
 And their necks after: only my friends be bold,
 And write that word gravenly on your hearts— 740
 And so ye have a talisman each one
 Safe as the ground he treads ; for ye know well
 He who would win success, must seize her first
 In the grasp of forward fiery confidence ;
 Be sure she takes for her lord her ravisher
 Who dares commit it. But which way ? what means ?
 Aye, 'tis well asked—cudgels I say, and stones,
 And they are strength enough when strongly used,
 So be our hearts our only arms of fire—
 We need none other. 'Tis but a street fray : 750
 When danger comes we'll meet him, dangerously
 Aimed to the teeth : but yet the time is not,
 Bludgeons will serve this bout. My very friends,
 What I have said I think to say again
 In the face of all the people assembled there,
 Our universal goodly brotherhood.
 If that it be your pleasure, as long since
 Your proffers were, now to join hands with me,
 The time is instant ; else if to your taste
 This mess I've mixed savour too fiery hot, 760
 Then make your meal apart—leave me alone ;
 And I will do the work of many men,
 And the work shall prosper. Stand you there awhile,
 And ponder well to do or to forbear ;
 For I must to the Shepherd's in mean time :
 Whate'er ye hold best, God speed it and us all 766

BOOK VII.

He ended ; and his speech from one so mild
And maidenlike, struck them with that surprise,
As who should see a flash of lightning start
From a blue sky. Long they stood wondering,
And witless what to think, much less to say,
The sudden danger opening at their feet
So startled them. The first was Linsingen
To array his thoughts, and give them issue of speech
From their surprise. "Hermann, what you have said,
It is not words, but a sheer wonderment ; 10
And first I marvel if thou be thyself ;
And next, that being so, thou shouldst lock up
This counsel from thy friend—beshrew us both,
Having so high a stake upon this game,
Methinks I have both right and reason too,
To see and know it all how it is played.
And Hermann, either you did flatter me,
Or I am the head of this our enterprize ;
The head as I once thought, and others too
Upheld me for no less : but now it seems 20
Since this your new conceit hath made me void,—
I am but the bare skull, and you the brains
To fill my emptiness. I have risked all
My honour, means of life, aye, and life too—
Risked them to the extremity of hope,
To the dizzy edge where but the madman's eye
Would deem it space enough for his foot to stand :
And how 'tis doomed in Heaven, Heaven only knows ;
But for the worldly rate, all affluence
Of honour, how full swollen soe'er, were but 30

A little thing against such waste of wealth ;
E'en if this honour were safe, not what it is,
Reeling its wild round like a gamester's ball,
With but one hopeful chance 'gainst many blanks,
And then all lost. Hermann, if to do this
Be a friend, then sure no rage of my enemies
Can screw their rack to the height of my desert,
When their time comes to work (their will on me.
'Fore heaven I fear not danger, only I wish
No more nor less but to be in front of it. 40
Nor is it I, if only I know myself,
Am like to march so dull a packhorse pace
That any other man need trip my heels,
And so supplanted, take my place himself,
Promising hotter speed—as a ball of fire
To run before their way ; only take heed,
Lest such a guide but lead you in a bog,
And so fulfil your hopes. Well, I care not ;
What I have done, I would others may rue,
Not I myself ; nor is my spirit so poor, 50
My stomach so faint-sick, as to puke now,
Like to a sot when his wine is turned to fume,
And his hot fit o'er. No ; be ye false or true,
What I am and was, that will I ever be ;
And so what others hold let them hold on :
For me, I speak not of my merit, let that
Proclaim itself ; only thus much I say,
My soul hath truth and honour, and strength enough
To be my sovereign. So it shall be,
And I obey it. Other obedience 60
Neither do I profess to other men,
Nor claim ought for myself, save what free souls
Render to full desert." " And even such
With strong affection," Hermann answered him,
" Freely I render, Linsengen, to thee.
Take it, and have, and use it for thy own.
But oh, no word of doubt or jealousy ;

Thou know'st how little a damp may check the train,
 That it take not fire; and a two-headed plot
 Is such a monster as lives no long life, 70
 How stoutly limbed soe'er: then think no thought
 But that thou art our one acknowledged head,
 To rule the bulk. And what I am we all are,
 Content if that our march more in such train
 That thou shouldst lead and we should follow thee:
 What late I said, the voice that uttered it
 Was but a fainter echo of thy own,
 Speaking erewhile in a spirit all as strong.
 Then no more words; rather the proof of them;
 That proof so let it come, welcome whene'er, 80
 We will fulfil it—only do thou command
 Boldly, and we will serve thee all as bold,
 That the head shall have no cause to say to the hand,
 Thou coward! Master, thou art the chief of us,
 Is it thy will we advance, or here turn back?"
 "Forward, in the name of God!" cried Linsengen,
 Fired as with sudden lightning. "Whate'er falls,
 We will defy the proof. See, there they stand,
 By Heaven 'tis a brave force, if but they be 90
 So full of daring as their numbers are,
 We shall have fire enough and some to spare
 For kindling of our blaze." They reached the height
 Of the ridge, there stopped, and waved their hats on high,
 For friendly token; the wild multitude
 Beheld and knew, and joyed to answer it,
 Greeting them with so hearty loud acclaim,
 That the lone plover wheeling o'er their heads
 Started aside as from the fowler's shot,
 At that so sudden alarm: soon were they met,
 With hasty earnestness and grasp of hand; 100
 Not such as is the festal meetings wont,
 Mirthful and light—but as when man with man
 Is leagued to do some danger, and hands meet
 Consciously, as fast-bound conspirators—

Silent and strong. Sudden a murmur ran,
 A birth without a father, through the crowd,
 Stirring its surface up into a swell,
 Portent of storm: and as that crowd was swayed
 This way and that by impulse of each man,
 So every heart like to a mountain pool 110
 Where many torrents meet, was stirred to its depth
 By passions rushing in contrarious
 Tide against tide. Long time did Linsengen
 Suffer their smouldering fire to work in them,
 Each kindling each, till the whole became one glow,
 Threatening instant flame; then he strode forth
 And mounted on a hillock there fast by,
 Heaped up of yore for burial of kings;
 Haply my ancestors,—” So did his thoughts
 Hold question on the ascent, “and haply I
 If those who now usurp—vengeance thou art slow
 To come, but when thou com’st thou bringest their end!
 Here kings are buried; and here freedom is born,
 And this her hour of birth. Oh! for a seer
 To cast the horoscope.” He stood on the mound,
 And sudden all that tumult became still
 As the vexed sea, ere that the hurricane
 Utter its voice. “My friends and countrymen,
 Ye were a happy people in these hills; 130
 ’Neath my sire’s sway, and so would be again
 If nature were herself, unmarred by man;
 And ye might joy in her, free from the rod
 Of these new rulers. Oh! it grieves me sore;
 So sore, that for this bitter general grief
 I may not taste the sweets of my own good.
 True, I am rich, and they who suffer thus
 Are but poor men; yet are we of one kind:
 Closer for that my sires held sway o’er yours,
 And this same kin that nature hath ordained
 Doth bind me closer to my brother men 140
 Than barriers made by man can sever me.

Ye see how nature rules ; she gives to them
 Her wealth, who give to her their patient toil ;
 As once our clan laboured these common lands,
 And the idle hand, she leaves it empty too :
 Then wherefore set we up a higher law
 Above our Maker's ; yet though this be much,
 Yet 'twere no more than sufferance might bear,
 Being this alone. But bad still genders worse ;
 And tyranny, where it hath made a sore,
 Doth fret and gnaw it till it grow to a scab— 150
 Spreading most ulcerously. We were content
 To till the common earth for our hard bread,
 And pay for leave to do it ; yes, industry
 Pay idleness the grain and best of the chaff
 For leave to be itself. This had we borne,
 But then comes one demanding what our toil
 Hath earned to buy its bread and eat in peace,
 That so wars may be waged, and Christian love
 Hewn merciless with swords, thrust through with spears,
 Drowned in a gore of blood ! Can this be well ? 160
 Oh no : and what is next betters it not,
 But makes our wormwood venom. Ye know well,
 And Oh ! that ye knew only, and did not feel,
 How that our patient toil striving 'gainst hope
 Hath yet improved that hope to harvestage,
 And the waste to wealth : hath tamed those savage hills,
 Made conquest of their stubborn barrenness,
 And set its golden sheaves for trophies up
 Upon the field : methinks he who did this
 Deserves a better quittance for the deed 170
 Than beggary requites him ; but desert
 Is a silly ass—must do oppression's work
 And then eat thistles. Well, our fields are full,
 Down comes the parson like a crow at scent
 Of carrion, and claims the law o' fus ;
 He who ne'er gave his hand at time of need,
 To put it in, then first at harvest time
 Taking his tenth ; a man strange to us all,

A lone black raven croaking hatefully,
Whose doctrine was n'er heard nor known to us, 180
Or known but for the abhorrence of our souls:
What followed on that claim is deep in your hearts,
I will not brand it deeper by my words:
Let woe go weep in silence; my dear friends,
Are ye already full to the overflow,
Or needs there one drop more. Said I a drop?
Oh! 'tis indeed a flood doth threaten us
With rage most tyrannous! those hills—those streams—
Your common right, yours and your ancestors,
Which to tear from us 'twere as well tear out 190
Our eyes from out our heads; these must they have,
And we must shrink within our cottage walls:
For if we peer beyond them, well I ween
'Tis instant treason: such a thing as this,
Burdens us harder than for man to bear.
Whoso shall think of it, his thought straitway
Doth lash itself to madness. But what boots
To think or talk, or mutter, or aught else
Save only to arm and strike; 'tis all is left,
The one good hope that sets man's wretchedness 200
Above a pack-horse: aye, and with this one
He may recover all loss, and gain thereto,
Else be forlorn of all. My friends, this tale
I've told it truly as a simple man,
Without all aggravation; for what needs
To paint Hell-flames more fierce: but my heart swells,
And my words fail me. 'Twere better at sword stroke,
As my sires were wont. Hermann, stand forth
And speak our griefs as they do seem to thee;
And if thou canst devise some milder mean
To quit this fever without flow of blood,
I'll hold thee for a surgeon above price, 210
And bless thy skill; else must we draw the sword
E'en as our foes compel us, and God wills."
He spake; but his speech uttered brokenly,
Died in the air, seeking an answering shout,

But finding none through that wide multitude ;
 Extinct half-way, e'en as the miner's train
 Ere that the perilous magazine hath caught
 Its flame, and with a burst of wild uproar
 Confounded all around ; yet was it not
 Unknown, nor unapproved, the end he aimed : 220
 They willed none other. But the multitude
 Is as a mass of tinder, apt to fire
 If that the stroke from above be swift and strong,
 And the sparks fall streamingly,—else gloomy and dark,
 Having no light nor heat within itself,
 But from without ; and tardiness of tongue
 Hath not the spell to quicken sympathy,
 But leaves it to lie dead ; dulling the sense
 That it should point,—the forward faculty
 That plays with words and wields them at its will : 230
 Never did Linsingen pay court to it,
 And now lacked it at need ; and the eloquence
 That should blow ever with continuous breath,
 He gave it forth in gusts, waking zeal up
 But for a while—to start and look around—
 Then flag again. Oh words, vain words ! how much
 More potent are ye than the things ye mean ?
 Who would be great let him, observe ye well
 To help his greatness. Linsingen stood back,
 And Hermann thus fiery, with bold front.— 240
 “ Landsmen and friends, our righteous brotherhood,
 That ye have met so many I thank ye much,
 And these same thanks your children shall repeat,
 To bless your memories—yours, and this day's,
 For the things it shall bring forth : and what erewhile
 I marvelled that your patience was so long,
 That marvel is made joy. My judgement turned
 To your side ; and your true wisdom justified
 By its fruit : else, had rash haste untimely urged on
 Disclosure, but to perish being disclosed, 250
 Making our birth abortion. What ye have heard
 Of the ills recited by our leader here,

Doubtless ye've felt them also this long time,
 Worse than the bitterest words : the man that writhes
 Beneath the whip, needs not a monitor
 To tell him 'tis a truth and no vain dream,
 The pain he suffers. But have ye felt so,
 That your strong feeling hath become a flame
 Feeding upon its griefs? Brethren, I know
 The man I am, a Christian minister ; 260
 And what I am 'tis not the name alone :
 For I have striven, that my very life
 Should earn itself that name ; not that the name
 Should throw its cloak of falsehood o'er my life,
 To hallow an ill thing—truly 'tis so :
 And in this truth as I have walked in it,
 So have I taught ye all to do the like ;
 Practising e'en as your profession is
 In pregnant faith : and well I know that faith 270
 Is only then itself, when it doth prove
 Patience most saintly of wrong done to it :
 And I beseech ye prove no less than this,
 Each in his own respect, thus—for himself,
 But for his neighbour and the commonweal—
 Impatience of their wrongs is all as great
 A virtue as to bear meekly our own.
 Aye, and I tell ye, the one lives and grows
 Out of the others' death : all we forego
 Of indignation in our proper cause.
 We hoard its long accumulation up, 280
 To crush the public traitor. This had ye done,
 Long ages since, then had much sin been spared
 To your rulers, and much sufferance to you :
 And yet 'tis well, since that your patience
 Hath armed you with more needful warranty
 To win by sheer force that which reason and truth
 With humble perseverance and still prayer
 Protesting, are but paid with mockery,
 As who should labour to preach back its prey
 From robber insolence. Therefore, dear friends,

I do beseech ye for the good of all, 290
 Pluck out this plague that dwells but in some few,
 And cast it from ye ; do brief violence
 To wrongfulness for even justice sake,
 That lasting peace may 'stablish on sure grounds
 Our rights, our lives, our fortunes of us all.
 For the cause that prompts me thus to counsel ye,
 Ye have known me long, and what ye know of me,
 Be it my judge ; have I been tried and proved
 Just in all else, sincere, careless of self,
 Then trust me this : and oh ! misdeem me not
 To think I and my office are at odds ; 300
 For that I counsel ye to cut the ill off
 That eats our core,—nor so to cherish and love
 A vice sitting in state, that ye must needs
 Hate many more and worthier in that love :
 That this is truth, reason persuades me so,
 Nor only reason, but my conscience more,
 Of God's own word. Oh ! could that word speak now,
 E'en as 'tis written, then would its voice breathe
 With such a fervent breath, that all your souls
 Must needs conspire with it. No ; sincere faith 310
 Is not a sluggard's dream, but rather a thing
 Most meek and patient in prosperity,
 As a calm sea, but being stirred by some
 Strong spirit's influence, then all as high
 And mighty in height as it was humble erewhile.
 Yes, it hath come to win us peace on earth,
 Through its own warfare—hardened 'gainst all proof
 Of peril ; and like a trusty messenger
 Tasteth not the rich blessings that he brings,
 Content with others' good. For what Christ said, 320
 How that his coming was contentions
 Lighting truth's way, but with a firebrand light ;
 That must we do—playing for a great prize
 The good of man ; and for that prize alone
 Setting at stake our lives, our means, our all,
 To win or lose :—this for my function,

Lest ye should deem I wrong its holiness
To bless thus boldly and sanctify your arms ;
Next, since we must encounter them with force,
That force, what is it, in manner and amount, 330
How armed, how furnished, and how spirited ?
Why brethren, I profess no magic means,
Nor have no spell to make our weakness strength
Or their strength weakness : only, we are men,
And in our manhood must we strongly win,
Or sternly die. Oh ! but if that be our aim,
There have been others have essayed the like ;
And how they sped, their history is writ
In their own blood ; the axe of the enemy
Fulfilled its office surer than their sword. 340
True, they are dead ; most true, they died half-way
Short of their aim—the martyr, hangman, and judge,
They are all dead ; the loss of life, the odds
Of a few years time hath made even now :
But there's an after-judgment they must bide :
And there are three men, and three several hopes,
And which think you the best and fairest one ?
Oh, I've strong faith the judgment passed on earth
Stands not in Heaven, but be that as it may :
Enough, that all are dead and gone alike. 350
For the rest, to our own counsels let us look,
Leaving what God hath doomed them, and questioning
What more concerns us, how they failed their mark
Set by themselves. 'Tis true their shaft fell short ;
And why, but that their boldness fell short first ?
For what is he but a fool,—the man who fain
Would shoot through a steel plate, and for that end
Doth draw his string as 'twere a silken thread,
Most girlish ? Oh ! one's teeth gnash in self-spite,
That the heart of such a deed should be so drowned 360
In such a dropsy ! that mere feebleness
And watery fear should so put out the flame
That burned so bright ! But what they did is done ;

And their repulse rebounds but to our good :
 For of the body of their enterprize,
 Remains but the dark shadowed memory,
 Standing to warn us, that whate'er we do,
 We do not in likewise : ye and your like,
 Brethren, ye are the sinews and the strength
 Of this fair land ; and what ye will, ye shall,
 Spite of your lords whose strongest power is but 370
 An idle plume that waves on the steel cap,
 And waving there, doth make its silly boast
 To guard the head and crown of monarchy :
 But that same cap which is indeed nought else
 But the people's iron strength, withdraw it once,
 Where is their vaunt ? gone, light as vanity,
 To flutter down the wind, with a few fools
 Wondering after it. Well, whate'er ye will,
 Ye may have all, so ye will earnestly ;
 But such a will calls for no idle cause 380
 To wind it up to such a haughty height,
 As opposition will but once look up,
 And then kneel down to it : 'twas there they erred
 Who fondly dreamt, as fools yet fonder dream,
 Their brain-born constitution had a charm
 That full contentment needs must follow it ;
 A thing without all life, or spirit, or sense,
 With ink for all its blood ; they gave it forth,
 And set it up—an idol high upreared
 But to fall down as flat : so the eager will 390
 'Gan wane, and zeal indignant to be fooled,
 Must rather be a madman ; so those men
 Having stormed their strength away in their mad fit,
 Sunk into stilly passiveness again,
 To wear the old fetters ; for their manly soul
 Was starved to weakness ; that they lost the hope
 Who had well-nigh won the crown. But better wit
 Guides us a better way : and be ye sure
 The spirit that we raise, we'll diet it

To grow a giant growth ; rashness—how so ?
 Come forth, the man who said it, oh, yes, erewhile
 I was discreet in counsel and in act ;
 But well I know boldest decision now
 Is best discretion. What again ? brute force
 Say'st thou, brute force ? why yes, my feeble friend,
 'Tis truly to be dreaded, but by whom ?
 Not, certes, by the strong, but by the weak ;
 By those whose wrongful weakness doth usurp
 Our native rights against our rightful strength.
 Look to our Sires—they reasoned vainly, until
 They armed—so we, likewise—true ; 'tis a mass
 Heavy to raise—the people of this land,
 But set your lever once on the firm soil,
 We'll heave it high enough. Then if your will
 Hold fellowship with mine, resolve we thus.— 410
 Since that of ancient time wrong hath prevailed
 Elsewhere, and specially here in this land,
 O'er christian faith, reason, and common right,
 Well nigh to the extinction of all three ;
 And since this people after long sufferance,
 Stirred up at length for Christ's sake and their own,
 Hath sought redress of grievance and found none,
 But rather hath been mocked of certain men, 420
 Claiming to be the representatives
 And express image of the people's will ;
 Who yet, in truth, do nothing of all that
 The people would have done. Therefore 'tis thus
 Agreed, and thus resolved by those met here : —
 'Tis just and fitting that the commonality—
 In virtue of its sovereign majesty,
 Seeing it hath entrusted its estate
 To certain men who have abused that trust—
 Should exercise itself the care of its own, 430
 And order all things for its interest,
 By its proper voice, and will immediate ;
 And be it resolved, all laws should be for use

Of the mair, and not for 'vantage of some few ;
 Therefore for furtherance of such main good
 The rule of property should be redrest
 From its wrong bias unto its right scope,
 Which was indeed to comfort industry ;
 As sure it doth where reason limits it ;
 Though oft of late, selfishness most perverse 440
 Hath wrested it, to ends of idleness.
 Then be it resolved, only the labourer,
 Or they who do provide labour its means,
 Have right and title to the land's increase.
 Hence that the farmer's stock upon each farm
 Be rated ; and a yearly usury
 Be paid him on that rate, from the land's growth ; 450
 And for his management and master-skill,
 A further portion of the yearly increase :
 Then for the surplus of such payment made,
 They who have toiled the ground, 'tis theirs of right
 To share it and enjoy it, and thank God
 Sharing by rule of elders, duly ordained
 To make apportionment of labourers,
 And judge all controversies in each farm.
 But for the landlord—'tis an impious name,
 By man usurped from God,—so be it resolved, 460
 To make no further mention of that name ;
 But let the state take their dominion,
 Paying them compensation lest they starve ;
 So much the less as they have taxed the more
 Our bread, long time, and now must quit the account.
 But that which each man's skill hath made for him,
 Procured, or earned, as money, and house, and goods,
 And what he hath by gift of the like kind,
 Be it all his own to hold and to enjoy.
 And be it resolved, that labour respiteless 470
 Befits not man, being brute drudgery ;
 Changing to beastliness his nature, born
 A little lower than the angels are :
 And in this rule the labourer hath right

Of leisure and appliance to enjoy
 His life, nor only toil for means to live,—
 As was his old compulsion. and is now :
 Barring all spiritual exercise,
 Stunting all holy growth, and robbing so
 His soul of its immortal privilege, 480
 Its means of grace, and faculty for heaven.
 Then to forfend that evil, and gain this good,
 Be there provided recreative means,
 Both for refreshment of man's weekly toil,
 And holy comfort after worldliness.
 But since vice ever grows from vacancy,
 Therefore, 'tis need all aids be ministered,
 To further blameless action to its end,
 And occupy in sport or seriousness
 The space that else the evil one would fill. 490
 And be those aids varied for various needs—
 Gardens and spacious shades, where the weary sense
 In their cool freedom may refresh itself ;
 And contemplative leisure study God
 By nature's help—his best interpreter :
 Besides, what ground for pastime may seem fit,
 In frequency of popular resort,
 For lusty games, and proof of manliness.
 Next, since man sins only in ignorance,
 And as he learns, e'en so he practises, 500
 Practising only what he first hath learnt ;
 Therefore it is the common good of all,
 And common right, that each man be taught well,
 Lest evil discipline lead to ill deeds :
 And then the law rising up wrathfully—
 Albeit itself worthier far of blame
 In its default, than was the man in his act—
 Do bloody vengeance on the deed foredone ;
 Making much evil in its slothfulness,
 And mending it with more in its hastiness : 510
 To punish eager, as careless to prevent ;

A hangman's office—'stead of the kind grace
 Of a loving teacher and good governor—
 Rule most irregular and mischievous.
 Therefore be there provided public schools,
 Industrial, labour and art with letters joined,
 Where each shall send his own, save on proof made
 Of homely discipline as sure and good—
 From tender infancy even to youth.
 And next, when liberty in riper years
 Shall grow beyond constraint; then let free-will 520
 Be kindly aided to take up the aim,
 By discipline foregone at her due time.
 And to that end be furnished treasuries
 Of various knowledge, books and liberal arts,
 Lectures mechanic, concerts musical,
 And whate'er else quickens humanity—
 That finer sentiment so to the soul
 Attempered, may prevail o'er brutishness;
 Subduing passion by its gentler sway.
 And be it resolved again—the church is naught; 530
 A thing corrupt,—essence and ordinance:
 No church indeed, but a foul den of thieves
 And money changers, trafficking men's souls
 With hire and sale, 'stead of salvation;
 Being one half of them to their own flocks,
 Foreigners, knowing nor regarding them—
 Though feeding on their flesh—clothed with their fleece;
 Truly, a sin to draw damnation down,
 Not only on them, but us who suffer them;
 As God will sure require it at our hands.
 Therefore, that this huge scandal be pulled down,
 And then reframed in frame Apostolic:
 So shall each congregation rule itself,
 Without all bias of authority
 For things of faith, save of the bible alone.
 Choosing its elders as it judgeth best;
 And they upon that choice, choosing again

The deacons and the preachers of the word;
 Each of these last holding authority 540
 To interpret Scripture by his conscience,
 So he profess Christ's word for his rule of faith.
 And that tithes cease; and each church bear its charge;
 They who own none being taxed for aid of all.
 And be it resolved,—soldiership shall be called
 No longer; but all men enured in arms,
 Not to be helpless for defensive need.
 And be it resolved,—'tis an unholy thing
 To make a general dearth for gain of few;
 Therefore be this land free what other lands 550
 Can give without all hindrance to receive.
 Saving the dues imposed to serve state needs.
 And be it resolved—the law is much in fault;
 Therefore behoves the counsel of men skilled
 To settle a sure rule of right and wrong,
 Bringing back error to simplicity.
 Further, 'tis good the general voice should be
 Arbitress of the general estate,
 Since discipline hath given intelligence
 Abroad, and with that gift the right of its use. 560
 So be it resolved,—'twere fit that every man
 (Saving the felon and taker of public alms)
 Should give his suffrage for the choice of those
 Proposed for rulers of the commonweal.
 And that such suffrage be in secret-wise;
 And that such chosen rulers rule alone,
 Forbye all claim of birth and privilege.
 Last, since these things—being our righteous due—
 Are, by our rulers, yet denied to us,
 With whom nor right, nor reason, availeth aught; 570
 And patience of their heavy oppression
 Doth but provoke them to heap wrong on wrong,
 As this poor land hath proved under their power
 Groaning and travailing in pain till now.
 Therefore, be it resolved—there is strong need

That we rise up from our long passiveness
 In arms, and so redress ourselves to right,
 Manfully, as behoves good and true men.
 Brethren, this is my conscience, these my thoughts:
 Hear me in few, ere ye resolve on them; 570
 I've made my search for truth these many years,
 And either this is she, or truth herself
 Is fallacy—a word—a sound—no more;
 A mere invention to lead men astray,
 In a worse error: that which ye now hear
 In common, ye have heard singly erewhile,
 Each man of you, with me, his minister,
 Weighing it well in portion and in bulk:
 And this my thought's hasty deliverance
 Hath been the fruit and travail of long time; 580
 Then needs no longer to make proof of it:
 Briefly ye've heard the sum, now, answer me;
 Is it your will that it be so resolved?"
 He ended; and the throng that listened him
 So zealously were rapt in his discourse,
 That answer was spell-bound—all utterance lost
 In the eager audience. And his speech done,
 After him silent admiration came
 To fill the void: then there sprang forth a voice,
 Sudden, exulting in its fierce assent; 590
 And upon that a shout tumultuous,
 Conclaiming, like a battery's general peal,
 After the signal shot. Who heard the acclaim,
 He had believed the people assembled there
 A thousand-fold themselves; so lively strong
 Against the surly mountain side it struck,
 As every voice had been a living thing,
 And joy were in its utterance: a glad fire
 Kindled in Hermann's eye, to feel their hearts
 Swelling to meet his own, pulse against pulse— 600
 Deep answering deep, and thus his soul spake out:—

" Brethren and friends 'tis well,
 Ye've said, and what ye've said who shall gainsay ?
 Not all the host of Hell,
 Shall now withstand your will or bar your destined way.
 We're risen up, and where's the mighty hand
 Shall smite us down ?
 We're risen up to win unto this land
 Her old renown—
 Her ancient high prerogative, 610
 To teach the nations how to live
 Long it was an idle boast,
 Least vouchsafed when vaunted most ;
 But the lie is now made true,
 Thanks to ye and honour due.
 Due to ye all, and to your patriot worth,
 And to the blessed land that sent ye forth.
 Yes, hail to thee ! my glorious mother-land,
 For glorious shalt thou be !
 Thou that hast borne this holy-brother band, 620
 All hail to thee !
 Men shall look to thee from far,
 As to some lone shining star,
 Shining in the dead of night,
 For a high and guiding light :
 Now the patriot glow I feel ;
 Now I know the fervent zeal,
 Never known or felt before,
 Vassal'd as thou wert of yore ;
 For who in his most fond imaginings 630
 Could love thee then ?
 O'erlorded by all cursed creeping things,
 Instead of men ?
 Things that had crawl'd unto their height,
 Thence to rule thee in the right
 Of their fangs and poisonous power ;
 But, thanks to God, they have fulfill'd their hour.

Mother of Freedom, yes, I greet thee now,
 Thy travail o'er ;
 There beams a high-souled beauty from thy brow, 640
 Was not before.
 And ever brighter glance thy fountains,
 And ever higher swell thy mountains ;
 And all for pride that thou art grown
 To stand amid the world alone :
 Stand alone, while others fall,
 Bending to the queen of all.
 I greet thee with a kiss ; and ye around,
 Bare ye your feet, for this is holy ground ;
 And mark the spot, and set a sign thereon— 650
 A sign of grace, to bide when ye are gone.
 Some stone-heaped altar on the lone hill side,
 Young freedom's monument, and the far pilgrim's guide.
 And see, this day, how brightly doth it shine !
 A heavenly token—a most gracious sign ;
 But brighter yet, and yet more heavenly clear,
 Its future radiance foredestined for each year.
 As now on us, so on our memories then,
 A day of thanks to God, of joy among all men :
 In holy honour, second but to one, 660
 That blessed day that gave the Saviour Son :
 Saviour alike and leveller of man,
 Divine reformer, arch-republican.
 For what are we but workers of his will ?
 As he foretold, e'en so do we fulfil.
 Then in this surety gird ye each his sword,
 And in your swelling souls receive the Lord :
 Receive him there, and there he will abide,
 A saving power still present on our side.
 Oh ! 'tis a glorions mission that ye claim ; 670
 Your scope is high, and be your souls the same ;
 Fearless of all such fear as worldlings feel,
 Each grief, each joy, consumed in blazing zeal ;

A blazing zeal, that neither cares nor knows
Of perils swarming on the path it goes ;
Looking but to its glorious end on high,
And flashing back that glory from its eye.
Whate'er befall, enduring all alike,
Hardship or ease, to suffer or to strike :
Counting all gain, and careless of all loss, 680
Save of Christ only, and his holy cross.
Such is the spirit that must speed us on
Another way than other men have gone.
Yes, brethren, mark me this, another way—
And further, straiter, and more sure than they ;
Ah, if it were not so, the thought were vain,
But one link more to lengthen out our chain ;
Look on that chain, and see how it is made ;—
'Tis wrought from many a broken patriot blade,
Shivered against the strength they foolishly assayed. 690
But what we purpose, none e'er dared it yet,
Then who shall say that we are vainly met ?
I tell ye none hath failed where none hath tried ;
Others have past away, our counsel shall abide.
The puny traitor-fools this land hath known,
Were frighted at the shadow of the throne,
And fell, uncared of all, who cared but for their own.
So dastard fear is father to its fate,
But rebel greatness must be boldly great :
Brethren, we know it well ; and what we know, 700
Our knowledge in our daring must we show.
No plotting treachery, no courtly lies,
Such puny tricks as suit a puny prize,
And weak hands execute, and slavish souls devise.
No ; let the mighty mass display its power,
Broad as the banner o'er some sovereign tower ;
The mighty mass that never rais'd its head,
While factions counter'd, and while nobles bled ;
But now, impatient of its stolen right,
Shall brandish its high hand, and burst into the fight. 710

Hark ! hear ye not ? 'tis the fresh spirit's sweep,
 Stooping to stir the fountains of the deep.
 And lo ! a mighty flood shall level all,
 New powers arise, and ancient empires fall.
 Joy to ye, brethren, joy ; for many are they
 Whose livelong spirits yearned to see this day,
 And saw it not, but past in frustrate hope away.
 That sight—that holy work is all our own,
 By God's free grace :
 O let us give him honour, kneeling down 720
 Here in this place.
 We have been a brotherhood,
 True and holy, fast and good ;
 I your minister, and ye
 Children of my ministry,
 Hearers of the word I preach.
 Livers of the life I teach ;
 Zealous for the gospel cause,
 In despite of worldly laws ;
 So of late I deemed ye all— 730
 Is it now the time to fall ?
 Shamefully to fall aloof.
 Bidden thus to bide the proof ?
 No ; it would grieve me sore ;
 Shall this our house so strictly edified,
 Fall loosely on the shore,
 Impotent of the assailing tide ?
 And often have I preached and prayed with you, 740
 Communing mind with mind ;
 And now the time is come that we should do
 What we designed.
 That which ye did profess,
 To be devoted to your Saviour's will,
 I deem ye are no less ;
 We promised then, and now much more fulfil."
 Fervency, thou'rt indeed a godlike gift,
 That makest the whole man to be one heart—

Afountain of warm blood ; 'tis only thou
 Begettest sympathy 'twixt soul and soul,
 Melting the mass, else rough, to a fluid heat, 750
 And blending many men to a single mind :
 Strange sorcery—that fervent faculty
 Had Hermann ; first to take the fire himself,
 And with that fire from the fierce torch, he was
 To light all round. Nature in the orator
 Is chiefest art, and the o'erflowing soul
 Bears all away in its flood : that multitude,
 Mixed of so many various men now breathed
 But one conspiracy : the brotherhood,
 Three hundred souls and more, bound in one bond
 Of holy love and zeal, stronger than chains,
 Warmer than blood, more solemn than all oaths,
 They were the chief of them—in spirit alike,
 And in strength too ; for sure such metal as theirs,
 Where heaven hath set its stamp, needs must it be
 More purer than for earthly proof to reach,
 Or persecution purge away its dross,
 Where truly is none ; for that same jealous fire
 Would purge it, is itself a drossy thing
 Against the fineness of its quality : 770
 So on the test it proves futility
 Against the assayer. Next, some ranker stuff—
 For where is there a river flows so pure
 But hath some mud at bottom—common men,
 Of common clay ; a clay trodden to mire
 In the world's foul traffic, ill at ease themselves,
 And therefore reckless of their neighbour's peace ;
 Living but as a plaguy changeful itch
 Upon the surface of the common life.
 Whoso were skilled to read man's character 780
 Had scarce misread them then, as they stood there,
 Wearing their souls outside—outscorning scorn
 That fain would fasten on their raggedness,
 By daring of their eye and weathered front,

Bronzed past the blush of shame; smugglers some few,
 And poachers more: transgressors such as the law
 Brands with its felon brand; but sympathy
 Characters with an honourable note
 Among their fellows: turning shame to pride,
 Suffering to praise. Oh! 'tis an evil thing 790
 When the law blows counter to the common tide,
 Chafing it into billows: such were they,
 A mere alloy fitting the gold for work;
 Old offcast stuff, metal much worn in the ways,
 All the more apt to dangerous purposes;
 For that it had been proved in baser use.
 Truly, the common lungs cannot away
 With such pure air as noble spirits breathe,
 Dwelling on high;—behoves gross appetite,
 Diet as gross: but be it as it may, 800
 Words are but words; 'tis the act proves itself,
 And time brings all to test; so did it them,
 Sooner than was their thought: in their mid joy,
 While yet it sparkled as 'twas first outpoured,
 And busy gratulation buzzed about,
 And hands were warm from the commutual wring;
 All in a wild ferment tumultuous,
 None knowing to what end; sudden there ran
 A murmur through that crowd, darkening each brow,
 Compressing every lip—"they come, see there, 810
 The staves are come." "Yes," shouted Linsengen,
 First looking thither where all eyes were fixed,
 Then turning round, and flashing from his brow
 Defiance yet more dangerous than he spoke.
 "Yes, 'tis no less, and would it were much more,
 A hundred swords vanquished were more renown
 Than a score broken staves. Let them come on:
 And let us break their sticks upon their backs,
 And kick them home again. What, are we babes?
 Or yon poor scurvy fellows, whom ye all know, 820
 Are they grown giants? And who leads them on?

'Tis he, the very man, the magistrate
 Who wronged me foully : well, I like the sport ;
 Yet break not into a shout as they come up,
 Give them but laughter and scorn : so let us stand,
 And they begin." So bidden, so they stood,
 That stern and self-collected multitude,
 But stood not long ; for the adverse troop came on,
 Slowly, as in solemnity of law,
 Silent and slow : if, haply, the opposites 830
 Might break away, and flee, striking no stroke,
 Routed by their own fear ; e'en as they came,
 Boldly, those brethren so confronted them,
 Nothing abashed ; and then, when they had reached
 So far, that scanty a staff's length parted them,
 The main made halt ; their leader magistrate
 Forth riding to the front, from his steed's height
 Thus spake. " What means this sudden meeting here,
 Without all lawful cause in so lone place ;
 What are ye, and why met ? Well, if ye 're dumb, 840
 'Tis I must speak : I tell ye then, disperse ;
 Else must I do what would displease me much,
 And ye, who suffer it, more. Attend me well ;
 Again, I say, disperse." He paused, and stood
 Looking in hurried expectation round,
 Who first should answer him : answer was none ;
 But such a shout of laughter, as 't might seem
 A mob of jeering devils and not men
 That stood before him. He had armed himself
 In courage, 'gainst what peril might befall ; 850
 Screwing determination to its height,
 There to remain. Had the proof cost his life,
 He could have paid the loss : but a proud man
 So fooled, is pride and scorn malignly met—
 Gendering frenzy. " What are ye, rebels, then ?
 Insolent villians ! but I tell ye this,
 I bear the Law's commission ; if ye dare
 To do this seal aught of indignity, 860

So trust me, ye shall rue it ; ye'er warned now ;
 Though e'en that grace—" "What," shouted Linsingen,
 "What mean ye with your silly paper scrap ?
 Go tell your master that he send a man,
 If it be his will to treat with us again,
 Not such an angry chattering ape as thou ;
 Who think'st to swagger our free manhood down,
 With thy big words : away ! and hold thyself
 Happy to be so quit." So saying, he snatched
 The horse's reins forth springing suddenly
 From the rider's hand ; and with a forceful wrench,
 And sharp compulsion of the curb, forced back 870
 Upon his haunches the indignant beast,
 Uprearing at the alarm. Then that proud soul
 Was all one flaming rage ; he raised his hand
 In act to strike, but Linsingen's young blood
 Prevented the effect of slower age ;
 And ere that hand its office could fulfil,
 The head that counselled it was smitten down
 By a sharp bludgeon stroke ; from his horse he fell,
 And lay, as past all power to rise again—
 A senseless length of limb. Wild was the outcry— 880
 Fierce the uproar, that rose upon that deed,
 Ere yet it was half done. Up rushed those men,
 Up to their fallen leader, to aid his fall—
 Aid and avenge. Then came the clash of staves,
 Conflicting skulls and stones ; bruises and blood—
 Curses and oaths ; triumph and wild dismay ;
 Struggle tumultuous on that rugged ground,—
 All the fell spirit of strife. But what were reeds
 Encountering spears ? or what can feebleness
 'Gainst fiery strength ? How should a score of men,
 With but obedience for all their zeal, 890
 How should they stand 'gainst many hundred's strength—
 A strength enflamed well nigh to a miracle,
 By its own fire ? When all was done, and the best
 Of all their force strained up, 'twas but a stone

Flung 'gainst a mountain side : first they fell back,
 O'erborne, and then borne down by the onward rush,
 They,—erst so haughty and loud, with spirits now
 To their own level abated in the mire,
 Lay prostrate there. "Mercy, mercy," they cried,
 E'en with that breath of late so menacing ; 900
 Now faint and feeble, as a woman is
 In throes of her first-born. But victor wrath
 Hears but what vengeance thunders in its ear,
 And nought beside : then had their prayers been but
 The heralds of their spirits' unto death :
 But what was best and noblest in that throng—
 Hess, Hermann, Linsingen, and many more,
 Rushed sudden in to prove their quality,
 Quick as the occasion called : they stayed the hands
 Uplifted o'er those destined victim heads, 910
 O'erawed brute fierceness with calm dignity.
 And raising them up, and back commending them
 To go the way they came. "When ye come next,
 Be ye either furnished with a better force
 Or else prepared to meet a worser fate :
 And look to him your leader—he's but stunned ;
 And now himself again—aye, and we'd hope,
 A wiser man than ever yet he was ;
 Go, take him with ye." All humble and forlorn,
 With downcast looks, bruises and bloody rags, 920
 Rather than men, hurried and shamefully
 They left that field, cursing it as they left. 922
 While e'en their foes though victors yet as ceased
 The strife, their spirits did subside with it.
 From fire to doubtful smoke—as a simple child
 Shrinks back' aghast from fording the strange flood,
 And the few steps he hath ventured it
 Feels not so much of hope from their succes,
 As cold discouragement from danger seen
 Widening still to his eye, and deepening
 Suddenly : in such fear had the many failed

But for the few—they stood those leaders there
Armed each 'gainst fate in his peculiar zeal.
Linsingen a rash life warm and profuse
As the heart of blood : incensed 'gainst who of late
Scorned him, and now must fear : dreaming high dreams
By the Harper voiced to him—Hess a stern soul
Hung' red of vengeance 'gainst the monster fraud
(So called in Heaven) here on earth dignified
A church—next him the simple devout faith
Of Hermann, spirit of grace, whom nature reared
In solitude, and with lone prayers and thoughts
Sanctified him to God—whose glory he aimed
And good of man—nought else—in their success
Sure of his own—so those lamps, though diverse,
Yet shone together, comforting the folk,
And they were comforted ; God speed them on,
As sure his arm hath strengthened them thus far.

BOOK VIII.

Oh! mortal man, Lord of this glorions earth,
With all thy lordship thou'rt a puny thing,—
A dwarf set up in state ridiculous
Upon the height of the Universal Globe:
Oh! if angels could laugh, what merry shouts
Would shake the vault of heaven, to see this ball—
This mighty ball, rolling in the universe,
With such a pigmy stature perched on it,
And calling it his own. Yet 'tis not that;
To be the puny body that thou art
I scorn thee not; but thou'rt a dwarf in soul: 10
'Fraid of thyself with a most silly fear;
Yes, truly, afraid of that most silly thing
Thou call'st thyself, which but to smile at it
Were the best and wisest judgment thou could'st pass;
Aye and yet more than this, thou'rt all afright
At thy own shadow; for in very truth
The common vulgar opinion is nought else.
A shadow; but more great and terrible,
Darker and dreader than the substance is.
Truly, when God gave reason for thy gift, 20
He knew thee well; he knew thee a poor wretch,
Unworthy of so precious godly a grace:
And so withal he gave thee something else
Beside the reason that thou could'st not rule,
Nor listen it, when fain it would rule thee:
Something might suit thee better—a strange half thing,
Or nothing but a name—opinion;
An Eunuch—a vile slave—that must crawl up
From slavishness to be thy sovereign;
Oh! what is dignity but baser shame 30

Being debased : native humility
 That ne'er was higher than its humble self,
 So born, so dying, is not half so low
 As haughtiness degraded from its height.
 Therefore I hold ye in much honour, ye brutes,
 Much more than man ; for, being graceless of
 That precious gift , ye ne'er debased its price ;
 Poisoning truth by lying fantasies,
 Eating the husk and flinging out the fruit,
 With perverse appetite : unreasoning 40
 Reason, to set opinion on its throne,
 As man doth use ; banishing the sun's light,
 To walk with smoky lamps. Oh, yes, ye brutes,
 Ye are our betters, and I bow to ye ;
 For ye have used your talent to the full,
 Poor though it be ; while for our higher one
 And godlier, we've buried it in mire,
 An outcast jewel. 'Tis no idle tale
 Told of the evil angel of this world—
 And thou, Opinion, art that evil one, 50
 Or else a worse than he. Ah ! who can tell
 How vast a sum of good thou hast blown away
 With thy fool's breath ; how oft, when souls have yearned
 To do some good, which reason prompted it,
 Opinion hath looked cold upon that warmth,
 Blighting it in the bud ; or else hath worn
 So very a withering devil in its sneer,
 That virtue hath shrunk back from manly intent
 To silly childhood—fearing to do well
 Lest men should construe it ill ; taking for judge— 60
 'Stead of its proper conscience that knows all—
 The vulgar, who know nothing—for the sum :
 'Tis thou mak'st man to be a vast machine,
 Moving with other motion than his own
 Weening strange vanities—a monkey, an ape,
 Looking to his neighbours that they should begin,
 And then he mimic them. Yes, Poverty

Of money and means, of knowledge and of will,
 Hath chilled some souls ; hundreds, thousands, perhaps,
 Their lofty aspirations to forego ; 70
 But thou hast stifled many millions ;
 Stifled them with the common highway dust,
 Flinging it in their eyes, and mouths, and ears,
 That they should neither see, nor hear, nor speak,
 Save thy own stuff. Yet is there not a thing
 Men call Religion ! lives it not and breathes ?
 And doth not man honour and bend to it ?
 Then whither, and whence doth it point ? away from man,
 And unto God. Oh ! then, as we honour him,
 So let us honour his commandments too, 80
 For our own good : setting religion up,
 Pulling opinion down ; planning new plans
 With our new rule—what the heathen did respect
 Of yore, for fault of higher authority :
 The law of this vain world and its vain fear,
 Away with both ; let them be only found
 Where the moths eat them : on that rubbish cleared
 How glorious high an edifice shall rise ;
 One Christian Temple, a worthy dwelling-place
 For the holy spirit—but for this needs first
 That every man look up to the right rule,
 Not to his crooked neighbour, holding use
 But for the parent of opinion—
 Vain parent of a vainer progeny :
 Not for the stamp of right—then many an one
 Shall ope his eyes and see the immediate truth,
 Who now but hears a false report of her.
 And great deeds shall be done ; and they shall ask
 They whose bold spirit prompts them to speak loud,
 Is it useful and right that this be so ? 100
 Careless if it be pleasing or aught else
 To those who rule, that the reason be inquired,
 Or the change made. And so shall man again
 Become, a creature of high impulses,

And noble energies, such as he was,
 And was designed to be : steering his course
 By his own helm, nor wildly blown adrift
 The waif of vulgar will—a man indeed,
 From a machine. Then shall that fashion vain
 Misnamed opinion before reason's light, 110
 As a cloud fades dissolved in a blue sky :
 And truth shall walk abroad so heavenly armed,
 That ridicule, assailing her, shall but
 Blunt its last shaft in the impotent assault,
 And chattering its vain rage, shall flee man's face
 To herd with apes. Then from that time, no more
 Shall man fear man, most wretched in his fear ;
 But loving God, be happy in his love—
 Happy to love, and happier yet to do
 What that love counsels him : then, though he stand 120
 But as one against a host, he will stand firm,
 And ne'er give back : as knowing there is one
 Stronger than all the millions of this world,
 Who stands by him that hath a righteous cause,
 And boldly doth assert it. Such is he,
 So valiant strong, who feels such confidence
 In force of truth, and of his sturdy self,
 To encounter the old giant Prejudice.
 And such were they, who, then on the hill-side,
 Reckless of custom alike, and sneers, and frowns, 130
 Of bayonets, swords, and death ; caring no jot
 Of what men said, but only of what God willed—
 Set up the standard of truth, freedom, and right,
 A glorious three. Which shall be conqueror,
 The world or they ? He who can see far on,
 He only knows : well, be it which it may,
 Only God speed the right, as surely he will,
 And surely all the more, if that the right
 Be feeble, and need his aid to speed it on ;
 And they were in that case, and that high aid 140
 Came to their help,—their foes discomfiture

They had wrought out right bold and manfully ;
And next, that sorry and most lame retreat
They had viewed as did befit their manhood best,
As calm and silently, without all sign
Of joy, or boyish shout, or laugh or jeer ;
But each with brow and lips sternly comprest,
Against what next should come: knowing that bout
Was but a trial of fence with bated foils,
Preluding pointed danger and bloody death 150
To some or all. Then, from their doubt being cheered
By those brave leaders, then came counsel again
To comfort them: they stood firm and highmanned,
Beyond what they e'er knew or e'er before,
Deemed themselves possible. Conversion strange,
Yet sure ; for there's a spirit in daringness
Outlives the daring deed : and the plunge made,
The glow comes after it—sleeping erewhile
At the heart, but now to the surface springing up,
And spreading vivid life through the whole frame. 160
So they, scattered in groups, or crowding round
To hear some ruler's voice, held their debate
What next they should essay ; whether topush
Or wait the proof: when sudden in the sky
The hurrying clouds met, as forewarned to meet,
Each from his several quarter rushing on
To make one massy darkness o'er their heads ;
Else a clear blue all round : one thunder-stroke !
And then a profuse deluge bursting down,
So full, as all the airy element 170
Were turned to water. "Ha ! what may this mean ?"
So sounded a strong voice amid the din,—
" One onset we stood out, and beat it off,
But here's a stronger yet, and fiercer one.
Well, we're but men ; and here 'tis Heaven itself
Proclaims we should be gone : therefore away,
Each to his home, or to his sheltering place ;
For counsel speaks not in such storm as this—

Speaks not nor hears: soon shall we meet again,
 As ye shall have apprizal in mean time." 180
 'Twas Linsingen that spake: and as he spake,
 So each man in the spirit of that speech,
 With first one cheer for their good cause's sake,
 Went several ways; in parties, ten or twelve,
 Home trooping: for the weaker soul stands not
 In its own strength, but in its perilous hour
 Must lean for comfort on some friendly arm,
 Or fall. But higher minds suffice themselves,
 Needing no counsellors but their own thoughts;
 And the work they finish in society, 190
 They love to frame that work in solitude.
 Hermann was such a soul—and in such wise,
 While the other men in numerous fellowship
 Thronged each his homeward way; secret and still,
 As the unquiet hare winds its shy course,
 So did he wind his own round the hill's brow,
 Threading the thickest heather, and gorse, and fern,
 Where but some shepherd tracks left their faint mark
 Wide of the vulgar way. Far as his eye
 Could range, was wild, and wild, and ever wild, 200
 As he were the only man: no hovel near,
 No shed, nor sheltering tree—nor needed much;
 For the headlong rain, ere this, had spent itself,
 Its office done. And now from her long sleep,
 A living fairy spirit of fresh green,
 Daughter of the giant storm, breathing like balm
 Jewelled with sun-drops, looked forth lovingly,
 Pleased of her new life. Hermann round admired,
 And thanked his Maker for the sight he saw,
 And sudden, the bright beauty of that scene 210
 Lit up with lustre his sad countenance,
 Unto complacency. 'Tis a blest turn
 To turn from moody and turmoiling man,
 And from our selfish task-mistress the world,
 To our mother and nurse; to thee, Nature, for thou
 Art both those tendernesses in one word.

He who hath aught of feeling must feel this ;
 And he who feels it not, when he is dead
 Will be as noble a thing as while he lived.
 No more of him—for such a man lives not— 220
 Having no soul—what he is, still let him be,
 A blank—Ah, no!—for a blank is innocence—
 And holy characters may there be writ,
 But he is a dark void. A page cross—scrawled,
 'Till all its whiteness is one scrawl of black—
 His perverse life. In his heart's joyousness
 Hermann past on, making a treasury
 Of his eye, there to receive the golden gifts
 Nature poured in, staying anon to look
 Gladly stay, as all his life were in his looks, 230
 Else worthless. So he drew a long pure draft
 From the bosom of the mother that he loved,
 A draught that did refresh his inmost soul
 Sick of its daily trash. And his soul grew
 With that good diet an expansive growth,
 Swelling as it would burst its bars of flesh,
 And so be free;—living in its own life,
 And communing with the Creator there,
 Above the world of men—heeding them not,
 Neither their promises nor puny threats 240
 As being in higher presence. Who could rise
 Above his fellows in his spirits height
 And do great deeds in his lofty daringness,
 Let him go leave their pigmy fellowship,
 Betake him to the mountain or lone wood,
 And sitting humbly there at Nature's feet
 Hear her great truths ; look up to her high front,
 And then look down on the world. As sure he must
 Who gazes on her so did Hermann then ;
 And whatso'er of doubt he had conceived, 250
 It vanished from his soul like to a mist
 In the sun's effulgence. So did he wind on
 His anxious way—but staying oft to gaze

With eyes more nimbly officious than his feet :
 'Till that at last he came to a lone tree,
 An ancient oak of so long memory
 That who would trace its course back to its fount,
 Was lost in the waste of years. Men paid to it
 Strange reverence, and Fancy deepened the awe
 That Nature had enveloped it withal, 260
 As with a mantle. There in the mid wild
 It grew, forthspringing from its own deep shade,
 Symboling so its ancient birth obscure,
 And standing 'stead of the primeval wood
 That once bore sway of the hills ; its brethren's pride
 Erewhile, but now their mournful monument,
 Left in its lonely stature but for note
 Of parish bounds. He saw it, and he sighed ;
 For he remembered it in years far off,
 When rustic revelry 'neath its dark boughs 270
 Was wont to celebrate its summer wake,
 And he among the rout of revellers,
 A laughing boy. That old tree spake to him
 Soothingly, as some fairy tale first told
 To the child, and heard again after long years
 By the care-worn man. E'en so it spake to his heart,
 And his heart answered it ; he turned aside
 From the direct pathway, and sat him down
 On a huge bole forth bulging from its trunk,
 There to ponder the past. 'Tis a sad thing 280
 To retrace step by step our mazy life,
 And find what should have been a forward path
 Strait as an arrow started from the string,
 To be a wild self-crossed perplexity,
 A hurry but no speed ; and at the end
 Farther from its mark than the beginning was :
 Furthest of all from its good, 'tis a curst sight,
 It makes all hope to be a suicide,
 Unto despair : therefore men rather choose
 Blindness than so to see. None looks to himself 290

But blindly on, never considering
 The points, whither and whence, how he should best
 Project his lines, but ever round and round,
 Narrowly reeling in the self-same sphere,
 As wise as any other whirligig :
 Such is his folly, and its counterchange,
 To look where he now hurries round about,
 And then march on whither he now scarce looks,
 That were his wisdom ; but oh ! wisdom and man
 Who yokes ye both together, he is a fool, 300
 Outfooling man himself. Then why more words ?
 Alas ! our folly speaks itself too plain.
 And Hermann's thoughts were dark ; and much he wished,
 So much that his desire overflowed in tears
 To have those days again ? plaintively breathed
 His spirit, and this the manner of its plaint
 „ Ancient oak, and how is it with thee ?
 Tell me, for thou
 Years ago wer't my dear company
 Dost mind me now ? 310
 Mind me, no, thou'st seen and hast forgotten
 Far better men :
 Better far than I are dead and rotten—
 And wherefore then
 Should'st thou hold my memory so dear ?
 But thou art more to me :
 Never yet did I behold thy peer,
 Therefore the thought of thee
 In my heart hath stricken a deep root :
 Thou art a King. 320
 'Tis for that I do thee homage and suit,
 Thou glorious thing !
 Ancient Oak I love and honour thee,
 For on thy rugged bark
 'Thousand years lost in eternity,
 Have left their mark,

Here thou hast thy stand, while they are gone
 Here in thy prime;
 Sure thou'rt he the strong the ancient one;
 Thou art old Time.

330

Would I were a giant, so I might
 Embrace thee now:
 All I can is but to uplift my sight
 To thy dark brow.

Prithee say, since thou regardest not
 Such things as I;

Where are all the hours that on this spot,
 Floated me by?

Ah! 'tis true—thou sayest truth they're on
 They might not bide;
 Onward thither where I should have gone
 Upon their tide.

340

Thither to the Haven where joy is,
 Far, far away.

All they can report of me this,
 Here would I stay:
 Linger here behind their company;
 Ever, mong these

Hills and woods loitering most foolishly,
 Like a vague summer breeze:

350

Murmuring here, and sinking there to sleep:
 And then again

Waking up, and mid the woodlands deep
 Shouting amain.

Nature, all I had I gave it thee,
 Tell me, wilt thou

As I gave it freely, even as free
 Requite me now?

Vainly else this world do I defy:
 If in the end,

360

'Gainst so fierce a foe thou dost deny
 To be my friend.

Vainly else I've haunted wood and hill,
 Wandering far

If I must be poor in spirit still,
As others are.
Gold and silver, all that men do prize,
I left behind ;
But for this that with thee I might rise
To height of mind. 370
Height of mind above the worldly man,
And worldly aim ;
I've fulfilled my promise and my plan,
Do thou the same.
Give the proof of this thy discipline,
That men may see
All their thoughts are puny things to thine,
As they to thee.
I did gaze upon thy glory and strength,
Treasuring it so, 380
'Till I deemed it all my own at length—
Is it or no ?
'Mong thy lonely hills I found me steel,
And a sword I made :
A strange potency thou didst reveal
To bless that blade—
Now I go to prove that potency,
If it be true :
Thou hast armed me, wilt thou spirit me,
And guide me through ? 390
Yes thou wilt, for lo ! I look around
This glorious range ;
Still thou art, as ever thou wert found,
Suffering no change.
Still thy mountains are as towering high,
Thy woods as green :
Still thy soul through river, waste and sky
Is felt and seen.
And that same high spirit that I knew
Doth comfort me : 400
Man is false, but thou art ever true,
I trust in thee."

He spake these words, and as he spake, he rose,
 In the same glad spirit that he uttered them :
 And as he rose, he heard a sound in the air
 So still and sunny gentle until then
 As of a wind in the woods—" All hail to thee,
 Nature, I hear thy voice, and in that sign
 Thou dost bespeak me a good deliverance
 Out of this darkness into a new light ; 410
 A light to lighten all this blessed land,
 And others after it."—Such augury
 He did believe was in the sound he heard ;
 But soon the truth prevailed o'er his belief
 That it was false—the sound grew on his sense ;
 And as it grew, clearness grew out of it,
 To mark its meaning. A faint doubt in the air,
 At first, and then a rush as of chafed waves,
 Lastly, the distinct clattering certainty
 Of horses' hoofs. Hermann looked forth, and his eye 420
 Affirmed his ear : e'en up the path he came,
 Encountering his late course, rode a loose troop,
 Armed, nay, not so, but much cumbered with arms,
 Some three-score men, spurring on eagerly,
 In the smoke and steam of their own sweaty haste :
 Loose reined, careless of soldierly array,
 As all their missions surety and success
 Were in its speed ; so to arrive, and see,
 And conquer. On they rode, as each man's steed
 Could win him place, so foremost, and so last, 430
 None other rule. Shouting and hallooing,
 As who could best confound order with noise
 Were the best soldier—thus the troop, or more
 Truly to name them, the who'e clatter and tramp
 Past by ; out-galloping the hearing first,
 And then the sight. Hermann gazed after them,
 From 'neath his covert shade, a stone's throw wide,
 And saw, not only the men, but their aim too,

Clear as themselves. " Lord, we are in thy hands,
 And being so, we are in safety too ; 440
 All thanks to thee for this thy gracious work,
 'Tis all thy own—thou didst come down to us
 In that sharp storm ; betokening favour there,
 Wherein some fainter spirits foreboded fear.
 And so these men sent forth to hew us down
 And bind our strength in chains, they must fall back
 Frustrate of blood. 'Tis thou hast willed it so,
 And I adore thy will."—he knelt him down
 So saying, and prayed in humble thankfulness,
 As his soul prompted him—then up again, 450
 Confiding with a high-born confidence,
 Calm in his conscious power ; a deep calm,
 For heaven shone on it—then briskly on
 To his destiued end, the cottage whither Love
 Led him for her dear sake who lodged in it,
 Nor only love, but his most perilous need
 Urged him that way—her Sire's counsel to take,
 Take it and give. For where danger is great,
 And strength but small—behoves us a shrewd skill
 To quit the odds. And truly, danger on them 460
 Did frown so deadly, it seemed danger no more
 But very death ; before him he sent despair,
 His giant shadow, to forebode himself,
 And darkly chill the encountering soul with awe
 Of his coming ere he came. But there's a trust
 So potent, and of proof so heavenly high,
 That whoso feels it hath no further care
 Of danger and devils, than of an old witch
 With her cross straws : such trust Hermann then felt
 And well behoved him to be strong in it : 470
 Being all his strength—he went ever along
 O'er vale and wood, and mountain majesty,
 Where long years since his childish wonderment
 Would gaze and gaze till it grew to the height of awe,
 And there stood bound in the spell—but nature is

A mirror, to reflect upon the soul
 Her changeful self—and the mind is as a God,
 To give whate'er it will, what form it will,
 After its image and own quality,
 A new creation. So walking those hills 480
 In lofty port and high stature of soul,
 They did seem changed from what his childhood deemed,
 Changed in his spirit's change o'ertowering them,
 Dwarfed to the puniness of vassalage
 Before the majesty of his high thoughts
 Projected o'er the whole earth in height and breadth.
 As all their lofty swelling amplitude
 Were an elevation scanty high enough
 For such a spirit as his to make of it
 A footstool. Danger, thou art a dark thing 490
 For him who looks on thee; but let that man
 Handle and feel thee, and boldly breathe thy breath,
 By heaven, such a one will make of thee
 (Yes e'en of the foul incubus thou wert
 When as he lay supine beneath thy weight.)
 A fiery winged horse, careering high
 Above the heads of men, upturned to gaze
 Upon his course in wonder from below.
 Aye, and if he fall short of the topmost height,
 To be a constellation there above, 500
 A glory and a marvel in men's eyes,
 Fixed as the firmament in deathless fame,
 His fault is his own fear: oh thou art ice
 To the shivering skin, but a most potent dram
 Taken in the stomach—this Herman had done
 And he found comfort where erst faintness was.
 'Twas evening, and nature languidly,
 Tired by the toil of the long summer day,
 Sank down, and the vast Sun was seen as the ghost
 Of one about to die by highland Seer, 510
 His winding sheet up-stretched e'en to his throat,
 Soon to foreclose the whole—so the sun showed

But an arc of his vast globe ; the rest cut sheer
Away by the sharp horizontal edge ;
When Herman, late to come, came there at last
There where his heart prevented him long way,
To his dear Lucy's home. 'Twas a blest time
For such a soul as his was wont to be,
Full of sweet silent thoughts, and loving well
To spend them gently in summer solitude : 520
There was a graciousness in the air might tempt
A stranger Devil to forget himself
And feel an angel's joy, joy in his God,
And in the aspect of others' blessedness
By fellow feeling adopted for its own.
Who saw it all would swear Heaven and earth,
Colour and light, and every summer charm,
Had then been fresh created for that show
They showed so bright. Hermann looked up to Heaven
And round on all the expanded loveliness, 530
" And is this world" he said, ,, this thing so rich
And beauteous, that the very angels themselves,
But that they know a higher and better one
Might deem it the perfection of God's power ;
Is it on the like that my rash turbulence
Should lay its hands to change it?" sagely he asked,
But a froward will ne'er starved for lack of words ;
And what reason doth ask, that froward will
Hath ever an answer in its own behalf,
Warranting all for wise—"aye, true 'tis good, 540
And glorious this world wherein we live;
And therefore 'tis more need to raise man up
To a height worthy of his dwelling place
That he be not as the ape a most base God
Of his great temple. Shame if he were so!
Therefore my work go on."—There is a state
Wherein the lover of nature often lives,
Counfounding sense with soul, each blent in each,
Neither wholly itself, no soul, no sense,

But a calm joy made of their confluence, 550
 Receiving on its surface many forms,
 And back reflecting them as it receives,
 Taking none to its depth. Then doth the eye
 Communicate its office with the mind,
 The mind with the eye, and sense and thoughtfulness
 Mingle their various essence into one,
 And all is feeling—so did Herman's soul
 Float in pleasing suspense, deep drinking in
 Those evening forms and colours like to a cloud
 Dyed with the golden sun; long lingered he, 560
 Ere that he broke the bonds of that sweet dream;
 For still some thing of doubt o'erruled the love
 That prompted him to entrance—so he sate
 Awhile uncertain on the brow of the hill
 O'erlooking that dear home, till a quick step
 Startled him from behind, and turning round,
 Old Walter's aspect startled him yet more,
 With a fear though foolish, yet not wholly false,
 For fancy shooting many a random shaft
 Doth sometimes hit the mark, and where love is, 570
 Thither doth fear still haunt him as his shade,
 Darkening his presence. "Sir," said the old man,
 "One moment earlier here, and ye were lost,
 A moment later, and ye risk to lose
 What now ye have saved—there have been troopers here,
 Have ransacked the house as for a hidden spoil,
 Searching for you; but for God's providence
 That led you round to take the wilder way,
 Sure they had met you, as they skurried hence
 Five minutes back—the dust they raised in the house 580
 Is flying yet; marry e'en now their oaths
 Tingle in my ears; well, we're well quit of them
 For this one turn, for the rest, each minute here
 May cost you a prison all your life that's left,
 Aye, and for aught I know, that life itself
 Shorten it by the head. What were best done

You should best know. For me, I were right grieved
 That harm should come to you, and there is one
 Would grieve no less, whose grief touches you more ;
 Aye, you have guessed me right, 'tis even she 590
 My dear young Mistress ; well if you must meet,
 Be it for a minute only ; there she is—
 I left her there in the garden even now
 By the brook side—but mark me 'tis not I
 Told you thus much—you guessed it first yourself,
 And whate'er fall, it falls betwixt you both,
 No fault of mine—well, be it as it may,
 Heaven guide it for the best : give me your hand—
 A happier meeting when we meet again,
 And so God bless you"— these were earnest words 600
 And much their hearing stirred the hearer's thoughts
 To cloud what erst was clear—but when hope came
 Pointing the end his love so yearned to reach
 The sight which but to see was to be blest,
 Her presence and the pressure of her hand ;
 Then was his turbulence turned to bright joy
 Running afresh : he sped swift as love's shaft,
 Thither to the lone spot so named to him,
 And found it by her beauteous presence graced.
 " Lucy, long have I prayed to find thee here, 610
 And now my prayer hath place ;
 And what chance gives, Oh, be not so severe
 To gainsay its grace,
 'Tis but a minute's stay, danger is near,
 And I must far away :
 Nay, speak me kind, and smile when I am here
 'Tis but a minute's stay.
 Yet a small light will light a dreary space
 And such a smile
 Would cheer me through all danger and disgrace, 620
 A weary while,"
 " Oh doubt it not, full glad am I
 That thou art safe and free :

'Scaped from each evil enemy,
 Yet what is this to me ?
 For thou art fallen off from us
 I heard it but this day,
 And wert thou then so treacherous,
 And is it as men say ?
 Oh ! yes, my mother told it me 630
 She told me all she knew ;
 But then these troopers, seeking thee,—
 Say is it false or true.
 Oh, were it false I would love well
 The falsehood for thy sake ;
 Yet tell me all and truly tell,
 Although my heart should break.”
 “ Treacherous and fallen off and false or true!
 What are these words to me ?
 I who have dared it all, and will dare through 640
 Lucy, who told it thee ?”
 “ Ah then 'tis false—it cannot lie,
 That open front of thine ;
 They did thee wrong, and so did I ;
 The misery be mine.
 And thy good name from that foul spot
 Is brighter than before ;
 But my lost peace returneth not
 'Tis gone for evermore.
 Forgive their fault and my belief—
 Alas I may not tell, 650
 And yet the tale would sooth my grief,
 Farewell, and Oh ! farewell.”
 She spake, and kissed his hand, and turned away
 And straight was gone. Swift and invisible
 As her winged words. Strange things happen to man,
 Ghosts have been seen, and miracles been done,
 And witches burnt at stake—and people have stared,
 As though the large expansion of their eyes
 Would make the wonder less—or mystery

Be cleared by amazement. Oft hath it so chanced 660
 But ne'er since wonderment was part of man,
 Did a wond'rous chance e'er fall more heavily,
 With such a stunning and astounding fall,
 As then on Hermann: he had hoped; but hope
 Is ever a liar, and why prate of her?
 No matter what; he had hoped, and now despaired,
 And his despair was wiser than his hope:
 A damning wisdom. There he stood, stock-still,
 As though her touch had frozen him to ice,
 And made of his warm blood a crystal mass 670
 Passionless as his bones—but a maid's will
 Is not God's fate, fixed and unstriveable;
 And who is driven amain by its wilfulness,
 Haply he needs but wait the tide's return
 To waft him back again in graciousness;
 For Love is but an errant gamester boy,
 Ever at high or low—and the same impulse
 That speeds him down, swings him aloft again
 Up the opposing slope. Else, were all smooth,
 So would he lie as still and powerless 680
 As a stone upon the plain. Hermann thought not
 One whit of these sage thoughts, but he acted them—
 First summoning himself, and then to the house,
 As an engineer after a stunning burst,
 Anxious what it might mean: but other wills
 Were there at work, and counter to his own:
 And where he would fain go and search to the end,
 Prevention barred his way. As he strode up,
 There met him one, forth issuing from the gate,
 The house dame herself—mother of the good man,— 690
 A careful soul—much did he owe to her
 Of reverence, and freely rendered it;
 But what he owed her of love, let us e'en hope
 Twas little—for all it was, 'twas so much more
 Than e'er he paid—yet 'twas well done of her,
 Courteously well, to meet her guest half way;

A gracious act—and what it had of grace,
 Surely its rarity, coming from her,
 And toward him, commended it the more.
 Alas! 'twere well for the world if show would serve, 700
 Merit were then good cheap. All our beads, pearls—
 Our covert vices made most virtuous—
 Good deeds plenty as dirt. Why in Heaven's name,
 Why hath not man, the trick of government,
 To make his paper gold? how wealthy he were?
 How many million million millions then
 Were God his debtor. Yet it matters not
 Our Pastors and our ghostly ministers,
 Pay him in words—they read from out a book,
 And his due's done. Well, then if words will clear 710
 The score as well, they clear it better too—
 Better and cheaper by the paper's worth—
 What needs such waste—look to it financiers,
 And make cheap cheaper—save your paper, and pay
 In words, as do those holy devout men
 Who've studied the truth most, and should know best.
 "Sir," said the Dame, "belike 'tis strange to you
 To see me thus—marry, 'twere stranger yet,
 You should not feel it so—but where need is
 To meet an old friend with new countenance, 720
 'Tis better at the threshold than the hearth.
 And, Sir, it grieves me much to tell you so,
 But grief is an ill thing to keep at heart,
 And I've no secret but may well be said.
 So in plain truth we have been friends long time;
 And if it be your will, so will we part;
 Lest that our friendship, as my Father would say—
 Poor soul he's dead and gone, long ere your time—
 Lest that our friendship then by too much use,
 Too often and too much, should wear away. 730
 'Tis better so, good Sir, much better so,
 Much better, though it were the dearest limb
 To be cut off, than lang but by the skin.

Sir, ye are learned men, ye're both book-learned,
 Both you and my good Son ; and I, please God,
 Am but a poor plain wife, yet such a one
 May tell a plain tale—nay let me say on—
 For the least hindered is the soonest done.
 'Tis not for me you're here, I know it well,
 But for a dearer sake. So be content— 740
 For sure it burns me till I've uttered all.
 Briefly Count Linsingen hath been with us ;
 And what he might chance say to Lucy, and how
 She answered him, 'tis not for our discourse—
 Only thus much is enough—they are betrothed
 For man and wife. Now Sir, ye may well guess,
 If ye've but half the wit I warrant ye,
 When that the trinket's bought, the buyer forthwith
 Takes it from the shop-window and broad gaze,
 And treasures it away. Is this enough? 750
 Or must I tell ye, that our dear good girl,
 For she is mine too, and but once removed,
 Heiress of all I have, would it were more—
 She is that precious jewel—and once 'gaged,
 It suits not with good manners and good grace,
 That other friends than the one, suitors perchance,
 Of how good fame so'er, should haunt her so,
 As when before. Therefore"—"Oh my good Dame
 Why so much more, when so much less would serve :—
 I do beseech you, give me grace of it ; 760
 And tell me, are you your own counsellor,
 Or hath another prompted you thus far ?
 Her father is it not?" "Aye sure, no doubt,
 I would not take so much on my single self ;
 Though truly reason were, that my advice
 Were asked and had, ere ought were set amove.
 Yes it is they have done it—and poor souls,
 They would fain leave it all untold to you,
 Though meaning you right well, lest you should chance
 Take it amiss : so what was their's to do :

I've made it mine; there is my say said out, 770
 And since my days of school and copy-book,
 And that is threescore since, I've left all use
 Of flourish at beginning and at end,
 Writing or speaking: and 'twere now full late
 To try the trick again. So, all I've said,
 I've said it in all kindness and plain faith,
 And you, Sir, take it home as kindly too;
 Or, if offence must come, why it must come,
 But not of me. Why plague of my old head,
 I had well nigh forgot; see here they are, 780
 The letters from them both, the poor kind souls;
 Look if you will, though yet there is no word
 But I have spoken it in freer sense
 Than they poor things could bring themselves to write."
 As she ended, so she held the letters forth,
 And Hermann looked on them, he dared no more,
 But looked so long, till to his ghastly look
 They seemed like living things with spectral eyes
 Gazing upon him; she in purblind sense,
 Unwitting, forced them on his cold white hand: 790
 He took, and opened, but read not at all;
 Though he seemed to read, only a word or two
 Seared his dull eye-balls, as 'twere written in fire;
 And his sight shrank from it.—“Yes, you are right;
 Right, said I right? Oh no, 'tis a foul wrong;
 They know it, who plotted, and shall answer it.
 But no—God bless them all—her most and me!
 Sure never man needed a blessing more:”
 He said, and turned, and slow walked his sad way,
 While she, the old Dame, to the house in hurry again. 800

BOOK IX.

Rebellion, patriotism, loyalty,
Ye are three words, bigger than most beside
Of portly presence, and bold seemingness,
Well stuffed and padded : truly ye deserve
Full well the admiring vulgar, that ye look
So burly among your fellows, rank and file.
In truth, ye are too big for my poor mouth
To utter ye; and more than that, too false
For my plain faith to give ye entrance there.
Therefore, keep out of doors; I'll none of ye— 10
Or if ye dare come near, I'll blow ye away
Contemptuous from the portals of my breath,
For the chaff that ye are; yet many, I ween,
Will entertain ye with more love than I,
For that ye serve to fill their vacancy,
Being so great of bulk. Albeit, that bulk
Is but a bladder, swollen of vain conceit,
The biggest then, when readiest to burst.
I marvel what so windy addled a brain
Could have begotten ye; yet I know not— 20
Looking upon ye closer, I stand in pause—
A pause of earnest doubt. Oh! pardon me,
The fault is all my own, I see it now,
And see ye clear of it; I did ye wrong,
Forgive me for my true confession's sake.
Yes, truly, I disgraced your dignity
With my vile thoughts, vilely comparing ye.
Ye are no bladders, as I said ye were—
No, nor yet words alone, but a live thing,

Of various life; one off and the next on ; 30
 A changeful form, a triple unity—
 Briefly, all three—ye are a kind of grub,
 A single substance, but with several shapes—
 And when that grub lies still, stirring no jot,
 And gives no sign of life, though fire should burn,
 Or water drown it, or pins prick it through ;
 But just so much as this to shrink from the hand
 That tortures it, and shudder a wee bit—
 Oh! then it is a most praiseworthy grub ; 40
 Then is its grubbish nature glorified
 Within a letter of a royal name :
 Men cry it up, and call it loyalty,
 And so 'tis made the footstool of the throne,
 And kings do honour it—setting their feet
 Upon the patience of its callous neck :
 And this same grub is now a middle thing
 Of neutral form—having no quality :
 A passive vacancy betwixt two lives. 50
 It was not always so; once twas so swift
 And active too, that all its hundred feet
 Were need to serve its swift activity—
 And so it lived at large after its will :
 Therefore, Earth's rulers hated it full sore ;
 They called it lawlessness, rebellion,
 To look to nature rather than man's law ;
 And cursed it for its stirring quality—
 Putting their worst of venom in their words ;
 And whatso'er of hatefulness they gave 60
 To the name, deeming it for vulgar faith
 All one, as though 'twere in the thing itself :
 And so they dubbed freewill, rebellion ;
 And—for it wanted force, and crawled a-ground,
 Having no wings to fly—so 'twas soon crushed
 By force or fraud of those its enemies :
 And, having such ill luck, it left behind
 A name as ill—for 'tis oft proved, be the gold

As fine, or else as base as e'er it may,
 'Tis not that makes it current among men;
 But whate'er stamp fortune may find for it, 70
 Groping with blind eyes, and uncertain hands,
 By chance, not choice—that stamp gives it the rate,
 Against all reason—thus Rebellion
 Became accurst, and what survived of it
 Dwindled to a grub; a poor dull heartless thing,
 Prisoned within its murky selfspun maze,
 Suffering all baseness. There are two of them,
 Being yet but one—the lawless rebel worm
 And the loyal grub; the third is yet behind,
 Holding a common nature with those two,
 But a strange name. For his life—be none so bold
 To tell it, but the truest man of the world,
 Lest he be deemed a liar; 'tis no life,
 But a miracle; for nature at his birth
 Frolic, her sober attributes flung off
 And played the fairy: thus, our loyal grub
 After long griefs endured, bethought him at length,
 That patience of all evil for evil's sake,
 And not for any good should come of it,
 Is no such virtue as suits one so sage— 90
 Therefore behoves me to be hence a large;
 But how, and to what end? aye there's the pause:
 For I remember while I was a worm,
 How my free life being without all strength,
 Was but a straw set among many fires,
 And hundred times I was at point to die
 Such dismal death as my co-fellows died:
 And why? for, being weak, they went abroad,
 A silly folk; therefore, ere I win out
 From this constraint, first will I get me wings 100
 To fly withal. So counselled and so done—
 He got him wings, and then wrought his way out,
 Wise as Wisdom herself from her Sire's head,
 Like her, well furnished 'gainst all dangerous chance;

And flew a towering flight ; and, as he flew,
 So all eyes gazed in rapturous wonderment.
 Yes, he, the worm of that same kind, that men,
 When they have crushed it, call Rebellion,
 And when they have coerced it to a grub,
 Name it anew nought else but loyalty : 110
 Now, for the self same end forth issuing
 As at the first ; only in pomp and power,
 'Stead of his former crawling feebleness ;
 Wending thither his way, where'er he will :
 Oh ! then his power doth make him patriot !
 Rebellion, Patriotism, Loyalty,
 Ye are one nature, or if ye be not,
 Yet the two first of ye most often are
 Under two names. The last, no nature at all,
 A name—no more. And they who name ye, name 120
 But a vain noise : go, let them speak their sense
 Into a trumpet, blowing a full blast,
 'Stead of nice difference : 'twill mean as much,
 And sound yet louder. Of these three strong words,
 Hermann was each, and all and none of them ;
 Loyal as others are for his own sake.
 Not for his rulers ; long as he saw good,
 Not a whit longer ;—Rebel or Patriot,
 As each beholder chanced to colour him,
 Viewing him but by Fancy's various glass ; 130
 Not the clear light of truth. Oh thou vain world,
 Truly, thyself, thou'rt more ridiculous
 Than any thing thou hold'st. Dark was that night,
 And wild the way that Hermann went through it ;
 But wilder yet was his perplexity.
 Darker his thoughts ; as cheer and comfortless,
 As when in the cold hearth the fire's extinct,
 That should blaze up, and crackle winter away ;
 Bidding him watch outside : then all is gloom,
 And not a spark for the most catching hope 140
 To kindle. Oh, 'tis then the soul must feel,

As doth the body in a chilly mist,
Self-shrinking, as a pin's head were a space
Too large for it to fill; and quite done out
Happiest ended; he had steeled himself,
Had Hermann, to a pure fine quality;
And yet that vaporous breath blown on his steel
Clouded it longer time than his purity
Gave promise. 'Tis not matter alone, but the mind
Also, must gravitate unto the mass; 150
For let it soar how high soe'er it may,
Yet is a check behind to draw it back
To the level surface, and the centre of all;
And he had offered himself freely up
For the common good. Most true, so had he done,
But yet more freely he made that offering;
For that he loved the Priestess who stood there,
And served the altar. And he gave his gift,
Hoping, while given, she would smile on him:
Fair hope, but which extinct then was nought left 160
But the aspect of the fire, and slayer, and axe,
Most terrible—but no—'twas only a cloud
That hath no terror, but to Fancy alone;
A cloud that doth keep off the Sun without,
But not the fire within. "Dastards, base thoughts,
I do defy ye," so he shouted out
Fierce, as he felt their quickening influence,
And waved his staff on high. "Come ye on all,
That I may scatter ye; 'tis a firm ground,
This mountain, for my feet to stand on it, 170
Sufficient 'stablishment. But thou my faith,
Art thou a waverer and a stumbler now;
Ere thou art well set out? No, by Heaven's grace,
Thou shalt be founded on a base as broad
As is this solid earth, as strong to stand,
As safe to walk. And sooner shall earth fail,
Than the common right, whereon thou'rt fixed on it,
Shall slip from under thee." Thus, as he spake,

His spirit rose e'en to the height of his speech,
 Aye, and above it. Words are most strange things, 180
 Begotten of thoughts, they do beget again
 Thoughts yet more potent than their parents were.
 And so did Hermann put on Fortitude,
 Against the assaults of fate : 'twas wisely done ;
 Better to sit at ease by the fire-side,
 Than go out fearfully to fight with a storm,
 Though for the richest venture. He strode on,
 As though a giant's strength were in each stride,
 Erect and bold ; whither to point his way,
 While late his spirits light was in eclipse, 190
 He had no knowledge, and but doubt alone.
 Now was his destiny drawn out forthright,
 So fast and strong, as he could walk on it
 From point to point, looking this side, nor that,
 But only on—On to his shepherd friend,
 In the like faith as who commits his hand
 To his own glove. For he knew the man of old,
 Honest and true as is his simple trade.
 Thither he went ; and as he went, the night,
 Like a huge monster heaving himself up, 200
 Had reared 'twixt earth and sun his opaque bulk,
 Darkening with its shadow all our day ;
 And the heather that erewhile shone in the sun
 Goldenly, now put off its vanity,
 Disrobed by darkness : changing its gay cloak
 To russet, and again to gloomier yet,
 In sad gradation. Ever and anon
 Hermann made pause to listen and look out ;
 But nothing could he see, save the huge hills
 In the distance dimly swelling 'gainst the sky, 210
 Or an owl with white wings deepening the night
 As slowly it sailed, in large and larger wheel.
 He looked, and saw nought else ; listened and heard
 Nothing save his own breath ; then, when without
 All was shut against sense, he looked within ;

And there his thoughts burned up so blazingly,
 They were good cheer and light and warmth to him.
 So buoyant they did raise him 'bove the earth
 That he felt not treading it. He gave them free
 License to flow, and thus did they flow on.

230

“ Lucy once I was thy lover,
 Thou wert mine, as thou did'st say ;
 Now those sunny days are over,
 Coldly now thou turn'st away.
 Be it so—for so, thou provest
 Faithless kind in faithless vow;
 Womanlike thou liv'st and lovest,
 I must prove my manhood now.
 Lucy now I'm but thy brother,
 What I do, I ask no meed,
 Now my spirit is none other
 But the Patriot's indeed.

230

Fool I was in very madness
 Thus to sow the shifting sand ;
 Now I reap my seed in sadness
 A lone outcast here I stand.
 Yet 'tis well—for surely never
 With a soul so torn in twain
 Had I reached my high endeavour :
 Half a will is surely vain.

240

I am sworn to raze the tower
 Of old Majesty and might :
 To uprear the people's power—
 Is that labour all too light ?
 Is it but a toy of pleasure,
 And must love come flaunting in,
 As on some vain maiden's leisure,
 Baulking all that I begin ?
 No, I dreamed, and in my dreaming
 Saw familiar lovely things !
 Of most gentle tender seeming
 Bright fireside imaginings.

250

Now I wake,—the dream's past o'er me,
 Past in airy sleight away,
 And I see the truth before me
 Marshalled there in stern array.
 "Antient love thou art a stranger,
 Antient troth thou art belied,
 I must marry me with danger,
 Tell me wilt thou be my bride?"
 "Nay, I know not—wilt thou woo me,
 Thou must sue with thy good sword,
 Only he who can subdue me,
 Will I take him for my lord."
 "Be it so, thou glorious creature,
 There is lightning in thine eye,
 Thou art strong and fierce of feature,
 Yet I front thee fearlessly.
 To my sword thou shalt surrender
 Thy fierce beauty for a bride;
 High renown and stately splendour
 Shall spring to me from thy side.
 Life and fortune, all I cherish,
 Thus I fling them 'mong my foes,
 To the rescue, or they perish
 Help me Heaven! here we close—"
 He spake and as the word prompted the act
 He launched his staff forward a strong arm's-launch
 Among the heather—even and strait it sped,
 Making small stir in the air, but piercing deep
 As with a point of steel in the hard ground,
 Quivering there as doth a furious beast
 His teeth fixed in his game. Hermann came up
 Following his aim—"faith 'tis a goodly throw,
 And shows a goodly strength.—If I but urge
 The intent whereon my soul is now astrain
 But half so manly, then may I pierce through
 The very heart of my great enterprize,
 Ere the arm aguard—surprized of all defence

Against his danger." Glad was the augury,
And glad the man that 'twas vouchsafed to him. 290
"Oh Lord may my soul's course be straight as this
As strait and steady and strong. I ask no more
Nor no more needs." By this the sky and air
Were one vast ocean darkness, and the day
Was drowned in it, a depth so fathomless
'Twere wonder if it ever rose again.
And Hermann had won up to a hill's brow
And thence he looked below; there stood the hut,
The shepherd's lonely home, unseen itself, 300
But noted by the lamp's uncertain light
Beaming within—there did Hermann take rest,
And sat him on a hillock, so to plan
What he must soon propose—he sate, his head
Pillowed upon his hand, deep sunk in thought
But a short space—then up again and on:
But as he started up, there shone a light
Sudden beneath his feet—what might it be?
Fancy or lonely fear might deem it a lamp
Of prowling foes; circling most jealously 310
Their nightly quest, for such as Hermann was
Or haply himself; but he was armed against
The truth of danger, and its dream much more.
He saw and spoke—"poor worm there dost thou shine!
And thine is a most pure and virgin light
And yet men heed it not. I love thee much
For truly we are fellows, I and thou;
And I too bear a light, and I trust well
It is both true and holy as thine is,
And I go forth to shine in the dark world, 320
Yet haply will the world heed me no more
Than it doth thee: look up, poor worm look up;
Look to yon starry host shining above,
What think'st thou? shine they not brighter than thou?
Yet none regards them, go put out thy light,
And live among the moles—aye, and 'twere well

I should take home the lesson that I teach ;
 For hath not God himself come down on earth—
 A grace truly as great, as though that star
 Yonder, that one, the mightiest of them all, 330
 Should lower itself to take the turn of the lamp
 That burns there in the hut. Yes, they scorned him,
 They smote him, and they slew him ; and what then ?
 Why truly then, there is much likelihood
 That they should honour me. Well, as they will—
 If they offer me spite for all my good,
 Then 'twere good severance 'twixt me and them ;
 And quicker death is sooner happiness—
 So be it. I thank thee much, good little worm,
 For these good thoughts"—he said, and he was there, 340
 There at the door—yet stayed awhile, his hand
 Upon the latch ; for noise tumultuous
 Of many tongues resounding from within :
 It seemed guests were enow by that fire-side,
 Needed no stranger more. What were they all ?
 To keep wassail so late, and multiply
 His cups, was not of old the Shepherd's wont,
 Nor likely now. What, if the Philistines
 Were ambushed there, waiting for who should come
 Within their mischief ! " Well, fate is fate still ; 350
 Danger and I are at odds—'tis a deep game
 We play, truly most deep and desperate :
 I have set down my life, and he hath staked
 Honour against it—what is done, is done,
 And who would win must win with a bold front,
 Not fugitive of that same peril he sought :
 Open, thou door ; for be they friends or foes
 I will confront them." Even as he spoke,
 Creaked on its crazy hinges that old door,
 And Hermann stood within. Fears are vain things 360
 When courage dares them, as his daring proved,
 For there they were, brethren, familiars, friends,
 Bound to him,—whether holy or wordly ties,

Yet all fast bound. Soon as he entered in,
 They hailed him hopeless seen with such a shout
 As blew the cobwebs from the black roof beams,
 An ancient net-work. Oh! 'tis a good thing,
 In this cold icy clime, where manners live
 Alone, having expelled the natural man, 370
 To see the spirit glow, and the heart's blood
 Gush to the surface—e'en as then their hands
 Met hastily, but parted not so soon
 From their close grasp. "My friends, I like ye well,"
 Said the new guest—"both ye and your glad looks,
 For the glad issue that they bode to us:
 I liked ye ever well, and better now.
 But sit ye down, and I will tell ye all—
 Both hear and tell." "Nay, be thou seated first;" 380
 Said the good Shepherd's wife, homely and kind,
 For sure thou hast most need—and art thou 'scaped?
 Those lion claws, our sorrow late, but now
 Our glad surprise; much I misdoubted thee,
 And fretted sore; and ever in and out,
 To look o'er the hill side—and then to search
 For texts of comfort in the blessed book:
 For a poor silly woman that I am,
 Fearing where no fear was. Alas! good Sir,
 The best of us are falterers in the faith,
 And 'tis a shameful sin—oh, think of it! 390
 To set man's fear above the trust of God,—
 Praised be his name. But, good Sir, thou art come,
 And long may'st bide. God love thee, and thy works,
 Dear as we do, bless love and cherish thee,
 As sure as thou'rt a blessing to us all.
 But come, sit there, by the fire—we are poor folk,
 Yet what we can—such store as God hath sent—
 Bacon, and bread, and eggs—aye, and drink too:
 Thou art no hireling, thou, yet well deserv'st
 A better hire than any we can give.
 A blessing on thy heart! it makes me glad 400

As I were a young girl, to see thee again,
 Glad of thee safe, as late of thy fear sad :
 There, so, 'tis well." Hermann sate down and ate,
 Till he was comforted with meat and drink :
 Then, as ever is wont after full meal
 Dispatched, question and answer took their turn,
 Matter enough—the day, and its fresh deeds,
 And what should come of them—how each had 'scaped
 That armed encounter, and all other assaults
 Of the evil one, by guidance of the Lord ;
 Surely a special grace. Then what was next 410
 To fear, what better argument of hope.—
 Eager each conscience to communicate
 How now for furtherance. "Sir," said one man,
 A sallow, blear-eyed cobbler, from the town ;
 " Much have I wrestled with these thoughts,—few more,
 And much I praise you, you and your plan too
 In the main ; and for its sake, I'll on as far
 As any here will dare to follow me.
 But, sir, in this your plan there's a sad gap, 420
 Frights me to think of it—yawning as wide
 As the jaws of hell. What of the Romans, Sir ?
 Aye, what think ye of them ? for, to my mind,
 'Tis a clear truth, and I'm as sure of it
 As though an angel of God had told it me ;
 'Tis they have brought the pest into this land,
 Plaguing it with their damned idolatry ;
 And till we fling them from our bosom forth,
 Stone them, or burn, or slay them with the sword,
 That pest will cleave to us. Sir, ye well know 430
 Last season was a dearth within the land,
 A murrain 'mong the flocks—all things at odds,
 Employment slack, and industry heart-sick :
 Why sir, I sate a week my hands, just thus,
 In pocket, for sheer lack of work to do,
 And fire to keep them warm. No other pay,
 Nor work, nor pastime, but to chew our ills,

And the cursed cause of them; why should this be
But for a token of wrath? and why such wrath
But for that idol sin? These things were not 440
In our forefathers' time, or only then
When in such wise they sinned as we do now,
And suffered all the same. Therefore, we're cursed
With fire and tithes and evil government;
With fornication and all deadly sin;
With drought for rain, and rain when drought were need.
Drowning the harvest: this is a clear truth,
Yet, 'tis not for that only I speak it out;
But trowing it so lively and so strong,
Where'er I turn my eyes, aye, or my ears, 450
'Tis there—I see and hear it bodily;
Filling my sense, flaming and crying out,
Denouncing judgment—there on that blank wall
'Tis written plain as any printed book,
That he who runs may read it. Therefore, Sir,
To do this deep damnation from the land,
I enjoin ye in God's name, not only—" "Oh, yes,"
Hermann replied, "I know what ye would say,
I know it well: and there are pious men 460
Think e'en as thou—and yet haply 'twere best ——"
"Aye, true, it were much best to pause on it,"
Said an old peasant voice, cutting the phrase,
"Ere we do aught—Heaven is a far way off,
And who shall say which is most near to it?
For me, I never spake the Romanists
A kindly word, nor did them a good deed,
And yet my crops rotted no straw the less
Than theirs, who, as folks say, worship the priest
'Stead of their God! But there's a something, Sir, 470
Touches us nearer home: 'tis the curst suit
About our common right; and many say,
They see not why—if that same mischief needs
Must bide, and be the mischief that it is—

They see not in that case, why they should stir
 To peril life and limb. Now, Sir, perchance
 You may see good to satisfy us all,
 (For truly, we are many of that mind);
 That we shall have and hold the land for our own;
 Common and close e'en as Hess promised us:
 And who would hinder us,—to make quick end, 480
 Be hanged straightway—no leave asked of the law,
 But the thing done; that were justice and right
 Where now none is." "Truly, such things as this,"
 Hermann made answer, in much gravity,
 "The greater part of us, whene'er we meet,
 Must rule the rest; whate'er is reason asked,
 That same shall be right lawed." "Sir, by your leave,"
 Said a sturdy hind, slow rising from his seat,
 "May I be bold just to put in a word 490
 About a cow of mine, that my neighbour Helst,
 Down in the hollow there, by the brook side,
 Hath wronged me of her, only they say the law
 Will bear him through in it: now, I've heard talk
 How that ye go about to change the law,
 And sure enough, for all I know of it,
 'Twere a good change. Now Sir, if it be so,
 That ye can 'vantage me 'bout the poor beast,
 Why, 'twere a good turn done: and Sir, ye know 500
 I've ever followed on your ministry
 Since my good mother, poor old soul, fell sick,
 And sent me in her room, lest prayers should fail
 Out of the house: so the old woman said,
 And so I went. Sir, you would glad her heart,
 I warrant her, to stand our friend in this—
 And mine no less: good Sir, 'tis a hard law;
 And if ye'll bear me in mind, me and my cow,
 Whene'er ye set yourselves to make a change,
 I'll follow ye, be sure, to the world's end.
 Through fire and water." Hermann heard and smiled, 510
 And fain would answer him in such kind wise

As suited his simplicity who asked,
 When sudden, 'twixt his will and tardy words,
 Up-sprang another speaker—up he sprang,
 A man broad and highboned, and big of limb—
 A mass of mighty members, incompact,
 Of most rude juncture : in his sprawling gait
 Belying the strong promise of his frame ;
 And for his face, 'twas full, but very pale,
 As the life-blood did never visit it— 520
 Clay featured of the potter—a damp mask
 Without a soul—spiritless, there he sate
 Like to a man opprest with his own weight,
 Too much for him to raise—sunk in his flesh,
 Stifled and buried there ; for the light and life
 Within him, 'twas all center'd in one point,
 Firing his eye. And sure that eye did show
 Most like a lamp, blazing through a dull fog,
 Wondrously bright. His coat hung on his back
 As loose, as on its mother a gipsy brat, 530
 In a strange heap—uncouth habiliments,
 And bushy hair, all 'tangled and all wild,
 As a thicket in a waste. Such was the man
 Christopher Ernst—erewhile solicitous
 Of a preacher's office in the ministry ;
 And for his gifts, they fell no tittle short
 Of the height that he aspired : and many there
 Did deem his fervent speech inspired of God.
 But, for he looked but to his own impulse,
 Nor made his reason of the vulgar rule, 540
 Therefore, the more denied him what he asked,
 Counting him mad. Madness thou art a name
 They best deserve who take so crooked a stick
 As is man's custom for their canon of right,
 And judge all things thereby ; but who is wise
 And with deep wisdom, he will show it most
 Hiding it deep away. So let him do ;
 Else will men deem him a fool—" brethern and friends,"

So spake the stern enthusiast glaring round
 Slowly a wild and visionary glance; 550
 "For so, I call ye, and account ye all,
 Though conscious some to be my enemies,
 Much have we heard, yes, truly, a great heap
 Of little things, shaming our mighty aim;
 Commons and cows and the poor romanists
 All idle, yes, my friends, all idle alike,
 And green as the sick fancy of a girl.
 And can it be for such a thing as this
 That we are met and sworn never to part
 Until the full achievement give us leave?
 Is't not as easy to say all as the half? 560
 Why, if we peril our lives, why should we not
 Make peril glorious with its high prize?
 Aye, why indeed? have ye not the more strength,
 And the better right? are ye not millions?
 And they your opposites, what are they else
 But some few idle stragglers here and there,
 Of no account or only of so much
 To make your big assemblage seem more big
 By their thin show. What! do ye know your wills?
 Then what ye will, 'tis ready to your hand, 570
 Take it, make much of it, and thrive by it:
 And take it all—nor leave no corner or hole
 Whence the old spider may 'gin spread again
 His cunning usurpation—are ye men?
 Then why such fools to dread a score foul words?
 No.—What the lawyer and priest, the thieves twixt whom
 Sitting in state this people is crucified—
 Themselves more due, what they for their own ends
 Have so perplexed that none might loose the knot;
 Cut through such question with the edge of sword, 520
 Making all clear—nor be such dolts to spend
 Your eager spirit, and the flower of prime
 Idly puzzling to make atonement there,
 Where God and truth have both made severance,

'Twiſt reaſon and uſe : my friends, hearken me this
 I have ſeen viſions, and dreamt dreams ere now,
 And lively ones—and I believed them true,
 They were ſo like the truth—but not ſo now :
 No, they were falſe as hell, I know them falſe ;
 Sure as I know this lamp is no true ſun, 590
 Having ſeen both. An angel yeſternight
 Viſited me, an angel of the Lord—
 Nay, ſtart not, here I ſet my ſoul at ſtake,
 And if I tell a lie, the fiend himſelf
 (And be ye wiſſeſſes to this our bond,)
 Fang me now if he pleaſe and hold me faſt
 Once and for all. Yes, 'twas indeed no leſs
 A glory of Heaven, an angel of the Lord
 I knew him well, not by my eyes that ſaw, 600
 But by my ſoul that felt him : thus it was
 My wife and little ones were all a-bed
 And I left there to brood o'er my faint thoughts
 Faint as the dying embers. Suddenly
 There ſhone a vehement light through all the room,
 As though a thouſand ſuns were lit at once,
 So bright it did extinguiſh all things elſe,
 That nought was ſeen for its brightness. I looked round
 But my eyes failed me, and I was viſionleſs :
 Yet was I conſcious of a preſence there, 610
 Being the ſpirit of that radiance,
 Clothed in its luſtre—a ſtrange conſciousneſs
 That was not of this earth ; nor may be told,
 Nor heard nor known ; paſt wonder there I ſtood
 Aſtounded and this truth burſt forth on me,
 No ſound, nor vocal utterance of words
 But the truth itſelf—ſpeaking not to the ear,
 But ſtriking on my ſoul immediate,
 Without all ſenſe. “ I am the living God,
 And I have choſen thee to be my voice ; 620
 Speak thou to thoſe with whom thou art in league
 As God ſpeaketh to thee—they who have ruled

I've suffered them long time—but now no more.
 The cup of their iniquity is full,
 And they shall drink it to the lowest lees.
 There was a time for grace, they let it pass;
 For mercy, and they took no heed of it :
 Now is the hour of wrath : I give them up
 To be smitten with the sword and burnt with fire,
 To be a lesson in all time to come : 630
 For other function they can now fill none,
 Being so deep in sin : go cut them off ;
 For they are an abhorrence in my sight
 For the evil they have done ; their blood is foul ;
 Pour ye it forth—and when ye have censed all
 Then build ye a pure priesthood up anew.
 But for your lords, having o'erthrown them once
 Set none up in their stead—for I alone
 Am Lord and God, and privilege in man,
 Whether of land or honour or aught else, 640
 Is but a root of all perversity.
 So do, and once afoot return not back,
 Till ye've done all—lest what ye fail 'gainst them,
 Ye draw that vengeance down on your own heads.
 Go forth, as I have said so execute—"
 Brethren this is the Lord, these are his words.
 They've starved us, have those men, of half our bread,
 For two loaves, scanty one—they've made our church
 A den of thieves and hirelings baser far,
 And for the law, they have so fashioned it, 650
 So murderously, to be a ball of spikes,
 Wounding his hand that doth solicit it,
 Worse than his wrong—therefore I call on ye,
 Go force those villains to gorge up our spoil
 Though it come with their hearts' blood : then slaughter them
 Them, and their sons' on heap—and of their bones
 Rear up a pile high as the pyramids
 For a sign and wonder—thus I counsel ye
 For the lord's sake, and for yourselves yet more,
 That ye fulfill his words, spare not to slay, 660

But slay and spare not—and oh, bitterly
 Be he cursed that comes not to the aid of the Lord
 Against the mighty. I have warned ye aright,
 E'en as my God and conscience have warned me :
 The rest is yours." He ended and sate down,
 The big sweat glistening on his brow like steam
 On the cauldron's side when water boils within,
 He was so fervent—then hushed was each voice,
 As by a trumpet blast, none spake a word :
 Their marvel was too much : at last one rose 670
 Forth from the brooding silence—a spare man
 So spare it seemed that thought and study had been
 His only diet ; one whom his countenance
 Piercing and keen, and smiling scornfully
 Where others looked most grave, and where they prayed
 Reasoned or preached, still smiling scornfully
 Bespoke him truly what he was ; ere yet
 His words declared what he would seem to be.
 Bespoke him one who viewed the world as a stage
 Where fools go masked, and who would pick a purse 680
 Must mask him also, and seem one of the fools,
 That seeming so, he may be a gainful knave.
 The world a stage and all that's played on it
 But a rank lie ; where simple folks go feel
 And weep and wonder : while the wiser man
 But cries well acted : and in gravest things
 Where fools full reverently do believe
 There would he scorn more reverently, yet,
 As a zany gaping on his conjuror,
 Wearing a deferential wonderment 690
 To mask contempt—" Sir, that we're Patriots
 All honest men and true, as truth itself,
 Thinking no thought but for our country's good
 And our religion—this sir is most sure,
 For we have said it who best know ourselves :
 And as we are the only sterling coin,
 So they, on the other side, they're a base crew

Not worth the counting—well, my friends, what then?
 Be it so; and say we are as pure as gold,
 And they as hard and base as iron dross, 700
 What then? Oh! if they'll give up all to us
 For this, that we profess ourselves more pure,
 Then were it well; but if our purity
 Must come to trial of blows against their strength,
 Then must the stronger win of the more pure.
 My friends, if we be better men than they,
 'Tis better for us, and we shall gain by it;
 But not just now—that question is to come,
 And we must die and rot ere it be tried.
 But what concerns us here; I would fain know 710
 Which is the bigger number, theirs or ours,
 And the stronger arm? well, I believe it well—
 Ye of the brotherhood, ye are the more,
 If that your numbers could be brought to one
 And the greater force; therefore that we're good men,
 And being such, deserve a good reward;
 Much joy to us for that—and much more yet,
 For that we can enforce our good desert
 With our better strength: 'tis there I put my trust,
 And therefore only am I Patriot here. 720
 Sir, I belong not to the brotherhood,
 And therefore, what they be, or why so named,
 I know not; only this I am most sure,
 It is not for their love and unity—
 And yet haply ye think to strengthen your knot
 Thus pulling several ways. Oh! my good friends,
 Mark me but this, that knot is round your necks,
 And so must strangle ye, if ye draw cross,
 Each starting off and away in his wild fit,
 Where ye should pull together in one line. 730
 Sir, we are patriots, and all that's wise,
 And good, and true, is uttered in that word—
 And well 'tis so—else were it otherwise,
 Much that I heard but now, and to speak sooth,

The most of it, had seemed full strange to me ;
So strange, I doubted if I heard indeed,
Or dreamed but a fool's dream. Now for our wrongs—
The landlord and the parson have grieved us sore,
And sorely that same grievance shall they rue—
Aye, well I hope it, but I doubt to affirm. 740
We say, they've starved us—is it so, indeed ?
Oh no—say they are devils ; the devil himself
Is all too wise to starve his customers :
But yet, 'tis true they've made us pay full dear
The privilege to keep starvation off.
Well then, as thoughts are free, and clamours rife,
Calling for vengeance ; I've a sauce for ye,
If ye'll but bear with me a minute's space—
Seasoned so high, shall make the sharpest tongue
Cry out 'enough'. 'Tis a just judgment, Sir, 750
They starved us then, and they shall feed us now ;
And it shall be—as they've no other means—
With their own flesh ; aye, Sir, we'll slay them first,
And eat them after. Ah ! 'twere a rich treat,
To make the parson of to-morrow's dish
Say grace o'er his roast brother of to-day.
And the 'Squire toc—they've fed on the land's fat :
Good reason they should render it in kind,
To us who crammed them erewhile. And they, the pest
Of the earth, those cursed bigot Romanists, 760
'Tis they, as being in that kind well skilled,
Shall light the fire—light it, and when 'tis lit
Flung in themselves for fuel ; this ye see
Is the strong man's riddle, out of the eater meat,
'Thus solved—a good solution : only I fear
Ye'll think it all too mild—so much for the will,
Now for the way that leads to it. And first,
I counsel ye, e're that ye flay this bear,
To master him ; for, truly, I much doubt
He will not hold his mouth and paws to ye 770
So modestly, to have his strength plucked out,

Claws teeth and all. Therefore, I wish ye warned.
 Take heed of this, e're ye begin ought else :
 And when your enemy is down in the dust,
 And ye waving your arm'd hands over him,
 'Twill then be time for vengeance, if ye think
 Vengeance a better virtue than grace is.
 My friends, mistake me not to thwart your aims,
 Oh no—for I expect my wrongs redrest
 By your means—go on and prosper, I wish ye well, 780
 Best of the world,, only I must needs think
 Your zeal may chance to be a quality
 Fiercer than wiser—burning so to light
 Your enemies , and to consume yourselves.”
 He ended, and straightway Herman began.
 Rising up hastily as anxious so,
 To close the issues of that long debate,
 Where else had seemed no end : ,, Brethren, he said,
 Much matter have I listened, and heard much
 Well worth the listeners, while : complaint most just, 790
 And bold determination of redress
 On the complaint: and if therein were aught
 Fiercer than suits with sober statemanship
 Mixed up in it, 'tis but the excess of zeal ;
 And so to exceed, I hold ye worthier praise
 Than blameable—that ye have dared thus much
 (Next to your own free spirit and God's will)
 'Tis partly I have prompted ye thereto ;
 Blowing with a strong breath upon your fire
 Which self respect had damply stifled else, 800
 Not to surmount its smoke : and now once up
 Be it good or bad, I who have spirited
 Must answer it. So when I heard e'en now
 Comments imputing blame to my purposes,
 I was full fain to render the account
 Of all I have counselled ye—specially what
 Ye late agreed me, but some now repent
 To enlarge this land from many properties
 To one main : God's own rule with Israel :

'Stead of divisions, strifes, hot jealousies,
 New robbery worse than the old. So had I done.
 But others in their forward patriot zeal,
 A quality I do commend in them,
 And much I hope they'll show it elsewhere as here
 Prevented me. I owe them thanks for it—
 For what one said another did gainsay
 Till each combating each, they left me stand
 An idle looker on ; so what I thought
 To answer ye all singly, each in his kind,
 Ye have done yourselves : enough of argument 820
 Already hath been spent upon this cause ;
 Wherefore lest I o'erload your weariness,
 For all my speech I'll tell you a short tale :
 Hearken it, if ye will ; long time ago,
 But when and where it matters not to say,
 There was a river flowing proudly forth
 From its fountain to the sea, so noble a stream
 As nothing less than the great ocean
 Were issue fit for such a glorious life :
 And as beseemed its state, many there were 830
 Of various note, rivers and brooks and rills
 Did pay it tribute—bringing in their wealth,
 Offering all they had, themselves and all
 But to supply its profuse majesty :
 And as of long tradition the use was,
 E'en so they did long time—till at the last
 There rose a grievous murmuring 'mong them all
 Why this should be, " why 'tis a foul abuse,
 Bad in itself, and worse in his caprice
 Who abuseth us : look and cry out on it— 840
 How strange a thing ! here do we lose ourselves,
 But for his gain—our water, our wealth, our name,
 Almost our being—and he our sovereign
 Whom we vouch him so fond and foolishly :
 Who flows but in our flow, lives by our lives,
 What doth he for it—how doth he regard

And how requite the most unreasoning love
 Of this our loyalty—why not at all :
 As he were the one head, and we the tail
 Born but to follow him, and so we do : 850
 As he doth lead so do we render him suit,
 Blindly, as all too weak to hold our course
 Save in his train—and troth, he pays us well
 Our silly price : for, stead of leading us
 Thither, where fain we would to the main sea,
 And there an end, he goes careering round
 To make a show of his state, and we poor things
 Obsequious after him. Why should we not
 As we were wont, ere this our king confest
 Or his name heard, go freely our own way, 860
 Sufficient for ourselves, nor suffer him
 Thus idly arrogant." So said, so done.
 They did renounce their legiance, checked their course,
 Gnaw'd them new channels, and forth venturously
 Each as a lonely pilgrim, so to fare
 As he might chance to find ; but what they found
 Erelong, in the doubtful error of their way,
 Was ill discovery. Each looked to his end ;
 And had their will and power been but one,
 Then had they reached it—but more goes to the act 870
 Than the wish is master of, soon is strife sown
 And severance made : but for the promised good
 Should come of it, it lives and breathes but in
 The breath of the utterer, and so perishes ;
 A life twin-born with death. Soon as they left
 Their old allegiance and common bond,
 The change they took was single helplessness :
 For each one deemed his journey's scope must lie
 On this or the other line, and what they deemed
 Straitest, they took none other : but that way 880
 They found for the free blessing they were wont,
 Curses instead : all was counter and cross,
 Dykes cut in the alarm and dams thrown up

'Gainst their strange insolent invasion.
 And more than all, what seemed simple and strait
 Nature had barred it—Hills rivers and bogs
 Twixt them and their vain fancy—the more toil
 And the less hope : till at the last, what each
 Had chewed awhile, but felt it stick in his throat,
 They took to their proud stomach : rendering 890
 Such suit and service as they used of yore,
 With humble prayer to be ta'en back in grace
 Where late they left in scorn : and so again
 Filling one channel by their confluence,
 And called one name, they did forget themselves
 To amity and unity once more,
 Making a mighty flood of their joint power
 Which else were impotent, shaping their course
 In such large round as they might best take in
 Whoe'er would join them : and so, not straight indeed, 900
 But surely moving onward to their end
 With hourly augmentation. This, my friends,
 Though seeming fable is a very truth ;
 And in their proof well may ye see your own,
 If ye will look to it, thither to aim
 Where is attainable : there is no bond
 Of surety, except with vantage on each side
 To make the tie—who would grasp all, must lose
 All he would grasp—all that, and himself too,
 A silly loss. Therefore whate'er ye would 910
 Singly, go throw it in for an offering
 To swell the main : nor be so desperate,
 Rather to give up all to your worst foes
 Than a little to your friends ; first make your hawl
 And be right sure of it—'twill then be time,
 How best to sort your fish. " He ceased, and they
 Shouted that in the old chimæy swayed the smoke
 As with a tempests' sway—" 'twas bravely said
 And should be done ; such was their common sense
 In various phrase : let each think by himself, 920

And act with all." So they resolved, and who
Could better that resolve, were wise indeed,
Wiser to rest on it. Their debate closed,
Good cheer and laughter followed on the close,
And merry songs, and the brown earthen jug,
Crested with foam : then was each crazy chair
Drawn up in closer session round the fire,
And livelier. While thus was argued there
Hermann out of joint strained and quite toiled down
Wished them joy and success, full as their hope, 930
And parted to his rest—such sorry couch,
As a cabin might afford ; but yet to him
Made joyous by the holy spirit of love
Which to Christ's faith holds the like function
As soul to body ; in that same he breathed
And lived and wrought : and it shed over him
There as he slept a tender vision of light
Angelic joy, 'stead of those wildering dreams
Issue of controversy and cross hate
Which rose from out those other bigot brains 940
In sullen fumes chequered with raging flames.

BOOK X.

Religion, they who deem thee a holy thing
Consecrate to the God of whom thou art,
Deem thee aright; thou art indeed all this,
But on this ground of truth have men built up
Towering lies : by their false edifice
Abusing the true base whereon they built
For often, knowing thee to be thus much,
They so misdeem thee as thou wert no more :
As thou wert all unfit for worldly wont,
Being hallowed to God—set wholly apart 10
Or else profaned : this is worse heresy
Than ever fed the flames; it cuts thy root,
That thou must die and be a barren stock
Fruitless of good. He who holds this for truth,
Truth holds him for a liar most assured.
For prayer and fast and pious discipline,
What are they else but several functions
Serving a common end? the good of man
And nought beside; and serving that same end 20
By preparation, not by immediate act. 20
For the best glory the creator hath
Is of his creatures' good, not his own praise:
For oh! how poor were that with hymns and harps
To make music for heaven; but communing
So with our maker we do fit ourselves
For our fellows' service—and for holy acts,
Children of the holy spirit of our prayers.
For our religion is but our soul's eye;
And that same eye, God hath vouchsafed it us 30
As in the body, so in the soul too, 30

Not to turn back upon the giver his gift,
 Looking but up to him ; not that alone,
 But also, and much more, to look around,
 How the good means by his grace vouchsafed to us
 May serve good ends : for faith is not a pool—
 Functionless else save to reflect the sky—
 But most like blood, a sprightly officious thing,
 Active and warm, the life of the animal,
 Coursing a thousand ways to a thousand ends,
 Ever in exercise, yet not so much 40
 In outward show manifest to the eye,
 But rather to our consciousness approved
 In the effect of office, not in the act.
 He were a madman who should red his cheeks
 To serve for blood—yet that were all as wise
 As whoso doth some solemn services,
 And calls it his religion—aye, 'tis the name ;
 But prithee say, why so superfluous
 To give that name, where save the name itself
 Is nothing ? Oh ! but we are fooled by our ears 50
 Against the wisdom of our eyes' advice ;
 And a high-sounding word fills many a void
 Where acts should be—and such a word art thou
 Religion, as knaves use to utter thee,
 And fools to hear. But the very thing itself
 Which that same word so oft doth counterfeit,
 'Tis not, as many deem, a holy nun,
 Unknowing of the world—living a life
 Of lonely prayer, pale and contemplative
 As Even, inoffensive as its shade— 60
 But rather a quick stirring quality,
 Likest to fire, which is not fire indeed ;
 Unless it light and warm, enliven and cheer
 All things around it. 'Tis a fresh soul, breathed
 In the old man so strong and subtle as makes
 All that he is, e'en to his dullest flesh
 New-born to spirit ; that where'er he goes,

He feels in fiercest danger and distress,
 The presence and protection of his God,
 And in that strength is strangely confident 70
 'Gainst all the world. Oh! would'st thou take on thee
 High enterprize, daring and dangerous,
 Be thou religious—that thou may'st be strong,
 And beat all barriers down. Look up to God,
 And down on man; trusting so fervently
 As shall flame out and dissipate all fear.
 So shalt thou turn thy brow to adamant
 Against the opposer's threats; doubting no doubt,
 Dreading no dread; but doing all thou dost
 As thou hadst heard God's voice within thy ear, 80
 Go do it. Our greatness is but this, to be
 Thus greatly ancedered—coming from God;
 For what but littleness can come of man,
 From the worm he is? he must put off himself,
 And be regenerate unto the Lord,
 Then shall he feel a strength to wield the whole world.—
 Then, as the heaven is high above the earth,
 So shall his courage rise above his fear,
 Till the hugest fear show faint as a far speck,
 And the most stormy blast danger can blow, 90
 He will lay bare his head, open his breast,
 To brace his nerves by its breath—"danger, come on,
 Thou'rt but a storm, and soon thou must blow o'er:
 I'll stand and shout against thee." Such e'en then,
 Was the spirit that possest young Hermann's soul,
 Transnated, not to be of earth no more—
 And in that spirit did he feel more strength
 Than twenty thousand men could give to him.
 He started up from sleep, as the sun looked
 In at his window, with a wakeful eye;
 Welcome for him to rise himself as fresh—
 He started but to wilder consciousness,
 From wildness of his dreams.—"Is it I am here,
 Or do I dream the man, Hermann by name,

Being myself another. Yes, thou'rt he;
 Nay—but sure not: he was mere gentleness,
 And thou—Oh! what a change! a few days back
 A careful, quiet, mild shepherd of souls,
 And now—a rebel. 'Tis a desperate word
 To speak it, and to do—nay—but attempt, 110
 Were need to change one's self to a flame of fire
 Ere I could be so bold—what I essay
 Is harder than e'er man: a million fold
 But have I millioned in myself the means
 Of other traitors? To the proof!—can I strike
 You mountain from its base with my clenched fist,
 Wield that old oak for a spear—or by process
 Of wizard power people the moor with arms,
 Each bush to be a soldier.—Can I this?
 Aye, and much more; would it were harder still, 120
 Come whate'er may, I'll meet it, in God's name,
 And by God's strength: meantime rise up and do,
 The season is such." He sprang forth from his bed
 As he was wont, with a quick sudden spring,
 And washed him, the whole man, from head to foot;
 Soliciting his blood into a glow,
 By the healthy cold effusion: then to his host,
 Whose downward step he heard awhile before,
 Intent on early cares. "No;" said the guest,
 Averse from profered hospitality 130
 "An oaten cake and basin of pure milk,
 Is all enough—if ye would do me grace,
 Then hear my counsel. Now is the night past,
 The sun is up: that sun symbols our own,
 Forelighting us: our day's at hand—our fire
 Impatient to flame forth: and soon this world,
 This old brute laziness shall flame with it.
 Well, we've the start of them—we're betimes stirred,
 And early is half done; only 'twere well
 What yet remains we follow with like speed: 140
 Therefore, go sow surmises in the ears

Of all our friends ; scatter intelligence
 Privily—no fall light, but a few sparks
 Captious of such quick tinder. Stir their souls
 That they be watchful—ready to take arms,
 (For faith, this our occasion is no less,)
 Swifter than summoned they could answer it :
 What else to do, consult the thing itself,
 'Tis the best counsellor. As the course goes,
 So further it : no more, for many words 150
 Are to the fool no light, to the wise a cloud.
 And now your hand—I go to serve a need
 That masters me ; districts thirty and two,
 You'll see flaming in arms a flame so fierce—
 As draws the popular breath to sweep it on.
 Soon as we raise our own let us shout strong,
 And they will echo us." As thus he spake,
 He gave his hand, and the Shepherd earnestly
 Grasped it, as so with his good angel hand-fast ;
 And looking a yet kinder speech than his words,— 160
 " Aye, Sir, be sure you may lean safe on me,
 Far as my life will go." As the old man spake,
 The tear quick trembling, stood in Hermann's eye,
 That answer, his affection wrung from him,
 He gave none else, but grasped the outstretched hand,
 And parted ; then forth strode into the air,
 And like the fabled giant son of earth,
 Felt a new life in that communion,
 With nature his fond mother—he breathed in
 Once and again the mountain healthfulness 170
 With eager breath ; looked on the landscape round,
 Bright, still, and beauteous, as the sky above,
 Till all that summer had sunk into his soul,
 Then brushed his dewy way up the hill side,
 Through goss and tangled grass : he reached the ascent,
 Then downward, where a thin light vapourous curl,
 Hovering, marked the windings of a brook,
 Itself unseen—a minute's space, and he stood

Upon its bank—a stand of his early years ;
 For he was so familiar with that stream, 180
 As though his being were bound up in it,
 To hold one life. He paused—for it poured on
 Not peaceful, as its wont, but big with rain,
 Outrageous to swell o'er—he paused, and thought—
 “ My pretty rivulet, whither away
 So rapidly ? thou dost o'erflow with foam
 As thou wert mad—is it in truant play,
 Or of some high ambition thou dost roam ?
 Surely I have a project, thou wilt say,
 So be it—yet thou wert best in thy first home : 190
 Here happiest, if but conscious being so,
 For this thy land feeds thee from her full breast,
 Most motherly, e'en from her hills of snow :
 And many men bless thee ; and thou art blest
 For thy abundance, and the flocks do go
 Freely, to drink from thee, as they love best.
 But thou'rt an idle and ambitious thing—
 Must be more than thyself ; and thy proud thought
 Hath puffed thee up in its imagining
 Not so to like, working as thou hast wrought ; 200
 And that same storm of yesterevening
 Hath swollen thy pride full—yet, a day's drought,
 And thou wilt shrink to thy poor self again.
 Nay, prithee, tell me, what dost hope to win
 Of worthy profit from all this thy pain ?
 Only to pass through peril, and hate, and sin,
 And so be lost in the tumultuous main.
 Poor fool, thou seest thy end—wilt yet begin ?
 Yes, for thou'rt proud, and much I pity thee
 For thy pride's sake : yet, haply 'tis not so ; 210
 And thou art swollen only to hinder me
 From yonder path of danger that I go,
 I thank thee, much ; but there's a destiny
 Rules me above, and I must serve below.
 Yes, thou and I are fellows in like fate ;

And there's a force urges us ceaselessly,
That we may never bide in peaceful state:
Well, be it so—and forward fearlessly—
Thou to thy troublous ocean, my poor mate—
And I to buffet a yet stormier sea." 220
He spake; and 'stead of picking carefully
His passage o'er the stones, huge, but smooth-worn,
That some kind hand—whom heaven requite again—
Had set them there, instead of a bridge way,
He rushed into the roaring foaming stream,
E'en through its darkest depth! "As I stand now,
No time to tamper nicely with my means,
But boldly on to the end." He scrambled up,
So minded, as who makes a desperate plunge, 230
And must screw up his utmost spirit and strength
To struggle through—soon was the wet made dry
By influence of the wind and his warm blood;
And yet some longer space, he reached the door,
Was closed for him last night, but haply now
May give him passage—he looked round, and all
Was summer sweetness fresh as the instant dew;
That e'en the smoke seemed to rise cheerily
Above the glistening thatch, and from their hives
Ranged in trim row, the bees, still issuing, 240
Made merry music—there was jessamine
And mingled roses arbouring the porch;
And in the little garden many flowers,
And yet more fruit, glad sight for a glad heart,
But not for his. He turned, and raised his hand
Heavily, and struck heavily on the door,
And he was answered with so heavy a sound,
As all were empty and cold and dead within,
That his heart sunk to hear it. As he knocked,
So did that watchful granddame of the house
Steal from an upper window her shrewd glance, 250
Wrapped her cloak round, muffled her headgear on,
And strait was hurrying down; but that her son,

Raised by the same alarm, encountered her,
 And asked her of that early visitor,
 Who he might be. Then at young Hermann's name
 As in her peevish spleen she uttered it,
 He stayed her hurry with mild voice and hand,
 Himself to give him audience, "Welcome Sir,
 Most welcome to our house and family,
 Long have I looked for thee." So said the host, 260
 And his new guest being seated thus again,
 "You know me, my young friend, you know us all;
 You know how our affection holds thee dear,
 As the dearest claim of kin—the proof of this
 It is not words alone, but our long use
 Affirms the faith of it; so much for us.
 Now for my daughter—she is maidenly,
 Gracious and pitiful, and apt to love;
 And they who see but the outward mood of her
 Know her no more than this, but she's much more. 270
 I need not tell thee, conscious so thyself;
 Whether of my example or God's will,
 I may not surely say, but there she is:
 A soul so fervent zealous for our cause,
 And of so pure and high a fervency,
 As cares but for that only thing in the world
 To see it achieved—and frankly as the child,
 So is the father too—vouch me this truth,
 For none is so well ware of it as thou:
 That I am self-devoted this long time, 280
 I and all mine, all that I have and hope,
 My wife and daughter and my eternal soul
 To this high trial. Now then in few words,
 When I disclosed it to thee a while since,
 Thou didst shrink from it as it seemed to me.
 Or else, thy words were of so sickly a breath,
 As fits not our strong fiery fellowship;
 Lest what some utter other affections feel,
 Catching the faint contagion. From that time

The hope I had of thee that thou wouldst fling 290
 Thy fortunes in among us, was no more ;
 Therefore, when Linsingen declared himself
 For better or for worse to be our friend,
 If Lucy would so choose to be his wife,
 I made his suit my own: waived thee away,
 And all the love I bore thee, all that a Sire
 May bear a son, I did surrender it
 To another love yet higher than that one,
 The zeal of Christ, my country, and mankind.
 And so faith has been plighted on both sides, 300
 And she is his and he is truly ours—
 Our very leader—for I rendered him,
 (Or rather not to him, but to our cause)
 My headship and command, rendered it up,
 As free as I will render my life too.
 Now, if thou'rt wronged in this, why thou art wronged
 And I am the wrong doer; hold me such:
 My conscience quits me, but thou may'st condemn;
 Only misdeem me not, that I was moved
 By aught that honesty need blush to avouch 310
 In this my sacrifice—for 'tis no less:
 And what I've done, I would that it were not,
 Since thou art proved of late; having performed
 More full and nobly than thy promise was,
 As noble minds do love. It grieves me sore
 That thus thy merit should fall short of its meed:
 Yet can I offer thee no guerdon more
 Than thy own conscience hath assured to thee—
 Briefly 'tis done, and regret looseth not
 The bond that haste the occasion and our need 320
 Have triply tied." "Sir, 'tis a grievous thing;"
 Hermann in tremulous utterance answered him:
 "To lose what we have cherished a long time
 Is sad in things of lesser dignity;
 Much more in this that once filled my whole heart
 Now void—'tis sad, but wrongful not at all.

No wrongs I do complain of nor feel none :
 And what must be I will essay to bear
 As a man should : therefore my hope of love
 Is so fore-gone to me as a fond dream : 330
 Happy, but hopeless ; if forgotten e'en so.
 For the rest, that other ground whereon I built
 Myself, our public cause so holy and true,
 That is a strength as sure as e'er it was :
 And there I make my stand : Sir, it may be,
 Your daughter's love, which was not mine alone,
 So I once hoped, but hers in equal share,
 Might well have been a cheering light to me
 Along that perilous path—but 'tis there still,
 The path itself ; and I will follow it, 340
 With the like force, if not with the like cheer.
 And Sir, that Linsingen hath this new spur,
 I think it well befallen—he is rich,
 And noble ; and much I feared lest he should be,
 By hinderance of those dull qualities,
 Lazier in our cause than forwarder.
 But now 'tis well. Sir, there's one thing I'd ask,
 To see your daughter, and so hear from her
 What I have good assurance from your lips,
 But nearer yet from hers." " 'Tis just and right," 350
 Answered the father. "and shall surely be.
 Wait but her coming down ; nay, 'tis herself
 There in the garden—she shall know your wish,
 Yours and her own." He went, and Hermann alone
 Remained : 'twas a short space, but large enough
 For thousand various thoughts to crowd between
 Confounded in one vague, thronging like motes,
 Though joyless of the sun : then was all still,
 Save the unruly beating of his heart :
 That broke the stillness, soon another sound 360
 That none might hear, save who had listened it.
 A quick light step : and then a gentle hand
 Upon the door, and gliding through the room

A youthful presence of pale loveliness,
 Lovely though pale, she moved as in a dream,
 Noiseless and vague and all unconsciously,
 For her deep passion had enveloped her
 As with a cloud: she stood, and had sunk there
 Ere she could speak; but Hermann hastily
 Rose, and encountered her and took her hand, 370
 And seated her in drooping passiveness
 That so she might collect her spirit again,
 And be herself. Sadly he gazed on her,
 Then broke the sad pause, "Lucy, look on me,
 And speak me a word—surely we may be friends,
 Such severance as ours it breeds not hate
 But pity—speak to me, and let me hear,
 That this same gulf but parts us being friends,
 No hostile distance—nay, but weep not so,
 Thy grief is my worst pain. Oh answer me 380
 Only a word." "Oh yes, I'll answer thee;
 But what to say? forgive me that is all.
 Forgive me now as thou didst love me once,
 Wholly—so shall my pain haply be less:
 But no—that I deserve not—nor dare hope—
 Only forgive me." "Lucy 'tis too much:
 Wherefore forgive? What thou hast done from my heart
 I do commend it for a noble deed:
 But if thou lovest more the other word,
 Then do I tell thee I forgive it all, 390
 As free as we forgive our dearest friends
 For seeking our best good: nay, mark me this—
 Had I such cause and motive for the act,
 I'd done no less myself—I loved thee much—
 Thou know'st it: and I felt and ever shall.
 Yet in the heat and fragrance of my zeal
 I had spent a hundred thousand loves like thine
 To gain but one such man as thou hast gained
 On our behalf in noble Linsingen:
 So prithee be content." "Nay what thou say'st" 400

The maiden answered him with streaming tears,
 " It shows thy spirit's greatness greater yet
 And all my baseness baser than before,
 Oh! hadst thou been my brother—how blest then
 Thy sister."—" Lucy deem it even so:
 I am thy brother, we're twinborn in soul:
 What would we more? Only be thou indeed
 My own true sister in this enterprize,
 So shalt thou have not only a husband's love,
 Which was the richest hope I offered thee, 410
 But a brother's also on the top of that,
 Crowning the measure: yes, by my faith I think
 A sister's name is of the sweeter sound;
 Purer and chaster; less of earth in it,
 And more of Heaven. Lucy 'tis God's grace
 And, for I deem it so, thy forehead I kiss
 For a most holy and baptismal sign,
 That thou art sistered to me. This is good,
 Never was I a brother yet before,
 And now I feel the spirit in my heart 420
 As a new born angel. Is it so with thee?
 Prithee, believe no less—we must part now—
 A longer stay might not beseem us well;
 But there's a word I'd say: haply thou knowest
 There is a force of soldiers here hard by
 In Salberg—Soldiers, but yet men no less:
 And not mere stocks for musquets as some are.
 There hath been sown good seed among those men
 And it hath taken root. Now in that force
 Young Edward Linsingen doth hold a charge, 430
 Being an ensign: what I know of him,
 He is a kind of metal might be wrought
 To our hottest use—now Lucy for my sake
 And yours and Linsingen's and all of us,
 While yet your husband's love holds its first heat,
 Fashion it to this end, to work upon
 His brother, whose good means may move those men

To join hands with us e'en as their hearts are,
 Wilt thou do this, thou'lt do our utmost aim
 Our foes destruction—I say, if thou wilt, 450
 For sure the power waits upon thy will :
 And never did a woman's will before
 Wield a like power to this : hast thou a soul,
 To look beyond thine eyes what shall be done
 In after years ? Oh thou'lt be honoured,
 So high, that she of Orleans, the French maid,
 Shall be but a poor wench, what she first was,
 By thy comparison : yield us thus much,
 I do beseech thee, and so bless us all,
 Or rather, yield thy own good spirit its way, 460
 'Tis a brave guide : Lucy, then shall I know
 What I do trust thee now, that thou art true ;
 And leaving me, leavest one thou dost love
 But for thy country's sake. Oh think of it !
 And may the act be instant on the thought
 Lest some cross chance mar all ; and now I go—
 Give me thy ambient blessing with me hence—
 Thy own true brother :” he kissed her and away.
 And she was left in a deep loneliness :
 And many thoughts came o'er her vague and dark 470
 Till at the last they fell into this frame.

“ Did I behold him
 And truly was it he,
 All I told him
 And all he answered me ?
 No—for in my blindness
 I did him a foul wrong :
 Sure such words of kindness
 Could ne'er be from his tongue.
 Nay—but dearest 480
 Tell me was it thou,
 Sure thou hearest—
 Or art thou perished now ?

Yes thou'rt parted
 Wilt never turn again—
 Here lone-hearted
 Here must I remain.—
 Were I only
 A reckless soldier lad !
 But thus lonely ! 490
 Sure I shall be mad.
 Then were anguish
 Lost in the stormy strife :
 Now I languish
 A despairing life.
 Oh it doth grieve me
 Thou visitest me so
 Only to leave me
 Deeper in my woe !
 While thou art present 500
 All that we dreamt of yore ;
 Lovely and pleasant,
 I dream it all once more.
 Then that old vision
 A very truth doth seem :
 Then my ambition
 Shows as a foolish dream.
 Yes its high glimmer
 More distant doth appear ;
 Fainter and dimmer : 510
 Whenever thou art near.
 There a star lone gleaming
 That hath no home on earth,
 Here a blaze warm beaming
 From our bright household hearth.
 Alas fond hearts are driven
 By anger and by scorn,
 But so to be forgiven
 Is harder to be borne.
 Yet thou art vanished ! 520
 And my woman weakness too

Hence be it banished—
 Lo here I rise anew.
 Gone is thy loved feature—
 But others I see there
 Many a grim stature
 All armed around thy chair.
 Or is it but a vision
 So troubles my poor brain
 I'll dream no more then back thou stern decision, 430
 Thus am I thine again."

She rose and as she rose her mother came
 To comfort her—but what we bear in the hand
 We may not always lay it on the heart—
 No—'tis the various spirit makes it balm
 Or gall and nettles. Lucy started up
 As she heard the door a-hinge—lest some strange soul
 In a familiar form should come to ask
 Merciless questions in another tone
 Than she must answer them: who feels with us, 440
 He is our friend, our father and mother too,
 In the heart's affliction; and all else soe'er,
 Though 'twere all our familiars met in one
 Are but cold hands of clay: so she came in,
 That tender mother, and spake kind to her;
 But 'tis the season brings the flower forth,
 The season and conspiring elements,
 And not the sun alone—"Lucy, he's gone—
 He and thy father parted with kind words;
 And they're agreed to meet this day at the fair 450
 In Markstein—so you see he'll be to us
 All he hath ever been—more than so much
 Were all too dangerous. Yes, I grieve for him
 Deeply as thou, if not so bitterly.
 For he's a noble youth: nor even then
 When most I doubted did I deem him less—
 I'll take him to my heart, call him my son,
 As long I've loved him: yes, loved him so much,

That it were death to me beholding ye
 Both thee and him bound in so crazy a boat 460
 As every wave may wreck it: ye are all hope
 Ye younger hearts, and we're as wholly fear;
 And this is but my fearfulness of love:
 This present trouble was not to foreknow,
 Therefore, dear Lucy, I did that which yet
 I may undo: I'll send to Linsingen,
 Whom late I summoned to be here this night
 That he stay away." "Oh no, I'll welcome him
 All that I can; first to my chamber awhile,
 And ere his time I shall be ready, then 470
 Being so rested." Thus as they discoursed,
 Hermann was far away, far o'er the hills,
 Where the sharp goad of danger urged his speed,
 Pursuing at his heels. As the aged hind
 In some high woodland range listens the storm,
 Shivering in his hut through the long night,
 Then forth at break of day, glad of his chance,
 And hope of fuel for his winter fire,
 To gather in the spoil strown by that wind
 In a rueful rack—rueful for forest Lord, 480
 But glad for him, so binding in a heap
 What he found thinly scattered in wide space,
 Wandering the uncouth wild: so Hermann fared,
 Soliciting materials far and near,
 For the blaze that he should kindle: they were hearts
 Those he did visit, all as prompt to burn
 As he to fire them; a strong brotherhood,
 (So was their union called, and so they were),
 Where every man was zealous, not alone
 With his single zeal, but with the fervency 490
 Of the whole host. They had been banded long—
 But so, as by the rulers of the land
 They were deemed only what they seemed to be,
 Preachers austere and devout listeners,
 Aiming at Heaven, and for this earth's estate.

How it were ruled, little regarding it,
 Nor caring to disturb. Thus as they grew,
 Others confided—truly confidence
 Thou'rt a good swordsman, but yet all unfit
 To hold the shield. And so this people waxed 500
 Daily and hourly, trunk and branches too,
 Spreading o'er all the region round about,
 Like a fresh fame; that who of the poor sort,
 Belonged not to them, lived as one plague-sick
 So shunned and pointed at. They'd a good cause,
 And more than that, they had a method too
 Bettering that goodness. He is but a fool
 Who would cry down a state with another cry
 Than of religion: treason's a hot taste,
 And needs hot appetite to swallow it;— 510
 A hot enthusiastic appetite:
 And this enthuaiasm is a fire
 That feeds on its own smoke—easy kept up,
 If we but starve it of all solid food
 And diet it with vapours. Who sees clear
 He is no zealot: truth doth purge for him
 Those visionary fumes, but where none knows
 And each man may believe whate'er he list,
 There is the enthusiast a king indeed
 And of wide royalty: then hail to thee 520
 Religion, nursing mother of that fire,
 Predestined to consume the bonds of man,
 Easy as withered tow. They in this frame,
 E'en as the ancient saints in Israel,
 Had ever in their mouth the praise of God,
 And in their sinewy hands a two-edged sword
 To execute sharp vengeance, to smite kings
 To the ground, and smitten so bind them in chains,
 Them and their nobles too—galling constraint,
 Iron coercion, yet ere they built up 530
 Their frame so high, first their foundation
 They did establish broad and deep and strong

Though out of sight ; for what is boldly done
 Needs warily : the numbers that they had
 They studied day by day with their best means
 To make them more ; active they were, as life
 Were motion only, and tardiness their death :
 And truly in such active zeal is a force
 Current, that draws with it things idle else
 And stationary. What the multitude 540
 Doth see astir, they fall agape at it
 And join the forward throng : so did the blood
 Course briskly through their body in daily use
 Of exercise, debates frequent and prayers ;
 Meetings for propagation of their faith,
 By message tract or bible : and lest youth,
 To spiritual service only enured,
 Should in that too much shade grow sickly, and feel
 Its hot blood cooled to caution and slow fear,
 Befitting more ancient authority 550
 Than zeal of what is new ; therefore with games
 (Pretending sport but oft meaning much more)
 Of force or skill, cudgel or marksmanship,
 And many else, they made each lusty heart
 Yet lustier, and strength stronger than itself.
 And they were furnished most officiously
 With emissary skill—immediate
 To every use and function of the main,
 As to the body its limbs, for in each town
 All needful means being prepared thereto,
 Discourse was rife, and popular debate 560
 Of public things, then what the lively tongue
 Urged on the hearer, that same sense did books
 Vile priced, but yet of golden preciousness,
 Speak to the studious mind ; popular fame
 That flies abroad with daily paper wings
 They gave to her an impress of their own,
 Stamping her with opinions and with acts
 Such as best pleased them : breathing into her

The breath that from her trumpet she should blow. 570
 And they had tax and tribute, duer paid
 Though self-imposed, than what imperious power
 Would force from its cross bondsmen : to sum all,
 They were a mass so many as might well
 Peril a stronger state, and all in one
 So bonded and compact, as needs must make
 That staggering peril a sure overthrow.
 Such was that brotherhood, holy at first
 Then traitorous : but traitorous 'gainst man
 Is oft loyal to God—and such the aim 580
 And eager expectations of those crowds,
 That thronged each passage on to Markstein fair
 A throng but yet no tumult ; steady and grave
 As their stern purpose was : for the fame ran,
 A Gossamer fame, floating everywhere,
 Whence none could tell—that something should be done
 That day so signal, and of so deep note,
 That in its memory it should outlive
 Their lives who did it. Prophecy hath oft
 The fabled power to beget with its breath, 590
 And that same oft was here made oftener
 By one proof more : faith, if these people here
 At their fair tide in high festivity,
 Carry so stern a front, what will they wear
 'Gainst the sharp edge of battle—then their brows
 Will threaten darkly as the thundercloud,—
 And those who stand on high beware that cloud
 Of its fierce lightning issue : is this land
 Harried by war, and are the peasant folk
 Hurrying for their refuge to one point ? 600
 That so each road is full as a river bed,
 One stream speeding one way ? no not yet war,
 But soon may be. 'Tis noon, the people are met
 There where old wont this day celebrates fair,
 And sure 'tis a full muster : all around
 The country is unpeopled, that this moor

May swarm with a strange life. There are they met
 In that rough barren plain, circled by hills;
 And there is all custom traditional—
 Caravans, booths, and shows and antic games, 610
 But no man heeding them. Is mirth clean gone,
 Laughter lost from the land? is wonderment
 Of curious presentation and strange sights
 Native no longer to the mind of man,
 But made a stranger itself? 'twere hard to say,
 Yet all things here look as 'twere even so:
 For where others should wonder at his show,
 The showman all forlorn, himself comes forth,
 Wondering what spell had bound the assembled folk,
 That none should enter. Whoso then had said 620
 That fun and frolic were dead suddenly,
 And pleasantry turned to philosophy,
 There was enough to warrant what he said
 In what all eyes might see—considerate groups—
 Speakers most earnest, and still listeners;
 Brows downward bent in cloudy seriousness,
 Instead of careless gay festivity,
 The time's convenience. Is it the world's end,
 Or other strange portentous prophecy,
 They wait to see accomplished? Whate'er 'tis, 630
 There is no need conjecture spend herself:
 Here comes the proof—far on the extreme edge
 Of that dark moor, a movement was to see,
 Of clamorous boys, in rush tumultuous,
 Like some mad shallow torrent foaming in
 At corner of a lake—disquietude
 Sudden, 'stead of deep calm: who had vantage ground
 Looked thither, whence the growing danger came;
 And what they saw, interpreted the sight
 To those whose tip-toe strained impatience 640
 Might not avail to give them their eyes use.
 "Ah! 'tis the yeomanry; yes, sure enough,
 See—there they come, and all that rascal crew,

Those urchin ranaways—where were they bred?
 Shame on them all, and on their sires alike.
 Why, we're a wall might well shiver that strength,
 Fifty times told. Ah? see, they've made a stand,
 'Tis bravely done—face but about, and keep
 The horsemen at bay—said I not even so?
 A murrain on them, they can do no more 650
 Than sheep at a stone wall. See now! what next?
 Why they're at parley: ah! 'tis but lost words.
 They would have Hess, Hermann, and Linsingen,
 Given o'er to them for traitors manifest:
 To die, I warrant ye: no; as one fares,
 So will we all—take the whole body of us,
 Or not a man; like tresspass, and like pain—
 The law of fellowship." In such wise spake
 Some high-placed speculator, to those near;
 But suddenly speakers and hearers, both 660
 Confounded, were borne off by the eager rush,
 Thither contending, where, as seemed most like,
 Force should be proven: all one mass along,
 Distinction none, of coward and of brave;
 For how should a poor water-drop fall back,
 Or strive to west against the Atlantic tide
 Rushing in eastward, swollen by storm-blast!
 To the old Herculean columns:—so being urged
 By that rear mass, the front were forced amain
 'Mong the angry horsemen, struggling wildly there, 670
 As breakers 'gainst the rocks. Strife is a thing
 Cloud-born, and gend'ered so tumultuously,
 That who begot it, who knows? nor matters much,
 When that two flaming brands are laid across,
 Which catches first the other. Those armed men,
 Their ranks so broken, and their horses scared,
 First with loud threatening—next with their flat swords
 Or with blunt stroke forced the intruder back;
 Thence anger and fierce words—stones flung—arms bared,
 And last, as gushed the blood forth from a wound 680

Of yeoman sabre ; swift upon the stroke,
 As thunder upon lightning, a gun-shot
 Crashed through the striker's temples ! "Aye, 'tis done ;
 Now is no faltering ;" cried the voice of Ernst,
 Bellowing o'er the conflict—"blood for blood,
 And life for life, so will their watchword be,
 And so must ours. Smite them with the sword's edge,
 The Philistines, the bloody Amalekites !
 Whom whoso pities least, best pleases God :
 The murderous gang, they came to trample us 690
 Beneath their horses heels, to cut our throats,
 And drink our blood : we'll give them back as good ;
 We'll slaughter theirs to a pool—a cursed pool,
 So shall our children call it. Up, friends, up !
 Requite them in God's name : spare no life home,
 To tell his comrades slain ; smite, I say, smite,
 Upon them boldly—as ye see me do,
 E'en so yourselves the like !" Ere he had said
 He was already in the midst of his foes,
 Hewing to right and left with an old broad-sword, 700
 Laid up since many years ; till on this day
 The crimson flowing blood dimmed the red rust
 Was erst upon it :—from assault so grim,
 Fearfully they fell back, those yeoman souls—
 Manliest ever, where no manhood needs,
 'Gainst old wives—dastard warriors, but most brave
 To ruffian peace : back they fell, fearfully,
 From danger glaring on them, like vile curs
 When a tiger bursts his den : so did they flee,
 Not so to 'scape ; they looked for stones, and staves 710
 Some clownish, all weaponless of other war ;
 Such faint offence as falls from the wearers' hands
 As a pistol flash : they looked for such as that,
 And what they saw, needed no second view,
 That one sufficed to curdle their heart's-blood ;
 That where they thought no danger, they should be
 Far from their wives, and from their blazing hearths,

In such a rout as this—these spirits of wrath
Were mixed with them, as hewers 'mong the wood,
Striking as pitiless—flashed in the air 720
A hundred guns, from 'neath the grey frieze coats,
And hissed a hundred shots—or would have done,
But for the cursed uproar and fierce shouts,
Drowning all else: then, who had space to flee
Turned each his horse, and with loose rein away,
Where issue was; the rest, a mingled throng,
Horses and men, rearing, plunging amain,
Striking or shouting, or dashed down to the ground;
And there imploring with their latest breath—
Mercy, which, asked of God, were their brief prayer— 730
Best spent, of man all hopeless. Oh! that field
Was such a one devils might look upon,
And for their fellows take a lesson away
From proof of christian men, how hell should hate;
Only there lacked more fuel for that fire
To hold its pitch. Slaughter was blanked of its aim
Ere half its fury spent: for the last feat,
When all resistance else was smitten down,
Christopher Ernst, as 'gainst a dying man
Stretched on the turf supine, he upheaved his sword, 740
Raging for blood in its hot sympathy
With the hand that held it—sudden his stroke failed,
And his brains, spattered by a pistol shot,
Sprinkled that trooper, whom the film of death
Had not obscured his certainty of eye
Ere he took aim. “And so doth violence,”
Said Hermann, gazing sadly on the corse;
“Foredo itself—and where is thy fire now,
Thou chilly piece of clay? aye, where indeed?
Grant heaven, as sure it hath gone forth from thee, 750
And this thy hand is cold, our people here
May be the heirs of it; thou hadst enough,
Were they ten times the number that they are,
To flame a greater host; but what needs more?

Already thou hast done it." Musing thus,
 More and more hotly the crowd thronged on him,
 Doubtful of the strange things they heard far off,
 Till they could see them. "Hear me, my good friends,"
 Said Hermann, as disorder grew to rout;
 "Here we have beat them off; and there's good hope, 760
 Where'er we meet, they'll be as strongly met:
 But not by this road only danger comes,
 For they are hasting hither, horse and foot,
 Wide as the compass points; therefore behoves
 Large front, and watchful guard; so every man
 By the pass he came there let him stand in arms,
 Waiting what may befall." They listened him
 Intent, as wisdom were in all his words,
 Then with cheerful acclaim went various ways,
 To do his bidding. He and the other heads 770
 Remained behind, doubtful what next to try;
 Doubtful, yet undismayed: then was a pause,
 For counsellors are few, there where men know
 Counsel were treason: then as each one seemed
 To wait others advice, the old harper broke
 Blindly upon their conference in this strain:—
 "My friends, a marvel hath been done;
 And ye stand wondering, every one,
 And reason good ye have therefore, 780
 For your clenched hands are red with gore.
 And shrieks, and shouts, and rage, and fear,
 Yet ring within each wildered ear,
 And so ye stand, all silently;
 But I must lift my voice on high:
 Though I have seen strange things likewise,
 E'en with these dead and darkling eyes,
 Ye know I'm blind these many years—
 Ye see me in a flood of tears;
 That flood, e'en now, brought back my sight
 To see one moment of God's might. 790

Blind as I am, I witnessed all,
 Whate'er of bloodshed did befall :
 And Ernst and others on our side,
 Who dared their death, and fought and died,
 I marked their souls mount up on high,
 In a strange glory to the sky.

And, my dear friends, ye knew it well ;
 Ye felt some sudden spirit's swell,
 Driving ye thither—a wild horde,
 Where danger met ye with drawn sword :
 Ye knew it not what it might be,
 But it was all reveal'd to me :

800

The spirits of your sires were there,
 Careering 'bove you, in the air ;
 And swelling every patriot breast,
 As sails with the full wind possess :
 Waving their country's banner old,
 And brandishing their weapons bold.

A radiant comfort to all here,
 But to the foeman a wild fear.

810

And with the battle's fiercer blaze
 Still they grew brighter to my gaze,
 Till in one lightning flash at last
 With victory's shout away they past.
 My friends, as God hath gifted me,
 E'en so the truth I tell to ye :
 For I am old and like to die ;
 Fiend have me if it be a lie.

And since this morning by the rood
 I'm tasteless both of drink and food.

820

Sure by such miracle is shown
 That God himself is all our own :
 E'en the blest spirits fight for us,
 How should we fail or falter thus ?
 Then in that faith go boldly on,
 But, till your utmost work be done,

I charge ye by the living Lord,
 Lay ye not down your conquering sword."
 "Well done thou brave old man, aye, bravely done,"
 Thus the impatient zeal of Linsingen: 830
 "Why this thy spirit lacks but a young arm,
 Then were it worth a thousand men to us,
 To swell our strength." "Nay, but there's more in it,"
 Said Hermann, "be ye sure there's more in it
 Than seems—for how but by God's special gift
 Could such fresh spirit dwell so crazily
 As in that man.—no, 'tis Heaven's influence,
 No less I hold it." Then said Linsingen,
 "Then will we follow it, what think ye Sirs?
 There lies Count Stolberg, there he lies, stark dead. 840
 'Stead of his wish and fiery winged hope,
 This our whole host impetuous from yon plain
 As whirlwinds sweep the stubble, there he lies,
 And there his castle stands, haughty and strong,
 As erst was he the living lord of it.
 What think ye? for the good will he hath shown
 Were it not meet to give him back as good,
 And storm his house? poor body, he's but clay,
 And whatsoe'er we do it harms him not,
 Who knows not of it. And for his young sons 850
 Their heritage is fallen ere its time
 By many years: and we who've hastened it,
 If we withhold it from them a short space,
 It were not much, what say ye, aye or no?
 Shall we to the assault?" "'Twere a bold stroke,"
 Said Hermann, "a bold stroke, but yet no blame;
 'Tis better overbold than to despair.
 For the rebel's strength is his audacity
 And we can lose no more, and may gain all.
 Then were we cowards indeed, and fools to boot 860
 To play a jealous game—if we would hope,
 Why we must dare. Then on thou mighty man

Of valour, whom the Lord is leagued with thee.
I give my voice for it." "And" said Linsingen,
"Defence is a cold word, I like it not;
And see, in its cold spirit we stand now,
Chilling our best of warmth. But to attack,
There breathes a hot defiance from that word,
Arguing strength. Oh, in the fiery assault
There is a force and terrible energy 870
That twice its numbers may not stand against,
But to be overthrown. Movement is warmth,
And swift is strong: else were this lazy stone
Violent as a cannon-ball. Then Sirs,
Let us go forward bold and lionlike
To front our danger and to grapple it;
Not waiting to be hunted out like wolves,
And skulk to a sure death—say are ye such,
To die so slavish? no my brave friends, we'll on,
So will opinion after us; whose breath 880
Must fill our banners, idle though it be,
Drooping without it." As he spake, so all
Shouted their loud accord. "Look to thyself,
Thou ancient castle—for if valiant hearts
And sinewy arms have aught of potency,
There is so much of spirit in that shout,
Bodes thee no good: look to thy strength, I say,
That it be sure—for truly, they who come
Will prove its surety with a most sharp proof. 889

BOOK XI.

Daringness, thou'rt a noble quality !
Had I been Pagan born, none else but thou
Had been my idol—yes, many there were
Vain images, I would have smitten down
And raised thee in their stead. Yet in those times,
When every knave that would set up a god,
And built a temple, and called himself a priest,
And stole the offerings—where myriads
Were esteemed worthy, thou wert never one :
No altar raised, nor incense burnt to thee. 10
For truly though thou art a noble thing,
Yet the priests love thee not ; as guessing well
Thou wert too true and simple to love them.
Who dost deny to give them what they ask,
The show of reverence : needs them no more.
True faith to fraud were but importunate,
Taking her ease : but no—the mask she wears
Would honest daring pluck from her foul face,
Therefore she curses him : for her craft's sake
Whereby she lives—that fraud is a feculence, 20
A priestly scum, o'er mantling the wide lake,
Deadening its life—stagnating ever there,
Betwixt the general tide and Heaven's light ;
Severing the two : being a barrier,
Where it professeth, and should be indeed,
The mean of reconciliation 'twixt them both.
This feculence would bold simplicity
Clear off, and show the surface to the sky
To shed its pure immediate light on it.
But no—Priestcraft is better interposed, 30
So the Priests say, good holy simple men,
To bate that lustre ; lest too much of it
Should make too clear what now is darkly veiled ;
Then were the fat scum of our being sunk

From its surface rule, our craft disauthorized,
Our calling named no more. Oh ! come some one
Who dares be holy and true, root out such lies
With their yet falser fathers—come, I say,
Whoe'er thou art, and be that burning sign
That they shall conquer in it, who follow it. 40
But be thyself, Daringness, be thyself,—
Yes, stead of thy dull body lying along
Hitherto, be the spirit and soul of it ;
A fiery spirit, a most eager soul.
Then doubt and fear shall fly thee, as darkness flies
Before the high-raised torch : men look for thee
Now this long time ; and when, though late, thou com'st
They will enforce thee with so eager a throng
As their cause were to scape away from Hell
And win to Heaven. Only know thyself, 50
How strong thou art, how weak thy enemies :
The people in all lands how sworn to thee,
To end what thou beginn'st : then do but thou
Pitch thy voice loud enough, they'll answer thee
With such full force, so like a torrent flood,
As all resistance must be whelmed in it,
And raise its head no more. Yes, Daringness,
Be but thyself, and know and prove thyself,
Thou swift impatient fire, though but in one
Spark of thy pure and pristine quality, 60
That were enough : for the rank luxuriance,
The o'erweening umbrage of that forest old
Cumbering all this earth with a few tall trees,
Stately but few ; that so o'ershade the soil
Where they have growth, that myriads of more use
Sicken beneath their shade, and only weeds
And poisonous vapours live on loathsomely :
That rank luxuriance, and those tall trees
Are aged to tinder ; they are rotten at heart ;
And there's a strong wind blows, and stronger yet
Threatens its blast : and that first spark of thine 70
Where it shall light, there shall be such a flame

As earth hath never seen, no, nor e'er shall
 Till it be itself consumed in the fiery clutch
 Of some wild comet: then shall fruitfulness
 Grow from the ashes of that old rank growth,
 And make one harvest of the face of earth,
 One happiness. And canst thou see such things
 Thou daring virtue, and not grasp thy sword
 To conquer them? but art thou indeed alive, 80
 Or only some faint flickering shade of thee?
 This may stand thy life. I fear thee much
 That thou'rt no more than so. Oh for one hour
 Of the ancient times when Patriots wore swords,
 And zeal was yet a virtue? now 'tis words,
 Words all, and nought but words. Curse on the breath
 That doth compose them—its heat is sickening,
 And spreads its faintness over the whole world.
 Then would that tyrants were most tyrannous
 To gag the tongue? what now we utter in words 90
 Then were we all the likelier in acts.
 For silence is a dark but quickening womb
 Wherein greatest conceptions are best bred
 To strongest growth: then forth full-formed they come
 At their full hour, while speech had scattered them
 In its most busy silly impertinence
 Abortive ere their time. But, daringness,
 Thou hast hands only, and no tongue at all;
 Therefore thou speakest not, but at the point
 Strikest full sore. God speed thee and thy stroke 100
 That both may prosper, if not what matters it!
 Thou'rt strong and in thy strength canst suffer more
 Than others can inflict. The sun was high
 While yet that conflict raged on Markstein moor;
 And many, being ceased, deemed it enough
 Of death and of destruction for that day:
 And fain had sheathed their swords and rested there
 On their work done—but 'tis quick movement still
 Dazzles the foe with changeful alacrity,
 And catching many points now here now there 110

Kindles rebellion's flame, languishing else,
If not astir; him who would snatch success
From forth that flame, behoves a hasty hand;
Else were his daring folly: that bold truth
They acted boldly those rebellious men;
Conscious that whoso makes a breach in the law,
May ne'er repair it, but hath hope to efface,
Levelling all: if only he have heart
To dare so strongly—while that field was fought
The sun verged down, and ere the evening star 120
The Stolberg garrison, 'scaped from the field
To the strong shelter of their castle walls,
Had looked their latest at both star and sun
And died a bloody death. 'Twas an old pile,
Fortress and mansion, serving either use
As the need was—tower and battlement,
Drawbridge and moat—such strength as had kept out
The sudden assailer in unquiet times;
But now, since centuries with their deep calm
Had stilled suspicion to security, 130
It lay like an armed warrior in repose;
Armed else in complete proof from head to foot,
Only his gorget off. Surely he breathes
More freely so in his loose luxury;
But surely too in that unguardedness
His throat lies open to the foeman's sword,
Fooling all other surety of his arms
By that one vantage. There was the deep moat,
Of depth to drown all armed hostility
Ere it became assault. Only 'twas dry 140
A traitorous drought: for there the attack made way,
Tumultuous bursting in on every side;
No other order but their disarray,
No forecast save a moment to draw breath
For one fierce shout breathing defiance forth,
And then fall on: truly fierce was their zeal,
And all as fierce despair encountered it:
For the life of those within lay in their arms

And well they knew it. Mercy was far off,
 Far as hope from despair; and there was due 150
 A forfeiture to death, and either they
 Or else their enemies must pay it him :
 Therefore 'twas sternly fought—at the first brunt
 While they without answered but with their shouts
 And heavy strokes the death-shot from within
 Doors were burst through, and the barred windows strength
 Out forced by dint of axe. Entrance is clear,
 Victory won. Oh where is mercy now ?
 Alas ! what should she here, or how prevail
 O'er the fell spirit of the conqueror, 160
 When e'en the vanquished call not on her name
 But die despairingly. So ever on
 Slaughter hunted her game from room to room,
 From stair to stair—before her shrieks and groans,
 Behind her a blood-track. Ever she smote,
 And smiting never slack'd while any stood
 To front her sword : then on the last man's groan
 Vomited forth in blood, came a still pause—
 A silence all the deeper and deadlier
 For the wild uproar that foreclamoured it, 170
 Then many went about, muttering low,
 With teeth hard set, and swords strainingly clenched
 Seeking whom next to slay ; and finding none,
 Must hack the dead, savage and butcherly,
 For lack of other vengeance. For blood thirst
 Is so assuaged by lavish draughts of it,
 As fire with profuse oil. Well was it then
 Women and children were all fled that hold,
 None left but men of arms : for cruelty
 Incensed, is natured so fiercer to blaze 180
 The more 'tis fed, 'scaping the thoughts of the past
 By raging on—knowing nor practising
 No readier means to efface a few blood drops,
 But to ensanguine all, bathing its hand
 In the full torrent of its cut-throat acts,
 Lest white and red should know distinction

For one to accuse the other. Cruelty,
 Thou'rt ever bitter, but then bitterest
 When thou'rt called conscience. In that house death swayed
 And silence followed him, his trainbearer ; 190
 Soon to be jostled away : for energy
 Breathes only in the stirring atmosphere
 Where it was born ; and recklessness loves not
 That its fierce trouble should subside in calm,
 Lest so its conscience be made clear, its drift
 From turbulent declared transpicuous
 With guilt at bottom : therefore those fierce men
 Their bloody excitement o'er, some other needs
 To drive them on : that other was at hand—
 For in that Hall sulphurous and carcase strown 200
 A feast was spread ; viands in plenteous store ;
 Wine, and what else is of more potency
 To fire the blood : strong comfort of faint hearts ;
 Frenzy for fear. " Ho there," cried Linsingen,
 " There's an ally shall chase the phantom mists
 That spring from spilth of flood, clearing our brains
 Of ugly images, cleansing our throats
 From the rank gory smack that sticks to them,
 Fill out—and he who drinks the fullest draught
 Is the wisest man." Sudden they did usurp 210
 Those high piled tables, and drank, shouted, and laughed
 As some dark phrensy had possess their souls
 And they were mad. All save some three or four
 Who took but bread and water to their taste ;
 In token of cool blood and judgment clear
 Feverless, passionless : a holy calm
 After a holy act. So fared those few :
 But for the multitude, soon as the blaze
 Of their high-mounting spirit had burnt off,
 Then reason came and earnest conference, 220
 And loud debate. Long ere their rough conceits
 Shuffled together fell into one frame
 Of mutual fitness—long it was, but yet
 'Twas so at last—dissonance lowered its voice

Confusion grew to calm ; then one stood forth,
 The shepherd manly and free as his lone life,
 And to the heads of the assembly thus,
 "Sirs, I address ye, our chiefs and counsellors,
 By the free bidding and for the behoof
 Of this our commonality sitting here 230
 Whose sense I speak. Ye know we're of strong force,
 For attack or for defence, as they well proved
 Who live not to give witness of their proof.
 But we must yet be stronger than we are,
 If we would stand upright before their power,
 Who come to break us down—marry, the need
 Is easy shown, but how to answer it,
 There is the stress : well, Sir, we commoners
 Have ta'en upon us to be counsellors
 This once, and but thus far—only to say 240
 What best we know, and you may best advise.
 Sir, there are many men prone to our cause,
 'Long this whole coast—craftsmen digesting ill
 Their hard bread—taxed yet harder smugglers rude,
 Who had as lief blow out the excisemans's brains
 As pay his due ; enemies of the law,
 And their best friends who live most lawlessly.
 Now, Sir, needs but a touch, a simple breath,
 To stir them up ; and for their reckless lives—
 Though for that cause we now stand off from them— 250
 Yet, Sir, methinks, if stones must needs be throwr,
 It were no wise man's part to reject those
 Fittest of all, and readiest to the hand,
 For a little dirt that may chance cleave to them ;
 Therefore 'tis our advice, that Linsingen,
 Being one of such high worth and likelihood,
 Should go among them. 'Tis but to light up
 A blaze upon some head-land, at dead night,
 By scores and hundreds they'll come trooping in ;
 And once assembled, what they know of him, 260
 They'll follow him, be sure, through fire, itself,
 On any service. We, if it seem good,

Will look meanwhile to Hermann for our head,
 With the like trust." Silence ensued this speech
 Bolvly delivered, but heard doubtfully ;
 For Linsingen, whom it imported most,
 Lent it no willing ear ; but with knit brow,
 And comprest lips, first scanned the countenance
 Of him who spoke, listening in cold scorn ;
 Then looked on those around him with strange eyes, 270
 As fain to have their judgment of the man,
 Rather than utter his own. Long was the pause,
 For answerdeigned he none, by word or sign,
 Till after parley had, 'mong his few friends,
 As with much urgency they counselled him ;
 So he spake forth.—" My friends, what ye have heard,
 If all things else that do belong to it
 Were good as is the will that prompted it
 'Twere excellent : but I would know it first,
 Whence authorized—for such a body as ours,
 If it should need a drudge sends the feet forth,
 And keeps the head for counsel. For this need, 280
 If such it be, I will provide a way,
 Suiting it to occasion : for the rest,
 What ye have given me of authority,
 As I alone must answer it abused,
 So would I hold its use in my own hands,
 Subject to no discretion save my own,
 Free of all censure." He spake moodily,
 As one much moved : but while his speech yet filled
 His hearers ears, Hermann rose hastily,
 And gave its utterance to his full soul 290
 Of fervour. " Brethren, as ye are so named,
 So, I beseech ye, 'bove all other things,
 Be ye no less : but what is brotherhood,
 Where love is not, and loving unity,
 Which is indeed its soul ? while we are one,
 So long we're stronger than our numbers seem ;
 But, severed once, then are we powerless
 As were these limbs of mine, torn from their trunk,

By bloody violence. Why, my dear friends,
 Why was it that we chose us freely a head, 300
 But for his counsel, to be ruled by it ;
 That he might order and we execute ?
 Following him wherever, hope or none.
 Then, wherefore stand we not by that our choice,
 Till we see cause to rue it : so to do
 Were simple reason, and the reverse of it—
 To start thus loosely, and debate wide off,
 Monstrous folly : rest we then content ;
 Being sure that we have not a thought so good
 But he hath bettered it, with his swift view, 310
 Preventing our more tardiness : 'tis well,
 If it be so ; if not, our best belief
 Is still so to believe it ; else, if trust
 Be once fly-blown with busy surmises,
 It turns to a maggot-heap of jealousies,
 Feeding upon the substance of their cause,
 Till they consume it all. And, oh ! lest we,—
 But no ; the thought's a monster—I pray ye then
 Be so content as I most truly am,
 To end, not to begin : but for this aim 320
 That is set forth to raise the smugglers up ;
 I know the men, their manners, and their haunts ;
 And if it please the noble Linsingen,
 The peril and the hope of the enterprize
 I claim them for this man. Ye see me here ;
 And if I have permission, and life serve,
 To-morrow's sun shall see me all as sure
 On the coast ; a dangerous coast, as ye all know—
 And those our enemies here upon land,
 Shall rue its dangerous men as fearfully 330
 As ever the sea-farer did its rocks.
 Sir, if thou think to send such mission forth,
 I beg the conduct and the honour of it,
 For my past zeal." Thus Hermann ; and all there
 Stood silent, wondering at his height of soul,
 Wonder past utterance—no shout—no word,

But only a still gaze, Then Linsingen,
 As quickened by some sharp spur, started up,
 And in these words—"Brethren, I give him leave,
 I give him leave; and when he parts from us, 340
 There parts a man who if he turn not back,
 Our hope were lost in his blank. Go, in God's name,
 Thou best and bravest! and, for I care not
 To outlive the chance may cost thy dearer life,
 Being behind when thou art in the van
 Of peril; therefore for my share, I choose
 A mission all as dangerous as thine—
 No matter what; for why? if it end well—
 If not, I say again, no matter still;
 For in its failure must we all fail too, 350
 Fortunes and lives: and this young hope of ours,
 Suddenly from the brightness that it is,
 Shall darken to the like darksome excess;
 And death shall open o'er us his strong jaws,
 And we shall dwell fearfully in their shade,
 Until he close them. So, if we should fail—
 Fail, my dear friends! but be it so, what then?
 Why we shall ne'er live to be ware of it,
 We who are well determined to die first:
 And so, my gallant Hermann, let's shake hands, 360
 For there's a quality in sword and shot
 May stiffen them to shake no more again:
 But he 'scapes many dangers who soars high,
 And thou'rt a towering spirit. Well, I too,
 Will mount as high a pitch as e'er I may—
 So high, I shall not live to feel my fall,
 If fortune strike me down; then if thou must,
 Go, and God speed thee. Give him all your prayers
 My trusty fellows; for if ye were saints,
 And they were blessings every word of them, ' 370
 He were well worth them all." Hermann went forth
 With tears and blessings of the brotherhood,
 For they wept sore, and fell upon his neck,

And kissed him, ere he went, sorrowing much
 For what he must encounter. There they stayed,
 With meat and strong drink comforting the flesh;
 The spirit with much prayer: and thence he sped,
 Having none other comfort but his heart,
 Nor needing more. Strait on to the sea-shore,
 No difference of brook, mountain, or bog, 380
 Valley or level, straight as the sea-fowl
 From the howling north of winter provident
 Ere it lay siege to the lorn Orcades,
 Might wing their airy wedge: so straight he sped,
 So questionless. Night had opposed herself,
 One dark immensity, barring his sight;
 Therefore his early use was all his sense,
 Supplying others: so he struggled on,
 With no more consciousness save of his thoughts,
 All else a blot. 'Tis fearful so to fare, 390
 And feel our darkling perplexed faculties
 Helpless as the unborn infant; but where Fate
 Commands, Fear must obey: and Hermann, so
 Right-forward as his manly intent was,
 Achieved his end; to the house of Zimmermann,
 A man he liked not, but must sue to him
 For the cause sake. To the enthusiast
 The scorner's sneer is as the serpent's tooth;
 Not hateful only, but much more than that,
 Distilling venom into his warm blood, 400
 That it must curdle, and grow deadly cold,
 Cold and corrupt: such scorner was that man,
 And Hermann was such warm enthusiast;
 Only not warm alone, but high and deep,
 And of a full strong current; therefore, scorn
 Was rapt along the tide it would fain turn,
 O'erwhelmed by his mighty force. He entered there,
 And found all things set forth neatly and trim,
 An easy plenteous household: for the world
 Is a wide space its welfare to fulfil; 410
 "Better"—so thought that patriot good man—

First try this little snug home of my own,
And for the rest, wishes and words must serve,
Till I've done here." 'Twas shrewdly meant, more shrewd
Than nobly; and yet, in faith, I blame him not,
Nor much commend him—only this is sure—
Mammon is never ought save his vile self;
No rebel: something traitorous perhaps,
But yet no rebel: and they err, who say,
That when the angel host fell off from heaven, 420
He shared their fall: oh no, for how should he leave
His bags behind him. Long time Zimmermann
Had chewed the danger he had helped prepare;
And ever as he chewed, that danger had grown
Bitterer to his taste: e'en then that night.
As he sat there musingly 'mong his books,
In chair of ease and cheerful circumstance,
On the right a blazing fire, on his left hand
A full rich glass, steaming most fragrantly;
And he the while poring upon a hope 430
Late proffered him, so to pass questionless
Of old accounts, proving new loyalty.
"Is aught so hateful in such life as this,
That I must leave it; ay, leave such a one
For such another as I must take for it?
Why, I were wiser to go naked forth
From this warm nook to the wild howling moor
And pray the stars to warm me; and if they should,
It were no greater miracle than that
We fools do hope for." "Oh, 'tis reasoned well: 440
Excellent well: and when, good Zimmermann
Thou didst profess thyself a patriot,
Doubtless thou didst but look for a lap-dog life
By the fire-side, and they do wrong thee in most
Unrighteous rigour who ask aught else of thee,
But just to be such a warm patriot
As now thou art." Hermann so came on him,
Cross minded thus; greeted him, and sat down,
Told him the tale of all, from the shepherd's hut

E'en to this hour : flashed forth the war again 450
 In his fiery words, showing all things more bright
 Than any there, who saw the truth itself,
 Could see them ; and so spiriting his phrase,
 As hope had only to stretch forth her hand,
 And no such thing as fear. Zimmermann heard
 And as he heard, his wont of worldliness
 Did grow well nigh to feeling wonderment,
 Impassioning his face from its shrewd smile,
 And that same wonderment had been full faith 460
 Had his white head been browner a few years.
 But the old are but the cinders of the young,
 And if they should take fire, they hold it not
 But strait are cold again, so was his proof.
 He answered not, but looked on the young man
 As elders look on the rash thing they love
 Doomed to perdition ; gently he took his hand,
 And paused, a feeling pause, and spoke to him—
 ' Yes truly, they're rich flowers though not fruit
 The things that thou hast shown me : and time was 470
 I might have cherished them as fond as thou,
 But now I'm a plain man — a grey old man—
 And all my wit is my experience :
 But thou'rt a poet : and now prithee friend,
 Give me a moment's grace ; I will say more
 When I return to thee," he said, and rose,
 And parted : Hermann leant o'er the bright hearth
 Watching its changeful embers : but much more
 Brooding o'er those late words—till their germ grew
 To a thoughtful life—

" Poet ! Oh no ! that name 480
 Hath more of honour than I dare to claim,
 For how should poetry, that high princess,
 Ally herself to my poor lowliness ?
 No ; I never sued to her,
 Save as a lone worshipper ;
 Then, why, thou foolish man ; oh tell me why
 Confound the virgin with her votary ?

Poet! thou nam'st the name—
But who is he,
Who claims to be
That same?
Oh! show him unto me,
And I will honour him with bended knee;
Yes, let the haughtiest bow down
To him whom all the flimsy stuff
That the world calls its wealth were not enough
To purchase him his crown.
Such crown of glory as 'twere meet
Our lowliness should lay it at his feet:
And so arise
From that deep reverence devoutly wise.
Poet alas, I'm none—
But if thou lov'st me pray
With thy most true and fervent prayer, I may
Be such an holy one.
So I were that, I would be all beside
All scorn soe'er that mortifies man's pride
A poor body blind and maim
Beggared to a vulgar shame.
I would leave all else behind
And go forward with my mind.
For say doth the lone star lament,
Because it hath no store
Of gold or silver ore?
Oh no, it is content
To shed its soul in light;
Though nations heed it not
To wake from their dull night.
For there is one
That doth take heed of all whate'er is done.
And hath delight
In all that is most pure and high and bright,
The purer and the brighter and the higher,
The nearer him, the liker to the sire.

A Poet— would I were—for how soon then
Were my name made a marvel among men ?

Yes, I would dedicate that fire

To purify this world of mire,

A fire so subtle, it should find

530

Its way through the whole mass of mind ;

Kindling it so

Into an universal living glow,

That man should live in his own light,

And see and know, and rule himself aright.

The glorious sun, that sate alone

While yet creation was a child ;

Is sov'reign still upon his throne :

Undimm'd, undarken'd, undefiled,

They watch and wheel those mighty spheres

540

Still rushing round him at his will ;

Through boundless space, and countless years,

And he doth list their music still.

And ever onward as they roll,

He cheers them with his quickening ray ;

Yes, they, the things without a soul,

Their darkness is redeemed to day.

But the spirits' realm of night,

Where's the sun should give it light ?

Where the spheres should circle round,

550

When shall their sweet music sound ?

When shall rise the mighty one,

To frame the world in unison ?

Round about whose radiant state,

All beside shall watch and wait !

Boldly arise,

And brightly shine,

So shall the prize

Be surely thine :

Thou our young creation's sire

560

Gifted with a poet's fire !

Other lights shall then be dim,

Other spheres shall wait on him ;

Other voices shall be mute,
 Other kings shall do him suit.
 For be he what he will
 That godly one must be a poet still :
 Poet in his soul and heart,
 Though he know no touch of art :
 Though his eyes did never look 530
 On the letters of a book :
 His ears hearken, nor his tongue
 Utter what old bards have sung,
 Nor his fingers hold a pen ;
 A Poet must he be, the monarch among men.
 With a spirit and an eye
 Viewing all things from on high ;
 So, in unity of soul
 Worldly fractions to make whole.
 He hath never walked among 570
 The turmoiling silly throng,
 Galling each his neighbour's heel,
 Seeing nought but what they feel.
 He ne'er wallowed with the press
 In the mire of worldliness :
 Never shrunk from danger yet,
 Never feared his fellow's threat :
 Be it lord or be it king
 Careless of the puny thing ;
 One scope and only one he deigns to scan, 580
 The church of Christ, the commonwealth of man.
 Oh ! well, were such a mind
 Worthy to rule mankind ;
 If only they again
 Were worthy subjects of such sovereign.
 Alas ! 'tis there
 Hope darkens to despair ;
 Though skilled the potter, and though pure the flame,
 Yet if the clay be base, the vessel is the same.
 Strange as the music of the spheres 590
 To mortal dulness of our ears,

Is that which passion pours along
 On the poet's tide of song :
 Hearts and ears are dead alike,
 What new chord were best to strike ?
 Oh that art again were wild !
 Oh that man were now a child !
 All perplexities undone,
 Then were hope, where now is none
 Let the mass be fused again 600
 Else our toil is all in vain.
 Melt each stubborn custom down,
 Sword and mitre, seal and crown ;
 'Till the mingled masses run
 Full conspiring into one
 'Till the dross be cleared away
 From its ancient surface sway.
 And what though his high hope
 Should sink in darkness ere she reach her scope.
 What though the upper ear 610
 Be all too thin his essence to up bear.
 Then must he fall—
 But shall he fail ?
 And all that he hath done, is all
 Of no avail ?
 Oh believe not what they say
 Truth will live and find her way.
 Thousand times hath she been crost ;
 Often miss'd, but never lost.
 Yes, in her travail she may droop awhile ; 620
 But swift shall be her joy ;
 And sweetly shall she smile
 Upon her new-born boy.
 Honour shall be his name ;
 And men shall set a crown upon his head
 And he shall raise it to her brow instead,
 To glorify her shame.
 "Beshrew me," said the host, entering then,

And gazing full on his guest's contenance,
 If I would fit rebellion with a head,
 Thou art the man—for thou hast fire in thee
 To catch men's souls: thy eye glows as 'twould set 640
 The world aflame—and when thou hast done that,
 And made a hell of what was earth before,
 There will be hope for thee; but hold, read this.
 Unless thou'rt bastard born, 'twill move thee much,
 'Tis from thy father—sage and scrupulous
 As is the man himself. That fire of thine,
 Prythee whence hast thou it? Sure not from him;
 That fame is liker truth than rumours thee
 A foundling. What! did'st never hear it yet?
 Well, 'tis all random work done in the dark 650
 Where like begets not like—there, look it o'er
 And give me your full mind: fain would he know
 Of our friend Linsengen what's heard of him,
 And how reputed, whether he hold with us;
 Whom he affects; what is his wont of life,
 His haunts and his discourse. How, is he mad,
 All this from him to me, who knows much more
 Than I can guess, and then he styles him too
 What is it? Captain -Ensign Linsingen
 A title was ne'er his—what hath your sire 660
 Sate on these thoughts so long and restlessly
 Till he hath addled them? And memory
 Is blurred and blunted with impressions:
 Too many made where one would stand more clear.
 Is it so? or is there something in all this
 Of mystery, more than they can foot to the end
 Who know not what's before?" With a quick glance
 Hermann o'erran that letter. "Here I see
 More written than I heard from you: but now,
 My father counsels ye to leave our league; 670
 Having no doubt discerned thee, whither inclined,
 What think ye of the counsel?" "Thou hast asked

Freely, and I will answer thee as free ;
 I think, nay, I'm declared to follow it.
 Taking advice of a much wiser head
 To save my own." " Well and if thou must be
 A coward by compulsion of cold blood,
 I quit thee—but a traitor is no need,
 Then be content ; nor peril thy own life
 Betraying ours." Carelessly as he spoke 680
 So he rose too without another word ;
 And from that bright warm chamber strode again
 Into the night uncertain whither next.
 But soon a soul of such keen temper as his
 Decides all doubt whether by point or edge
 Cutting the knot in twain. " Where lies the coast ?"
 Up to the stars he looked, and as he asked
 Straitway they answered him. " What, are ye too
 Traitors ? and dare ye thus aid and abet
 My traitorous self, pointing my pathway out ? 690
 Aye, but ye'll rue it—henceforth the justices
 Most loyal, will proclaim ye a curfew-tide
 That ye put out your lights—else with a puff
 They'll blow ye out from the sky." So desperate men
 Their desperation wreath with crazy mirth,
 Myrtling the sword : and so on madman lips
 Bubbles the light foam : proof of fervency
 That works within. He stretched his stiffened arms
 A lunge or two, fastened his coat to the chin
 Then on with swelling breast, and spirit as high, 700
 As 'twere his bridal morn 'stead of that night,
 And he bound to the church. So a long hour
 O'er hill and waste, morass, gully, and moor
 He, filled with thoughts of his birth, dark hinted oft
 Before and careless, now more clear to him—
 Welcomer yet than clear : till, at the last,
 Nature 'gan call to him to have her due,
 For she would wait no longer : all the world
 Beside she held in her soft hold of sleep,

And he must enter there: he flung him down 710
On a hill, midway between the nether damp
And the cold weathery ridge: his 'kerchief bound
About his head, his feet thrust in a brake;
None other fence against the chill night air,
No more than a wild beast. "Oh! thou kind earth
Thou mother nature whom I've loved so long,
At least I'm no rebel against thee,
Thou'lt shelter me." He said, and flung him there
And slept, and dreamt—no vulgar dream; but strange
As the other circumstance of that wild sleep. 720
He saw a meteor, or what so seemed,
Shoot down the sky: he looked, and marked its track,
That nearer as it came, greater it grew;
Till it stood at last before him in full form,
An angel fresh from heaven: "I come to thee,
Bringing the tidings of what God ordains,
And thou must do. Forbear all question,
But faithfully receive what truly I tell.
There are full many whom thou fain would'st see,
But go not near to them—and there is one 730
Whom thou hast never known, nor heard her name,
Margaret Berg. First thou shalt visit her,
And what the spirit prompts thee shalt thou speak.
For the rest, as God wills, so it will be done;
Take thou no care of it." The angel spake
And vanished; but his presence left in the air
And the hearer's sense such a sweet influence
That Hermann slept on in a Heavenly trance,
Was never sleep so sweet: and heavenly
As was that trance so was the freshness too 740
Wherein he rose from it—buoyant and light
As the mountain air—lusty and confident
As that warm sun just risen from his bed
To light the nations. In such spirit he rose,
And made his prayer. "I thank thee, Father and God
In whom and by whose grace I am what I am,

For all good things, and chiefly for this sign
 Thou hast vouchsafed me." A brief minute more
 And on the crest of that high hill he stood,
 Looking upon the Ocean. Such a look 750
 As beggars all magnificence beside
 Spread for the eye by nature: there he stood,
 As a vassal suddenly and in surprise
 Encountering the front of majesty,
 Palsied with awe speechless and motionless.
 Till in these thoughts his soul resolved itself.
 "A stately queen is Nature!
 But e'en her mightiest stature
 In rock and wild is dwarfed by thee
 Thou outstretched Giant, thou vast sea— 760
 Yes, shamed by thy old hoary
 Dominion is earth's glory.
 I seemed erewhile a man of might,
 But now I'm nothing in thy sight.
 And lo, thy foam is flashing,
 And thy huge billows dashing;
 And yet art thou, the vast the wild,
 To thy stern father a meek child.
 Thou seek'st not to be greater
 Than him—than thy Creator. 770
 But I a weak and helpless thing
 Will know no law, and own no king.
 I call thee—but thou carest
 Nought of the voice thou hearest.
 I may not bend thee to my will,
 Yet would I rule a fiercer still.
 Yes, thou indignant ocean,
 Fiercer than thy commotion,
 And wilder and more hard to tame,
 Is man's proud soul that flood of flame. 780
 That flood who fears must rue it,
 And yet I would subdue it,
 That mighty flood so fierce and strong,

And what I would I will ere long.
 And thou, thou dost inherit
 A free and mighty spirit :
 Untired untainted to the end—
 Wilt burst thy bounds and be my friend ?
 Man's empire was ne'er o'er thee,
 Therefore I kneel before thee. 790
 Come as of yore, come flooding in ;
 We two will purge this world of sin.
 Oh ! 'twere a goodly union,
 A glorious communion !
 Then God were 'venged, and man were free,
 What thinkest ? wilt thou join with me ?
 Alas ! thy high-souled seeming
 Is but a poet's dreaming :
 The Persian king, he knew thee well,
 Who fettered thy most slavish swell— 800
 Slavish ! oh no, he found thee
 Yet mightier when he bound thee :
 Roll and roar on ; thou'rt no ally
 Old Ocean, for such things as I.
 Slavish ! 'tis thou that lashest
 The servile shore whereon thou dashest :
 Bound by thy chain, thy prisoned slave,
 And passive to thy surging wave.
 Slavish ! alas, that I should shame thee
 Thou noble spirit, so to name thee. 810
 No, I go forth sworn to make man as free
 As thou hast ever been, thou glorious sea !”

He spake, and mused a moment, and then straight
 Adown the hill, toward the fisher huts,
 There by the coast : when, as the level he reached,
 He came on a small path crossing his line
 From east to west : 'twas strange to him ; but yet,
 Some power that he knew not whence it was
 O'erruled him from his purpose to go on,
 And turned him thither aside ; he followed it, 820

Unconsciously, but yet undoubting too,
 As in a dream, till he descried a house
 Of fanciful adornment, airy and light,
 A modern artifice mimicking ill
 That ancientry—itself most honourable—
 But being counterfeit, poorer than is
 The poorest tinsel. Entrance of that house
 Unknowing yet why he would enter there—
 He craved and found it. “Edward Linsengen,”
 (After some courteous preface, thus he spake 830
 To her who held authority therein—
 A damsel, young and fair, fairer than sage ;)
 “Is thy familiar, and oft visitor,
 Or are ye both belied ?” “Nay, ’tis e’en so,”
 She answered, a deep blush vouching her words ;
 “I know him, and what wouldest thou on his part ?”
 “I am his friend—he hath no truer one,
 And thine no less ; for that I hear thou art
 As true to him as I profess myself. 840
 Now listen, for my counsel imports both,
 Both thee and him ; and hither I’ve risked, if so
 It may avail ye : they of his family
 And others who would fain be deemed his friends,
 Have urged him on to marriage this long time.
 Yes, it is painful—it is pitiful,
 I know it well ; but who would heal a wound
 Must handle it first. She your loves severance,
 Thou knowest her : albeit such sufferer
 Hath latest knowledge of her sufferance,
 Latest and least. Now, if thou would’st ward off 850
 This deadly mischief from thy heart and home,
 (As doubtless thou art earnest in that will)
 I’ll show thee means ; how to keep all as sure—
 Thy hope, affection, and thy most dear joys
 As else thou’lt lose it : we’ve an enterprize,
 Myself and other thousands of my mind,
 Which, if he enter it, forthwith he’s barred

On such his entrance, with relentless bar,
 From all his friends—no passage 'twixt them more,
 No, not once to shake hands; from all but thee— 860
 And then you two." The damsel gazed on him,
 Looking her eager soul forth in her gaze.
 Till tears suffused her sight; then, what she felt,
 Sudden she broke his speech with it. "Oh! Sir,"
 She said, her sobs struggling against her words;
 "'Tis long since I have talked with such a friend
 So kind as thou; and that long since of pain
 Makes this brief now yet sweeter than 'tis brief;
 Yet must I tell thee I deserve it not,
 For, Sir, 'tis true, I've walked in perilous ways, 870
 Till what was peril is guilt; and yet, methinks
 If sufferance may atone for our past sins,
 I've suffered all as grievously as sinned:
 For there are many scorn me, and they most
 Who are my friends. And oh! 'tis death to me
 To utter it, my sisters most of all,
 My cousins and my sisters: I've borne much,
 And much could I bear yet, but not from them;
 No, not from them. Yes, Sir, of those I know
 There are full many scorn me, and but one 880
 Tenders me love: and think Sir, what I were
 If that one love should leave me outcast here,
 'Mong all their scorns. No, Sir, it cannot be,
 For I should die e'en in the thought of it,
 Ere the sore touch: but thou hast given me hope,
 Both me and him; for so he loves me, as is
 The fond affection that I bear to him;
 And we will both be happy in our loves,
 If but they give us leave. Oh! tell it me, 890
 And doubt me not that I should shrink from it,
 But tell me all. Forgive me—I have a heart,
 And all those feelings that were cramped in it,
 Cramped up so long, now that thou givest them way,
 Burst forth at once—for thou dost speak me so

As one who hath a heart to feel for me,
'Stead of a tongue to make me feel myself.
Then tell me ; and I'll love thee of all the world
The next to him alone." What she would say
Further than this, she uttered it in tears
Of purest passion ; but they flowed not long : 900
Soon was her anguish comforted to joy,
For what he told ; how that her lover, e'en now,
(As Zimmermann had made it manifest)
Stood in misprision, with suspicious eyes
Watching him ; wherefore, boldest policy
Was like to be his best, and to go on
Safer than to fall back. This and much more,
All to one scope, awakening love by turns,
And fear,—she heard, and did embosom it,
Not doubtfully, oh ! no, nor jealously, 910
Nor hopefully alone, but gladly too ;
Glad rapture : for when two desires would rush
With warm encounter, each in the other's arms,
Needs not much argument to urge them on,
Their meeting is soon made. They were agreed,
Ere their agreement could be said in words,
By their commutual will. Strangers they met,
And parted in full trust, as inmost friends. 918

BOOK XII.

Union, I wonder much the Censor's pen
Should suffer thee uncanceled, being a word
So weighty, and raising by thy utterance
Such perilous thoughts for if, as men do oft
Invoke thee, so thou would'st thyself stand up
By Heaven, e're thou wert risen half thy height
Rulers would fling them prostrate on their face
Before thee ; scared into a most sage fear
At sight so monstrous—monarchy 'gainst thee,
What is it but one figure of account
'Gainst many millions. Oh ! were I a king
Thy whispered name would fright me more than din
Of thunder in my ears. I should so start
To hear it, as at sight of a sudden knife
Held at my throat by a rebel enemy.
But now thy name is all—a shadowy name
There is no more of thee, give me a pen
To cancel it—then were the whole extinct
Substance and shadow—else while it yet lives
That shadow ; it portends a substance too,
Idle portent unreal—men play with words
As boys with bubbles ; and so blowing out
A full round word, think it a glorious thing,
And are content with it—counters for coin,
And where those counters are, the coin is not,
And he wins but the wages of a fool
Who wins the most. Union, thou'rt a fine word
And rife in many mouths ; but thou fill'st not
The appetite I feel for the very thing
That thou usurp'st its name ; perish the phrase

10

20

When that were perished, a clear void would be,
 And then would men haply bestir themselves
 To fill it up with acts. Why, what strange fools
 Are we all, we busy people of this earth,
 So to o'erlook the only means we have
 To make us mighty! We are as elements
 Each by itself ordained to barrenness,
 'Till all be blent : in one union in them
 Is fruitful nature, and in us no less
 An union quickening what were barren else, 40
 To breed great things—but oh thou man—thou fool!
 That what we all endure of general grief
 Each of us all should mutter his sense of it
 In his own breast! when common utterance
 Would swell the common murmur to a storm :
 Such storm as those who will not bow to it
 Must break before it. Oh! most perverse choice,
 Choosing to sigh despairingly alone,
 Then shout triumphantly as patriots should
 A brave conspiring shout. But such as this, 50
 So glorious an unison, ne'er was :
 Else had misrule been blown away by it
 Like cobwebs from the trumpet, when its breath
 Is loudest blasted—no, it ne'er was yet
 And till it come, our weal must wait for it,
 Haply so long 'till manhood pine away
 To that poor thing called patience—a dull sheep
 Sheared many times, and slaughtered last of all
 In silly sufferance! Would they look round
 The many might learn wisdom of the few, 60
 To bind themselves in bond of their own good
 E'en as their rulers do ; for 'tis that spell
 Doth make men governors, and keep them so :
 And when it fails, authority fails too
 Signally. In such danger then were they,
 Those lordly counsellors in Gilnau met,
 How with prudent resolves to win their way

Out of their peril, thither to that town
 Their flower of youth, all the best force they had
 Was drawn together; and all little enough, 70
 If number were the only rate of worth
 For such encounter—but the soldier's sword
 Practised in skill fears not the peasant scythe
 Cumbrous though big, and wielded cumbrously.
 And in such confidence stood that armed force
 'Gainst their tumultuous foes: no fear of the end,
 But only lest that end be long to seek
 For lack of a clear issue, front to front,
 Force against force. So strong had this trust been
 But now was not. Seldorf and Faulkenstein 80
 Arenberg, Nanhim, Bruhl, and Geisingen,
 The chief 'mong many others of less note
 Met there to set the antient standard up
 Of lordly law custom and privilege:
 To crush rebellion's head, and drag in the dust
 Its senseless body at their cannon wheels,
 Held their high council, not as late, secure
 Of what they did debate, but doubtfully
 In earnest doubt—for many flying clouds
 Had gathered to one body, dense and dark, 90
 O'erclouding the late cheer of hopefulness
 Most gloomily: and fame's latest report
 Of ill was overlaid ere an hour's space
 With something worse. Behoved them all their strength
 In such a strait as this, and all their skill
 To make strength sure. Fearfully were they met,
 And distrust crept, a haggard murmurer
 Through the old justice hall; each man of them
 Sought comfort from his neighbour's countenance,
 And found but fear: at length in the eager throng 100
 Tumult composed itself to audience,
 And Arenberg rose up, governor late
 Of this same province, till war snatched from him

Hit peaceful rule, making law of its will
 A sceptre of its sword. "Sirs, we are here,"
 So said the calm and reverend old man,
 "Arbiters 'twixt lawful authority
 And this strange violence—whether to keep
 Rebellion at swords length, 'till it be slain,
 Or, if we should vouchsafe them terms of of peace 110
 We're so empowered: now what we would have
 If that our wills were the only arbiters,
 Is nothing short of flat submission first,
 And then the headsman's and the hangman's work
 To follow after. This is easy said;
 And doubtless many here will say no less.
 Many and brave men—I mistrust them not;
 But he's yet braver who in the hot field
 Will vouch the saying: 'tis a dangerous proof,
 I say it steadfastly, most dangerous, 120
 As full of danger as the bravest here,
 Is full of courage to encounter it.
 For look what danger it is—scarce a weekes growth
 And now already a giant—this I trow,
 Is our third day to us abiding here,
 And wants but such a a fourth, to end us all,
 Sure fame is traitored to blow treason abroad
 Blasting us with each breath. Stolberg is kept
 In rebel hold, despite us and our arms,
 Shivered against it—our worst brunt they bore, 130
 And beat it back: no gain to us, that bout
 But loss of six score men—worse than all this,
 The devil hath sown tares in our best wheat,
 And the very hands we armed with our own swords
 Have turned them 'gainst us: treason is at work.
 Young Linsingen, beshrew the sottishness
 That left him with such means of mischief there,
 To serve for his arch-rebel brother's ends;
 Ere the assault, he and a hundred more
 Took treason's side; frankly went o'er to them, 140

And fought so madly against us, as they fight
 Who from defeat to death have but one step,
 And knowing that are fain rather to die
 In wilful proud defiance of the law
 Than by its doom. This is most hideous :
 And what is saved is in scarce better plight
 Than that clean loss. So hath the taint of blood
 Pested e'en the heart : for I have sure advice,
 That the more half of those who rest behind
 Stay but on tiptoe ; and our enemies 150
 Have better right than we to call them their's,
 Having the heart and soul of the whole bulk
 Upon their side. Thus is our keystone gone,
 Dragging the main of our fabric after it
 Ruining down on us : and what remains,
 It stands so loosely, as 'tis rather a show
 Than any surety : now, Sirs, what to do,
 That must your wisdom ponder and execute,
 But suddenly : for in such din as this,
 An empire's crash thundering in our ears, 160
 A minute of delay longer than needs
 Might chance to make an everlasting pause.
 Then let each shortly speak his seeming out,
 And mine is thus—for war we're weaker far
 Than warrants it. Our strength is rottenness,
 Our army falling off from us like flesh
 In a fever ; mercenary on our side,
 But native in affection to our foes :
 A wolf more natural than grateful of food
 Wilder than safe ; long reared and fed by us 170
 But for a rank and idle rain in peace ;
 In war a fatal home—thrust treachery,
 This for our soldiery ; a hope by the wise
 Long seen but for suspicion—and which now
 The simplest is unfooled of it ; what yet
 Remains, our power and wealth and patronage,
 These were strong means when all things else were ours,

Before these broils begun, this devil loosed :
 But now they're but the golden harvestage
 Against the whirlwind flame, feeding the force 180
 It cannot combat, nor yet fly from it—
 Therefore, behoves we try, being so weak,
 Some other trial than the proof of arms,
 Lest that our weakness fail before their strength,
 And we be brought to know ourselves then first,
 Perishing, how forlorn now we've no means
 But friendly composition and fair terms
 To help us to that end: what is gone by,
 The proffered peace we flung from us in scorn
 Long since, when in our pride of power we stood, 190
 As regret veils not to recover it,
 So neither will I now disquiet ye
 Calling it up again: only mark this,
 If ye choose treaty rather than sharp war,
 Surety than ruinous peril, I warn ye then
 Largely and liberally to propose ;
 Else a poor offer were but an argument
 Of your faint hopes and of your avarice too,
 Doling them but a starving beggar's dole
 From that vast sum which in plain truth ye hold 200
 As by their toil, so at their mercy too,
 A poor precarious hold. This is salt truth
 But we must swallow it : and I, be sure,
 As loathingly as any of ye all.
 But what needs must, why 'tis best gulped at once,
 Sour medicine we but exasperate more
 With a sour face—therefore for polity,
 Frankly I speak and without all reserve,
 Be it the scapegoat of our property.
 And so consent we to the people in turn
 To rule us, as they must despite of us,
 And let the common will be common law,
 Better and safer, as for me to judge
 Then common violence: our privilege

Burdensome oft, and seldom relevant,
E'en as a mantle of state, we must fling off,
And meet them hand with hand and man with man ;
Lest if we strive to keep it, our very shirts
Be torn away with it. And the hard tax
We now impose on the bread that labour eats, 220
Frankly we must forego it. Church and State
Must be reformed to such a rule of right
As suits with reason. And in sacred things
No charge imposed, pain nor privation,
For conscience' sake—but where each man approves
There let him pay : more I might show to ye,
But this may serve ; and thus I see some hope
Foregoing much to save more that remains.
For let none err so wide that rendering
Thus much we render our arms into their hands. 230
Who with those arms will 'reave us of all else.
Nay, my good friends, but if they're minded so
They've means already to fulfill their mind,
Being thousands to one. So, if they're bent
To rob us, why, 'tis sure we must be robbed ;
But, to hold parly with them in such wise
Makes them no stronger robbers than before.
And I have good and sure intelligence
That there are many 'mong them will fall off
For such fair promise : minishing their force 240
And swelling ours—else, if we stand on all,
All we now have, to hold it for our own,
Then lest the matter end yet more from our minds
For if their violent flood should bear us down,
Our smallest loss would be to lose the whole
Swept clean away from us : and what they win
With the sword, be sure they'll keep it with their teeth,
Than loose their hold again." He ceased, and such
A murmur ruffled all that audience
As when the Severn rolling down his tide, 250
By towers of old Berkley prison of kings,

Impetuous to the Ocean, suddenly
 Checked by the strong southwest, lashes itself
 To foam, and high uprears its billowy crest
 Angrily chafed, so that encounter vexed
 Their reckless will : upstarted Falkenstein,
 Hastier of mood than was his lordly wont :
 A man haughty of presence as of soul,
 Noble, of far derived nobility :
 And deeming so of that vain phantasy, 260
 As of some high and holy mystery,
 A thing to be admired in silent faith,
 No question made of it : yet of ostent
 Bounteous, and scattering largess with free hand,
 As feeling that the giver is glorified
 In his gift, and he who takes enslaved to him
 In bounden duty—and so all he gave
 It was brought back again and laid at his feet,
 In such a form as truly his pride loved
 More than its ancient one : obsequious suit, 270
 And lowliness, and whispered deference,
 'Stead of the trashy gold he cared not of,
 And therefore gave it. So he fed his pride full
 Vainglorious upon the waste of his wealth,
 And so was he content. Long had he marked,
 And with high-towering fierce disdainfulness
 How that the sturdy commons challenged him
 And his compeers to prove their privilege,
 In a just title—setting reason up
 'Gainst the fantastic old idolatry ; 280
 Thronging in lewdly and with irreverent points
 Probing the stately fabrication's self,
 That none should search too close, but fall flat down
 And worship it. He was a wrathful man
 To hear their hopes, much more see their success
 So rampant. "Gentlemen," thus fiercely he spake,
 "If yet distinction be 'twixt gentle and base,
 Which some would seem to doubt, and in all faith

As they doubt us, frankly I doubt them too,
 That they are bastard : for sure noble blood 290
 Would ne'er so shame itself. What we have heard
 I would have sooner torn my tongue by the roots
 Than uttered it : and so, I trust, would ye,
 Whoe'er is not a traitor. Here's a flood,
 A very flood of mire scouring this land ;
 And we are asked, will we bestir ourselves
 To keep it out, or must we give it place,
 Usurping land and home, all that is ours
 E'en to our hearths, chambers, and very beds,
 With beastly usurpation—and yet more, 300
 Question is made, shall we nobles along
 Mixed in its foulness : yes, mixed up with it
 To float, lazy as scum, vile as dead dogs,
 Upon its stream ? why, when did insolence
 How rank soe'er, and bloated of late years,
 Did it ever dream so strange a dream as this,
 Which grave deliberation in high place
 Would now commend for truth. To reason it
 I will not ; but would fling all reason away
 Sooner than give the thought room in my mind, 310
 Though but to prove it wicked as 'tis false.
 Wilder than needs wisdom to argue it.
 What, shall we do any the strangest act
 That e'er polluted earth ? eat our own Sires
 Rather than bury them ? give to the arms
 Of some strong peasant churl for his strength's sake,
 Our delicate daughters ? these and the like things
 Doubtless keen wits might find good reason why
 They should be done—for set nature aside,
 Nature by knaves and fools called prejudice, 320
 And let Philosophy once take her place,
 They must be held for usefui : and yet the man
 Were no true man indeed but a brute beast
 Who would receive them : for all argument,
 Wheretrue abhorrence starts away from it,

Is shame confest. Therefore, to argue this
 Were baser than to measure swords with a slave
 In question of our honour. What, is here
 Any so poor of heart but his blood boils
 At mention of such terms?—for my own, Sirs, 330
 I'll spill it on the dust to its last drop
 Ere I will hearken them. Then what needs more?
 Say they have reason—well, 'tis a good thing,
 So let them rest content with it—for us,
 All that we would is but to hold our own.
 And that we can and will: when I must yield
 My castle and broad lands, my ancestral
 Vessels, silver and gold, my purse, my coat,
 The very shirt I wear for the common use;
 To use them just so sagely as the ape 340
 Its pilfered garment; then too will I bate
 The poorest tittle of my privilege.
 Till such time comes no force shall fright me so,
 But I will hold them all as I had them first;
 And they who'd take them must fight hard for them
 To outfight me. Why, Sirs, our ancestors
 Had scorned to back a foot, though for their lives,
 From such a rabble; they had 'countered them
 One moment, and the next bruised them to bits
 As rotten stuff—and all they doubted of 350
 Had been but this; the lustre of our swords
 Shall we endure to dim it with base blood,
 Instead of cudgel service? Oh! let us
 But dare so much as boldly to do that
 Which they did scornfully—to arm and fight
 Unless they flee us first, as like they will,
 Ere we encounter them." Boldly he spoke,
 A boldness that sped on to many hearts
 Doubtful and cold before—and their new warmth
 Grew next to fiery heat—for, while he spake, 360
 All travel-toiled a messenger came in
 Bearing glad news—Rebellion had been checked.

The Bishop's old palace at Mitterwald
Had Weyer a fierce rebel associate
From Stolberg castle speeding suddenly
At dead of night with a force tumultuous
Stirred by himself to the feat, attacked and won :
Had won it for his side with his own loss
Slain there outright : and other men of mark
His fellows in that plot had rued it alike 370
Sharing his death. Needs but a child's impulse
To stir the floating vessel, and their minds
Erewhile reeling unsteady to and fro
Caught that light breath, and spread all sail to it,
So by its fickle favour, and for its hope
Pointing their course further than eye could see
Across the perilous Ocean. Strong emprise!
Feeble assurance ! but hope mounts or sinks,
Bursting into a blaze or dying away,
By virtue of the fuel it feeds upon 380
Not of the cause that kindles it—and they
Were apt to burn—so apt, they took their fire
E'en from a straw—then hurried eagerness
Was rife and gratulation and all joy
Auguring hastily the whole event
From one slight chance : swiftly was it decreed
To strike at once home to rebellion's heart,
Stunned, as sure it must be, or much dismayed
By such strong blow. Then with fierce drum and fife
Was peace noised off from pleading her mild prayer ; 390
Then long and ceaseless stirring was the din
Of bloody preparation : revelry
Swilling the streets—banners displayed in air :
Outrageous licence beckoned to come in,
And fill the space 'twixt the design and act,
Lest conscience should grow cool, and thoughtfulness
E'en in those savage souls turn into doubt
Which were the better side, challenging choice
Instead of helpless hooded obedience.

Then all was soldiership e'en to the games 400
 Of mimic children ; and all those the huge
 Materials of war framed in array
 To move at instant need—nor only here
 Did the giant raise him up, and blow his blast,
 And bear his murderous arm. Treason and war
 Are many handed monsters, and their works
 Manifold—striking with their thunderstroke,
 Various lands and cities far removed,
 And all at once while here hurry was rife
 And Hermann afar off on the wild coast 410
 Wandering all as wild, by night and day
 In fair or foul, sleepless, companionless,
 Stirred up the dwellers there, desperate men
 To a venture yet more desperate than their own :
 While so he fared his father sate the while
 In depth of a dark night ; fearfully sate,
 Front against front with Seldorf that proud count
 Of all that region the chief magistrate
 And lord of the old massive abbey pile
 Their council-place : 'twas a confessional 420
 The chamber where their close conclave they held
 Or once had been—now other monitors
 Held the priest's office, and fulfilled his room,
 A library dark wainscoted and carved
 With curious skill ; and the huge oaken door,
 Nail-studded, weighty in iron as in wood,
 Stood mediator 'twixt it and a wide
 Arched hall—the Abbey chapel aforetime,
 Ere the old faith was out. Long had they sate,
 For sure the dignity of their debate 430
 Might challenge no scant audience ; a realm's fate,
 Whether to stand or fall, and by what means,
 Is grave deliberation : and the old man,
 Being a traitor, would seem something else,
 And therefore needed many a round of words
 To cloak his purposes—fold upon fold,

As on an ancient mummy, and naught at last
But filth and stench within. Long did he speak
Ere thus he ended. " Sir, what I have said
Be sure of it ; much mischief hath he wrought, 440
And will much more, less he be timely check'd—
Nay, clean cut off: 'twas he in Salberg there,
Having by night thither adventured him—
Stirred up his brother to take traitor arms
Himself, and to draw with him his men likewise,
Suborning their sworn faith to perjury,
Whence Stolberg lost. Now, how to rid him away,
Him your chief fear.—The bridal is this morn
This very morn ; for look, by yonder clock
We are past midnight ; and the way he comes 450
Sure as the certainty that he will come.
But for myself and my intelligence
I ask no hire for it ; only thus much,
That what I start ye will hunt down the game—
So shall Rebellion stagger, and one stroke
Smiting it as it reels, shall smite it down ;
And ye stand fast, 'stead of the wild earthquake
That shakes ye now. For me, it doth concern
Only my conscience ; so shall I atone
Truly and well, whate'er I have thought ill ; 460
This is my richest hope. For the rest, Sir,
E'en to your hands I do commit myself,
And those of like authority with yours,
If present service 'vail not 'gainst the past—
Then—but if this my zeal seem worthy of thanks,
Or commendation, or aught else of grace
To give it." So he spake, and parted so
Homeward, in tremulous hurry traversing
The night—as who hopes to escape his cares
Outspeeding them—fond hope—for the hell hounds 470
Track not their game afoot, but ravin the heart
Within. He hasted on—still on ; vain haste !
Then stopped : that momeut from his brooding thoughts,

Upgrew a monstrous horror, awful, vast,
 More than for man to image its vast awe;
 Amazement grew with it, till full confest
 His conscience—front to front, as at doomsday
 Bodily; to dissemble then was not;
 But in the shade of its dark presence, down
 He fell, bowed down, a mortal agony— 480
 Speechless confession; such as sin needs must,
 Arraigned to final doom. Oh! then all worlds,
 Millions and millions, he had given them all,
 Unhappy man of his remorse late rued!
 For when did ever the fiend quit his prey
 Once seized of it? He fell; and the evil ghost
 So with the thundering terror of his voice
 Smote him, that all his senses darkly reeled,
 Whirled his wild eye-balls—then, with lightning stroke
 Branded him through the forehead to the brain; 490
 So blasted: he shrieked out and started away,
 Wringing his hands, and laughing as he ran
 Yet direr than his shrieks—hedge o'er ditch through
 Straight to his door; his daughter opened it,
 And saw a maniac gnashing his teeth!
 "Father! is't thou? what's this?" Nay, ask not him,
 'Tis vain. That night past off, and the sun rose
 Early, as in mid June he loves to rise;
 But Linsingen, in his glad eagerness
 Made him a laggard; springing up himself, 500
 The brighter and more joyous of the two,
 Ere yet that fiery eye had once o'erpeered
 Above the horizon. Whither he would go
 He told to none, lest some should construe him,
 More softly than befitted that stern time—
 Mistrusting him, lest his red fiery zeal
 Should fade in love's faint lustre. As he rose,
 Loud howled the wind in the waste.—"Aye, howl away,
 And drive the cowering sheep for shelter there
 'Neath yon high ridge: I like the augury; 510

To those who now despond, to our enemies
 Presaging fear: to us brave conquerors
 Triumph and joy; for we will sweep this land
 With a strength mighty as thine." So he went on,
 Secret and still—a hopeful bachelor,
 Saying no word, taking no friendly leave,
 As purposed to return thither that day
 A lusty bridegroom. 'Twas a weary length
 Of walk, twelve mountain miles over the waste
 That lay before him; but his heart was there 520
 Earlier than himself, and drew him swift
 After it, as by secret sympathy—
 No sense of toil. But foemen were abroad;
 And though his blood were hot, and his spirit high.
 He deemed them on that day better eschewed
 Than to confront them. And the way he took,
 He took it in that thought—leaving far wide
 The common beat, and where ne'er foot did use
 Over the hills, strange and precipitous—
 No fear of ambush, but all open and clear 530
 As Ocean—in that trust. Forward he went
 Like a brave boat in storm—up the ascent,
 Down the steep fall—so forward and so far,
 That he descried at last the spire of the church
 Where he should be a bridegroom that same morn,
 And Lucy a bride! He stood, and gazed on it
 As on Heaven-gates; rested him a sweet rest,
 Still gazing there; and then rising again,
 "By Heaven, 'tis on that very moor I walked
 Some three years since; and but for walking it 540
 And shooting one poor hare, they robbed me at law
 More than the land's worth; but now times are changed
 And there I'll range, and none shall hinder me;
 For freedom I have won, and its first fruits
 I challenge for myself—there lies the road
 Beyond it; peril is past, or say 'tis not,
 Thus I defy ye. Alas thou rashness! hold

Act not thy deadly words—" meanwhile that house
 In bridal expectation waited there
 Solicitous, and for each minutes pause 550
 Filled up the void with fear; felt all the more
 At the heart, as driven thither from the face
 Which with semblance of ease and gladsome show
 Would fain belie it; still as the hours waned,
 So waxed their carefulness, 'till doubt on doubt
 Grew unto darkness; then a flash of light
 Showing the darkness deeper than before
 And dreder: in came that old serving-man
 Walter, purposed to draw his master apart,
 But as he entered and each eager eye 560
 Enquired of him, his faculty fell short,
 To answer false that which too truly he knew:
 And so missing his purpose he looked round
 Wildly, 'till e'en that wildness lost itself;
 Confounded wholly in tears. "Why, what is this,
 Walter, how now? sure something ill has chanced,
 But hither, come this way." So the sire spake:
 But she his gentle daughter, undismayed,
 "Whate'er it be," she said, "be it spoken out
 I will know all." "Aye, mistress, so you must," 570
 From mid his sobs old Walter answered her,
 "For such a monstrous grief may not be hid,
 As one would smother a spark; yes you must know
 But not from me: you've wished me ever well
 And spoken me so kind; 'twould be my death.
 Sooner than tell thee all thy pain, poor child,
 I will die first; and, Sir, I deserve so,"
 Thus he half said, half-groaned in the father's ear,
 "For the message that I bring; they have taken him—
 There's one of them killed dead, but it boots not 580
 The rest have ta'en him there by the moor side,
 And so away with him. Hans saw it all
 And 'twas he told me." Bitter herbs to the tongue,
 And to the ear evil intelligence

Is of sharp taste ; striking swift on the sense,
 And biding there. Lucy heard all, though meant
 Aside from her—she heard and swooned away,
 A deadly swoon : for she had nerved herself
 To encounter all of fate she could foresee 590
 Standing in front against her ; but this chance
 Befell her so, with impulse so transverse,
 It shocked her from her stand. When that again
 Being raised, and in her chamber sadly laid,
 She knew herself from that surprise of soul,
 Then all her mourning friends, mother and all,
 She prayed them to go forth, and leave her awhile
 Alone in sorrow—they though doubtfully
 Her bidding did ; silent and shadowy 600
 Passing away from her, then in their place
 Her thoughts thronged in a visionary train.
 “ Yes the blow is stricken—the death blow
 Noble lovers ye are both laid low
 No hope for ye.
 I alone, the traitress, yes e'en I,
 Who suborn'd ye most unwomanly,—
 Wherefore spare me !
 Thou art powerful ; but just—oh no,
 Thou high Providence that orderest so,
 Nay, peace vain fool ! 610
 Worse than thousand death from headman's steel
 Is the livelong anguish I shall feel !
 And righteous is God's rule.
 I shall rue it in sore penitence,
 Yet 'twas done in simple innocence,
 And holiness.
 Work more pure was never wrought by men
 So I thought and felt, and knew it then,
 And now no less.
 Aye, and sure, this is no punishment 620
 But a trial of my firm intent,
 If it stand or fall.

Welcome thou strong trial ; all I see
 Of thy terrors doth but strengthen me
 To brave them all.
 Hence weak pillow, hence despondency !
 'Tis not weeping will avail with me :
 I must away.

Thus I rise never again to rest
 'Till his deadly danger be redrest : 630
 God be my stay !”

Behind the hills of Eckthal the sun sunk
 Like some old empire, with more gorgeousness
 Cloaking his minished glory. “ He looks on thee,
 Yes, sure he does, for 'tis his latest look—
 And still thou shinest, caring nought of the woe
 That thou dost witness : thou art high and great
 But hast no feeling. Oh go down, go down !
 I hate thee for thy brightness—dost shine yet ?
 Well, if thou wilt, I'll close my eyes and weep 640
 Rather than look on thee.” It was the voice

Of a lone wandering girl of Lucy Hess
 Lone save her strength of soul, sore travelled there
 Sitting on that wild height ; for when she rose
 From the couch where they had left her in hope of rest,
 As 'twas her prayer they would ; when she rose up
 So she went forth, unheeded of all there
 Leaving no sign behind, but a scant scrawl
 To show her purpose. Boldly she sped on,
 Bold in the surety of her innocence 650

And purposed good : first, from some aged dame
 Homewending with her burden of dry wood,
 She learnt them which way gone ; for Eckthal strait,
 And having learnt so much, thither she too
 Pointed her haste ; a march beyond such girl
 To attain so far ; but virtue is a power
 Harder than bones, stronger than muscle's strength,
 More careless of rough ways and thorns and stones
 Than the gipsy's callous foot. So, ere night fall

She stood, not only herself, but an old man,
Before the prison gate—"Here is a maid,"
So spake her guide, as the portal at his peal,
Swung slowly round, "come hither from afar,
And she's betrothed to him ye have in hold,
To Linsingen—fain would she speak with him,
If that your discipline may grant so much
To the poor maiden's case and circumstance.
For me, I know her well, and what she says
I warrant it, at peril of my life
To be nought else but truth." That porter heard, 670
Dangling his heavy keys, and eyed her askance
Doubtfully as she stood contemplating
A ghastly skeleton, tall, hollow as death,
A scaffold; but the speaker with those words
Slipt silver in his hand, a full broad piece
To pay their passage home. "What I can do
I will; but 'tis not I, but he I serve
Must give the order. Wait ye there awhile,
I will go see." He went, and turned again;
"Come in, no other warrant save your word 680
The governor needs." She entered—all was dark,
As 'twere a hundred fathom under ground;
Solid as the earth's centre, and as hard
To win away thereout—the chill damp clung
About her, and the very breath she drew
Was a damp cloud sinking in heavily
Upon her heart. They past on, traversing
Round within round of walls such as but one
Seemed a more massy barrier than was need.
And still the little light they brought with them 690
Was darkened as they past each jealous door,
Booming behind: till at the very heart
Of the prison arrived—" 'tis here, is it not here?"
"Aye sure." "Well then you see me what I am
And know what I would have: a poor lone girl,
And now suffer me with him a brief while

Alone, and thou shalt have for the sufferance
 My truest thanks." She said, and with her speech
 Threw gold into the balance, a small coin,
 To clear his doubt, "well, if it must be so : 700
 (Twere pity not to give sweethearts such grace),
 There is your way, but mark me, time is short ;
 I'll wait without." The door opened and closed,
 And as she past, the echo of those cells
 Noted nor spoke not of her noiseless tread
 No more than of her thoughts—sudden she stood
 And looked, and saw—in the far corner there
 A light, and by that light a musing man,
 Deep musing, careless of whate'er might come,
 As knowing well to-morrow would end all : 710
 And so he sate, his head weighed on his hand,
 Despondingly : she stood and gazed on him ;
 For a still horror crept upon her soul
 More than to speak : then at length, "Linsingen
 Thy light is burning out, it wastes apace :
 Look to it," he sprang up at that sweet voice,
 And in her arms. "Lucy, dear love, is't thou ?
 Oh ! yes, none other than so kind a soul
 Had come to see me : a traitor—a rebel—yet thine—
 Thine own except these chains—well is't not sad ? 720
 There in view of the church, to be so met
 Then, when I looked only for thy sweet smiles,
 And such a meeting—and thou too so near,
 And yet know nothing—nay, thou hast heard all :
 And thy poor mother who shall comfort her ?
 Oh 'tis a selfish joy to see thee here
 At her worst need," "Francis, indeed 'tis sad.
 My husband, yes my husband, thou'rt no less,
 For 'tis no sudden chance that can bereave
 Our holy purpose of its holiness : 730
 And I'm thy wife : thy own true earnest wife
 And being so, fain would I grieve for thee
 As a wife should : so vehement strong a grief

That my heart bursts with it ; but I may not ·
 This is no time for tears, and Franz, I'm here,
 Not to weep with thee, but to rescue thee :
 Unless thy heart be weaker than a girl
 To strike for it—thou knowest well, our hope
 Rests wholly upon thee ; and in thy death,
 Forgive me that I can pronounce that word, 740
 But I feel something gives my soul the strength.
 We're all undone. 'Tis but a minute's space
 Yet time enough : strip thy apparel off,
 See 'tis soon sped ; mark me, I've don't e'en now,
 Thy coat and hat, and what besides most needs,
 And take this cloak of mine, and my head gear
 And what thou canst wear else. Oh, doubt not now,
 But do it—a moment's doubt is death to thee ;
 An everlasting death." " Lucy, art mad ;
 Sure 'tis dreadful to die, so young, so rich, 750
 So blest in all of worldly blessedness.
 But such a hope as this, why e'en despair,
 Is better and more manlier ; do but think—
 Wer't only I, yet there's more dignity
 In treason, yes, it is too noble a thing
 To act the harlequin ; to play such tricks
 As an urchin schoolboy, being caught in them
 Must cry for shame. But thou, what would'st thou do ?
 The traitor flown, and thou found in his place,
 Must pay for him. They'll make a show of thee :
 Prick thee to death with pins—hawl thee about
 For a mannish strumpet most unmaidenly—
 Fling filth upon thy face, and drown thee at last 760
 In the common sewer. Do but think of it,
 'Twere infamy worse than the hangman's self.
 If I could fly from the mischance, I dared,
 And leave thee here at upshot of the game
 To pay the loss of it. Then, if 'twere not
 Beyond the utmost patience of man's pride

To think of it, yet 'tis past hope to do. 770
 So prithee, be content, my dearest soul,
 I have done boldly, and as chance falls ill
 So will I suffer." "Aye, when need shall be,
 But why before? so would'st thou do what most
 Thy bloodiest enemies would thank thee done.
 And what thou saidst of late, think not of me,
 For neither came I here for thee alone,
 But for the common cause—but say is't I?
 Is it my respect that blinds thee from all else,
 And standest thou only in this one pause, 780
 The fear to leave me?" "Lucy, 'tis e'en so—
 'Tis e'en that fear—and then the little hope
 I have to 'scape in such attire as thine.
 What? is there magic virtue in that cloak?
 If there be none, then all I see of it
 Is but mere foolishness and no disguise,
 No, not to cheat a babe."—"Stay, Linsingen,—
 Hark—'tis the turnkey's voice—oh yes, I come;
 Yes, I'll go beg of him a moment's grace:
 'Tis all we need; for the rest it is our own, 790
 If we have but the heart to stretch our hands
 And take it," saying so she glided off,
 Like to a ghost, both for her shadowy shape,
 And sudden vanishment, but Linsingen
 Gazed after her, uncertain of himself,
 For all that scene did seem so strange to him,
 That he 'gan hope his capture prison and all,
 And bloody imagination of his death
 Was but a dream, vain as e'er dawn dispersed
 The dreamer's vanity. So in that hope 800
 He stamped his foot 'gainst the hard prison stone
 In proof of it. "Alas! 'tis indeed I,
 A dreamer's stamp is unsubstantial,
 Nor makes no echo; and the chains he wears,
 He doth not feel their check so gallingly
 As these wring me. I am no dreamer, no—

Behoves me then the proof that I am none.
By Heaven I'll give it, and fight the fiend himself
To force my way from Hell." As thus he spoke
His spirit outdared his speech; swelling the tide 810
Of his blood that on his forehead each light vein
Was swollen to a snake. Oh! such fierce mood
Snatches ten years of life, and flings them in
To feed a minute's fire: he waited her,
That gentle maid, eagerly but not long,
Else had he been distraught—she turned to him,
And how she looked, he who had seen her then,
Had ne'er dared tell the terror of her looks;
Haggarder and more hurried than before,
And deadly pale, as she had gazed on a ghost, 820
And caught its dim reflexion: while she came,
Fearfully she looked round, as one pursued
Of an evil spirit—"See he's leagued with us;
There is his cloak, take it, he lends it thee;
And here his hat and shoes—what doubttest thou?
Oh take them, or I slay myself e'en here,
Thou need'st them more than he," "Oh brave most brave,"
Linsingen answered, fierce and recklessly,
"Whoever said that gaoler's heart were flint,
Ha! Lucy," "What do'st ask me? 'twas not I. 830
His a flint heart! 'twere well for him if 'twere—
Whoe'er might say it, I have proved that man
A liar; yes, I've done it—but the deed
Was all for thee: therefore if blood be shed—
What lookest thou so wild? if blood be shed
'Tis not thy right to dab it in my face:
Nay—start not. What did'st ne'er see it flow before?
Men have been butchers ere now many times,
And many thanks to them, yet, 'twixt ourselves,
Foh! 'tis a nasty trade, who does its work 840
Needs not white linen. I'll go get me strait
A mantle of blue, blue! 'tis the colour of Heaven.
Crimson were best, crimson if ye be wise—

So were your colour and your works akin,
 And neither known from the other, but look here
 This is too glaring red, oh much too fierce—
 It cries out murder—she who painted it
 By Heaven, I would not have her conscience
 For all her skill, who was it, Linsingen,
 That should have married her—tell me, was't thou, 850
 Faith, a bold bridegroom?" He heard and started back
 Gazing upon her as on a fair girl
 Suddenly by some damned magician's art
 Ungirdled to a fury—then out broke her grasp,
 And like a maniac on to the dark door,
 Clanking his hurried chains—"nay, go not there,
 Unless thou would'st fain die of laughter outright
 For the merry sight thou'lt see," he heard her not
 In his wild haste : heard nothing, nor yet saw,
 But rushing madly on ere he was 'ware 860
 Stumbled on what was late a living man,
 But now dead as the stones whereon he lay,
 The cold damp stones—the lamp fell from his hands
 And all was darkness—"Lucy I know it well,
 Thou art an angel—else sure none but a fiend
 Had wrought this work : but oh thou dear lost thing
 Thy hands are crimson drenched while yet thy soul
 Is purest innocence. Come to me then,
 Come hither to my arms and let us out—
 Here are the keys, and there's a light outside— 870
 Oh sure we will fly fast with murder both
 And treason at our heels. What dost thou there?
 Dear love! Lucy, come forth and flee with me,
 Ere we be lost." "Nay, prithee, whither away?
 Dost know of any better cheer than this?
 Show me as good—else I stay here the night—
 'Tis a brave lodge—aye is it—glorious
 To look on, we had seen it better if thou
 Hadst not put out the light? Why what could'st mean
 Ah—well I ween—'twas all for the ghost's sake 880

He loves not lamps : but we'll make merry now
All three of us—but come, out with his heart
And bring it here : 'tis rare and delicate,
On my mouth waters at the thought of it !
A liquorish supper !” “ Heavens ! what is this ?
Madness on the heap of all our miseries,”
Said Linsingen, with frenzy muttering,
As he rushed towards her. “ Come take my hand,
And fly this cursed place.” “ Off from me—off hands,
Thou'rt an ice devil ! why thy clutch is cold, 890
Away with thee—oh help me Linsingen,
Here is a devll here would drag me away
And swing me by the hair into hell flames
And all for thee, murdered thee, dost thou say ?
Aye sur : I did ; but why thou silly fool,
Why so superfluous to cry out now ?
Then was the time when the knife was at thy throat,
But being dead, thou wert more mannerly
To hold thy peace.” Linsingen stooped and kist
Her clammy forehead and her cold pale cheek ; 900
Then raised her up, and as she fell again,
Lifted her a dead burden in his arms,
And hurried her away. “ Yes, it were best
I were mad too : so haply I might turn
All horror to a frantic merriment,
E'en as thou dost.” While those distressful two
Enveloped in dark terror all around,
Were struggling against hope, rescue was near
If it might be but timely : on that coast
Hermann, so fiercely had stirred the multitude, 910
That they rose up in surge as violent
As their own sea—munition, arms and men,
One on another mission he had sent
To Stolberg—where their power held chief state
And gave its ordinance. In that turmoil
E'en in the hurry and mid storm of it,

There came a floating rumour to his ears
 As rumour soon characterized to his sight,
 In character most dear to him, but such
 As he scarce hoped to see again so soon: 920
 Written by Lucy's hand. "Linsingen, here
 Is prisoner in Eckthal and death doomed,
 If thou can'st help him come or he dies else
 Ere yet another day." He read that scroll
 Delivered to his hand by a strange lad,
 And what he read promptly did execute
 Prompt as her wish the authoress. Himself
 And in his train some thirty mounted men
 On the spur of that sudden intelligence,
 Forth-galloped as the race were for their lives, 930
 To save or lose them all. Soon their hot speed
 Had reached a force marching in slacker march
 For Stolberg. "No," cried Hermann, "my brave friends,"
 Another way and to another end
 Is now our need." They heard his tale as a clap
 Of thunder in their ears, and hastily
 Sorrow striving with rage, hope with despair,
 And hurried eagerness confounding all,
 They pointed their strong column wide away
 To a more dangerous point—thick rose the dust, 940
 And ever thicker from their hastier march
 And every man they met, though nought he knew
 But rumour, yet his idlest breath heaved up
 Their hopes and fears in surge contrarious,
 They were so fitful. Last there met them one,
 A woman—she had seen their friendly approach,
 And ran to hasten it: "Oh, Sirs? more speed
 Or ye lose all: 'tis but ten minutes back
 There past a soldier party, a score men
 Into the prison: and the neighbours said 950
 Their errand was to drag him poor soul forth
 And shoot him there in front." Each word she said
 Goaded their eagerness to a mad haste,

Their march to a race : all order broken and lost
And forward every man like a wild herd
Driven agad. So scurrying the mid space
They burst into the town, the horsemen first,
And they on foot after, as best they might
Each with his hottest speed ; such an uproar
As in some ancient wealthy city's sack 960
After its storm. So they careered their course,
Those horsemen wildly to the market place,
With shouts and brandished swords ; there they broke in,
And what they saw assured them of their hope
That he might live. A soldier company
Marching in guard on certain prisoners
That walked within—they saw, and their shot pealed
Recklessly, from their hot impatient hands,
A murderous volley—fled the affrighted guard,
Flinging their arms away. " Hold, stay your fire," 970
Hermann had cried to them—but 'twas too late ;
Fearfully he rode up, and what he saw
It turned his fear to frenzy. Mid a heap
Of wounded soldiers lay on her father's corse,
Who had so risked himself to rescue her,
Death stricken, his dear Lucy. He raised up
Her passiveness, and faintly breathed her name ;
Faintly, for fear she might not answer him,
Fain had she spoken, but her life blood gushed
Forth with her words, drowning all utterance. 980
He gazed on her, pale as her deadly self,
So blanched with horror—and the while he gazed,
" Sir," said a soldier, dying with his words,
" Ye are too late, would ye were earlier come ;
For we were loath to do on your friend there,
On Linsingen, the deed we've done perforce,
Shooting him as we would our bitterest foe,
Whom his acts proved him truly our best friend.
Those were black minutes that ye did delay
Else ye'd been welcome to us soldiers too 990

As to all else : and we had joined your force
Stead of this carnage." Hermann while he spake.
And Lucy in his arms sobbed her death sob,
Noted, nor saw nor cared nothing but her :
But yet one moment did he look from her
Starting to hear the tale told by that man
Of his rival's death : then as she past away,
He bore her in his arms to a house hard by :
But ere he reached it—" Oh what means this pause !
She sobs no more," He stopt and looked at her—
" Alas it is not she, thou lookest upon
If thou wouldst know her whither glorified,
Raise up thy eyes to heaven." He sat there
By the bed side, brooking no presence else,
A lonely hour, for comfort would be none :
But rather if despair would come to end all,
So had he welcomed it. He prayed that hour
Fervently as they said who watched the door,
And then in sternness of pale silence forth
Issuing, " Friends, 'tis time ye should march on
To Stolberg, as your destination was,
Soon will I follow ye." Strait they obeyed
As he commanded them. Hermann stayed there,
And now as that mischance cleared of its smoke
And stunning din showed itself as it was,
In the ruin it had wrought, turning surprise
Of such a sudden strange calamity
To a sad surety : now, being alone,
Left with her, his one joy in all the world,
And that one dead, knowing and feeling so
He flung himself recklessly in the flood
Of his despair, as he would scape from the world,
In its dark depth. So was he whelmed long time
Beneath the bitterness that ceaselessly
Broke over him, and he passive the while
Stirring no whit against it ; praying not
Nor pondering, but pacing wildly about

Wild anguish—suddenly, as thus he fared,
 Fell from his bosom a small book to the ground,
 A Bible; stooping to recover it, 1030
 Some spirit prompted him to open its leaves,
 And there he read, “Flee, save your life, and be
 As the heath in the lone wilderness;” those words
 Many have heard them, but none e’er so felt
 As he did then—straight was restored to him
 What grief had troubled, his clear consciousness:
 He knew his danger, and with a few words
 Commending to the host that lifeless charge
 Mounted his horse, and on his fellow’s track
 Swiftly away: but for a breathing time 1049
 He paused upon the brow of the first hill,
 And backward viewed—but dwelt not on that view.
 For ’twas a troop of eager yeomanry
 Fast spurring in up to the house he left,
 And clamouring round; that clamour cried out haste,
 So on he hurried: ’till ere a mile more
 He met a messenger riding in speed
 As earnest as his own. “Sir, we’re well met,
 For I had thought rather to hear of ye
 Captive, than see ye here so happily 1050
 Front against front: but, Sir, no matter of that;
 I’ve much to tell ye, much and of more weight.
 Scarce three hours back, (ye’ve heard Linsingen’s death
 And how our hopes were well nigh dead with him)
 Well, there was question ’mong the main of us
 In full assembly, if we should leave all
 For lost—or else who were the worthiest
 To fill his room? Then many names were voiced
 But none agreed; till haply one called out,
 I said it first, and then another too, 1060
 “What doubt ye? surely Hermann is the man,
 Young Ernest Hermann.” Then was silence there
 No stir at all: till to the hustings front
 Suddenly like one man, the old harper rushed,

And such a peal he raised as none e'er heard,
 'Bout you and your deserts. That you had wrought
 Faithfully a most hard and perilous work,
 O'erruling danger with your master skill,
 Spiriting skill with boldness: last of all
 After many such words he urged on them 1070
 How you should be the one man of the world,
 The very Ernest of the olden time,
 Their hope had looked for: theirs and their ancestors,
 Waiting him long in patience, and at last
 In joy and triumph now possessing him.
 Him whom old Hermann falsely fathered thee.
 Oh! Sir, it told upon them like a spell,
 Beyond all power of will—that they seemed mad,
 Their wits all gone—would ye had heard their shout;
 And yet 'tis better ye were here away. 1080
 For surely they had killed thee with their throng
 Crowding to greet their king—for thou'rt no less,
 That is the sum and upshot of it all.
 They've made thee king with voice unanimous.
 No whisper heard against it, 'tis e'en so,
 Despite all wonder. So, when thou'rt in state
 Be pleased, Sir, graciously to think of him
 Who brought the news, and see, jaded his horse
 To bring it." Hermann paused on the word;
 "If true thy tidings are most strange—if false 1090
 Thou'rt all as strange a liar. I'll go see,
 Till then attend me." He rode silently
 But swift, as the eagle hasteth to his prey;
 Till on a height arrived whence he could view,
 In prospect large, Stolberg and all its camp,
 And exercise of war: there did he stay
 Pondering what he saw—for all was strange,
 And the sight needed an interpreter,
 If any such were near, nor needed long:
 For on the spur, galloping, hat in hand, 1100
 A horseman came bearing intelligence,
 Mixed with his homage. "Sir, be pleased to accept

My duty and most loyal obedience,
 And pardon this my haste : for circumstance
 Suits not the point of time. The enemy,
 With a chosen force, nobles and gentlemen
 Chiefly, since none beside they can now trust,
 Is here upon us ; having sure advice
 How all the country's up in our behalf :
 Therefore would they assail our growing strength, 1110
 Ere it be stronger : 'tis their only hope :
 And failing that, they must fail utterly
 Like water spilt a ground ; there's our array :
 You see it, Sir, stretching along the hills,
 Backed with potent reserves from point to point,
 Fronting to Gilnau : whence the foe comes on,
 Less he be stopt myself, ere I rode here,
 I saw the dust and banners of their van,
 Far off ; but nearer now, e'en while we speak :
 And sure, if we haste not, our folk will lack 1120
 The comfort of their king. Oh ! Sir, 'tis here,
 'Tis hard at hand our fierce trial of war ;
 God speed us through it." Hermann heard not all ;
 But what he heard it had so sharp a spur
 As prompted his best speed : thither he rode,
 To a high ridge, where, as that horseman said,
 Their chiefs held council : there arrived, respect
 Of eager looks and earnest deference
 Preceded his arrival : heads all bare,
 And all their trepidation and quick stir 1130
 Suddenly stilled : then each looking to him
 Forgot himself. What had been done, and what
 Was presently to do, and how proposed,
 He heard it, and took counsel and gave command,
 Coldly, as one under some destiny
 Whom death whene'er, would come to him well pleased ;
 And therefore, careless, how the end should be,
 Which must ere long. Other dispatch being sped ;
 "Sirs," he addressed them, "we're a multitude
 As zealous as our cause is righteous, 1140

And they a hireling crew : far fewer men,
 And chiller hearts ; and for the act of arms
 Wherein their use makes them seem terrible,
 'Tis but a 'semblance. Why, is there a man
 So poor among us not to point a gun ?
 As any boy can do who hath scared crows,
 Well as their best. And for the bayonet,
 I know of no such palsy in our arms,
 But we may thrust it home with force as strong
 Since skill is none : for other discipline 1150
 We need it not ; standing their onset here,
 And stirring not a whit : such obstinate stand
 With vantage of our ground is best defence,
 Better than discipline : well have we learnt
 That lesson, and will practise it at need.
 Now this one charge I do commend to ye ;
 All that I've now recited, all these hopes
 And vantages, go spread the trust of them
 Through our whole host ; cheerfully colouring
 This my cold phrase : so shall fresh comfort rush 1160
 To all their hearts. Then for our ordinance—
 Behoves us to push forth our sharp shooters,
 No scanty sort of them, but a full swarm
 To infest their march : besetting them all round
 With hot distraction. Only mark me this.
 Warn them, whome'er ye send, that they fire low,
 Covering first their mark : fire low, I say,
 Again fire low. Repeat it o'er and o'er,
 And send them with that lesson dinned in their ears
 To give the proof of it : given 'twere worth 1170
 No more nor less but victory itself.
 Else rout and ruin. And now one word more,
 If, as he surely will, the enemy
 Being so galled should send his skirmishers
 To sweep them from his side, then let them fall
 Wide of him when constrained, only not back
 Upon our host ; and ever as they see
 Their vantage so to turn on him again,

Still with fresh fire and bitterer eagerness
 Venging their check. If but thus much were done, 1180
 The sum were triumphed." He ended, and they did
 As he ordained. Himself, galloping down
 Along the array of his armed people rode
 From end to end: then such a shout arose,
 So loud and long, that a peal of musquetry
 From twice as many men were faint as a sigh
 To sound with it. Sure the applauding breath
 Of myriads bestowed so warmly on one
 Should swell his heart, 'less it were all of lead :
 And truly his was of that quality, 1190
 As then it seemed: what boots all brightness else
 To him who hath a cloudy film on his eye,
 That e'en the sun shows dimly? And when grief
 Hath made its mourning chamber of the heart,
 What profits it that splendour is outside
 Promising gorgeousness of kingly pomp,
 Wooing the soul of young ambition
 With such high hopes that e'en the dullest clay
 Should grow to spirit and aspire with them?
 Alas, there is a deadness of the heart 1200
 Ere the life die. And yet, though in despair,
 Yet he spoke calmly: and that deep stern mood
 Commended him far more than hurry and heat
 To trust in him. "I thank ye, my brave friends;
 I thank ye from my heart: ye've chosen me
 To be your ruler, and ye see me here
 Devoted to approve that choice with all
 That's left to me of life; and when that fails
 In my death too. For the instant brunt of war
 How ye should bear it, and how beat it off, 1210
 Your chiefs and officers skilled in that kind,
 Have warned ye; warning needless to repeat,
 But now to do it. There's the enemy:
 Ye see him there flashing with spiteful shot
 'Gainst your brave fellows. What shall I say more?

Only, quit ye like men—what! can it be
 That those your adversaries, poor base slaves,
 Peril their life but for their slavery's sake,
 That they may live in it? and shall not ye,
 Armed with religious arms, freedom, and right 1220
 Of those rich lands so long usurped from ye,
 Shall ye not fight eager as fire itself,
 As hot and fierce? Now is your proof, brave friends,
 To prove your worth. One cheer ere I depart.
 Ah! brave this shout is valiancy, the next
 Victory such clear visions have I seen,
 Such surety of God. By this the enemy,
 Slowly and with much loss, more than his gain
 Of ground, had won toward the patriots
 Within a cannon's range. His mighty mass 1230
 Lay all as open to the adverse shot,
 As the huge bulk of an ox to the fierce sting
 Of hornets on each side assailing him,
 Small danger to themselves, but death to him;
 Spite of his rage, and what as little avails
 His unskilled strength—many fell slain—yet more
 Wounded, and all were sore dismayed at heart
 To see what they ne'er looked for: such fierce strife
 'Stead of easy success. There was a ridge
 Whereon the rebel host made their strong stand; 1240
 And yet, another and a lower one
 Five furlongs off in front, sidelong the two,
 As art had ruled them. There did the enemy
 Beneath the shelter of that nether ridge,
 Stretch out his shattered force: so to redeem
 Their disarray to a sound order again,
 And in that pause to breathe, and with free breath
 Renew their spirit; then, being so refreshed
 With sudden onset to assail their foes
 Long the whole line: one onset and one end 1250
 Of rout or victory. Thus they devised,
 And did it: lying so with secure front,
 And scattering their skirmishers abroad,

For safety of the rear. Safety ! Ob, no !
But only longer agony. Those swarms
Deadly and fierce beset them round again,
Ever as soon as scattered turning back
From the truce with keener appetite of blood.
Till Falkenstein at length, that haughty lord,
Thus to his company : “ Comrades what now ? 1260
Are we turned popinjays ? that we stand thus
To make them sport ? No, let us first go clear
Yon harvest from the field, then will we back,
And glean those scatterlings : and hearken me.
No more child’s play : no more such silly waste
Of shot and powder : but upon them strait
With the bayonet.” He spoke, and as he said
So ran that word of fear through all the line.
“ The bayonet.” Up started one and all,
Some daringly, others in frenzy of fear 1270
Rushing like sheep to a gate, where but one leads
All following : so they rushed on, and so
Were slaughtered : for their foes, firmly fixed there,
And counselled to a sage surety of aim,
Met them with such a crashing storm of shot,
As broke that living wall to a score gaps,
Ruinous carnage. Yet were brave hearts there,
High blood, and valiant arms : what they failed once,
Framing their force anew they dared again,
And sure their daring wins. Scarce their gun’s length 1280
Severed them from their foes—If they break in
They conquer. Yes, if death be victory :
They’ll know none else. E’en as they drew their arms
Back for the thrust, came such another crash
Deadlier than the first. “ Oh, hold your hands ;
Is man so vile a thing, and is his life
Of such an easy simple artifice
To be crushed so recklessly ? Then as they stood
Doubtfully, wondering each to stand alone
’Mong his fallen fellows. “ See they waver, Oh, see,” 1290
Cried Hermann : “ Now ’tis time for our cold steel,

One rush, and they are swept before our swords
 As the air that we rush through." He spake and matched
 The word with a deed as good—forward they burst
 Fierce as mastiffs unchained. Oh! who shall tell
 The encounter? shouts and groans and pealing shot
 Are the only words to speak it: as damned sprites
 Fleeing before their devilish torturers
 When flames of hell are at their fiercest pitch,
 So fled those soldiers: and their conquerors 1300
 Ask not if they pursued; if bayonets
 Wantoned in blood; if savageness for all
 Answer to supplication cut its throat
 In the act of prayer? No, rather ask cruelty
 What she e'er did of fiercest memory,
 And then be sure a thousand deeds as fierce
 Dyed that red field: slowly the sun sank down,
 And murking red as with rank vapour of blood,
 And well doth he remember yet that day,
 For never did he see the like of it, 1310
 Nor ever will. Then vengeance wiped its sword
 Smiling a grim smile at the bloody sight,
 Cursing the shade that hindered it to slay,
 While yet were men for slaughter: at length their way
 They wended back, those conquerors, in stern joy,
 Back to the camp again: great was their gain,
 And small their loss: a few score comrades miss'd
 And the world won. But Hermann! where is he?
 Where is the king? come forth and show thyself,
 That loyalty may do thee obsequious due, 1320
 And crown thee with a free crown laurel-wreathed
 By victory. Oh, come; they call for thee
 Thy faithful people. Shine in their glad eyes,
 And be so kingly in thy grace, as they
 Are loyal in their love. All ask of thee,
 Questioning darkly, in wild tumultuous wise,
 But none may answer them. Why, 'tis most strange?
 Strange as the trunk and limbs to stand alone,
 And the head gone—when was it heard before,

A king was lost and no more known of him, 1330
 More than a gipsy's brat? Treason, speak out;
 Hast slain him? if thou hast, thou'lt answer it
 Fearfully, to such wrath as ne'er raged yet
 The wrath of a mad people. But who last
 Beheld him? in what place and circumstance,
 What time? Then many spake, but only one
 Was listened, for his grave authority
 Outweighed the worth of many witnesses:
 'Twas he the honest shepherd then came forth
 And said, "I loved him much and honoured him, 1340
 And therefore through the danger of the day
 I watched him close: when we broke out at last
 He was in front of us, cheering us on,
 Himself the first of the rush. I followed him
 Fearless, for there was something more in him
 Than doth belong to man: so it seemed then,
 And so his bearing showed. He rode forthright
 O'er rough and level, hill, brushwood and bog,
 Through the wild panic of the enemy
 In midst of danger: and soliciting death, 1350
 But ne'er inflicting it: striking no stroke;
 Firing no shot at all, but with sword hung
 Heavily from his hand by his horses' flank,
 E'en as his arm were shattered, so he rode,
 And so I followed him, up to the stream
 Or hard upon; when, as we neared the bank,
 Down fell my horse stumbling in the thick furze,
 I under him—and there, senseless and stunned,
 I saw no more: but rising after awhile,
 Looked round, and nought was there in front of me, 1360
 But the swift river flowing silently
 Behind; and on each side the din of war
 Roaring as ye all heard it. I've said all,
 Heaven grant us better certainty than this
 That I can show." Then was much murmuring,
 Since that no light appeared from all that tale
 But darker doubt. Then was the river too

Questioned with drags and with all manner of search
 To tell the truth : vainly—for were it so,
 Yet such a royal prize once chanced to him 1370
 Was little hope that he would render it,
 And so perplexity, all means being spent,
 Stood there with folded arms. But time past on
 Indifferent ; and days were heaped on days
 To a full month ; and in that while the folk
 Confest the hand of God seen plainly there,
 And grew to cheerful calm : then as they met
 Duly, for statement of their ordinance ;
 And there was question who for their lost king
 Should rule them in his stead—“ No, we'll have none, 1380
 (Cried the conspiring universal voice),
 No other ruler, only his memory
 And the rule he gave shall be our sovereign,
 And in his empty throne none else shall sit
 Till he return—for he but bides his time
 As ancient Providence hath so ordained ;
 And as of late he did no less again,
 He will revisit us at pinch of need,
 Watchful whene'er. Meanwhile we'll honour him,
 Our patriot hero, in honour next to God, 1390
 With ceremonious due, festal and full,
 The yearly celebration of set days,
 And with heart-worship holier than all
 And deeper : that this land's prosperity
 May ne'er forget herself whence she first rose,
 Nor him the fountain and the source of all :
 But emulate her ever growing weal
 With the like growth of fuller gratitude,—
 So be it—and Ernest, when thou com'st again,
 As thou would'st find us so may we be found. 1400

