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LEGENDS

OF

THE AFGHAN COUNTRIES,

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LEGENDS

OF THE

AFGHAN COUNTRIES.

IN VERSE.

WITH

VARIOUS PIECES,

Original and translated.

BY

CHARLES MASSON,

AUTHOR OF

TRAVELS IN BALOCHISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE PANJAB, ETC. ETC.

Fall. Coll.

LONDON:

JAMES MADDEN, 8, LEADENHALL STREET,

AND

JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

1848.

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LEGENDS OF THE AFGHAN COUNTRIES.

The Zikker.

A LARGE proportion of the inhabitants of Mekraun (the ancient Gedrosia), as well as of the inland province of Kej, profess themselves to be Mahomedans, and repeat, when asked, the ordinary declaration of faith, viz. "There is but one God, and Mahomed is "the prophet of God;" yet they will not acknowledge the necessity of prayers, and refuse to follow the prescribed forms of the Mahomedan Religion: they confine themselves to ejaculations, which practice being called Zikkeree, the name of Zikker is applied to them as religionists. They farther believe that a certain Moollah Moosa, whose sepulchre, now the principal of the Zikker shrines, is in Kej, was the Imaum Mehdee, announced in the Koran as to appear on earth in the latter ages of the world; and they have, in other respects, many singular and peculiar customs, which render them especial objects of detestation to the orthodox Moosalmaun. Nasseer Khan, the celebrated Chief of Kalat, is said to have

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persecuted them; and a circumstance, which the Zikkers assert to have happened to him, furnished the theme for the following verses. At Ormarah, the writer had frequently opportunities to converse with Zikkers, who came in from the surrounding country: they were generally very tender on the score of religion; and in fact they cannot be said to have any: and they were no less shy in giving information upon their peculiar rites and observances; nor was their reserve in this instance to be wondered at, for there is just reason to suspect, that they are not unjustly taxed as being followers of the system which sanctions a community of females—a system which, varying in the mode of being carried out, yet prevails largely in the regions between Persia and India.

THE ZIKKER.

A LEGEND OF MEKRAUN.

When from Kalat's proud towers, his conquering arms
Great Nasseer led, and filled with war's alarms
Mekraun's wide coast, and Kej's fruitful vale;
The Zikker host that dared his might,
Was scattered in the fearful fight,
And fled before his bands in terror pale.

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A glorious trophy could the victor boast,
For, lo! before the chief of Islam's host,
And gathered concourse of his martial train,
In sullen, not dejected mood,
The captive Zikker prelate stood,
Bound with the shackle vile and galling chain.

"Wretch," cried Nasseer, with plumed success elate,
"Renounce thy heresy, or bide thy fate:
"Five times a day the grace of Allah crave!"
The Zikker all his rage defied,
And calmly, fearlessly replied—
"I will not pray—I will not be thy slave."

"Thou base despiser of the Prophet's laws,
"Repent, lest justice vindicate his cause:
"Five times a day the grace of Allah crave!"
The Zikker prelate, undismayed,
The same composed denial made—
"I will not pray—I will not be thy slave."

"Lead hence the graceless wretch who will not pray,"
Said stern Nasseer; "and as a warning, slay!"
The dauntless Zikker cried—"Thy wrath is vain;
"Preserved by Heaven's protecting charm,
"I stand secure from mortal harm!"
And, lo! he burst the shackle and the chain!

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Aghast the Mooslem council gazed; Nasseer,
For one brief moment quailed with holy fear;
But straight, in furious energy uprose—
"The caitiff shall not 'scape his doom;
"This sword shall send him to the tomb;
"And so let perish all the Prophet's foes!"

Impatient of the pious prelate's gore,
His gleaming falchion from its sheath he tore,
And brandished it in vengeance o'er his head:
Vain menace! from his grasp it fell—
His withered arm proclaimed a spell;
Secured the blood he madly thirst to shed.

Now proud Nasseer was struck with wan affright:
A miracle was wrought, too plain to slight;
He gasped, and sunk upon his couch subdued:
A death-like terror spread around,
Follower and chief fell on the ground;
Alone, erect, the Zikker prelate stood.

At length, when somewhat calmed his troubled breast,
The humbled chief his captive thus addrest—
"Just man, I dare not doubt the heavenly sign—
"I own the power, above our scan,
"That foils the will of impious man:
"Thy blessing grant, and peace to thee and thine!'

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With silent vows the Zikker priest implored
Of Heaven, remission for the chastened lord;
And Heaven was pleased to hear the secret prayer:
The withered arm new vigour braced,
Within its sheath the sword was placed,
And peace and joy succeeded to despair.

ORMARAH, 1831.

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Asthœa.

A FEW miles off the coast of Mekraun, nearly equidistant from Cape Arabah and the creek of Kalamat, is the small isle of Asthee-lall. It is the Carnine of Nearchus; and when he visited it in the third century before the Christian era, it was inhabited, which is not the case at present. It is, however, remarkable as being the Sitadip, or White Island, of the Hindoos, and the western limits in these days of their pilgrimages; it being thought necessary, after a due sojourn at the celebrated shrine of Beebee Nanee, on the adjacent line of coast, to pass over the sea to Sitadip, or Asthee-lall, and there to remain other three days. It may be remembered, that the very enquiring but sometimes fanciful Wilford laboured to prove that Sitadip was Albion. I think I could explain why this little island was called Carnine, in the time of Nearchus; but I recollect that I am not writing an antiquarian dissertation. Claudius Ptolemy, I may still observe, has no Carnine, but an Asthœa, which was its name in his age, being that by which it is now known to the inhabitants of the coast, and to Arab navigators. The mariners of Sind call it Sitarah (the Star), which the Portuguese have translated into Astola, by which appellation it is found on our maps.

The native tribes on the coast of Mekraun, who

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exist in a very rude and primitive state of society, are wonderfully imaginative, and especially delight in tales of perees and fays (fairies and their attendants), as well as of jins (demons), of whose reality they entertain no doubt. Their narratives suggested the following copy of verses, in which the only liberty taken is to give the ill-fated peree the name of Asthœa, in connection with the island of Astheelall.

ASTHŒA.

A LEGEND OF MEKRAUN.

Long were the flowery plains of Kej renowned
As fairy seats, and famed as hallowed ground;
There Sooleemaun, enthroned in radiant state,
To mystic realms dispensed the will of fate,
Ere strife and slaughter in the world began,
And ere its surface had been vexed by man.

Perees and jins, and hosts of shadowy guise,
That ranged the earth, the ocean, and the skies,
In the day's sunshine, and the night's dim shade,
The potent fiat of the king obeyed.
Fowls of the air, and ocean's finny train,
Beasts of the mountain, forest, and the plain,

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With every branching tree, and plant, and flower,
Sped at his summons and confest his power;
Obedient vassals of the gorgeous king—
Lord of the talisman and magic ring!

The monarch, seated on his jewelled throne,
Knew all their tongues, and spoke each in its own,
For in those times, when yet the world was young,
Brutes, plants, and even rocks, possessed a tongue.

When Sooleemaun was called from earthly sway,
And fixed his empire in the orb of day,
To all the various tribes beneath his reign,
He duly portioned his immense domain;
Those cherished plains, thy limits, Kej, embrace,
His favourite seats, he gave the peree race—
A gentle race, devote to harmless sport,
And long the loveliest circle of his court.

In Kej, beneath the guidance of a queen,
They dwelt in peace, and sought each gladsome scene;
In freedom roved within the verdant land,
On all sides girdled by a waste of sand,
And danced the sunny days and moonlight nights,
And undisturbed performed their secret rites.

At length, a part of Heaven's predestined plan,
A new creation rose—mysterious man!

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Mortal, yet glowing with ethereal fire,
Than angels lower, but than perees higher;
Feebler than brutes, but of so vast a soul,
That nature bends beneath his stern control,
Man! half of heavenly, half of earthly birth,
But willed by Fate the Sovereign of the earth.

As man increased, his bold aspiring race
Spurned the scant limits of surrounding space;
He broke o'er mountains girt with rugged woods,
Through pathless forests, and o'er raging floods;
No toil or peril stayed his forward course,
Victorious ever, or by skill or force;
While, as on every side he dauntless prest,
Monsters and hideous jins he dispossest;
Before his aspect, struck with inward dread,
Their might was withered, and they basely fled:
Nor less the lordly brutes of wood and glen,
Their haunts abandoned to the strides of men;
Conscious to them by privilege of birth,
Belonged the empire of the vanquished earth.

The perees yet in peace their lands retained,
The last to suffer, so had Heaven ordained;
Although their worth did not their safeguard prove,
It drew that mark of favour from above.

Around their realm, to cheat presumptuous eyes,
The sandy desert bore the ocean's guise;

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Like that, its surface tendered specious forms
Of calms serene and simulated storms.
A reeking mist upon its bosom lay,
Which shone like crystal in the solar ray;
While in the void above, deception rare!
Bright filmy landscapes floated in the air,
And hills and groves hung pendent in the sky,
Their forms inverted to the wondering eye:
So sportive nature watched the gay domains,
And barred the approaches to the peree plains*.

The lawless brigand, roving o'er the plain,
Who long had sought to slake his thirst in vain,
With eager joy before him would survey
The liquid scene, and hopeful urge his way;
But as he onward prest, surprised he found
The same deceitful prospect spread around;
Still luring on, the welcome waves appear,
Denied to access, though in semblance near.
Now sad mistrust perplexed his anxious breast,
In turn to action roused, in turn deprest,
He stands, and half determines to recede;
Again the vision tempts him to proceed.
Deluded wretch! his labours close in death—
He sinks, and gasps away his vital breath†.

* This description will be recognized to apply to the *miraje*.

† The fate here described might very possibly occur to the traveller deceived by the illusions of the mirage.

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If e'er adventurer, led by rash emprize,
To gaze at things unfit for mortal eyes,
By aid of charm or magic spell had past,
The various obstacles before him cast—
If but his feet infringed the hallowed soil,
He met the bounty of his fatal toil;
That moment lost, unable to escape,
He changed his human for a brutal shape—
A bird or beast, and joined the herds of those
Whose sins before had brought down equal woes*.

But if, by chance, all o'er the dreary wild,
Some guiltless pilgrim, of his path beguiled,
Approached the land, then would the perees deign
To bid some fay direct him o'er the plain,
Who stepped before him with a twinkling light,
And led him scathless through the gloomy night;
For perees, though of man they held distrust,
Were yet by nature merciful and just.

At length, as fixed by Heaven, arrived the day,
When Kej was wrested from the peree sway;

* The transformation of men into the inferior animals was one of the strange notions entertained in very ancient times, by the inhabitants of the coast of Gedrosia (our Mekraun). The curious may see a singular story of the transformation of men into fishes, in Arrian's account of the voyage of Nearchus, where he mentions the island of Nosola, "sacred to the sun, and not to be approached by any mortal," &c. &c.

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When human footsteps passed the desert fence,
And man had power to drive immortals thence.

The beauteous sylphs in terror urged their flight,
And sought retreats remote from mortal sight.
No longer joined in one united band,
In groups dispersed they wandered o'er the land;
Sad remnants of the bright and lovely train,
Happy so long in Kej's flowery plain!

The splendid hills that gird Gedrosia's coast
Received great numbers of the exiled host;
For they opposed a front so smooth and steep
The skill of man was foiled to climb or creep;
While on their summits spread an ample space,
Become the refuge of the peree race.
There, yet in mirth they pass the fleeting hours,
And lively gambol in the blooming bowers—
There yet at ease, they play their guileless sports,
Practise their rites, and hold their little courts,
Unseen by any but the Powers above,
The timid deer, and milder meek-eyed dove.

'Tis said, when o'er the globe dull darkness throws
Its vest, and nature lingers in repose,
When grosser forms their strength renew in sleep,
They still repair to Kej, and vigils keep;
In their old favorite haunts their frolics play,
By night, and vanish at the dawn of day.

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But should one heedless of the signal wait,
Her doom's the forfeit of the peree state:
Who looks on man, may never join again
The fairy bands, nor shine amid their train;
She stands condemned the peree's form to wear,
While human passions too become her share—
A lot more grievous than is borne by men,
Yet has it happened, and may so again;
For such, do ancient chronicles relate,
In time of yore, was sad Asthœa's fate,
Who fell unguarded from her former bliss—
And what those chronicles relate, is this—

It so befel, a shepherd led his flock
Beneath Mount Arabah from rock to rock,
And with his pipe of reed, and sylvan lay,
Essayed to wile the languor of the day;
Well pleased a cool protected spot he found,
And careless, thoughtless, stretched him on the ground:
Around him whistled all his goats and sheep,
And putting by his pipe, he fell asleep.

It chanced, the night before, the peree train
Had urged their wonted flight to Kej's plain—
In gay disport had revelled wide and far,
And fled on rising of the morning star;
Save bright Asthœa, who, it haply sped,
Had loitered, slumbering in a lily bed;
For tho' pure sleep the peree never knows,
She yet may taste a soft and lulled repose.

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When she arose and gazed upon the light,
Her soul recoiled and sickened at the sight.
Oh! sad calamity! oh! dire disease!
When day's pure lustre kindles to displease.
Full conscious of her wo, and fate forlorn,
To man and peree both become the scorn,
Wild through the ambient air she winged her way,
Unknowing where to fly and where to stay;
And thus in grief and frantic terror lost,
Her fate impelled her to Mekrannia's coast;
And there she flitted by the shady spot,
In which the shepherd had his cares forgot.

Then was she doomed, unhappy lot! to know
The nature of her fallen state and wo;
For on his manly face she witless glanced,
And strait with mortal love became entranced;
Fain would she fly, for in her mind arose
A dark presentiment of pending woes,
And sense of guilt; but, ah! the will was vain!
She gazed and loved, and loved and gazed again.

A time she hovering o'er the shepherd kept,
Averse to break his slumbers while he slept;
Till in blind haste, she shrieked, when in surprise,
The youth awoke, and wildly turned his eyes;
Again she shrieked, when, smit with panic dread,
He started—cried—forsook his flock and fled.

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O'er the wide plain and craggy rocks he took
A path direct, nor dared aside to look;
With starting eye-balls, features ghastly pale,
And ringlets fluttering in the ocean gale.

The peree's yells but amplified his fright—
Her prayers but gave new impulse to his flight;
The unearthly accents chilled his sinking frame,
And still she skrieked, and still he fled the same:
If nigh she came, and strove his form to clasp,
He darted forth, and foiled her airy grasp,
Till on the sandy beach, by ocean's side,
He fell exhausted, and convulsive died.

The peree, lost in passion and despair,
In tones of grief to Heaven preferred her prayer:
" Ye sovereign Powers, whose wisdom all adore,
" Rescind my shepherd's fate—his breath restore!
" Be this not given, or should ye not approve,
" That earthly born should share immortal's love,
" Resume thy boon to me, now grief to bear,
" That, mortal, I my shepherd's doom may share!"

The Gods assented; strait her sylphic form
Was clothed with substance, and with blood was warm,
A lovely being then stood imaged there,
Surpassing all that men conceive of fair;
But t'was in vain the bright creation shone—
Her life she prayed for but to lay it down;

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Smiling she sank, surveyed her shepherd's charms,
And dying clasped him in her chilly arms;
Yet hopeful to enjoy, in realms above,
The bliss awarded there to mutual love.

Not long, the seamen, plying fast their oars,
A bark to Yemen bound approached the shores;
The crew, obedient to their chief's command,
Lowered their skiff and sought the dreary strand;
And as along the sandy beach they pace,
They find the corses locked in death's embrace:

Wondering the seamen gazed, nor could suppose
What angry fate had caused such grievous woes;
The strange and mournful sight to pity drew
Their breasts, nor was their marvel less to view
The beauty which adorned the hapless pair—
The youth so comely and the maid so fair;
So fresh the hue upon their features kept,
It seemed that in each other's arms they slept;
And then so calm and hopefully they smiled,
It seemed that death was of its pangs beguiled.

Still rapt they gazed, when accents mild and clear,
From unseen lips enjoined them not to fear;
Bade them to list, nor in attention fail,
And told, in gentle tone, the tragic tale.

The honest seamen next, with pious care,
To the contiguous isle conveyed the pair;

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In the same grave their corses placed, and rose
Vast heaps of stones, a monument of woes,
While seeds of flowering plants around they spread,
To grow and bloom in honour of the dead.
This done, they bid the grateful fumes arise
Of ispand-seed and incense to the skies,
And due respect from future times they crave
Upon the peree's and the shepherd's grave.

Henceforth the isle was consecrate to fame,
And henceforth bore the fair Asthœa's name;
E'en to this day its shores deserted lie,
And vessels sail in awe and terror by.
By night is often seen a fitful light,
And mournful sounds the listening ear affright;
While seamen count their beads, and prayers prolong,
As pale the pilot steers his bark along.

ORMARAH 1831.

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Chehel Tan.

Chehel Tan, or literally the Forty Bodies, is a name applied to the most celebrated and lofty of the mountains of Saharawan, a northern province of Balochistan; it extends between Mustung and Quetta. In the following lines, nothing more has been attempted, than to express in rhyme what the writer heard related in sober prose. His interest in the subject, was indeed increased, by the circumstance of his having made a pilgrimage to the shrine, on the crest of Chehel Tan, when in that part of the world. It need not be observed, that the name conferred upon the mountain, has relation to the legend connected with it, and it would seem to have entirely superseded its original and independent appellation.

CHEHEL TAN.

A LEGEND OF BALOCHISTAN.

In that far clime, where eastern lore pretends,
That Hind begins and Khorassania ends,
Where the rude frontiers of two realms approach,
And Afghan races mingle with Baloch,

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Where nature marks the limits as her own,
And parts the torrid from the temperate zone;
High o'er the neighbouring hills around it spread,
Majestic Chehel Tan rears its towering head.

Eastward it skirts a plain of woful name,
As Dasht Bee-dowlat known to evil fame,
And peers o'er treacherous Bolan's pass and flood,
Polluted oft with strife, and stained with blood;
On Dolaï's kooch its western shadows fall,
And to the north it marks thy confines, Shall;
Fair from its southern base extend the plains
Of fertile Mustung, dear to Brohee swains,
Where, though fell war has razed her ancient towers,
Still teem her orchards and still bloom her bowers,
Where still is labour blest with large increase,
If man permit to till her lands in peace.

The rude Brohee, imagination's child,
His tutor Nature, and his school the wild,
In awe beholds its forehead blenched with snows,
Meekly inclines his head, and mutters vows;
His glowing thoughts conceive a ghostly train,
Prolific produce of the fervid brain,
Seraphic spirits, clad in heavenly light,
That glide unseen to feeble human sight,
Or, but revealed, and that but rarely too,
To those, approved of Heaven, a chosen few.

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To him, the monarch hill and circling space,
Are haunts frequented by the mystic race;
To him, its wild and varied precincts swarm
With shadowy myriads of ethereal form,
Whose presence is declared by every sound,
That flings a deep mysterious charm around.

If the bold huntsman mount the sacred hill,
What mingled feelings in his bosom thrill!
How fears and hopes by turns his mind control!
How oft he craves a blessing on his soul!
At every sound he lists, and looks behind,
And stands aghast at every gust of wind,
And oft directs his eye where nature shrouds
The hill's proud summit in a veil of clouds.

When sets the sun, and from the distant plain,
The striplings brisk have led the fleecy train,
Their camels fed, and closed their daily work,
And, wearied, gather round the crackling terk,
While busy hands augment the blazing fire;
Cheered by the flame, perchance the reverend sire
Grows talkative, and in a prattling vein,
Tales told a thousand times, yet tells again,
Those of the hill revered are then preferred,
And, heard before, are still with pleasure heard.

The good old man unfolds full many a tale,
That chills and turns his youthful audience pale,
Or full of glorious marvels, topics rich,
Exalts their fancies to intensest pitch.

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He vaunts the rose, whose tender buds disclose
Their milk-white blossoms 'mid eternal snows—
He vaunts its native fruits, its balmy groves,
And spicy breeze perfumed with fragant cloves—
He vaunts its plants endued with magic power,
Found but by favored wight in lucky hour,
Rare plants! whose juices wonderous to behold,
Convert all baser metals into gold!
Earnest he tells, as listening in amaze,
The group with open mouths devoutly gaze,
How oft the Joghee, versed in occult skill,
And nature's secrets, seeks the lofty hill:
His swarthy skin with ashes overspread,
His feet unsandalled, and exposed his head—
Naked, he climbs the steep and snowy heights,
And hungry, roams whole days and frozen nights.
What latent spells his vital powers preserve,
Sustain his body and his bosom nerve,
Who can divine? At length, when crowned his ends,
With meet success, he joyfully descends,
And holds as nought, enriched with mystic spoils,
His lacerated limbs, his sufferings, and his toils.

He shows to none, what precious leaf or root,
What bud or berry, or what flower or fruit
He found; but if the evening's guest, by night
He steals away, nor waits the morning light;
And homeward speeds, through many a lengthened scene,
To sultry Hind, or distant Cheen Macheen.

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In every age, beneath religion's guise,
Designing men have palmed successful lies;
However great their fervour to deceive,
They still found men as eager to believe;
Mankind are ever credulous, and feed
With zest upon the supernatural deed.
Resistless fancy plays her specious part,
And stills the sober dictates of the heart.
Such easy faith, in Christian climes erst bred
The lying legend, now but seldom read—
Had reason urged beyond all due restraints,
And filled the rubric with pretended saints.

In Mooslem lands, where by a faith depraved,
The mind is turned from truth, and held enslaved,
Where reason's claims are wholly put aside,
And blindly men upon that faith confide,
Imposters largely thrive, and boldly rear
Their impious heads, as saiyad and as peer.
There every subtle knave, with solemn face,
Pretends thy favour, Heaven, and special grace!
Lives held in awe—and when he dies, his grave
Becomes a shrine, where crowds a blessing crave;
Legends, the lips of lisping infants fill,
And rude zeearats rise on every hill.

Chehel Tan's proud crest partakes of fame divine,
And boasts alike its legend and its shrine;
What was and is by Brohee swains believed,
Relate, oh, muse! and what great Ghous achieved!

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Near Khaunak lived, engaged in rustic care,
In time of old, a simple, frugal pair;
Year after year, in dull succession spread,
Yet cold and fruitless was their nuptial bed.
Much sorrow preyed upon the woman's mind,
Who felt herself reproached amongst her kind.

In neighbouring Teeree, dwelt a reverend sage,
His beard all silvered by the frost of age,
Who long had learned life's busy scenes to shun,
And lived secluded with an only son;
To pious deeds, his sole attention given,
To praise his God, and make his peace with Heaven;
For holiness of life he stood renowned,
And his fame spread throughout the regions round.

To him the anxious wife had often led
The votive lamb, with garlands on its head,
That he would grant his blessing, and efface
Amongst her sex, her sorrow and disgrace,
She oft had prayed; and he, as oft replied,
He could not grant a boon which Heaven denied.

A final time she came, with offerings meet,
And cried, while humbly she embraced his feet—
"Tell me, if it be written in the sky,
"That I dishonoured live and childless die?"
Still said the sage—"Thy grief and prayers are vain,
"Deem not a hardship what thy fates ordain."

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" Sire," cried the youthful Ghous, within whose
breast,
The heavenly influence first shone forth confest,
" Remove the woman's pangs, in prosperous hour,
" Or what avails thy benediction's power?
" Pronounce her fruitful, and her offspring bless,
" And prove that you the love of Heaven possess."

" Son," quoth the sire, " so rash a zeal abate,
" 'Tis not in man to change the course of fate."
The son rejoined, inspired by grace divine,
" I feel persuaded that the power is mine.
" Woman," he cried, " to peace thy mind compose!
" Lo! Heaven concedes a period to thy woes!"
Then forty pebbles from the soil he drew,
Which one by one into her lap he threw,
Invoked of Heaven its blessing on her head,
Then breathing on her face, " Depart," he said;
" Full forty babes, a barren womb, thy shame
" No more, shall call thee by a mother's name!"

The dame obeyed—and from that very hour,
Conceived, as ordered by superior power,
And nine months passed, when, prodigy on earth!
Forty fine infants graced a single birth!

Then evil thoughts perplexed each parent's mind,
How could their forty babes subsistence find?
The mother's breasts would yield a scant supply,
For one sufficient, and the rest must die.

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In sad distrust their mutual plaints they verse,
And madly deem the boon of Heaven a curse.
Must then, alas! the smiling infants bleed!
Parental fondness shuddered at the deed.
At length the father, with distracted sense,
Commits, what seems to him, a less offence:
He took his helpless charges, all but one,
And mournful bore them to thy wilds, Chehel Tan—
Sighed o'er their helpless, unprotected state,
And, frantic, left them to the charge of fate.

A time elapsed: but conscience preyed within
Each parent's breast, and anguish followed sin.
Her plea in vain necessity applies,
Too strongly nature urged her broken ties,
And dire calamities the pair forbode,
Who erred, mistrustful of the power of God.
The babe retained with gushing tears they view,
Although in beauty as in age he grew,
His sportive, fond caresses but remind
Of his lost brethren to the hill consigned,
And all his frolics but to mind recall
Feelings that chill, and horrors that appal.
" I will arise," exclaimed the sire, " and climb
" That fatal hill, the witness of my crime!
" I will collect, sad thought! whate'er remains,
" Spared by the winds or vultures on its plains;
" Into one grave depose my infants' bones,
" And o'er it raise a monument of stones."

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Thoughtful he went—but, lo! amazed, he found
His babes alive, dispersed the hill around,
The pledges he abandoned in despair,
If wanting his, had met with better care;
Indulgent Heaven their guardian stood confest,
And angels nursed the babes whom Ghous had blest.
Some leaping o'er the rocks in artless play,
Enjoyed the sunshine of the genial day;
Some perched, spectators, on the mountain trees,
Swung with the branches quivering in the breeze;
Some sipping lucid gums and pearly dews,
Partook the simple fare that perees use.

Awhile the father gazed—awhile descried
Their various motions with a transient pride;
But when he called, and in a parent's name,
Implored them to approach and hide his shame,
O'er the projecting rocks, in rapid flight
They soared, and vanished from his aching sight.

Homeward he sped, with visage wan and pale,
And told his listening wife the wonderous tale.
She, fertile in expedients, formed a plan,
And thus addressed the grief-bewildered man—
" Again to-morrow to the hill repair,
" And take our infant still beneath our care;
" His presence will allay our babes' alarms,
" And all will hasten to their father's arms."

The obedient husband, with the early dawn,
Bore his fond child across the fragrant lawn,

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And cheered by hope, which flatters misery still,
With lightened steps ascends the sacred hill;
He soon perceived the gay infantile train,
On cliffs disporting, which to reach were vain;
They would have fled—but paused, when now they saw
Their brother, moved by Nature's kindly law.

The sire, impatient, urgent vows addrest,
And spoke the many griefs that tore his breast,
Placed on the soil his charge, and then withdrew,
Expecting to entice them by its view.
They came—but with a swiftness far above
That of the falcon, or the flying dove—
Their brother seized, and bore him to the skies,
While clouds of darkness dimmed the parent's eyes.

With vacant mind, the man his steps retraced,
And joined his wife—the pair to man disgraced:
The cup of grief, too deeply had they drunk,
And both beneath its baneful poison sunk;
Life's vital current, frozen, ceased to flow,
And death applied its cure for mortal woe.

The various wonders noised the country round,
The swains revere the hill as holy ground,
And glowing scenes their vivid fancy paints,
Of dreamy bliss and forty living saints.

Where soars abrupt, in grandeur to the skies,
The hill's bold apex, tapering in its rise,

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E'en on its crest, from which the startled sight
Surveys whole realms with wonder and delight,
They raise, with pious toil, a rustic shrine,
A rude memorial of the deeds divine,
Bedizened now with party-coloured rags,
With fluttering shreds, and gently-waving flags.
Above the pile ascends a slender pole,
Where hangs a bell, whose monitory knoll
Reminds the pilgrim, by its tinkling sound,
That there he treads on consecrated ground.

There, to this day, the shepherds wend, and pay
Their vows, regardless of the toilsome way ;
Nor is it held such vows are paid in vain,
Who ask in meekness will their ends obtain :
Thither, as offerings meet, are often led
The lamb or kid, with flowers around its head ;
Nor are such offerings to no purpose made,
Kind Heaven accepts, and grants the donors aid ;
There is no boon denied, or good unwrought,
If in the name of Hazret Ghous 'tis sought.

Ages on ages in their course have ran,
Since flourished Ghous, beloved of God and man ;
Approving Heaven, conferred, beyond his peers,
And health, and wisdom, and increase of years ;
But tho' on earth it various blessings gave,
His mortal race still closed within the grave :
Yet lives his fame—and prattling babes are taught,
In earliest years, the miracles he wrought,

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And wrought for them. Commissioned from above,
On little children he bestowed his love,
Endued with power, for all things high and rare,
On little children he conferred his care,
His sole pursuit their perils to assuage,
To watch, protect, and bless their tender age—
To lead them kindly in the way of truth,
And shed the gleam of virtue o'er their youth:
Indeed, of all the saints that Mooslems claim,
None lived like Ghous, or boasts a purer fame.

Nor destined is that fame to perish soon,
Renewed to memory each revolving moon,
For yet to Teeree's holy saint belongs
Its thirteenth day, e'er welcomed in with songs.
In smiling groups then guileless children range,
And mutual presents tender and exchange;
No thoughts but those of joy possess them then,
And graver sentiments they leave to men;
Well judging that for Hazret Ghous designed,
The fittest homage is the cheerful mind.
Then seek the sportive bands, the mirthful scene,
Then sound the tabor and the tambourine,
Then in full many a maze and circling ring,
They lead the dance, and in loud chorus sing
Loud hymns and pæans, which, impassioned, paint
Their love for Hazret Ghous their patron saint;
Oh! long may pastimes so endearing sway,
And long be honoured Hazret Ghous's day.

MUSTUNG, 1831.

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The Origin of the Roonjahs.

THE tribes of the principality of Lus claim to be of Rajpoot descent, and the origin of one of them, the Roonjahs, is accounted for as set forth in the following verses. It is proper to state, that the writer, while representing a leopard as the animal who nurtured in infancy the founder of the tribe, is not certain that he has correctly rendered the word Roonjah. It is said to be an animal of whose skins shields or their coverings are made, and as he found it did not mean the buffalo or rhinoceros, he was at a loss to identify it, although it would seem to be well known to the natives of Lus. It is affirmed, that there were as many as sixty Jams or Princes of the Roonjah family, who successively reigned in Lus. They were displaced from power by the Goongah tribe, who again were compelled to make way for the Jamhoots, who now supply the chiefs of the little principality.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE ROONJAHS.

A LEGEND OF LUS IN BALOCHISTAN.

ALONG the fertile vale of Sind,
The lengthy kafila wends its course;
It comes afar, from swarthy Hind,
With mingled bands of foot and horse.

In it, there are of all degrees,
Of rich and poor, of high and low,
Of those who journey at their ease,
And those who trudge in pain and woe.

Rajahs are there in pompous state,
With elephant and palanquin,
While slaves, who on the Rajahs wait,
On prancing steeds career between.

Fierce warriors from the sultry wastes
Of Rajpootana too are there,
In mail of steel and quilted vests,
With buckler round, and quivering spear.

Some on the mettled charger ride,
With gaudy tassels hanging down;
Some o'er the saddled camel stride,
That carries two or carries one.

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There in the crimson palkee, led
By bullocks decked with trappings gay,
The wealthy merchant nods his head,
As jolted onwards on his way.

There are the jogee and faquir,
With begging pot and noisy brawl,
Who e'er in varied guise appears,
Grotesquely clad, or not at all.

There are besides a motley crew,
Of men and women, old and young—
Who tramp on foot, and children too
In panniers over asses slung.

Some speed with wallets on the back,
And needful hookah in the hand,
While clouds of dust reveal the track
The kafila takes along the land.

Nor lacks the deafening tumult there,
That yelling conchs and drums supply;
Nor fail the banners flaunting fair,
To flutter proudly to the sky.

Say, whither does this kafila wend
Its motley clamorous array?
To where Pooralee's waters blend,
And mingle with the ocean's spray.

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Where Hinglatz stands—a sacred spot,
And blest with many a wonderous sign
Of gushing fount and gloomy grot,
The Lady Nanee's holy shrine*.

There, where the mystic rocks display
The symbols of the sun and moon,
There wend those crowds their vows to pay,
And of their Lady crave a boon.

Some long for honours and renown,
Some seek relief from worldly cares,
Some ardent hope to win a crown,
Some sigh for gold, and some for heirs.

But who can tell the secrets hid
Of all who wish what they have not?
Or who'd be better if he did?
Poor mortals! restless of their lot!

Still forward press the eager host,
In toilsome marches long and slow,
And joyful reach at length the coast,
The groves of Ram† and Munneroh‡.

* A celebrated shrine on the coast of Lus.

† One of the names of Karauchee, in Sind, is Ram Baugh, the grove or garden of Ram (Rama).

‡ Munneroh is the fort commanding the entrance of the port of Karauchee.

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There, standing on the sandy shore,
They reverence the monarch main,
And meet oblations duly pour,
Of milk, of cocoa-nuts, and grain.

A little rest—and then anew
They issue forth, and onward toil;
Soon Sind's frontier is lost to view,
They march on Lus's arid soil.

They pace the ocean's sterile brink,
The path laborious and drear;
Full many would desponding sink,
But that their journey's close is near.

Now Hinglatz looms before the sight,
And cares and toil are all forgot;
Loud shouts of joy proclaim delight,
And now they reach the sacred spot.

The rites prescribed are all observed,
Their earnest vows the rocks repeat;
No doubt the Lady, as deserved,
Will bless them with the favour meet.

Now needs must they their steps retrace,
The self-same long and weary track;
Yet they have done a deed of grace,
And full of hope they turn them back.

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Again the sands and sterile shore,
Again the Lus and Sind frontier;
Where the stern mountains darkly soar,
And flows the Hub its torrent clear.

The range is pierced—the kafila speeds
Its huge disorderly array;
The toil the strength of one exceeds,
She sinks exhausted by the way.

To all her agonizing moans
Is gentle pity disallowed?
Are human hearts as hard as stones?
And must she perish on the road?

She must: yet at the Lady's shrine,
Her humble vow in truth was paid;
And though she die—a Power divine
Will lend her in her sorrow aid.

She is in travail—and before
Her vision closes on the earth,
Albeit her suffering may be sore,
She yet shall give a hero birth.

A child is born—the mother dead—
A moment's bliss was all her own;
But with it life unfaithful fled—
And who shall tend that infant lone?

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Despond not: Heaven is rich in love;
Nor deem that orphan's portion hard;
There is a watchful power above—
Who gave it life its boon will guard.

A leopard hears the infant's cries,
And listens: she had lost her cub,
And hastens where, all helpless, lies
The new-born on the hills of Hub.

She licks it, and she paces round,
Then by its side she lays her down.
Perchance she thought her cub was found,
For she adopts it as her own.

She gave that babe her tenderest care,
And all its little wants supplied;
Its home became the leopard's lair,
Who nursed it with maternal pride.

In health and strength the infant sped,
Till old enough abroad to stray;
When forth its charge the leopard led,
For pastime, or in quest of prey.

It was a thrilling sight to see
How they together toyed and played,
Exulting in the sunshine free—
Or crouched beneath the palm tree's shade.

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Soon all the land a marvel fills;
For, lo! a shepherd has descried,
A leopard bounding o'er the hills—
An infant running by its side.

'Twas odd, mysteriously odd,
A leopard with so strange a trust,
But who can tell the ways of God,
So vast, so merciful, and just?

'Twas straight resolved, by every art,
To lure the child forlorn away;
Hard task! for never were apart,
The orphan and the beast of prey.

At length it chanced, a swain, in guile
More skilled, or luckier than the rest,
Contrived the leopard's care to wile,
And of its charge became possest.

Its foster-mother grieves, and fills
With plaintive moans the vale of Hub;
She bounds distracted o'er the hills,
And seeks in vain her second cub.

Another home received the child,
Fresh parents watch its future lot;
And by degrees, its habits wild
And mountain manners are forgot.

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Behold the infant once, a youth
Endowed with every virtue rare,
Esteemed for valour, faith and truth,
And comely as might please the fair.

His name, when rescued from the lair,
Was Roonjah, fixed by one consent,
In memory of the Leopard's care,
And to record the strange event.

Fond maidens in the love delight
Of one, with heaven protected life,
And Lus had maidens fair and bright,
Of them he wisely chose a wife.

With offspring many was he blest,
And died at last; but dear to fame,
His power and wealth his heirs possest,
And they preserved their father's name.

By cunning seers it was foretold,
That from the favoured race should spring
A warrior generous and bold,
Who o'er the land should rule as King.

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In noble Sappar was fulfilled
The secret purpose of the sky,
A Prince than Nushirwaun* more skilled,
More liberal than Hautum Taï.†

Long over Lus did Sappar hold
The sceptre, and from him there sprung
A line of Princes, much extolled,
Whose praises famous bards have sung.

Now Lus by other tribes is swayed,
Yet are their ancient Kings revered,
And never will the memory fade,
Of Roonjah by the leopard reared.

* Khosroo Nushirwaun, surnamed Adil, or the Just, is celebrated, in oriental lore, as the model of a wise and politic King.

† Hautum Taï is renowned in romance for his wealth and liberality.

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The Serpent of Vaihund.

It is generally believed by the inhabitants of Kandahar, that at a locality called Panch Vaï, a few miles westward of the present city, and on the road to Greeshk, once stood the ancient city of Vaihund, by Mahomedan writers affirmed with great probability to have been an Alexandria, and therefore the Alexandria of Arachosia. Besides a multitude of artificial mounds, some of them exceedingly large, there are many very curious indications of the old Arachosian capital; and the site is popularly believed to be that of a petrified city, and in the several objects strewed over the surface of the plain, fancy detects a resemblance to animate figures. Thus, in one place, it is said, a man may be seen in the act of drawing his arrow at a deer—in another, a woman milking a cow. This conviction of a petrified city is shared in by all classes, by the high and by the low. It is attributed to the power of Hazaret Alee, who, in the various Afghan countries, and I believe generally in the Mooslem world, enjoys all the reputation which Jack the Giant-killer possesses amongst us. The legend relating to the imputed fact is told in the following verses. It may be as well just to observe, that Hazaret Alee was never in the countries of Afghanistan; but it has happened that all the more ancient legends and superstitious

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tales of the country have been fastened upon his name, often a lucky circumstance, as tending to their preservation. It may also be observed, that most spots with which legends are connected, are distinguished by some object or objects, of natural interest or curiosity; so, besides the petrified city at Vaïhund, in the hill commanding the plain, there occurs a black vein in the rock, which winds very tortuously, and appears to branch off into seven heads, on the eastern side, having crossed the summit of the hill. Imagination has converted this vein into a petrified serpent. The intimate relation between the current legends of the Afghan countries, and the various natural curiosities so abundantly dispersed over them, in my opinion, establishes that the latter were held in the same consideration, and were equally regarded in a miraculous light by the inhabitants, prior to the introduction of the faith of Islam, the professors of which have merely transferred to their own favourite hero and champion, the legends they found prevalent, and which originated with those following another faith.

In the verses I have arranged on the subject, the legend is strictly preserved; and I believe I have little, if at all, deviated from the manner in which it was told to me.

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THE SERPENT OF VAIHUND.

A LEGEND OF KANDAHAR.

THE sun fast declining behind the far west,
The shades of the mountains creep over the earth;
The breezes, which freshened the day, sink to rest,
And the spirit of silence precedes the night's birth.

Who art thou, the lone maid, who on Vaihund's bleak plain,
In this hour of calm, all in tears and alone,
Disconsolate poureth the dolorous strain?
Unheeded thy sorrow, unnoticed thy moan!

The bonds which enthral thee suit ill with the free;
To thy misery the effort of flight is denied;
This load of fine bread, is of no use to thee,
Any more than this camel can serve thee to ride?

What marvel, what mystery hangs o'er thy fate—
What anguish, fair virgin, has drooped down thy head?
What mean these vile fetters of ponderous weight,
This camel, and also this load of fine bread?

Lo! above the horizon a horseman appears:
In the distance, the bearing of him and his steed
Are so gallant, a virgin might quiet her fears:
God send him a solace to thee in thy need!

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The sun o'er the land throws a last gleaming glare,
And the dimness of twilight obscures the dull skies,
May the path of the stranger conduct him to where
The disconsolate virgin in agony lies.

Amidst the deep gloom, the precursor of night,
Advances the stranger, confiding and bold;
His form seems enchased with a luminous light—
A wonder to think and a joy to behold.

He who moves in such glory was blest from his birth
And must on an errand of mercy be sped;
His presence illumes and rejoices the earth;
There is power in the halo which circles his head.

As the stranger approaches, he seems to the maid
A knight helmed and mailed, while a banner he bore;
His steed is with trappings of azure arrayed,
And a shauter, or poursuivant, hurries before.

He is near—and the shrill plaintive moaning of woe
Has attracted his notice—he stands at the sound;
And he strives to detect whence the sad accents flow,
As his charger impatient is pawing the ground.

"I hear the shrill cry, on the desolate plain,"
Aloud he proclaims, "of a virgin in woe:
"Whoever thou art, tell the cause of thy pain;
"To relieve the oppressed is a duty I owe."

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" My lord," cries the virgin, " my portion is sad ;
" And to list to my griefs, my lord's patience
might fail."
But the stranger replies, " Make thyself, virgin, glad ;
" And composed and at leisure relate me thy tale.

" But first I'll dismount, and I'll loosen the chains,
" Ill befitting so graceful a figure to bear ;
" And good Kumber perchance will take charge of
my reins,
" While I lend this young delicate virgin my care."

" My lord," cries the virgin, " thy kindness forego;
" Thy pity accorded, all else I resign ;
" So fell and so mighty besides is my foe,
" If you aid me, your life will be perilled with mine."

" Fear not," says the stranger, " the peril I'll chance ;
" I have met nothing yet in the lands I have trod,
" That I have not subdued by sword, arrow, or lance,
" Through the favour of Allah, the one only God."

The virgin, released from the bonds which opprest
Her soft limbs, to her gallant deliverer turns,
And prepares more at ease to fulfil his request,
While her bosom with wonder and gratitude burns.

" My lord, for nine years this unfortunate land,
" By a serpent of horrible form has been curst ;
" Seven heads hath the monster, and nought could
withstand
" His fury, when first on our valleys he burst.

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" He carried off cattle, man, woman, and child,
" And he laid waste our fields, or in malice or sport;
" The swains who escaped, from their homes were exiled;
" And a refuge they sought in the walls of our fort.

" Then was Vaihund the stately, a fortress of grief,
" All within was affliction, without all despair;
" Nor appeared there to be any hope of relief,
" There was famine in view, while the fields lay all bare.

" The serpent so closely blockaded the walls,
" It was woe to the wretch who might dare to steal out;
" In the jaws of the seven-headed monster he falls,
" Who vigilant, ever, was gliding about.

" The horrors of famine pressed sorely within;
" Without the fell serpent, deficient of prey,
" O'er the walls every morn thrust his seven heads in,
" And seizing seven victims, he bore them away.

" Our King, moved at last by the tears of his court,
" From the monster by parley demanded to know,
" On what terms he would please to withdraw from his fort,
" And permit his liege vassals to till and to sow.

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" The serpent was not very easy to please—
" But at length he agreed every day to be fed,
" On condition of leaving the people at ease,
" With a virgin, a camel, and load of fine bread.

" Then he fixed his abode in the mystical grot,
" Where the treasures of Jumsheed are said to be stored,
" And except for his food, he ne'er leaves the spot,
" But watches, 'tis thought, o'er the glittering hoard.

" Every evening at sunset, upon the wide plain,
" A virgin, a camel, and load of fine bread,
" Are brought from the city, and there they remain,
" Till the merciless monster desires to be fed.

" From the virgins by lot is the victim procured,
" And so many have perished, I'm nearly the last;
" Nor much longer can Vaihund's repose be assured,
" The serpent will soon lack his evening's repast.

" Such, my lord, is my tale, and a bitter tale too;
" The lot of to-day has decided my fate;
" To life and life's joys I must soon bid adieu,
" And, helpless, my doom from the monster await."

" Gentle virgin, thy tale is afflicting to hear,
" And to give thee my succour rejoiceth me well;
" Prithee, tell me, at what time is wont to appear
" This venemous reptile—this foul spawn of hell."

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" At the hour of midnight, he stealthily threads
" His course from the grot, and glides up the high hill ;
" On its summit he coils, and thence thrusts forth his heads,
" And again he retires, having taken his fill."

" It is well, gentle virgin, for his hour I'll wait ;
" I am weary, oblige me, and watch without fright;
" The moment you see him, awaken me straight—
" By God's grace, I'll give him his supper to-night.

" Trusty Kumber, let Duldul be tethered and fed,
" For we tarry just now on this desolate plain ;
" Though rugged, t'will serve us awhile for a bed,
" And at midnight there's need to be stirring again.

" For a heathenish serpent resides somewhere near,
" Making virgins, and camels, and fine bread his prey ;
" He has filled all the region with horror and fear—
"It behoves me, in God's name, the monster to slay."

Now the strangers, the lord and his shauter, both sleep,
The virgin in wonder sits tremulous nigh ;
There is no need to warn her due vigil to keep—
She has awe in her bosom, and tears in her eye.

Tis midnight; and forth from the mystical grot,
She sees the huge serpent most loathsomely crawl—
So bewildered her senses, she almost forgot,
In her stupor, her friend, the bold stranger, to call.

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" Many thanks, gentle virgin! Stout Kumber, arise!
" Here's a monster so foul, so enormous, and grim,
" The griffin of Tooss did not equal his size,
" And the dragon of Heeree was nothing to him.

" Amidst the night's darkness, observe the foul light
" He leaves on the hill, from the slime of his track;
" How his scales glare with lustre, disgustingly bright,
" How his tall bristling mane stands erect on his back.

" He has reached the hill's summit, and forming a coil,
" Sways his huge heads around, while his eyes glance below;
" He will soon dart them forth to lay hold on his spoil,
" Trusty Kumber, stand ready—I'll trust to my bow."

Forth issue the heads of the monster so fell,
Seven shafts the bold stranger successively sped,
Each shaft pierced a head, and the foul spawn of hell
Hissed in fury, rebounded, and fell over, dead.

" Now cheer thee, young virgin, and speed to thy town!
" Bear the news that the curse of the country is slain;
" The cloud that hung over its sunshine has flown,
" And the serpent will never need virgins again.

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" But will not my Lord to our city repair,
" To claim from our King the reward, his just meed?
" Whose arm, shall I say, won a conquest so rare?"
Cries the maid, as the stranger is mounting his steed.

" To the city it is not my purpose to hie,
" And I covet just now from your King no reward;
" In the name of the one only God, the Most High,
" I encountered and vanquished the serpent abhorred!

" I go towards the east, where the heathen is strong,
" All giants, and dragons, and serpents to quell:
" Tell this to your King: I may see him ere long;
" And thee, too, fair virgin—at present, farewell!"

Rejoicing, the virgin returns to the walls,
Whence so lately a victim in bonds she was brought;
Still night, to the guard on the towers she calls,
" The serpent is slain, and a miracle wrought!"

The king is aroused, and in Vaihund that night,
Despair changed to wonder, and joy banished pain;
And impatient, the King waits the dawning of light,
To see of a truth that the serpent is slain.

The virgin spoke truth: there the fell serpent lies,
Stretched at length on the hill, with a shaft in each head;
Glad shouts from the King and his people arise—
" The dire foe of Vaihund, the serpent, is dead!"

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All is joy in Vaihund, ancient griefs are forgot;
But soon a new source of misfortune succeeds,
The serpent's huge corse has been suffered to rot,
And the foul mass of matter a pestilence breeds.

No one can approach it, the stench is so strong,
And its fetid effluvium impregnates the gale,
Which now carries death in its progress along,
As it sweeps o'er the beautiful Arghandaub vale.

A blight sears the fields, and the orchards' gay bloom,
And the lakes' silvery currents flow loathsome and rank,
The flowers of the plains shed a tainted perfume,
And the musk willows fade on the Arghassaun's bank.

Again in Vaihund there is wailing and woe,
Its streets are choked up with the dying and dead;
When living, the serpent was much less its foe,
Content with his virgin, and camel, and bread.

The King in despair to his sages applied,
To know why this curse on his people should fall;
And they, in their short-sighted judgment decide,
"That the death of the serpent is cause of it all!"

The virgin is called to the council convened,
And is charged with exciting the wrath of the sky;
And for slaying the serpent by aid of some fiend—
She is asked, why she shall not be sentenced to die.

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The virgin replies, if her death will relieve
The city's sad woe, she is willing to die;
That no fiend slew the serpent, she dares to believe,
'Twas the favoured of Him, the one God, the Most High.

So noble his port, and so gracious his mien,
She could not conceive he'd speak lightly or vain;
And whatever her sentence, she still felt serene,
For the stranger had promised to see her again.

The King, with his sages, had lately much heard
Of Allah, the one only God—the Most High;
But of Gods they had many, and these they preferred
To but one; so they sentenced the virgin to die.

To the Chahaur Soo, or square in the town, she is led,
On a vast pile of faggots the virgin is thrown,
A garland of lilies is placed on her head—
She must die for the sins of Vaihund to atone.

The torch is uplifted to kindle the pile,
When, "Hold!" cries a voice of command from the crowd,
"At your peril proceed with a purpose so vile—
"He who slew the fell serpent here stands forth avowed.

"I am he, who of heathens and monsters in quest,
"By the favour of Allah, the one only God,
"Slew the serpent, and rescued this virgin opprest,
"And left his rank carcass to rot on the sod."

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The virgin at once her deliverer knew,
Who straight from the pile his fair protegée bore ;
" I saved once your life, when the serpent I slew,
" And I now have the pleasure to save it once more.

" You, oh King ! and ye sages, by error misled,
" Who now groan and writhe 'neath affliction's stern rod,
" Know, that he who the shafts at the fell serpent sped
" Was Hazaret Alee, the lion of God !

" Other shafts has he still, and a keen two-edged sword,
" The bright Zoolfeekar, for the proud who defy
" That God, who should be by all mankind adored—
" Great Allah, the one only God, the Most High !

" That serpent which plagued you, and now this disease,
" Are but signs of His vengeance your sins have called down ;
" Acknowledge His power, and His mercy with ease
" Will the horrors of death remove far from your town !"

The King and his sages with one accord cry,
They are anxious themselves and their city to save,
To acknowledge the one only God, the Most High,
To repent, and the pardon of Allah to crave.

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Then Hazaret Alee, the maid by his side,
While Kumber in front of the proud Duldul past,
Leads the King, and the sages, and people beside,
To the hill where the serpent's foul carcass was cast.

He drew forth the blade of the bright Zoolfeekar—
Strikes the carcass—the mountain recoils at the shock!
Vivid flashes burst forth, and it thunders afar,
And the serpent's foul carcass forms part of the rock.

To this day, Vaihund's sons, by these wonders imprest
In the paths of Islam have unswervingly trod;
And the veins in their mountain the prowess attest,
Of Hazaret Alee, the lion of God!

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Sir-i-Asp.

Sir-i-Asp (the horse's head), is the name of a locality on the Turnek river, on the high road from Kandahar to Ghuznee. It has a legend attached to it which Wilford had heard of, and very accurately notices in his Essay on Mount Caucasus. He writes—"An unwary traveller, riding upon a mare "great with foal, stumbled into it (a deep hole in "the bed of the Turnek), and both were drowned. "During the struggles, the mare brought forth a "foal, who was received by the fairies residing in "this cave, and nursed by them. He is often seen "grazing on the banks of the river, and at "other times, his head only is seen above the waters; "from that circumstance the surrounding hills are "called Sir-i-Asp, or the horse's head. As the foal "was grazing one day in the adjacent meadows, he "was seen by a traveller, who, admiring his shape, "laid hold of him and rode him for a long time; "when returning the same way, he did jelo-rez, or "relax the reins; the horse ran away, and jumped "into the cave or hole. From the circumstance of "his relaxing the reins, the surrounding hills are "also called Jelo-rez."

In the following verses I have set forth this legend as I heard it, and have transferred the name of Jelo-rez from the mountains to a small town on the

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route to Bameeaun, and which bears it; whereas I am not certain that Wilford was correctly informed when he applied it to a mountain. The Ghiljees who now inhabit the valley of the Turnek are very fond of repeating this legend, and not a little proud of possessing this imaginary foal within their limits.

SIR-I-ASP.

A LEGEND OF THE TURNEK.

At the famed Sir-i-Asp, in the valley of Khawer,
Where the Turnek's cold waters so tranquilly glide,
You may hear a colt neigh, if at morn's ruddy hour
You follow the path by the calm river's side.

If at noon, when reflecting the sun's vivid rays,
The river's pure currents refulgently gleam,
Perchance the colt's head may arise to your gaze,
As it gambols and laves in the cool freshening stream.

If at eve you should still to those borders repair,
And along the broad track by the river proceed,
While the breeze of the evening perfumes the bland air,
You may see the colt graze in the neighbouring mead.

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You will pause to admire that exquisite form
Which the bright mane and forelocks embellish and deck,
Those full brilliant eyes so vivacious and warm,
That finely-shaped head and superbly-arched neck.

You will pause to admire that delicate coat
Which shines than the gloss of the sable more sleek,
And with equal surprise and delight will you note
The colt's gentle aspect, so winning and meek.

If sniffing the gale, it bounds over the mead,
As fleet as the lightning you'll witness its pace;
The deer of the hills does not rival its speed,
Nor the stag of the forest exceed it in grace.

And truly it is a most beautiful sight,
And one that the traveller in rapture surveys;
For never was creature so graceful and light
As this, the protected of perees and fays.

Oh! be not allured the young colt to disturb,
To frighten it grazing, or offer it harm;
It has never known saddle, or bridle, or curb,
It will always be young, and its life is a charm.

Remember the fate of the shepherd unblest,
Who saw the young colt, and, who leaving his track,
Intending to seize it, approached and carest,
And finished by jerking himself on its back.

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Away the colt flew, for its panic was sore,
All along the green vale, all along the wide plain,
Up hillock, down dale, over thicket and moor,
While the shepherd clung fast by its neck and its mane.

Now Joolduk, and Tazee, and Mokur, are past,
For the speed of the colt outstripped that of the wind,
And the shepherd in horror clung firmly and fast—
Now Oba and Nanee are left far behind.

Then the colt darts by Ghuznee, her groves and her towers,
And next by the holy Aroona's proud hill,
And along the deep valleys of Wurdek she scours,
The shepherd distractedly clinging fast still.

Through the plain of Mydaun, and through Zeymannee's vale,
With swiftness unceasing the young colt had flown,
When the grasp of the shepherd began him to fail,
He loosed it, and fell like a thunderbolt down.

The young colt, relieved of her load, on the track
She had come, hastened back with as rapid a pace,
And the spot where the shepherd fell dead from his back,
Was called Jelo-rez, to record his disgrace.

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Thence beware, in the mead if you see the colt graze,
Never scare it, or purpose it mischief beside;
Reflect, it is guarded by perees and fays,
And remember how sadly the rash shepherd died.

Its dam in the pastures of Nissa was reared,
And for sale to the markets of Heeree was sent;
It was bought, and then first in these parts it appeared,
With its master, a merchant, on pilgrimage bent.

They had followed the track of the Subzeewaur dale,
And had passed ancient Furrah, in legends renowned;
They had crossed the broad Helmund, and now in the vale
Of the Turnek, with Vaihund behind them, were found;

From Zuffa's tall towers which stood on the height,
They had started at dawn, and were weary and sore,
For the merchant was journeying to Vamee the bright,
At the shrines of the Munnees to kneel and adore.

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Long and toilsome the march that the harsh merchant made,
For t'was night, and still onward his journey he prest;
Not heeding his mare was in foal, but afraid
That he should not arrive where he purposed to rest.

The poor mare in travail, and jaded alike,
Her feet barely kept, and would falter and trip,
Which angered the merchant, who shouting Hyke! Hyke!
Kicked her flanks, and redoubled the strokes of the whip.

At length they were tracing the Turnek's left bank,
Where in the stream's bed a deep cavity lay
Concealed, and surrounded by rushes so dank,
It could hardly be seen in the broad light of day.

The merchant still kicked, and he shouted and cursed,
When the mare and her rider fell into the hole;
Both were drowned, but t'was willed that the animal first,
In her struggles with death should give birth to a foal.

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This foal is the colt, now by travellers descried—
To be born in the stream was its privileged lot;
That it lives, was that perees the accident spied,
And pitying its fate, bore it off to their grot.

They tended with kindness and nourished and fed,
Whence the grace of its figure, the tone of its hues,
Of roses and lilies they made it a bed,
And for fare they supplied it with flowers and dews.

It was taught to love pastime, and meekness, and ruth,
As befitted a gentle companion of elves,
And the fond fairies gave it the rare gift of youth,
In order to keep it for ever themselves.

If ever you rove in the Turnek's fair vale,
Forget not at even to look in the mead,
If your mind be devout, then your sight will not fail,
And blessings the sight of the young colt succeed.

If seen at new moon, 'tis a prosperous sign,
And your life for the month will be happy and clear;
If on Noh Roz, a far richer portion is thine,
And good fortune attends you the rest of the year.

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The Malek's Daughter.

A LEGEND OF HOOPEEYAUN.

HOOPEEYAUN, the scene of the legend introduced to the reader's notice in the accompanying verses, is the name of two contiguous localities in the Kohistaun of Kaubul; the one being called simply Hoopeeyaun, the other Malek Hoopeeyaun; both probably were once included under the same appellation. Malek Hoopeeyaun may be rendered the Malek's or King's Hoopeeyaun, that is, the Royal Hoopeeyaun; and there is good evidence that thirteen centuries ago it was a capital city, if not of a kingdom, at all events of a district, and that its Malek, or King, was of the Thoukee, the Turkee, or perhaps Thokee race; and moreover, as we may infer from the Chinese testimony, a patron if not a professor of the Buddhist faith. The name Hoopeeyaun, or Opiane, is very ancient, being as much so at least, as the old author Hecatæus, whose work on Asia is mentioned by some of our earliest classical writers.

Upon the legend itself there is not perhaps much to observe, the circumstances of the story I have heard, and the liberty of engrafting it upon the locality in question I have myself to answer for.

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THE MALEK'S DAUGHTER.

A LEGEND OF HOOPEEYAUN.

RENOWNED, midst the Princes and Kings of the earth,
The Malek of Hoopeeyaun in dignity reigned;
His dutiful subjects acknowledged his worth,
And his rule was in justice and mercy maintained.

He had conquered all foes in the regions around;
He had gathered much fame, and much spoil he had won;
And he flourished in age, by prosperity crowned,
Having humbled the pride both of Getœ and Hun.

One daughter he had, and so wonderous beside
Were her charms and attractions as blazed by report,
That the hope of obtaining so beauteous a bride
Had brought many princes to sue at his court.

The Malek was thought to be happy and blest,
In power, and in wealth, and a daughter so fair;
So he was; but he still had a thorn in his breast,
And in midst of his happiness nourished a care.

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It was much his desire, that a daughter he loved
Should in marriage be duly and worthily led;
But the wish of her sire she by no means approved,
And strangely enough, she objected to wed.

The princes her suitors were handsome and brave,
And formed to find grace with their merits and mien;
But Dilkoosha to no one encouragement gave,
Of the princes of Eeraun, of Tooraun, and Cheen.

The Malek was sore that his plans should be foiled,
And felt at his daughter's perverseness perplexed;
And with one, who through life he had humoured and spoiled,
He was, or appeared to be, angry and vexed.

Dilkoosha was duteous, and mourned both to see
How her parent was grieved, and to hear what he said;
And imploring his pardon, she bent on her knee,
But still craved he would not compel her to wed.

The Malek, the suppliant arose from the ground,
While avowing he had but one object in life,
Now that else all his hopes and his wishes were crowned,
Ere he sunk in the grave, to behold her a wife.

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T'was the love that he bore her, and no thought unkind,
That impelled him to wish her a consort to choose;
And this, with the good of his people in mind,
Who would learn with regret she was bent to refuse.

Tho' he wished her to wed, he had not the design
To sport with her feelings, her fancy, or whim;
Let her choose who might best with her humour incline,
For the princes, her suitors, were equal to him.

To these claims the fair maid could not justly demur,
And confessed that in truth she had little to say;
But she prayed that her sire would the matter defer,
And a respite accord of a year and a day.

And farther, she prayed she might fix her abode,
Till the period arrived, in the tower of Nigghar,
At the foot of the hill, where, away from the crowd,
No intrusion could happen her quiet to mar.

The Malek consented to all she required,
Though he could not devise what his daughter could mean,
And the suitors dismissed who Dilkoosha admired,
The princes of Eeraun, and Tooraun, and Cheen.

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They were told it was vain better terms to expect,
That Dilkoosha was pleased they should all go away;
That she would not at present a consort select,
But would wait to the end of a year and a day.

When known in the land, it astonished the whole,
And t'was noted the year had in prodigies sped;
First a comet blazed forth, next a mule brought a foal,
And now a young princess declined to be wed.

The princes withdrew, all complaining and sad,
To the north, east, and west, o'er the mountains afar;
And Dilkoosha, relieved from their presence, and glad,
Resided at peace in the tower of Nigghar.

Soon the vallies once verdant are covered with snow,
For winter all frowning presides o'er the year;
The rude blasts of Perwaun unceasingly blow,
And the landscape once charming is gloomy and drear.

From her tower no longer Dilkoosha can stray.
In garden and grove, for her pastime or sport,
How contrives she to wile through the wearisome day?
And why did she fly from the city and court?

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Oh! list to the sound so delightful and rare,
Whose melody flows from the tower of Nigghar—
'Tis the silvery-toned voice of Dilkoosha the fair,
Who sings to her maids while she plays the sehtar.

The winter, she knows, will not ever endure;
Its rigours will pass, and the spring will succeed;
While they last, they but tend her repose to secure,
And from princes and suitors at least she is freed.

Again the bright sun has increased in his power,
And the trammels of ice are cast off by the rills;
The rude winds less fiercely assail the lone tower,
And the snow melts away at the foot of the hills.

Now the seech and gool-noh-roz peep forth from the ground,
And their buds the sweet sanjeet and almond disclose;
Soon the vale and the hill-skirts with verdure are crowned,
And soon in its brightness the arghawaun blows.

Now the orchards gush forth, and their blossoms unfold,
Vermilion, pearl-tinted, and crimson, and white;
And the bulbul and sayrah their serenades hold,
And fill the green groves with their songs of delight.

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And balmy and soft is the northerly breeze,
For blue violets lend their perfume to the gale;
A rich mass of foliage has covered the trees,
And the lalla resplendently gleams in the vale.

The Malek of Hoopeeyaun wends to the towers,
As behoved him, the gifts of the season to bring,
In boodeenas and posies of bright Nerghiz flowers,
And greets the fair maid on the advent of spring.

He said, that already, the roads being free,
Many merchants had reached from the lands to the west,
With bales very precious and costly to see,
From which she might choose such as pleased her the best.

There was one, a young merchant of Fars, who he thought
Had a charge, more than others, inviting and new;
If she pleased, he would order the youth should be brought,
With his elegant wares to display to her view.

Dilkoosha repeated her thanks o'er and o'er,
For she knew her dear parent ne'er promised in vain;
She should so like to see the young merchant's fine store—
And she kissed the good Malek again and again.

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Behold the young merchant is following the track
That leads from the town to the maiden's lone tower;
There are camels, each carrying two bales on its back,
And the young merchant rides on a charger before.

The watchmen have seen the cortége from afar,
Its arrival the menials attentively wait;
The camels are knelt 'neath the walls of Nigghar,
And the bales are unladen and placed in the gate.

To the midst of the baugh, the young merchant is shown,
Where the waters disport in both fount and cascade—
Where Dilkoosha, supported by pillows of down,
Is sitting beneath the chunar's quivering shade.

She was lovely, so lovely, that never on earth
Shone beauty more perfect, or aspect more fair;
Her eyes seemed to speak her of heavenly birth,
For the light and the grace of heaven's radiance were there.

She welcomed the merchant in accents so sweet,
Their music enchanted his soul to its core;
And he tremblingly knelt as he placed at her feet
The choicest of wares from the treasures he bore.

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On attractions so dazzling t'were peril to gaze,
And no wonder some mirth was afforded the fair,
When she saw the young merchant was struck with amaze,
And no wonder the latter continued to stare.

Dilkoosha addressing in tones the most bland,
As she saw his confusion, desired him to rise,
And in speaking, she showed a white delicate hand
Which by no means diminished the charms of her eyes.

"Fair princess, the flower of ——" the young merchant cried,
In his transport, and then rose abruptly; t'was well;
He stood, his hands folded in front, on one side,
Remembering he came not to make love, but sell.

Dilkoosha surveyed the rich wares with delight,
And in truth they were costly as costly could be;
There were silks, and brocades, shawls and emeralds bright,
With pearls from the bottom of Bahreen's dark sea.

There were trinkets in silver, and trinkets in gold,
Some wrought in Sheeraz, some in famed Ispahaun;
There were gorgeous enamels, superb to behold,
With carpets prepared in the looms of Kermaun.

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Dilkoosha in turn now evinced her surprise,
For she had not expected such treasures to view;
She could not enough feast her wondering eyes,
Or admire their texture, their lustre, and hue.

"You must take them," at length she exclaimed,
"to my sire—
"I dare not myself choose from things of such worth!
"I know not the which most to prize and admire,
"And deemed not such objects were found on the earth."

"I will leave them with you," the young merchant replied,
"As your sire knows my course is to Hindostan sped.
"You may choose at your leisure—the rest may abide;
"And the price I shall claim on the day you are wed."

The merchant is gone; and Dilkoosha alone,
Recalls to her memory his mien and his port,
So courteous his manners, so graceful his tone,
He might pass for a nobleman bred in a court.

She pondered alike on the wares he had brought,
And marvelled whence treasures so rare he could bring;
Then his generous nature accorded she thought,
With a merchant much less than the son of a king.

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The Malek no more could the mystery explain,
The young merchant had taken his farewell, and said,
He was going to Hind, and would see him again,
On the day that his daughter intended to wed.

Now the year rolling on, smiling summer diffused,
And plenty and joy in gay Hoopeeyaun's vale;
With her maidens Dilkoosha her leisure amused,
In singing, or telling, or hearing the tale.

Then were told the great triumphs of Rustam and Zall,
Of the perils they dared, and the feats they had done;
How love held the bosoms of heroes in thrall,
And how soft virgins' love was by bravery won.

Hard by the lone tower, there was a lone glen,
Where a stupa arose o'er a relic of Boodh,
Most sacred of yore, and sequestered of men,
Its precincts were rugged, and sprinkled with wood.

Adjacent a fountain gushed forth from the rock,
In a tank of Lahoree's pure marble conveyed;
O'er its source their firm branches the dark hollies lock,
And above the chunar throws its wide spreading shade.

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Hither oft would the charming Dilkoosha repair,
With her maids from the neighbouring tower of Nigghar,
It was pleasure to look on a prospect so fair,
Of the city, Perwaun, and the bright Gool-Veehar.

It was pleasure to gaze on that beautiful soil,
Begirt with its mountains in lofty repose,
Where the harvests rewarded the husbandmen's toil—
Whence a thousand fine hamlets and castles arose.

It was pleasure to gaze on the sparkling streams,
Which through the broad plain so exultingly wound,
With their ripples reflecting the sun's bright beams—
With their borders with aspens and poplars crowned.

It was pleasure to gaze on the life-stirring scene,
Which none but who gaze at a distance can know—
To enjoy all its beauties, at ease and serene,
Remote from its follies, perchance from its woe.

At that fountain Dilkoosha was sitting one day,
And she sang and she played in her sweetest tone,
When she heard in surprise a soft cadenced lay,
Which seemed to respond to the notes of her own.

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The maidens search here, and the maidens search there,
And they search all around, amongst thickets and rocks,
But whence the sounds came they're at fault to declare—
They saw but a shepherd a tending his flocks.

Dilkoosha anew poured her soft thrilling strain,
And anew the same echoes saluted her ear;
And she sent forth her maidens to search once again,
For she felt great surprise if she did not feel fear.

Again they search here, and again they search there,
And they search all around, amongst thickets and rocks,
And again they return to protest and declare,
They saw but a shepherd a tending his flocks.

"Oh! lead here that shepherd," Dilkoosha then cried;
And the maidens all hastened the shepherd to bring;
Yet she thought, "It can never be he who replied—
"For how could a shepherd so tunefully sing."

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The shepherd was brought with his lute in his hand,
And Dilkoosha, who greeted with grace and good will,
Said, if quite to his taste, she would lay her command,
He should favour them all with a proof of his skill.

The shepherd observed, that his skill was but small—
That his lute was but mean, and but simple his lay;
Still when beauty was pleased on his efforts to call,
T'was his duty as much as his will to obey.

He sang then of love, and he plaintively told
How without a return pined the fond lover's breast;
That love was a treasure more precious than gold,
And tho' eagerly sought, better prized when possest.

He told, the true lover would all peril spurn,
And would suffering, and toil, and would hardship endure,
Content if devotion engaged a return,
And succeeded the love it so sought to secure.

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Love, he told, was of life the consoler and joy;
Without it, life's course was of mourning and woe;
Its flame no reverse could impair or destroy,
And it glowed, the pure image of Heaven below.

By love all the powers of nature were moved,
And by love in their circles the planets were prest;
Love hallowed on earth, was by Heaven approved,
And its holiest fane was the fair virgin's breast.

Dilkoosha, amazed at his wonderful art,
Commended the bold and adventurous strain:
And she said, as she rose with her train to depart,
She should like on the morrow to hear him again.

It was strange that a shepherd untaught should possess
So much science and skill—it appeared like a dream:
Whence derived, the young Princess was troubled to guess,
Or whence he had gathered so glowing a theme.

The next day Dilkoosha again sat reclined
At the fountain, beneath the tall plane trees' broad shade,
And the shepherd was summoned, and asked, if inclined,
Once more to oblige with a lay—he obeyed.

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He sang then of battle, and war's fell alarms,
And of warriors mailed, and of warriors steeled;
How they strove to excel in all bold feats of arms,
And encountered the shocks of the rude battle field.

He sang of the victories of Sapor the great,
O'er the glittering levies of Armeen and Room;
He sighed o'er the vanquished, and pitied their fate,
And condoled in his song with the bold Kaisar's doom.

He sang of the actions of Bahram the brave,
Renowned in the chase, and renowned in the wars,
Whose arm made the turbulent Saka his slave,
And added Kermaun to the empire of Fars.

Then he sang, that the glory which warriors prize,
When they rush to the combat its perils to dare,
Would be held but of little account in their eyes,
If it did not ensure them the love of the fair.

For whatever the triumphs in battle they won,
And whatever the laurels entwined round their arms,
They would wither like flowers deprived of the sun,
If unsmiled on by beauty's encouraging charms.

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Dilkoosha this rhapsody heard with amaze,
And applauding, could scarcely conceal her surprise;
She had fixed on the shepherd when singing her gaze,
And rising with trouble took from him her eyes.

The fountain, she said, was a favourite spot,
Where she often repaired in the heat of the day;
And she felt it would add to the joy of her lot,
If the shepherd came oft and repeated a lay.

"'Tis a marvel!" she thought, as she pensive withdrew
To the tower, "most swains sing of flowers and flocks;
"But this one has forgotten, if ever he knew,
"And his songs are of love, and of rude battle shocks.

"No less is a marvel, the skill that he shows,
"Which is equal to that of a minstrel refined;
"And the fire which so warm in his countenance glows,
"Betokens deep passion pervading his mind.

"Then his aspect is noble, and stately his mien,
"And seldom a shepherd can boast so much grace;
"It seemed, that before I this shepherd had seen,
"Or so, I conceived, as I gazed on his face.

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" Still the fancy must be but delusion at best,
" Tho' his features seemed strongly impressed on my mind,
" All is riddle, or truth but in mystery drest,
" Of which we, some day, the solution may find."

Now daily Dilkoosha would hie to the fount,
And the young shepherd's skill was as frequently tasked ;
To be summoned at first was he bashfully wont,
But at length he grew bolder and ventured unasked.

Every day but redoubled the virgin's surprise ;
His songs, ever varied, were brilliant and light ;
And his fine form and manner won grace in her eyes,
And she heard and she gazed with increasing delight.

Full oft in her wonder, a thought passed her mind,
That the merchant and youth some resemblance bore,
But that could not be ; and she still strove to find
When and where she had seen the swain's features before.

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So much was her mind with its wonder imprest,
Of the youth's matchless skill, and his fine manly mien,
Stranger feelings unprompted arose in her breast,
And her gaze grew more ardent than else it had been.

Her maiden reserve then attempted to check
The desire of her eyes the young shepherd to seek,
Yet the effort but crimsoned her fair milk-white neck,
And brought blushes like rose buds to bloom on her cheek.

She felt shame, but her reason could not explain why,
And she thought she would visit the fountain no more;
Yet why from a pleasure so innocent fly?
So she went, and she gazed, and she blushed as before.

The young shepherd no doubt saw those blushes, arise,
And his breast must have glowed with emotion as strong;
But he struggled the secret to veil with his eyes,
For he would not that modesty suffered a wrong.

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Now summer had closed, and its gaudy array
Of fruits and of flowers had to autumn bequeathed;
And Dilkoosha was seen at the fount every day,
And the same the young shepherd his melody breathed.

She came, it is true, with her blithe maiden train,
But the scene and young shepherd familiar were grown,
And dispersing, the maidens would rove o'er the plain
While they left their fair charge and the minstrel alone.

What passed in the moments so precious to those
Who pant to reveal what so long they've supprest,
Is not in our power, if we would, to disclose,
And must be by the curious imagined and guessed.

If still the young shepherd continued his song,
Or earnestly told what was hid in his breast,
And the secret divulged he had cherished so long,
Must be, by the curious, imagined and guessed.

If the lovely Dilkoosha adventured to speak,
And to the young shepherd some query addrest,
For a passion there is that gives strength to the weak,
Must again, we repeat, be imagined and guessed.

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If the twain held communion, we cannot unfold,
But so much from authentic relation appears,
When the maidens returned, they were struck to behold
Their mistress confused, and in blushes and tears.

To the fountain, as usual, Dilkoosha would hie,
And pensive and musing she sat with her train;
In her rèveries a tear would succeed to a sigh,
But the young tuneful shepherd came not there again.

Now autumn like summer was waning away,
And few are the days which at length intervene,
To bring round the term of a year and a day,
With the Princes of Eeraun, and Tooraun and Cheen.

The good Malek has gone to the tower of Nigghar
To warn his loved daughter the period is nigh,
When the princes so gallant will come from afar,
And as duty befits, for her preference vie.

Dilkoosha reminded her sire that her choice
Of a consort, as promised, must meet his assent;
The Malek agreed, and found cause to rejoice
That his daughter with marriage appeared so content.

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Now the princes have all come again from afar,
And through Hoopeeyaun's vale the glad tidings have spread,
That the lovely young maid of the tower of Nigghar
Has at length, for its welfare, consented to wed.

'Tis now the last day that Dilkoosha the fair
In a virgin's pure glory and name may rejoice;
On the morrow, she steps forth a bride with the care
Of a consort to make, as concerted, a choice.

For the last time she speeds to the fount with her train,
And her sehtar the echo aroused of the rocks;
Oh list! the sweet notes are replied to again,
And there's the young shepherd a tending his flocks.

Lo! the day has arrived, so expected by all;
In attendance, the princess's suitors are found,
And the Malek to grace it has sent forth to call
All the noble and brave of the country around.

The proud chiefs of Kaubul and Zaubul repair,
With the Kings of the Khawer and Dawer Zameen;
The Lords too of Bameeaun and Zoormut are there,
With the Princes of Eeraun, and Tooraun, and Cheen.

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In the hall of the Malek the guests have all met,
And the conchs and nagaras resound in the air ;
All are present—there lacks but one visitor yet,
And that is Dilkoosha, the blooming, the fair.

She comes—with a blush mantling over her face,
And attired as became a young princess and bride;
She salutes the gay concourse with dignified grace,
And sits by her father's, the good Malek's side.

" Thrice welcome, ye princes, and nobles, and chiefs !"
As he took her soft hand, the good Malek then said ;
" This day sees a close to my sorrows and griefs,
" Since the daughter I love has consented to wed.

" Ye Princes who vie for her favour, the choice
" Of my daughter depends on her pleasure alone ;
" Whoever she chooses, in him I rejoice ;
" That pledge have I made—the decision's her own.

" Ye nobles and chiefs, to my compact give ear ;
" My daughter at will gives her hand and her love ;
" With her judgment unfettered, unbiassed by fear,
" She chooses, and I stand engaged to approve."

Approval at first was in murmurs exprest,
But soon grew to plaudits repeated and loud ;
And all eyes to the beautiful maid were addressed,
While hers were inquiringly fixed on the crowd.

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'Twas a time of suspense—but it lasted not long,
For before the young virgin her consort declares,
The long-absent merchant stepped forth from the throng,
And boldly demanded the price of his wares.

In Hoopeeyaun's hall, there were wrath and surprise,
All were staggered to think what the fellow could mean;
Swords were brandished, and black fury flashed in the eyes,
Of the Princes of Eeraun, and Tooraun, and Cheen.

"My friend," cried the Malek, "in truth you're precise
"In your dealings, although in your manners amiss,
"When our bridal is over, I'll pay you your price;
"You should not have pressed on occasion like this."

"Noble Malek," the daring young merchant replied,
"In craving your pardon, I'd rather not wait;
"Would you ask the fair virgin who sits by your side,
"If she thinks not with me, it would then be too late."

To his daughter, the Malek directed his look,
Who at once said the merchant deserved his reward;
That his claim was a debt which she cheerfully took
On herself, and was willing to make him her lord.

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"Just Heavens!" the good Malek, in horror exclaimed,
"Will the daughter I love thus disgrace my grey hairs!
"And rejecting her suitors, illustrious and famed,
"Sell herself to a merchant in payment of wares?"

Now ruled uproar, and strife, and bewildered dismay,
And all some opinion or counsel preferred;
But at length the confusion a little gave way,
And the daring young merchant implored to be heard.

"Think not, noble prince, I inveigled the love
"Of your daughter by wares of mean cost and device;
"Or by fraud won her favour, a treasure above
"All the joys of the earth, to be purchased by price.

"The fame of her beauty was bruited afar,
"And I longed to admire and behold with mine eyes;
"And with love for my guide, to the tower of Nigghar
"I came, as you know, in a merchant's low guise;

"There I witnessed that fame spoke far short of the truth,
"That a virgin so bright never knelt to the sun;
"Then a merchant no more, as a plain shepherd youth,
"I sought grace in her sight—and I wooed her and won.

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" But think not, oh Malek! your fair daughter's vow
" Was exchanged with a merchant, or vile shepherd clown;
" My secret she knew, as you shortly shall know,
" Before she allowed me to think her my own.

" Now I claim her, 'tis just that my birth I declare,
" Of my truth, I appeal to the sun, moon, and stars;
" While I tender these presents and letters I bear
" From my father, great Bahram, the Malek of Fars."

In Hoopeeyaun's hall shouts of triumph arise;
A lover so bold none had heard of or seen;
And by general approval, he bore off the prize
From the Princes of Eeraun, and Tooraun, and Cheen.

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The Fall of Ghoolghooleh.

THE site of the ancient citadel of Bameeaun is called Ghoolghooleh, and a legend is connected with its capture and desolation, essentially the same as detailed in the following copy of verses; and an old ruin is shown as having been the residence of the lady who betrayed the place to its captors. Authentic history informs us that the fortress of Bameeaun was taken by assault by the celebrated Jenghiz Khan in 1212, A. D. but no mention is made by his historians of any event which could possibly give rise to the legend having occurred during its siege by him. If, therefore, there be any, the least ground for it, we must look to a period anterior to that of Jenghiz Khan, and this I state, as justifying the liberty taken of connecting the legend with the fall of the dynasty of Fire Worshippers, who, of whatever race, appear to have once made Bameeaun their metropolis.

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THE FALL OF GHOOLGHOOLEH.

A LEGEND OF BAMEEAUN.

Now beams the moon, resplendent queen of night!
Full on the earth its golden radiance pours;
On Bameeaun's vale it sheds a holy light,
Where in its arch, the idol darkly lours,
Amid the temple grots—mysterious sight!
Fit shrines and fanes of supernatural powers!
Nor less benignly its rich lustre falls,
On proud Ghoolghooleh's stately towers and walls.

The calm of heaven but seems to bless the earth;
Ghoolghooleh's walls its foemen's tents surround;
Within them, fear has stilled the laugh of mirth,
And watchful sentinels parade them round,
Intent with eye and ear to prove their worth,
To espy a movement, or to catch a sound;
For bold and daring are the hostile bands,
Tartarian hordes—the sons of many lands.

And o'er that hostile camp too, silence throws
Its treacherous mantle; for its stern array,
While yet alert, seem slumbering in repose;
The war-horse even has forgot to neigh,
And one may hear each sighing wind that blows,
So mute its warriors wait the dawn of day;
The signal for the fell and dire attack,
To end in that fort' capture and its sack.

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The chieftain of that host, with rapid pace
His crimson kergah* treads; his evening's couch
Is not for him that night a resting place;
He too impatient bides the dawn's approach,
And peeping forth upon the moon's bright face,
He almost dares it for its light reproach,
As on the fortress, with a glance of scorn,
He looks and cries, "Oh! would that it were morn!"

As wanes the moon, it's feebler-growing light
But dimly shadows forth the indented walls,
When thousand torches flash upon the sight,
And loudly now the watchful guardian calls,
For silence, with the moon, has taken flight,
And o'er the Tartar camp the effulgence falls
From the fort's ramparts, echoing long and far,
With shouts of Hai Shah Baz! Hai Kaub-beedar†!

The foe besides had marked the fleeting lamp
Of heaven, and hoped his fatal purpose crowned;
A murmur rises from the Tartar camp,
The sign of motion—a portentous sound,
A menacing buz of men, of horses' tramp,
Of clanging weapons, fills the gloom around,
When lo! the trumpet, with its shrill alarms,
Throws off disguise, and calls the host to arms.

* Kergah, the Tartar name for tent.

† Hai Shah Baz! Hai Kaub-beedar! imply, Bravo! Be on the alert!

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Now stand the iron Tartar ranks arrayed,
The sacred banners in the van are borne,
The hordes are told that to the victor's blade
Belong the treasures of Ghoolghooleh, shorn
Of pristine glory, and that many a maid
The morning may not see, or see it mourn;
Then forward, Tartars, crush the trembling foe,
His ramparts once your own—the rest ye know!

Swift with exulting cries and wild despair,
On the proud fortress rush the maddened host,
The lengthened ladders to its walls they bear,
And press contending for the dangerous post:
Ghoolghooleh's bands an equal fervour share,
And oft its battlements are won and lost—
Whole crowds unpitied fall! When shines the day,
The Tartar sword for once hath missed its prey.

Then peals of triumph from the lofty towers
Of glad Ghoolghooleh, with a loud acclaim,
Resound the conquest o'er the Tartar powers,
And give the victors their due meed of fame;
While Taujik beauty on their valour showers
Its smiles, deserved by those who save from shame,
Nor fails the Taujik monarch to command
Rare gifts to Mithra, guardian of the land.

The Tartar chief within their camp has led
His baffled warriors, and convened his lords:—
"My hopes of victory in this land have fled,
"And ye have failed to win your meet rewards;
"I deem our march had better hence be sped,
"Since Mithra to our foes his aid accords;

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" This time we may not quench the sacred fires,
" Which burn more fiercely on their mountain pyres.

" To us advantage from delay will spring;
" Besides, t'were rash to urge our present war;
" For know, in succour of the Taujik King,
" Strong levies hasten from the realms afar,
" From east and west the tribes their prowess bring,
" From royal Heeree, and from Mawer-al-Nahr;
" Better we wait them on the Amoo's side,
" Where best their vaunted strength may be defied.

" Yet will we not before the Taujik fly,
" Or shun his fortress by the friendly shade
" Of night; our trumpets shall loud-shrieking cry
" Our standards waving, and our hordes arrayed,
" While we, by herald, his vain King defy
" To combat, though he boasts his Mithra's aid;
" If he accept, the plain may still afford
" A glorious triumph to the Tartar sword!"

Now form the Tartar squadrons on the plain,
The Captains with the banners in advance,
Loud drums and trumpets bellow forth amain,
Amid the clang of buckler and of lance;
The Chieftain eyes them; of their bearing vain,
And bids his herald to the walls advance,
And there, a parley sounded, boldly fling
His proud defiance to the Taujik King.

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They in the fortress view the dense array,
And to their battlements tumultuous throng,
Mean then the vanquished to assault by day,
And think they that the darkness did them wrong?
Prepare, ye Taujiks! for the desperate fray,
The foemen still are confident and strong.
Lo! comes a herald, on some mission sped,
To sue for peace, or ransom of the dead.

The herald sounds a parley; from the fort
Shrill trumpets in return responsive blow;
Then comes the King with nobles of the court,
And lists the message brought him from the foe;
He smiles, and treats its arrogance with sport,
And bids the herald let his chieftain know,
That under Mithra's grace he stands or falls
Within his castle's Heaven-protected walls.

Yet gazed he wondering from the rampart's height,
Upon the Tartar host that filled the vale;
It showed a goodly and exciting sight,
Of stalwart heroes clad in dazzling mail;
Rough hands and trusty blades, that in the fight
Could help their friends or turn their foemen pale;
But most the Tartar chieftain's noble port,
Drew the admiring gaze of King and court.

And there were other eyes, it so befell,
That on the Tartar chief, in that sad hour,
Were fixed admiring, as by magic spell,
With which to struggle, reason has no power.
Their glances too from high Ghoolghooleh fell,
Where the King's daughter, from her latticed tower,

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Curious to see the Tartar host's parade,
Was by a passion for its lord betrayed.

Unhappy maiden! now is she forlorn;
  Yet of the Tartar chief she madly raves;
And must she of her sex become the scorn?
  And yet her passion but the more enslaves.
Oh! had she never seen him! fatal morn!
  She loves him, and her love compunction braves.
And he will hence depart—excess of woe!
It must not be! the Tartar must not go!

The Tartar chief informs his serried host,
  "The Taujik monarch at our challenge jeers;
"The time may come when he shall cease to boast,
  "And we returning may renew his fears;
"When Mithra's favour may be less, or lost,
  "And he may perish with his vaunting peers:
"Till then—'tis his to profit by delay:
"To-morrow morn we lead our bands away."

Such was the chief's resolve: and in his tent
  He musing sat, and mighty projects planned—
When told, a female from the fortress sent
  Disguised, attends with letter in her hand.
Received—he reads the missive, speaks content,
  Thus, "Tell your lady, I salute her hand."
Then rising, shouts, "Our Tartar Gods are just,
"And Mithra yet shall yield to woman's lust!"

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Again the lustrous moon illumes the skies,
And glows on proud Ghoolghooleh's fanes and towers,
Where now exulting songs of joy arise,
And dance and revel lead the thoughtless hours,
Of danger past the memory swiftly flies—
No longer dreaded are the Tartar powers ;
Who but await the coming blush of day,
To march their rude and vanquished hordes away.

And all within the Tartar camp is still,
Till yet once more the moon begins to wane,
Then runs a murmur through the host, of ill
Foreboding, and the bands are armed again.
The lords instructed of their chieftain's will,
In silence hold their levies on the plain,
While he in person leads some chosen ranks,
With stealthy pace between the river's banks.

Straight to the castle's base they firmly press,
And climb the rock where opes a postern gate !
Will now their Gods the daring effort bless ?
And will the Princess their arrival wait ?
Is then her duty than her passion less,
And will she not repent ere yet too late ?
Her love prevails, and there she ready stands,
The gate is opened with her own fair hands.

She frenzied, shrieks, " Oh ! spare my sire, my lord !"
And sinking, clasps his knees, and sobs and sighs,
He spurns, and with a flourish of his sword,
Her head dissevered from her body flies.
" Tis thus, we Tartars punish crime abhorred,
" And thus we stay a foolish woman's cries—

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" Now gallant warriors, raise a mighty shout—
" The welcome signal to our friends without."

The bands without return a deafening yell,
And forward rush with loud promiscuous din,
On every side they scale the walls pell mell,
And join their conquering friends already in.
On every side the reeling Taujiks fell,
To spare a Taujik dog is deemed a sin.
" Spare none!" the chieftain cries, " Spare none, kill, slay!
" The night for slaughter, and the morn for prey!"

And comes the morn at length: amidst the dead
And dying, takes the Tartar chief his stand—
" Ghoolghooleh's glory has for ever fled,
" And we are now the masters of the land!
" Enough of blood, since none remains to shed—
" The city's treasure lies at your command:
" But heed—a woman's lust hath brought this shame
" On Mithra's worship, and the Taujik fame!"

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A Legend of Lamghaun.

The vale of Lamghaun, or Lughmaun, as now generally called, is remarkably fertile, and the husbandmen have the reputation of being eminently skilful. The fertility of the soil is usually considered to be owing to the presence of the shrine of Mehter Lam (the scriptural Lamech, the father of Noah), and the excellence of the cultivators is attributed, perhaps good-humouredly, to the science of agriculture having been, in the first instance, taught to the inhabitants by the devil. The legend referring to this event, is developed in the annexed verses, and in all points is faithfully pursued.

His Satanic Majesty is reported to have had a good deal to do with the country in and about Kaubul. Wilford, in his researches (very inquisitive always) remarks, in his Essay on Mount Caucasus before quoted, that "When Satan was ejected, or kicked, as they say, out of the garden of Eden, where he first lived, he leaped over the mountains, and fell on that spot where Cabul now stands; hence the origin of the well-known proverb, that the inhabitants of Cabul are truly the offspring of this prince of darkness. Those of Cabul do not deny his having been at Cabul; but say, he had no offspring, was soon conjured away, and withdrew into the district of Lamgan."

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It would appear Wilford had not heard of the manner in which the inhabitants of Lamghaun pretend their ancestors rid themselves of their troublesome guest. I cannot say that I ever heard that Satan was supposed to have resided at Kaubul, and the proverb mentioned by Wilford, would, or might only mean that the inhabitants thereof were like children of the devil, wicked and mischievous. But it is a traditionary belief that Cain dwelt there, and was the founder of the city, whence its appellation, Cain being called Kaubeel, as Abel is Aubeel, by Mahomedans.

A LEGEND OF LAMGHAUN.

In fertile Lamghaun's sunny vale,
'Tis said the harvests never fail;
That nowhere else the soil produces
So much for man and for his uses.
But should you ask the reason why,
No two would give the same reply:
Some think it is through Grace divine,
Since boasts the land of Lamech's shrine,
And therefore is it holy ground,
And therefore do its crops abound.
But others are there, who dispute
This notion, and the fact impute

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To him who prompts man to rebel—
Ev'n Lucifer, the Prince of Hell:
For they assert that from his highness,
The pink of talent and of shyness,
The Lamghaun labourers confest,
Of all who till the soil the best,
Acquired the science which they know,
And learned the arts to reap and sow.

To me, who have no undue bias,
The former reason seems most pious,
Yet may we give the devil fair play,
And hear what those who doubt it say;
The tale's not long, and there's no harm in
Showing the origin of farming.

In time of yore—I know not when—
The point's not fixed by learned men;
And bold geology opposes
The date we once received from Moses;
But 'twas the time, when all allow
That men were not so wise as now,
When human beings, like the brutes,
Roamed free, and fed on mountain fruits,
Nor vexed with care of lands or flocks,
Resided in the clefts of rocks;
Clad not at all, or of the oddest,
As now would be esteemed immodest;
And tailed or tailless—still contest
Those who have conned the question best.

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The globe, too, in that time of yore,
A very different aspect wore,
From what we now behold—but what
That aspect truly was or not,
We are not sure—and in distress
Are left, like shrewder men, to guess.
Strange monsters then, of all degrees,
Swarmed on the land and in the seas,
Of wondrous size and wondrous strength,
And then of such exceeding length,
Their names are much too long to stick
In measures octo-syllabic.

The devil, eke it would appear,
Was not then tied to nether sphere;
Or if it was his usual home,
He had the liberty to roam,
And oft for mischief or for mirth,
Would take a ramble on the earth,
To cool himself, or take the air,
Or witness what was passing there.

One morn—or so, at least, 'tis said,
Arising, restless, from his bed,
To chase the *ennui* of the night,
He fixed upon an earthly flight,
And soaring into upper space,
Towards the north pole set his face,
Then skimming o'er it, with the breeze,
He passed Tartarian plains and seas;

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And finally, where darkly frown
The Kasian hills, he settled down,
And on their summits took his stand,
To make a survey of the land.

The scene of mountain, plain, and flood,
Appeared e'en to the devil good;
In secret, he confessed the sight
Repaid him for his lengthened flight,
Although, as banished from the sky,
He looked on all with envious eye,
Nor suffered to escape his tongue,
The praise which in his bosom sprung.
Soon he espied the races round,
Like pismires creeping on the ground,
On whose account, and to his cost,
He heaven and all its joys had lost,
And in the mood he then was in,
Of mingled waggery and sin,
He deemed it due, as father Nick,
To play some part of them a trick.

While thus resolved, by fate or chance,
On Lamghaun's valley fell his glance,
And while he saw the site was fair,
He quizzed the natives ranging there:
He found they were a simple race,
Who at their ease possessed the place,
Who trusted to their hills for diet,
And lived in innocence and quiet,

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It grieved him in his soul to see,
That mortals could so happy be,
And straight he purposed to endeavour,
To change their mode of life for ever.
By subtle fraud to expel their quiet,
And give them wrangling, feuds, and riot—
Wants and desires before unknown,
And make them, by such means, his own.

He tarried till the eve-tide hour,
Ere he essayed his cunning's power,
For then, their daily needs allayed,
They gathered round the plane tree's shade—
He came before them with a mien
The most seductive and serene,
For never looks the devil more bland,
Than when he mischief has on hand.
He bowed so humbly and politely,
In sooth, they thought him very sightly,
And when he spoke, he spoke so sweetly,
At once he won their hearts completely,
And so, as kindly as was meet,
They begged their guest would take a seat.
He nodded, and with gracious smile,
Said he would rest himself awhile,
For rising with the morning star,
He, since that time, had travelled far,
And though, of course, his observation
Had glanced o'er many a race and nation,

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He none had found, he needs must say,
Who pleased him half so much as they;
They were so innocent and kind,
So frank in manner, pure in mind,
Their numerous virtues warmed his breast,
And made it joy to be their guest.

Such flattery did not fail to make
Impression, and to see it take,
A glow transfused the devil's breast,
Who straight his first advantage prest—
" Dear friends," he cried, " for by that name
" I now the right to call you, claim,
" I am a being mild and meek,
" Who but the good of others seek,
" And I may say, without offence,
" Devoid of guile as of pretence;
" With that intent, I spend my time,
" In travelling from clime to clime,
" Happy the human race to bless,
" And share the knowledge I possess.
" It grieves me sorely when I see,
" Their portion less than it should be;
" I grieve to see them live like brutes,
" On berries crude, and mountain fruits;
" I would improve their wretched fate,
" And teach them how to mend their state;
" No toil, no danger I forego,
" To soften pain, or banish woe,
" And task my philanthropic mind,
" To benefit and bless mankind."

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The devil's audience thought forsooth,
Their guest a winning courteous youth,
And if well pleased with him before,
They now were prepossessed the more;
Yet with no want or wish to sate,
They did not murmur at their fate,
And well contented as things stood,
They did not long for greater good;
So while they duly thanks repaid,
They did not crave their good friend's aid;
But urged, that happy as they were,
They had no want, and knew no care;
All they required around them grew,
And God their welfare kept in view.

They thought their guest looked very odd,
At mention of the name of God,
And winced a little bit; but straight
He reassumed a placid gait,
And mindful of his wily ways,
Pursued his eulogistic phrase.

They sat in converse, 'till the light
Of Luna shone on Khrinja's height,
And shed its lustre, calm and pale,
Upon the streams of Lamghaun's vale.
Nor did they part, until with guile,
The devil had gained his purpose vile;
And they, subservient to his will,
Agreed the virgin soil to till;

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Resolved to better fare than brutes,
As heretofore, on savage fruits,
And roots and berries, as supplied
The forest, or the mountain's side;
Besides, to consummate the act,
They with the devil formed a pact,
To share the produce of the soil,
The science his, and theirs the toil.

The fiend let not their fervour cool,
But in the morning opened school;
And led his scholars, blithe and gay,
To where, in wild luxuriance lay,
The plain upon the river's bank;
And made them clear of brushwood rank,
Of rocks and stones, and what else grew
On soil that never culture knew.

They, who had never known before
What labour was, now felt it sore;
And when the sweat drops fell, in fact,
They could have wished annulled the pact;
But their instructor, tho' to see
Their anguish gave him mighty glee,
When he beheld them droop and faint,
Would all the joys before them paint;
And talked of rich unbounded spoil,
And pleasure, the reward of toil;
Bade them work on—they would not rue it,
And so contrived to keep them to it;
Until, by turns depressed and cheered,
At length an ample space they cleared.

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To follow up his worthy deeds,
The fiend brought various kinds of seeds;
And while their several names he told,
Their divers virtues he extolled;
And shewed how, planted in the soil,
Their produce would reward their toil.
Turnip and carrot, parsnip too,
With onion seeds, minute to view;
And seeds of earth's prolific fruits,
Whose value centres in the roots,
He placed before their wondering eyes,
And taught how from their germs would rise,
A stately mass of verdure bright,
To captivate, in time, their sight,
And yield them such delightful food,
The angels tasted not so good.

The task of sowing being light,
They followed it with more delight;
Their master's will with zeal obeyed,
And all the plain in plots they laid,
With nicest care, and every plot
Of seed its proper portion got,
Each in its kind; and, so much done,
Behold the devil's purpose won.

He then the due instructions gave,
The rising crops from harm to save,
To delve and trench, in case of need,
And when to irrigate and weed;

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And when he found they all things knew,
He bowed, and bade them all adieu;
Engaging, when the time drew nigh,
And crops mature should greet the eye,
When harvest would demand their care,
To re-appear, and take his share.

He winged to towering Khrinj his flight,
And hovering there, surveyed the sight;
His clients busy on the soil,
Delighted with their novel toil,
He saw, and felt his bosom glow,
And cried—"Oh, man, I have you now!
"Henceforth the cares of life are thine—
"The bliss of sated malice mine!
"Ha, ha! Lamghaunees, meek and pure,
"Ye shall not long remain obscure.

"I'm off to where Tartarian plains
"Support a race of sturdy swains,
"Of figure gaunt, of frowning look,
"Turk, Mogul, Uzbek, and Kallmook.
"I'll teach them that the brawny frame,
"A diet needs in strength the same:
"That herbs and plants are weakening food,
"And flesh alone for them is good.
"When once a taste for blood they gain,
"Will anger seize the maddened brain;
"And then, oh glorious scene of strife!
"A man will take his fellow's life.

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" Ha! ha! my Tartars, bold and true,
" I've hit a rare device for you.

" I'm off to where, on Euxine's shore,
" The steep Caucassian mountains soar;
" Where in the valley and the glen
" Resides a humble race of men,
" Obscure in ignorance and ease,
" Who call themselves the Chalybes.
" I'll teach them from the hidden mine
" To draw the metal and refine;
" To fashion it, and then to form
" The weapon for the stalwart arm.
" My sturdy Tartars may not lack
" The needful engines for attack;
" My skill shall every aid afford,
" In lance, mace, battle-axe, and sword.
" Then will the deadly slaughter rage,
" And blood wash out the golden age:
" Ha! ha! my mind the vision sees!
" I've work for you, my Chalybes!

" I'm off to where by Tigris' side
" A swarthy race of men reside;
" I'll teach them how to cross the main,
" And rove about in quest of gain:
" To traffic, barter, and defraud,
" By no reproach of conscience awed.
" I'll teach them luxury is health,
" And that there is no good but wealth;
" That gold makes all injustice just,
" Excuses sin, and hallows lust.

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" My sturdy Tartars in their wars
" Will need some bounty for their scars;
" The spoil this worthless race afford,
" Will be fit harvest for the sword:
" Ha! ha! my Punic race so vain,
" For nought you shall not rove the main."

The devil in this mood assigned
To every race of human kind,
Some part to further and combine,
In pursuance of his grand design;
To fill the earth with care and strife,
With hatred, crime, and loss of life;
And so revenge upon each race,
His loss of heaven and disgrace.
And off he flew to bring about
The foul intentions he traced out.

In order due came summer time,
The Lamghaun crops were in their prime,
And never burst forth fairer scene,
Of all the shades of vivid green
Than that which fixed the native's gaze,
And filled their senses with amaze.
Unwearied, to admire the sight,
They wondering stared from morn to night;
And but one fervent hope exprest,
To see again their quondam guest.

The devil, in our days, 'tis said,
Is so obliging and well-bred,

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That if a wish to see him rise,
He straight appears before our eyes.
In days of yore, 'twas much the same,
His manners never were to blame.
Thus, when by sympathy, he knew
His Lamghaun friends desired his view,
As quick as thought, o'er land and flood
He swept—and, lo! before them stood.

The simple men his advent greet,
And, prostrate, worship at his feet;
And know not how, with homage rude,
To testify their gratitude.
He begs they will their warmth restrain—
It really gives his feelings pain—
His modesty receives offence—
To honor he has no pretence.

To serve them was his only aim,
He sought not gratitude or fame;
They must not so his feelings wound,
He craves they'll rise them from the ground.
They rose—and then he turns his eyes,
Where the tilled plain in glory lies;
And next, exstatic with delight,
Directs upon the clouds his sight;
Again, impressed with awe profound,
The simple race fall on the ground;
Anew he vows they cause him pain—
So much attention is profane;

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They rise once more—once more the scene,
Combined with his affecting mien,
Compels their homage more than meet,
And lays them prostrate at his feet.

His secret soul with transport glowed,
And gloated o'er the abject crowd :—
" And this is man," he thought, " for whom
" I groan beneath eternal doom !
" That boasted man, to whom as bid,
" The host of angels homage did,
" Save I ; who, to my order just,
" Scorned to salute a thing of dust.
" Behold him, like the reptile, crawl,
" And at my feet in worship fall ;
" The angels bent to him the knee,
" I make the creature bend to me ;
" Thrice has he meanly licked the ground,
" And thus have I my triumph crowned.

" Dear friends," aloud he cried, " the soil
" Has well repaid your skill and toil ;
" Its teeming womb has never bore,
" So full and rich a birth before ;
" To me no jot of praise is due—
" In toto it belongs to you.
" These splendid trophies, which delight
" Your gaze, are yours, by labour's right.
" I'm more than paid to see you blest,
" And grateful to your humble guest.

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" My heart would lead me, I declare,
" On your behalf to yield my share;
" But that, so kind you are, I know
" You'd not permit me to forego;
" Still must I on one point insist,
" And what it is, I crave you list:—
" You see the harvest spread around,
" The plots with bright luxuriance crowned,
" What portions on the surface grow,
" And what are hid from sight below;
" The portions which may please you best,
" Select—that right I in you vest.
" This favour at your hands I claim,
" To me all portions are the same;
" Say which you choose—the shares below,
" Or those which on the surface grow?"

They judged their patron's fairness great,
But did not hold a long debate;
The tops, so charming in their eyes,
They could but deem the greater prize;
And so, with non-dissentient voice,
Proclaimed the surface share their choice.

The devil did not tell them nay,
But bade them forthwith clear away;
Then taking up the useful roots,
He left them to arrange disputes.

My pen might fail to paint the scene,
Of mingled anger and chagrin,

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In Lamghaun, once so calm and gay,
When the arch-fiend had flown away.
Too soon its simple natives found,
Their harvest's worth was under ground;
And when they would their leaves devour,
They found them nauseous, rank, or sour;
They did not care their spleen to smother,
But cursed the fiend, and then each other;
Foul words were followed by foul deeds,
Lo! general anarchy succeeds;
And from the devil's love to man,
In Lamghaun tumult first began.

The seasons roll in happy train,
And, lo! 'tis seed-time once again.
The devil, mindful of his ends,
Bethought him of his Lamghaun friends,
And willed they should, despite their fear,
Renew the pact of former year:
The gate of hell turns on its hinge,
And straight he gains the crest of Krinj;
Awhile he lingers on its brow,
And peeps upon the vale below;
He saw enough to make him sure
His pupils were not quite so pure
As they had been in days gone by,
Or when he wished them last good bye.
Most folks are pleased, and somewhat vain,
A longed-for object to attain;
Nor is the devil less, so he
Beheld whate'er he saw with glee,

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And cried—" Ha, ha! my project thrives,
" These men will peril soon their lives;
" Their rage is fine, their malice good,
" Ha, ha! I sniff the scent of blood;
" They've lost the shyness once they prized,
" They'll do quite well when civilized."

Now gently dropping in the vale—
His sight turned all who saw him pale;
But then his features seemed so bland,
And with such grace he waved his hand,
That though they wished him far away,
They stayed to hear what he'd to say.
He greeted with so soft a tone,
Its music would have charmed a stone;
Just passing by, he deemed it right,
Amongst his old friends to alight.
He hoped their lot in joy was cast
And happier this year than the last.
" Alas!" they answered, " 'tis not so—
" Our lot is now a lot of woe.
" Since taught by you, to lend our toil
" To clear and cultivate the soil,
" All peace and joy our vale have flown,
" And we have nought but discord known.
" The surface share we chose in haste,
" Proved rank and bitter to the taste;
" And to the pang of useless toil
" Was added shame, and civil broil;

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" And ever since, nor night or day
" Has passed, without some dismal fray.
" How dearly we have paid our whims,
" Attest our broken heads and limbs !"

" Respected friends," the devil cried,
Although he heard the tale with pride,
" If sympathy can lend relief,
" I would at once assuage your grief;
" It rends my heart to hear of woe,
" And think that friends should suffer so.
" I did not recommend you strife—
" I only teach the arts of life ;
" Delightful arts ! which, understood,
" Serve private and serve public good.
" If, when you choose your share to take,
" By any chance occurred mistake ;
" Though all your grief I cannot bear,
" It is my duty to repair ;
" To banish from your valley pain,
" And make you happy once again ;
" And if you will indulge me now,
" I'll tell you very briefly how :—

" It is a noble, virtuous toil,
" To till and cultivate the soil ;
" The various treasures it produces,
" Are meant for man, and for his uses.
" If this year failed—the next will bless
" Your honest labours with success ;

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" The several seeds you last year tried,
" May for the present, lay aside,
" And others, to my science known,
" Shall for your past mishap atone."
In vain they urged their former trial,
The pressing fiend took no denial;
For who can shake his logic much,
Unless indeed he plead in Dutch.
In short, their pleas and reasons failed,
They yielded, and the fiend prevailed;
'Twas fixed to sow the land once more,
The bargain standing as before.

Of seeds, he had a large supply,
Wheat, barley, beans, and oats, and rye,
And of such pulse, legumes, and grain,
Whose stalks, the useful parts contain.
With them the soil was duly sown,
And fit instructions handed down;
And all things ordered to his will,
He sped again to Khrinja's hill,
Engaged by promise most sincere,
At harvest-time to re-appear.
From Khrinja's hill he, with content,
Beheld them on their labours bent;
" Ha, ha!" he cried, " 'twill do, I see—
" This man is not a match for me;
" I'll make a tour and ascertain,
" How fare my rovers on the main;

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" And then I'll visit at my ease,
" My Tartars and my Chalybes,
" And mark what progress all have made,
" In slaughter, making arms, and trade.
" Ha, ha! my work advances well,
" And triumph waits the Lord of Hell!"

Again the seasons roll; again
The Lamghaun harvests crown the plain;
The swains the varied products view,
With pleasure—for the sight was new;
In truth they fair and goodly showed,
And hope within their bosoms glowed;
Exulting in their prospects bright,
Anew they wished their patron's sight.
No sooner did the wish arise,
Than he appeared before their eyes,
Anew in homage at his feet,
They barely gave him time to greet;
Their gratitude knew no alloy,
And all was love, and all was joy.

" My friends, behold this glorious plain,
" And own you have not toiled in vain;
" Right glad am I—the cheering sight
" Inspires me with intense delight;
" Your skill I cannot duly laud—
" Your labours gain a rich reward.
" As I desire in all your bliss,
" What joy supreme I feel in this,

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" That through my pains, of little worth,
" You've won this conquest o'er the earth.
" Now choose your share—but ponder well
" The error which last year befel;
" I have no interest at stake,
" So well advised selection make:
" I only crave it may be wise,
" And give me credit in your eyes,
" That I may never lack your praise,
" And you live happy all your days."

The swains took counsel, and agreed,
To err again there was no need;
From past experience they had found,
The portion worthless on the ground;
For though its verdure charmed the eyes,
Beneath was hid the genuine prize;
Therefore at once, without disputes
Or arguments, they claimed the roots.

The devil praised their prudent part,
And wished them joy with all his heart;
He soon would clear his upper share,
And leave them to their chosen fare.
But now his object being won,
He had no wish to be unknown;
So throwing off his bland disguise,
He stood the fiend before their eyes,
With scales and tail, a sight to loath,
And fire belching from his mouth:

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He hissed, and whizzed, and flew about,
And put his former friends to rout,
Who fled in horror from the sight,
And roared and screamed with all their might;
The devil's imps, a hideous crew,
About the skies in myriads flew,
And flocked their long-tailed master round,
To help to clear away the ground,
And putting all the grain in sacks,
They flung them gaily on their backs,
And raising such uproarious mirth,
As shook the centre of the earth,
Bore through the air the harvests' fruits,
And left the swains the worthless roots.

'Twas thus, Lamghaun traditions tell,
In compact with the Prince of Hell,
Its ancient hinds, their part to fill,
Acquired their agricultural skill,
Which to their children, handed down,
The sons preserve their sires renown.

Here might, perhaps, my story close,
For mine, and for my friend's repose;
But if his patience be not spent,
I'll tell him where the devil went;
Or rather what the legends say,
Befel him with his grain that day.

When great men quit this world below,
It oft shows signs of joy or woe,

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Whate'er the cause—nor know I what,
If glad to be relieved or not;
'Tis apt to give its feelings vent,
In storms that rend the firmament,
Which, as they shake the spheroid's poles,
Hurl terror into living souls.

Such was the case, so runs the tale,
When Satan left the Lamghaun vale—
A tempest burst so strong and fell,
It overthrew the host of hell;
Dispersed the party here and there,
And brought the arch one to despair,
Who, failing to bear off his grain,
Has never showed his face again.

The spot where he just missed his doom,
Bears yet the name of Shaïtaun Goom,
Which Englished, will the sense convey,
Of "Where the devil lost his way."

JELLALABAD, 1834.

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The Mehergheeah, or Love Plant.

Imagination and credulity have, at all times, endowed certain plants with extraordinary and peculiar virtues and properties, not so much to be wondered at, seeing that in truth many products of the vegetable kingdom are possessed of known efficacy and tried utility in very numerous cases. In the western world we no longer believe in the existence of the plant which converts all it touches into gold, although our forefathers no doubt did; yet in the eastern world, such belief yet devoutly prevails, and is coupled with that of the mehergheeah, or plant of love, the possession of which enables the fortunate holder to attract to himself at pleasure the love or affection of any individual. To obviate the objection of the non-existence of these plants, it is always the custom in oriental countries to locate them in some remote, inaccessible spot. Thus, in the eastern parts of Afghanistaun, the Siaposh hills, inhabited by a singular and sturdy race, at war with all their neighbours, are made the locale of these celebrated plants; and very safely, for no one can venture amongst them in search; and it is very possible that the Siaposh themselves, if they entertain similar notions of these ideal vegetables, as is not unlikely, place their habitat in the mountains of Kaubul, or elsewhere, beyond their own limits.

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In the annexed verses I have explained what is credited in Afghanistaun of the virtues of the mehergheeah. It is described as a jointed plant, the stem being the part of value; the portion selected should comprise at least two joints, better three, and it should be sewed in the cap or other article of raiment of the person possessing it. The colour of the plant is pale yellow, and the upper joints are distinguished by being nearly white. It is to be found only on inaccessible heights, and must be shot at by firelock or bow, when the fragments brought to the ground are to be brought away.

A wife of the late Nawab Sammad Khan (one of Dost Mahomed Khan's half brothers), notwithstanding she enjoyed in a high degree the affections of her husband, offered, on oath upon the Koraun, the reward of a pearl necklace of great value, to any one who would bring her a pair of the three bundehs (joints) of the mehergheeah. Nadjeel is a dependent district of Lughmaun, immediately contiguous to the hills of the Siaposh.

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THE

MEHERGHEEAH, OR LOVE PLANT.

A LEGEND OF NADJEEL.

Have ye heard of the wonderous plant of the hill,
Endued with virtues and spell so rare,
That they who possess it, can at their will,
Command return for the love they bear?

Oh! know ye where the rare plant grows,
Which thus engenders love at will?
Above the forests, above the snows,
On the crest of the lofty Siaposh hill.

Hath any one found this plant, more worth
Than gold of the mine, or pearl of the main?
Ah yes! the envy of Kings of the earth,
It was found by a gallant Nadjeelee swain.

The swain of so costly a treasure possest,
Must have sailed through life with a prosperous gale—
Endowed with the full joys of love, and blest:
If it please you to list, I will tell his tale.

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The Lord of Nadjeel was of prowess avowed,
He was famous in war, and in council was skilled;
But at home he was rigid, imperious, and proud,
And insisted that all things should be as he willed.

Cruel he was not, tho' far from bland,
Neither was he unjust, tho' strict and severe,
But he ruled over all with an iron hand,
And his hinds and his warriors beheld him with fear.

There were many bright forms in his castle's towers,
The wives of his choice, or the victory's spoil—
Of the sunniest climes the sweetest flowers,
To solace his rest and to lighten his toil.

He may have esteemed them with heart sincere,
For who could feel to their beauties blind,
Yet they like all others beheld him with fear,
For his manner bespoke not the love in his mind.

He was frowning and harsh, and he would be obeyed,
And their blandishments often he checked and reproved;
So, no wonder the languishing fair were afraid,
That, in spite of their fondness, they were not beloved.

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Now love unrequited is torment to bear,
And its pang e'en the stoutest of heroes would vex;
More bitter its sting to the sensitive fair,
Encreased by their soft and more delicate sex.

Of the beauties possessed by the Lord of Nadjeel,
If one of them more truly loved than the rest,
'Twas a fair Toorkee bride, who had pain to conceal
The grief that his coldness had raised in her breast.

That she loved him, it is not permitted to doubt,
Since so much for his love and affection she yearned;
And it puts a sweet lady most strangely about,
When she loves to despair, and her love's not returned.

All efforts to move him in vain had she tried,
By her gentle caresses when called to his arms;
His rigour the power of her fondness defied,
And he looked, with an air of disdain, on her charms.

She lamented her lot, and lamented it loud,
And her damsels in pity oft heard her bewail,
Until one, more acute than her sisters, avowed
She a remedy knew that might haply avail.

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She told the fond bride of the wonderous plant,
That grew on the loftiest Siaposh hill—
She told of the spell its possession would grant,
To raise in a bosom affection at will.

The bride heard with rapture, and bade her disclose,
How the wonderous plant of the hill might be got,
No matter the cost, if to lessen her woes,
Some bold youth of Nadjeel would hie to the spot.

The damsel told all that she ever had heard,
Of the wonderous plant—of its size and its hue,
How many had sought, but by perils deterred,
Had never arrived at the spot where it grew.

The bride bade the damsel proclaim in Nadjeel,
That a necklace of rubies should be his reward,
Who should bear off the plant from the Siaposh hill,
That she hoped would secure her the love of her Lord.

The Lord of Nadjeel with his bold warrior train,
O'er the mountains his banner of conquest had borne;
Oh! could she in his absence the rare plant obtain,
And be able in joy to await his return.

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If great was the labour, the meed was not small,
And the glory it promised exceeded the gain;
So the youths of the valley stood forth at the call,
And amongst them young Ajeel, the pride of the plain.

Full of hope they departed, but only to find
How serious and grave were the dangers they spurned;
Till wearied in frame and dejected in mind,
One by one all but Ajeel in sorrow returned.

His course he pursued, through peril and toil,
Through glens and through forests, o'er mountain and rock;
He swam the broad rivers, intent on the spoil,
And of wild brutes and reptiles encountered th shock.

At length he beheld, towering vastly above
The mountains around it, and belted with snow,
The peak of the hill of the rare plant of love,
But how long was the journey he yet had to go!

Hope calmed the distrust which his mind overcast,
And forward he started confirmed in his will;
Lo! the mountains, the valleys, the torrents are past,
And Ajeel arrives at the foot of the hill.

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Fresh horrors arise ; serpents deadly and fell,
Lift their heads, and of wild beasts a ravenous horde,
Assail on all sides, while they hiss and they yell :
You have need, Ajeel, now of your good bow and sword.

His valour has triumphed, the might of his arm
Has equalled the strength of his firmness and skill ;
But how will young Ajeel, unless by a charm,
Pass the broad belt of snow that encircles the hill.

Young Ajeel's a hunter, and often in quest
Of his prey, hath he traversed Koh Kohwund's tall brow,
When the deep snows of winter lay full on its crest ;
The address he has learned may advantage him now.

He has passed the broad snow belt—all honour reward !
Lo, terror of terrors ! a host strong and gaunt
Of dragons appointed the rare plant to guard,
Rush forward, the soul of young Ajeel to daunt.

The monsters in fury all others surpast,
And their horrible forms were as foul as their ire,
Tho' long was the combat, yet vanquished at last,
Some were slain, and the rest were compelled to retire.

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Now is Ajeel the victor, but where is the prize,
The reward of his valour, his faith, and his toil?
Just heavens! 'tis true that in prospect it lies,
But to reach it, the skill e'en of Ajeel will foil.

From the limit of snow, rose the crest of the hill,
But its sides were so high, and their surface so steep,
That vain the endeavour, and useless the skill,
Of mortal to strive, or to climb, or to creep.

Lo! there is the plant, that rare plant, beyond gem
In value exceeding, upon the crest's brow;
Oh! Ajeel, an arrow might cleave its frail stem,
And thy skill as an archer may profit thee now.

But hasten, the keen winds less steadily blow,
For the powers of nature combine to defend
The rare plant, and clouds overburthened with snow,
Now menace in showers of flakes to descend.

Bestir thee! around all is horror and gloom,
The murmurs that herald the storm find a vent,
A moment decides, or thy fortune or doom:
Oh, may not thy damsel her lover lament!

Twangs his bow, and, alas! fails the arrow so fleet,
Another—another less faithless may prove:
Soul and eye now in concert!—Behold at his feet,
The plant, the mehergheeah, the rare plant of love!

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Happy Ajeel! thy labours with triumph are crowned;
The fair Toorkee bride of the stern Nadjeel Lord
Is made joyful by thee, and thy name is renowned;
Of a truth thou hast worthily won thy reward.

From the stem, with due caution, he severed the part,
Embracing three joints, as his orders laid down;
And placing the prize close, too close to his heart,
Turned his back on the hill whence the glory had flown.

All labours seem pleasing, all perils seem slight,
Now mountains and torrents no obstacles prove,
And wild beasts and serpents seem charmed with his sight,
Who bore the mehergheeah, the rare plant of love.

Lo! Nadjeel's green vale, rich in meadow and corn,
And the towers of the castle expand to his eyes;—
Swift as thought, to the fair bride the tidings are borne,
Ajeel has returned—and returned with his prize.

The fair Toorkee bride, oh! what raptures were thine!
Thy bliss, past expectance, in fulness assured,
Of love thy soft bosom will now be the shrine,
And the love of the Lord you so dote on secured.

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She blest the kind damsel who pitied her woe,
And earnest and eager conveyed her commands,
That young Ajeel be brought to the garden below,
To receive his reward at her own grateful hands.

The damsel her mission fulfilled with delight,
Not less that the youth her affections possest,
Young Ajeel was loyal, and wild at her sight,
He flew, and the damsel with energy prest.

They had often embraced, but less warmly before,
And the damsel as fervent could scarcely reprove;
'Twas forgotten, the youth in his custody bore,
The wonderous mehergheeah, the rare plant of love.

Lo! Ajeel attends in the garden below,
And the fair Toorkee bride at her balcony stands,
Her thanks to the youth, in her silvery tones flow,
And the necklace, his guerdon, she holds in her hands.

Never gazed the young swain on so glorious a sight,
Her loveliness struck all his soul with amaze;
Though loyal, he thrilled with bewildered delight,
And forgetting his damsel, continued to gaze.

He forgot too the rare plant was still in his trust,
Nor thought of the feelings its virtues reveal;
The fair Toorkee bride to its influence was just,
And the love for her Lord was transferred to Ajeel.

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The necklace she dropped, but by passion inflamed,
Forgot the mehergheeah, nor felt what she said,
"Take it, Ajeel, and with it my love!" she exclaimed,
She shrieked, and she fainted, and Ajeel had fled.

There is woe in the castle of fertile Nadjeel,
The fair Toorkee bride in her loneliness pines,
She is sullen and sad, and she dreads to reveal
Her affliction, and no one its reason divines.

There is woe in the valley of fertile Nadjeel,
The plaint of misfortune ascends from its groves,
With the plant and the necklace, the gallant Ajeel,
Bewailing his sorrows, disconsolate roves.

The Lord of the vale has returned with his powers,
The welcome of vassals his advent awaits;
His banners are raised on the castle's tall towers,
And elated with conquest he enters the gates.

The bright spoils of war, and the wives of his choice,
To greet his return, press on every side;
All are eager to testify how they rejoice,
But one, who appears not—the fair Toorkee bride.

Their warmth he acknowledged with haughty respect,
As a token of zeal and subservience due;
But his eye wandering round did not fail to detect,
That she he desired was not in his view.

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" Where is she," cried the Lord of Nadjeel, in concern,
" Who so wept when the combat compelled us to part ?
" Is she ailing ? or knows not her loved Lord's return ?
" Where's my fair Toorkee bride—the delight of my heart ?"

The fair Toorkee bride in her chamber was pent,
And in secret her love and her misery deplored,
No entreaty or menace, and many were sent,
Could induce her to rise, and to welcome her Lord.

The resolute Lord to her chamber repaired,
The fair bride but shrunk and recoiled at his sight ;
All his efforts to soothe her were vain—he despaired,
And left her, amazed at her folly and fright.

The stern Lord employed all his agents to find,
What cause in his absence had worked him this wrong ;
How it came that his love was dispelled from the mind
Of his fair bride, where once it existed so strong.

By mandate he threatened impalement to those,
Who, knowing the cause, might presume to conceal ;
And the fear of the stern Lord made some one disclose,
All that rumour had told of his bride and Ajeel.

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The rage of the Lord like a hurricane burst—
For a moment his frenzy exceeded all bound;
And he ordered the false bride and lover accurst,
To be seized, and in fetters disgracefully bound.

The fair bride accused, did not wish to deny
That her love for Ajeel was the pang in her breast;
And the bold youth when questioned would make no reply,
But the necklace too plainly suspicion exprest.

Lo! Ajeel the brave, and the fair Toorkee bride,
Are like criminals seized, and in vile dungeons thrown,
The former still loyal, to fall in youth's pride—
The latter to perish for crime not her own.

But the stern Nadjeel Lord was just, though severe,
And determined in public the process to try;
And convened all his lieges the trial to hear—
To see the false bride and her paramour die.

At the gates of the castle the lieges attend,
And the Lord with his Barons are seated in state,
And before them, with Heaven alone to befriend,
The fair Toorkee bride and the young Ajeel wait.

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By the side of young Ajeel, four chargers stand bound,
To assist in avenging his crime so abhorred,
And to tear limb from limb, when stretched on the ground,
Him who dared to imagine the shame of his Lord.

Near the fair Toorkee bride, four kaleefas await,
Their mattocks and shovels hang down by their side;
To be buried alive is the horrible fate,
That the stern Lord has willed for his criminal bride.

The proud Lord arose, and propounded the crime—
It behoved him his honour untarnished to save;
If any knew reason for mercy, 'twas time
To declare it, or guilt must be hid in the grave.

Little trial was needed, for Ajeel tho' true,
To his wrathful accusers still scorned to reply;
And the necklace of rubies displayed to the view
Of the court, it pronounced he was worthy to die.

Little trial was needed, the fair bride avowed,
Her love for Ajeel, which was too well exprest;
E'en now, as she saw him with passion she glowed,
For the youth had the mehergheeah close to his breast.

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The Lord of Nadjeel felt his fury arise,
At the fair bride's temerity thus to his face,
Yet with tremulous accents, and mingled with sighs,
He faltered the sentence to veil his disgrace.

The damsel who pitied the fair Toorkee bride,
And who loved young Ajeel, now stepped from the crowd;
What from fear of her Lord she had struggled to hide,
She revealed, and the whole of the secret avowed.

The Lord of Nadjeel, while he listened, yet heard
With incredulous ear, and observed with a frown,
That the tale of the powers of the plant was absurd,
A pretence of his false bride's—the maid was her own.

The Barons suggested, tho' lie it might look,
It were worth while to search if the plant could be found:
The stern Lord assented, and soon it was took
From the breast of young Ajeel, then stretched on the ground.

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The sight of the plant which had caused so much woe,
But served the Lord's fury the more to inflame:
"From a fragment of reed, could such wretchedness flow?
"Let them suffer, and trifle no more with my shame!"

As he spoke, the rare plant in his fingers he took:
Must they die then, and guiltless—the valiant, the chaste!
On the fair Toorkee bride he bestows a last look,
'Twas an instant—he rushes and holds her embraced!

Supporting her head on his shoulder, he held
His fair bride, while they both with love's ecstacy burned;
His wrath and her hatred for ever were quelled—
His love and the love of his fair bride returned.

The power of the plant was now fully confest,
Its magic had called back the love of his bride;
And she looked in his face while she clung to his breast,
With all the delight she was wont in her pride.

The mystery unravelled, young Ajeel was freed,
And the Lord gave the necklace, and honours beside,
And to punish his rival, he farther decreed,
That forthwith he made his loved damsel a bride.

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The plant to the fair Toorkee bride he consigned,
Since she willed that his love should with spells be bound fast;
In a thraldom so sweet, and so much to his mind,
He was very well pleased that his life should be past.

Yet he prayed her to be most discreet with a charge
Which the source of such joy or disaster could prove;
And so careful she was, that ne'er since at large,
Has been seen the mehergheeah—the rare plant of love!

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The Grave of Loolee.

A WHITE tomb, standing on an eminence overlooking the River of Kaubul, immediately to the north of the town of Jellallabad, is said to designate the grave of Loolee. The legend connected with it is a little varied in the following verses, yet the catastrophe is preserved. An elephant is involved in the tale of the unfortunate Loolee's fate; and of the honour attached to the gift of that animal by the beauties of ancient India, a curious account may be found in the seventeenth chapter of Arrian's Indian History. It is even possible, that the customs there alluded to are commemorated in the legend of Loolee now current.

THE GRAVE OF LOOLEE.

A LEGEND OF NINGNAHAR.

NEAR the town of Jellall, on a rock's lofty crest,
Overhanging the river of fair Ningnahar,
Stands a tomb, which by travellers from east and from west,
Though but modest in structure is seen from afar.

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You will mark it with chaplets and sweet garlands crowned,
Which the maids of Beesoot morn and eventide bring;
Rest there the remains of some martyr renowned—
Of a saint, or a hero, or haply a King?

If you bide, yon meek virgin, who speeds to depose
Her offering of violets, and venture to crave
To whose memory the tomb in its loneliness rose,
She will sigh and exclaim—'tis the sad Loolee's grave.

If you ask who was Loolee, of memory so blest,
The same virgin meek, should your patience not fail,
Will relate, in her soft tones, by sadness imprest,
Of Loolee the mournful and heart-rending tale.

Her parents were humble; her sire every morn
Led his flock to the waste, and the hill's verdant side;
His dame plied her distaff; nor was she forlorn
With her daughter, bright Loolee, her solace and pride.

In their dwelling was peace, and the fruit it yields, grace;
The father, whose duty compelled him to roam,
On return found his toils overpaid in th' embrace
Of his wife and his daughter, who welcomed him home.

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The mother, who cheerful throughout the long day
Had in tasks ever varied engaged till the last,
Was delighted at night her good man to survey,
Seated down at his frugal but grateful repast;

Nor was Loolee less charmed on her sire's return
To indulge in her frolics and infantine glee—
To climb up his legs and his shoulders in turn,
And when weary to kiss him and sit on his knee.

Young Loolee in childhood was lovely to view,
As the bud of the lily which nods to the gale;
As she gathered in years, still in beauty she grew,
And bloomed the acknowledged bright belle of the vale.

Her parents were proud on their offspring to gaze;
Yet too did her beauty occasion them care;
'Twas a perilous gift, which fixed all in amaze,
Or might be, to one if less modest than fair.

But they felt consolation, and could not but own,
That in her, for whose welfare their hopes were enshrined,
The charms of her person, if worthy a throne,
Were rivalled in full by the charms of her mind.

For never had maiden so little pretence,
And never was daughter more duteous and mild,
Ever prone to oblige, and avoiding offence,
It was joy where she dwelt, and heaven when she smiled.

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To watch o'er her fate, and to shield her from harm,
They relied that just Heaven would second their love;
So much merit they deemed would misfortune disarm,
And secure her protection from Powers above.

Was it wonder the youth of the country around,
For the preference of Loolee impatiently vied;
That suitors in shoals in attendance were found,
All eager to carry her off as a bride.

Of all ranks and stations, from near and afar
Were the claimants who bid for the fair maiden's hand;
There were high, there were low, men of peace, men of war,
From the hind, to the Lord of proud castles and land.

Yet was Loolee not vain of the homage she drew,
But a consort she firmly refused to select
From the crowd who besieged her, although, as was due,
She refused with all meekness and fitting respect.

The parents of Loolee would marvel and muse,
As they thought on their mean and their humble estate,
And somewhat regretted their child did not choose
A lord from the mass of the rich and the great.

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Suitors high, in whom all maidens else would rejoice,
To reject, in their wordly conceit, was absurd;
Yet they did not insist on their loved daughter's choice,
And to Heaven their vows for her welfare preferred.

But had then all those charms to fair Loolee been given
To raise idle hopes, and their ruin to prove?
Was that bosom, so stored with the virtues of heaven,
Foreclosed to the best of its sympathies—love?

Oh, no! in that shrine, where nought earthly was mingled,
Than the crystal of Balti more lucid and bright,
Love the flame of his taper had stealthily kindled,
Which glowed with its purest and holiest light.

There was one, in whose nature the maiden descried
The same genial warmth that exalted her own,
And in secret she owned to herself, and with pride,
That her love was devoted to him and alone.

He was not of the concourse of wealthy and proud,
Nor had he his suit to her suffering prest;
Yet conscious was she of his love unavowed,
And how deeply her image was stamped on his breast.

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When two hearts beat in union, it cannot be long
Ere the truth must gleam forth from its shallow disguise,
Nor needs it the voluble aid of the tongue—
Love can many more delicate mediums devise.

Many gifts, rare and costly, her suitors had brought,
Their homage, their hopes, and their duty to prove,
But Loolee refused them, as truly she ought,
Since she could not concede to their donors her love.

But of him whom she prized she accepted a rose,
Which she placed on her bosom—oh! prosperous sign!
On that bosom where monarchs would sigh to repose!
Happy minstrel of Khonar, fair Loolee is thine!

Go forth to the dells where erst echo so coy
Was wont to repeat thy sad plaints, and rejoice;
String thy lute to the full-flowing cadence of joy,
Lovely Loolee has blest thee and made thee her choice.

There were many who envied, but none who could blame—
The minstrel was handsome, accomplished, and young;
And beauty might justly the privilege claim,
To bless with its charms the inspired of song.

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Yet the parents of Loolee, their daughter believed
To have chosen the fortunate minstrel in haste;
And dazzled by wealth and its splendour, they grieved;
For a lover of rank had been more to their taste.

The father, moreover, to Loolee unknown,
In the secrets of destiny curious to pry,
Had consulted the Bungurrùk Seer of Kushmoon,
And had learned Loolee's fortune as traced in the sky.

The wizard pretended he shared in the love
Of the Queen of the Elves, who revealed in return
The fate of mankind, and the mysteries above,
Or whatever else he was willing to learn.

The fortune of Loolee disclosed by the Queen,
Was mixed with extremes both of brightness and gloom;
It was brief, for two pictures sufficed for the scene—
One, the bride of a Prince, and the other, a tomb.

The overjoyed sire took too kindly a view,
Of what the Queen told of the secrets of fate:
He was proud of his daughter, a princess, and knew
In the tomb but a portion which all must await.

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So it chanced when the minstrel—love soon valiant grows—
Had plighted his faith to the beautiful maid;
Her sire, though he did not the union oppose,
Urged pretences and reasons to have it delayed.

The fame of fair Loolee had spread far and wide,
And strangely the wonders were swelled by report,
Of her beauty, her coyness, and much more beside;
Till at length they had reached the Gandharian court.

It was said, in the vale of Beesoot was a flower
So beauteous, 'twere pity it flourished obscure;
It was worthy to bloom in the king's royal bower,
For never was flo'ret so lovely and pure.

The Prince of Gandhara's ambition was fired,
To possess what so many had sought to obtain;
Besides, with a tincture of passion inspired,
He dispatched to Beesoot a magnificent train.

He instructed his Lords to the fair to announce,
That, inflamed and subdued by her beauty's report,
He, the prince, had determined to make her at once,
The delight of his soul, and the pride of his court.

As pledge of his faith, they had orders to hold,
As an offering, an elephant, richly arrayed
With trappings of crimson, embroidered with gold,
To be tendered as gift to the beautiful maid.

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Now the laws of Gandhara, of old time, ordain,
That their kings, in this mode, shall their favour evince;
And no subject may dare to repine, or complain,
Much less to refuse the proud gift of their prince.

From the palace, the train, in its pompous array,
Has marched, and in front is the elephant led;
And wonder attends, as it wends on its way,
What damsel the prince may design for his bed.

It shapes its course westward, and through the defile
Of the Mohmund emerges on Ningnahar's dale;
On the bank of its river it journeys awhile,
And then takes the route of the fair Beesoot vale.

Are there none who forbode where that mission may steer?
Has Loolee no dread of the power of her charms?
Does her sire not remember the Bungurruk seer—
His daughter received by a prince, in his arms?

Soon all doubt is dispelled, and the gay cavalcade,
To the humble abode of pale Loolee draws nigh;
It arrives, and the Lords ask to see the fair maid,
Who trembles and greets, with a tear in her eye.

Surprised at her beauty, they reverently kneel,
And their sovereign's beneficent purpose report;
His love-gift they tender, and pledge with all zeal,
To escort the bright maiden in state to the court.

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A pallor spread over the fair Loolee's cheek,
She shrunk in dismay, and she drooped down her head;
Her terror deprived her of power to speak,
She shuddered, and tears in her agony shed.

Her father, who, proud of the honour conferred
On his house, called to memory the Bungurruk seer;
To the Lords, an excuse for his daughter, preferred,
And her illness ascribed to surprise more than fear.

To a litter was Loolee still senseless removed,
The commands of the prince none dared disobey;
Oh, woe to the minstrel of Khonar, beloved!
They have carried fair Loolee, his mistress, away.

Its steps now retraces the long cavalcade,
And heralds have sped to the Gandhara court,
To announce the approach of the fair Beesoot maid,
Whose beauty, so peerless, surpasses report.

The prince overjoyed, lists with pride and delight
To the tale of her many and wonderous charms;
And he longs for the hour to be blest with the sight
Of the treasure he sighs to receive in his arms.

Now the banners are waving, the trumpets' loud sound,
And the drums' rolling murmurs their clamour supply;
The pageant is tracing the Gandhara ground,
And now are the city and King's palace nigh.

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The Prince is all eager the fair one to meet,
The Lords of his court in due order are placed;
He alights from his charger fair Loolee to greet,
And straight to the litter advances in haste.

He draws back its curtains, and fixes his gaze—
Where at once are his joy and his eagerness fled!
Why that look of dire horror and dismal amaze?
The bride he expected—fair Loolee was dead!

Hapless minstrel of Khonar, his rival was foiled,
And the purity of Loolee pollution defied;
Of him her beloved and affection despoiled,
That beautiful floweret, withered and died.

He roved, without Loolee, a desolate swain,
And in anguish, he broke his melodious lute;
With life and his sorrow he wrestled in vain,
And ended them both in the stream of Beesoot.

The parents of Loolee their errors descried,
And mourned their lost child with affliction sincere;
But stricken with grief, they too languished and died,
Lamenting they questioned the Bungurruk seer.

The Prince a due season of mourning decreed
Through his state, for the fair and unfortunate maid,
And commanded the corpse should in pomp be conveyed
To Beesoot, in the land of her birth to be laid.

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Trains of virgins the mournful procession attend,
Clad in white, as befitting the duty they paid ;
And hymns to the Fountain of Mercy ascend,
For the peace and repose of the innocent maid.

Crowds flocked, as the concourse their journey pursued,
And o'er fair Loolee's fate was shed many a tear ;
The paths in the progress with garlands were strewed,
And snowdrops and lilies were cast on the bier.

Arrived in Beesoot, by the Prince's command,
His Loolee's remains were interred on this spot—
That her tomb might be seen throughout the wide land,
And her beauty and constancy never forgot.

Such, Oh traveller ! is the story of Loolee the fair,
Which faithful traditions preserve and record ;
If on earth she had sorrow, we do not despair,
That in heaven her virtue has found its reward.

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Hazaret Alee and Bul Sheenwauree.

In the following copy of verses, I have ventured to put forth another legend of Hazaret Alee, relating to an adventure he is supposed to have encountered in the celebrated valley, or rather defile, of Khaibar. By it the Afghans may pretend in some measure to account for the very extensive works, apparently of a defensive character, which in some former time have been carried along the ridges of the hills in many parts of those formidable fastnesses; but I apprehend but for the copious springs which have their rise at the spot called Alee Musjeed, we should never have had the legend. Near it was, in ancient time, a structure of some kind, a fort or a temple, and the site, being on a hill, was selected by Dost Mahomed Khan for the erection of a small post, when the Sikhs appeared to threaten the defiles by establishing themselves at Jumrood.

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HAZARET ALEE,

AND

BUL SHEENWAUREE, THE GIANTESS OF KHAIBAR.

A LEGEND OF KHAIBAR.

THE hosts of the heathen lie prostrate and foiled ;
Their gore stains the snow of the drear Hindoo Kosh,
And Alee, the mighty, has vanquished and spoiled
The iron-clad Kaffer, the stern Aheenposh.

That tyrant the power of Allah defied ;
He was bold, and relied on his fortunate star ;
He shouted, and rushed to the war in his pride,
And was clove to the earth by the bright Zoolfee-kar.

Cries Alee, " I have conquered so many stout foes,
" And so many gaunt monsters and heathens I've slain,
" I am willing awhile from my toils to repose,
" And I long to say prayers in blest Mecca again.

" Trusty Kumber, we'll march to the borders of Hind,
" Which the fast-flowing streams of the Neelaub invest,
" And tracing its course to the country of Sind,
" We will cross the wide ocean to Mecca the blest.

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" If paynims and dragons our passage oppose,
" And to Allah refuse a just homage to pay,
" We must needs use our valour and treat them as foes,
" By God's grace, our strong arms will open our way."

Now along the deep valley of famed Ningnahar
Rides Alee the Great—trusty Kumber before;
And the dark hills of Khaibar rise looming afar,
Like a rampart extending the rugged land o'er.

Through those dark-frowning hills, they a passage must force
To the plain, where of Pooroosh the great city stands,
Beyond which the Neelaub divides in its course,
The region of Hind from the Gandhara lands.

They have reached the dark hills, and are following the track,
When a dwarf issues forth from a cave on one side,
" Oh, my lord! I entreat thee, in mercy come back;
" There is no one who ventures on this road to ride."

" Who art thou," Alee cried, " of diminutive form?
" And what is the risk you would have me eschew?
" The eagle less ardent exults in the storm,
" Than do I when some peril presents to my view."

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" My Lord, there's a giantess lives in these hills,
" Who suffers no stranger to pass through her land;
" No matter his country, she seizes and kills,
" And her strength is so great, 'tis in vain to withstand.

" I complain not, my lord, that you jeer at my size,
" For of thine would this giantess surely make sport,
" She's so tall that her head seems to bear up the skies,
" And of hills piled on hills she has made her a fort.

" When her food she prepares, and she sits on the hills,
" And water she wants as she's kneading her dough,
" With the right hand her bowl from the Kameh she fills,
" While the left hand extends to the Neelaub below.

" In the rich glowing juice of the grape she delights,
" With the pure wines of Kaubul her cellars are stored,
" And 'tis said she rejoices to pass through her nights,
" In revel and mirth o'er the plentiful board.

" Otherwise she is comely, and glad to the sight,
" And her features like those of a young bride are fair,
" Her eyes shine like stars in their radiance bright,
" And the gloss of the topaz is matched by her hair.

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" Yet my lord I would pray thee in safety fall back,
" Many paths through the mountains will serve thee as well,
" And perdition awaits all who follow this track,
" For the giantess roused is a tigress of hell."

" Thanks, my friend, for your counsel, 'tis honest and wise,
" Yet I may not return, since so far I have past,
" Pray tell me the name of this dame of large size,
" And at what time of evening she takes her repast."

" Her name's Bul Sheenwauree, or so she is called,
" And at sunset, my lord, it is said that she sups;
" But I pray thee return, or thy life will be thralled,
" She never spared mortal, she saw in her cups."

" Good friend, I proceed, and from what you declare,
" Of the charms of this marvellous lady so bright,
" Of her eyes and her features, and topaz-tinged hair,
" I intend to take with her my supper to night."

" May the just God of heaven preserve thee in view,
" On journey no mortal in safety has trod!
" My lord, of a truth will his confidence rue,
" Unless he be Alee, the Lion of God."

Now through the dark hills of the Khaibar they speed,
Their summits with towers and battlements crowned,
The passage is lengthened and weary indeed,
And silence and gloom cast a terror around.

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" I could wish of these rugged defiles we were clear,"
Cries Alee, the brave, " they will make Duldul lame ;
" Methinks, trusty Kumber, the time must draw near—
" We should reach the abode of the giantess dame."

Duldul snorts, and stout Kumber exclaims—" See, my Lord,
" Yon's the castle, which looks as if built in the air,
" And there sits the Kafferree, perchance our reward—
" I never saw Kafferree so huge, or so fair."

There sat she, that giantess, strong in her might,
On the hill, with a turretted crown on her head,
And her countenance beamed with a pure lambent light,
As she plied her long fingers in kneading her bread.

" By my troth," cries brave Alee, " the dwarf did not feign,
" When he told of her castle, her strength, and her size ;
" And had she but faith, she might justly be vain
" Of her features, her topaz-tinged hair, and bright eyes.

" Trusty Kumber, I would not this giantess harm,
" Nor employ my keen arrows or bright Zoolfeekar,
" My shrill-sounding conch may possess a due charm,
" And I'll send her a summons to yield from afar."

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Then Alee dismounting, his conch takes in hand,
And he blows a long blast, so terrific and shrill,
It re-echoes in thunder all o'er the broad land,
And the fort of the giantess quakes on the hill.

" Bul Sheenwauree, I wish not to harm thee or thine,
" On condition you grant the two things I demand,
" That you bow to great Allah, the one God divine,
" And permit me to journey in peace through your land."

The giantess shrinks for the moment in awe,
But straight she recovers the deafening shock,
And foaming with wrath, when brave Alee she saw,
She replies to the summons by hurling a rock.

" What dwarf thus presumes to disparage my strength?
" The pigmy perhaps sends his summons in sport:
" I'll crush him, or stretch out my arm to its length,
" And dash out his brains on the walls of my fort."

She stretched out her arm, and bold Alee in haste,
Slipped her grasp, while he firmly encountered her eye,
Then closing, he first seized her fast by the waist,
And then held her up 'twixt the earth and the sky.

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" Bul Sheenwauree, how long you may hang in the air,
" Will depend rather more on your pleasure than mine :
" It were seemly a maiden so valiant and fair,
" Should acknowledge the one only God, the divine.

" If the victor, I wish your conversion to see
" To that faith, in whose light now so many have trod,
" And the shame is not great to be vanquished by me,
" Who am Hazaret Alee, the Lion of God."

Bul Sheenwauree was moved by this gracious address,
Nor displeased she was thought to be valiant and fair ;
So the faith recommended, she vowed to profess,
For she did not like hanging too long in the air.

Hazaret Alee, the victor, was courteous as bold,
And at her decision evinced such delight,
Bul Sheenwauree his generous nature extolled,
And implored him to tarry her guest for the night.

Now Alee partakes of the delicate feast,
And then, as was fitting, to bar all reproach,
With the blessing of Kumber, who acted as priest,
He leads Bul Sheenwauree, a bride, to his couch.

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Next morn the bright sun in the heavens arose,
And Alee, the brave, on his course had not sped;
The charms of his bride, or the need of repose,
Detained him much longer than usual in bed.

When Kumber was ordered fierce Duldul to bring,
And Alee, equipped, was all ready to move,
To the fair Bul Sheenwauree he tenders a ring,
As a pledge of his faith, and a token of love.

He has left the strong fort, and below in the dell,
Where the loud waters gush from the black rock with force,
He alights, and he cries, "Trusty Kumber, 'twere well
"That to Allah we pray for a prosperous course.

"Many heathens we have quelled, through His favour and might;
"Some are converts, and others lie weltering in gore,
"But his mercies are crowned by our conquest last night;
"For Islam never won such a triumph before.

"In this solitude, prayer takes a suitable tone,
"And I will, in remembrance of this our great deed,
"That in all future ages the spot shall be known,
"And sacred to Islam, as Alee's musjeed."

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Kurna and Roodra.

In the following copy of verses, the subject, of which the Panjab is made the locality, has been taken advantage of, to allude to the probable state of the country, both in a political and religious point of view, in the eighth century. It is entitled a Legendary Tale, because it is not strictly speaking a legend which is current, and notes are appended when the text seemed to require them.

KURNA AND ROODRA.

A LEGENDARY TALE OF THE PANJAB.

In a castle, whose crenellate turrets controlled
The vale, by the Sohan* divided in twain,
Dwelt the father of Roodra, a Raya† of old,
The Lord of the castle and circling domain.

* The Sohan is a river in the western region of the Panjab, or the tract between the rivers Indus and Jeylam (the ancient Hydaspes); it was formerly known by the name of Aobodha, and on the Sohan stood the famous city of Taxila.

† Raya, a vernacular expression for Raja (Ruler), was the title anciently borne by the numerous petty feudatory chieftains of the Panjab.

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In a region, by climate and sky genial blest,
Where beauty the birthright appears of the fair,
That of Roodra, the flower of its maidens confest,
Must have been something very bewitching and rare.

The times were of trouble, and seldom, by chance,
Would Roodra adventure the castle beyond;
Yet did she one day, and it happened her glance
Fell on that of a youth bold enough to respond.

The youth was the son of a neighbouring chief,
Who alike owned a castle and bordering estate;
The charms he encountered subdued him: in brief,
Love a victim had found not averse to his fate.

He was following the chace on a high-mettled steed,
With his falcon in hand, bow and quiver at back,
And thoughtless of all but his sport, at full speed,
When, as destined, he fell on the fair Roodra's track.

Checked abruptly, his charger was thrown on its haunch,
When from Roodra escaped a shrill cry of alarm,
But the youth was adroit, and the charger was staunch,
And both soon were righted, while neither met harm.

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The glances exchanged of the sportsman and maid,
His bearing found grace in her innocent breast,
How her beauty moved him, his confusion betrayed,
And her care for his peril completed the rest.

Enraptured he was, yet respectfully awed,
He faltered his thanks with indifferent grace;
But thenceforth fair Roodra was often abroad,
And the youth grew remarkably fond of the chace.

Moreover whenever the bright lady strayed,
She always selected the very same track,
While the sportsman a similar impulse obeyed,
With his falcon in hand, bow and quiver at back.

It was strange, very strange, they so often should meet,
All, of course, without concert or settled design,
That the damsel grew venturous—before so discreet,
The cause those, who like her have felt, must divine.

For some time they neither found words to express,
Their sensations which yet they but badly conceal;
But at length they conversed as their shyness grew less,
First a little, then more, and at last a good deal.

Their meetings were hallowed by exquisite joy,
Love had banished distrust and its satellite fear,
Like the moments which angels in greeting employ,
Are the meetings of lovers when love is sincere.

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Came the day when, as wonted, fair Roodra pursued
The path by the old and familiar-grown track,
When on foot, to her wonder, the sportsman she viewed,
Without falcon in hand, bow and quiver at back.

And his features were woeful; she shrunk with dismay.—
"Oh, Kurna!" for so was he called, she exclaimed,
"Why sad? Why not meet me as heretofore gay?
"For this change is my fortune, or thine to be blamed?

"Dearest lady, may ever thy fortune prove kind,
"And may ever my memory be dear to thy heart;
"Yet the gloom of uncertainty darkens my mind,
"For duty compels me from Roodra to part.

"The great King of Kings hath his banners unfurled,
"And hath summoned his Rayas in haste to attend;
"He, whose puissance of yore overshadowed the world,
"Takes the field, his own realm from the foe to defend.

"To the plains of Sirhind (at the summons I fly,
"My sire so wills, and 'tis mine to obey)
"I lead my Syallas*. And need you ask why,
"If bearing such tidings, I cease to be gay?

* The Syallas were the race formerly dwelling in Taxila and its vicinity.

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" Not that dreams of the fame to be won by the sword,
" Incite not my bosom with triumph to swell,
" But 'tis misery to part from thee, Roodra, adored!
" And to bid thee, for ever it may be, farewell!"

Fair Roodra awhile drooped her languishing head,
And pressed the youth's hand that grasped firmly her own;
Then raising her beautiful features, she said—
" Go, Kurna, and fight for your King and his throne!

" For thee, while thine absence to mourn is my task,
" My prayers shall ascend to the spirits above;
" In a maiden it would be unworthy to ask
" Him she lives for, to sacrifice duty to love.

" Go, gather renown in so noble a cause—
" For the generous, glory like love hath a spell;
" But triumphant, and vain of a warrior's applause,
" Forget not thy Roodra, who loves thee so well!"

Then Kurna the fair bashful maiden embraced,
And the lips which the tender confession avowed,
Nor did innocent Roodra withdraw them in haste,
While listening the love he so fervently vowed.

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They parted—their rings * to each other conveyed
The appropriate symbols of union and truth;
The regards of the youth lingered after the maid—
Those of Roodra not less lingered after the youth.

Thenceforth she was prone from her train to retire,
Filled with musings, the better indulged when alone,
And no longer she roved from the castle of her sire,
For with Kurna the courage of Roodra had flown.

To the turrets at morning, she daily would speed,
To hail the proud sun as it rose in the east,
And she thought, while observing the rites of her creed,
On it Kurna was gazing—the thought was a feast.

And then, in due season, she watched in the sky,
Through the gift-ring of Kurna, most fearful to miss
The first glimpse of the new moon, which thus to descry,
Was an omen auspicious of fortune and bliss†.

* Rings are esteemed symbolical of union and affection by oriental, as well as by western nations, and were so considered in all antiquity.

† To see the new moon is thought lucky by both Hindoos and Mahomedans, particularly if seen through a ring.

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Yet moon after moon in its circuit had run,
And from Kurna no tidings of joy came to hand;
The maiden confiding still prayed to the sun,
But rumours of evil had spread through the land.

In Hind it was known that confusion was rife;
Kings Lunar and Solar were pitted in arms;
While sects of all colours promoted the strife,
Expecting to rise on their rivals' alarms.

In the west a dark cloud o'er the horizon frowned,
For the Zealots of Yemen*, by numbers increased,
Under Abbas the Bloody new vigour had found,
And menaced to burst o'er the lands of the east.

Already as converts and allies they claimed
The Ghorians†, sons of a mountainous soil,
Who had raised the war-shout, while great Allah they named,
Lured by visions of conquest and Hind's costly spoil.

The Kosola Toorks‡, who might else have defied
The sable-clad hosts, and their bigoted zeal,
Had ranged themselves too on the foreigners' side,
And betrayed both their own and the general weal.

* That is the Arabs

† The mountaineers of Ghor, from whom some of the Afghan tribes claim descent, were early converts to Islam.

‡ Kosola was the name of a kingdom west of the Indus, comprising probably the modern Kaubul and Ghuznee, and, at the period alluded to in the tale, was, it may be presumed, held by Toorkee Princes.

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Deep and dire was the gloom that pervaded the land
Of Ayoodha the sunny, which gave Rama birth*;
Its warriors away at the monarch's command,
Its plains and its vallies forsaken of mirth.

The winter was closing its course long and drear,
And already the swallow was seen on the wing,
And all were awaiting the forthcoming year,
Though marvelling what changes or woes it might bring.

Now that season to them was most sacred of old,
And devote to festivity, music, and mirth,
For then first the sun in the firmament rolled,
And smiled on the wonderous creation of earth.

The swains then were wont, in their holiday vests,
To practise their ploughs on the respited soil,
To call in their friends, and carouse with their guests,
And crave that a blessing might crown the year's toil†.

* Rama is generally supposed to have been born at Oude, which is also called Ayoodha; but it may be suspected that Ayoodha of the Punjab has the preferable claim; of course, the hero Rama, and not the mythological personage of that name, is intended.

† This custom is still observed by the agriculturists of Kaubul.

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'Twas the season in honour observed from all time,
When all, by the law and its mysteries bound,
Offered vows to Ardokro*, the goddess sublime,
Whose bounty the earth with fertility crowned:

By whose power the soil from its slumbers arose,
And nature rejoiced with fecundity rife,
Earth's beneficent mother, and dignified spouse,
Of Okro†, dispenser of light and of life.

By the hills of Ayoodha a dell was enclosed,
Sequestered, and breathing the holiest calm,
Where a lake, on whose bosom the lotus reposed,
Was margined by groves of the peepul‡ and palm§.

It was said, that in epoch remote, it was held
By dragons and serpents, a hideous train!
But Ardokro the reptiles and monsters expelled,
And adopted the spot as her favourite fane.

* Ardokro, a female Magian goddess typified on Indo-Scythic coins, possibly the equivalent of the Egyptian Isis, and the prototype of the Hindoo Parvati, the wife of Siva. The worship of Andokro was indubitably prevalent at the date taken for the tale.

† Okro a deity also typified on Indo-Scythic coins.

‡ The peepul is the Indian fig tree (ticus religiosa).

§ In the hills near Rowul Pindee, which if not on the exact site, still may be presumed to represent *hodie* the ancient Taxila, is a celebrated shrine of the nature here described, at which annually in spring a large meyla, or fair, is kept. The Mahomedans ascribe it to a saint, called Latti Cheree.

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Straight it gleamed with a mantle of lotus arrayed,
Whence she gathered the flowers and garnished her throne,
And birds of all colours their plumage displayed,
In groves, where before all was barren and lone.

In proof of her presence, the trees never sear,
In all seasons their foliage is vivid and bright,
Nor migrate the warblers, but sing through the year
In chorus unceasing their notes of delight.

It was thither in spring from the regions around,
And distant, that myriads their progress inclined,
Robed in white, and their wands with the young blossoms bound,
Of the nergiss*, and iris, in chaplets entwined.

It was thither, that solemnly chaunting they led
In procession, the bull with the chowree† fanned,
With his horns golden tipped, and with garlanded head,
A type of the Goddess who cherished the land.

When there, to the lake they meet offerings made
Of fruits and of flowers, of milk and of grain,
And they joyously danced in the sunshine and shade,
And strewed with sweet blossoms the Goddess's fane.

* The narcissus.

† The chowree is the tail of the Tibetan ox, which, set in a handle, is used as a fan.

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Now draws the glad time of the festival nigh,
And Ayoodha's bright maids for its honours prepare :
Will Roodra, long given to pine and to sigh,
Be present, and smile on the multitude there ?

She will, though her bosom be anguished with woes,
And vainly she struggles its pangs to conceal ;
She will pay to the Goddess the duty she owes,
And crave of her Kurna's protection and weal.

There was Roodra, like Peree in mortal disguise,
And so proudly excelling in beauty and grace,
That to her was assigned, nor did envy arise,
In the rites of the Noh Roz* the prominent place.

It was she, the admired of spectators, who led,
While a gem-bright tiara encircled her brow,
The bull with gilt horns, and with garlanded head,
And in name of the people submitted the vow.

" That the love and the grace of the Mother benign
" Would fall on the soil, and its products increase—
" That her favour would bless those who knelt at her shrine,
" And crown all their wishes in fulness and peace."

* Noh Roz—New year's day.

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Then the meek virgin train their petitions addrest,
For the boon each held nearest and dearest at heart;
What was Roodra's we know not, but this may be guest,
'Twas a boon in which Kurna and love had a part.

The fair white-robed suppliants still knelt on the green,
And the trumpets proclaimed the fulfilment of law;
But of many who gazed on the marvellous scene,
There was one who beheld not with reverence and awe.

This was Sunka of Shumlah*, a Gandhara Lord,
Who had crossed the broad Indus to visit the fane;
A man for his lawless injustice abhorred,
But the chief of stout bands and a potent domain.

His eye dwelt on Roodra; he never had seen,
Nor in dream had imagined a virgin so bright;
And entranced with her beauty, her form, and her mien,
He determined to win her by favour or might.

The festival past, did fair Roodra retire
To her castle, where still for her Kurna she sighed:
Lo! heralds from Shumlah announce to her sire,
That Sunka solicits his daughter for bride.

* Shumlah, a district of Gandhara, west of the Indus river.

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The demand, if in wonder the Raya received,
He yet in the guise of civility heard,
And premising he was of much honour bereaved,
He pleaded the claim of another preferred.

Of Roodra, the mind gloomy bodings possest,
And often her tears would incontinent flow;
By day she was lorn, and by night had no rest—
Would Kurna return, or be slain by the foe?

Anew o'er the land fearful rumours prevailed,
All were smitten with panic, and no one knew why;
It was whispered that fortune the great King had failed,
And that evils impending were lowering nigh.

On the turrets fair Roodra each morn took her stand,
The Sun for her Kurna to hail and implore,
And she saw, in their speed flying over the land,
Bands of horsemen—she gazed, but she knew nothing more.

At length the dire truth in Ayoodha was known,
The great King of Kings in the battle was slain;
From the Moon-favoured tribes had departed the crown,
And the race of the Sun wield the sceptre again.

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To Roodra from Kurna no tidings arrive :
What must the sad virgin believe or suppose ?
What her anguish and doubt—is he dead or alive ?
Is he faithless ? Oh no ! he is slain by the foes!

He could not be faithless, fair Roodra divined,
And the faith of an innocent virgin is strong ;
Her image too deeply was graven on his mind—
So she thought ; and he never would do her such wrong.

Yet no tidings. Alas ! must then Kurna be slain ?
Oh ! that some friendly tongue would the fancy deny !
Lies his corse in dishonour exposed on the plain ?
Oh ! the thought is too dreadful—and Roodra must die !

There are tidings, for warriors, returned from the field,
Tell in haste that young Kurna won deathless renown—
That, all lost, he still struggled, disdaining to yield—
Is a captive, or else has gained martyrdom's crown !

While Roodra sits weeping, behold ! to her sire,
The heralds of insolent Sunka again
Bear a message, and boldly the maiden require,
Since he that she once so affected was slain.

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Of a truth then, the spirit of Kurna had fled
From the earth, to its seat in the mansions of rest;
And Roodra, disconsolate, sunk down her head,
In the anguish of woe, on her beautiful breast.

Console thee, sad maid! from thy reveries awake;
The place of thy Kurna may soon be supplied;
For Sunka of Shumlah is willing to take
The love-bereft Roodra, and make her his bride.

Foul thought! that the bold, lawless chief should aspire
To her hand, or that she to his passion should list;
The virgin's resolves were approved by her sire,
And again were the heralds of Sunka dismissed.

Straight the Raya his bands gathered in from the plains;
It behoves him his castle protected to hold;
The realm was convulsed, and fell anarchy reigns,
While the tyrant of Shumlah was impious and bold.

To thee, hapless Roodra! e'en death were a boon,
To the Goddess thy vows were but idly addrest;
In vain had she sought the first glimpse of the moon,
Through the gift-ring of Kurna still worn near her breast.

If wakeful she wept o'er her happiness seared,
Yet oft in her slumbers fair visions arose;
Heaven opened to her view, and the Goddess appeared,
Resplendent in glory, and smiled on her vows.

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But where then is Kurna, so valiant and young?
To the field of the battle our course let us wing;
Behold mighty Bappa* his warriors among,
Who proudly salute him as victor and King.

For the Moon from her sons had her favour withheld,
And the thread of their power its term had outrun;
Their pillars of greatness in ruin were felled,
And the empire had fallen to the race of the Sun.

Elate with his triumph, great Bappa gazed round
On the field, and commanded that carnage should cease;
For pity and ruth in his bosom were found,
And the first and the noblest of conquests is peace.

"Who were foes now are subjects," the noble Chief cried;
"If vanquished, with honour they loyally fought;
"And let him who so long in the contest defied
"Our Rajpootras, forthwith in our presence be brought."

* Bappa, a celebrated Rajpootra hero, who is said to have marched from Cheitore, about A. D. 763, and to have subdued the various countries of Afghanistan and Turkistan. Antiquarian research and discovery confirm the historical traditions of these conquests.

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A youth was led forward, who dropped on his knee,
When the monarch, advancing, took kindly his hand—
" Arise, gallant youth, you are honoured and free,
" Though it was not your will made me Lord of the land.

" Young in age, but so valiant in arms, I must own,
" That your prowess this day had nigh brought on me shame,
" So stoutly you fought for your King and his throne;
" I would fain know your country, and lineage, and name."

" I am Kurna, oh King! a Syala by race;
" In a vale of Ayoodha I first saw the light;
" Of my father, grown aged, I came in the place
" To the wars, in defence of our Sovereign's right."

" It is well, gallant Kurna, you nobly have done:
" With our sanction, you may to your father repair;
" His eyes will be blessed by the sight of his son,
" And your fame and your fortune are henceforth our care.

" When our armies have strengthened by needful repose,
" We march with our banners displayed towards the west,
" To advantage our friends, and to punish our foes,
" And at Taxila look to see Kurna our guest.

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" Yet this aigret you may from our favour receive,
" 'Twill a mark to your friends of our countenance prove ;
" Nor displease your good sire; nor, we dare to believe,
" The fair maiden, if maiden there be, whom you love."

Who so happy as Kurna? Already in thought,
The beautiful Roodra he saw and embraced.
Few were spared of the friends he to battle had brought,
But those few he assembled together in haste.

On the road to Ayoodha he cheeringly sped;
But unhappily sent on no tidings before,
Even thinking that Roodra might fear he was dead,
And her joy when she saw him return would be more.

But Sunka, who never was loyal and true,
In the camp of great Bappa had minions and spies,
Who steadily kept his instructions in view,
And were ready to act as their Lord might advise.

That Kurna would fall in the field, he had deemed
As likely, and fealty to Bappa he feigned ;
But the former alive, and by Bappa esteemed,
A last and a desperate effort remained.

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He instructed his friends in the camp to take heed
That Kurna ne'er came to Ayoodha again;
His interest required that a victim should bleed,
And the youth on the road must be waylaid and slain.

Then once more to Ayoodha his heralds he sent,
And sternly demanded fair Roodra as bride;
It was hinted the Raya might one day repent
His refusal. The Raya the menace defied.

Then Sunka waxed wrathful, and swore in despite
Of the Raya, his daughter by arms to possess;
And he learned, from his minions in camp, with delight,
That their efforts to serve him had met with success.

They reported they waited the youth and his few,
In a narrow defile, and assailed them by night;
Though desperate the conflict, they all of them slew:—
But they knew not that one had escaped them by flight!

The tyrant rejoiced, but he felt it was due
To be prompt, with the vengeance of Bappa to fear,
And without further counsel together he drew
All his host, and his friends from Suwaut and Booneer*.

* Districts adjacent to Shumlah.

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Nor paused he, but hastened to Kosala straight,
Where to Islam's great Chief he submissively bowed;
Said his warriors and allies but orders await,
And himself as a slave of the Prophet avowed.

With the stout bands of Yemen, the Toork, and the Hun,
It was easy rich Hind with its spoil to secure;
But the blow should be struck, and the deed should be done,
Ere Bappa the dread, should his empire assure.

And proud would he be of the Chieftain's commands,
The banners of the true faith at once to display—
To pass o'er the Indus his resolute bands,
And to glory and conquest to herald the way.

Islam had a glorious triumph achieved,
A convert of note had been gained to the cause;
His proposal alike was with favour received,
And his zeal and his ardour won general applause.

Cried the chieftain—"Thy words are as precious as gold;
"God is great, if the infidel in power be strong!
"Go forth, valiant Sunka, thy banners unfold,
"Our stout-hearted bands do not tarry here long."

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While thus the dark storm o'er Ayoodha had set,
At Cheitore there was pageantry, revelling, and mirth;
For the rulers and sages of Hind there had met,
And Bappa acknowledged as King of the earth.

The hero exalted, they raised on a throne,
And his head they anointed with honey and oil;
Blades of grass, with fresh corn spikes, they set on his crown,
In token that his were the dues of the soil.

Then the Monarch commanded a horse to be bound,
Whose forehead a star, white and dazzling, displayed,
Pure in breed, fed on grain, with a green wreath around
Its neck, that the rites to the sun might be paid*.

And he called on the sages to aid in the rite,
That he, by its virtues and powers endued,
Might shine on the earth a magnificent light,
And hold all its Kings to his empire subdued:

* In ancient India, a King ambitious of universal empire, performed the solemn ceremony of the aswamedha, the offering of a sacred horse. It is well known that the horse was sacred to the sun amongst some of the ancient Scythians, with whom probably originated the ceremony.

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And gifts of rare price to the sages he gave,
Who proclaimed that the King should live ever renowned—
That fortune should follow him as handmaid and slave,
And as Indra* in Heav'n, he on earth should be crowned.

Thus was Bappa installed on the plain of Cheitore,
And of myriads the shouts rent the echoing skies,
For never had Hind for its Sovereign before,
A hero more valiant, more liberal, or wise.

Straight he bade the bold chiefs, who his triumphs had shared,
Now the realm was in peace and security blest,
To gather their warriors, and hold them prepared
To march to the menaced frontiers of the west.

While the levies were forming, young Kurna again,
In the Monarch's dread presence was dropped on the knee:
"What!" cried Bappa, in wonder, "we pray thee explain;
"Is it Kurna who kneels, or a vision we see?"

* Indra, supreme of the Gods, is said in the Vedus to have become so, by performing the aswamedha rite.

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" 'Tis no vision, oh King! but 'tis Kurna, escaped
" From the dastard assault of assassins unknown,
" Who by night set his path as his journey he shaped,
" And, alas! mighty Monarch, he kneels here alone!"

" Arise, noble Kurna, and be of good cheer,
" We ourselves, as an escort, will convoy thee soon;
" The traitors detected, our vengeance may fear,
" Our armies are ready, and wait but the moon*."

He spoke, when, lo! heralds announced to the King,
That Sunka, of Shumlah, his faith had betrayed;
And, determined the hosts of the Arab to bring
Upon Hind, had the banner of Islam displayed:

And another succeeds, who reports he has crossed
The Indus, on vast plans of conquest inclined—
That the Rayas, in fear and confusion are lost,
For Toorks, Huns, and Arabs, support him behind.

Yet another, who tells he has leaguered around
A castle, and to a fair maiden lays claim;
The sire a Syala, a good man and sound,
The maiden his daughter, and Roodra by name.

* That is the appearance of the new moon, before which it would be thought unlucky to march.

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The King, who the tidings with dignity heard,
While a flush e'en of triumph illumined his brow,
At that name glanced on Kurna, and smiling averred,
" I think, friend, the would-be assassin I know."

In the bosom of Kurna what feelings arose!
The King saw at once he suspected aright,
And rejoined—" We esteem it most kind of our foes
" That they place themselves thus within reach of our might.

" The Arab, no, doubt, we had purposed to seek,
" And looked to long marches, hard battles, and toil;
" But his pride is his folly—he makes himself weak,
" And loses his strength by invading our soil.

" This Sunka of Shumlah, a renegade bold,
" We deliver to Kurna, our guest and our friend,
" And let ten thousand valiant Rajpootras be told,
" On the orders of Kurna, their chief, to attend.

" For ourselves we may tarry, and wait the new moon;
" But matters there are which may not brook delay;
" And if sorry to part with our good friend so soon,
" We keep thee not, Kurna: no thanks, but away!"

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In Ayoodha, fair Roodra bewailing, deplored
The fate of young Kurna she loved, and her own;
His was cruel to fall by the merciless sword,
Hers was more so, surviving him sad and alone.

Yet at times would the solacing rumour arise,
That Kurna still lived, and would shortly appear;
But he came not, and rumour is given to lies—
Were he living, she thought, he would surely be here.

Still rumour, who, flirt like, is never at rest,
Would, in spite of her doubt, the same story repeat,
And added, with Bappa he sojourned a guest;
She, for the same reason, thought rumour a cheat.

Yet at night, should soft slumbers her sorrow beguile,
Would visions still soothe her of peace and of joy;
But if hope cheered her waking, it cheered but a while,
For too soon would reflection its comfort destroy.

Though weighty the load on the meek maiden cast,
On her faith further trials in fortune are stored
Lo! the renegade Sunka the Indus has past,
And wastes all around him with fire and sword.

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Too well gentle Roodra his purpose divined,
And her soul shrunk within her with horror and fright;
But her scorn seemed to lend a new strength to her mind,
When told that his vanguard was hovering in sight.

And Sunka of Shumlah has thrown off the mask,
And his heralds no longer claim Roodra for bride,
But demand that the Raya his mercy shall ask,
And submit to Islam, or his vengeance abide.

The Raya in council his clansmen convened,
What reply should be made to the insolent Chief?
Defy him, a worthless apostate and fiend!
And spurn both his summons, and hateful belief.

"Then 'tis so!" cried fair Roodra, "the man without grace,
"Would, impelled by his lust, win a virgin by force;
"But death shall preserve me from such foul disgrace,
"And Sunka but gain an inanimate corse.

"Oh, my sire! what the woe I have brought on thy head!
"Thy old age and faith, of a tyrant the scorn;
"Oh, that ere this, thy Roodra had slept with the dead,
"Or better than all had she never been born!"

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Fearful Sunka commanding his levies to halt,
Shouted—" Friends, for the resolute conflict prepare!
" Lo! there stands the castle that waits our assault,
" Slay old and slay young, but the one, Roodra, spare.

" The Raya our summons but lightly regards;
" His chattels and treasure may sweeten your toil;
" My peril the churl's bright-eyed daughter rewards—
" Remember that Roodra's my share of the spoil."

Swift the bands of bold Sunka the castle surround,
And on all sides impetuously drive the attack;
But its ramparts with loyal defenders are crowned,
And the haughty assailants defeated fall back.

And daily the tyrant his onslaught renewed,
When the dawn in its glimmering preceded the day;
Still the friends of the Raya unflinchingly stood,
And daily he led his foiled warriors away.

Fair Roodra, amidst the uproar of the strife,
Was in turn buoyed by hope and dejected by grief;
Now resolving on death, and now clinging to life;
Oh! that Heaven, or that Bappa, would send them relief!

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Even now the bright Goddess still lightened her rest,
In visions which promised her blessings in store;
But still his dire efforts the fell Sunka prest,
For repulse seemed to madden his fury the more.

"We fear not the foe," the good Raya oft cried;
"Nor his force nor his treason against us avail;
"Our castle is strong, and our clansmen are tried,
"But keep far the day when subsistence shall fail!"

And often fair Roodra he kindly consoled,
Her innocence yet would just Heaven befriend;
Oft were thwarted the plans of the impious and bold,
And magnificent Bappa might still succour send.

Of the day to be feared was the prospect in view,
And scant was the fare to each warrior assigned;
Yet the morning they battled like good men and true,
If fainting in body, still vigorous in mind.

In this peril, on heart-stricken Roodra once more
Shone, in vision, the Goddess who cherished the lands;
And smiling more sweetly than ever before,
She led to her Kurna, and joined both their hands.

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The beautiful virgin in rapture arose,
And poured out her praise to the Powers of the sky;
What betokens the omen? what must she suppose?
Is her doom then at hand, or deliverance nigh?

The warriors alert had the battlements crowned,
Impatiently waiting the daily attack;
But for once there's no foe, and they hear not a sound:
What has happened? and what keeps the bold Sunka back?

They peer thro' the gloom of the glimmering dawn,
And their eyes seek the cause of his sloth to explain;
Lo! they find from the castle his forces withdrawn,
And formed up in battle array on the plain.

They gaze on in silence, 'twas marvellous at least,
Yet to wonder was mingled a thrill of delight,
May they hope—they gaze round, and, behold! in the east
Clouds of dust, in the distance, ascend to the sight!

Oh! those clouds so obscure—do they veil friend or foe?
The Arab and Toork, or the bands of Cheitore;
Hark! the clarions of Sunka with shrill clangour blow,
And his daring Karowals* are thrown out before.

* Advanced guards or skirmishers.

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Still on roll the clouds, and the sun's rising rays
Gild their progress—and now a dark body appears;
Then their trumpets are heard, and there bursts forth a blaze,
Of gallant Rajpootras, their standards and spears.

From the ramparts the glad shout of triumph ascends,
E'en the beautiful Roodra was wild with delight;
And when told by her sire that the Rajpoots were friends,
She blessed the bright Goddess who smiled in the night.

The bands of Cheitore move in rapid advance,
The Karowals of Sunka fall backwards opprest,
Now mingle the hosts, and by sword, shield, and lance,
Must the victory be won—by who wields them the best.

The Raya to succour his friends if in need,
Had prepared his stout clansmen to join in the fray,
But a horseman arrived from the battle at speed,
Said a word to the Raya, who bade them to stay.

And joyful he sped to fair Roodra amain,
"Oh! my daughter, rejoice in the day of your birth!
"Your Kurna beloved you will soon meet again!"
"In Heaven, oh, my father!" "No, my daughter, on earth.

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" 'Tis Kurna himself leads the bands of Cheitore,
" Which Bappa, great King, to our rescue has sent ;
" And he bids us abide, till the combat be o'er,
" In peace, and confide on a glorious event !"

Then Roodra with fulness of joy was opprest,
Fresh hopes, fresh emotions, fresh conflicts and fears !
Her fair hands she clasped, drooped her head on her breast,
And poured forth her soul in a torrent of tears.

Still raged the fierce strife, and the tumult of war
Filled with havoc and clamour the region around ;
The shouts of the warriors were heard wide and far,
As they struggled for life on the fell battle ground.

O'er the fall'n and the falling fresh warriors advance,
And archers their death-bearing arrows discharged ;
Then flashed the bright blade, and then glistened the lance,
As squadrons on squadrons successively charged.

And slaughter was rife, and the hosts to and fro,
Like the tremulous waves of the sea were impelled,
And fierce yells of triumph, and dire shrieks of woe
Told how keenly and deadly the struggle was held.

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From the castle the Raya and clansmen surveyed,
With anxious emotion, the fate of the field;
It was true, gallant Kurna required not their aid,
But Sunka seemed loth or to fly or to yield.

And fiercer than ever the conflict raged on,
And madly the carnage on either side was prest.
Lo! they waver, they break, and the victory is won,
For they fly, and they fly in dismay, to the west!

And horsemen from Kurna on speed's fleetest wing,
For the castle their chargers exultingly press;
"Hail, Raya! thrice hail! we the glad tidings bring
"That Heaven has crowned the just cause with success.

"Of Sunka no more may the peaceful complain,
"The merciless tyrant has fallen in his gore;
"His trunk, food for vultures, lies stretched on the plain,
"As trophy, his head will be sent to Cheitore.

"And Kurna, the victor, commends this his suit,
"While his greeting attends on the turn of the day,
"That the Raya permit him, returned from pursuit,
"His respects at the castle in person to pay."

"Generous youth!" cried the Raya; "long blest may he live,
"In whom honour, and valour, and virtue combine;
"Bid him take all the welcome an old man can give,
"With the welcome of one quite as grateful as mine."

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That evening fair Roodra the sad stories told,
How her fears had been raised, her affection been proved;
But in hope for the future the virgin was bold,
Being listened to by Kurna, the youth whom she loved.

And Kurna had much, very much to relate
Of the pangs he had borne, and the perils he had past,
Of the favour vouchsafed him by Bappa the Great,
Which had brought him to her, and to happiness at last.

And the twain to Ardokro, the Goddess benign,
With fervour their praise for her clemency gave;
And when next the fair Roodra was seen at her shrine,
She knelt as the consort of Kurna the brave.

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MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

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MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

The Veiled Beauty.

When at Kazeroon, the writer in company with Aga Khosroo, a young man of the place, repaired to a garden in the suburb, perhaps at an hour when visitors were unexpected, and chanced to find a lady promenading in the shaded walks. In conformity to custom, she was covered from head to foot with her chaddar, or white linen dress. The garden being rather a private than a public one, the writer persuaded his companion to retire. Conversing with him about the custom of concealing the persons of females from observation, he justified it, as all Mahomedans do, on three several pleas. First, that of old and time-hallowed usage—which could be conceded: Secondly, that of the prudence in avoiding exposure to temptation—which may have some reason in it: and Thirdly, that women by nature are frail, and liable to go astray; upon which point the writer presumes not to offer an opinion. The incident and the conversation with Aga Khosroo, led to the following lines.

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THE VEILED BEAUTY.

WHY that face in chaddar shroud,
Like the moon in dusky cloud ?
For the moon and beauteous mien,
To be valued must be seen.

Vainly like a sylph ye rove,
Amid the tufted citron grove ;
We cannot pay thee homage due,
Thy lovely form concealed from view.

Though graceful as the lily pale,
That blooms in royal Susa's vale—
Though stately as a minaret,
Upon a marble temple set—
What boot thy stateliness and grace,
So long as thou withholdst thy face ?

Is thy bosom ne'er inspired
By the wish to be admired ?
Do thy breast no passions vex—
Passions common to thy sex ?

Well we know thy bosom glows
With warmth, and throbs with secret throes ;
Though thy robe thy face conceal,
Well we know thy heart must feel.

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Can we guess what bright array
Of charms, those folds deny to-day ?
Can fancy to the mind supply,
The lustre of thy hidden eye ?
Or can we in its fiction seek
The smile that plays upon thy cheek ?
Alas ! our keenest skill might fail,
To guess the charms beneath that veil.

Oh ! mourn the custom which destroys,
Converse free, and social joys !
Oh ! mourn the rule which dares to mask
Creation's last and lovliest task !

KAZEROON, IN PERSIA, 1830.

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STANZAS.

Say, what are crowns and coronets,
The garter, and the ball?
To nature we must pay our debts,
And there's an end to all.

The scanty term in life displayed,
While we our own can call it;
What matters it what part is played,
The viscount or the valet.

In that impending hour, when we
A just account must relate,
The curate may acquitted be—
Not so the haughty prelate.

Then on our famed and titled men,
The scrutiny may turn hard;
And many a pope may envy then,
A brother of Saint Bernard.

The monarch then, his empire o'er,
Gives place to clowns with blushes;
And washerwomen step before
The marchioness and duchess.

How futile then the flimsy pride,
Derived from gems and gold;
When life's thin veil is torn aside,
'Tis only truth can hold.

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How worthless human titles then!
Will they for crime atone?
And will mere rank from judgment screen
The sitter on a throne?

The only title to avail,
Is that which virtue gives;
On earth, its light can never fail,
And it hereafter lives.

A hind may win a heavenly crown,
When monarchs lose the prize;
And, rich in virtue, make his own
An empire in the skies.

GULF OF PERSIA, 1831.

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On being refused permission to land in Scind.

In April 1831, the writer left Muscat in an Arab vessel for Karachee, a seaport of Scind, intending, on his arrival there, to proceed along the banks of the Indus to Peshawer, and thence to Kaubul. On reaching Karachee, the vessel was fired upon by the garrison stationed in the fort Munneroh, and the writer was not suffered to land. So inhospitable a reception was wholly unexpected, and completely disconcerted all previously-formed arrangements. After some communion with himself and others, the writer decided to return in the Arab vessel to Ormarah, a port on the coast of Mekraun, and thence to attempt a passage into the upper countries.

In justice to the Ameers of Scind, who have since been heavily visited by misfortunes, the writer must add, that his disappointment at Karachee was not due to them, or to their orders; on the contrary, as he afterwards learned, the Ameers having been informed of his arrival, issued instructions that he should be received with all courtesy, and, further, that he should be considered as their méenaun, or guest, which meant that he was to be allowed to incur no expences; but their orders reached Karachee after he had left it, at the time not very well pleased.

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The author may also be excused to notice, that this repulse at Karachee was the occasion of his visiting Kalat of Balochistan, where, and in the vicinity, he resided seven months, which otherwise would not have happened. Ten years afterwards, when the course of events brought him again to Kalat, and he had the misfortune to become a prisoner of the revolted Brahooees of the country, the friends he had made during his first visit, were principally instrumental, under the favour of Heaven, in saving him from destruction.

ON BEING REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND IN SCIND.

ALTHOUGH events seem adverse,
Chase sorrow from thy breast,
If not exactly as 'twas wished,
Perchance 'tis for the best.

Against the will of Heaven
Forbear unjust reproach;
If not allowed to land in Scind,
Why do so in Baloche.

If the peril should be greater,
The glory will be more;
And e'en should fortune fail thee,
T'were folly to deplore.

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So frail is human nature,
  So feeble human sight,
Our measures oft are thwarted
  But to put our motions right.

Then with pious resignation
  Submit to Heaven's will ;
The power that erst has saved thee,
  Implored, will save thee still :

No matter what the danger,
  Or whither ye may stray ;
If the grace of God attend thee,
  And cheer thee on thy way !

Steer, steer then for Ormarah,
  And reassure thy breast ;
And be assured what Heaven ordains
  Is ever for the best.

KARACHEE HARBOUR, 1831.

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On May-day.

Civilly received at Ormarah, the writer resided there for some time, having assigned to him, as his place of abode, one of the towers of the ruinous mud fort. The shoomall wind raged incessantly, and sometimes with so much violence, as to menace the safety of the tower in which the writer dwelt. It required some patience and effort to wile away the hours at this desolate place; and the writer's chief resources were to sip coffee and to exercise his pen, as accident or reflection suggested a theme.

The first of May seemed to call for the tribute of a few lines; and an ascent the writer had made to the summit of Mount Arabah, overlooking the little town and sandy peninsular of Ormarah, had made him acquainted with the trees and plants to be met with there, from which he has selected a group for his garland. If Hoosnee be deemed an imaginary beauty, the writer may observe, that there are many Hoosnees at Ormarah; and that if, as a general rule, the males of the Baloche community must, agreeably to our notions, be considered deficient in personal appearance, many of the females, even estimated by the same standard, are very handsome, and deserve to be commemorated by abler pens than his.

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ON MAY-DAY.

THO' not amid a joyous band,
Of jocund youth, with chaplets gay;
Tho' roving in a stranger land,
I hail thy advent, first of May!

In absence, if our lot be cast,
Reflection may our grief decoy;
The mind may dwell on pleasures past,
And feel a melancholy joy.

When they are happy whom we love,
We feel not wholly sad or lone;
Their fortunes sympathetic prove,
And in their bliss we find our own.

Then need I not, in dark despair,
Too sorely wail my lot forlorn;
But bid awhile a truce to care,
And welcome May's auspicious morn.

Although no primrose wreath I bring,
No hawthorn blossoms bathed in dews,
As offerings to the genial spring,
I owe the homage of my muse.

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Tho' here no daisy-spangled mead
Allures, nor murmuring streamlet flows;
O'er rocks and crags the chase I'll lead,
And seek each fragant plant that grows.

I'll fly the sultry sandy beach,
The mountain's rugged sides I'll climb;
And on its even summit reach
Another sky, another clime.

There will I cull the clustered fig,
The mohr, with peerless bland perfume,
The majjersir, with balmy sprig,
The gaz, with ruddy pendent bloom.

The babool, with its golden hair,
I'll gather from its thorny seat;
The kroop, with blossom white and fair,
I'll mingle with koolmurreh sweet.

The pheer shall yield her fruit—the best
Of all that boast these fairy bowers;
And perpook grant her orange crest,
The brightest of the mountain flowers.

Should I with these a garland weave,
To whom address my May-day vow?
The gift fair Hoosnee may receive,
And place it on her ivory brow.

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The vernal wreath may well entwine
Her glossy ringlets, flowing gay;
While she, fair nymph, consents to shine,
The blooming Goddess of the day.

Thy sandy shores, Ormarah, seem
To glow, with verdure bright and fair;
It may be but an idle dream—
It is not—charming Hoosnee's there.

Beauty can sterile soils illume,
And in the desert charms unfold;
Its beams can pierce the night's dull gloom,
And paint the day with tints of gold.

As lovely Hoosnee, robed with grace,
Moves o'er the waste and lonely strand;
Fair blossoms spring at every pace,
And rays of glory fill the land.

The smiling type that nature wears,
Is borrowed from her face divine;
If it illusion be—my prayers
Implore it may be ever mine.

Break not the dear and magic spell,
Which makes a stranger's bosom gay;
That bids to life his numbers swell,
And animates his votive lay.

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Then let fair Hoosnee list my vow,
Nor scorn the homage which I pay;
And let my garland wreathe her brow,
In honour of the first of May.

ORMARAH, 1831.

THE COMPLAINT.

UNLUCKY I! who fain would rhyme,
But lack the inspiration fit;
Unhallowed wish! 'tis adverse time—
The year has seasons, so has wit.

Of old, the bard resolved to sing,
Indulged his flowing vein at will,
He sought the Heliconian spring,
And drank its waters to his fill.

The song-inspiring fountain 's dry,
No more are favoured by the nine;
Our bards the deficit supply,
With copious draughts of rosy wine.

No more, with bays and laurels crowned,
As suppliants to the muse they throng;
Their brows with vine and ivy bound,
From Bacchus they invoke the song.

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How luckless I, who cannot join,
With foaming cup the jovial train,
Condemned in Mooslem lands to pine,
Where generous wine is sought in vain.

What made the Prophet, surely wrong,
Proscribe the rich and mantling bowl?
Possessed he to the voice of song,
A deafened ear or callous soul?

Oh! had he known what various bliss,
What virtue in the grape is hidden,
He ne'er had deemed its juice amiss,
And wine had never been forbidden.

Perchance, the simple man but knew,
Of wine of dates—unholy, vile!
Of fiery nature—fashioned too
By uncouth hands in sorry style.

Had he but quaffed the generous bowl,
Whence Hafiz caught his glowing flame,
It's sacred warmth had flushed his soul,
And he had been inspired the same.

The mild persuasive charms of verse,
Had stayed his unrelenting sword;
His life had never proved a curse,
Nor man his stern career deplored.

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Alas! within his votaries' breasts,
The same mistaken zeal survives,
And they, to follow his behests,
In needless penance pass their lives.

Vain hope, to banish joy and mirth,
The genial cup and cheerful laughter,
To make a mournful hell of earth,
And dare to dream of heaven hereafter!

Ah, me! without the exciting bowl,
Sad, uninspired, I pensive sit,
No ray of light illumes my soul,
No spark of genius kindles wit.

In vain for rhymes I seek, with eyes
Now fixed on earth, now raised towards heaven;
My thoughts are bound with leaden ties—
My fancy with oppressive leaven.

Then woe to me, like woe to those,
Who in a Mooslem land forlorn,
Presumes to offer up their vows
To poetry, and meet with scorn.

But better days may come to pass,
And pleasure take the place of pain,
When wine shall sparkle in the glass,
And loose the soul to song again.

ORMARAH, 1831.

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THE CAUKER.

Let the dastard succumb at the feet of his lord,
Be elate at his smile, or depressed at his frown;
The Cauker confides on himself and his sword,
And scorns the mere will of a tyrant to own.

In these mountains his sires for ages have reigned,
Nor can hate on their valour impute a reproach;
In war and in peace they have freedom maintained,
And baffled the pride of Afghan and Baloche.

The hosts of Eeraun, tho' by Nadir impelled,
Those warriors who Kaubul and Zaubul had spoiled,
By the arms of our fathers were bravely repelled,
And fled from our borders desponding and foiled.

The Doaraunee in vain has our valleys assailed,
With bands that Hindostan could never oppose;
The lords of the sword in the struggle have failed,
And Bolan has streamed with the blood of our foes.

The land of his birth, to the Cauker how dear!
How dear are its rivulets, torrents, and rocks!
How prized are its mountains, terrific and drear!
How lovely its valleys, o'erspread with his flocks!

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How delightful to breathe the keen odorous gale,
With the fragrance imbued of the flowers of the lawn—
The mountain to climb, and enraptured, to hail
The birth of the day, and the blush of the dawn!

How thrilling to track, in their fugitive course,
The antler-graced stag, and the vigilant deer;
To urge the swift arrow with dexterous force,
To hurl with precision the tremulous spear!

Nor is it less cheering, when evening draws nigh,
On return to our homes with the spoils of the chase,
To meet our chaste consort's encouraging eye,
And forget our fatigue in her love and embrace.

To close round our fires on the advent of night,
As the youth lead the dance in its circles along;
And the minstrels awaken to notes of delight,
Their lutes in accord with the wild flowing song.

Thrice happy the life by the Cauker enjoyed,
And boundless the blessings by freedom assured;
No force can impair them—no fraud render void—
By valour obtained, and by valour secured.

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No lust of dominion the Cauker inspires,
Serene, he the wealth of his neighbours can see;
Content with the portion bequeathed by his sires,
The right to be fearless, and lawless, and free.

QUETTA, 1831.

TO HOPE.

WRITTEN DURING SICKNESS.

HOPE! with blue benignant eye,
Fairest daughter of the sky,
Come, with violet-circled brow,
Come, and cheer thy suppliant now!
Tho' disease his frame assail,
Yet shall all her terrors fail;
Tho' pale death in ambush lie,
Yet shall he defeated fly,
If thou appear and fondly shed,
Thy radiant beams around his bed.

Altho' no Esculapian friend,
With kindly skill my sickness tend;
Altho' beneath a foreign sky,
And far from friend or kinsman's eye,
Still warmed by thee, my soul can buoy
Above despair, and glow with joy.

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Dear as thy presence mid the strife
And changes of our busy life;
Dear as thy light is hailed by those,
Oppressed with transient earthly woes;
Yet dearer is thy smile to him,
Who writhes beneath distemper grim,
And presses with a lonely head,
The pillow of a sickly bed!

If warned by death of ghastly face,
He treads with feeble, faltering pace,
(His mind with gloomy doubts perplext),
The bounds of this world and the next;
Still faithful Hope presents her hand,
To lead him thro' the darksome land;
Nor lets him wander from her sight,
Until he reach those realms of light,
Where vanish doubts, and sufferings close,
In perfect bliss, and pure repose.

Albeit, the path of man's career,
Be set with peril, pain and fear;
He is not left without resource,
To bear them, and elude their force—
Heaven, ever provident and kind,
A train of guardians has assigned,
To tend him on his devious way,
And aid him if he fall astray;

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His energies assured by these,
He moves with lightened steps and ease,
And views with eye serene, elate,
The turns and purposes of fate.

He learns from Prudence to avoid
Ills that had else his course annoyed;
Or, if they haply fall his share,
From Fortitude he learns to bear:
If sorrow too severely press,
Friendship may soothe him in distress;
And steadfast Faith may lull to rest,
The scruples of his troubled breast.

Yet none of all the heavenly race,
Can, genial Hope, supply thy place;
Cherished in every human breast,
Its truest friend, its dearest guest—
Whose blessings like the sunbeams fall,
The solace and delight of all;
A treasure, which no stroke of Fate
Can lessen, or obliterate—
Which, in misfortune's bitter hour,
Supports with all-consoling power;
A constant guide, whose cheering ray
Attends us from our natal day,
Intent the sorrows to assuage,
Of life's conflicting pilgrimage;
Nor failing with its fervent breath,
To calm the agony of death.

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Just God! how prostrate human power,
In that inevitable hour,
When clammy rigours numb our limbs,
When reason faints, and vision swims,
When darkness dulls our feeble eyes,
About to part from all we prize;
From all we rashly made our boast,
From all we loved, and valued most,
From all we fondly thought our own,
And enter on a state unknown—
How couldst thou, man, abide the test,
Were Hope an outcast from thy breast!

Auspicious Hope! of heavenly birth,
The herald of the skies on earth;
We glow with joy, inspired by thee,
Thou pledge of immortality!
Is he who turns a sceptic's eye,
On that enduring azure sky,
A stranger to thy sacred fires,
Or are his lips unhallowed liars?
Lives one so bold, as dare believe
That Hope was missioned to deceive?
Lives one so rash, as to deny
The special witness of the sky?

Why seek the academic shade,
To ask what Plato thought or said?
Can pert philosophy disclose,
Beyond what every rustic knows

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To be a truth, within whose breast
The light of Hope was e'er a guest ?
'Tis she who bids our souls to rise
Their expectations to the skies ;
Tells that our life is trial here,
And points us out a happier sphere.

Bright delegate of truth divine,
I kneel obedient at thy shrine,
And wait the hour when thou shalt be
Fulfilled in bliss and certainty ;
And be that hour or soon or late,
May I resigned submit to fate ;
And if it be my Maker's will,
That I on earth may linger still,
May I with grateful heart receive
The precious boon—the vast reprieve ;
Or if the hour of death be nigh,
And never more my longing eye,
May open on the rising sun,
Still may the will of Heaven be done ;
While I assured 'tis for the best,
Confide in thee, and bide the rest ;
Remembering, Hope, whatever be,
He dies in peace who dies in thee !

KAUBUL 1833.

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TO THE AGUE.

Ague! dire unwelcome guest,
Full of curst capricious whims;
Why with flames consume my breast?
Why with tremors seize my limbs?

Why with me a refuge seek,
Roving 'neath a foreign sky?
Oh! avert thy aspect bleak—
Oh! avert thy withering eye!

Hospitable rites I prize,
Yet would not grant them to the base;
And thou art come in such a guise,
I'd gladly shun thy haggard face.

If full of fraud and foul intent,
My hapless frame thou wilt not spare;
To bear thee I must be content,
But let me tell thy bill of fare.

If thou assume a shivering port,
With laudanum I'll abate thy spleen;
And strive to cut thy visit short,
With frequent doses of quinine.

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Oh! get thee gone—thou quaking pest!
And leave me to my wonted quiet;
No welcome hails so vile a guest,
Nor wilt thou meet with better diet.

Go where the freezing tempest blows,
O'er Zembla's mountains dark and drear—
Where Hecla's fiery furnace glows—
Go any where—but go from here.

KALAT OF BALOCHISTAUN, 1831.

LINES ON ZEYBEE.

A MAIDEN OF BALOCHISTAUN.

FULL many a maid of many a land,
The bard has taken by the hand,
And handed down to fame;
Will Zeybee then, that maid divine,
Allow the humble hand of mine,
To do for her the same?

And let me not incur reproach,
If I extol a maid Baloche,
The peerless of her race:
What themes so apposite and fit,
To stimulate poetic wit,
As Zeybee's form and face?

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Had ever nymph more sparkling eyes?
Their flashing with the lightning vies,
  On which to gaze is death.
Had ever rose so gay a bloom,
As tints her cheeks, or such perfume,
  As scents her fragrant breath?

Did ever neck so fair and white,
So much enchant and charm the sight,
  As that by Zeybee shown?
I dare not to my numbers trust,
To sing the beauties of her bust,
  And graces of her zone.

Her winning smiles our love secure,
And to her homage all allure,
  On whom they chance to fall;
As on the tulip spots of jet,
Are they upon her features set,
  And fix our minds in thrall.

Her mien, how gracious, clear, and bright—
Her step, how elegantly light—
  To paint, my colours fail!
For she in gracefulness excels,
The mountain deer, the swift gazelles,
  And leverets of the dale.

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As blithe, with sprightly pace she roves,
Amid gay Mustoong's almond groves,
So heavenly is her guise;
We deem her not of earthly mould,
But fondly fancy we behold,
An angel from the skies.

Her beaming features, mild and bland,
Like pearls arranged with skilful hand,
Are wonderously combined;
Nor do those features, more than fair,
Excel the jewels rich and rare,
The virtues of her mind.

Serene they bless, and warm they glow,
Nor is the winter's virgin snow,
More spotless than their shrine;
Which as a vase of crystal bright,
Reflects the pure effulgent light,
Of innocence divine!

Thou bright creation of our spheres!
Still shine among thy loved compeers,
The fairest of the throng!
Rich in thy mind's unenvied wealth,
Crowned with the roseate wreath of health,
And with the meed of song.

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For me, whatever be my lot,
Thy charms may never be forgot,
  Tho' wide and far I rove—
O'er plain, o'er vale, o'er flood and hill,
Thy memory will be cherished still,
  Fair maid of Mustoong's grove.

MUSTOONG 1831.

THE SOLITARY TREE.

UPON that wild and dreary waste,
Which stretches far as eye can see,
What only object glads the sight?
  The solitary tree.

There nature breathes in solitude,
And motion seems extinct to be,
No sign of life is there, but thou—
  The solitary tree.

The monarch of a wide domain,
Its branches form a canopy,
And there, in lonely grandeur stands,
  The solitary tree.

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Thou art not like earth's monarchs are,
Austere to those of low degree—
Thou art beneficent and kind,
Thou solitary tree.

Thy benefits to all extend,
And all to share thy boons are free,
And therefore art thou loved by all,
Thou solitary tree.

Thy welcome shade the traveller seeks,
His place of rest—and breathes more free
When parched by heat, and tired, and wan,
Thou solitary tree.

To thee from noon's meridian warmth,
The panting flocks for shelter flee,
They gain new vigour in thy shade,
Thou solitary tree.

We marvel not that grateful swains,
Ascribe a hallowed power to thee,
And vow to thee as to a shrine,
Thou solitary tree.

For ages haply hast thou stood,
And ages more thy growth may see,
For all regard thee with respect,
Thou solitary tree.

Digitized by Google

Armies, whose track fell havoc marks,
Have yet passed by and reverenced thee;
Who nothing else have spared, have spared
The solitary tree.

So honoured is the man of worth,
Who lives from this world's trammels free,
To him is given the love we give
The solitary tree.

To him the lowly and oppressed,
For safety and protection flee,
He lends his aid—and is to them
The solitary tree.

Diffusing joy to all around,
All in one theme, his praise, agree,
By all beloved, his emblem is
The solitary tree

On the Plains of the Thokee Ghiljees, 1832.

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FROM LUCIAN'S DIALOGUES OF THE MARINE GODS.

DIALOGUE THE FIRST.

DORIS AND GALATEA.

DORIS.

A RARE gallant crowns Galatea's pains;
'Tis said the shepherd of Sicilia's plains,
In downright love for her has crazed his brains.

GALATEA.

Jest not, oh Doris! if a swain I've won,
But know that rare gallant is Neptune's son.

DORIS.

Were he great Jove's, it would not mend the case;
Just mark his lanky hairs and brutal face;
Can birth a cure for ugliness supply,
Or hide the horror of his single eye?

GALATEA.

His hairs do not, as you pretend, impair
His look, but rather give a manly air;
His eye well placed is not amiss to view;
He sees as well as others can with two.

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DORIS.

Your praise of Polyphemus seems to prove,
The monster's less your lover than your love.

GALATEA.

No love of mine, and that I dare avouch,
Nor will I bear from you the foul reproach;
But well I know what moves within thy breast;
'Tis rankling jealousy disturbs its rest.
That day, when he to pasture led his flock,
And 'spied us from the summit of his rock,
As we, at Etna's base, in merry glee,
Were sporting, 'twixt the mountain and the sea;
I seemed to him the fairest of you all,
Nor did his glance on any other fall:
Your charms and beauties he disdained to own,
And fixed his burning eye on me alone.
This grieves thee now; his preference told too well
How much my beauty and my charms excel:
That I alone was worthy to be prized,
And thee with all the rest to be despised.

DORIS.

Ah! wilt thou then our jealousy excite—
Found lovely by a hind with troubled sight?
What beauty could the bumpkin find in thee?
Perchance accustomed milk and cheese to see,
Whatever bears their hue, he thinks has grace,
And therefore liked the paleness of thy face.

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If thou wouldst what your form resembles know,
Ascend a rock, when winds have ceased to blow,
And see your image in the waves below;
Then wilt thou find thou'st only one point good,
A whitish skin, the sign of sluggish blood;
But a white skin is not admired 'tis said,
Unless 'tis heightened by a little red.

GALATEA.

Whatever be the paleness of my hue,
I have a lover, and that's more than you;
Amongst you all, not one has charms to raise
A shepherd's, sailor's, or e'en boatman's praise:
Besides, my Polyphemus plays the lyre;
His breast the heavenly charms of song inspire.

DORIS.

Oh, Galatea! why indulge in sport?
We heard him sing, when last he paid thee court:
By Venus! such the dismal noise he made,
In truth, we thought we heard an ass that brayed;
And then his lyre—what sort of lyre was there—
A stag's skull mounted and deprived of hair;
The horns for branches served, and bent around,
They formed a yoke to which the strings were bound;
How rude his song, no words of mine can say—
I never listened to so vile a lay;
And then he bellowed in so strange a key,
His voice and lyre did not in tune agree;

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E'en Echo, babbler as she is, for shame,
Repeated not the brawling brute's acclaim;
Nay, more, the monster, smitten by thy charms,
Fondled a pretty plaything in his arms—
Just like himself, a young and shaggy bear!
Who does not envy thee a swain so rare?

GALATEA.

Well, Doris, show me thine, and I shall know
If he in goodly looks surpass my beau;
If he can better sing his amorous lays
Or if on the seetar he better plays.

DORIS.

I have no lover, nor do I pretend
That I have charms a lover may commend;
But for one such as he on whom you dote,
Who stinks with all the rankness of a goat,
Who eats raw flesh, and if a stranger fall
Into his hands, will eat him bones and all;
Thou may'st preserve him fast in amorous ties,
Nor fear that I shall e'er dispute thy prize.

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TO A LADY ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

I STRAYED among the garden bowers,
And marvelled why the blooming flowers
Shone forth so blithe and gay;
I marvelled why the azure sky
Glowed with so fresh a tint on high,
And why so beamed the day.

Methought the late reviving showers
Had with new beauty clad the flowers,
And robed the joyous earth;
Ah, no, 'twas nature's self array,
In honour of the happy day—
The day of Mary's birth.

Nor misapplied was nature's care
For one so modest and so fair,
Her charms in life to call,
And fitting was it that the flowers
For her, with fragrance filled the bowers,
The fairest flower of all.

Dear maiden, gladly would I bring
The choicest garlands of the spring,
And bind them on thy brow,
And when performed a task so sweet,
Would next presume, in duty meet,
To offer up my vow:

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That no dim cloud may e'er obscure
The bliss of one so fair and pure,
  So worthy to be blest;
That never pain or grief may vex
The mildest, meekest of her sex,
  Or sorrow wound her breast:

That genial health may blandly shed
Its blessings on her valued head,
  And guard her tender frame,
That all the pleasures mortals know,
May freely in her fortunes flow,
  And gild her cherished name.

And last, not least, if love should find
Admittance in that gentle mind,
  My vow should still implore,
That honour, constancy, and truth,
May guide her innocence and youth
  To Hymen's sacred shore.

Adieu! dear maiden, for awhile,
And may thy soft and winning smile,
  Approve my artless lay.
When nature pays her willing suit,
And all rejoice, could I be mute
  On Mary's natal day?

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ON THE CLOSE OF AUTUMN.

The trees in rustling murmurs tell,
To Autumn we must bid farewell;
A sloven aspect wears the ground,
With yellow leaflets strewed around,
The birds that welcomed in the spring,
Have ceased to chirp, and taken wing;
The flowers no longer gaily bloom,
And scent our gardens with perfume;
The rose-tree fades, the balsam dies,
And murky clouds obscure the skies,
The landscape wont the sight to glad,
Presents a scene forlorn and sad;
All nature seems to shrink dismayed,
And veil her varied charms in shade,
While Winter, lord of frost and snow,
Advances with repulsive brow,
His chilly eyes portentous glare,
And icicles bespread his hair,
His teeth all clatter as he talks,
And stern with shivering limbs he walks.
Come, Mary, near the cheerful blaze,
And tranquil on his terrors gaze;
Within our snug and curtained room,
We need not fear his hours of gloom:

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But let not ease our bosoms steel—
Remember, there are those who feel
The tortures of his cruel sway,
And pine in anguish through the day.
With timely aid dispense relief,
Supply their wants, assuage their grief,
For all the goods which on us flow,
That duty to the weak we owe,
Nor can we guiltless cozy sit,
Until we first their claims acquit,
Then may we, with our minds serene,
Survey and e'en enjoy the scene,
And full of gratitude and praise,
Abide the approach of milder days.
See, Robin with his ruddy breast,
Appears the chilly season's guest,
And hopes with many a tuneful ditty,
To win dear Mary's care and pity:
Nor shall the little bird complain—
He seeks not her regard in vain;
Then hop about, secure and bold,
She'll guard thee from the piercing cold;
And if the frost thy limbs benumb,
She'll warm thee, and bestow the crumb,
And all reward she'll claim from thee,
Will be to sing and merry be.

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNTRY TO A FRIEND.

MAN of sorrow! why thus pine—
  Why a farewell bid to mirth?
While the sun above shall shine,
  Gladness hath not fled the earth.

The busy city leave awhile,
  With its follies and its noise;
Hie where nature's beauties smile,
  And impart their simple joys.

Look upon the healthful scene,
  Ever verdant, ever gay;
Its potent spell will cure your spleen,
  And chase your sorrow's pang away.

Look upon the glowing sky,
  Breathing fondest hope to man;
View it with keen stedfast eye,
  And be mournful if you can.

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Look upon the painted lawn,
Rich in nature's livery drest;
Joy will in your bosom dawn,
Prelude to its wonted rest.

Let the grove attract your sight,
Where the blackbird loves to sing;
Lo! your sadness takes to flight,
As the warbler takes to wing.

Gaze upon the glistening rill,
Gliding gently through the plain;
Its placid course will soothe and still
Your suffering, and dispel your pain.

Look upon the glorious scene—
Every charm and grace combined;
Pure, consoling, and serene,
Its peace will fall upon your mind,

Ask ye, whence has nature power,
Soothing, to allay the strife
Of the passions,—fatal dower!—
Which disturb the course of life!

Ask ye, why the troubled mind
Comfort finds in leaf or sod?
Be not to the reason blind—
'Tis because they are of God.

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ON THE PICTURE OF A BEDOUIN.

THE Bedouin bold, on his charger fleet,
Scours o'er the desert wild;
Woe to the wretch he may chance to meet!
For he is Misfortune's child.

Turn, pilgrim, turn away thy face;
Or thy lot may be deplored:
The Bedouin moves with a rapid pace,
And keen is his cruel sword.

The daring Bedouin laughs to scorn,
The laws that men impose;
He makes the widow and orphan mourn,
And his breast no mercy knows.

He has no home but the desert wild;
No friends but his steed and blade:
Oh! fly from his path, ye simple child,
For rapine is his trade.

While yet ye may, thy steps retrace;
And never, by hope of gain,
Be tempted to meet the Bedouin's face,
Or cross his path again.

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THE TOASTS.

THIS rosy glass, the first I quaff,
To her who claims my heart is due;
And love shall tint, let cynics scoff,
His pinions with my nectar's hue:

The second then, my bosom friend,
To thee invokes all health and grace,
For love requited, friendship claims,
In generous minds, the second place:

Another fill; ye claim a third,
Companions jovial, free, and gay;
To such a toast 'twould be absurd
To turn the sparkling glass away:

The fourth I drink alike to those
Who, absent, wish me well or not;
May fortune crown the former's vows—
The latter's malice be forgot!

Ye Gods, I feel a cheering glow
Refine each sense, and flush each vein!
While from the glass such transports flow,
Can it be wrong to fill again?

Ah, no! from bliss within our power,
'Twere surely folly to refrain;
Come, boys! indulge the genial hour,
And fill, and fill, and fill again!

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LINES ON THE TOMB OF AN OFFICER.

STRANGER! this pile, which in the desert rears
Its lonely head, surmounts no humble grave;
Here sleeps a warrior, famed amongst his peers—
Here rest in peace the relics of the brave.

The praise of those who greatly live or die,
The measured span of earth can ne'er enclose;
Spread by renown, it fills the ample sky,
And vast and boundless as the ocean flows.

If foreign soil possess his mouldering clay,
Still blooms his memory on his native shore;
There the sad generous impulse all obey,
Extol his valour, and his loss deplore.

Full oft stern fate o'er victory casts a gloom,
And, mid success we mourn the warrior brave,
Too emulous of fame, in life's gay bloom,
Lost to the world, and hurried to the grave.

Illustrious yet he falls—a short career
In glory spent forbids his name to die;
His country's tears bedew his sacred bier,
And greeting angels bear him to the sky.

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PROPOSED

EPITAPH FOR THE TOMB OF AN OFFICER

SLAIN AT THE ASSAULT OF A FORTRESS.

WEEP not for him whose ashes moulder here!
When living, he a race of glory run;
By conquest crowned he left this earthly sphere,
His grave the ramparts which his valour won.

THE DYING WARRIOR.

THE warrior in the battle strife,
Transfixed with many a wound,
Bathed in the crimson stream of life,
Lies weltering on the ground.

If valued friend or kinsman dear
Be not to raise his head,
Angels of grace are hovering near,
And tend him in their stead.

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If reft of speech, to heaven still
He turns his dim pale eye,
Nor unapproved his mute appeal,
Nor unobserved his sigh.

He dies—but is not dead to fame,
Which yet his life prolongs;
The bard enshrines his honoured name
In the temple of his songs.

Is there on earth a heart so cold,
With coward fetters bound,
That would not die like the warrior bold,
To be like him renowned?

TO FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship! thy powerful charm can stay,
The anguish of the bitterest day,
And raise the mind to joy:
Amid this world of grief and pain,
We still may taste, beneath thy reign,
Of bliss without alloy.

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For ever vigilant and fond,
All sordid selfish views beyond,
  Thou weanest us from sorrow;
Nor fickle dost thou flit away,
Led by the fortunes of to-day,
  Or changes of to-morrow.

Affliction, at thy magic nod,
Retires her black and vengeful rod,
  And grants a happy hour;
E'en grim despair, of hideous mien,
At thy bland smile becomes serene,
  And owns a master power.

Of men, the greatest and the best,
With zeal in every age have prest,
  As votaries to thy shrine;
Poets thy blessings have extolled,
Philosophers thy portion hold,
  As first of boons divine.

Achilles stern confessed thy sway,
Nor blushed to thee, those vows to pay,
  Which he to Gods denied:
And Alexander prized thee more
Than all the Persian's golden store,
  And Asia's regal pride.

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E'en tyrants at thy winning smile,
Relent, and cease their purpose vile,
And in thy praise descant;
Proud Dionysius sighs, and lifts
His voice in prayer, to ask those gifts,
His crimes forbid to grant.

Hear Israel's bard and prophet-king,
Beloved of God, thy transports sing,
Which bade his bosom glow,
And hear his plaintive harp bewail,
Thy severed ties in Gilboa's vale,
In notes of tuneful woe.

Thy blessings to no rank confined,
On every class of human kind,
With equal hand are thrown;
Where virtue sways, they love to dwell,
And cheer alike the hermit's cell,
The cottage, and the throne.

Thrice hapless he whose iron breast,
Hath never owned thee for a guest,
Or felt thy sacred glow;
Indulgent Heaven may not supply,
A greater bliss, or to deny,
Inflict a greater woe.

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Of imprecations fell, the worst
Was that with which the ancient curst—
"Mayest thou survive thy friends!"
He knew, without thy cheering ray
Life, blank, desponding wastes away,
And in dishonour ends.

May we be never doomed a fate,
We would not wish to those we hate,
If hate be in our breast;
But Friendship, may thy saving force,
Attend us thro' life's devious course,
And soothe our final rest.

ON A GHILJEE MAIDEN.

Oh! my heart, why by throbbings controlled?
Oh! my bosom, why glow with such fire?
Such beauties as those I behold,
Is it sinful to love and admire?
Or to envy the swain who shall clasp in his arms
So rich an assemblage of graces and charms?

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A damsel so fair, who would not be content,
While kids and while lambkins around him should play,
To fold in his arms, and in front of his tent,
To bask in the sun all the hours of the day?

Oh! were she but mine, the false world I would quit,
Its allurements, its splendours, its follies, and noise;
I'd exchange all the pleasures of science and wit,
For the smiles of my love, and more sensible joys.

If her sire be a bandit—'tis not her disgrace;
That a Ghiljee were else, it were wrong to expect;
So sylphic a form, so enchanting a face,
May atone for her tribe's and her father's defect.

For her I'd renounce all that cities afford,
Secure of her favour, her khail should be mine;
The cake she prepares I'd accept for my board,
And with buttermilk fancy the relish of wine.

For her I'd forget that such places there be,
As Kaubul the bright and the proud Kandahar;
Their gardens no more have attraction for me,
For they lack the pure light of the fair Ghiljee star.

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Her home is the wild, and her home shall be mine,
And the wild to my vision shall Eden appear;
Its surface with flowers and verdure shall shine,
And one spring with her love shall enliven the year.

But, my heart, all thy fluttering restrain,
And my bosom thy fervour abate;
To love is to languish in vain,
So wills thy untractable fate:
Some shepherd with lot more auspicious than thine,
Will possess the fair maid, and leave thee to repine.

Valley of the Tarnek River,
On a Journey from Kandahar to Kaubul, 1832.

THE FAIR OF MANY CLIMES.

The maidens of Georgia are fair to behold,
With their soft azure eyes and their tresses of gold;
The daughters of Persia are charming to view,
With their rose-tinted cheeks, and their delicate hue;
But for loveliness, beauty, and grace without peer,
Are the fair maids who rove in the vale of Cashmeer.

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The bright Toorkee lass with her brilliant black eyes,
Sways our bosoms at will, and awakens our sighs;
And the Taujik girls' smiles—so sweetly they fall,
They enchant while they fasten our feelings in thrall;
But for loveliness, beauty, and grace without peer,
Are the fair maids who rove in the vale of Cashmeer.

Unrivalled their dark and magnificent eyes,
Which like suns in the firmament dazzle and blaze:
We behold—and our bosoms are won by surprise,
Entranced, we admire and love as we gaze.

In no other clime do the fond virgins prove,
So affectionate, tender, so warm and sincere,
So attractive in form, and so eager to love,
As the fair maids who rove in the vale of Cashmeer.

The Georgian and Persian, in feminine grace,
By common consent hold an eminent place:
The power of the Toorkee no one may dispute,
And the charms of the Tanjik might soften the brute;
But for all the allurements that bind and endear,
They match not the maids of the vale of Cashmeer.

Digitized by Google

Each of them has her charms and attractions to boast,
Which we fail to do justice when striving the most;
But those charms and attractions so justly their pride,
All blend in the Cashee with something beside;
With her love is nature, unshackled by fear,
And therefore excel the fair maids of Cashmeer.

KAUBUL, 1833.

ON

VISITING THE HOUSE IN ALDERMANBURY, LONDON,

In which the Author was born,

UPON HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND IN 1841.

Lo! after years in absence past,
I hail my natal spot at last;
And for one moment seem forgot
The troubles which have vexed my lot.
'Tis well, that 'mid the changes round,
The house in pristine state is found;
The sight, no tawdry columns trick,
No stucco hides the ancient briek;

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All wears the dull and solemn guise,
As when the light first blessed mine eyes.
Like the tight bark that rides the storm
Has it escaped that blight—reform;
Mid upstart neighbours keeps the field,
Tho' Church and State were forced to yield.

Full eager did I seek the spot;
But, marvelling, does it stand or not?
Has it the fate of others shared,
Which innovation hath not spared?
It stands! and as in days of yore,
The self-same windows—self-same door—
Unchanged by fashion, or by whim,
In all its solemn antique trim.

Tho' flattery be not my defect,
I laud the City architect,
Who, mid the ruins he has planned,
Has yet allowed this pile to stand;
To his reserve the praise is due,
That I enjoy this goodly view:
And now, his complaisance to own,
I grant him leave to pull it down.
Enough—so long delayed its fate,
And let it follow Church and State.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE FRENCH.

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TRANSLATIONS.

FRANCOIS DE NEUFCHATEAU,

(Sur la manière de lire les Vers,)

ON THE MANNER OF READING POETRY.

Cease, silly reader, whose unhappy whine
Destroys the beauty of the tuneful line;
In pity, cease! what frenzy fires thy brains,
In spite of Phœbus to peruse our strains?
If harsh or feeble be thy faithless tone,
Or if it languish with incessant moan,
If the bright flame which genius bids arise,
Impart no lustre to thy leaden eyes,
Or if, in short, thy dull psalmodic dole,
Convey nor paint aught to my troubled soul—
Cease, or let me thy chilling looks depart,
Their Gorgon virtues petrify my heart;
Thine audience, whom thy withering looks congeal,
The tortures practised by Mezentius feel:
O'erpowered, and shrinking with disgust and dread,
They writhe—the living fastened to the dead.
Thy drowsy accents e'en oppress the Gods,
Lo! Phœbus listening, drops his lyre, and nods.

'Tis not enough that you our lays admire,
You must recite them with becoming fire;

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You must that soft melodious art embrace,
Which speaks the language of the Gods with grace;
Which, rich in tone, with measured cadence fraught,
Lends ease and number to the flowing thought—
A sovereign art, whose powerful spells control
The ravished ear, and subjugate the soul.

" This sharp apostrophe," perchance you cry,
" Will not to me, or men of sense apply;
" By reason led, we merely books peruse
" In quest of truth, with philosophic views;
" A sterling work requires no spurious aid,
" As paint is needless to the rosy maid.
" The declamation, which so much you boast,
" Addressed to learned ears, is labour lost;
" Let others to its specious power agree,
" Truth, naked truth, has only charms for me.'

What! with a frigid tone and aspect drear,
Wouldst thou pretend to win my outraged ear?
What, traitor! wouldst thou bind in bonds so frail,
My mind, and basely kill me in detail?
Would'st thou with yawns and mortal vapours curse
The sacred honours of immortal verse?
And in thy spleen, methodically dull,
The glorious transports of the Muse annul?
Would'st thou fall abject, when aloft she soars,
And when she walks majestic, crawl on fours?

Be thine the scruple, frivolous and blind,
Oh, thou, the most precise of human kind!
Content, within the narrow circle tread,
Which vapid sameness hath around thee spread.

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Trace with thy compass laws—by them restrain
Chimena's love, and anguished Phœdra's pain:
To thy perception stint the daring flight
Of Jove's proud eagle, towards the realms of light;
Be dull—be barbarous—if you think it best,
But hold me not in thraldom I detest!
At least, do not exact, oh, soulless man!
That I consent to thy destructive plan!

Go! with a fine delivery aid the Muse,
Embellished nature will the craft excuse;
Expressed with skill, the traits enshrined in song
Become more touching, and shine forth more strong,
And leave upon the soul their lasting trace,
A monument of eloquence and grace.
For what secures more universal praise,
Than the just reading of harmonious lays?

Of old they sung—of song and sacred lays,
All ancient chronicles exalt the praise.
In song, both Moses and Orpheus strove
To celebrate Jehovah's name—and Jove:
Mark how, obedient to Amphion's lyre,
Rocks leap on rocks, and Thebes's proud walls aspire
Behold Terpander quell revolt's alarms!
And bold Tyrtæus rouse a state to arms!

'Twas then that bards, the guides of man confest,
Controlled at will the passions of the breast:
The soul they softened, while the ear they charmed,
And e'en the rage of tyranny disarmed.

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'Twas then that verse fair Order's ally proved,
And by its graces made the laws beloved:
In proud distinction from all meaner things,
The art to read it was reserved to Kings:
Nay, e'en the Gods, to lend their fiats weight,
Revealed in song the oracles of fate.

How sweetly Grecia's polished sons of old
Attuned the lyre, and all its chords controlled!
In their mild clime, to strict prosodial laws,
They bound the Muse, and won her new applause.
Mark, in their verse how skilfully agree
The flying dactyl and the slow spondee;
How the cesura guards the artful lines,
And every word its proper place assigns.
Each kind possessed its rythm: the epic song,
In verse majestic rolled its theme along.
Iambics served the keen satiric Muse,
And modest elegy the distich chuse.
Alcæus and Anacreon, great in name,
To future bards bequeathed their measures and their fame!

For us, from Goths and barbarous sires sprung,
Apollo long disdained our rugged tongue;
At length refined, within our shores, the Nine
Have culled rich treasures from the latent mine;
Nor fair Parnassus echoes softer strains,
Than those which now resound from Gallia's plains.
Due thanks to thee, immortal bards! whose lays
Have won the tribute of undying praise;

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Who rival nature in resistless sway,
Now light, now mild, now solemn, and now gay:
Whose verse remains for ever loose and free,
Amid the trammels of its melody;
And so upon our charmed attention gains,
We think we listen to great Maro's strains.

But badly read, these verses please no more:
There is a secret and a magic power—
There is an art to read, and be possest
Of every transport of an author's breast—
To penetrate his thoughts, and make the while
The tone a fitting organ of his style:
To emulate his strength—with him to shun
Extremes, by which most readers are undone;
By tone and gesture to assist the force
Of happy words; to keep an equal course;
To give due colouring to the lively scene,
Sketched by the comic Muse, with laughing mien;
A nobler tone and graver port to wear,
When tragic scenes depicture grief and care;
When Coligny, whom ruffian bands assail,
By one word turns the dire assassins pale;
Then to perfection make a bold advance,
And while you act the hero, steal his glance.

Thou, who so well hast sung the alarms of Rome,
And sketched in sombre tints a nation's gloom—
Claiming our pity for Marcellus' fate,
And blighted prospects of the imperial state—

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Oh, Virgil! with what art thy verse was read,
When all her soul in tears the mother shed!
What drew those gushing torrents from their source?
What called those sobs to life, and gave them force?
'Twas, that absorbed by thy sad theme alone,
The mother's tears were second to thine own.

And wilt thou then, unfeeling man, peruse
Our luckless verses as thou wouldst the news?
In vain shall beauty be the Muse's dower,
Thy hands dissolve her talismanic power:
Far from persuading—in thy odious mouth
E'en truth displeases, and her sight we loathe:
Reason resigns her claims—content to flee,
And shun the hateful pressure of *ennui*.
Who hopes to instruct, must condescend to please;
Once charm the ear—the soul is won with ease.

How must the poet chill in every vein,
Who hears a prosy reader mar his strain!
How must his secret soul in horror groan,
As every grace is mangled by his tone;
Not less afflicted hears the shuddering sire,
His helpless offspring sentenced to expire,
Or sees them, dim with anguish and affright,
Dissevered, limb by limb, before his sight!
The bard, when ruin thus assails his page,
In vain attempts to check his growing rage;
No human deference can his fury stay,
And bursting nature bears his soul away.

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" Why, murderer, wilt thou thus destroy my song—
" Why wilt thou do my fame this mortal wrong ?
" No love, no friendship can this crime atone—
" Oh ! read me not, or if thou must, alone!"

This transport of an angered muse I laud,
And hence the choler of Rameau applaud,
Who, we are told, in wrath avenged the sin
Of a vile fiddler on his violin :
Nor less he raved, when, to assembled throngs,
He heard vile singers spoil his deathless songs ;
Nor less he loved thy accents and thy mien,
Fair Arnauld, Goddess of the choral scene ;
He, with his art, embellished every theme,
And thine in turn gave double grace to him ;
Like his, thy bosom throbbed with warmth divine,
And all his talents were enhanced by thine !

If airs their worth to taste in singing owe,
The charms of verse from graceful utterance flow.
See you this mirror, in whose faithful face
The fair one seeks her form's reflected grace ?
Such should a reader be, and to the mind
Show all the beauties in a work combined.
From echo, wanderer in our woods, is heard
But the last syllable of each last word ;
The skilful reader echo more complete,
All that the Muse has given should repeat.
How great his task ! 'tis little if he own,
A supple organ, and a tender tone ;

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Or if with these essential gifts he blend
The powers that gesture and expression lend.
What say I? All is nought, if Heaven beside
Has still the better gift of soul denied.

When a just reader reads the tuneful lay,
How glow his eyes with genius' kindled ray!
How firm in bonds he leads the captive soul—
And how in ecstacy the moments roll!
And, like the relic in a fane enshrined,
He stamps his author on his listeners' mind.

All poets know and cultivate the part,
Through the pleased ear to fascinate the heart;
'Tis by that art so many poets claim
Their festive honours and their social fame;
By that they fill their circles with delight—
Who write with fervour, will with warmth recite.

Soon as a work has issued from the press,
Upon the buyer's taste depends success;
The poet cannot read to every throng,
Nor through the world accompany his song;
If badly read, farewell all prospects fair,
And ruin, fatal ruin, falls its share.

'Tis after dinner Midas takes the lay,
When indigestion rules with painful sway;
Spiteful he reads, with censor's tone obscure,
And yawns, and thinks himself a connoisseur:

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With the rank surfeit of excess opprest,
He judges and condemns with equal zest;
The cost begrudges, and declares with heat,
The bard a fool, the publisher a cheat.
Midas decides.—Who dare his sentence slight?
His cringing flatterers bow, and feign delight.

Leave this conceited judge, and next repair
To the gay mansion of Aspasia fair:
Supreme she reigns, the arbitress of taste,
And crowds of authors to her levees haste:
Admiring wits extol her spacious mind,
And at her board a gracious welcome find.
'Tis now past four, and at her toilet still,
The beauty deigns to test the poet's skill;
The work is brought, a certain Abbé, prim,
Must read to satisfy Aspasia's whim:

Sidling he opes it, makes a knowing pause,
Adjusts his collar, hums a tune, and haws;
Now stops to utter some conceit absurd,
Then sorely comments on some guiltless word;
Smiles at the passage which should claim a tear—
No wonder all should cold and blank appear.
At length, more giddy than the lacquey vile,
And skipping pages at his will the while,
He gains the last—and so achieved his task,
He bows, and humbly dares for judgment ask.
Aspasia all the time caresses Shock,
Or in the mirror tends her favourite lock;

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Sees if her rouge is touched in proper place,
And trains the various powers of her face.
" Agree, dear Abbé, 'tis in wretched style—
" Horrid!"—" The opening's too abrupt!"—" Oh vile!
" No point at all—and then so sad!—indeed
" 'Twould give the vapours any one to read."
At that detested word, a smirking page
Ushers another actor on the stage.
This fool's a doctor, prince of smooth-tongued quacks,
And deemed most witty, though all wit he lacks;
Dubbed by the mode, whose fiat all obey,
The sovereign Esculapius of the day,
He straight remarks, " If I remember now,
" This is the day that finds your spirits low."
" It is, dear doctor: nothing can elude
" Your skill."—" But pardon, madam—I intrude—
" You read—I interrupt—I crave excuse:
" The work—what may it be that you peruse?
" Is it good?"—" 'Tis new."—" Do you, dear madam, praise?"
" Dear doctor, read, and your own judgment raise."
" Is it a drama, novel, or romance?
" Dear me!—a poem!" on a hasty glance,
" 'Tis well got up—this frontispiece is fine—
" And oh! these charming vignettes are divine!
" Dear madam, have you seen these wreaths of flowers?
" These smiling loves, these landscapes, and these bowers?"

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" Ah ! you are right—the plates in truth fulfil,
" All we might look for from the artist's skill ;
" But doctor, let them not your taste betray ;
" Peruse the work, and then its merits say."
" Madam, be thou my monitress ; 'tis fit
" That beauty should preside as judge of wit."
" You flatter, doctor—but, if I decide—
" The poem's worthless."—" Madam, I confide
" On your decision—and throughout the town
" Your verdict henceforth shall become my own.
" To read all works one would be sorely tasked,
" Yet who'd seem ignorant when another asked ?
" To hesitate, to falter, would be blame,
" Avowing ignorance, and incurring shame ;
" A verdict must be given : if mine be had,
" To risk the least—I say, that all are bad."

Thus are ye read, and judged, and thus reviled,
Unhappy authors, helpless and exiled ;
Condemned by weak and shallow wits you sink—
Fools who can slander, but can never think.
Their valets give their jests a second birth,
And every anti-chamber sounds with mirth.

Nor pitied less, if by a fate unkind,
Your verses in a club reception find ;
Bold Vadius grasps them, in pretentions loud,
And volunteers to read them to the crowd ;
Then o'er the measured couplets passes quick,
And prosing scans the lively hemistich ;

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Finds the turns forced, the similes misplaced,
And so they seem through his pedantic taste ;
But Damis, ardent lover of your strains,
With the broad accents of his country's swains,
Maintains by all the laws of song and rhyme,
The poem's faultless, and its style sublime ;
He reads it, but with so burlesque a tone,
His own demerits, not its charms are shown.
To his panegyric no one assents ;
He raises laughter at the bard's expence ;
His audience fairly tortured through his zeal,
To the work's faults ascribe the pangs they feel.
How many other coxcombs yet remain
To sketch—who by bad reading spoil the strain ?
We mourn the mass of idle scribblers found,
But greater shoals of readers vile abound.
If the sublime in reading ye would gain,
Shun affectation—all excess refrain ;
Simplicity is baneful—so conceit,
Art which is shown is always indiscreet.
True taste and feeling should the reader guide,
Sublimity and nature are allied.
Beware ! nor imitate that madman's tones,
His rolling eye-balls, and his hideous groans ;
That fanatic, in love with his own lays,
Who strives by dint of voice to win them praise—
That furious rhymer, who like one possest,
Strikes now the empty air, and now his breast—

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Who pains our ears, and tears his throat—for what?
To be sublime by power of bawling thought.
Of yore, the Pythian, in her frenzy wild,
When filled by all her God to him was mild!

Oh, cherished bards! oh, troubadours divine!
To jugglers all these frightful arts resign;
Be true to nature—all such vain parade
May cause surprise, but never can persuade;
For sermons, uttered with tremendous tongues,
Move not our souls, but tear the preachers' lungs.

Better I love the reader mild and wise,
Whose well-trained powers with his subject rise—
Who from the onset, with just step proceeds,
Restrains his strength, and thunders when it needs.
Thus when Nivernois, to the Muses true,
Reads to the Academy a fable new,
With happy art he captivates the wit,
Each line is brilliant—every word is fit.
All imaged forth by him secures applause,
Voice, look, and even silence, aid the cause;
Like homage paid the Greeks to Nestor's skill,
And when he ceased to speak, they listened still.

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THE BIRTHDAY.

(ANONYMOUS.)

'Tis plain, my wife and children dear,
Some kindly part your love intends,
Since I behold, assembled here,
My neighbours good, and ancient friends;
And all, in festive garments drest,
Congratulate with joyful tone,
And why? forsooth! as they attest,
Because I'm twelve months older grown.

To compliment I'm quite alive,
And thine as well designed I hold;
Yet to it would I fain derive,
A claim, without my growing old.
As midst you all I happy sit,
Partaking of our generous cheer,
What joy to hear, did truth permit,
That I was younger by a year.

The faded beau and dim coquette,
With trophies seared and charms decayed,
Like me, when age augments its debt,
Could wish its march were retrograde:

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But the young maid, whose bosom glows
With love, and hopes the bridal day,
Will not be sorry when she knows,
Another year has passed away.

Alas! in this our sphere below,
We all must yield alike to age;
Its burthen falls on friend and foe,
Nor spares the hero or the sage:
Then welcome what we cannot shun,
Since love as long as life endures;
It grows with each revolving sun,
And age its vigour but matures.

When in my arms I fondly fold,
The partner of my youthful years,
I then forget I'm growing old,
And age but as a friend appears:
And when in turn by her caressed,
I list the music of her tongue,
The soft emotions of my breast,
Tell that affection still is young.

Our wine, tho' many a changeful year
Has, since we first prepared it, rolled—
If good at first, methinks 'tis clear,
It has not spoiled by growing old.
More mellow as the seasons fly,
While in the cup for thee 'tis cast,
It seems with sparkling pride to cry,
I'm better this year than the last.

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Tis thus, that with ourselves at peace,
Intact from time's destructive rage,
We still may feel our love increase,
Progressive with the course of age:
Therefore with soothed and grateful heart,
My kinsmen dear, and neighbours gay,
Do I receive in flattering part,
Your homage on my natal day,

RACAN'S ODE TO MALHERBE

ON THE DELIGHTS OF RURAL LIFE.

'Tis time, my friend, to bid the world adieu,
For more than half our journey is gone through,
And age leads on to death with stealthy haste:
Enough upon the changeful sea of life,
Our vagrant skiff has tost in stormy strife,
'Tis time the haven's quietude to taste.

The goods of fortune wither in the hand,
Who builds on her, builds vainly on the sand,
The more exalted, the less safe his lot:
The tallest pines yield to the tempest's powers,
And the rude winds lay low the monarch's towers,
Which blow unharming o'er the peasant's cot.

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Thrice happy he, who from his breast can chase
All thirst for glory—an illusion base,
Whose worthless longing proves our pleasure's bane!
Who, from the craving crowd secluded lives,
At home, content with what his fortune gives,
With no desires beyond his power to gain.

He tills the soil his fathers tilled before,
Nor sighs the troublous secrets to explore,
Of those whose councils guide the helm of state;
Serene he views the ocean vexed with storms,
And calmly notes the sky's portentous forms,
But as they presage for his harvest's fate.

Lord of himself, with no unfilled desire,
His rich domain 's to him a small empire—
His hut a palace with a royal dome;
His fields so many provinces appear—
And without envying Princes and their cheer,
He sees them pictured in his mind at home.

All parts to him their varied tributes yield,
His sheaves redundant speckle o'er the field,
His vineyards teem with purple clusters o'er;
It seems the humid vale, the fertile hill,
And grassy mead, but vie which most should fill,
With rich excess, his cellar and his store.

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Sometimes he leads the stag in noble race,
In those old forests, sacred to the chase,
  Which never day's bright torch admittance gave:
Sometimes he follows the tumultuous pack,
And gains upon the wily leveret's track,
  That where it seeks for shelter finds its grave.

He breathes in rest the lassitude of age,
Beneath that roof where in his infant stage
  He cradled lay, unconscious e'en of woe;
By harvests numbers years, and fondly views
The woods he planted wear each season's hues,
  While with himself, in steady age they grow.

He wanders not to foreign lands, nor braves
The mercy of the winds or of the waves,
  In quest of wealth, by niggard nature hid;
He seeks to crown his life—no nobler death—
No brighter fate—than to resign his breath,
  On the same bed on which his father did.

If his are not those stately marble halls,
Those towers, and porticos, and capitals,
  Which art and grandeur to adorn combine:
His are the pleasures which the seasons yield,
And his the beauties of the enamelled field,
  Which in those halls on canvass only shine.

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Believe me, let us fly the busy crowd,
And henceforth live far from the bondage proud
Of gilded palaces where all resort:
Beneath the towering oak, small shrubs repine,
Before the sun small stars no longer shine,
For fear they be compelled to pay him court.

Delightful wilds! the seat of harmless joys,
Where far from vanity, and pomp, and noise,
My peace begins, and cares my breast resign:
Vales! rivers! rocks! ye soothing, lovely scenes!
If once ye testified to my chagrins,
Now bear me witness that thy peace is mine!

LA MOTTE.

(Danger de réveiller l'Amour.)

DANGER OF AWAKENING LOVE.

As I strayed the other day,
In a lone and shady grove,
Asleep an infant lay,
Whom I recognised as Love.

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I stepped, not boding harm,
To scan his features o'er,
They were those of that false maid
I had sworn to love no more.

The same vermillion lips,
Glowing tint, and heaving breast;
I sighed, and Love awoke,
Love soon awakes from rest.

At once his wings he spread,
And grasped his tiny bow,
Direct an arrow sped,
In my bosom rankling now.

"Go," said he, "at Sylvia's feet,
"Again thy suit attest—
"Thou shalt love her all thy life,
"Having dared to break my rest."

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LA MOTTE.

(Les Souhaits.)

THE WISHES.

Oh! that I were the fragrant flower,
The fair Climene's morning choice;
That on her bosom lives the hour,
The sole, it may in life rejoice!

Oh! that I were the zephyr light,
That wanton fans her blooming hue—
Sighs for her charms in Flora's sight—
And makes the Goddess jealous too!

Oh! that I were that tuneful bird,
Whose notes she lists with such delight,
That she forgets—their warbling heard—
There's danger in the woods by night!

Oh! that I were the lucid stream,
Which shields her from the heat above;
And when it clasps her beauteous frame,
Mistakes her for the Queen of love!

Ye Gods! were I that fountain free,
How soon my waves, inflamed with fire,
Pardon, dear maid, I'd wish to be,
All that Climene might desire!

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BERNARD.

(L'Amour fouetté.)

LOVE WHIPPED.

" Oh Jove! I crave thy thunder!"
Cried Lycoris one day;
" The temple where I first knew Love,
" I would in ashes lay.

" Oh Alcides! were I armed
" With thy fatal darts and rod,
" To avenge a troubled earth,
" And to crush a faithless God!

" Oh Medea! that the art
" Of thy spells to me were known!
" To compose for him a draught
" As poisonous as his own.

" If I held him in my grasp!"
The nymph sore threatening cries:
" Here he is!" cried Love himself,
Who stood before her eyes.

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" Strike, punish, if you dare !"
By his quick return confused,
She took a bunch of roses,
That for whipping Love she used.

'Tis even said, the fair nymph
Half fearful Love to touch,
Whipped so very, very gently,
She did not hurt him much.

BERNIS.

(L'Amour et les Nymphes.)

LOVE AND THE NYMPHS.

WHERE gushed a hundred rills
From the copious fountain head,
Love, wearied by his flight,
Slept on a rose-heaped bed.

The nymphs without distrust,
Advanced with stealthy pace,
And in silence as they stood,
Admired his beauteous face.

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" Oh, Sister! what sweet lips!"
Said one, rasher than the rest;
Love heard her, and awoke,
While pleasure thrilled his breast.

He hid his base designs,
By an air assumed to please,
So the nymphs less timid grown,
Placed the urchin on their knees.

They crowned his head with flowers,
While he with subtle guile,
Their fond and gentle favours
Repaid with many a smile.

But soon by raging flames,
Which burn by night and day,
These indiscreet immortals,
Felt Love's perfidious sway.

Imploring and reproaching,
They called on him to close
The tortures they were bearing,
And give them back repose.

Said Love—" My tender fires
" Rather cherish, than complain;
" Though I kindle them at pleasure,
" I can't put them out again."

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BERNIS.

(L'Amour Papillon.)

LOVE, A BUTTERFLY.

CUPID having dared to wound,
The Father of the sky,
Was by an angry glance,
Changed to a butterfly.

Straight his dwindling arms became,
Wings of azure finely cleft;
His darts were gilded horns,
And the power of speech was reft.

The perfidious God chased hearts,
With quiver armed no more,
But with pleasure for his guide,
He flit from flower to flower.

Touched at length by his disgrace,
Great Jupiter relents—
"Love, I pardon you the past,
"But beware a fresh offence."

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Love changes, and his darts
  Regain their prior state;
But he preserves his wings,
  In memory of his fate.

Since then, Love, volatile
  As the fickle butterfly,
Flies about from heart to heart,
  As changeful as the sky.

DUFRESNEY.

(Les Trocs.)

THE BARGAINS.

Phillis, greedier than tender,
  Drove a bargain not amiss,
She took from Damon thirty sheep,
  Ere she indulged him with a kiss.

The next day—'twas a new affair,
  The shepherd's bargain was the best,
For he received his thirty sheep,
  Before the maiden's lips he prest.

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The next day, Phillis much more kind,
And fearful to displease her swain,
Was very happy thirty sheep
To give him, to be kissed again.

The next day, she with all her sheep,
And dog too, would have gladly bought
The kiss which her inconstant swain,
To arch Lisetta gave for nought.

BERNARD.

(La Rose.)

THE ROSE.

Offspring of Aurora's tears,
Reared in balmy Zephyr's arms,
Queen of Flora's painted realm,
Hasten to unfold thy charms!

What did I say? Alas! delay,
A moment be the boon delayed—
The instant that will see thee blow,
Is that which, ah! must see thee fade!

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Thémira is an opening flower,
And must the same stern law obey;
Rose, thou must shine as she shines now,
And she, like thee, must pass away.

Descend thou from thy thorny stem,
Come, deck her with thy blushing hue;
Thou art the loveliest of the flowers,
'Tis fit thou be the happiest too.

Go, die upon Thémira's breast,
And let it be thy throne and tomb;
Envying thy fate, I only crave
The transport of so blessed a doom.

The asylum which is thine to seek,
Thou mayest, perhaps, some day descry,
A sigh from it would give new life,
If fair Thémira cared to sigh:

Love, careful, will instruct thee well
To choose the due and fitting side,
Glow in her eyes, but dazzle not—
Adorn her breast, but do not hide!

And, ah! if some imprudent hand,
To trouble thy repose be born,
Bear with thee all my vengeance dire,
And for my rival keep a thorn!

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PANNARD.

(Le Ruisseau.)

THE BROOK.

Ye gentle brook, that laves this plain,
I fondly read my type in thee;
The same attraction leads thee on,
And mine will never change to me.

Cherished by thee, gay flowerets bloom,
They bud too sometimes in my strains;
Thou rollest warbling through these groves,
Where I too sing Love's laws and pains.

Thy murmurs, flattering and soft,
Excite no tumult but their own;
Though stricken by the griefs of love,
My plaints are made in gentle tone.

The liquid realm boasts nought so pure
As of thy wave, the silvery gleam;
The warmth that dwells within my breast,
Is not less pure than is thy stream.

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Thou bravest the redoubled shocks,
When Neptune bids the tempest howl;
All Fortune's cruel freaks and sports,
Mar not the quiet of my soul.

Thou hast no embouchure profound—
No treacherous snare have I designed;
As thy wave's bottom all may see,
So all may read my secret mind.

Unto the term, by nature set,
Thou wendest on with equal pace—
Until the time, when checked by cold,
Chill winter binds thy crystal face:

I cannot live—Thémira not—
My term upon her heart is sealed;
To follow her I ne'er shall cease,
Till death has too my blood congealed.

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MONCRIF.

(Conseils à Themire.)

COUNSELS TO THEMIRA.

Remember, Love is skilled to wile—
Mistrust the wise and bashful swain!
There never is more danger nigh,
Than when we think all fear is vain.

Daphnis would greet me, if we met,
Yet still I felt my mind at rest;
He found me singly in the wood,
And not a word in courtship prest.

We should be diffident of love—
Was of his songs the burthen still;
But then his tones were so divine,
They caused my melting soul to thrill.

The listening to him on the turf,
I held in reason quite, forsooth!
Ah! what can reason have to do,
With listening to a gentle youth!

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Without suspicion or design,
I loved to see him every day;
Soon, unawares, the habit grew,
I found I could not keep away.

Enchanter! with what wondrous art,
He used his spells to me unknown—
Inflamed a passion in my breast,
And hid the secret in his own!

If in the grove I raised my voice,
He stayed and heard with rapture bent;
But if another maiden sang,
He, careless, to the village went.

Of lovers' frenzy he discoursed
One day, and did in earnest seem;
It was indeed condemning love,
Yet still was love his constant theme.

How dexterously love deceives!
To hide his torch how great his care!
The evil spoken of the God,
Is but a well-concerted snare.

Daphnis at length prevailed, and forced
My soul to share his passion's heat;
I felt that he had won my love,
And then I first perceived the cheat.

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DESHOULIERES.

(Conseils à Iris.)

COUNSELS TO IRIS.

Between two sheets of texture fair,
So nicely blanched and spread with care,
Young Iris, warm, sincere, and kind,
With brilliant eyes and spotless mind,
To noon-day will her leisure waste :—
I quarrel not with maiden's taste,
Yet truly my surprise I own,
It is too long to lie alone,
Between two sheets.

When thus we set ourselves apart,
The traitor, Love, takes no denial;
Soon from the bosom sighs will start,
And virtue stands a serious trial,
When a maid communes with her heart
Between two sheets.

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FONTENELLE.

(Apollon et Daphne.)

APOLLO AND DAPHNE.

" I AM," Apollo cried, as he pursued,
Breathless, the flying Daphne through the wood,
Recounting all the merits he possessed,
In hope to win upon the virgin's breast—

" I am the God of rhyme, its patron born!"
But rhyme, it seems, coy Daphne held in scorn.
" I play the lute—Oh, stay!" The trifling part,
The lute, had no effect on Daphne's heart.

" Of every root beneath the verdant sod,
" I know the power, for I am physic's God!"
That nauseous name but scared the nymph the more,
And made her fly more swiftly than before.

Had he but cried, " Your conquest, nymph, survey—
" A God, young, handsome, liberal and gay;"
He would have needed no more to have said,
And Daphne promptly would have turned her head.

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MALLEVILLE.

(La belle Matineuse.)

THE BEAUTIFUL EARLY RISER.

O'ER land and sea impressive silence spread;
The air waxed calm; Olympus, flushed with red,
And amorous Zephyr, shaking off sleep's powers,
With his prolific breath revived the flowers.

Aurora, with her golden hairs displayed,
The Sun's new path with sparkling rubies laid:
The God at last appeared, more richly dight
Than ever he had come the earth to light.

Then youthful Phillis, with a radiant face,
And clearer than the East, with stately pace,
Her palace leaving, burst upon our sight
With a more brilliant and more lovely light.

Oh! sacred torch of day, thy wrath forbear!
Nor jealous be of the surpassing fair;
Thou in her presence gavest as faint a light,
As just in thine had given the fires of night.

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DESHOULIERES.

(Reméde contre l'Amour.)

REMEDY AGAINST LOVE.

WOULD you to love a fence oppose,
Beware the intercourse of those
Whose converse breathes the feeling mind:
Few are there of the hateful kind,
Yet far too many to instil
A dangerous passion, if they will:
Let such assume a tender strain,
And all that Ovid writes is vain,
Against young Love.

Reason will then all aid refuse,—
Too many a sorry fate attests—
Once moved the heart, her little use:
In flight our only safety rests,
It is the wisest part to chuse,
Against young Love.

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L'ABBE L'ATTAIGNANT.

(Les Adieux.)

THE ADIEUS.

I soon shall number fourscore years—
At such an age, it time appears
The world to abandon quite:
I part—nor mournful look I back,
But gaily I make up my pack—
Good night, my friends, good night!

Revelled have I in every joy—
Now all is gone, and pleasures cloy,
And I am wearied quite:
When useless grown, and good for nought,
We needs retire, and so we ought—
Good night, my friends, good night!

When hence I go, I know not where
My steps may lead—what lot my share:
In God I trust me quite.
He will not fail to guide me clear,
So on that score I have no fear,
Good night, my friends, good night!

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PATRIX.

(Vanité de la Grandeur.)

VANITY OF GREATNESS.

I DREAMED one night, that falling sick, I died,
And straight was buried by a pauper's side:
Displeased so vile a neighbour to endure,
As corpse of rank, I thus addressed the boor:
" Fellow, retire, and at a distance rot!
" It ill becomes thee to approach this spot!"
" Fellow!" quoth he, with stern contemptuous brow,
" Go, seek thy fellows elsewhere. Fellow thou!
" Here all are equal—no more claims are thine;
" Thou on thy dunghill rot—and I on mine."

J. B. ROUSSEAU.

(Ode sur la Vie Humaine.)

ODE ON HUMAN LIFE.

TRULY man, throughout his life,
Is a glass which evil shows;
He cries as soon as breathes,
In fore-knowledge of his woes.

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In infancy, all tears—
A pedant, cause of sadness;
Books of every kind and hue,
And punishments to madness.

In hot and boiling youth,
His state is even worse;
Creditors and mistress then
Torment him with their curse.

Age mature brings other strife—
Then ambition's yearnings vex;
Wealth, dignity, and pomp—
Cares of family perplex.

Old—he's despised and shunned,
Ill tempered and infirm;
Cough, gravel, stone, and gout,
Assail his feeble term.

As climax—comes a nurse,
To tend his state forlorn;
He at last neglected dies—
Was it worth while to be born?

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GRESSET.

(Ode sur le Siècle Pastoral.)

ODE ON THE PASTORAL AGE.

Delightful days, by which were crowned
The smiling universe when young,
By what misfortune are you found
No more but in the poet's song?

In those blest times of fairy hue,
The earth, so great her fertile powers,
Bore the ripe fruits to autumn due,
Combined with spring's perennial flowers.

The world was then one sylvan scene,
And all mankind were shepherd swains;
No titles then excited spleen,
No master lived on servant's gains:

Where all in equal freedom fared,
And no distinction led to woes,
All in the same abundance shared,
And all enjoyed the same repose.

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Their roofs were formed of leafy boughs,
Their canopies of willows' shade,
In groves they offered pious vows,
And flowery banks their altars made.

The Gods then often travelled down
To earth, ere soiled by crimes untoward—
Gods, less by vengeful thunders known,
Than by the blessings that they showered.

In those, the happy days of earth,
Man lived from sin and vice secure;
Passions had then not grown to birth,
And all his pleasures then were pure.

The mind had then received no taint
From frauds or sophisms of the schools;
The swains held reason in restraint,
And sought from nature's light their rules.

With order, Heaven's own image, here,
Their rural commonwealth was fraught,
Man duly filled his destined sphere,
He better lived, and less he thought.

No courts of justice heard their cries,
No famous capitol their shout;
But were they not the only wise,
Who were the only blest? No doubt.

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They knew none of the painful arts,
And labours born of rigid need,
They studied blithe and peaceful parts,
And pleasure was their labour's meed.

From their gay sports, the tender strains
Of touching harmony first sprung,
And to the genius of their swains,
Apollo owes the lay first sung.

There never dwelt in their retreats
Vain desire, or black chagrin—
Hope, which the longing fancy cheats—
Brief pleasure, or repentance keen.

From the dark mine, foul interest's hand
Had not yet drawn the treasures stored;
With war it had not scourged the land,
Or yet the ocean's paths explored.

The shepherds to their homesteads true,
To the still grave serenely hied;
No other soil or land they knew,
But there they lived, and there they died.

With innocent delights content,
In union's sweetest bonds they met;
Youth flowed with them, from vice exempt,
And age for them had no regret.

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Death, which to us allows no pause,
  Appeared to them with tardy wing,
And never did a guilty cause,
  Accelerate his painful sting.

No day without a feast passed round,
  In concerts did their contests rise,
A shepherdess the victor crowned,
  And Love himself decreed the prize.

That shepherd God, discreet and fair,
  Then none but golden arrows sped,
Nor did he then the bandage wear,
  Which makes him now so much our dread.

The shepherdess, as fair as true,
  Did not presume upon her skill;
To charm was all the lore she knew,
  And best her duty to fulfil.

Then she was clad in homely dress,
  And simply as the lambs she drove,
From whose convenient snowy fleece,
  The graceful vest she wore, she wove.

Oh! happy reign of Nature's light!
  What God will thy lost days restore?
Oh! justice, equal law, and right!
  Why is thy blest dominion o'er?

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But do I not a fiction paint?
  Or has an age so charming been?
Is there an author yet extant,
  Who has the blissful period seen?

I search the records of that age,
  I find that pinings follow fast,
Whene'er its image fills the page,
  Of being born when it was past.

I read there that the earth was stained
  With its first shepherd's guiltless blood,
And since then, at the murder pained,
  In arms, to avenge his fate, has stood.

'Tis then a fable, finely built—
  Let's envy not our father's fate;
Man ever was a child of guilt—
  His ever was a wretched state.

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SONGS, &c.

FROM

SEDAINE'S OPERA COMIQUE

OF

Richard Coeur de Lion.

ANTONIO . . . . . *Couplets.*
BLONDEL . . . . . *Air.*
LAURETTE . . . . . *Air.*
BLONDEL . . . . . *Chansonnette.*
BLONDEL . . . . . *Song.*
RICHARD . . . . . *Air.*

ANTONIO.—COUPLETS.

La danse n'est pas ce que j'aime.

To me the dance offers no charm,
But I love Nikky's daughter so fair;
When I hold the sweet girl by the arm,
Oh! who can my transport declare!

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When still closer I draw her to me,
And we whisper together quite low;
That you cannot her loveliness see,
Alas! that I pity you now*.

She is fifteen, a year less than I,
Ah! if Nikky took not so much pain,
Our movements to watch and to spy!
Never mind, we must not complain.
Though 'tis vexing, I can but agree,
Yet we whisper together quite low;
That you cannot her loveliness see,
Alas! that I pity you now.

How graceful my shepherdess seems,
Along the green valley to pass,
As a butterfly lightly she skims,
And seems not to ruffle the grass:
Still I catch her—how swift she may be,
And we whisper together quite low;
That you cannot her loveliness see,
Alas! that I pity you now.

* Antonio sings to Blondel, who is disguised as a blind mendicant.

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BLONDEL.—Air.

O Richard! O mon Roi!

Oh, Richard! oh, my King!
The universe forsakes thee,
And no one on this earth,
His care or sorrow makes thee!
I, only I, thy bonds would break,
When all the world beside forsake:
And then his noble love—alas! her heart
With grief, with agonizing grief, must start.
Oh, Richard! oh, my king!
The universe forsakes thee,
And no one on this earth,
His care or sorrow makes thee.

Ye monarchs, seek not friends,
War's laurelled bands among,
But in the myrtle groves
Of memory and song.
A troubadour
Breathes love all pure,
And reckless of reward or fee,
Is lasting faith and constancy.
Oh, Richard! oh, my king!
The universe forsakes thee,
And Blondel, only Blondel,
His care and sorrow makes thee.

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LAURETTE.—Air.

Je crains de lui parler la nuit.

I fear to talk with him by night,
I hear him with too much delight;
" I love you—I love you !" he cries,
And my bosom responds to his sighs;
In spite of myself it swells,
And the secret it covers tells:
Then so warmly he presses my hand,
I know not where I stand;
I fain would fly, but in vain,
In spite of myself I remain:
Ah! why then talk with him by night?
I hear him with too much delight.

BLONDEL.—Chansonnette.

Un bandeau couvre les yeux.

The God of love, whate'er his guise,
Has still a bandage o'er his eyes,
A fact, which was, no question, meant
To our attention to recall,
He's never more on mischief bent,
Than when he cannot see at all.

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BLONDEL.—Chanson.

Que le Sultan Saladin.

Let Sultaun Saladeen,
In merry mood convene
A troop of damsels rare,
Of damsels young and fair,
To meet him on the lawn,
His sport at early dawn,
'Tis well, 'tis very well,
And in no way grieves my soul,
But with Gregory, I think
'Tis best to quaff the bowl.

Let a Knight or Baron bold,
Sell to his castle hold,
To go, in mail arrayed,
To the perilous Crusade;
His spouse, if so it must,
Left to creditors in trust,
'Tis well, 'tis very well,
And in no way grieves my soul,
But with Gregory, I think
'Tis best to quaff the bowl.

Let valiant Richard spurn
Every hazard in its turn,

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Let him plunge war's turmoil in,
The stranger's realm to win—
Let him far from England quell
The pride of Paynim fell:
'Tis well, 'tis very well,
And in no way grieves my soul,
But with Gregory, I think
'Tis best to quaff the bowl.

RICHARD.—Air.

Si l'Univers entier m'oublie.

If all the world forget—if here
My life consumes in bondage drear;
Oh! what avail my past renown,
My valour, and the fame I won!
Soft image of my love! thou only
Canst soothe awhile this bosom lonely;
Thou, only thou, canst give relief,
And for a moment calm my grief.

Retrospect of former power!
Canst thou smooth the present hour?
Canst thou mitigate? ah, no!
The thought but aggravates my woe;
Oh, death! come, close my pain!
Oh, death! come, rend my chain!
Oh, death! come, speed thy dart!
For hope has sped my heart.

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ROMANCE.

RICHARD AND BLONDEL.

Une fièvre brulante.

Blondel.... A fever once opprest
With flames my sinking breast,
From its tenement of clay,
My soul it chased away;
My beloved approached my bed,
And death far from me fled.

Richard.... A look from my beloved,
Revives my tender heart—
Makes happiness succeed,
And misery depart.

Blondel.... A puissant King repines,
In a castle lone and strong;
His faithful servant mourns,
His royal master's wrong.

Richard....Were Margaret but here,
I should cry, farewell to care.

Both. .....A look from $\frac{\text{his}}{\text{my}}$ beloved
Revives $\frac{\text{my}}{\text{his}}$ tender heart,
Makes happiness succeed,
And misery depart.

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FEROKH AND GOOLSEEMA.

A Tale of Badakshaun.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following pages form the FIRST PART of a versified Tale, the incidents of which are supposed to have occurred in the Eighth Century. The author submits them to the Public, under the hope of possibly being able to ascertain if the opinion of those he would wish to propitiate be so favourable as to encourage its completion.

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FEROKH AND GOOLSEEMA.

Of that fair land, where morn's first beams awake,
And Amoo, gushing from its parent lake,
Bounds o'er the glistening rocks with gentle force,
And gathers strength to run its mighty course;
Where the gay meads are spangled o'er with flowers,
And vine-clad hillocks nod on arghwaun* bowers;
Where costly lajward† darts its speckled rays,
And crimson rubies in her streamlets blaze;
Where the warm turquoise, in its azure hue,
Reflects the blush of heaven's ethereal blue;
Where every rock with sparkling crystal glows,
And every fount is margined by the rose—
Of that fair land, one rich exhaustless mine
Of all in nature lovely and divine,
I tell a tale—a tale of arms and love,
Which Albion's maids may list, perchance approve.

The Taujik race, once great in power confest,
The favoured soil from time remote possest;

* Arghwaun is the name of a beautiful flowering tree, indigenous in Badakshaun.

† Lajward or lapis lazuli, of which there are mines in Badakshaun.

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'Tis true, their pristine and extended sway,
Had like a meteor gleamed and flit away;
O'er Soyd's luxuriant vales, and Samar's fanes,
O'er Arian mountains, and Bucharian plains,
Ruled other races—in their turns to wait,
The sport of fortune, and caprice of fate.

In Badakshaun, from other realms expelled,
The sons of Princes* still dominion held;
If elsewhere doomed the vassal's lot to share,
They still preserved their rule and freedom there:
Of glory past, and royal lineage proud,
To none of earth's imperious Kings they bowed;
And faithful to themselves, in strength unbroke,
They spurned the bondage of a foreign yoke.

In its sequestered vales, their manly sires,
Whose generous bosoms glowed with freedom's fires,
In many a struggle kept their homesteads free
From stranger lords and foreign slavery.
Host after host of Scythians, Turks, and Huns,
Of Jeehoon's tribes and Kathai's swarthy sons,
Had strove to make those fertile fields a prey,
And, vanquished, led their barbarous hordes away.
In later times, the Arabs' sable bands
Had, flushed with conquest, hovered o'er the lands,
And fought as men who two-fold motives feel—
The lust of empire, and religious zeal.

* Such is the signification which has been given to the word Taujik; its correctness is not vouched for.

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Yet could not all their might the Taujik scathe,
He foiled their armies, but received their faith;
To that his reason's dictates bade him yield,
Although by arms victorious in the field.
Then Mithra's shrines were doomed in waste to lie,
And holy fires then ceased to tint the sky;
The Magi, howling, shunned their fanes destroyed,
With loosened girdles, and with censers void;
Their faith's last strong-hold forced, they fled in wo,
Unhappy exiles to the land of Fo.

The Taujik, unsubdued by change of creed,
Was still prepared in freedom's cause to bleed;
Her boons their sires had cherished while they breathed,
And pure and spotless to their sons bequeathed;
Who prized as life the gifts thus handed down,
Meed of their father's valour and their own;
And more than life—for what has life to boast—
If slaves we pine, and liberty be lost.

Such was the dauntless race, inured to toil,
That, born and nurtured on a genial soil,
Beheld its fruits mature, and harvests grow,
Nor gleaned nor wasted by a savage foe;
To Heaven their homage unmolested paid,
And native chiefs, and equal laws obeyed.

If thus renowned, that clime's bold sons in arms,
Not less illustrious were its daughters' charms—

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The charms of those bright maids who sportive lave
Their beauteous limbs in Amoo's golden wave;
Who, in the sanjit groves that fringe its stream,
When lulled in slumber, angels' visions dream.
Theirs is the tint that clear and radiant shines
As the pure crystal of their country's mines—
Theirs is the roseate hue that health supplies,
And theirs the liquid lustre of the eyes,
Whose subtle power makes every heart its throne,
And all its softer instincts claims its own.
Enchanting maids, and only not divine!
Their grace and beauty pass from line to line;
Dowers, by indulgent nature haply given,
To make earth's daughters rival those of heaven;
To purify men's grosser souls by love,
And grant a foretaste of the bliss above.
Where has not busy fame the story spread,
Of heroes, captive by her virgins led?
Who thinks on them but must to mind recall
The festal honours of the Bactrian's hall?
The gaudy couches ranged in order round,
The tables covered, and the goblets crowned;
The god-like guest enthroned in regal pride,
His martial chieftains placed on either side.
Who but must see advance Roxana, coy—
Who but must hear the general shout of joy,
When the first glance from that fair maiden's eyes
Made Asia's victor, and the world's, her prize?
A noble prize! and worthy her and love,
To beauty's queen was due the son of Jove.

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Such, Badakshaun, did once thy virgins glow,
Nor shine diminished their attractions now;
No foe approaches, but thy race disarms—
Thy sons by valour, and thy maids by charms.

A time there was, and to that time our tale
Refers, when two good Maleks ruled the vale;
Each, of its wide extent, a portion claimed,
And Khosroo this—and Arghoon that, was named:
The first with cheerful hearts obeyed the swains,
Who reaped the harvests of the Kohchak's plains;
The last, the youths with equal pride obeyed,
Who tilled the teeming soil by Amoo's side;
Both chieftains were in feats of arms approved,
Revered for wisdom, and for justice loved.
Between the two, a strict alliance run,
Their objects mutual, and their interests one—
To seek their vassals' safety and repose,
And guard their native land from foreign foes;
To uphold ancestral fame, and from decay
Preserve the last faint spark of Taujik sway.
O'er Kohchak's plains did hostile hordes impend,
Their chief in Arghoon found a constant friend:
Did Arghoon's fields the hideous Kerghiz threat,
Bold Khosroo's succour never failed him yet.
They both had fought in many a common field,
And culled the honours which war's triumphs yield,
And shared the glory which attends the brave,
Who in the time of need their country save.

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If thus to friendship public calls impelled,
Its claims by private ties were sacred held;
Congenial natures glow with kindred fires,
And mutual virtue mutual love inspires;
Each chieftain owned within the other's breast
The self-same motives which his own possest,
The same desire by worthy ends to claim
Their subjects' plaudits, and the world's just fame,
And thus their union's bonds cemented stood,
By private feelings, and by public good;
Their lieges, happy in its fruits, approved
The friendship cherished by the chiefs they loved,
Who far and wide amid the region round,
For valour, truth, and friendship, were renowned.

Oft would these chiefs, when peace their vallies blest,
Each in his turn become the other's guest,
Indulge in social converse and delights,
And give and take due hospitable rites:
Oft Khosroo, with Arghoon would chase the deer
Across the sterile desert of Pameer,
Or track the shaggy bison in his course,
To Khutlaun's mountains, or to Amoo's source.
Oft would Arghoon, when Khosroo led the way,
In Kohchak chase the stag, or nobler prey;
Through dale and glen the flying beast pursue,
And at full speed the quarry keep in view,
While as their steeds tore up the reeking ground,
Their followers' clarions roused the echoes round.

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Thus fate benignant on our chieftain's shone,
Blessed in their vassals' welfare and their own.
Yet though the present with such bliss was fraught,
Both felt the future claimed an anxious thought,
And both had often weighed in calm debate,
The rising prospects of the Taujik state.
Khosroo, a son, an only son could boast,
The destined leader of the Kohchak host;
While Arghoon gloried in a daughter fair,
His realm's bright heiress, and his dearest care.
Both were of few and nearly equal years,
And both excelled amid their young compeers;
For in green youth their virtues budded forth,
And promised blossoms of exceeding worth.
With joy that none but happy parents know,
The conscious Maleks saw their offspring grow,
In age and hope, in manliness and grace,
The first in merit as the first in place.
It was not strange the chieftains had agreed,
That Khosroo's son should Argoon's daughter lead
In wedlock, or that they should be allied,
Soon as the maid might fitly be a bride;
Nor was it strange, a match so wisely planned,
Had filled with general joy the Taujik land,
Where all looked fondly to the wished-for day,
When Khosroo's son should lead his bride away.

Yet was that day for which were daily paid
So many vows, by reasons fit delayed;
Nor youth nor maid had yet attained the years,
Deemed right to bear the weight of nuptial cares;

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For in that land weak minors are not led,
By shameless custom to the marriage bed;
In better taste, an age mature they wait,
And well prepared embrace the social state.
Good Khosroo, with an anxious thoughtful care,
That every virtue should exalt his heir,
And render worthy of his high command,
Had learned doctors called from Samarkand *—
Skilled in nice points of law, and doctrine's rules,
And all the knowledge of its famous schools;
Docile and apt, the youth their converse sought,
And gathered wisdom from the lore they taught;
Charmed, they beheld his dawning powers expand,
And foretold future blessings for the land.

While books and study held their fitting place,
For pastime, Ferokh † mingled in the chace,
Led by his generous sire, who well divined,
The body needed training like the mind;
There too the youth discharged a manly part,
And lanced the spear or sped the feathered dart;
None bolder with the foremost horsemen rode,
And none more venturous leaped o'er rock and flood;
And long had passed the day, by banquets crowned,
When Ferokh's arm first dealt the stag his wound.

* Samarkand was in former time the great school of learning in Upper Asia. Its learning has declined, but its reputation still remains.

† Ferokh, or the fortunate.

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It yet remained in foreign lands to roam,
And gain a knowledge not acquired at home—
The knowledge of mankind—untaught by rule,
And only gathered in the world's great school.
To this great end, the worthy sire decreed,
The youthful Ferokh should on travel speed,
To Bagdad, blooming on the Syrian plains,
Proud of its thousand minarets and fanes;
Of art and science then the bright resort,
And where the mighty Haroon kept his court.
Three years did Khosroo to the tour allot,
The fourth his son would reach his natal spot,
When, ripe in age and knowledge, as became
A Taujik Prince and his ancestral fame,
He hoped to see him, versed in arts and arms,
A worthy claimant of Goolseema's* charms.
Thus Khosroo, though compelled some pain to feel,
His projects fashioned for young Ferokh's weal;
And gave him, as becoming was and meet,
A train of friends, right trusty and discreet.

O'er Ferokh's head but sixteen years had flown,
And still his chin was smooth with boyhood's down,
When thus he wandered from the scenes of youth,
Those scenes endeared by innocence and truth,
Where every object seems with smiles to beam,
To guileless hearts, that but of pleasure dream—
Fond scenes! in after times of pain and strife,
Remembered as the happiest scenes of life.

* Goolseema, or lovely as a Rose.

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To grief at parting, sooth he was not proof;
But who grieves not to leave his father's roof?
To sigh and falter out a sad adieu,
To friends and kinsmen, and to kind ones too—
About to enter on a world unknown,
The stoutest heart but ill preserves its tone.
Tears, many tears from Ferokh's eyelids flowed,
And many tears his friends in turn bestowed;
Theirs doubtless to affection owed their course—
Nor those of Ferokh owned a different source;
Only a deeper pang may have imprest
The sorrows gushing from his aching breast.
At Wakhaun oft he with his sire had been
A guest, but never Arghoon's daughter seen;
For time-respected custom disallows,
A youth betrothed to see his future spouse;
Yet had he heard how bright her charms were held,
And how in female grace she all excelled;
The plaudits played upon his gentle mind,
And raised a transport sweet yet undefined;
Of future bliss disclosed a transient ray,
Which warmed his soul awhile—then passed away.

But though 'tis true they never yet had met,
To usage faithful and to etiquette,
They had, by interchange of gifts, exprest
The hopes allowed to grow in either breast;
Or, as their own free will and impulse moved,
Or as their friends suggested and approved.
When Ferokh made a noble stag his prize,
Its antlers passed before Goolseema's eyes;

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And some kind present in return, conveyed
How much his prowess pleased the blooming maid—
Oft fragrant flowers, on tender missions sent,
Perplexed to solve the riddle, what they meant;
And each would, as by fancy led, unfold
The silent hopes and vows the blossoms told;
Their youthful breasts, may be, unskilled to court,
But played at love, as at another sport.

Perchance Goolseema, sensitive and fond,
The line which held Ferokh, had passed beyond;
Or, that the female mind is easier moved,
And that it hails the thought of being loved;
Or, that it earlier feels that passion's birth—
To chasten which would seem its task on earth.
For so it was, that Ferokh distant, still
The thought of Ferokh would her memory fill;
While his, perhaps, was turned by change of place,
Claimed by the day's new pastime or the chace.
Not so Goolseema's: in her festooned bower,
Or in the grave or in the social hour;
From morn to night, at labour or at rest,
The thought of Ferokh rose within her breast;
For him, when seated in the gay alcove,
The thread she knitted, and the web she wove,
To form a gift by which might be exprest,
Her hopes, when next he came her father's guest;
For every cap and sandal Ferokh wore,
Were presents from the fair Goolseema's store;
And so the cords, which his bright helmet laced,
And the silk bands upon his sword-hilt placed.

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Ere Ferokh bade his native soil adieu,
'Twas fit he should take leave of Arghoon too;
For Arghoon loved him much—indeed, looked down
Upon him, as he would upon a son.
And such he was, or such in time would be,
Were human pact confirmed by Heaven's decree.
With that intent he sped to Wakhaun's court,
And dull at heart, according to report.

Brief was the stay the youthful chief could make,
His only object a farewell to take;
And that brief stay he wished much briefer too,
Grieved with the prospect of a long adieu.
He must have loved Arghoon, and, do I err?—
His daughter—he must, too, have thought of her—
Of her on whom his future hopes relied,
The beauty destined to become his bride;
Her many kindly acts—her love confest—
Must through his memory then, have moved his breast;
Which, if it never had been moved before,
Must then have shrunk, and trembled at its core.
'Tis when we part from those we love, we know
The full extent of friendship and of woe;
Affections in the mind, till then concealed
Or little heeded, blazon forth revealed;
Then all we prize, as doubly dear appears,
And all the soul awakes to doubts and fears;
Shrinks from the weight, or haply finds relief,
In floods of tears and plenitude of grief.

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But did the youth at fate alone repine—
And was the burthen, Ferokh, only thine?
Didst thou alone affliction's anguish bear—
And was there none its bitterness to share?
They who could then have pierced the latticed shades,
Where Arghoon's daughter sat amongst her maids,
And seen her pensive on her couch reclined,
Could best resolve what feelings swayed her mind,
And why she wept, and called her fate unkind.
There sat she, lovely as the beaming morn;
But, though encircled by her train, forlorn;
O'er the pale features of her beauteous face,
There stole a soft and melancholy grace;
While on half-questioned Heaven she fixed her eye,
And vacant stared, or heaved the heavy sigh:
In vain her maids their kind attentions prest,
Their kindly cares but made her more distrest.
How oft had she delighted heard them raise
Their mingled voices in her Ferokh's praise;
How often blushed, and turned her head aside,
And chid their zeal, and called it misapplied;
And then anew reverted to the theme,
And proved her ire was less than it would seem.
Could she unmoved hear flattering tongues record
The worth of one to be her future lord?
They told her true—for all they told, and more,
Her father had repeated oft before.

Then was it wonder she for Ferokh felt
A growing love, or that her soul should melt;

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And trained that only object to prefer,
Received his image there as worthy her;
And in that spotless shrine, an idol raise,
Endowed with every charm that merits praise;
Or that she looked to it for all the bliss
That true love hopes for in a world like this.

Now that the youth was soon about to leave,
We need not marvel that the maid should grieve;
Or that her mind, with harrowing thoughts confused,
The tendered solace of her train refused.

Her sire beheld with pity, so distrest
The object which on earth he loved the best;
It touched his soul to see her sorrows flow,
But though he chid, he hardly blamed her woe.
At length perceiving all his efforts vain,
To soothe her anguish and her tears restrain,
And fully conscious of their secret source,
He wisely took a new and different course—
He bade her courage take, and hope renew,
It yet remained to bid Ferokh adieu;
And she must for that arduous task prepare
With all her maiden energy and care.
Well judged he such behest would check her grief,
And by diverting give her soul relief.
Joy, sudden as the tidings, o'er her gleamed,
As her blue eyes upon her father beamed;

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Indulgent hope a ray of comfort lent—
She then should see her Ferokh ere he went.
Dark as her fate, one blessing was in store—
To see him once, if ne'er to see him more.

Nor did the worthy sire delay to tell
Young Ferokh he should bid the maid farewell,
Who heard with feelings, truth alone could teach,
And too confused to utter thanks by speech,
Yet did his looks their failing aid requite;
And told at once his wonder and delight.

Two days of his intended stay had past—
The third arrived, and was to be the last—
The day he would the promised boon receive,
Behold his future bride—and take his leave:
Inspiring oped the morn, and never day
Was ushered in more brilliant and more gay.

Behind lake Sirikool the sun arose,
Bright as a bridegroom in his wedding clothes,
Darting his rays on mountain, plain, and brake,
And gilding o'er the surface of the lake.
More dazzling as he rose, his stately march
He led, diffusing warmth o'er heaven's broad arch:
Ascending still, receding shadows fly,
Till one full stream of light illumined earth and sky;
Then shone in glory Shughnaun's happy vales,
Then smiled her hillocks, and rejoiced her dales;

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Then bloomed her orchards, fresh with morning dews,
Then blushed her flowerets with their thousand hues;
Then gleamed her rills beneath her tall alcoves,
And countless songsters warbled in her groves;
It was a day for every praise to call,
When nature's gladness shed delight on all.

When first that morn in gilded pomp arose,
It saw Goolseema's beauteous eyes disclose:
If fitful dreams had chased her through the night,
Not less the maiden prized the friendly light.
Her circling maids, a busy train, were near,
Their aid to offer, and her will to hear;
And in those rites their duteous part to bear,
Which at their hands required the highborn fair:
All such with care performed, in beauty's pride,
Improved by art, and radiant as a bride—
Stepped forth the fair, and with her menial choir
Her chamber left to seek her loving sire,
His sight to gladden, and his blessing ask,
Of every morn her wont and grateful task.
Joyful, the fond and happy parent prest
His blooming daughter to his throbbing breast;
Read in her mild blue eyes her bosom's glow,
And stamped the kiss of love upon her brow.

Now as the day's meridian hour had past,
And the bright sun obliquely shadows cast,
The fair Goolseema, by her sire conveyed,
Within the garden sought her bower's shade—

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There to await Ferokh—perchance to tell
Her love—and then to sigh a long farewell.
A soft and calm, yet melancholy grace,
Suffused the lovely features of her face;
Unmoved by all the floral charms around,
Her timid eyes were fixed upon the ground,
As up the cypress-shaded paths she led
Her way, with heaving breast and gentle tread;
'Till in the centre she had reached the bower—
Her favourite refuge in the sultry hour.

In front a tank the sparkling torrent fills,
By art diverted from the neighbouring hills,
Whose marble fountains lucid jets display,
And murmuring cascades spout their liquid spray,
While towering planes their turfted branches spread,
And form a canopy above the head.

Around, on every side, the soil was spread
With gaudy flowers in many an ample bed,
A wilderness of beauty, which might vie
In colouring with the tinted evening sky.
The gay shub-booee there enchants the sight—
So bright by day, and, oh, so sweet by night!
The graceful nerghis, with its slender stem,
Crowned with its golden cup, a floral gem;
The fragrant zambuk, with rich azure bloom,
And orange mirjaun, with its bland perfume;

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All these, and many more, in bud and flower,
Adorned the space around Goolseema's bower,
While lines of roses placed the beds between,
Glowed, with their full-blown freight, and filled the scene.

There Arghoon brought his lovely charge, and there,
Within her bower seated, left the fair;
While he upon the special errand hied
To lead young Ferokh to his future bride.

And there Goolseema sat forlorn alone,
As beauty chiselled on a marble throne;
Though pensive, yet a pleasure unexprest
Pervaded every feeling of her breast:
Her gentle nature by its force refined,
And led to abstract thought her wandering mind,
Thence seemed the charms around her all forgot,
And mute she gazed on that enchanting spot,
Which erst had power to charm her longing sight,
And raise the warm expression of delight.
Around her fitly stood her serving train,
And silent too, averse to give her pain.

Lo! Arghoon now with young Ferokh appears,
And his approach renews the maiden's fears;
Nor Ferokh's bosom less tumultuous glows,
With sudden pangs and unexpected throes.

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The sire, perchance aware what inward strife
The hour of meeting would arouse to life,
Cut short its progress, and with manner bland,
To young Ferokh's consigned Goolseema's hand,
And while that treasure in its grasp was prest,
The pair, with all a parent's fervour blest,
And craved that all their future days might flow
In bliss and virtue, undefiled by woe—
That love for them its path with flowers might spread,
And Heaven its blessings on their union shed!

This done, the happy father was not pained
That Ferokh's grasp its precious charge retained,
Nor did Goolseema the detention loathe,
The witching contact seemed to flatter both.

No doubt the gentle virgin joyed to find
The youth excelled his picture in her mind;
No doubt the youth a magic influence felt—
What heart would not beneath such influence melt!
The storms of life a hero may withstand,
But not the pressure of a houree's hand;
To him the shocks of battle trifles prove—
Not so the tokens of fair woman's love.
How then could Ferokh's guileless breast withstand
The power imparted by Goolseema's hand!

'Twas from that moment, that a power unknown
Before, claimed all his love for one alone;
Nay, more—'twas then that love within his breast
Awoke, and to himself was manifest.

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The latent spark, once kindled, brightly glowed,
And o'er his mind its light and warmth bestowed;
From its pure source a vital draught he drew,
And a new being opened to his view;
As much the beauteous maid rejoiced to see
Her visions sanctioned by reality;
As much rejoiced, when she beheld the youth,
To feel, that what she fancied love was truth.

The father, while with pleasure he surveyed
The modest Ferokh and the bashful maid
Admit a passion, once at least his own,
Thought best to leave them for awhile alone.
The waiting train he bade the garden stray,
And then he took himself a different way,
But first admonished, that however strong
Their pain to sever, they must part ere long;
For little time, in truth, remained to tell
Their mutual secrets, and to say farewell;
For on that eve would Ferokh's party wait
Their Malek Zaudeh at his castle's gate,
When he, perforce, must mount his ready steed,
And with his trusty friends his ordered course proceed.

Oh, love, what arts thy innocence can teach!
Soon modest Ferohk found the use of speech;
And soon Goolseema, that coy bashful maid,
Her secret passion to the youth betrayed.

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Soon Ferokh found his highest hope approved,
And soon Goolseema felt herself beloved;
Confiding beauty spurns all false disguise,
And soon she bore the gaze of Ferokh's eyes;
For soon her snowy veil, as chance designed,
Or ruffled by Ferokh, or by the wind,
Fell backward, and revealed her beauty's blaze,
Which fixed the youth an instant with amaze;
The next, unable to endure her charms,
He clasped their fair possessor in his arms.

The timid maiden met the firm embrace,
And in his glowing bosom hid her face,
Her panting bosom to his warmth replied,
And sighs avowed that love had vanquished pride.
Nature itself in magic charm seemed bound,
Unusual splendour seemed to shine around;
The rainbow's tints decked earth, and sky, and trees,
Unearthly fragrance charged the balmy breeze,
Celestial music seemed to fill the grove,
Such heaven is opened by the spell of love.

Now hand in hand the pair enraptured strayed
Through many a shrouded path and winding glade,
Delightful haunts to fair Goolseema known,
Where they might whisper forth their love alone;
For by young bashful lovers 'tis preferred,
Their vows should only by themselves be heard;
For love is pure, and deems intrusion rude,
And therefore flies to shades and solitude,
Where, unreserved, may freely be exprest
The warm o'erflowing feelings of the breast.

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In truth, it is a fair and goodly sight,
Which angels pure may witness with delight,
When, in two youthful minds of equal worth,
The kindled flame of love just struggles forth,
When first the warm impassioned vow is paid,
And blushes mark the acceptance of the maid :
The lover's fervour, which no more can brook
Concealment, and the fair's confiding look,
Are eloquent, above the power of speech,
And carry triumph, which no art can reach.

Oh, woman! in that hour the crown is thine,
Thy grace is matchless, and thy faith divine;
Thy tender passion so with skill displayed,
Thy very weakness lends thy beauty aid;
Surely such confidence is framed to move
Heaven's smile upon thy virtue and thy love.

The garden of Argheen, disposed with skill,
To southward rested on a rocky hill,
Whence gushed the copious springs, whose waters led
Throughout its borders, their luxuriance fed—
Supplying too, beneath the cypress shades,
The tanks, the fountains, and the gay cascades.
Upon that hill there stood a lonely tower—
A mournful vestige of departed power,
Believed, in former days, when blazed the fire
Of Mithra, to have been a Magian pyre,
And therefore called by Taujik lass and swain,
The Guebre's tower, or the Guebre's fane.

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Beneath, a cavern's gloomy entrance yawned,
Where never yet the light of day had dawned;
Abundant marvels of the place were told,
Though too a vestige of the faith of old;
And common fame, its ancient use forgot,
Had willed it should be called the lover's grot.
All near the gurgling waters formed a pool,
And though the spot was lonely, it was cool;
There oft repaired the maid from midday heat,
And for her use her sire had placed a seat,
And many a tree and bush about arrayed,
To knit their branches, and complete its shade.
To this retreat, by love their herald fed,
The happy pair, their lingering footsteps sped,
And there reposing, in affection true,
Opened their hearts, and breathed their vows anew.
The maiden's hand the trembling youth embraced,
And gently on her taper finger placed
A ring, with torquoise set of azure ray,
To tell her of his hopes when far away.
The maid in turn from her fair finger drew
A ring, her father's gift, of emerald hue,
And as a token of her faith and truth,
With modest grace presented to the youth.
He took the precious gift, the pledge of love,
And swore to prize it other things above;
And while the hand that gave was still in his,
His lips had pressed it with a glowing kiss.
Goolseema, blushing with due maiden pride,
Her hand, with soft reluctance, drew aside,

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Yet too embarrassed language to employ,
Her beaming features told her bosom's joy.
Thus in the bower hard by the lover's grot,
Had vows and gifts combined their future lot,
The anxious hour of owning love had past,
And now their fortunes in one bond were cast—
A bond by all that dignifies approved,
And each was happy, by the other loved.

Love in its fervour has so much to say;
Our lovers sat, nor marked the waning day;
Ferokh so many flattering sayings said,
That oft Goolseema drooped her lovely head,
And oft with beauty's own and native grace,
Stole an impassioned glance upon his face.

'Twas in that thrilling and exciting hour
She first was conscious of her beauty's power,
And felt within her breast a feeling soar
Of triumph—passive, or extinct before.
Long had they stayed in that auspicious spot,
All else in one absorbing bliss forgot,
And longer had they stayed—but, cruel stroke!
Impatient Arghoon on the conference broke;
The sun had close upon the horizon prest,
And soon would evening shades the skies invest;
Young Ferokh's friends in gallant order wait,
The Malek Zaudeh at the castle gate;
The parting pang must sadly be gone through,
One last and fond embrace—and then adieu.

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We need not tell how much the tidings shocked—
How long in that embrace the pair were locked;
Good Arghoon wept their love and grief to note,
And poured a father's blessing on them both;
His sorrowing daughter to her train consigned,
And strove to calm the unhappy Ferokh's mind,
As to his friends, with faltering step and slow,
He led the anguished lover, dumb with woe;
In truth, the sudden change from joy to pain,
Might well suffice to affect an older brain.

But love, of passions while the most refined
To all it blesses, grants due strength of mind
To bear the trials which its course attend;
And thus Ferokh felt in his breast a friend,
That checked the unruly torrent of his grief,
And soothing gave his suffering soul relief—
Taught him above the afflicting hour to buoy,
And stilled his present pain in dreams of future joy.

Before he joined his friends, the soothing balm
Of hope had o'er his mind diffused a calm;
And with collected eye he glanced around,
His snorting charger pawing on the ground;
And then he knelt, while worthy Arghoon blest,
And the last time unto his bosom prest;
While all the Taujik clans, convened around,
Record their joy, and loud applause resound;
And thus, while blessings showered on his head,
Goolseema's lover on his journey sped.

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That beauteous maid long time a silence kept,
And vacant gazed, and then profusely wept;
The floods of tears, may be, assuaged her grief,
And laid her bosom open to relief;
The consolations which her sire preferred,
Unheeded at the first, at length were heard;
And with mild looks, which all his pity claimed,
She sank upon his breast, and Ferokh named.
The melting father could not but approve
Her honest anguish, and commend her love,
While yet he urged, that grief was misapplied
In Ferokh's chosen love and future bride;
And though the pang at parting must be great,
How bright the prospect of her future fate.
Such reasons may have had their force, but more,
The turquoise ring she on her finger wore;
A glance at that her best consoler proved,
For the fond maiden felt herself beloved,
And that conviction much her pain removed;
That sweet remembrance filled her with delight,
And made her feel all minor evils slight,
Flushed all her frame with transport undefined,
And poured a soft delirium o'er her mind.
Composed, she with her maiden train retired,
Her kindly father's blessing first desired;
And on her couch, in sleep her cares forgot,
She dreamed of Ferokh and the lover's grot.

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