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T H E S L U M B E R S
O F
T H E D E A D.

10

How long, O Harold, shall thy tread,

Disturb the slumbers of the dead.

- Scott.

Wakel wakel ye slumbering muses. -old.

Who sang of warriors brave and bold;

And tell this tale. -'till now untold.

Its truth unto the mass unfold.

You sang erewhile of iron will.

Of lofty halls upon the hill

Where Coldness, Fame's fair son did kill.

And lay his frame out, warmthless, -still.

The song you are now called to sing.

Bespeaks no fame of mighty king.

Who spread his hands, like eagels' wings.

And fear, o'er tangent nations fling.

You wake your harps not for a song,

To some fair maiden, who has long

Forgot of tender passions strong.

Whose pleasing echoes ceased for long.

But to a slower, solemn tread.

You tuned your lyres as we read,

How noble soldiers once, -'tis said,

Disturbed the slumbers of the dead.

And now ye muses old, yet young;
Who never leave one song unsung;
Who never high your harps have hung;
Come! sing this song.-'till now.- unsung.
Pour forth in sweet, angelic strains,
Your sweetest song, and cast no chains,
Around the minds whose hallowed brain:
Present no foe to Music's claims.

PART FIRST.

Deep in the heart's unfathom'd caves,
Where Tumult's ocean ceaseless roars,
Where pleasure oft high revell holds,
Whence hearts most weak, are thence made bold,
Resides a sympathetic thought,
For those who have their finis found,
And they are sacred, hallowed thoughts,
Which come of life's enchanted march;
Bespoiling naught, by naught bespoiled,
Cleansing the mind and giving joy,
To those whom Fortune favors well.

And when toward the close of life.

With slacken'd footsteps, on we tread.

Toward the region of the dead.

Should we not sacred hold those thoughts.

Which from our Past experience rise?

And granting this, should we not have

In early life, some sympathy

For those who near their goal have gone?

Yet, can there be an end for those.

Whom Heaven's mighty king did frame?

An end! can there exist an end

To pre-decreed eternity?

Most surely not, for as we gaze

Far into space, we can discern

No rise- no end of the Unknown.

-One which to grasp, and then proclaim

In loud stentorian voice and clear:-

"O hear ye men! your God is found.

Behold Him! the Unknown, Unseen.

Unserued, Unworshipped, and Unpraised!

Behold Him! come and fall ye down,

Before His throne and give Him praise!"

Nor can we with our mortal eyes,

Behold Him in some far-off land,

Where seeing Him we strive to rush,

And reach the shining silv'ry shore,

Thro' whose most verdant fields do flow,

Rivers of brilliant precious ore.

Nay! we must cease to breathe this foul,

-This murdering mortal air, and seek u

Us for the end for which we must,

This life forego. Yet, is there such

An end more wanted than this life?

Perchance there be no end in death;

What land is seen when Death his blade

Doth sheath? I hear of Heaven's land

Whose streets of glittering gold are made,

Whose agate palaces receive

The passing rays of brilliant light,

From vast Celestia's countless suns.

But can there any such exist, -
A land material, and blest
With endless day, and is not hot
From having ceaseless luminance?
Whose inmates naught but love enhance,
And where they feed on honeyed milk;
Where all is pleasure and content;
Where Night is ~~depressed~~ ^{alien}, and Light
Unfolds his brilliant rays, and reigns
Eternal Monarch of the days!
And if there doth exist this land,
Who guides us by the hand, and leads
Us to its shores of indelence?
And where doth band the troops he leads
Into this place? But cease thee Muse!
Where soarest thou? Unto what plains
Have you now flown? Dost thou not know
If thou ascendst into the vast
Ethereal heights, unto this earth
Thou wilt return in fury at

Your fruitless search, for some unknown,

- Some unexisting land; - a land

Which is a recompense to those,

Whose mortal life has virtuous been?

Nay! nay! thou canst not find this shore,

Whose joys, the fevered brains of some,

Present to man. These pleasant blinds

And fancies are but symbols of

The non-existing heavenly life,

Which man supposes truly is.

And as they argue warmly, this

Most pleasing fancy, which some wild,

Enthusiastic, misled child

Of darkness teaches them: Thou must

Return and by your failure show

To them, what vast and grave mistakes

They oftimes make, do not misjudge

O men! these pleasing visions which

Have been designed, but to compell

Obedience to that natural force

7.
Which caused our complex being, to be.
But rather ye should strive to live,
A life of virtue and of love.
Regardless of what good ye do,
Yet, mindful of your evil acts;
For both are counted in the day,
Wherein we crave that pleasant sleep,
-That endless & close slumber of the dead.
And when on earth ye daily wend
Your footsteps with Time's fleeting wings
This, ever hold within your minds:-
That conscience does not die, but lives
Eternally; yea, while this frame,
Has wasted all its mortal force,
And lay out in the burying ground,
A bleached and useless mound; of clay.

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PART SECOND.

I strive to hear Hell's crackling fires,
Mingled with agonizing cries.

And seek to catch some sulphric fumes.
Ascending from the Tempter's cave.
I fail; but still I hear a sound,
As of some great, gigantic being,
Proclaiming thro' this rymthic ball,
Its threats of everlasting death.
But can there e'er be such a thing,
To man the image of his God?
And would not God be most unjust to
To punish everlastingly
One sin committid by the being
He did create with His own hand,
To worship Him and to adore
Eternally His holy name?
But nay, the priests would have you think,
That the divine Creator has
Established 'neath Celestia's bounds,
[Composed of fire and brimstone
Whence sulphric fumes ascend and spread,
There most extensile fumes over

The whole vast universe] a cave
Where Lucifer was bound, with all
The demons who rebelled against
The mighty power of Heaven's King:
And where those sinful souls descend,
Who in their mortal life refused,
The teachings of their learned sires.
But where can I this peaceless cave
Discern? I look into that vault,
Of azure hue, which crowns the frame
Of Nature's matchless dwelling place;
Where multitudes of bodies move,
Each in its own prescrib-ed sphere,
Disturbing none, by none disturbed;
Fulfilling each its own commands,
Not meddling with another's cause.
I look; but, what do I perceive?
A burning cave, whose inmates howl
With undescrib-ed pain and woe?
While fires arise, anon, and burn

With fierceness 'round the naked loins
Of those unhappy victims, whose
Most slow consuming flesh returns,
As with the speed of Heaven's light:
[Some rays of which descend to earth,
Accompanied by loudest noise,
Which shakes the universal frame,]
And burn forever, ceaselessly?
Or, do I hear 'neath earth's fixed base
Those hideous cries ascend on high,
Unto the realms of heavenly bliss,
From dark Tatarus' depthless cave?
I do not hear, nor do I see
These wonderful phenomena,
Nor will my mind permit belief
In these most wild, fantastic dreams,
Whose Ghostly forms present themselves,
While soundly on our couch we sleep.
Nay! Nature is not so unkind,
Unjust, unfeeling nor unlearned;

The deep recesses of our minds .
To her are as an open book:
She reads, -and quickly too- the thoughts
Therein , before one faint idea,
Is in our feeble minds conceived.
From her we cannot hide, for this
Most noble, -this most complex frame,
Is her own handiwork. Yet,
Not vainly do they often try,
-These leaders of the uninformed,
Who teach but falsehood to the mass
That follows like unthinking beasts,
Accepting as a germ of Truth .
Their false, unfounded theories, -
To lead the nobler mind away.
And he who once rejoiced in
A mind unfettered by the bonds,
The feebler minds encircle those .
Who to their ravening words do list;
Doth bind himself eternally.

Held closely by those narrow views,
 Which show us Nature as a guard
 -A warder of some dungeon dark,
 More cheerless than grim Singbi's cave*
 Whose darkness is of such a kind,
 As leaves its impress on the frame,
 Of those who have th' unpleasant chance
 To be one minute in its gloom:-
 Eternally. Ah man, awake!
 And from your most inactive mind,
 Throw off fore'er there slaving bonds,
 Which blind you to Great Nature's good;
 Nor serve your God because you fear
 Th' eternal sting of Hell's hot fires;
 Nor quench of thirst, with liquid lead,
 Nor Lucifer's tri-dental fork,
 [Which weapon from Celestia's heights
 Was thrown, when o'er the battlements
 Of Heaven, Michael did plunge,
 Defeated Sheitan and his host.

Headlong into that darksome cave.
 Nay! nor because you fear to win,
 That peaceless slumber of the dead,
 Unquiet as the boist'rous waves,
 Which is the portion of the souls,
 Who in their pre-existence scoffed
 At all idea of that great force,
 Which caused their mocking frames to be.
 But in consideration of
 The blessings which you have received,
 From great Allahu's bounteous hand.

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PART THIRD

Now list ye to the Poet's theme,
 Which came to him as on his couch,
 He lay, revolving in his mind,
 Some new unknown presentiment,
 Descended from the Gods. He lay,
 And in a twinkling slept; and lo!
 Some 'habitant of boundless realms

Of Nature, guided him away,
From these materialistic scenes,
Up thro' etherial regions where
Do dwell those undescribable,
-Those never 'fore discovered, fields,
Which Nature planted in the age,
Of Paradise's infancy;
Led by his guides inspiring hand,
Thro' countless halls and corridors,
Where dazzling weapons, bright as gold,
Suspended high, from those stout walls,
Built by the powerful Jovian hand,
In ages when dark Chaos ruled
Over the boundless realms of space,
And Sol's now brilliant, piercing rays,
Were like a far-off-candle's light,
Remind him of the heavenly war,
When Michael leading forth his leagues
'Gainst Satan's discontented fiends,
Entrapt, and bound in fiery chains,

The Leader of the great revolt.
[O terrible the warlike scenes!
When immortals against their kind,
In thunderous fury dashed, and fell,
One from the other, - stunned, yet to
The conflict still convening, when
Into the depthless pit, the whole
Of Lucifer's demons were plunged,
Upon their burning couches: bound,
Never to see the luminance
Of the bright home they did forego.]
He past from hall to hall; when lo!
A court of splendrous show appeared,
Surpassing all the golden wealth,
Which lies, deep buried in the earth:
Where Nature, [seated on a throne,
Raised on a diaz of jasper,
Sculptured from one huge diamond,
Whose loustrousness outshone the sun:
Around which, ever and anon

Her attaches their homage pay:]

Doth guide and rule the universe,

With an allpowerful, tireless hand.

"And what of man, the fallen type,

Of your own bright, ethereal light?"

Then like the twittering of the bird;

The rush and gush of mountain stream;

The roar of thunder, and of sea;

And all of Nature's sounds combined,

Vibrates, the answer, loud, now soft,

Now smooth, now rough, upon the air:-

"When I, Confusion sent to reign,

Over the plains which I did make,

Directing him to trouble them,

Untill the whole igniting mass,

[Which was then liquid, and did run,

From pole to pole without regard

To place or time, alike a ship,

Adrift upon the boundless sea.]

Had cool-ed down; in which process,

The various clans of trees and beasts.
 Assumed those forms which they would bear.
 Forever after in that world.

Whither I caused their forms to be
 Frail man, the last but highest being.
 I did ordain from Chaos grim.

To reign and rule and to possess.
 Supernal rights o'er all things else.

Ne'er have I promised him to live.
 Within these vast ethereal realms;
 Nor e'er gave I him cause to hope.

That here with me an equal reign,
 O'er Heaven's host, which from the rise
 Of endless Time has with me dwelt."

Nay! nay! ambitious man! not here
 Canst thou reside: after the end.

Of mortal life, thou must accept
 The only compensation which.

On the true merits of thy life.
 In equity in truth, and love.

Redowns to thee by Heaven's grace.''

The bard amazed at what he heard,

Inquired of the pleasant guide:-

"What meaneth this most unjust oath,

The mistress of high Heaven decrees?

Why have the priests and prophets whom,

In early ages she did cause,

To teach her creatures of the pow'r,

Which did create their noble being;

Caused man to hope, eternal life,

As recompense for service true,

If she intended not to give,

Unto the race what she decreed,

In ages when high Heaven was not?

Ah, are these celestial beings,

So blind to all that is most just,

That endless life from mortal man,

Is snatched; while age by age the cry

Of holy prophets raise the souls,

Which were extinct, to fight for truth

18.
And holiness? "Be not deceived"

The guide replied, "for ne'er have you
Been shown the scenes, where those do dwell
Who from their labours on that earth,

Whence you avenge, received that sleep,
-that peaceful sleep that comes to those,
Who in their pre-existence lived,

Honest and upright, day by day,

Ah, man! too quickly dost thou judge,

These acts, of Providence most wise,

If you comply, unto these realms,

Where rest those peaceful sleepers, who,

Have now received their just deserts;

And where those who in torment lie;

I'll thee thither, right away.

PART FOUR.

8 Then unto some realms on high,

Crown'd by the purple-tinted shroud,

Of sunset's flaming, golden cloud,

The two were wafted, with the speed

Of Hermes. Heaven's messenger

There in that western clime of Heav'n.

Where ever waft those zephyrs sweet.

That cool the regions of the dead.

Spreading their fragrance, far and near;

Refreshing e'er the peaceful sleep.

The endless slumber of the dead.

Who for their virtuous life below.

Received from Nature their deserts

Consisting of a peaceful sleep.

Unbroken by Stern Conscience's qualms;

The peaceful slumberers they viewed

Inhaling in their quiet sleep.

The air of immortality.

"Is this, my friend, the recompense.

Which man receives from Heaven's hand.

After the trials of his life.

He overcomes, and wings his flight.

Thro' fumes of nectar, to the throne.

Of that ethereal monarch's home?

Are these the golden til-ed streets,

Flowing with milk and honey sweet,

Where happy spirits ever sing,

Unto Sublimity's great king

Their pealing notes of prayer and praise?

O thou effulgent being, speak!

Inform if Great Emensity's

Most wide decrees are thus fulfilled."

Thus spoke the Poet to his guide,

Who smiling, answered in this wise:-

"Not unto mortal man was given,

The power these higher things to know,

Upon the earth content must be,

Those who reside upon that sod,

To know, that there doth still remain,

Unending rest from all their woes.

The meaning of symbolic speech,

That is, its force and purport true,

And mysteries, of eternal life,

Which he did miss, never to know.;

When thro' his helpmeet's tender hands,

The fruit of good and evil tree,

Gaining the bad, -the good,

Forever lost to him, he not

Perceives; nor e'er will know, untill,

Before God's throne when life is o'er,

He bows th' adoring head. Thou knowst

There are no swarms of honey gluttons,

In these realms who do infest

Each tiny flow'r and rose-buds sprout;

Nor cattle, nor bright tiles of gold,

Which mortal man expects to view,

When he adjoins to Heaven's land:

Giving to them their products, which,

Which on earth ye crave with mortal tastes,

Nay! those pictures are but symbols

Of the pleasantness which, reigns,

Over these blessed celestial climes,

Ye undying slumberers who

In deep and sweet repose now lie!

24.

The light resolves far off in space,
And casts a wretchedness o'er Hell,
Spreading dismay throughout the land,
And setting Conscience's lash in act:
From whose harsh sting red gore doth flow,
Filling that all-surrounding stream,
With one volume of ruddy glow,
Which flowed thro' ages far remote,
When Heaven, there did bind the fiends,
Who 'gainst great God's high power rebelled,
The habitant of higher climes,
These vast, symbolic scenes explained;
The Bard believed, and praised his God,
Awoke and found that he had dreamed!
.....
Thus we perceive that Heav'n is not
Composed of golden tiled streets,
Where push throngs fore'er do cry,
Holy! Holy! Holy! to God,
Nor is low Hell composed of fire.

High Heaven is the sign of good;

Hell is the figurative bad.

Heaven is the abode of peace;

Hell, that undying, great torment.

And when, and why, and where, these thoughts,

Unto my sleeping view was given;

Ask ye not me, but go, consult,

The mighty powers of Nature's good!

Finis.

26.

Rest, - peaceful rest, . your only due,
When after turmoils of that life,
And faithful serving, - tho' unknown,
The boundless greatness of NATURE,
Is now your sole companion here!

PART FIFTH.

The vision changes, and the scene,
Shifts from the region of the dead
Where peace and quietude do reign,
And shows unto astonished gaze,
The region of unpeacefulness,
There, where peace nor quietude do reign,
Nor daylight e'er dispells the light;
Nor fragrant breezes e'er refresh;
Nor Conscience's lash is e'er remote;
Where sultry air, free breath refuse;
And souls in tor ment ever lie;
Who on this earth no God did serve:
The poet and his heavenly guide,
Did view this all amazing sight.

Around this place, nine times did run,
A river, serpentine, and wide;
O'er whose high banks, fore'er did hang,
A gloom so thick as could be felt.
Between the round the river made,
Vast banks arose: a thousand leagues
Their breadth; their length, ten thousand times
Ten thousand leagues: and on these shores,
From pole to pole Blind Conscience's lash,
And sword in hand, whip, slay and gash,
Unceasingly, those unrepenting souls,
Who e'er do rise as soon as slain.
Here are the wailings, - here the prayers,
Of these sad victims of the lash:
They pray to Heaven and the lights
Of that far fairer clime approach;
And as with gratitude they hail,
Great Brilliancy's speedy approach,
A sudden darkness fain doth fall,
O'er this infernal realm of woe;

