Dec. 25, 1860.
PARADISE
AND THE
PERI
THOS MOORE
DAY & SON
One morn a Peri at the gate of Eden stood, disconsolate; and as she listened to the Springs of Life within, like music flowing and caught the light upon her wings through the half-open portal glowing, she wept to think her_recurent race should e'er have lost that glorious place!
How happy! exclaim'd this child of air: 
are the holy spirits who wander there. 
And flowers that never shall fade or fall: 
though mine are the gardens of earth and sea, 
and the stars themselves have flowers for me; 
one blossom of heaven out-blooms them all! 
though sunny the Lake of cool Cashmere. 
with its plane-tree isle reflected clear, 
and sweetly the founts of that Valley fall; 
though bright are the waters of Sinsu-hay, 
and the golden floods that thitherward stray, 
yet—oh, 'tis only the Blesl can say 
how the waters of Heaven outshine them all!

Going thy flight from star to star, 
from world to luminous world, as far 
as the universe spreads its flaming wall; 
take all the pleasures of all the spheres. 
and multiply each through endless years, 
one minute of Heaven is worth them all!
THE GLORIOUS ANGEL

who was keeping
the gates of Light, beheld her weeping;
and, as he nearer drew and listen'd
to her sad song, a tear drop glisten'd
within his eyelids, like the spray
From Eden's fountain, when it lies
on the blue flower, which -Bramins say-
Blossoms nowhere but in Paradise!

Nymph of a fair, but erring line!

Gently he said - "One hope is thine,
it is written in the book of Fate,
The Peri yet may be forgiven
who brings to this eternal gate
The gift that is most dear to Heaven!

Go seek it, and redeem thy sin:-
it is sweet to let the Pardon'd in!"

Rapidly as comets run
to the embraces of the sun:-
Fleeter than the starry brands
flung at night from angel hands,
at those dark and daring sprites,
who would climb th' empyreal heights.
Down the blue vault the peri flies,
and lighted earthward by a glance
that just then broke from morning's eyes.
Hung hovering o'er our world's expanse.

But whither shall the spirit go
to find this gift for heaven?—"I know
the wealth," she cries, "of every urn,
in which unnumber'd rubies burn,
beneath the pillars of Chilmimar:
I know where the Isles of Perfume are
many a fathom down in the sea,
to the south of sun bright Araby:—
I know too where the Genii hid
the jewel'd cup of their king Jamshid,
with life's elixir sparkling high—but gifts like these are not for the sky.
Where was there ever a gem that shone
like the steps of Alka's wonderful throne
and the Drops of Life—oh! what would they be
in the boundless Deep of Eternity?"
While thus she mused, her pinions fan'd the air of that sweet Indian land, whose air is balm, whose ocean spreads o'er coral rocks and amber beds; whose mountains, pregnant by the beam of the warm sun, with diamonds teem; whose rivulets are like rich brides, lovely, with gold beneath their tides; whose sandal groves and bowers of spice might be a Peri's Paradise! But crimson now her rivers ran with human blood—the smell of death came reeking from those spicy bowers, and man, the sacrifice of man, mingled his taint with every breath upwafted from the innocent flowers! Land of the sun! what foot invades thy pagods and thy pillar'd shades—thy cavern shrines, and idol stones, thy monarchs and their thousand thrones?
Tis he of Gazna—fierce in wrath he comes, and India's diadems he scatter'd in his ruinous path.—his bloodhounds he adorns with gems, torn from the violated necks of many a young and loved Sultana:—Maidens, within their pure Zenana, Priests in the very fane he slaughters, and chokes up with the glittering wrecks of golden shrines the sacred waters!

Downward the Peri turns her gaze, and through the war-field's bloody haze beholds a youthful warrior stand, alone, beside his native river,—the red blade broken in his hand and the last arrow in his quiver.

"Live," said the Conqueror, "live to share the trophies and the crowns I bear!"

Silent that youthful warrior stood—silent he pointed to the flood all crimson with his country's blood.
then sent his last remaining dart,
for answer, to the invader's heart.
False flew the shaft, though pointed well;
the tyrant lived, the hero fell!
and when the rush of war was past,
swiftly descending on a ray
of morning light, she caught the last-
last glorious drop his heart had shed,
before its free-born spirit fled!

Be this; she cried, as she wing'd her flight—
my welcome gift at the gates of Light;
though foul are the drops that oft distil
on the field of warfare, blood like this,
for liberty shed, so holy is.
it would not stain the purest rill,
that sparkles among the bowers of bliss!
Oh! if there be, on this earthly sphere,
a boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
as the last libation Liberty draws
from the heart that bleeds & breaks in her cause!
"Sweet" said the Angel, as she gave the gift into his radiant hand. Sweet is our welcome of the brave who die thus for their native land—but see—alas!—the crystal bar of Eden moves not—holier far than e'en this drop the boon must be that opes the Gates of Heaven for thee!

Her first fond hope of Eden blighted, now among Africa's Lunar Mountains, far to the south, the Peri lighted, and sleek'd her plumage at the fountains of that Egyptian tide, whose birth is hidden from the sons of earth, deep in those solitary woods, where oft the Genii of the Floods dance round the cradle of their Nile, and hail the new-born Giant's smile! Thence, over Egypt's palmy groves, her grots, and sepulchres of kings, the exiled Spirit sighing roves:
and now hangs listening to the doves in warm Rosetta's vale—now loves to watch the moonlight on the wings of the white pelicans that break the azure calm of Mœris' Lake. It was a fair scene—a land more bright never did mortal eye behold! Who could have thought, that saw this night those valleys and their fruits of gold basking in heaven's serenest light:—those groups of lovely date-trees bending languidly their leaf-crown'd heads, like youthful maids, when sleep descending warns them to their silken beds:—those virgin lilies, all the night bathing their beauties in the lake, that they may rise more fresh and bright, when their beloved suns awake:—those ruin'd shrines and towers that seem the relics of a splendid dream: amid whose fairy loneliness nought but the lapwing's cry is heard.
I had seen but (when the shadows flitting fast from the moon, unsheath the gleam) some purple-wing'd sultana sitting upon a column. motionless and glittering, like an idol bird! who could have thought that there, e'en there amid those scenes so still and fair, the Demon of the Plague hath cast from his hot wing a deadlier blast, more mortal far than ever came from the red desert's sands of flame! so quick, that every living thing of human shape, touch'd by his wing, like plants, where the simoom hath past, at once falls black and withering!

The sun went down on many a brow, which, full of bloom and freshness then is rankling in the pest-house now, and ne'er will feel that sun again! and oh! to see th'unburied heaps on which the lonely moonlight sleeps—
the very vultures turn away, and sicken at so foul a prey! only the fiercer hyaena stalks throughout the city’s desolate walks at midnight, and his carnage plies woe to the half-dead wretch, who meets the glaring of those large blue eyes amid the darkness of the streets!

Poor race of men!” said the pitying Spirit, dearly ye pay for your primal fall—some flowerets of Eden ye still inherit, but the trail of the Serpent is over them all! She wept—the air grew pure and clear around her, as the bright drops ran; for there’s a magic in each tear, such kindly spirits weep for man!

Just then, beneath some orange-trees whose fruit and blossoms in the breeze were wantoning together, free, like age at play with infancy—
beneath that fresh and springing bower.
close by the lake, she heard the moan
of one who, at this silent hour,
had thither stolen to die alone.

One who in life, where'er he moved,
drew after him the hearts of many;
yet now, as though he never were loved,
dies here, unseen, unwept by any!

None to watch near him—none to stoke
the fire that in his bosom lies,
with e'en a sprinkle from that lake,
which shines so cool before his eyes.

No voice, well known through many a day,
to speak the last, the parting word,
which, when all other sounds decay,
is still like distant music heard.

That tender farewell on the shore
of this rude world, when all is o'er;
which cheers the spirit, ere its bark
puts off into the unknown dark.

Deserted youth! one thought alone
shed joy around his soul in death.
ah! once, how little did he think
an hour would come, when he should shrink
with horror from that dear embrace.

those gentle arms, that were to him
holy as is the cradling place
of Eden's infant cherubim!

And now he yields—now turns away,
shuddering as if the venom lay
all in those proffer'd lips alone—

those lips that, then so fearless grown,
never until that instant came
near his unask'd or without shame.

"Oh! let me only breathe the air,
the blessed air, that's breathed by thee.

And, whether on its wings it bear
healing or death, 'tis sweet to me!

There,—drink my tears while yet they fall,
would that my bosom's blood were balm,
and, well thou know'st, I'd shed it all

to give thy brow one minute's calm.

Nay, turn not from me that dear face—
and not thine—thy own loved bride—"
one, the chosen one, whose place
in life or death is by thy side!
think'st thou that she, whose only light,
in this dim world, from thee hath shone
could bear the long, the cheerless night
that must be hers, when thou art gone?
That I can live, and let thee go,
who art my life itself?—No, no—
when the stem dies, the leaf that grew
out of its heart must perish too!
Then turn to me, my own love, turn,
before like thee I fade and burn:
cling to these yet cool lips, and share
the last pure life that lingers there!
She fails—she sinks—as dies the lamp
in charnel airs, or cavern-damp.
so quickly do his baleful sighs
quench all the sweet light of her eyes!
One struggle—and his pain is past—
her lover is no longer living!
One kiss the maiden gives, one last
long kiss, which she expires in giving!
that she, whom he for years had known, and loved, and might have call'd his own, was safe from this foul midnight's breath, safe in her father's princely halls, where the cool airs from fountain falls, freshly perfumed by many a brand of the sweet wood from India's land, were pure as she whose brow they faun'd.

But see—who yonder comes by stealth, this melancholy bower to seek, like a young envoy, sent by Health, with rosy gifts upon her cheek?

His she—far off, through moonlight dim, he knew his own betrothed bride, she, who would rather die with him, than live to gain the world beside!—Her arms are round her lover now, his livid cheek to hers she presses, and dips, to bind his burning brow, in the cool lake her loosen'd tresses.
"sleep" said the Peri, as softly she stole the farewell sigh of that vanishing soul, as true as c'ier warm'd a woman's breast—
"sleep on, in visions of odour rest,
in balmier airs than ever yet stirr'd
in enchanted pile of that holy bird,
who sings at the last his own death lay,
and in music and perfume dies away!"

Thus saying, from her lips she spread unearthly breathings through the place,
and shook her sparkling wreath and shed
such lustre o'er each paly face.
that like two lovely saints they seem'd upon the eve of doomsday taken from their dim graves, in odour sleeping—
while that benevolent Peri beam'd like their good angel, calmly keeping
watch o'er them, till their souls would waken

But morn is blushing in the sky:—
again the Peri soars above.
High throb'd her heart with hope elate, the elysian palm she soon shall win, for the bright Spirit at the gate smiled as she gave that offering in and she already hears the trees of eden, with their crystal bells ringing in that ambrosial breeze that from the Throne of Alla swells and she can see the starry bowls that lie around its lucid lake, upon whose banks admitted souls their first sweet draught of glory take!

But ah! even Peris' hopes are vain—again the Fates forbade, again the immortal barrier closed—"not yet!" the Angel said as, with regret, he shut from her that glimpse of glory—true was the maiden, and her story, written in light o'er Alla's head.
by seraph eyes shall long be read.

But, Peri, see—the crystal bar
of eden moves not—holier far
than even this sigh the boon must be
that opes the Gates of Heaven for thee:

N
ow, upon Syria's land of roses
softly the light of eve repose,
and, like a glory, the broad sun
hangs over sainted Lebanon:
whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
and whitens with eternal sleet,
while summer in a vale of flowers,
Is sleeping rosy at his feet.

To one, who look'd from upper air
o'er all the enchanted regions there,
how beauteous must have been the glow,
the life, the sparkling from below!
Fair gardens, shining streams, with ranks
of golden melons on their banks,
more golden where the sunlight falls.
gay lizards, glittering on the walls of ruined shrines, busy and bright,
as they were all alive with light;—
and yet more splendid, numerous flocks
of pigeons, settling on the rocks,
with their rich restless wings, that gleam
variously in the crimson beam
of the warm west,—as if inlaid
with brilliants from the mine, or made
of tearless rainbows, such as span
the unclouded skies of Peristan!

And then, the mingling sounds that come
of shepherd's ancient reed, with hum
of the wild bees of Palestine,
banqueting through the flowery vales;—
and, Jordan, those sweet banks of thine.
and woods, so full of nightingales!

But naught can charm the luckless bird:
her soul is sad—her wings are weary—
joyless she sees the sun look down
on that great Temple, once his own.
whose lonely columns stand sublime,
slighting their shadows from on high,
like dials, which the wizard time
had raised to count his ages by!

Yet haply there may lie conceal'd
beneath those chambers of the sun,
some amulet of gems, anneal'd
in upper fires, some tablet seal'd
with the great name of Solomon,
which, spell'd by her illumined eyes,
may teach her where, beneath the moon,
In earth or ocean lies the boon,
the charm, that can restore so soon,
an erring spirit to the skies!

Cheer'd by this hope, she bends her thither
still laughis the radiant eye of heaven,
nor have the golden bowers of even
in the rich west begun to wither:
when o'er the vale of Balbee winging
slowly, she sees a child at play.
among the rosy wild flowers singing,
as rosy and as wild as they;
chasing, with eager hands and eyes,
the beautiful blue damsel flies.
that flutter'd round the jasmine stems.
like wing'd flowers or flying gems;—
and, near the boy, who, tired with play,
now nestling 'mid the roses lay.
she saw a wearied man dismount
from his hot steed, and on the brink
of a small imaret's rustic fount
impatient fling him down to drink.

Then swift his haggard brow he turn'd
to the fair child, who fearless sat.
though never yet hath daybeam burn'd
upon a brow more fierce than that—
sullenly fierce—a mixture dire.
like thunder-clouds, of gloom and fire!

In which the Peris' eye could read
dark tales of many a ruthless deed:
the ruin'd maid—the shrine profane;
oaths broken—and the threshold stain'd
with blood of guests!—there written, all black as the damning drops that fall from the denouncing Angel's pen.

ere Mercy weeps them out again!

Yet tranquil now that man of crime as if the balmy evening time soften'd his spirit look'd and lay, watching the rosy infant's play:—though still, when'er his eye by chance fell on the boy's, its lurid glance met that unclouded, joyous gaze, as torches, that have burnt all night through some impure and godless rite, encounter mornings glorious rays.

But hark! the vesper call to prayer, as slow the orb of daylight sets, is rising sweetly on the air, from Syria's thousand minarets! The boy has started from the bed of flowers where he had laid his head.
and down upon the fragrant sod
kneels, with his forehead to the south
lisping th' eternal name of God
from purity's own cherub mouth.
and looking, while his hands and eyes
are lifted to the glowing skies,
like a stray babe of Paradise,
just lighted on that flowery plain.
and seeking for its home again!
Oh, 'twas a sight—th' heaven—th' child—
a scene, which might have well beguiled
even haughty Eblis of a sigh
for glories lost and peace gone by!

And how felt he, the wretched Man
reclining there—while memory ran
'yer many a year of guilt and strife,
flow o'er the dark flood of his life.
nor found one sunny resting-place.
nor brought him back one branch of grace?
There was a time,' he said, in mild,
heart-humbled tones—thou blessed child!
when, young and haply pure as thou.
Hook'd and pray'd like thee—but now—
his nobler aim
and hope and feeling, which had slept
from boyhood's hour; that instant came
fresh o'er him, and he wept—he wept!

Blest, tears of soul-felt penitence!
In whose benign redeeming flow
felt the first, the only sense
of guiltless joy that guilt can know.
There's a drop said the Peri, that down from the moon
falls through the withering airs of June
upon Egypt's land, of so healing a power;
so balmy a virtue, that 'e'en in the hour
that drop descends, contagion dies
and health reanimates earth and skies!—
Oh! is it not thus, thou man of sin,
the precious tears of repentance fall?
though foul thy fiery plagues within.
One heavenly drop hath dispelled them all!
And now—behold him kneeling there
by the child's side, in humble prayer,
while the same sunbeam shines upon
the guilty and the guiltless one,
and hymns of joy proclaim through heaven
the triumph of a soul forgiven!

It was when the golden orb had set,
while on their knees they linger'd yet,
there fell a light, more lovely far
than ever came from sun or star.

upon the tear that, warm and meek,
dew'd that repentant sinner's cheek:
to mortal eye this light might seem
a northern flash or meteor beam—but
well th' enraptured Peri knew
twas a bright smile the Angel threw
from heaven's gate, to hail that tear
her harbinger of glory near!

Joy, joy for ever! my task is done—
the gates are pass'd, and heaven is won!
Oh! am I not happy? I am, I am—
to thee, sweet Eden! how dark and sad
are the diamond turrets of Shadukiam, 
and the fragrant bowers of Amberabad! 
Farewell, ye odours of earth, that die, 
passing away like a lover's sigh! —
My feast is now of the tooba tree, 
whose scent is the breath of eternity!

Farewell, ye vanishing flowers, that shine 
In my fairy wreath, so bright and brief! —
oh! what are the brightest that e'er have blown 
to the lote-tree, springing by Alla's Throne, 
whose flowers have a soul in every leaf! 
Joy, joy for ever! — my task is done — 
the gates are pass'd, and Heaven is won!