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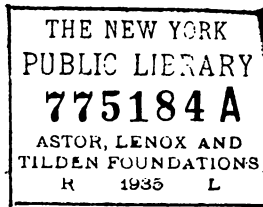
BY C. W. EVEREST.



'Ah! there is desolation cold:
The desert serpent dwells alone;
Where grass o'ergrows each mouldering stone;
And stones themselves, to ruin grown,
Are grey, and death-like old!'

HARTFORD:
CANFIELD AND ROBINS.

M D C C C X X X V I I I .
E. P.



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TO

MY MOTHER,

THIS POEM

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poem was in part delivered at a late 'Commencement' occasion of WASHINGTON COLLEGE. To some who were then its auditors, its present appearance will excite no surprise, their desire having been freely expressed for its publication. But with others, we cannot anticipate so flattering a reception. The severe injunction still stands upon the page of the bard of Venusium,

—————nonumque prematur in annum,
Membranis intus positia:

Shade of Horace! forgive us. Scarcely so many weeks have gone by since our rude lyre sounded its last strain. But no rich Mæcenas stands at our side. A desire to gratify some, actuates—and (a secret known only to rhymers!) a desire to be gratified by others, still more strongly impels us!

In conclusion—we send forth our verse, with all its errors clustering about it, to 'sink or swim,' as accident and the good Public may determine—soliciting just so much of the popular lenity, as all similar works are accustomed to receive. And those whose purses shall suffer in an undue proportion to the entertainment thereby received, and whose ready sympathies will be awakened for 'the indiscretion' of the author—we would refer, for consolation, to the sentiment in which a Reviewer of former times exulted, when he exclaimed, in concluding the praiseworthy task of abusing a young writer's production—'Well! we may rejoice, for 'tis the last of him!'

Truly the Public's obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Hartford, Sept. 14, 1838.

B A B Y L O N .



I.

Long had the 'star of empire' shed its ray
O'er Babylonia's kingdom, from the hour
When Nabonassar held his regal sway¹—
(A liberated Nation's grateful dower :)
Then slow but firm her step to wealth and power :
Succeeding kings in turn improved her state ;
And not a cloud upon her sky 'gan lower :
With name revered, with conscious pride elate,
'Mid Eastern realms she sat—in equal honors great.

II.

But not until her mightiest king arose,²
Was Babel's name a world's re-echoing dread :
Then did her monarch triumph o'er her foes,
And march to conquest with a giant's tread :
Before his conquering sword wide Nations bled,
And kings, obedient, bowed in suppliant plight :
His legions ne'er from hostile foemen fled ;
But favoring Victory marked his banners' flight—
In peace the most renowned, the most renowned in fight.

III.

Of old Chaldea owned his sceptre's reign,
And the wild Arab wore the look of fear ;
But now new conquests did his valor gain :
The vanquished Syrian came, a suppliant, near—
Samaria bowed beneath his yoke severe—
And next, a triumph prouder, mightier still,
Which well the monarch's swelling heart might
cheer :
The great Assyrian, learned in empire's skill,
Sat like a humble child, obedient to his will.

IV.

Still shone the star of conquest—mighty Tyre,
 Of high renown, the Ocean's peerless bride,^s
 Though fighting bravely through long years of ire,
 Yielded at length to battle's gory tide:
 And ravaged Egypt wailed in dust her pride,
 When his tired cohorts ceased their vengeful
 slaughters:

And, while the song for distant Zion sighed,
 Lonely and sad, by Babel's gushing waters,
 Sat Judah's captive sons, and Judah's mourning
 daughters.

V.

But not to empire's growing sway alone,
 Did Babylonia's realm her greatness owe:
 Her City's grandeur all unrivalled shone,
 Since lorn Assyria in the dust lay low;
 The home unwilling of her captive foe,
 Her strength the mightiest of the Orient clime—
 Her grace and beauty passing human show:
 Thus hated, feared, beloved, in glory's prime,
 She mocked Destruction's dart, and mocked the
 Spoiler, Time.

VI.

And Science came, a pilgrim, to her walls,
And learned Magi, from the distant shore :
There the Chaldean, in her nursing halls,
Delved o'er his mystic, astrologic lore :
And wealth to genius oped her glittering store :
In learning's, honor's, grandeur's varying scene,
She brooked no rival, no companion bore :
But peerless, lone, in proud, imperial mien,
Like mighty Juno, swayed—Earth's universal queen.

VII.

Alas, for human greatness! and alas,
For glory's splendor on a mortal brow !
The stateliest realms must down to ruin pass,
And mightiest monarchs to a mightier bow :
Alas! will Death ne'er spare a gallant foe ?
Vain, vain, to hope for mercy from his might :
He laid great Babylon's noblest monarch low,
And veiled her glory's beam in boding Night,
While Eastward Victory's star took its eternal flight.

VIII.

The monarch slumbered with the valiant dead—
His wayward son assumed th' ancestral reign;⁵
Who—long by Flattery's blandest accents fed,
And now, by sudden exaltation, vain—
Ruled, like a tyrant, o'er his broad domain:
In vain did Justice urge her high behest,
And tearful Mercy seek her boon to gain:
Scorned by the good, he ruled—by Vice, unblest—
Like hideous Nightmare's weight upon the sleeper's
breast.

IX.

Meanwhile the Median and the Persian state,
(Chaldea's allied aid in times gone by,⁶)
Stretched wide their bounds, with waxing power
elate;
Their banner flaunted proudly to the sky—
While varying Victory hovered gladly nigh,
And sought to nestle in its rustling fold;
Till Cyrus' name on every breeze went by—
While Rumor's tongue declared how foemen old
Their routed legions bowed before the Conqueror bold.

X.

Not long Chaldea's king his pomp might wear ;
Ere two short years their silent flight had made,
Assassination's 'red right arm' was bare—
His cruel guilt by cruel doom repaid,
And the proud despot in the dust was laid!
(Thus, maddened tyrants, by their folly driven,
While ne'er a voice around them dare upbraid,
Will deem that all to peace profound is given—
When lo! the avenging bolt peals through the startled
Heaven !)

XI.

Then rapturous rose a Nation's grateful voice,
To hail the noble Neriglissar king :
And well, in sooth, Chaldea might rejoice,
And well might Joy her tuneful pæans sing,
And garlands in the monarch's pathway fling ;
For well her monarch proved such rightful claim :
Constant he toiled (alas! in vain,) to bring
The empire back to glory, and her name
E'en higher yet to place upon the scroll of Fame!

XII.

Nor all in vain had proved his tireless zeal,
 Could but man's follies slumber with his clay :
 Such fortune might not bless Chaldea's weal :
 Her last weak tyrant, in an evil day,
 Had dared from honor's sacred path to stray,
 And, undeserved, to brand an insult foul,
 In wanton rancor, on the Median sway :^s
 And now War's gathering clouds in gloom did scowl,
 And muttering thunders spoke in sullen, boding growl.

XIII.

The Sun had wheeled through Heaven his burning
 course
 For three long Summer-tides, and looked his beam
 Upon the mustering Nations' gathering force—
 Like leaves of forests, when the genial gleam
 Of Summer's glory gilds the glade and stream :
 For aid the Median sought, nor undenied—
 With state which well a Conqueror's own might
 seem,
 Great Cyrus came, in Youth's impetuous pride—
 While Persia's warlike sons swarmed countless at his
 side !

XIV.

Nor friendless sat Chaldea's warlike lord :
The Lydian Cræsus came, with bannery host—
The Phrygian realm poured forth her vengeful horde,
And thousands thronged from Caria's distant coast :
And Cappadocia—long an allied boast—
With free Cilicia, marched her deathful train :
Thus, their proud banners, by the wild winds tossed,
The Orient Nations pressed, in glory vain,
To pour War's crimson tide along the peaceful plain.

XV.

The banded Nations met—the trumpet's tone
Gave awful summons to the sanguine strife :
Then rose the cry of battle, and the moan
Which bleeding nature gives for gasping life :
Steed pressed on steed, and furious cohorts, rife
For frenzied carnage, rushed with frantic yell :
The spear's red work was done—the warrior's knife
Slept in the breast—nor ceased the maddening spell,
Till in Death's foremost rank Chaldea's monarch fell !

XVI.

Then Victory fled his banners—Discord came—
His broken ranks no more would meet the foe :
And Media's host swept on, like waves of flame—
In fierce pursuit still dealt the vengeful blow :
Still rose to Heaven the fearful cry of woe :
And when the Sun last viewed the scene of blight,
A purple tide gave back his crimson glow :
Nor ceased the contest, till the sorrowing Night,
With brooding wing, came down, and stayed the
mournful fight.

XVII.

Ah ! there was wailing, when that broken band
Resought their City's welcoming walls once more :
Few days had passed, since, at their king's command,
They trod in pride along the Euphrates' shore,
And, joyous, mused the coming peril o'er :
Now, lorn they came, and, with a brow of gloom,
Their slaughtered king in solemn sadness bore !
So War's fell dæmon breathes his direful doom,
So Nations, mourning, stand around a Nation's tomb !

XVIII.

Scarce were the monarch's funeral honors done,
And scarce had Sorrow dried her gushing tear,
Ere Babylonia hailed the regal son'—
Would that his throne had earlier proved his bier!
Now, sudden freed from all restraints of fear,
No tyrant's heart with his in guilt might vie:
Nor might Chaldea view one hope, to cheer,
Nor one weak virtue in her despot spy—
But drained, in sullen wrath, the cup of anguish dry!

XIX.

Soon, swift-winged Rumor bore the news afar:
Th' exulting foeman marched his legions fleet—
And o'er the realm still poured the tide of War,
While Victory sped his onward course to greet:
But once—in vain—Chaldea's king would meet
His fatal foe—then fled, in dread dismay:
And vain, to woo him from his guarded seat,
Did Persia's son his boasting troops display—
Then toward far Media's bound took his triumphant
way!

XX.

Now, joyful, freed from all his irksome care,
His heart to guilt the despot all resigned :
From his fell frown of wrath forth stalked Despair,
To doom of lingering wretchedness consigned !
While the crowned fiend, to hastening dangers blind,
Forgot that wounds concealed will rankle deep :
But when high hearts in bleeding anguish pined,
Safe, where the nightly guard its watch did keep,
Stern Vengeance softly stole, and frowned upon his
sleep !

XXI.

Then came Belshazzar to the kingly crown,
The last—the vilest—of the royal line,¹⁰
Which Babylonia hailed of long renown,
And deemed, as all realms deem their kings, divine !
(Alas ! that he, whose splendor last must shine,
Should shed a sickly glare o'er glory's wreath !
How better far, if Heaven hath doomed decline,
To struggle fiercely with the tempest's breath,
And 'lume with hallowed glow the darkening brow of
Death !)

XXII.

'Tis true, he was no tyrant—for his soul
 Ne'er felt the burning of the despot's fire :
 And while he shunned oppression's dread control,
 (For minds enervate fear a Nation's ire,)
 At Pleasure's shrine he knelt, in fond desire ;
 Nor cared that loftier aims became a king—
 Only to press 'mid Folly's votaries higher !
 Unheeding all what dangerous ills might spring,
 While Ruin o'er him wheeled, and flapped her gloomy
 wing !

XXIII.

But while her son his guilty course pursued,
 No peace his royal mother's breast might feel :¹¹
 Her heart, with Wisdom's sternest lore endued,
 Owned but one aim—her groaning country's weal :
 And while Chaldea's rightful lord, with zeal
 Sped on in Pleasure's pathway—she, distrest,
 Guided in camp and court, with righteous deal,
 And watched the Empire, with a troubled breast,
 As mothers watch will keep above an infant's rest !

XXIV.

For well she knew the Persian's banner, furled,
Would soon again be rustling on the blast:
And well she trembled, lest a captive world
Should sit submissive 'neath its shadow vast;
Nor proved in vain her fears—few months were past,
Ere War's dire notes th' unwilling ear assailed;
Tower, town, and guarded fortress, tottered fast,
Nor aught their ancient strength and might availed—
Where Cyrus' arm was raised, his sovereign power
prevailed.

XXV.

Yet still the brave Nitocris quelled her fear:
When, one by one, her girted holds went down,
Still strove the Nation's fainting heart to cheer;
Still strove to guard the feeble monarch's crown:
With needed force supplied th' unsheltered town:
But most her City's strength engrossed her now—
For firm her vow, that queen, of proud renown,
Should ne'er in shame a conquered subject bow,
And give the proudest wreath to Victory's laurelled
brow!

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brow !

XXVI.

When years had fled, and other hope seemed vain,
 The listless monarch woke to Reason's sway :
 With wealth's charmed spoil endued, the royal train
 To Lydia's realm betook their speedy way :
 There, soon, a countless host, in stern array,
 The Western Nations to the monarch gave :
 Then throbbed his breast, with Hope's fond whispers,
 gay—
 Potent the aid—their Lydian leader brave—
 His throne, so long oppressed, so mighty now to save !

XXVII.

Vain, vain, his hope—scarce had the glad court rung
 With welcoming echo, 'neath his charger's tread,
 Ere mournful ills were borne by Rumor's tongue—
 Th' advancing hosts had met th' invader dread—
 And whelmed by matchless force, had, routed, fled ;
 Then Fame declared, how 'neath proud Sardis' wall,
 His tireless foe the constant siege had led,
 While vain, for aid, was guarded Cræsus' call—
 Then Sardis shrunk in awe, and trembled to her fall !

XXVIII.

Still, Persia's banner waved in Victory's hand,
Still, Cyrus' legions marched to conquest wide,
Till every clime confessed his free command,
From where Euphrates rolls, in lordly pride,
To far Ægea's sportive, rock-bound tide :
Then Syria wore the captive's galling chain,
And awed Arabia bended by her side :

While Northern powers confessed the struggle vain,
And bowed unwilling necks, and owned resistless
reign !

XXIX.

What now remained, the Captor's joy to grace ?
His crown of Victory lacked one peerless gem ;
Great Babylon must kneel in dust, and place
The crowning jewel in his diadem :
On came his conquering hosts, in power, to hem
The last free hold that dared his glory mock ;
Brave, at the last, Belshazzar sought to stem
Th' advancing flood—then fled th' recoiling shock,
As Ocean's broken waves will flee the breasting rock !

XXX.

The City spread abroad her sheltering arms,
To shield her fleeing sons in danger's hour :
There, safe at rest, they smiled at War's alarms,
Nor feared their vaunting foe's eluded power :
Nor recked that gathering clouds of wrath might
 lower :
While free, without, came Persia's joyful son,
Gay as a lover to his lady's bower :
And ere the day's eventful light was done,
Close pressed his guarded lines in siege round Babylon.

XXXI.

But now a work the Persian's care engaged,
No pastime, meet for holiday employ :
Though long his sword successful war had waged,
And marched his hosts in triumph, to destroy—
Day came and went, but brought his heart no joy :
Yet still his eye ne'er deemed his hope forlorn,
Still watched with jealous zeal his foeman coy :
Though to his ear, each day, in taunt, were borne
Contempt's deriding laugh—th' unwelcome hiss of
 scorn !

XXXII.

Far as the eye may view the arrow's flight,
When the perched eagle plumes his wing to fly—
So, to th' astonished gazer's wildered sight,
The City's breasting walls arose on high:¹²
Their beetling towers unneeded aid supply—
While wheeling cohorts tread their widening
crown :
Such vast domains within their circuit lie,
Who sought at dawn to view th' encompassed town,
His panting steed would sink ere the bright Sun went
down !

XXXIII.

But when the ponderous, brazen gates unfold,
And, wide within, Life's heaving tide disclose—
Then doth the awe-struck eye, with dread, behold
An Empire's might in dazzling pomp repose!
Strong to protect, though all the World were foes,
With aid secure from Famine's power supplied,
E'en though no walls, protecting, round them rose,
Seemed that the countless hosts might safe abide,
And rest from danger free, and Death's wild storm
deride.

XXXIV.

The broad Euphrates rolled his stately wave
 Free, through the lengthening City's utmost bound :¹³
 While girding, guarded walls his waters lave :
 On either shore, with triple bulwarks round,
 The royal monarch's palace-halls resound,¹⁴
 Near where vain Belus' heaven-ward towers arise ;¹⁵
 Whose matchless height, though shouting crowds
 surround,
 Th' aspiring Echo died, in feeble sighs,
 To gain their onward verge, conversant with the skies !

XXXV.

But vain were words the wond'rous tale to tell—
 That Warrior-City's pride, with strength replete :
 Ye, who have wooed the Muse of History well,
 In vain may search for realms that dare compete :
 If righteous Heaven but smile, might ne'er Defeat,
 With Slaughter's spear, her crested myriads thin :
 Thus, round her base, War's angry surges beat—
 Thus, smiled the sheltered hosts 'mid conflict's din ;
 A leaguering world without—a leaguered world
 within !

XXXVI.

Resistless Time rolls on the sluggish years—
 Two Summers bloom, two lingering Autumns fade :
 But ne'er success the Persian's effort cheers :
 His hosts surround, with bosoms undismayed—
 His circling line its frowning towers displayed¹⁶—
 Yet was each trusting labor fruitless riven :
 The world's great Conqueror proved his conquest
 stayed—

Gazed his vast throng, all mute, to madness driven,
 As Satan's baffled hosts gazed at the towers of Heaven.

XXXVII.

What sudden joy hath seized the Camp to-day ?
 Why flies the murmur hushed, with gladdening tone ?
 Lost Hope hath come, triumphant on her way—
 Ere the dim Morning's faintest beams have shone,
 Will Cyrus hail the yielding state his own :
 Low in the dust must lie her guilty head—
 For heard is Captive Judah's plaintive moan :
 She, for whose pomp broad realms so long have bled,
 A widowed slave must kneel—for Heaven's high aid
 hath fled !

XXXVIII.

To-night, through Babylon, the torch shall glide,
 Where frantic Revel rules in wild command :
 Then shall Euphrates bend his vassal tide—
 While o'er his bed shall march th' invading band,
 Like Israel's hosts to Victory's promised land :¹⁷
 Now, wildest glee doth thrill th' impatient throng,
 While free, from rank to rank, in accents bland,
 Th' exulting tale of joyance spreads along—
 Hist! in the royal tent a Minstrel pours his song.

THE SONG OF CYRUS' MINSTREL.

1

Belshazzar! Belshazzar!
 Thy glory is past :
 For Vengeance, long slumbering,
 O'ertakes thee at last :
 Dire Slaughter and Havoc
 Around thee await—
 And the hand of the Foeman
 Is hard on thy gate!

2

Belshazzar ! Belshazzar !
Thou rulest in scorn—
But Ruin approacheth,
And red is the Morn :
Thy Sceptre is broken—
The Spoiler hath come :
Ere the Morning, proud Tyrant,
Thou sleepest in doom !

3

O Babylon ! Babylon !
Peerless and free !
The stole of the Captive
Is woven for thee !
Thy gladness shall flee
At the lorn Widow's moan,
And the song of the Banquet
Be hushed by the groan !

4

Thou shalt perish, though smiling
 In splendor and power—
 Like the oak, when the tempest
 Sweeps by, in its hour!
 Vain, vain is thy Fortress,
 Thy walls so bedight—
 Thou sleepest, proud City,
 In ruin, to-night!

XXXIX.

The Sun was sinking down the purpling West,
 And bright the god poured forth his parting beam :
 Rejoicing Earth the soft refulgence blest—
 His bright rays glinted o'er the quivering stream,
 While flashing lance and glave returned the gleam :
 Then sunk adown his crimson pathway, slow,
 While—sad to say 'farewell,' may Fancy deem—
 He bathed high Babel's top with molten glow,
 As lingers Christian hope, till falls Death's final blow.

XL.

Then Twilight spread her shades o'er town and
 Camp—
 A moment's hush pervades each living thing—
 Now, mustering squadrons, and the stealthy tramp
 Of hurrying steeds, and muffled sounds, that ring
 From rank to rank, the fated signal bring :
 While, all unconscious of the threatening doom,
 The City's eager sons await the spring
 Of Mirth's enlivening reign, 'mid light and bloom—
 Nor deem her flowery path leads to the yawning tomb!

XLI.

'Tis Revel's hour—she comes with cheer to all—
 Nor will the soldier at his task remain :
 The gates which guard Euphrates' shielding wall,
 Shall ne'er, forbidding, close in might again :
 The thronging streets pour forth a blithesome train :
 All hearts, all sounds the beaming gladness borrow—
 Save some sad Hebrew maiden's mournful strain :
 While Rapture rules, all thoughtless of the morrow,
 She, from the throng apart, thus breathes her plaint
 of sorrow!

THE HEBREW MAID'S LAMENT.

1

Oh, sweet o'er Judah's distant hills
The wandering zephyr mourning sighs;
And sweetly gush the crystal rills,
And sparkle 'neath the tranquil skies:
And light waves, in the Moon's bright beam,
Along the blue Lake's beach deplore;
And Jordan rolls his hallowed stream
All silent by the lonely shore!

2

Oh, sad o'er Salem's mournful walls
The mantling ivy's tendrils cling:
There, lone, the solemn night-bird calls,
There folds the bat his blighting wing!
And o'er the Temple's crumbling stones
The loathsome serpent leads her young—
And dreary Desolation moans,
Where erst the songs of gladness rung!

n.

3

For Judah's sons in exile stray,
And Judah's daughters weeping roam—
Far from their own loved land away—
Lorn Captives in th' Oppressor's home :
And while their souls in anguish mourn,
And sigh to view the natal hearth—
Loud is the Foeman's taunting scorn,
And wild the Godless heathen's mirth !

4

O Thou, the Shepherd of thy flock,
Who led'st thy people through the wave ;
And gav'st them water from the rock,
And bar'dst thine arm in might to save :
Hear Thou the strain our hearts prolong—
List—list the suppliant Captive's cry—
Oh, when shall cease the mournful song—
Oh, when shall Judah's tears be dry !

XLII.

The lovely minstrel ceased the mournful strain,
 And Stillness brooded o'er each trembling string ;
 While Rapture, wild, maintained her giddy reign,
 Unconscious aught of hearts 'neath Sorrow's sting:
 (So blooming Joy, and Death with shadowy wing,
 Go hand in hand through Life's inviting bowers :
 So clouds will come o'er skies of Youth's gay Spring,
 So Grief intrude on Pleasure's golden hours—
 So roses bright will bloom beside the funeral flowers !)

XLIII.

While far and wide is borne the echoing shout,
 Deem not Belshazzar listless views the scene :
 With maddening glee his palace walls ring out,
 Where frantic Revel's royal slaves, I ween,
 With rites unhallowed, hail their guilty queen :
 Nor marvel thou, that those with power increast,
 With joy increast, should glow at Pleasure's mien !
 Chaldea's haughty lords, with Revel's priest,
 Like altar victims decked, partake their Funeral
 Feast !

XLIV.

Where the long festive chamber greets the eye,
The costly banquet spreads in tempting line ;
From the far, fretted, vaulted roof, on high,
A thousand lamps in fragrant splendor shine :
The teeming quarry, and the glittering mine,
O'er all the scene their dazzling store display :
Where thousand arches gracefully recline,—
Where thousand columns rise in strength to stay,
While wall and pavement bright throw back the
spice-lamps' ray !

XLV.

On purple couch, with gold and gems arrayed,
Reclined Belshazzar in his regal state :
Next, Beauty's train its matchless charms displayed ;
Then countless princes bowed, with heart elate :—
Mute at their feet a crowd of menials wait :
While high apart, above the royal throng,
The pampered minstrels joyed in envied fate—
At Grandeur's beck to pour their servile song,
While Incense' balmy breath in fragrance floats along.

XLVI.

On flowed the feast—on sped the rosy hours—
 The red wine mantled blushing and bright;
 While Wit and Beauty joined their varied powers,
 And every heart to Rapture's thrill beat light:
 Nor vain the wine-cups' maddening fumes invite—
 When wilder grew each breast with wild desire—
 'Ho! Minstrel! join to cheer the fleeting night!
 The eager bard approached the royal Sire—
 Bowed by his gleaming couch, and swept th' exulting
 Lyre!

THE SONG OF BELSHAZZAR'S MINSTREL.

1

All hail to Belshazzar! Earth smiles in his light,
 As the flowers, when the Sun cometh forth in his
 might:
 All hail to Belshazzar! bend low at his nod!
 He feasts like a monarch—he rules like a god!

2

All hail to Belshazzar! fill the cups to the brim,
For the glad Earth ne'er gazed on a monarch like him :
Like Belus, the mighty, his thunders are hurled,¹⁸
And Terror comes down on an awe-stricken world.

3

What though, for a moment, dire troubles arise—
So the black clouds will creep o'er the Sun in the skies :
As the Sun moveth onward, right on, in his path,
Belshazzar will scatter his foes, in his wrath.

4

Shame, shame, on the weak, trembling victims of fear,
Who have yielded like slaves to the Conqueror's spear :
When the flag of Belshazzar the gay skies shall greet,
Again shall the cowards bend low at his feet.

5

Contempt for the Persian, who sits 'neath our wall,
And deems it will crumble to dust at his call !
As well might he hope, by his mad folly driven,
To beat down the thunder-capped Fortress of Heaven !

6

Vain, vain! let his banners be furled, at the last,
And his trumpets in silence be hushed of their blast:
Bid his cohorts return, at the break of the Morn,
For the mighty Belshazzar hath laughed him to scorn!

7

Great Babylon joys at this festival hour,
And Gladness walks forth, in her life-giving power:
Proud Belus, approving, looks down from his height,
And the shade of Belesis is joyful to-night.¹⁹

8

Mighty Babylon! firmly thou sittest on high,
Serenely, while Ages go tottering by:
Around thee all vainly the wild tempests rave,
And Time's mighty torrent breaks idly its wave!

9

Thou reck'st not! thine eye looketh far through the
gloom,
And Nations, all prostrate, are waiting their doom:
'Mid the ruin of Empires thou sittest sublime,
Like the fame of Belshazzar, eternal as Time!

XLVII.

The Minstrel ceased—her spell charmed Silence
throws—

Then rapturous shouts of adulation ring :
With impious pride the infuriate Monarch glows—
' Ho, slaves, away! the sacred cups to bring,
Of Judah's baffled God, and vanquished King !'
The trembling slaves obey the foul behest—
Where sleeps the lightning on its fiery wing ?
Unhallowed lips those hallowed brims have prest,
And dread Jehovah's name blent with the scoffer's
jest !

XLVIII.

Ha ! shrieks Belshazzar in his banquet hall !
What means his starting eye-balls' ghastly glare ?
A blood-red hand is out upon the wall—
And fiery words of wrath are flaming there !
' Haste for the Magi !' gasps the king's despair :
With faltering step the lorn Magicians come—
Gaze on the fated wall with hopeless stare—
Gaze o'er the banquet with a brow of gloom—
All vain their skill to read those awful words of doom !

XLIX.

Then wise Nitocris to the monarch hies—
 So wild, so fierce, the fearful tumult grew :
 ‘Let not, O King! thy heart’s despair arise,
 Nor change thy visage wan with fears undue !
 Lo! Judah’s sacred Prophet, sage and true,
 Shall solve those words which mystic horror shed !
 Reviving hopes the monarch’s heart renew—
 Great Daniel comes, with slow, majestic tread ;
 Shrinks from his eye the throng, with glance of
 trembling dread !

L.

‘Art thou the Seer of Judah’s captive line—
 In whom the wisdom of the gods doth dwell ?
 If thou that mystic sentence canst divine,
 Riches and power shall crown thy potent spell !’
 ‘Nay, monarch! keep the gifts thou lov’st so well,
 Or fling thy wreaths when baser souls aspire !
 Yet to thy shuddering spirit will I tell
 His words—his name blasphemed—whose hand
 in ire,
 Hath writ thy final doom, in vengeance-flames of fire!’

THE INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL.

1

Thou'rt fallen, doomed monarch!
Stern Vengeance, arrayed,
Thy madness and guilt
In the balance hath weighed!
The crown of thy glory
No more may'st thou clasp—
Thy sceptre is wrenched
From thy quivering grasp!

2

Go, wrap thee in shame,
In the realm of Despair:
For the worm of the charnel
Awaiteth thee there!
Ere the Night thou defilest
In terror hath flown—
The Mede and the Persian
Shall sit on thy throne!

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Like guilty murderer, at the death-bell's sound,
The gasping monarch shrinks : but hist! below,
What startling notes along the court resound?
'Tis armor's fearful clang! they come—the foe!
'To arms! to arms!' before their desperate blow
The guarding doors give way! Now Conflict's tone
Rings through the echoing halls! its purple flow
The gushing life-blood pours; while shout, and moan,
And woman's frantic shriek, blend with the dying
groan!

LII.

The Morn was struggling o'er the Eastern hill,
Though Night still brooded o'er the valleys, where,
Amid his slumbering flocks, all hushed and still,
The faithful shepherd watched, with wakeful care:
Now, troubled sounds, along the darkening air,
Break on his ear—he turns, with mute surprise,
His gaze tow'rd distant Babylon—but there
Night wraps her gloomy veil—no tower he spies,
While deeper, louder still, the mingling notes arise!

LIII.

Morn lights the scene! the Persian's banner floats
 O'er Babylon's high towers, so free at even :
 All silent grow the Conflict's varying notes,
 Like Summer's air, when Tempest-Winds have
 striven!

Then rose the yell of Victory, fiercely given,
 As when foes cease the hot pursuit to urge!
 Then sadly, wildly, to the listening Heaven,
 Like mournful murmurs of the far-off surge,
 A captive Nation's wail—Belshazzar's funeral dirge!



LIFE: ITS SEASONS.



I.

Life hath its Spring-time! Childhood's morn,
When pure is young affection's ray;
Gay are the flowers its path adorn,
And bright the hues of opening day:
Wild music lingers in its bowers—
Grateful the fragrance of its flowers—
And all betokens bliss:
Hope weaves her wild, enchanting song,
And sings, at every path along,
That all shall be like this!
Time's rapid footsteps never stay—
Life's golden Spring-time speeds away!

II.

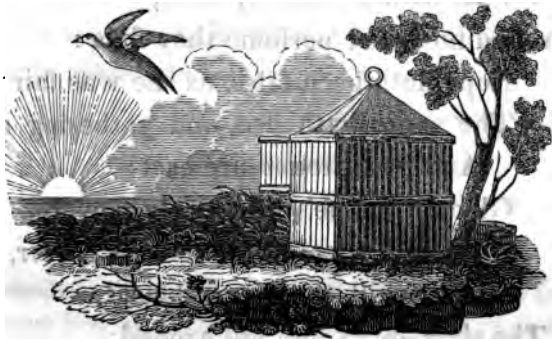
Life hath its Summer! ardent now
Is Manhood's toil, ambition's sway;
Hope lighteth still the fevered brow,
And sweetly sings the coming day:
Fond are affection's whispers, bland,
And warm is Friendship's proffered hand—
Summer's horizon fair;
But ah! anon a cloud is seen;
Dark and more dark its threatening mien—
A Tempest gathers there!
Sunlight and storm are o'er, at last;
Life's fitful Summer-time is past!

III.

Life hath its Autumn! where have fled
Those flattering promises of Spring?
Alas! like withered roses, dead,
Around no sweet perfume they fling:
Hope hath been false, as she was fair;
The smile hath fled, and gathering care,
And woe around are cast:
Gloomy is Life's late lovely bower—
Here falls a leaf, there fades a flower,
And chill the dreary blast!
The showers of ruin fall around;
Life's withered foliage strews the ground!

IV.

Life hath its Winter! snowy Age,
When Manhood's noblest vigors fail!
Weary becomes the chequered page,
Cold is the wintry, piercing gale:
The faltering step—the trembling limb—
The flagging pulse—the eye-ball dim—
Alike deliverance crave:
Fainter—yet fainter—hark! the breath!
O haste thee, tyrant, angel, Death!
Welcome the frightful grave!
'Tis finished! Life's short journey's done—
The Sun hath set—the Seasons run!



NOTES TO BABYLON.

NOTE 1.

When Nabonassar held his regal sway—

Nabonassar is the same with Belesis. He, while governor of Babylon, with Arbaces, governor of Media, headed the conspiracy whereby the old empire of Assyria was brought to an end. After the successful termination of the enterprise, Belesis had Babylon, Chaldea, and Arabia, and Arbaces all the rest.

NOTE 2.

But not until her mightiest king arose,

Nebuchadnezzar—not only the mightiest king of Babylon, but one of the mightiest monarchs the East ever saw. After waging successful war with most of the surrounding nations, (though Assyria, mentioned in the text, was in fact an early conquest, while his father was yet on the throne,) he carried his victorious arms even into Egypt; and after success had crowned every effort, he gave his whole care to the improvement of his royal city, Babylon, which became, under his direction, ‘the praise of the whole Earth, and the glory of the Chaldee’s excellency.’

NOTE 3.

Of high renown, the Ocean’s peerless bride,

Tyre was situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It was a city of great wealth and power; and held out against the seige for thirteen years.

NOTE 4.

Delved o'er his mystic, astrologic lore :

To such an extent was this science prosecuted by the Chaldeans, that the very name of astrology has become identified with that of their kingdom. It is related that when, in after times, Alexander took Babylon, Calisthenes, the philosopher, who accompanied him, found astronomical observations for nineteen hundred and three years back.

NOTE 5.

His wayward son assumed th' ancestral reign ;

Evilmerodach, (or Merodach,) succeeded in the kingdom—a tyrant, whose excessive cruelties caused his own relatives to conspire against him.

NOTE 6.

Chaldea's allied aid in times gone by,

By ' Chaldea ' is here meant the Babylonian empire. It was called Chaldea and Assyria, indiscriminately, after the overthrow of the latter power.

NOTE 7.

To hail the noble Neriglissar King :

Neriglissar was the husband of the sister of the last king ; and he it was who took the lead of the conspiracy against him.

NOTE 8.

In wanton rancor, on the Median sway :

Merodach, while on a hunting excursion, had made an inroad into the territory of the Medes.

NOTE 9.

Ere Babylonia hailed the regal son—

Laborosoarchod succeeded to the throne. His reign was marked with such intolerable cruelty and injustice, that he was assassinated, when he had ruled but nine months.

NOTE 10.

The last—the vilest—of the royal line,

The conduct of Belshazzar formed the climax of that series of regal folly and crime which Babylon had been doomed to suffer, (with the exception of Neriglissar's reign,) since the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

NOTE 11.

No peace his royal mother's breast might feel :

Nitocris, the queen-mother—a woman of superior understanding and bravery. She took nearly the sole command of the government; and after placing the country in the best possible state of defence, she turned her whole attention toward the finishing of such of the fortifications of Babylon as had been left in an unfinished state by Nebuchadnezzar.

NOTE 12.

The City's braesting walls arose on high :

The city of Babylon was laid out in the form of a square. The walls were every way prodigious—being, according to Herodotus, in thickness eighty-seven feet, in height three hundred and fifty feet, and in compass four hundred and eighty furlongs, which make sixty of our miles. The walls were surmounted by two hundred and fifty towers; and each wall contained twenty-five brazen gates, making one hundred in all.

NOTE 13.

Free, through the lengthening City's utmost bound :

The river Euphrates, or rather a branch of it, passed directly through the city. Its banks were guarded with walls, resembling those which enclosed the city, in point of height and thickness, and, like them, firmly cemented with bitumen. And over against every street that crossed the river, there was a brazen gate, on each side, in the wall, with stairs leading down from it to the river.

NOTE 14.

The royal monarch's palace-halls resound,

On the east side of the river stood the old palace of the kings of Babylon, being four miles in compass. Over against it, on the other side of the river, stood the new palace, of four times the size of the former, being eight miles in compass. It was surrounded with three walls, one within another, and strongly fortified.

NOTE 15.

Near where vain Belus' heaven-ward towers arise;

The celebrated 'Tower of Babel,' situated near the old palace. It consisted of eight towers, one above another, each of which was seventy-five feet high. Nearly all its stately apartments became finally devoted to idolatrous uses. On the top of the Tower was an Observatory.

NOTE 16.

His circling line its frowning towers displayed—

Cyrus at first hoped to take the city by assault, and for this purpose he 'drew a line of circumvallation round it, making the ditch broad and deep, and erected towers higher than the walls.'

NOTE 17.

Like Israel's hosts to Victory's promised land;

'After nearly two years had been wasted, Cyrus resolved to take the city by stratagem. Learning that a great annual festival was approaching, and that the Babylonians were accustomed on that occasion to spend the whole night in revelling and drunkenness, he thought this a proper time to surprise them; and for the effecting of it he had this device: He sent up a party of his men to the head of the canal leading to the great lake, [which had been formed for receiving the waters of the river while its walls were being built, and which was still preserved, to receive its waters at the times of its overflowing,] with orders at a set time, to break down the great bank, or dam, which was between the river and that canal, and to turn the whole current that way into the lake. In the interim, getting all his forces together, he posted one part of them at the place where the river ran into the city, and the other where it came out, with orders to enter the city that night by the channel of the river, as soon as they should find it fordable. Both parties (each under the direction of a Babylonian guide,) were thence to proceed through the gates (which, it was rightly supposed, would be left open, through the riot and disorder,) into the city, and to meet, in the dead of the night, at the gates of the palace, where Belshazzar and his lords were partaking of their impious feast.'

NOTE 18.

Like Belus, the mighty, his thunders are hurled,

Belus, Bel, or Baal—the god of the Babylonian idolatry—to whom Nebuchadnezzar had erected an image of gold, which was placed in the 'Tower.'

NOTE 19.

And the shade of Belesis is joyful to-night.

Belesis—the same with Nabonassar. See Note 1.

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