and Messrs. Methuen & Co. Ltd., for permission to print *Ave Imperatrix*; to Mr. John Murray for Browning's *Clive*; to Mr. Herbert Sherring for *The Sack of Delhi*, from his volume entitled *Nadir the Persian*, published by Messrs. Methuen & Co. Ltd.; to Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Messrs. Methuen & Co. Ltd., for *With Scindia to Delhi* and *Ford o' Kabul River*; and to Mr. J. R. Denning for *The Lucknow Garrison* and *Soldiers of India* from his *Indian Echoes*.

Some notes have been added at the end of the volume, furnishing briefly such historical detail as may be necessary for an appreciation of the poems.

P. S.

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## *PART I.—ANCIENT INDIA*

### 1. THE VEDIC WARRIOR

When cased in mail, the warrior proud
Stalks on, defiant, to the front,
To bear the raging battle's brunt,
We seem to see a flashing cloud.
Bold warrior, may thine armour bright
Preserve thee scathless in the fight.

May I the foeman's malice foil
With this my all subduing bow!
May I, triumphant, lay him low,
And all his goods and cattle spoil!
This bow our foes with ruin whelms
And conquers all surrounding realms.

The bowstring to the bowman's ear
Approaches close, as if to speak:
Its twang is like a woman's shriek:
It guards the warrior's soul from fear.

See, yonder on the chariot stands
The dauntless charioteer, whose skill
His horses onward drives, whose will
Their movements to and fro commands.

The reins (their wondrous power extol!)
Although behind, the steeds control.

The impetuous coursers shrilly neigh,
As forward to the fight they rush:
Their trampling hoofs our foemen crush;
They never shun the murderous fray.

J. MUIR.

## 2. AYODHYA

ON pleasant Sarju's fertile side
There lies a rich domain,
With countless herds of cattle thronged,
And gay with golden grain.

There, built by Manu, Prince of men,
That saint by all revered,
Ayodhya, famed through every land,
Her stately towers upreared.

Her vast extent, her structures high,
With every beauty deckt,
Like Indra's city, showed the skill
Of godlike architect.

Or, like a bright creation sprung
From limner's magic art,
She seemed too beautiful for stone:
So fair was every part.

Twelve leagues the queenly city lay
Down the broad river's side,
And, guarded well with moat and wall,
The foeman's power defied.



Her ample streets were nobly planned,
And streams of water flowed
To keep the fragrant blossoms fresh
That strewed her royal road.

There many a princely palace stood,
In line, on level ground;
Her temple, and triumphal arc,
And rampart banner-crowned.

There gilded turrets rose on high
Above the waving green
Of mango-groves and bloomy trees,
And flowery knots between.

On battlement and gilded spire
The pennon streamed in state;
And warders, with the ready bow,
Kept watch at every gate.

She shone a very mine of gems,
The throne of Fortune's Queen:
So many-hued her gay parterres,
So bright her fountains' sheen.

Her pleasure-grounds were filled at eve
With many a happy throng,
And ever echoed with the sound
Of merry feast and song.

For meat and drink of noblest sort
In plenty there were stored:
And all enjoyed their share of wealth,
Nor heaped the miser's hoard.

At morn the blossom-scented air
The clouds of incense stirred,
And blended, with the wreath's perfume,
The sweet fresh smell of curd.

Streamed through her streets, in endless line,
Slow wain and flying car:
Horse, elephant, and merchant train,
And envoys from afar.

Her ample arsenals were filled
With sword, and club, and mace;
And wondrous engines, dealing death,
Within her towers had place.

Nor there unknown the peaceful arts,
That youthful souls entrance,
Of players, minstrel, mime, and bard,
And girls that weave the dance.

There rose to heaven the Veda-chant,
Here blent the lyre and lute:
There rang the stalwart archer's string,
Here softly breathed the flute.

The swiftest horses whirled her cars,
Of noblest form and breed:
Vanayu's mare that mocked the wind,
And Vahli's fiery steed.

There elephants, that once had roamed
On Vindhya's mountains, vied
With monsters from the bosky dells
That shag Himalaya's side.



The best of Brahmans, gathered there,
The flame of worship fed;
And, versed in all the Vedas' lore
Their lives of virtue led.

By penance, charity, and truth,
They kept each sense controlled,
And, giving freely of their store,
Rivalled the saints of old.

Her dames were peerless for the charm
Of figure, voice, and face:
For lovely modesty and truth,
And woman's gentle grace.

Their husbands, loyal, wise, and kind,
Were heroes in the field,
And sternly battling with the foe,
Could die, but never yield.

The poorest man was richly blest
With knowledge, wit, and health;
Each lived contented with his own,
Nor envied other's wealth.

All scorned to lie: no miser there
His buried silver stored:
The braggart and the boast were shunned,
The slanderous tongue abhorred.

Each kept his high observances,
And loved one faithful spouse;
And troops of happy children crowned,
With fruit, their holy vows.

R. T. H. GRIFFITH.

## 3. TO A BUDDHA SEATED ON A LOTUS.[1]

Lord Buddha, on thy Lotus-throne,
With praying eyes and hands elate,
What mystic rapture dost thou own,
Immutable and ultimate?
What peace, unravished of our ken,
Annihilate from the world of men?

The wind of change for ever blows
Across the tumult of our way,
To-morrow's unborn griefs depose
The sorrows of our yesterday.
Dream yields to dream, strife follows strife,
And Death unweaves the webs of Life.

For us the travail and the heat,
The broken secrets of our pride,
The strenuous lessons of defeat,
The flower deferred, the fruit denied;
But not the peace, supremely won,
Lord Buddha, of thy Lotus-throne.

With futile hands we seek to gain
Our inaccessible desire,
Diviner summits to attain,
With faith that sinks and feet that tire;
But nought shall conquer or control
The heavenward hunger of our soul.

[1] From *The Golden Threshold* by Sarojini Naidu. (London: Heinemann.)



The end, elusive and afar,
Still lures us with its beckoning flight,
And all our mortal moments are
A session of the Infinite.
How shall we reach the great, unknown
Nirvana of thy Lotus-throne?

Sarojini Naidu.

## 4. ASOKA'S MESSAGE TO HIS PEOPLE

### I.

Thus spake royal Piyadasi,
Of the Gods beloved:
"Grace and righteous exhortation
Have my subjects moved,
For my pastors to the people
Holy lessons sing,—
And my priests to countless thousands
Loving message bring!

### 2.

"I have spoken to subject peoples
Precepts I have loved,
I have carved on rock-made pillars
Lessons I have proved.
Ministers of faith and duty
Have my mandates told,—
Spoken to near and distant nations
Maxims loved of old!

3.

"And within my spacious empire,
By each high way made,
Figs and mangoes I have planted
For repose and shade,
Wells I made for man and cattle,
All that breathe and move,—
But with higher toil constructed
Springs of faith and love!

4.

"Scatter then my royal riches,
Spread my bounty then,
To the monk and to the toiler,
To all living men,
To the Brahman and the Sraman,
To all sects of fame,—
Let each clan and corporation
Know Asoka's name!

5.

"And unto my royal bounty
Others add their store,
For my queens with queenly mercy
Help the helpless poor;
And my white-robed royal children
Acts of kindness prove,—
Charity and Truth and Kindness,
Purity and Love!



6.

"Thus in ever growing current
May our bounty flow,
To the Brahman and the Sraman,
To the poor and low;
For the humble and the lowly
Special kindness crave,—
May our mercy reach the menial,
Cheer the unchained slave!

7.

"Laws severe we vainly fashion,
Codes we vainly start,
Gentle teaching, soft persuasion,
Touch the people's heart.
Hence I carve this loving edict,
Speak these maxims pure,—
Future kings will work as long as
Sun and moon endure!

8.

"Since I won my father's Empire,
Since this State was mine,
Past are seven and twenty autumns
When I carve this line.
Where 'tis writ on stony pillar
In this Empire vast,—
Unto far and distant ages
May this Edict last!"

ROMESH C. DUTT, *Pillar Edict*, viii.

# *PART II.—MOHAMEDAN INDIA*

## 5. MAHMŪD

THERE came a man, making his hasty moan
Before the Sultan Mahmūd on his throne,
And crying out—" My sorrow is my right,
And I *will* see the Sultan, and to-night."
" Sorrow," said Mahmūd, " is a reverend thing:
I recognise its right, as king with king;
Speak on." " A friend has got into my house,"
Exclaimed the staring man, " and tortures us:
One of thine officers;—he comes, the abhorr'd,
And takes possession of my house, my board,
My bed: I have two daughters and a wife,
And the wild villain comes, and makes me mad with life."
" Is he there now? " said Mahmūd. " No;—he left
The house when I did, of my wits bereft;
And laugh'd me down the street, because I vow'd
I'd bring the prince himself to lay him in his shroud.
I'm mad with want—I'm mad with misery,
And oh thou Sultan Mahmūd, God cries out for thee!"

The Sultan comforted the man, and said,
" Go home, and I will send thee wine and bread,"





(For he was poor) " and other comforts.—Go;
And, should the wretch return, let Sultan Mahmūd know."

In three days' time, with haggard eyes and beard,
And shaken voice, the suitor re-appear'd,
And said, " He's come."—Mahmūd said not a word,
But rose and took four slaves, each with a sword,
And went with the vex'd man. They reach the place,
And hear a voice, and see a woman's face,
That to the window flutter'd in affright:
" Go in," said Mahmūd, " and put out the light;
But tell the females first to leave the room;
And when the drunkard follows them, we come."

The man went in. There was a cry, and hark!
A table falls, the window is struck dark:
Forth rush the breathless women; and behind
With curses comes the fiend in desperate mind.
In vain; the sabres soon cut short the strife,
And chop the shrieking wretch, and drink his bloody life.

" Now *light* the light," the Sultan cried aloud.
'Twas done; he took it in his hand, and bow'd
Over the corpse, and look'd upon the face;
Then turn'd, and knelt, and to the throne of grace
Put up a prayer, and from his lips there crept
Some gentle words of pleasure, and he wept.

In reverent silence the beholders wait,
Then bring him at his call both wine and meat;
And when he had refresh'd his noble heart,
He bade his host be blest, and rose up to depart.

The man amaz'd, all mildness now, and tears,
Fell at the Sultan's feet with many prayers,
And begg'd him to vouchsafe to tell his slave
The reason first of that command he gave
About the light, then, when he saw the face,
Why he knelt down; and, lastly, how it was
That fare so poor as his detain'd him in the place.

The Sultan said, with a benignant eye,
"Since first I saw thee come, and heard thy cry,
I could not rid me of a dread, that one
By whom such daring villainies were done,
Must be some lord of mine,—aye, e'en, perhaps, a son.
Whoe'er he was, I knew my task, but fear'd
A father's heart, in case the worst appear'd:
For this I had the light put out; but when
I saw the face, and found a stranger slain,
I knelt and thank'd the sovereign Arbiter,
Whose work I had perform'd through pain and fear;
And then I rose and was refreshed with food,
The first time since thy voice had marr'd my solitude."

LEIGH HUNT.

## 6. MAHMŪD, THE IMAGE-BREAKER

OLD events have modern meanings; only that survives
Of past history which finds kindred in all hearts and lives.

Mahmūd once, the idol-breaker, spreader of the Faith,
Was at Somnath tempted sorely, as the legend saith.



In the great pagoda's centre, monstrous and abhorred,
Granite on a throne of granite, sat the temple's lord.

Mahmūd paused a moment, silenced by the silent face
That, with eyes of stone unwavering, awed the ancient place.

Then the Brahmins knelt before him, by his doubt made bold,
Pledging for their idol's ransom countless gems and gold.

Gold was yellow dirt to Mahmūd, but of precious use,
Since from it the roots of power suck a potent juice.

"Were you stone alone in question, this would please me well,"
Mahmūd said: "but, with the block there, I my truth must sell.

"Wealth and rule slip down with Fortune, as her wheel turns round;
He who keeps his faith, he only cannot be discrowned.

"Little were a change of station, loss of life or crown,
But the wreck were past retrieving if the Man fell down."

So his iron mace he lifted, smote with might and main,
And the idol, on the pavement tumbling, burst in twain.

Luck obeys the downright striker; from the hollow core
Fifty times the Brahmins' offer deluged all the floor.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

## 7. FIRDAUSI'S INVOCATION TO MAHMŪD

THEE I invoke, the Lord of Life and Light!
Beyond imagination pure and bright!
To thee, sufficing praise no tongues can give,
We are thy creatures, and in thee we live!
Thou art the summit, depth, the all in all,
Creator, Guardian of this earthly ball;
Whatever is, thou art—Protector, King,
From thee all goodness, truth, and mercy spring.
O pardon the misdeeds of him who now
Bends in thy presence with a suppliant brow.
Teach him to tread the path thy Prophet trod;
To wash his heart from sin, to know his God;
And gently lead him to that home of rest,
Where filled with holiest rapture dwell the blest.

Saith not that book divine, from Heaven supplied,
"Mustafa is the true, the unerring guide,
The purest, greatest Prophet!" Next him came
Wise Abu Buker, of unblemished name;
Then Omer taught the faith, unknown to guile,
And made the world with vernal freshness smile;
Then Othman brave th' imperial priesthood graced;
All, led by him, the Prophet's faith embraced.
The fourth was Ali; he, the spouse adored
Of Fatima, then spread the saving word.
Ali, of whom Mohammed spoke elate,
"I am the city of knowledge—he my gate."
Ali the blest. Whoever shall recline
A supplicant at his all-powerful shrine,



Enjoys both this life and the next; in this,
All earthly good, in that, eternal bliss!

From records true my legends I rehearse,
And string the pearls of wisdom in my verse,
That in the glimmering days of life's decline,
Its fruits, in wealth and honour, may be mine.
My verse, a structure pointing to the skies;
Whose solid strength destroying time defies.
All praise the noble work, save only those
Of impious life, or base malignant foes;
All blest with learning read, and read again,
The sovereign smiles, and thus approves my strain:
"Richer by far, Firdausi, than a mine
Of precious gems, is this bright lay of thine."
Centuries may pass away, but still my page
Will be the boast of each succeeding age.

Praise, praise to Mahmūd, who of like renown,
In battle or the banquet, fills the throne;
Lord of the realms of Chin and Hindustan,
Sovereign and Lord of Persia and Turan,
With his loud voice he rends the flintiest ear;
On land a tiger fierce, untouched by fear,
And on the wave, he seems the crocodile
That prowls amidst the waters of the Nile.
Generous and brave, his equal is unknown;
In deeds of princely worth he stands alone.
The infant in the cradle lisps his name;
The world exults in Mahmūd's spotless fame.
In festive hours Heaven smiles upon his truth;
In combat deadly as the dragon's tooth;

Bounteous in all things, his exhaustless hand
Diffuses blessings through the grateful land;
And, of the noblest thoughts and actions, Lord;
The soul of Gabriel breathes in every word.
May Heaven with added glory crown his days;
Praise, praise to mighty Mahmūd—everlasting praise!

JAMES ATKINSON.

## 8. FIRDAUSI'S SATIRE ON MAHMŪD

KNOW, tyrant as thou art, this earthly state
Is not eternal, but of transient date;
Fear God, then, and afflict not human-kind;
To merit Heaven, be thou to Heaven resigned.
Afflict not even the Ant; though weak and small,
It breathes and lives, and life is sweet to all.
Knowing my temper, firm, and stern, and bold,
Did'st thou not, tyrant, tremble to behold
My sword blood-dropping? Had'st thou not the sense
To shrink from giving men like me offence?
What could impel thee to an act so base?
What, but to earn and prove thy own disgrace?
Why was I sentenced to be trod upon,
And crushed to death by elephants? By one
Whose power I scorn! Could'st thou presume that I
Would be appalled by thee, whom I defy?
I am the lion, I, inured to blood,
And make the impious and the base my food;
And I could grind thy limbs, and spread them far
As Nile's dark waters their rich treasures bear.



Fear thee! I fear not man, but God alone,
I only bow to his Almighty throne.
Inspired by Him my ready numbers flow;
Guarded by Him I dread no earthly foe.
Thus in the pride of song I pass my days,
Offering to Heaven my gratitude and praise.

From every trace of sense and feeling free,
When thou art dead, what will become of thee?
If thou shouldst tear me limb from limb, and cast
My dust and ashes to the angry blast,
Firdausi still would live, since on thy name
Mahmūd, I did not rest my hopes of fame
In the bright page of my heroic song,
But on the God of Heaven, to whom belong
Boundless thanksgivings, and on Him whose love
Supports the Faithful in the realms above,
The mighty Prophet! none who e'er reposed
On Him, existence without hope has closed.

And thou would'st hurl me underneath the tread
Of the wild elephant, till I were dead!
Dead! by that insult roused, I should become
An elephant in power, and seal thy doom—
Mahmūd! if fear of man hath never awed
Thy heart, at least fear thy Creator God.
Full many a warrior of illustrious worth,
Full many of humble, of imperial birth:
Tur, Selm, Jemshid, Minuchihr the brave,
Have died; for nothing had the power to save
These mighty monarchs from the common doom.
They died, but blest in memory still they bloom.

Thus kings too perish—none on earth remain,
Since all things human seek the dust again.

O, had thy father graced a kingly throne,
Thy mother been for royal virtues known,
A different fate the poet then had shared,
Honours and wealth had been his just reward;
But how remote from thee a glorious line!
No high, ennobling ancestry is thine;
From a vile stock thy bold career began,
A Blacksmith was thy sire of Isfahan.
Alas! from vice can goodness ever spring?
Is mercy hoped for in a tyrant king?
Can water wash the Ethiopian white?
Can we remove the darkness from the night?
The tree to which a bitter fruit is given,
Would still be bitter in the bowers of Heaven:
And a bad heart keeps on its vicious course;
Or if it changes, changes for the worse;
Whilst streams of milk, where Eden's flowrets blow,
Acquire more honied sweetness as they flow.
The reckless king who grinds the poor like thee,
Must ever be consigned to infamy!

Now mark Firdausi's strain, his Book of Kings
Will ever soar upon triumphant wings.
All who have listened to its various lore
Rejoice, the wise grow wiser than before;
Heroes of other times, of ancient days,
For ever flourish in my sounding lays;
Have I not sung of Kaus, Tus and Giw;
Of matchless Rustem, faithful, still, and true.



Of the great Demon-binder, who could throw
His kemund to the Heavens, and seize his foe!
Of Hoshend, Feridun, and Aam Suwar,
Lohurasp, Kai-khosrau and Isfendiyar;
Gushtasp, Arjasp, and him of mighty name,
Lohurs, with his eight sons of martial fame!

The toil of thirty years is now complete,
Record sublime of many a warlike feat,
Written midst toils and trouble, but the strain
Awakens every heart, and will remain
A lasting stimulus to glorious deeds;
For even the bashful maid, who kindling reads,
Becomes a warrior. Thirty years of care,
Urged on by royal promise, did I bear,
And now, deceived and scorned, the aged bard
Is basely cheated of his pledged reward.

JAMES ATKINSON.

# *PART III.—MOGHUL INDIA*

## 9. AKBAR'S DREAM

AN INSCRIPTION BY ABUL FAZL FOR A TEMPLE IN KASHMIR (*Blochmann*, xxxii.)

O GOD in every temple I see people that see thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise thee.

Polytheism and Islam feel after thee.

Each religion says, "Thou art one, without equal."

If it be a mosque people murmur the holy prayer, and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee.

Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.

But it is thou whom I search from temple to temple.

Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy; for neither of them stands behind the screen of thy truth.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox,

But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller.





*Akbar and Abul Fazl before the palace at Futehpur-Sikri at night.*

"Light of the nations," ask'd his Chronicler
Of Akbar, "what has darken'd thee to-night?"
Then, after one quick glance upon the stars,
And turning slowly toward him, Akbar said,
"The shadow of a dream—an idle one
It may be. Still I raised my heart to heaven,
I pray'd against the dream. To pray, to do
To pray, to do according to the prayer,
Are, both, to worship Alla, but the prayers
That have no successor in deed, are faint
And pale in Alla's eyes, fair mothers they
Dying in childbirth of dead sons. I vow'd
Whate'er my dreams, I still would do the right
Thro' all the vast dominion which a sword,
That only conquers men to conquer peace,
Has won me. Alla be my guide

But come,
My noble friend, my faithful counsellor,
Sit by my side. While thou art one with me,
I seem no longer like a lonely man
In the king's garden, gathering here and there
From each fair plant the blossom choicest-grown
To wreathe a crown not only for the king,
But in due time for every Mussulman,
Brahmin, and Buddhist, Christian, and Parsee,
Thro' all the warring world of Hindustan
Well spake thy brother in the hymn to heaven
"Thy glory battles wisdom. All the tracks
Of science making toward Thy perfectness

Are blinding desert sand; we scarce can spell
The Alif of Thine alphabet of Love."

He knows Himself, men nor themselves nor Him,
For every splinter'd fraction of a sect
Will clamour "*I* am on the Perfect Way,
All else is to perdition."

Shall the rose
Cry to the lotus "No flower thou"? the palm
Call to the cypress "I alone am fair"?
The mango spurn the melon at his foot?
"Mine is the one fruit Alla made for man."

Look how the living pulse of Alla beats
Thro' all His world. If every single star
Should shriek its claim "I only am in heaven,"
Why that were such sphere-music as the Greek
Had hardly dream'd of. There is light in all,
And light, with more or less of shade, in all
Man-modes of worship; but our Ulama,
Who "sitting on green sofas contemplate
The torment of the damn'd" already, these
Are like wild brutes new-caged—the narrower
The cage, the more their fury. Me they front
With sullen brows. What wonder I decreed
That even the dog was clean, that men may taste
Swine-flesh, drink wine; they know too that whene'er
In our free Hall, where each philosophy
And mood of faith may hold its own, they blurt
Their furious formalisms, I but hear
The clash of tides that meet in narrow seas,—
Not the Great Voice not the true Deep.



To drive
A people from their ancient fold of Faith,
And wall them up perforce in mine—unwise,
Unkinglike;—and the morning of my reign
Was molden'd by that cloud of shame when I . . .

I hate the rancour of their castes and creeds,
Let them worship as they will, I reap
No revenue from the field of unbelief.
I call from every faith and race the best
And bravest soul for counsellor and friend,
I loathe the very name of infidel.
I stagger at the Koran and the sword.
I shudder at the Christian and the stake;
Yet "Alla," says their sacred book, "is Love,"
And when the Goan Padre quoting Him,
Isa Ben Mariam, his own prophet, cried
"Love one another little ones" and "bless"
Whom? even "your persecutors" there methought
The cloud was rifted by a purer gleam
Than glances from the sun of our Islam.

And thou rememberest what a fury shook
Those pillars of a moulder'd faith, when he,
That other, prophet of their fall, proclaimed
His master as "the Sun of Righteousness,"
Yea, Alla here on earth, who caught and held
His people by the bridle-rein of Truth.

What art thou saying? "And was not Alla call'd
In old Iran the Sun of Love? and Love
The net of truth?"

A voice from old Iran
Nay, but I know it—*his*, the hoary Sheik,
On whom the women shreiking "Atheist" flung
Filth from the roof, the mystic melodist
Who all but lost himself in Alla, him
Abu Said—

—a sun but dimly seen
Here, till the mortal morning mists of earth
Fade in the noon of heaven, when creed and race
Shall bear false witness, each of each, no more,
But find their limits by that larger light,
And overstep them, moving easily
Thro' after ages in the love of Truth,
The truth of Love.

The sun, the sun they rail
At me the Zoroastrian. Let the Sun,
Who heats our earth to yield us grain and fruit,
And laughs upon thy field as well as mine,
And warms the blood of Shiah and Sunnee,
Symbol the Eternal. Yea and may not kings
Express Him also by their warmth of love
For all they rule—by equal law for all?
By deeds a light to men?

But no such light
Glanced from our Presence on the face of one.
Who breaking in upon us yestermorn,
With all the Hells a glare in either eye,
Yell'd "hast thou brought us down a new Koran
From Heaven? art *thou* the Prophet? canst *thou* work
Miracles?" and the wild horse, anger, plunged



To fling me, and fail'd. Miracles, no, not I
Nor he, nor any. I can but lift the torch
Of Reason in the dusky cave of Life,
And gaze on this great miracle, the World,
Adoring That who made, and makes, and is,
And is not, what I gaze on—all else Form,
Ritual, varying with the tribes of men.

Ay but, my friend, thou knowest I hold that forms
Are needful: only let the hand that rules,
With politic care, with utter gentleness,
Mould them for all his people.

And what are forms?
Fair garments, plain or rich, and fitting close
Or flying looselier, warm'd but by the heart
Within them, moved but by the living limb,
And cast aside, when old, for newer,—Forms
The spiritual in Nature's market-place—
The silent Alphabet-of-heaven-in-man
Made vocal—banners blazoning a Power
That is not seen and rules from far away—
A silken cord let down from Paradise,
When fine Philosophies would fail, to draw
The crowd from wallowing in the mire of earth,
And all the more, when these behold their Lord,
Who shaped the forms, obey them, and himself
Here on this bank in *some* way live the life
Beyond the bridge, and serve that Infinite
Within us, as without, that All-in-all
And over all, the never-changing One
And ever-changing Many, in praise of Whom
The Christian bell, the cry from off the mosque,

And vaguer voices of Polytheism
Make but one music, harmonising " Pray."

There westward—under yon slow-falling star,
The Christians own a Spiritual Head ;
And following thy true counsel, by thine aid,
Myself am such in our Islam, for no
Mirage of glory, but for power to fuse
My myriads into union under one ;
To hunt the tiger of oppression out
From office ; and to spread the Divine Faith
Like calming oil on all their stormy creeds,
And fill the hollows between wave and wave ;
To nurse my children on the milk of Truth,
And alchemise old hates into the gold
Of Love, and make it current ; and beat back
The menacing poison of intolerant priests,
Those cobras ever setting up their hoods—
One Alla, one Kalifa.

Still—at times
A doubt, a fear,—and yester afternoon
I dream'd,—thou knowest how deep a well of love
My heart is for my son, Saleem, mine heir,—
And yet so wild and wayward that my dream—
He glares askance at thee as one of those
Who mix the wines of heresy in the cup
Of counsel—so—I pray thee—

Well, I dream'd
That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,
A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
But loftier, simpler, always open-door'd



To every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace
And love and Justice came and dwelt therein ;
But while we stood rejoicing, I and thou,
I heard a mocking laugh " the new Koran "
And on the sudden, and with a cry " Saleem "
Thou, thou—I saw thee fall before me, and then
Me too the black-wing'd Azrael overcame,
But Death had ears and eyes ; I watch'd my son,
And those that follow'd, loosen, stone from stone,
All my fair work ; and from the ruin arose
The shriek and curse of trampled millions, even
As in the time before ; but while I groan'd,
From out the sunset pour'd an alien race,
Who fitted stone to stone again, and Truth,
Peace, Love and Justice came and dwelt therein,
Nor in the field without were seen or heard
Fires of Suttee, nor wail of baby-wife,
Or Indian widow ; and in sleep I said
" All praise to Alla by whatever hands
My mission be accomplish'd " but we hear
Music : our palace is awake, and morn
Has lifted the dark eyelash of the Night
From off the rosy cheek of waking Day.
Our hymn to the sun. They sing it. Let us go."

*HYMN*

I.

Once again thou flamest heavenward, once again we see thee rise.
Every morning is thy birthday gladdening human hearts and eyes.

Every morning here we greet it, bowing lowly
down before thee,
Thee the Godlike, thee the changeless in thine ever-
changing skies.

II.

Shadow-maker, shadow-slayer, arrowing light from
clime to clime,
Hear thy myriad laureates hail thee monarch in their
woodland rhyme.
Warble bird, and open flower, and, men, below the
dome of azure
Kneel adoring Him the Timeless in the flame that
measures time.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

## 10. JAHANGIR AND NURJAHAN

'TWAS when the hour of evening came
Upon the Lake, serene and cool,
When Day had hid his sultry flame
Behind the palms of Baramoule.
When maids began to lift their heads,
Refresh'd, from their embroider'd beds
Where they had slept the sun away,
And waked to moonlight and to play.
All were abroad—the busiest hive
On Bela's hills is less alive
When saffron beds are full in flower,
Than look'd the Valley in that hour.



A thousand restless torches play'd
Through every grove and island shade;
A thousand sparkling lamps were set
On every dome and minaret;
And fields and pathways, far and near,
Were lighted by a blaze so clear,
That you could see, in wandering round
The smallest rose-leaf on the ground.
Yet did the maids and matrons leave
Their veils at home, that brilliant eve:
And there were glancing eyes about,
And cheeks, that would not dare shine out
In open day, but thought they might
Look lovely then, because 'twas night!
And all were free, and wandering,
And all exclaim'd to all they met
That never did the summer bring
So gay a Feast of Roses yet;—
The moon had never shed a light
So clear as that which bless'd them there;
The roses ne'er shone half so bright,
Nor they themselves look'd half so fair.
And what a wilderness of flowers!
It seem'd as though from all the bowers
And fairest fields of all the year,
The mingled spoil were scatter'd here.
The lake too like a garden breathes,
With the rich buds that o'er it lie,—
As if a shower of fairy wreaths
Had fallen upon it from the sky!
And then the sounds of joy,—the beat
Of tabors and of dancing feet;—

The minaret-crier's chant of glee
Sung from his lighted gallery,
And answer'd by a ziraleet
From neighbouring haram, wild and sweet ;—
The merry laughter, echoing
From gardens, where the silken swing
Wafts some delighted girl above
The top leaves of the orange grove ;
Or, from those infant groups that play
Among the tents that line the way,
Flinging, unawed by slave or mother,
Handfuls of roses at each other :—
And the sounds from the Lake,—the low whisp'ring in boats
As they shoot through the moonlight ;—the dipping of oars,
And the wild, airy warbling that everywhere floats,
Through the groves, round the islands, as if all the shores
Like those of Kathay utter'd music, and gave
An answer in song to the kiss of each wave !
But the gentlest of all are those sounds, full of feeling,
That soft from the lute of some lover are stealing,—
Some lover, who knows all the heart-touching power
Of a lute and a sigh in this magical hour.
Oh ! best of delights as it everywhere is
To be near the loved One,—what a rapture is his,
Who in moonlight and music thus sweetly may glide
O'er the Lake of Kashmere, with that One by his side !
If woman can make the worst wilderness dear,
Think, think what a heaven she must make of Kashmere !



So felt the magnificent Son of Akbar,
When from power and pomp and the trophies of war
He flew to that Valley, forgetting them all
With the Light of the Haram, his young Nurmahal.
When free and uncrown'd as the conqueror roved
By the banks of that Lake, with his only beloved,
He saw, in the wreaths she would playfully snatch
From the hedges, a glory his crown could not match,
And preferr'd in his heart the least ringlet that curl'd
Down her exquisite neck to the throne of the world !

THOMAS MOORE.

## 11. THE TAJ MAHAL

WHITE like a spectre seen when night is old,
Yet stained with hues of many a tear and smart,
Cornelian, bloodstone, matched in callous art :
Aflame like passion, like dominion cold,
Bed of imperial consorts whom none part
For ever (domed with glory, heart to heart),
Still whispering to the ages, " Love is bold
And seeks the height, though rooted in the mould " ;
Touched when the dawn floats in an opal mist
By fainter blush than opening roses own ;
Calm in the evening's lucent amethyst,
Pearl-crowned when midnight airs aside have blown
The clouds that rising moonlight vainly kissed,
An aspiration fixed, a sigh made stone.

H. G. KEENE.

## 12. THE ROYAL TOMBS OF GOLCONDA.[1]

I MUSE among these silent fanes
Whose spacious darkness guards your dust;
Around me sleep the hoary plains
That hold your ancient wars in trust.
I pause, my dreaming spirit hears,
Across the wind's unquiet tides,
The glimmering music of your spears,
The laughter of your royal brides.

In vain, O Kings, doth time aspire
To make your names oblivion's sport
While yonder hill wears like a tiar
The ruined grandeur of your fort.

SAROJINI NAIDU.

## 13. NADIR SHAH AT DELHI

THE city lay silent. Our horses' feet
Clanged on the stones in the empty street.
As on we rode with our bodyguard,
The windows were shuttered, the doors were barred.
But to us unknown, a million eyes
Were watching our reckless enterprise,
And behind each door with its bar of wood
Armed men in waiting stood.

[1] From *The Golden Threshold* by Sarojini Naidu. (London: Heinemann.)



For the city we deemed in slumber deep
Had gathered herself like a wolf, to leap
On our weary troopers when sunk in sleep.

The King was in his merriest vein
As we passed up a narrow winding lane,
And we laughed till the echoes around us rung,
When a sudden stone from a roof was flung.
It crashed upon Nadir's stately head,
And down he fell and lay as if dead.
Upon the instant a bugle blew,
And a roar like a surging tempest grew,
And the city of Delhi awoke to life,
Athirst for revenge and armed for strife.

As a mountain cataract boiling flows,
Our lane was seething with furious foes,
But my troopers stern made an iron ring,
While I lifted to horse the wounded king.
And soon the hero's great limbs stirred
When loud the roar of the strife he heard.
At the scent of blood he oped his eyes,
(For I ween that its briny, pungent smell
Would drag him back from the gates of hell,)
A moment frowned in mute surprise,
Then shook me off as a feather light,
And firm in his saddle sat upright.

Like the Angel of Death's consuming brand,
The long sword flashed in his brawny hand.
And "Charge!" he roared, and spurred his steed,
And the stallion leapt at breakneck speed
Upon the thronging press of foes.

Back, back they surged at the sweeping blows
Of the circling sword with its razor edge,
And a path was cleft in the living hedge
As a tree is cleft by an iron wedge.
And through it he galloped and we behind.
But the streets on either side were lined
With bowmen who shot their arrows fast
Upon us as we thundered past;
And long ere our course was half way run
Our saddles emptied one by one,
Till at length, when we reached the palace wall,
The chief and I, we rode alone
Under the archway's ringing stone,
And by the grace of a kindly fate
Unwounded we spurred through the heavy gate.

Meanwhile as our men lay sunk in sleep,
The foe had crept up the rampart steep,
And entry found in a hundred ways,
Through the secret tunnels beneath the ground
And winding passages which surround
The palace in a bewildering maze.
With a sudden shout, "Your king is dead.
We have lopped the Persian devil's head!"
They rushed on our troops bemused with wine,
And or ever the men could form in line,
They were butchered by scores as prone they lay
Or weaponless stood at angry bay.

The gate was open, the guard was slain,
Behind us the mob was racing amain.
We entered abreast, and brushing aside
The few who stood up to our steeds in their stride,



We galloped swift to the courtyard wide.
A moment our headlong course we stayed,
While the King's quick eye, like a flickering blade,
Flashed round with the warrior's practised sight
On the whirlpool of men in the swirling fight.
He heard the cry, "The King is dead!"
He saw his veterans backward borne,
Their eyes aghast with a new-formed dread.
"Was it true that their King indeed was dead?
Were they leaderless and forlorn?"

And then with the shattering roar and boom
Of the trump of God's angel announcing doom,
Above the wild tumult his voice pealed afar,
"Behold! It is I, the Nadir Shah!"
And standing forth in the wan moonlight,
He waved aloft his falchion bright.

What followed was like the magic wrought
By a dread enchanter's spell.
The panic ceased. The line was formed,
And shoulder to shoulder our veterans stormed,
With savage, triumphant yell
Of "Nadir! our Nadir!" upon the foe,
Who turned their backs and ran,
While swift we followed with blow on blow
Of our dripping swords, and we laid them low,
At every blow a man.

And then it was over. The last dying cry
Had sobbed itself out to a tremulous sigh.
Our warriors around their hero pressed,
And God and the Prophet ofttimes blessed

That the King had come back to his own again.
But he cut them short. "Go! count my slain!
My heart with tears of blood could weep
For my trusting troopers killed in their sleep.
To these Delhi liars without delay
Our debt with some interest we must pay."

We counted our slain—a thousand odd.
Then Nadir swore: "By the Thunder of God,
I will make of this city a shambles red
For the wrong it has done to my troopers dead.
That our creditors grieve not at payment doled,
I will pay for each life two hundredfold.
Make haste, my lambs, for the night is old.
Four hours ye have till morn.
Two hundred thousand heads ye must bring,
For I'll royally pay my debts like a king
Ere another day be born."

His "lambs" obeyed with a ready will.
We were mad at the sight of our slain.
Our tongues were dry with the thirst to kill,
As the desert's athirst for rain.
And first we rushed on the city gates,
And strongly held them barred,
And then with the doors of the trap shut down,
We turned on the rats in the doomed town,
Of cities the most ill-starred.

We slew them by ones and twos and threes,
In batches and droves by the score.
They clung in despair to our soldiers' knees,
But we trod them down in their gore.



And with the first light of the rising sun
We wiped our blades, for the deed was done
In the palace yard our trophies we laid,
And of them a rampart high we made.
And 'twas then I wrote with blood on the wall
Of that jewel-bedizened banqueting-hall,
"If ever a hell upon earth be found,
Ye white-livered curs, look around! look around!"

Thus Nadir, royally paying his debt,
On Delhi the seal of his vengeance set,
And naught remained but to take a toll
Of the city's treasured hoard;
And the weary day we passed in toil,
For we garnered a store of priceless spoil,
As our labour's due reward.

As a vampire sucks a sick man's veins,
And with the red stream his manhood drains,
We left the city flaccid and weak.
The people, like ghosts, too cowed to speak
Save in frightened whispers, hurried by,
Trembling to live and too craven to die.

HERBERT SHERRING.

## 14. WITH SCINDIA TO DELHI

THE wreath of banquet overnight lay withered on the neck,
Our hands and scarves were saffron-dyed for signal of despair,

When we went forth to Paniput to battle with the
MLECH,—
Ere we came back from Paniput and left a kingdom
there.

Thrice thirty thousand men were we to force the Jumna
fords—
The hawk-winged horse of Damajee, mailed squadrons
of the Bhao,
Stark levies of the southern hills, the Deccan's sharpest
swords,
And he the harlot's traitor son the goatherd Mulhar
Rao!

Thrice thirty thousand men were we before the mists
had cleared,
The low white mists of morning heard the warconch
scream and bray;
We called upon Bhowani and we gripped them by the
beard,
We rolled upon them like a flood and washed their
ranks away.

The children of the hills of Khost before our lances ran,
We drove the black Rohillas back as cattle to the pen;
'Twas then we needed Mulhar Rao to end what we
began,
A thousand men had saved the charge; he fled the
field with ten!

There was no room to clear a sword—no power to strike
a blow,
For foot to foot, ay, breast to breast, the battle held
us fast



Save where the naked hill-men ran, and stabbing from
below
Brought down the horse and rider and we trampled
them and passed.

To left the roar of musketry rang like a falling flood—
To right the sunshine rippled red from redder lance
and blade—
Above the dark UPSARAS[1] flew, beneath us plashed
the blood,
And, bellying black against the dust, the Bhagwa
Jhanda swayed.

I saw it fall in smoke and fire, the banner of the Bhao;
I heard a voice across the press of one who called in
vain:—
"Ho! Anand Rao Nimbalkhur, ride! Get aid of
Mulhar Rao!
Go shame his squadrons into fight—the Bhao—
the Bhao is slain!"

Thereat, as when a sand-bar breaks in clotted spume
and spray—
When rain of later autumn sweeps the Jumna water-
head,
Before their charge from flank to flank our riven ranks
gave way;
But of the waters of that flood the Jumna fords
ran red.

I held by Scindia, my lord, as close as man might hold;
A Soobah of the Deccan asks no aid to guard his life;

[1] The Choosers of the Slain.

But Holkar's Horse were flying, and our chiefest chiefs were cold,
And like a flame among us leapt the long lean Northern knife.

I held by Scindia—my lance from butt to tuft was dyed,
The froth of battle bossed the shield and roped the bridle-chain—
What time beneath our horses' feet a maiden rose and cried,
And clung to Scindia, and I turned a sword-cut from the twain.

He set a spell upon the maid in woodlands long ago,
A hunter by the Tapti banks she gave him water there:
He turned her heart to water, and she followed to her woe.
What need had he of Lalun who had twenty maids as fair?

Now in that hour strength left my lord; he wrenched his mare aside;
He bound the girl behind him and we slashed and struggled free.
Across the reeling wreck of strife we rode as shadows ride
From Paniput to Delhi town, but not alone were we.

'Twas Lutuf-Ullah Populzai laid horse upon our track,
A swine-fed reiver of the North that lusted for the maid;
I might have barred his path awhile, but Scindia called me back,
And I—O woe for Scindia!—I list'ned and obeyed.



League after league the formless scrub took shape and glided by—
League after league the white road swirled behind the white mare's feet—
League after league, when leagues were done, we heard the Populzai,
Where sure as Time and swift as Death the tireless footfall beat.

Noon's eye beheld that shame of flight, the shadows fell, we fled
Where steadfast as the wheeling kite he followed in our train;
The black wolf warred where we had warred, the jackal mocked our dead,
And terror born of twilight-tide made mad the labouring brain.

I gasped:—"A kingdom waits my lord; her love is but her own.
A day shall mar, a day shall cure for her, but what for thee?
Cut loose the girl: he follows fast. Cut loose and ride alone!"
Then Scindia 'twixt his blistered lips:—"My Queens' Queen shall she be!

"Of all who ate my bread last night 'twas she alone that came
To seek her love between the spears and find her crown therein!
One shame is mine to-day, what need the weight of double shame?
If once we reach the Delhi gate, though all be lost, I win!"

We rode—the white mare failed—her trot a staggering
stumble grew,—
The cooking-smoke of even rose and weltered and
hung low;
And still we heard the Populzai and still we strained
anew,
And Delhi town was very near, but nearer was the foe.

Yea, Delhi town was very near when Lalun whispered:
—"Slay!
Lord of my life, the mare sinks fast—stab deep and
let me die!"
But Scindia would not, and the maid tore free and
flung away,
And turning as she fell we heard the clattering
Populzai.

Then Scindia checked the gasping mare that rocked and
groaned for breath,
And wheeled to charge and plunged the knife a hands-
breadth in her side—
The hunter and the hunted know how that last pause
is death—
The blood had chilled about her heart, she reared
and fell and died.

Our Gods were kind. Before he heard the maiden's
piteous scream
A log upon the Delhi road, beneath the mare he lay—
Lost mistress and lost battle passed before him like a
dream;
The darkness closed about his eyes—I bore my King
away.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

# *PART IV.—BRITISH INDIA*

## 15. VASCO DA GAMA'S DISCOVERY OF INDIA

Now morn, serene in dappled grey, arose
O'er the fair lawns where murmuring Ganges flows;
Pale shone the wave beneath the golden beam;
Blue o'er the silver flood Malabria's mountains gleam:
The sailors on the main-top's airy round,
Land, land, aloud, with waving hands resound;
Aloud, the pilot of Melinda cries,
"Behold, O chief, the shores of India rise!"
Elate the joyful crew on tip-toe trod,
And every breast with swelling raptures glow'd;
Gama's great soul confest the rushing swell:
Prone on his manly knees the hero fell,
"Oh bounteous Heaven," he cries and spreads his hands
To bounteous Heaven, while boundless joy commands
No farther word to flow. In wonder lost,
As one in horrid dreams through whirlpools tost,
Now snatch'd by demons rides the flaming air,
And howls, and hears the howlings of despair;
Awaked, amazed, confused with transport glows,
And trembling still, with troubled joy o'erflows.
So, yet affected with the sickly weight,
Left by the horrors of the dreadful night,

The hero wakes in raptures to behold
The Indian shores before his prows unfold:
Bounding he rises, and with eyes on fire
Surveys the limits of his proud desire.

MICKLE (From the *Lusiad*).

## 16. THE ZAMORIN'S COURT.

THE tapestried walls with gold were pictured o'er,
And flowery velvet spread the marble floor,
In all the grandeur of the Indian state,
High on a blazing court, the monarch sate,
With starry gems the purple curtains shined,
And ruby flowers and golden foliage twined
Around the silver pillars: High o'er head
The Golden canopy its radiance shed:
Of cloth of gold the sovereign's mantle shone,
And his high turban flamed with precious stone.

MICKLE (From the *Lusiad*).

## 17. CLIVE

I AND Clive were friends—and why not? Friends!
I think you laugh, my lad.
Clive it was gave England India, while your father
gives—egad,
England nothing but the graceless boy who lures him
on to speak—
"Well, sir, you and Clive were comrades—" with a
tongue thrust in your cheek!



Very true: in my eye, your eyes, all the world's eyes,
Clive was man,
I was, am and ever shall be—mouse, nay, mouse of all
its clan
Sorriest sample, if you take the kitchen's estimate for
fame;
While the man Clive—he fought Plassy, spoiled the
clever foreign game,
Conquered and annexed and Englished!

Never mind! As o'er my punch
(You away) I sit of evenings,—silence, save for biscuit-
crunch,
Black, unbroken,—thought grows busy, thrids each
pathway of old years,
Notes this forthright, that meander, till the long-past
life appears
Like an outspread map of country plodded through,
each mile and rood,
Once, and well remembered still: I'm startled in my
solitude
Ever and anon by—what's the sudden mocking light
that breaks
On me as I slap the table till no rummer-glass but shakes
While I ask—aloud, I do believe, God help me!—"Was
it thus?
Can it be that so I faltered, stopped when just one step
for us—"
(Us,—you were not born, I grant, but surely some day
born would be)
"—One bold step had gained a province" (figurative
talk, you see)

"Got no end of wealth and honour,—yet I stood
stock still no less?"
—"For I was not Clive," you comment: but it needs
no Clive to guess
Wealth were handy, honour ticklish, did no writing on
the wall
Warn me "Trespassers, 'ware man-traps!" Him who
braves that notice—call
Hero! none of such heroics suit myself who read plain
words,
Doff my hat, and leap no barrier. Scripture says the
land's the Lord's:
Louts then—what avail the thousand, noisy in a smock-
frocked ring,
All-agog to have me trespass, clear the fence, be Clive
their king?
Higher warrants must you show me ere I set one foot
before
T' other in that dark direction, though I stand for
evermore
Poor as Job and meek as Moses. Evermore? No!
By-and-by
Job grows rich and Moses valiant, Clive turns out less
wise than I.
Don't object "Why call him friend, then?" Power
is power, my boy, and still
Marks a man,—God's gift magnific, exercised for good
or ill.

You've your boot now on my hearth-rug, tread what
was a tiger's skin:
Rarely such a royal monster as I lodged the bullet in!



True, he murdered half a village, so his own death came
to pass;
Still, for size and beauty, cunning, courage—ah, the
brute he was!
Why, that Clive,—that youth, that green-horn, that
quill-driving clerk, in fine,—

He sustained a siege in Arcot. . . . . But the world
knows! Pass the wine.
Where did I break off at? How bring Clive in? Oh,
you mentioned "fear"!
Just so: and, said I, that minds me of a story you shall
hear.

We were friends then, Clive and I: so, when the clouds,
about the orb
Late supreme, encroaching slowly, surely, threatened
to absorb
Ray by ray its noontide brilliance,—friendship might,
with steadier eye
Drawing near, bear what had burned else, now no
blaze—all majesty.
Too much bee's wing floats my figure? Well, suppose
a castle's new:
None presume to climb its ramparts, none find foothold
sure for shoe
'Twixt those squares and squares of granite plating
the impervious pile
As his scale-mail's warty iron cuirasses a crocodile.
Reels that castle thunder-smitten, storm-dismantled?
From without

Scrambling up by crack and crevice, every cockney prates about
Towers—the heap he kicks now! turrets—just the measure of his cane!
Will that do? Observe moreover—(same similitude again)—
Such a castle seldom crumbles by sheer stress of cannonade:
'Tis when foes are foiled and fighting's finished the vile rains invade,
Grass o'ergrows, o'ergrows till night-birds congregating find no holes
Fit to build in like the topmost sockets made for banner-poles.
So Clive crumbled slow in London—crashed at last.

A week before,
Dining with him,—after trying churchyard-chat of days of yore,—
Both of us stopped, tired as tombstones, head-piece, foot-piece, when they lean
Each to other, drowsed in fog-smoke, o'er a coffined Past between.
As I saw his head sink heavy, guessed the soul's extinguishment
By the glazing eyeball, noticed how the furtive fingers went
Where a drug-box skulked behind the honest liquor,—"One more throw
Try for Clive!" thought I: "Let's venture some good rattling question!" So—



"Come, Clive, tell us"—out I blurted—"what to tell in turn, years hence,
When my boy—suppose I have one—asks me on what evidence
I maintain my friend of Plassy prove a warrior every whit
Worth your Alexanders, Caesars, Marlboroughs and—what said Pitt?—
Frederick the Fierce himself! Clive told me once"—I want to say—
"Which feat out of all those famous doings bore the bell away
—In his own calm estimation, mark you, not the mob's rough guess—
Which stood foremost as evincing what Clive called courageousness!
Come! what moment of the minute, what speck-centre in the wide
Circle of the action saw your mortal fairly deified?
(Let alone that filthy sleep-stuff, swallow bold this wholesome Port!)
If a friend has leave to question,—when were you most brave, in short?"

Up he arched his brows o' the instant—formidably Clive again.
"When was I most brave? I'd answer, were the instance half as plain
As another instance that's a brain-lodged crystal—curse it!—here
Freezing when my memory touches—ugh!—the time I felt most fear.

Ugh! I cannot say for certain if I showed fear—anyhow,
Fear I felt, and, very likely, shuddered, since I shiver now."

"Fear!" smiled I. "Well, that's the rarer: that's a specimen to seek,
Ticket up in one's museum, MIND-FREAKS, LORD CLIVE'S FEAR, UNIQUE!"
Down his brows dropped. On the table painfully he pored as though
Tracing, in the stains and streaks there, thoughts encrusted long ago.
When he spoke 'twas like a lawyer reading word by word some will,
Some blind jungle of a statement,—beating on and on until
Out there leaps fierce life to fight with.

"This fell in my factor-days.
Desk-drudge, slaving at St. David's, one must game, or drink, or craze.
I chose gaming: and,—because your high-flown gamesters hardly take
Umbrage at a factor's elbow if the factor pays his stake,—
I was winked at in a circle where the company was choice,
Captain This and Major That, men high of colour, loud of voice,
Yet indulgent, condescending to the modest juvenile
Who not merely risked but lost his hard-earned guineas with a smile.



"Down I sat to cards, one evening,—had for my antagonist
Somebody whose name's a secret—you'll know why—so, if you list,
Call him Cock o' the Walk, my scarlet son of Mars from head to heel!
Play commenced: and, whether Cocky fancied that a clerk must feel
Quite sufficient honour came of bending over one green baize,
I the scribe with him the warrior,—guessed no penman dared to raise
Shadow of objection should the honour stay but playing end
More or less abruptly,—whether disinclined he grew to spend
Practice strictly scientific on a booby born to stare
At—not ask of—lace and ruffles if the hand they hide plays fair,—
Anyhow, I marked a movement when he bade me 'Cut!'

"I rose.
'Such the new manœuvre, Captain? I'm a novice: knowledge grows.
What, you force a card, you cheat, Sir?'

"Never did a thunder-clap
Cause emotion, startle Thyrsis locked with Chloe in his lap,
As my words and gesture (down I flung my cards to join the pack)

Fired the man of arms, whose visage, simply red
before, turned black.
When he found his voice, he stammered
'That expression once again,'
'Well, you forced a card and cheated!'

"'Possibly a factor's brain,
Busied with his all-important balance of accounts, may
deem
Weighing words superfluous trouble: CHEAT to clerkly
ears may seem
Just a joke for friends to venture: but we are not
friends, you see!
When a gentleman is joked with,—if he's good at
repartee,
He rejoins, as do I—Sirrah, on your knees, withdraw
in full!
Beg my pardon, or be sure a kindly bullet through
your skull
Lets in light and teaches manners to what brain it
finds! Choose, quick—
Have your life snuffed out or, kneeling, pray me trim
your candle-wick!'

"'Well, you cheated!'
Then outbroke a howl from all the friends around.
To his feet sprang each in fury, fists were clenched and
teeth were ground.
'End it! no time like the present! Captain, yours
were our disgrace!
No delay, begin and finish! Stand back, leave the
pair a space!



Let civilians be instructed: henceforth simply ply the
pen,
Fly the sword! This clerk's no swordsman? Suit
him with a pistol, then!
Even odds! A dozen paces 'twixt the most and least
expert
Make a dwarf a giant's equal: nay, the dwarf, if he's alert,
Likelier hits the broader target!'

"Up we stood accordingly.
As they handed me the weapon, such was my soul's
thirst to try
Then and there conclusions with this bully, tread on
and stamp out
Every spark of his existence, that,—crept close to,
curled about
By that toying tempting teasing fool-fore-finger's
middle joint,—
Don't you guess?—the trigger yielded. Gone my
chance! and at the point
Of such prime success moreover: scarce an inch above
his head
Went my ball to hit the wainscot. He was living, I
was dead.
Up he marched in flaming triumph—'twas his right,
mind!—up, within
Just an arm's length. 'Now, my clerkling,' chuckled
Cocky with a grin
As the levelled piece quite touched me, 'Now Sir
Counting-House, repeat
That expression which I told you proved bad manners!
Did I cheat?'

" ' Cheat you did, you knew you cheated, and this moment, know as well.
As for me, my homely breeding bids you—fire and go to Hell ! '

" Twice the muzzle touched my forehead.
Heavy barrel, flurried wrist,
Either spoils a steady lifting. Thrice : then,
' Laugh at Hell who list,
I can't ! God's no fable either. Did this boy's eye wink once ? No !
There's no standing him and Hell and God all three against me,—so,
I did cheat ! '

" And down he threw the pistol, out rushed —by the door
Possibly, but, as for knowledge if by chimney, roof or floor,
He effected disappearance—I'll engage no glance was sent
That way by a single starer, such a blank astonishment
Swallowed up their senses : as for speaking—mute they stood as mice.

" Mute not long, though ! Such reaction, such a hubbub in a trice !
' Rogue and rascal ! Who'd have thought it ? What's to be expected next,
When His Majesty's Commission serves a sharper as pretext
For . . . But where's the need of wasting time now ? Nought requires delay :



Punishment the Service cries for : let disgrace be wiped away
Publicly, in good broad daylight ! Resignation ? No, indeed
Drum and fife must play the Rogue's March, rank and file be free to speed
Tardy marching on the rogue's part by appliance in the rear
—Kicks administered shall right this wronged civilian, —never fear,
Mister Clive, for—though a clerk—you bore yourself— suppose we say—
Just as would beseem a soldier ! '

" ' Gentlemen, attention—pray !
First, one word ! '

" I passed each speaker severally in review.
When I had precise their number, names and styles, and fully knew
Over whom my supervision thenceforth must extend, —why, then—

' Some five minutes since, my life lay—as you all saw, gentlemen—
At the mercy of your friend there. Not a single voice was raised
In arrest of judgment, not one tongue—before my powder blazed—
Ventured " Can it be the youngster blundered, really seemed to mark
Some irregular proceeding ? We conjecture in the dark,

Guess at random,—still, for sake of fair play—what if for a freak,
In a fit of absence,—such things have been !—if our friend proved weak
—What's the phrase—corrected fortune ! Look into the case, at least ! "
Who dared interpose between the altar's victim and the priest ?
Yet he spared me ! You eleven ! Whosoever, all or each,
To the disadvantage of the man who spared me, utters speech
—To his face, behind his back,—that speaker has to do with me :
Me who promise, if positions change and mine the chance should be,
Not to imitate your friend and waive advantage ! '

" Twenty-five
Years ago this matter happened : and 'tis certain," added Clive,
" Never, to my knowledge, did Sir Cocky have a single breath
Breathed against him : lips were closed throughout his life, or since his death,
For if he be dead or living I can tell no more than you.
All I know is—Cocky had one chance more ; how he used it,—grew
Out of such unlucky habits, or relapsed, and back again
Brought the late-ejected devil with a score more in his train,—



That's for you to judge. Reprieval I procured, at any rate.
Ugh—the memory of that minute's fear makes goose-flesh rise ! Why prate
Longer ? You've my story, there's your instance : fear I did, you see ! "

" Well "—I hardly kept from laughing—" if I see it, thanks must be
Wholly to your Lordship's candour. Not that—in a common case—
When a bully caught at cheating thrusts a pistol in one's face,
I should underrate, believe me, such a trial to the nerve!
'Tis no joke, at one-and-twenty, for a youth to stand nor swerve.
Fear I naturally look for—unless of all men alive,
I am forced to make exception when I come to Robert Clive.
Since at Arcot, Plassy, elsewhere, he and death—the whole world knows—
Came to somewhat closer quarters."

Quarters ? Had we come to blows.
Clive and I, you had not wondered—up he sprang so, out he rapped
Such a round of oaths—no matter ! I'll endeavour to adopt
To our modern usage words he—well, 'twas friendly licence—flung
At me like so many fire-balls, fast as he could wag his tongue.

"You—a soldier? You—at Plassy? Yours th
faculty to nick
Instantaneously occasion when your foe, if lightning
quick,
—At his mercy, at his malice,—has you, through some
stupid inch
Undefended in your bulwark? Thus laid open,—not
to flinch
—That needs courage you'll concede me. Then look
here! Suppose the man,
Checking his advance, his weapon still extended, not
a span
Distant from my temple,—curse him!—quietly ha
bade me 'There!
Keep your life, calumniator!—worthless life I freel
spare:
Mine you freely would have taken—murdered me an
my good fame
Both at once—and all the better! Go, and than
your own bad aim
Which permits me to forgive you!' What if, with suc
words as these,
He had cast away his weapon? How should I hav
borne me, please?
Nay, I'll spare you pains and tell you. This, and onl
this, remained—
Pick his weapon up and use it on myself. I so ha
gained
Sleep the earlier, leaving England probably to pay
still
Rent and taxes for half India, tenant at the French
man's will."



"Such the turn," said I, "the matter takes—with you?
Then I abate
—No, by not one jot nor tittle,—of your act my
estimate.
Fear—I wish I could detect there: courage fronts me,
plain enough—
Call it desperation, madness—never mind! for here's
in rough
Why, had mine been such a trial, fear had overcome
disgrace.
True, disgrace were hard to bear: but such a rush
against God's face
—None of that for me, Lord Plassy, since I go to church
at times,
Say the creed my mother taught me! Many years in
foreign climes
Rub some marks away—not all, though! We poor
sinners reach life's brink,
Overlook what rolls beneath it, recklessly enough, but
think
There's advantage in what's left us—ground to stand
on, time to call
'Lord, have mercy!' ere we topple over—do not leap,
that's all!"

Oh, he made no answer,—re-absorbed into his cloud. I
caught
Something like "Yes—courage: only fools will call it
fear."
If aught
Comfort you, my great unhappy hero Clive, in that I
heard,

Next week, how your own hand dealt you doom, and
uttered just the word
"Fearfully courageous!"—this, be sure, and nothing
else I groaned.
I'm no Clive, nor parson either: Clive's worst deed—
we'll hope condoned.

ROBERT BROWNING.

## 18. SERINGAPATAM

"THE sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Heeds not the cry of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No judge on earth can scan;
He is the lord of whom ye hold
Spirit and sense and limb,
Fetter and chain are all ye gain
Who dared to plead with him."

Baird was bonny and Baird was young,
His heart was strong as steel,
But life and death in the balance hung,
For his wounds were ill to heal.
"Of fifty chains the Sultan gave
We have filled but forty-nine:
We dare not fail of the perfect tale
For all Golconda's mine."

That was the hour when Lucas first
Leapt to his long renown;
Like summer rains his anger burst,
And swept their scruples down.



"Tell ye the lord to whom ye crouch,
His fetters bite their fill:
To save your oath I'll wear them both,
And step the lighter still."

The seasons came, the seasons passed,
They watched their fellows die;
But still their thought was forward cast,
Their courage still was high.
Through tortured days and fevered nights
Their limbs alone were weak,
And year by year they kept their cheer,
And spoke as freemen speak.

But once a year, on the fourth of June,
Their speech to silence died,
And the silence beat to a soundless tune
And sang with a wordless pride;
Till when the Indian stars were bright,
And bells at home would ring,
To the fetters' clank they rose and drank
"England! God save the King!"

The years came, and the years went,
The wheel full-circle rolled;
The tyrant's neck must yet be bent,
The price of blood be told:
The city yet must hear the roar
Of Baird's avenging guns
And see him stand with lifted hand
By Tippoo Sahib's sons.

The lads were bonny, the lads were young,
But he claimed a pitiless debt;
Life and death in the balance hung,
They watched it swing and set.
They saw him search with sombre eyes,
They knew the place he sought;
They saw him feel for the hilted steel,
They bowed before his thought.

But he—he saw the prison there
In the old quivering heat,
Where merry hearts had met despair
And died without defeat;
Where feeble hands had raised the cup
For feebler lips to drain,
And one had worn with smiling scorn
His double load of pain.

"The sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Hears not the voice of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No earthly judge may scan;
For all the wrong your father wrought
Your father's sons are free;
Where Lucas lay no tongue shall say
That Mercy bound not me."

HENRY NEWBOLT.



## 19. THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE

SHOUT, Britons, for the Battle of Assaye!
For that was a day
When we stood in our array,
Like the lion's might at bay,
And our battle-word was "Conquer or die."

Rouse! rouse the cruel LEOPARD from his lair.
With his yell the mountain rings,
And his red eye round he flings,
As arrow-like he springs,
And spreads his clutching paw to rend and tear.

The first array'd in battle-front we saw,
Far as the eye could glance,
The Mahratta banners dance
O'er the desolate expanse;
And their standard was THE LEOPARD OF MALWA.

But, when we first encounter'd man to man,
Such odds came never on,
Against Greece or Macedon,
When they shook the Persian throne
Mid the old barbaric pomp of Ispahan.

No number'd might of living men could tame
Our gallant band, that broke
Through the bursting clouds of smoke,
When the volleyed thunder spoke
From a thousand smouldering mouths of lurid flame.

Hail, WELLESLEY! who led'st the martial fray!—
Amid the locust swarm,
Dark fate was in thine arm;
And his shadow shall alarm
The Mahratta when he hears thy name for aye.

Ah! mark those British corses on the plain!—
Each vanished like a star
Mid the dreadful ranks of war,
While their foemen stood afar,
And gaz'd with silent terror at the slain.

Shout, Britons, for the Battle of Assaye!
Ye who perish'd in your prime,
Your hallow'd names sublime
Shall live to endless time!
For heroic worth and fame shall never die.

JOHN LEYDEN.

## 20. ODE TO VIRTUE

IMITATED FROM THE GREEK OF ARISTOTLE

*(Written on the death of General Frazer, killed at the Battle of Deeg.)*

STERN virtue, unappall'd by toil,
To mortal man the noblest prize!
For thee the chiefs of Albion's soil
By envied death of glory rise.
Inspir'd by thee, their souls disdain
Intolerable toil and pain,



Beneath the noontide's sultry star:
When fell Mahrattas, on the fervid plain,
Bend fainting o'er each fervid courser's mane,
They rush impetuous to the charge of war.

For thee the sons of Albion bore
Woes that no mortal tongue can tell;
For thee, on India's dusky shore
They nobly fought and proudly fell.
For thee, brave Frazer sunk below:—
For him no more the sunbeams glow;
Yet lives his worth on India's strand;
And long on Albion's shore the warrior's fame
To future ages shall bequeath his name,
The pride, the glory of his native land.

JOHN LEYDEN.

## 21. GILLESPIE

RIDING at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets bit,
And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
"There are two living and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
But laid his barrel and drew his bead.



There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,
And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight;
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They've kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

HENRY NEWBOLT.

## 22. THE RED THREAD OF HONOUR

ELEVEN men of England
A breast-work charged in vain;
Eleven men of England
Lie stripped and gashed, and slain.
Slain; but of foes that guarded
Their rock-built fortress well,
Some twenty had been mastered,
When the last soldier fell.

Whilst Napier piloted his wondrous way
Across the sand waves of the desert sea,
Then flashed at once, on each fierce clan, dismay,
Lord of their wild Truckee.
These missed the glen to which their steps were bent,
Mistook a mandate, from afar half heard
And, in that glorious error, calmly went
To death without a word.

The robber-chief mused deeply,
Above those daring dead;
"Bring here," at length he shouted,
"Bring quick, the battle thread.
Let Eblis blast for ever
Their souls if Allah will:
But we must keep unbroken
The old rules of the Hill.

"Before the Ghiznee tiger
Leapt forth to burn and slay;
Before the holy Prophet
Taught our grim tribes to pray
Before Secunder's lances
Pierced through each Indian glen;
The mountain laws of honour
Were framed for fearless men.

"Still, when a chief dies bravely,
We bind with green one wrist—
Green for the brave, for heroes
One crimson thread we twist.



Say ye, oh gallant Hillmen,
For these, whose life has fled
Which is the fitting colour,
The green one, or the red?"

"Our brethren, laid in honoured graves, may wear
Their green reward," each noble savage said;
"To these, whom hawks and hungry wolves shall tear,
Who dares deny the red?"
Thus conquering hate, and steadfast to the right,
Fresh from the heart that haughty verdict came;
Beneath a waning moon, each spectral height
Rolled back its loud acclaim.

Once more the chief gazed keenly
Down on those daring dead:
From his good sword their heart's blood
Crept to that crimson thread.
Once more he cried, "The judgment,
Good friends, is wise and true,
But though the red be given,
Have we not more to do?

"These were not stirred by anger
Nor yet by lust made bold;
Renown they thought above them,
Nor did they look for gold.
To them their leader's signal
Was the voice of God:
Removed, and uncomplaining
The path it showed they trod.