

THE TWIN LOVES.

FROM out the sphere where ages I had moved,
With silent joy among the stars divine,
With sudden bound I started, for I loved
No longer their dim, silent, silvery shine.
Burning within me was a grief more dear
Than all the pleasures of that starry sphere,
That sprang from earth, yet ever looked toward heaven.
And that I loved more dearly, that I knew
That all its fire and its course uneven
Were born from other worlds, away from view,
Where dæmons wail, and yet where love is true.

Truer and fiercer than the quiet light
That shines eternal in our heavenly dome;
And if it spring from earth and care, and blight
With its dark fire the sweetness of its home,
Points yet toward highest heaven, whither nought else can
come.

Forth sprang I from my cloudy seat above,
And towards the earth I bent my winged way;
And as I passed did from my brow remove
The diadem of time, that ages gray
Spent in that spherical life upon my head did lay.

Then from me passed remembrance and its grief,
From me went all the lore that I had learned,
So far away, that a faint dim belief
Of what had been before within me burned,
But vague and shadowy; all my strength was turned,
To weakness, and I wept; — as who would not,
Cast on this world's cold shore, before him such sad lot.

Then when I raised my eyes, behold there sate
 Two shadowy forms beside me. They did seem
 Brothers in age and beauty, if their state
 Were not beyond all age. 'T was not a dream,
 For these twin forms still on my pathway gleam,
 Still light the dark sad path that I must go,
 Still dry the tears that thou alone mayest know.

Like, yet dissimilar, their figures were; —
 One like the *Grecian Eros* gazed on me
 So statue-like, so earnest, so severe;
 And his deep eyes seemed fixed tenderly
 Not on the weeping child, but anxiously
 To watch the swelling of the germ within,
 Round which the body's veil, clustered full light and
 thin.

The other smiled upon my infant form,
 Twined his warm fingers in my waving hair,
 And said; "Oh come with me into the storm
 Of this world's sadness; thee I'll shield from care;
 I'll bid the blustering winds, they shall forbear,
 And only sunny zephyrs dare to breathe
 Within the magic circle that I'll wreath."

He sang to me of earthly love, and bright
 Flooded the colors on his canvass then,
 He sang to me of hopes and dear delight
 Most fondly cherished by the sons of men;
 He sang of home. — "Ah, child, thou too mayest gain
 A portion in this paradise, with me
 Wilt thou but sail over this summer sea."

Aye while he spoke dreamy enchantment fell
 From his sweet lips, and I, entranced away,
 Lent myself to the mastery of his spell,
 As many another had before that day.

But while I watched the ever-changing play
 Of joy upon his features smooth and clear,
 Behold! his brother's voice, in accent calm I hear.

High and imperial was its tone; — it sounded
 First like the trumpet in its thrilling cheer,
 And as its clear stern note the sweetness wounded
 That but then filled the air, it seemed severe;
 But as it followed on its high career
 My soul was strengthened, so that the proud tone
 Answered to power within me like its own.

His earnest eye was fixed upon the ground,
 Yet sometimes did it read far into mine,
 No story of earth's love his tale did bound,
 High and exalted was his front divine;
 Yet round his feet sweet flowers of earth did twine, —
 Not ever, — for he turned his steps away,
 And in a rocky path he went his way.

Ask you if I him followed? Aye we wend,
 I and his brother, on that pathway wild;
 And when its roughness the boy's feet offend,
 In my strong arms I bear the sorrowing child,
 And soothe him till comes back, serene and mild,
 Love's early joy. So with him may I go
 Still heavenward, and not stay, even with love, below.