

## A VISION UPON USHBA.

**H**ERE in the wild Caucasian night,  
The sleepless years  
Seem to pass by in garments white,  
Made white with tears,  
A pageant of intolerable light  
Across the sombre spheres,  
And, mingling with the tumult of the morn,  
Methought a single rose of blood was born.

Far on the iron peaks a voice  
Crystal and cold,  
Sharper than sounds the aurochs' choice  
O'er wood and wold,  
A summons as of angels that rejoice,  
A pæan glad and bold,  
A mighty shout of infinite acclaim  
Shrieks through the sky some dread forgotten Name.

Trembles the demon on his perch  
Of crags ice-bound ;  
Tremble near forest and far church  
At that quick sound ;

The silver arrows that bedeck the birch  
Shiver along the ground :  
Priest, fiend, and harpy answer to the call,  
And hasten to their ghastly festival.

There in the vale below my feet  
I see the crew  
Gather, blaspheming God, and greet  
Their shame anew.  
A feast is spread of some unholy meat ;  
Oftimes there murmurs through  
Their horrid ranks a cry of pain, as God  
Bids them keep memory of His iron rod.

The vale is black with priests. They fight,  
Wild beasts, for food,  
The orphan's gold, the widow's right,  
The virgin's snood.  
All in their maws are crammed within the night  
That hides their chosen wood,  
Where through the blackness sounds the sickening  
noise  
Of cannibals that gloat on monstrous joys.

The valley steams with slaughter. Here  
Shall the pure snow  
The bloody reek of murder rear  
To crush the foe ?  
In Titan fury shall the rocks spring clear,  
And smite the fiends below ?

Shall poisonous wind and avalanche combine  
To wreck swift justice, human and divine ?

Priests thrive on poison. Carrion  
Their eager teeth  
Tear, till the sacramental sun  
Its sword unsheath,  
And bid their horrid carnival be done,  
And smite beneath  
In their cold gasping valleys, and bid light  
Break the battalions of the angry night.

That sword that smote from Heaven was so keen,  
Its silver blade  
No angel's sight, no fairy's eye hath seen,  
No tender maid  
With subtle insight may behold its sheen  
With light inlaid ;  
But God, who forged it, breathed upon its point,  
And His pure unction did the hilt anoint.

Within the poet's hand he laid the sword :  
With reverent ear  
The poet listened to His word  
Cleansed through of fear.  
The brightness of the glory of the Lord  
Grew adamant, a spear !  
And when he took the flachion in his hand  
Lo ! kings and princes bowed to his command.

Then shall the flag of England flaunt  
    In peaceful might,  
The sceptred isle of dying Gaunt  
    Shall rule by right.  
The sons of England shall bid Hell avaunt  
    And priest and harlot smite.  
Then all the forces of the earth shall be  
Untamable, a shield of Liberty.

Freedom shall burgeon like a rose,  
    While in the sky  
A new white sun with ardour glows  
    On liberty.  
Men shall sing merrily at work as those  
    Who fear no more to die—  
Ay ! and who fear no more at last to live  
Since man can love and worship and forgive.

Then on these heights of Caucasus  
    A fire shall dwell,  
Pure as the dawn, and odorous  
    Of bud and bell ;  
A flower of fire, a flame from heaven to us  
    All triumph to foretell,  
A glory of unspeakable delight,  
A flower like lightning, adamant and white.

There needs no more of sun or sea  
    Or any light ;

On golden wheels Eternity  
Revolves in Night.  
The island peoples are too proud and free  
And full of might  
To care for time or space, but glorious wend  
A royal path of flowers to the end.

I pray thee, God, to weapon me  
With this keen fire,  
That I may set this people free  
As my desire ;  
That the white lilies of our liberty  
Grow on Life's crags still higher,  
Till on the loftiest peaks their blossom flower,  
The rampart of a people and their power.