

CHAPTER LXXX

Morning

Life or death, weal or woe, the sun stays not his course. On: over battle-field and bower; over tower, and town, he speeds,--peers in at births, and death-beds; lights up cathedral, mosque, and pagan shrine;--laughing over all;--a very Democritus in the sky; and in one brief day sees more than any pilgrim in a century's round.

So, the sun; nearer heaven than we:--with what mind, then, may blessed Oro downward look.

It was a purple, red, and yellow East;--streaked, and crossed. And down from breezy mountains, robust and ruddy Morning came,--a plaided Highlander, waving his plumed bonnet to the isles.

Over the neighboring groves the larks soared high; and soaring, sang in jubilees; while across our bows, between two isles, a mighty moose swam stately as a seventy-four; and backward tossed his antlered wilderness in air.

Just bounding from fresh morning groves, with the brine he mixed the dew of leaves,--his antlers dripping on the swell, that rippled before his brown and bow-like chest.

"Five hundred thousand centuries since," said Babbalanja, "this same sight was seen. With Oro, the sun is co-eternal; and the same life that moves that moose, animates alike the sun and Oro. All are parts of One. In me, in me, flit thoughts participated by the beings peopling all the stars. Saturn, and Mercury, and Mardi, are brothers, one and all; and across their orbits, to each other talk, like souls. Of these things what chapters might be writ! Oh! that flesh can not keep pace with spirit. Oh! that these myriad germ-dramas in me, should so perish hourly, for lack of power mechanic.--Worlds pass worlds in space, as men, men,--in thoroughfares; and after periods of thousand years, cry:--"Well met, my friend, again!"--To me to me, they talk in mystic music; I hear them think through all their zones. --Hail, furthest worlds! and all the beauteous beings in ye! Fan me, sweet Zenora! with thy twilight wings!--Ho! let's voyage to Aldebaran.--Ha! indeed, a ruddy world! What a buoyant air! Not like to Mardi, this. Ruby columns: minarets of amethyst: diamond domes! Who is this?--a god? What a lake-like brow! transparent as the morning air. I see his thoughts like worlds revolving--and in his eyes--like unto heavens--soft falling stars are shooting.--How these thousand passing wings winnow away my breath:--I faint:--back, back to some small asteroid.--Sweet being! if, by Mardian word I may address thee--speak!--'I bear a soul in germ within me; I feel the first, faint trembling, like to a harp-string, vibrate in my inmost being. Kill me, and generations die.'--So, of old, the unbegotten lived within the virgin; who then loved her God, as new-made mothers their babes ere born. Oh, Alma, Alma, Alma!--Fangs off, fiend!--will that name ever

lash thee into foam?--Smite not my face so, forked flames!"

"Babbalanja! Babbalanja! rouse, man! rouse! Art in hell and damned, that thy sinews so snake-like coil and twist all over thee? Thy brow is black as Ops! Turn, turn! see yonder moose!"

"Hail! mighty brute!--thou feelest not these things: never canst thou be damned. Moose! would thy soul were mine; for if that scorched thing, mine, be immortal--so thine; and thy life hath not the consciousness of death. I read profound placidity--deep--million--violet fathoms down, in that soft, pathetic, woman eye! What is man's shrunk form to thine, thou woodland majesty?--Moose, moose!--my soul is shot again--Oh, Oro! Oro!"

"He falls!" cried Media.

"Mark the agony in his waning eye," said Yoomy;--"alas, poor Babbalanja! Is this thing of madness conscious to thyself? If ever thou art sane again, wilt thou have reminiscences? Take my robe:--here, I strip me to cover thee and all thy woes. Oro! by this, thy being's side, I kneel:--grant death or happiness to Babbalanja!"