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THE KOH-I-NOOR
OF
THE BRITISH DIADEM,
AND OTHER FRAGMENTS IN VERSE.

Burgess Hill, Sussex :—

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY CHARLES N. BLANCHARD.

1896.

THE KOH-I-NOOR
OF
THE BRITISH DIADEM,
AND OTHER FRAGMENTS IN VERSE.
BY
EDWARD-GIBBON SWANN, C.M.E.,

AUTHOR OF

*“General Santa Anna’s Ghost,”—“Matters and Men,”—
and numerous other works,*

IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

BURGESS HILL, SUSSEX:—

CHARLES N. BLANCHARD.

1896.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

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i.

LA BELLE VEILLE :—

Christmas, 1895.

Behold, 'tis Christmas Eve—aye, Christmas Eve,—
The time of revels and of minstrelsy ;
And yet I lack a Muse to deftly weave
The tissue of enchantment over me.

Will no fair Ministress afford me aid
Of inspiration, wherewithal to sing
The charms that hover round me, and to braid
The tresses of sweet Nature's fostering ?

See how yon pendant boughs, begemmed with rime,
Tempt one to coil them into fancy dress,
With a tiara matching the sublime,
Grand coronet, aloft,—that's measureless.

Mark how, in crisp night air, with cloudless sky,
The myriad other stars smile on that one
Of eastern splendour and of heraldry,
That marks the spot where sacred halo shone.

Where is the gem, of most resplendent ray,
To match that dome of spangles and deep blue—
That matchless aureole of the Milky Way—
That lambent lustre of Aurora, too?

E'en merriment is chastened at the sight,
And deeper thoughts come crowding in the brain.
Within, prevails reflection of the light
That shines above the shadowed earth amain.

Be joyous an ye please, but still adore
That grand symbolic Presence of All Power—
That Mystery that reigns for evermore
And nought can match,—much less displace or lower.

THE "KOH-I-NOOR"

OF

THE BRITISH DIADEM.

Written for and published as a Supplement to

THE ADMIRALTY AND HORSE GUARDS GAZETTE, INDIA NUMBER:—
AUGUST 29TH, 1895.

—I.—

'Neath Nature's ramparts, frowning on the foe,—
And folding them in sheltering embrace,—
See plains of Empire stretching far below,
Which England's greatest Sons have spread
apace :
Whose valour and whose wisdom, blended, show
Dominion mastered by a fearless race
Of Swordsmen and of Statesmen, proudly wreathed,
Where even Alexander's sword was sheathed !

A

—II.—

Two centuries, since Charnock's time, have sped ;—
 Two centuries all burnished with the glow
 Of glorious deeds, by Story writ in red,—
 From which such potencies of greatness flow,
 And ruthless tyrannies, in rout, have fled :—
 Glories that “ like Marcellus' fame still grow,”
 To more adorn the British Diadem
 With matchless “ Kohinoor's ” resplendent gem !

—III.—

Like the grand waters of the Amazons,—
 Springing from tiniest of rivulets,—
 Albeit most feeble of comparisons,—
 Survey, from India's mighty parapets,
 The Empire one of England's humblest Sons
 Has caused to spring from least of “ Calumets ”:
 Job Charnock, for THEY “ Calumet,” I claim
 Th' orchestral Overture of India's fame !

—IV.—

Yet, fie on us ! Who, now, e'er hears thy name,—
 Or that Fort William had been thy foundation ?
 Which Dowlah seized and Clive did next reclaim,—
 Avenging the “ Black Hole's ” sore tribulation :
 A penman erst t' achieve a warrior's fame,
 And, from a Counting-house, construct a Nation,
 But, to our shame,—as conqu'ror of Bengal,—
 To be reviled by Dolts of Leadenhall !

—V.—

First of a line of many a master-mind
 And hero,—who on Plassey's glorious plain,—
 With prowess and with matchless skill combin-
 ed,—
 Struck with such valour as a Realm to gain
 By one decisive blow,—to be maligned
 And branded with rank Defamation's stain
 And,—for requital,—with aspersions loaded
 Alas ! to self-destruction to be goaded !

—VI.—

Such was the earliest maker of a State

His sword had won and wisdom next endowed
With Rule perfected, that should make it great.

To his far-seeing prescience India owed
The splendour only tarnished by his fate :—

To THAT it was barbaric hatred bowed ;
'Twas his instinctive glance, above,—ahead,—
That traced the bounds succeeding ranks should
tread :—

—VII.—

Those mighty mountain watch-towers, far away,

That should, in future, skirt yon teeming fields
Of swarming people, subject to our sway,

Imperial power with gentle firmness wields
O'er distant regions, wrapped in misty grey,

Where Range on Range of lofty barriers shields
The glowing plains, whose peaceful Industry
Rears people happier in such crafts they ply.

—VIII.—

From Hindoo Koosh to Coromandel shore,—
 From Himalaya Range to Malabar,—
 We rule what Clive devised to us of yore :—
 The heritage of his resplendent Star,—
 For the mean guerdon that his service bore ;
 And those stupendous snow-clad peaks, afar,—
 Aglow and ruddy from the setting sun,—
 Blush for th' ungrateful meed of what he won !

—IX.—

But what of Hastings,—great in state-craft too,—
 Who next took up the master-work of Clive ?
 He, also, earned like recompense anew,—
 Rancour again,—nor did he barely live
 To hear his vindication carried through.
 Such was the meed for which they both did
 In conscious duty, but because THEY knew
 (And DID), more surely, what 't was their's to do !
 strive,

—X.—

A mighty line of warriors next succeeded.

The fields of rising soldiers, then, became
Those Indian plains where valour ne'er receded :—

“To come, to see,—and conquer,”—were the
same.

The onward march of victories proceeded,

For Statesmen to consolidate each claim ;—
First Baird's decisive and o'erwhelming blow,
In Tippoo Sahib's fatal overthrow.

—XI.—

Then Arthur Wellesley made himself a name

Thereafter destined to reverberate
Throughout the world, in foremost rank of fame.

And when Assaye was fought, to dissipate
The strongest hostile coalition's aim,

And made, of two, each one “Dependent
State,”
'T was parting Central India on each hand,
To curb disquiet from a firmer stand.

—XII.—

Then followed Nott and Pollock, joining Sale,
 To quit with vengeance Akbar's treachery,
 And mark that British daring ne'er can fail;

Whilst Pottinger bade Persians rearward hie,
 And Napier, at Meeanee, clinched the nail

That pierced and shackled Scinde's hostility :—
 To earn the name of "Devil's Brother,"—and
 To claim "Peccavi" as his proper brand.

—XIII.—

Next 'gainst the "Khalsa Banner," flashed the
deeds

Of Gough and Hardinge,—on the Sutlej bank,—
 The record of whose great achievements reads

Like some o'er-coloured fiction, and will rank
 With any martial tale.—"Success succeeds";—

And England knew the "Khalsa Banner" sank
 With thousands, in that blood-discoloured stream,
 And Ranjeet's power had fled like a dream!

—XVI.—

Outram,—the generous,—whose placid brow
 Had won the wreath of victor at Bushire,
 Now cheered devoted Havelock's, at Lucknow,
 In masterly defence :—were far or near
 The aid to come,—assured 'gainst any blow :—
 Composed and dauntless,—consciousless of fear,
 Though sorely grieved for dying Havelock's fate,—
 Outram ne'er let HIS steadfastness abate.

—XVII.—

The greatest of the Lawrences' grand race
 Now bent his genius to gainsay the date,—
 The "Sumbut,"—when Bengalis should efface
 The "Sahib Raj," and live to reinstate
 Their old misrule,—for THEM "A Year of Grace,"—
 And glut with blood hereditary hate ;
 For Lawrence,— a constructive chief of men,— ✕
 Had organised controlling power then.

—XVIII.—

Brave former foes he'd made auxiliary ;
 The " Khalsa Banner " was unfurled again,
 To lead them 'gainst their previous enemy
 And wreak repressive vengeance for the slain,
 And, from the stronghold of Moguls, to ply
 The sword of retribution, to restrain
 Transgression,—come it from whatever side,—
 In concert with battalions led by Clyde.

—XIX.—

Last, but not least, in Roberts next behold
 His rapid, well-concerted strategy :—
 Dashing on Candahar to seize and hold
 The " Gates of India " in security,
 And, with reflective insight, then unfold
 The problem of defensive barriers, high,
 'Long trackless Ranges,—bulwarks natural,—
 Insuperable, let what could befall.

* * * *

THE
ENSUING FRAGMENT

was written for and published in "The Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette" of October 17th, 1895, in reference to an Illustration, published in the same issue and reproduced from the photograph of a part of the Colours of the 14th Native Infantry, which was recovered at Lucknow, on the 16th of November, 1857, when that mutinous regiment was annihilated by the 93rd Highlanders, who bayoneted every man of them.

Beyond the Ganges sank the sun blood-red :—

Red as Cawnpore's defiled and gruesome ghât,
When Campbell grimly scanned the men he led,—

With whose heroic grit he erst had fought,—
With whom he erst had confidently bled.

“ Yes :—they're all good avenging stuff,” he
thought :—

“ Tomorrow we must hasten to Lucknow,

“ To punish treason with unerring blow.”

In pride, the gallant “Ninety-Third” were there ;

In pride, the Khalsa heroes mustered, too :

In conscious prowess, they had sworn to share

The triumph of a vengeance over-due,—

Alike resolved to kill and not to spare.

The Cawnpore villainy was but too true ;

They, all alike, had seen what fate befel

The mothers and their infants— —IN THAT WELL !

That sight “had roused the vengeance nought
could quell

Save blood-atonement”— —from each Beast of
prey:—

Though not unarmed—so not one tithe so fell

As the ferocious rage to hack and flay

The helpless mothers,—and their babes as well.

The gallant Clansmen yearned but for the fray,

To drench Secunder-baugh with savage blood

And wade triumphant through the crimson flood.

And lo! the breach was made, the shout was
raised,—

“Cawnpore, Cawnpore! Strike home! Lochiel,
Lochiel!”

In rushed the Clansmen, whilst the foes, amazed,

And pent up in their courts, must face the steel

Without escape, 'gainst men whose features blazed

With fiery ardour of determined zeal

And stern, relentless passion in their eyes,

As thrust on thrust they dealt—with deafening
cries.

“Cawnpore, ye fiends!—‘Fourteenth, Fourteenth,’”
they cried

To Sepoys fired by valour of despair :
 Until not one alive could be descried,
 And none were left but tartaned heroes, there.
 Then the braves to the Residency hied
 T’ hail the beleaguered garrison, and share
 The triumph with them, and, in tears caress
 The children joyous at their tenderness.

Yea, tears!— —Aye, tears of joy from stalwart men
 Still dripping with the blood of fallen foes,
 And melting in their gentler nature, then,—
 As nobler human nature only glows.

* * * *

Gaze on those colours, that they tell you when
 The rescuing heroes plied their conqu’ring blows!
 Hold them aloft—examples for your pride
 In comrades who—so nobly steadfast— —died

FRAGMENTS IN VERSE.

B

FRAGMENTS IN VERSE.

PREFACE.

This trifle has no pretension to be more than a mere *Brochure* comprising some odd "Fragments in Verse," written on the spur of the moment, *à propos* of questions arising in the course of journalistic subjects of discussion.

The contents of the sixteen preceding pages:—namely, the twenty one Stanzas, under the title of "The Koh-i-noor of the British Diadem," and the seven Stanzas on "Cawnpore and Lucknow," were hurriedly written for the India and Lucknow Numbers of the "*Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette*," respectively then announced to be published on the 29th of August, and the 17th of October, 1895:—and some defective lines and misprints, overlooked by the Author at the time, are herein corrected.

The several "Sallies" on "Proselytism" were written

for the "*Whitehall Review*," with the object of (if possible) checking the insane "Missionary" mania which is involving this poly-religious Empire in a complication of internecine feuds, and thus compromising the principles of its UNITY, by violating the spirit of *tolerance* upon which that unity depends.

Toleration was the fundamental principle even of the fanatical Puritans:—it was the watch-word even of Cromwell's military supremacy. It saved England, against the Counter-Reformation, plotting the infamous "Treaty of Dover."

It is high time, indeed, before the exaggerated zeal and fervour of Proselytism shall have wrought up some great catastrophe (as it surely will if persisted in), to discourage such abuses of sectarian frenzy, and to suppress them, in withholding the funds by which alone they are promoted.

Every one who contributes to sustain so-called "Missionary" work, contributes, more or less, to the destruction of that British Supremacy, which it is the interest not only of Englishmen but of all civilized society to uphold intact,—be the components of our Imperial Dominion however heterogeneous or heterodox (and indeed because they are so).

If Proselytism offered us the least prospect of unity of persuasion, and, therefore, thorough sympathy of races, it would have a claim upon us for support; but, inasmuch as, on the contrary, it can only provoke the bitterest of animosities amongst our fellow-subjects, it is nothing less than a curse.

PROSELYTISM!

FIRST SALLY.

—I.—

Gaze on the planets and the galaxy,
And myriad other twinkling specks of light
Illumining the space of sunless sky,—
Mysterious revelations of the night!
Are *they* not works of One Divinity,
Ruled by the self-same Universal Might,
And by the same co-ordinance as we—
Controlling space, throughout immensity?

—II.—

If so, pray tell me, if Humanity—

Such as our own—inhabit every one?

And tell me, too, what all *their* creeds may be :—

Whether they worship idols or some sun,

Or hold the Faith that came from Galilee,—

Or if they have distinct beliefs or none?

THEY *may* be fields for Missionary zeal,

Lest wrong debar them from eternal weal.

—III.—

On earth we've only one aspiring creed,

That would “convert” all others' votaries—

Although its own *amongst themselves*, indeed,

Have been the most relentless enemies,

And never blenched to make *each other* bleed :—

Each damning t' other's vows, as “heresies”

More infamous than any “Pagan” errors—

Foreboding curses and eternal terrors !

—IV.—

The “ Pagans ” have no Missionaries. They
 Would keep *their* cults— — —and let all others
 be.

But if ye *will* insult their Gods, I pray,

How can ye rave at their hostility ?

Your business is to keep yourselves away,

And not remind them of *your* history.

THEY have not slain each other ; Christians have
 Sent myriad Christians to a bloody grave !

—V.—

Do ye suppose, in yon vast Universe—

In which our Earth is but a grain of sand,—

There can have been diffused a single verse

Of all your Faith :—or bid us understand

That all those wondrous worlds are doomed to curse,

Because, forsooth, they’re subject to *your* brand :

And that Omnipotence has been so cruel

As to create them for eternal fuel ?

—VI.—

Millions have joined “the Great Majority”—

E'en on this puny globe—without *your* creed :—
Creatures, alike, of just Divinity.

And ye have now the hardihood to plead
That *their sincere* beliefs are reasons why—

As outcasts from *your* savage Sects—they need
YOUR intercession and your coalition
To rescue their successors from perdition !

—VII.—

Let them alone,—they will not trouble you.

Revile their Faiths— — —and take the conse-
quences.

WE claim that OUR religion is the true :—

Yet no man—rancour 's not bereft of senses—
Can say that, in *your* midst,—and flagrant, too,—

Outrage of rectitude not more intense is
Than 'mongst unconscious Negroes or Chinese,
Whose older Faiths ye arrogantly lese.

PROSELYTISM!

SECOND SALLY.

—I.—

“I bring not peace to men—but bring a sword!”*

Alas! a true but mournful prophecy:—

The sad, reproachful forecast of “The Lord,”

Confirmed for sixteen centuries gone by,

In manifest perversion of “The Word,”

And “Separatist,” furious casuistry:

When ye have burnt and butchered one another—

And now would bid each heathen slay his brother!

* Matt. X, 34.

—II.—

Your Missionary track is traced with blood
 And rapine,—war and internecine rage,—
 On mandate, at the least, misunderstood,
 Fomenting passions nothing can assuage—
 Which, with grim irony, ye christen “GOOD!”
 Whilst, like “Kilkenny Cats,” ye ever wage
 The conflict ’gainst each other,—ye incite
 The outside world around you, too,— — — *to fight!*

—III.—

Your hostile “SECTS” all yearn for fields of fray.
 What! — — Can it be Uganda has, already,
 Faded in “Ancient History” away:—
 Or has your frantic eagerness misled ye?
 Alas! ’tis melancholy, sooth to say,
 That, if some savage, erring folk have bled ye,
 ’Tis you yourselves who—in mis-spelling “pray”—
 Taught them, by your example,— — how *to prey.*

—IV.—

The tale of “ Fifty Sev’n ” reproaches you.

The Ganges redd’ning, swollen with our gore,—
Th’ unwonted frenzy of the meek Hindoo,—

The savage butcheries that fouled Cawnpore,—
The horrors of Lucknow, eke, have their clue

In *your* disparagement of Brahman lore.
The Sepoys, ever jealous of their Caste,
Were harrowed up to fierce revenge at last.

—V.—

When Officers turned Preachers o’er their men,

These saw, in every order, some device
Degrading them in their beliefs:—and then

“ Greased cartridges ”—or aught else, should
suffice

To rouse their rage,—e’en were not nine in ten

Wrought up to mark the sinister advice.
Their Faith had been defamed, their rites polluted
Through homilies of yours the most mis-suited.

—VI.—

For the vain boast of one false “Convert,” ye

More lauded nations’ strifes—the more they bled !

The “Sumbut’s” slaughter’s of your guilt ; and
we

Hold you to bail of conscience for the dead.

They fell on *your* responsibility :—

The charge rests on each proselytish head.

Not gorged, at last, ye sought more victims yet,

And had provoked the hapless fate ye met !

PROSELYTISM!

THIRD SALLY.

—I.—

Your Missionary fervour is a pest :—

Your peace is strife,—your concord bitterness.

What right have ye t' invade and to infest

Dominions sacred as our own—no less,—

To preach a creed their denizens detest ?

Treat others by the rule which ye profess.

No Englishman would brook the rude invasion

Of his domain,—or shock to his persuasion.

—II.—

Your vicious scourge, resented at Cawnpore,
 Next drenched Uganda, likewise, with “red
 rain ;”
 And yet, alas ! insatiate of gore,
 Ye seek fresh fields to ply your trade again,
 And rouse the lust of vengeance evermore,—
 For “Converts” that ye boast of— — —to be
 slain !
 Surely, by carnage, as in India wrought,—
 Through you,—all “Converts” would be dearly
 bought.

—III.—

Did ye “convert” all China,— —well, what
 then?—
 Of unity of Faith ye’d make dissention ;
 Did ye “convert” one Chinaman in ten,
 That tenth would be distracted by contention
 And the most savage feuds e’er known ’mongst
 men :—
 Feuds, too, for which there could be no preven-
 tion :—
 Ye ’d have a thousand “SECTS” on bloodshed bent,
 And by most ruthless mutual rancour rent,—

—IV.—

As were *professing* CHRISTIANS heretofore !

Remember all your hideous persecutions
And do not spread incentives any more ;—

We've had enough of wars and executions :—
We've had enough of tortures and of gore.

Already, ye will need life-long ablutions
To cleanse the stains that blemish all your past :—
Pray let your latest misdeeds be the last.

—V.—

The Ganges and Uganda brand your guilt.

Leave men at peace, and— — —make *your* peace
with Heaven ;
Ye've made too much of blameless blood be spilt.

Let us forget there was a " FIFTY-SEVEN."
'Tis best no temples, such as yours, be built
Amongst Pagodas,— —were there " Converts "
even ;
Nor,—if ye force your way in China, were
Your rights supreme o'er native passions there.

PROSELYTISM !

FOURTH SALLY.

—I,—

Oh ! if ye must make “ Converts,”— —or must
try,—

Ye have no need so far abroad to roam.

There 's more occasion for your Ministry,—

If it be good at all,—hard by, at home.

Assuming first, your own sincerity,—

Your draughts real beverages, not mere foam,—

And your “ Communicants ” as genuine too,—

Good, flowing from your “ Missions,” might accrue.

—II.—

Here, many social haunts need “disinfecting”

And moral nuisances—like smoke,—“abating,”
And errors,—glaringly,—alike, correcting,—

Which make one shudder in mere contempla-
ting;
And yet, with all your zeal, ye keep neglecting

Those who, amongst you, most need educating,
To hunt for exercise ’mid distant races
Whom less of foul pollution e’er disgraces.

—III.—

Search high and low, amongst yourselves, indeed.

Christians, in name, who ’d be as well “con-
verted,”
Will furnish you the practice, if ye need.

“Convert” half those whose conscience is in-
verted
By vicious lusts,—by ignorance,—or greed,—

In whom best human instincts are perverted,—
In London,—East, North, South, midway or West,—
In parts alike we call the “worst” and “best”:—

C

—VI.—

I wish you joy, if, trying to “convert”

The Irish Rabble that infest St. Stephen’s—
With scant success—ye e’en escape *the dirt* ;

But as they ’re all at sixes and at sevens,
Let *them* clean out *each other*,— —and revert

To other fields,—and toss up “odds or evens”
Which of our many harbours next may be
Amongst your scenes,—to scourge depravity.

—VII.—

If, then, ye should succeed to purge but one

In every thousand of the rogues or sots
’Mongst those ye take in hand, ye would have
done,—

To cleanse the slough in which religion rots,—
Much worthier service than by having gone

Dispensing hymns amongst the Hottentots,
Or teaching, like trained parrots,—few, indeed,—
Of Chinamen to chant th’ Apostles’ Creed.

—VIII.—

'T were not by stirring angry passions *there*,—
Nor *here*, by corybantic foolery :—
'T were not by making victims anywhere,
But by the gentle touch of sympathy,
'Mongst erring Christians,—well within your care,—
That ye *could* hope successfully to vie
With vice and its allurements, and rely
To win *some few* Repentants for the sky.

PROSELYTISM!

FIFTH SALLY.

—I.—

'Tis time ye "Missionary" men should cease
Distorting sacred utt'rance to blaspheme,—
Promoting slaughter,— in the name of "Peace"!
Forego your lust of strife, that we may dream
Our future may be calmness and release,—
And promises of bliss be what they seem.
Redemption, surely, *should* mean "to redeem"
And heav'nly harmony,—not anguished scream.

—II.—

Here— — —in this world's dark, sorrow-stricken
page :—

Here— — —'mid the travail of poor human-
kind :—

Here— — —in this sad probationary stage,—

Some fairer forecast one might hope to find—

Some better boding from our pilgrimage,—

Than the wild raving of some tortured mind,—

Arousing vengeance, in ferocity,

As if to twit us what "Next Worlds" may be !

—III.

Ye tell us Heav'n is all serenity,—

And what examples do you shew us here ?!

Men are persuaded more by what they see,—

By patent models that convince and cheer,—

Than by whole libraries of casuistry,

Or by mere *forms of Creed*—they don't revere

Nor even understand, and but recite

As infants, tutored to repeat them, might.

—IV.—

Inculcate virtue and the sense of duty

And strict obedience to authority ;—

No one will seek to question or refute ye.

The sense of right and wrong, in all, 's the key
To true devotion ; and the sense of beauty

Awakens consciences—through symmetry.

In Nature's charms and order 'tis, we see
The evidences of the Deity.

—V.—

This study shocks no foregone prejudice,

But gently wins all minds to one belief :—

It combats error as it combats vice :—

'T were e'er the Preacher's most persuasive
Brief ;—

Such evidence, more likely, would suffice,

Without your cloudy " Articles in Chief "—

If not in spite of them—to gain reliance,

Than all your jumble of dogmatic science.

—VI.—

Ye preach to Catechumens who don't see
 The drift of doctrine, at the best abstruse,—
 As of a metaphysic “Rule of Three,”—
 Which even experts, more or less, confuse
 By studied paradox of formulæ,—
 In terms that are mere Mystery's abuse :—
 Terms that the veriest Alchymist of Babel
 To construe, must have owned himself unable.

—VII.—

Appeal to master-marvel's of Creation,
 And all their beaming radiance to the sight ;—
 What more convincing than such contemplation ?
 Point out how day succeeds to day, with light :—
 How sunshine warms and rain yields irrigation :—
 How darkness follows,—for repose, in night :—
 How blossoms yield the needful fruit and seed
 On which most creatures, to subsist, must feed.

—VIII.—

But—most, beware ! revile not others' Creeds.

Beauty is *sheen* and needs not to contrast
With hideousness to be discerned :—nor needs—

By Truth or Good, 'gainst Lies or Ill—be cast
The brand of infamy that venom breeds ;—

Exhibit what is bright, and good, and fast :—
Ignore what is not laudable or true,—
Keeping the Beautiful alone in view.

PROSELYTISM !

SIXTH SALLY.

—I.—

To be quite plain with you, I *don't* believe
Ye *do* believe one tithe of what ye rant on.
It may be that ye do yourselves deceive ;
But Sages dwell betwixt Mukden and Canton,
Who, with deep lore, disclaim descent from Eve :—
Who scout your self-assertedness, as wanton :—
Who rake up contradictions in your teaching,
And brand, as insincere, your very preaching.

—II.—

They claim to prove, with most profound of learn-
 ing,—
 Much more, indeed, than ye could dare pretend
 to,—
 That ye must be defectively discerning,
 Since a large part of what ye teach must tend to
 Your own concurrent dogmas' overturning,
 And scoffing at the jargon ye descend to ;
 And, mark ye, Chinese Pandits *are* well-read
 And shrewd enough to scorn the webs ye spread.

—III.—

Ye brand all ancient lore as superstition ;
 But its professors might, as truly, quote
 Much of your own that's not above suspicion :—
 “ Remove the beam before ye draw the mote.”
 Accommodate the conduct of your “ Mission ”
 Less to assumed defects, o'er which ye gloat,
 And more to pristine precepts, which, ye say,
 Are truthful axioms,—yet from which ye stray.

—IV.—

Draw more from Nature's holy inspiration
 Than from cramp catechismal verbiage.
 There 's more suggestion of true adoration
 In one small blossom, than in many a page
 Of doubtful, theologic disputation ;—
 There 's more in tiniest insects to engage
 Truly devout reflections, than could flow
 From all mock forms and chants of yours, I trow.

—V.—

“ Pagans,” say ye, have idols :—so have ye ;—
 In that respect, I see small difference.
 All *formal* worship is idolatry ;
 Indeed our “ SECTS ” of most magnificence
 Bear idols with them wheresoe'er they be,
 Whilst, with the most unblushing impudence,
 On some fine “ heathen ” sculpture, that no worse
is,
 They'll lavish the whole catalogue of curses.

—VI.—

If they have hand-wrought “ Images ” or not,
 Men trained to *set* devotion will adore
 Some crude ideal semblances of what
 They fancy Deities, to bow before ;—
 They conjure Beings their own form and lot
 Suggest,—for shapes and instincts,—less or
more :—
 Idols of fancy, they profess to see
 As revelations of Divinity !—

—VII.—

It is not things of metal, wood or stone,
 Which men “ kow-tow ” before, that they adore ;
 'Tis some Supreme of Powers, above,—alone,—
 Whom they in truth prostrate themselves
before,—
 That Universal and mysterious ONE,—
 To whom these things direct the thought,— —no
more.
 E'en such religions should not be reviled ;—
 “ *Au grand Jamais* ” ye 'll all be reconciled.

—VIII.—

The grandest Temple 's neath the dome of blue :—
 Omnipotence's " Images " are crests
 And peaks, snow-clad, suffused with sunset hue ;—
 Omnipotence's Diadem, that rests
 On truth, is jewelled with the stars we view,
 All glitt'ring in the Zodiac—East to West.—
 Go, " MISSIONS " !— — — study this idolatry
 Within your homes, — — — and we shall all agree !

PROSELYTISM !

SEVENTH SALLY.

—I.—

Bah!— —how one turns, revolted, from your
cant,—

Ye Missionary bigots,— —Pharisees !—

Ye false interpreters, who e'er descant

With inverse parables and tortuous pleas,—
More vicious than the cults ye would supplant.

Do study your Evangel, if you please :—
And try to read aright ;—for hitherto,
Ye've made it bear all senses but the true.

—II.—

'Tis just as if the Comets “ran amock”

Amidst the Constellations, and o'erthrew
All preconcerted order by the shock,

To start insurgent forces, all anew :—
To scoff at pristine certitude, and mock

The well poised balances all ages through, —
In substituting conflict, as ye do,
For placid rites and placid doctrines too.

—III.—

In all its purity,—we may declare

Our Creed to be as spotless as can be ;
But, after all, pray tell us anywhere

That 'tis professed at all, in purity ;
And, taken at the best, do just compare

The age of other Cults with ours, and see
How recent our own dispensation is,—
Some of which turns on mere hypothesis :—

—IV.—

Say nineteen centuries,—a dot in time!—

Long, countless ages had preceded that;

Whilst every age, and, doubtless, every clime

Religions by the scores on scores begat,—

And some, perhaps,—however wrong,—sublime:—

Without an “Ark” or “Writ” to wonder at,

Rely upon and be directed by,

But yet with hopes aspiring to the sky.

—V.—

Now, tell us, Missions, clearly what became

Of all the votaries of all these Creeds.

They should have been disposed of by the flame

Of burning fiery furnaces,—as reads

The Writ-inspired authority ye claim,

By your interpretation,—for misdeeds

And unclean Faiths! through myriad ages held:—

Rebellious against Heav'n, yet never quelled.

D

—VI.—

When, lo! a tardy, dim hypostasis,
 Revealed to one obscure "selected" Tribe,—
 Men's *residue*,—vouchsafed eternal bliss,
 Through Faith which ye *discordantly* prescribe
 In endless contests 'mongst yourselves :—that is,
 Ye make Relenting Deity ascribe
 To warring men, urged on to fight, more feud
 As the precursor of beatitude!

—VII.

The thousand million others, who ne'er knew
 Of this new militant expediency,
 Are doomed for everlasting! E'en the Jew,
 From whom ye borrow your Cosmogony
 And somewhat of your legislation, too,—
 Because untaught—must pay the penalty
 Of quite unconscious wrong,— —and undergo
 Eternal penance, in eternal woe!

—VIII.—

Justice and Mercy, as we know,—howe'er,—
 Inseparably dwell with Deity,
 And actuate Divine Paternal care ;
 And yet,—perversely blind,—ye cannot see,
 In your construction lurking, many a snare—
 Savouring rankly of absurdity.
 Try to revert to the simplicity
 And tolerance in Faith there used to be.

—IX.—

Ye call yourselves “ The Army of the Lord ” !
 Though ye are Rebels in His uniform,
 Who, once equipped and girded with His sword,
 Rush to revolt,—as Sepoys did,—to storm
 Your Master's lines, with sinister accord.
 His mandates ye misconstrue and deform ;—
 In fact, ye practise nothing else but harm,
 And, in the guise of bliss, ye spread alarm.

PROSELYTISM !

EIGHTH SALLY.

--I.--

Three hundred human races occupy,—

In temporary life,—this little Sphere,
In types of manifold disparity.

Each race is fashioned for its own career,
And for the site and circumstance whereby

And upon which its motives come to veer.
In climate, soil and products ever suited,
Mankind's diverse proclivities are rooted.

—II.—

Negroes and Red-Skins,—Samoyedes and Finns,—
 Tartars and Huns,—Aztecs and Israelites :—
 Some whose existence ends ere ours begins,—
 Have each had habits and religious rites,—
 With much-like blends of virtues and of sins,—
 All differing as much as days from nights,—
 Yet all existing for their times and places,
 Distinct in their beliefs— — —as in their races.

—III.—

They had, in common, but one single need,—
 To eat and drink to keep themselves alive :—
 With sleep as a relief :—unless, indeed,
 'T were on all other life to prey, and strive,
 Like you, for mastery and gluttred greed.

They did not make *themselves*, nor did they give
Themselves their passions, tenets or their natures
 One whit more than they did their forms or statures.

—IV.—

They had no choice :—they took life as they found
it,

With all associations ready made,
And all its hidden mysteries around it.

Each race, howe'er divergent, but obeyed
The same Creative Power ;—and yet, confound it,

Ye talk of “ CHOSEN PEOPLE,”—as arrayed
In special sacredness, when one and all
Are equal—to the Maker and His call !

—V.—

Now, since Omnipotence has so ordained,

And wisely planted all these various races—
Each in its special destiny contained—

Your wanton interference,—as the case is,—
Makes nothing less than Work Divine profaned,

And sinks your show of fervour to grimaces.
Ye have no right to countermand Creation—
Merely to manifest your own inflation.

—VI.—

As men were made before, thus let them be.

They have existed in their own vocation,
 For ages past,—all Humans such as we,—
 No less fulfilling duties of their station,—
 No less controlled by the Divinity,—

And, therefore, living in Its approbation.
 There 's no such thing as "CHOSEN PEOPLE":—no!
 The Great Supreme makes no distinctions so.

—VII.—

All men are right and wrong in their own way ;

No tenet makes them so, or more or less ;
 Alike,—their blood is blood and clay is clay.

Supreme Benignity will, *surely, bless*
 The Good *of any Creed alike*, and flay

Those who—all knowing wrong from right—
transgress.
 The only "CHOSEN PEOPLE" are the Good
Of every Creed,— — —who *share* beatitude.

—VIII.—

The ruling gist of every so-called “ Mission,”—
 From whatsoever “ SECT ” or nation, and
 In whatsoever fields,—is but ambition.

The motive wrought on, we quite understand,—
 To raise the needful means,—is competition
 To get well advertised, on every hand,
 In *pious* Papers and Subscription Lists,
 Whereby some “ Wine,”— —or what not,— —
“ Trade ” subsists.

—IX.—

Hypocrisy,—hypocrisy,—and guile !

Oh ! cease,—*do* cease religion to degrade
 By such mean, worldly artifice and wile.

No sacred “ Revelation ” e’er was made
 That one sole tribe all others should revile,—
 Nor for the purposes of sordid trade,
 Or cant to practise cadging tricks among
 The facile foibles of a silly throng.

PROSELYTISM !

NINTH SALLY.

—I.—

Far, from the crests of Arctic ice, behold
The brilliant-tinted rays of Polar Light,
Which, in their lustrous radiancy, unfold
A great mysterious Power to the sight,—
Which Esquimaux in veneration hold
To charm their gentle lives with Hope's delight.
Disturb their simple Faith,—which God forbend,—
Ye'll crush belief in them :—ye'll mar not mend.

—II.—

From Misti's tow'ring summit, cast your eyes
 On Arequipa huddled at your feet,—
 Two thousand fathoms down,—where agonies
 And strife are Priestcraft's constant treat.
 Turn eastward next :—the vast expanse there lies
 Where Indians,—free from priests or "Missions,"
 In constant concord, 'mid banana groves,—
 Serene,—unruffled in their lives or loves.

—III.—

May Heav'n protect them 'gainst all priests and
 "Missions,"
 Deep in the shelter of their forest homes,
 Where yon mild, lustrous southern Zodiac vision
 A gleaming heav'nly smile for them becomes
 And call to Adoration and Petition,—
 With lofty Andes' Heights as temple domes ;
 For there — — — beyond,— — Brazilian Priestcraft
 reigns
 Supreme in bigotry and vice and banes :—

—IV.—

Debauched and brutal,—cruel and depraved,—

The Priesthood there will serve to warn us all
How human souls, through “Missions,” may be
“saved”!

Where infamy of lust is general,
And fiendish filth on Prelates’ hands engraved,
To aptly illustrate some Cardinal!
Whilst harmless Indians,—“Heathens” though
they be,—
May live—and worship, too, in purity.

—V.—

Wherever untamed men have been “converted,”—

Or purport to have been so,—there, indeed,
They’ve caught the vices, whilst they have pervert-
ed

The virtues—were there such,—they do not
heed,—
Of their “Converters”; and they have reverted

To “Nature’s touch” inherent in their breed,
Or have made Faith absurd by sheer distortion,—
Or, with o’er-zeal, *outré*, by disproportion.

—VI.—

Thence come yon “corybantic Christians,” who
 Would make of every “Convert” a buffoon,
 And murder psalmody by howling, too,
 Without regard to time, or sense, or tune :—
 As if the Seraphs should take up the cue
 Of every frantic exile from the moon!
 Reducing worship to a farce of raving,—
 Profane, uncouth, unseemly and depraving.

—VII.—

Devotion needs the mind to be abstracted,
 Not harried by a howling crowd around one—
 Which could but drive reflective men distracted.
 'Tis not in reason, 'mid a din of sound, one
 Can train one's thoughts, nor, 'midst a frenzy
 Or clownish mummers crowding on to hound one,
 The least sense of devotion can arise,—
 Suggested by such medlied sights and cries.

—VIII.—

This form of artful, well-feigned “Mission” mad-
ness

Is but another of the tricks of greed,
To cozen money—be it said in sadness—

From puffing trading-men or dupes,—to feed
Aspiring Rovers, to whom praise is gladness.

A mask’s Religion :—’tis the bait, indeed,
To catch your Gudgeons,—all the world about,—
As minnows and may-flies to capture trout.

PROSELYTISM!

TENTH SALLY.

—I.—

Come, “Missions,” sail we th’ Atmospheric Ocean,
In buoyant Air-Boat,—scudding in the breeze—
’Twixt placid Heaven and this Earth’s commo-
tion :—
Perfectly tranquil and in noiseless ease :—
Though driving fast yet unperceiving motion,
Save where the hills and dales,—the fields and
trees,—
Dappling the plains below,—are hurried past :—
A wondrous span of beauty, first to last !—

—II.—

Behold, that even-seeming surface gleams
 As if adorned with silver ribbons, where,
 All glistening in the sun, the winding streams
 Go curling on to make the scenes more fair,—
 Each moment varying, like beauteous dreams
 Serenely peaceful, silent, *debonnair*!
 Charming illusions!—It is there,—aye there
 That all your tumults madden to despair!

—III.—

Can ye behold those scenes without compunction?
 Those scenes in Nature made so beautiful,—
 Poisoned to rage by your pernicious unction,
 Lashed into torments that are pitiful;—
 Look what they'd be untortured by your function:—
 Such is the peace of life that ye annul!
 Will not that sight forbid your rabid trade
 And bid you spare the peace that Heav'n has made?

—IV.—

Here— — —far above yon “ Mission ”-pestered
ground :—

Here— — —in the verge of the ethereal,
Amid harmonious silence, where no sound
Is heard save melody of fancy :—all
In concord free, above, below, around,—

One feels how tranquil Earth *should* be, withal :—
But that ye ever strive to aggravate
The ready festering of mutual hate.

—V.—

Relent ! For very pity’s sake, relent !

Do “leave the sleeping cats to lie a-sleeping” :—
Leave dormant passions to remain unspent :—

The rest is in Eternal Power’s keeping.
The consciousness of Future’s Dawn was sent
To human beings to forefend their weeping ;
Fanatic passions are the cause of wailing :—
This outcome always has been never-failing.

—VI.—

And then, your methods ply so much deception,—
 As “*pious frauds*,” mock-miracles and trash,
 Ye should not wonder at their rough reception
 Except by fools— — —and those they find in
cash :—
 Fools who have not the wit for clear perception,—
 And hucksters— — —with whose greed they do not
clash ;
 But, as Supremacy is Truth, 'tis plain
 Ye have no countenance in what ye feign ;—

—VII—

No sanction,—no !—Ye're wholly disavowed
 By HIM whom ye make semblance to invoke.
 Frauds by persistence are not proved allowed ;
 They mostly are not shattered at one stroke,
 And mostly, also, they beguile the crowd.
 Full many a fraud is laughed at, as a joke :—
 And Joshua's strategy would hardly, now,
 Be seriously recorded, anyhow.

E.

—VIII.—

We must compare your words with what ye do,
 And shun the fictions that ye flaunt before us.

“Comparisons are odious,” say ye?—True:—

But when ye fashion verbal standards for us,
 Which ye yourselves are first to set askew,

Ye figure as a very sorry “Chorus.”

We see Good Nature’s world— — —and what YE
 make it:—

We feel what Truth is— — —and how YE forsake it.

PROSELYTISM!

ELEVENTH SALLY.

—I.—

From Boston and from Chester comes the howl—
Re-echoed 'twixt two blatant hemispheres—
Of Missionary fervour,—falsehood foul,—
Now raging to set bigots by the ears,
And back SHAM-Christian Brigands, on the prow!
For Moslem Babies to impale on spears!
And this in name of “Christianity”
And Holy Writ— --and righteousness!— — —Oh,
fie!

—II.—

And now ye 've got "Armenians" on the brain,—
 Or on your *canting lips*,—to cause more frenzy,
 And revel in red carnage o'er again.

Ye— —"Unionists" (!),— — —Monroeists,—
— — *flatulency*,—
 To puff more triumphs— — —as ye count the
slain!

To arrogate, in Turkey, competency
 For doing that which ye denounce at home,
 As "revolutionist" and meddling.

—III.—

And what are these "Armenians"? "Christians,"
say ye?

If they be "Christians," ye would best abjure
 Their buccaneer profession,— —lest they slay

Or rob ye,— — — —that of "Mammon" ye,—
ye be
pure!

And, as nine-tenths are "Heretics," I pray ye,

Of which amongst them is your cynosure?

Certes,—on your lust of blood-shed's peace forbid-
ding,—
 They'll cut each others' throats without your bid-
ding

—VI.—

Show us the Quid-Nuncs,—Anglican or Yankee,—
 Who'd suffer hordes of Turkish Firebrands,*
 All trained in artful, rebel hanky-panky,
 With arms and manifestoes in their hands,—
 Unless John Bull and Uncle Sam were cranky,—
 To prowl about (inciting cut-throat bands)
 And scatter dynamite— — —in Prayer-Book †
covers— —
 Throughout their States and Counties,— — — —
as “Improvers”!

* Though not strictly correct in *syllabic* metre,—for which the line should be completed with “wild firebrands,”—since the word is pronounced “*fi-er brands*” (as in *three* syllables), I prefer to omit the adjective, for the sake of oral euphony of cadence. By *ear*, the measure is proper; and it is, therefore, of fair “poetical licence.”

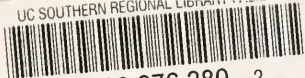
† “*Korân covers*” would be in equally good measure—and it would be more in keeping for *supposed* “Turkish Firebrands,”—who don't exist;—but it would not be so suggestive of the *real* Firebrands,—who *do* exist,—or of the facts.

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