

THE MISSIONARY.

Amor patriæ ratione potentior omni.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.*

It is not necessary to relate the causes which induced me to publish this poem without a name.

The favour with which it has been received may make me less diffident in avowing it; and, as a second edition has been generally called for, I have endeavoured to make it, in every respect, less unworthy of the public eye.

I have availed myself of every sensible objection, the most material of which was the circumstance, that the Indian maid, described in the first book, had not a part assigned to her of sufficient interest in the subsequent events of the poem, and that the character of the Missionary was not sufficiently professional.

The single circumstance that a Spanish commander, with his army in South America, was destroyed by the Indians, in consequence of the treachery of his page, who was a native, and that only a priest was saved, is all that has been taken from history. The rest of this poem, the personages, father, daughter, wife, *et cet.* (with the exception of the names of Indian warriors) is imaginary. The time is two months. The first four books include as many days and nights. The rest of the time is occupied by the Spaniards' march, the assembly of warriors, *et cet.*

The place in which the scene is laid, was selected because South America has of late years received additional interest, and because the ground was at once new, poetical, and picturesque.

From old-fashioned feelings, perhaps, I have admitted some ærial agents, or what is called machinery. It is true that the spirits cannot be said to accelerate or retard the events; but surely they may be allowed to show a sympathy with the fate of those, among whom poetical fancy has given them a prescriptive ideal existence. They may be further excused, as relieving the narrative, and adding to the imagery.

The causes which induced me to publish this poem without a name, induced me also to attempt it in a versification to which I have been least accustomed, which, to my ear, is most uncongenial, and which is, in itself, most difficult. I mention this, in order that, if some passages should be found less harmonious than they might have been, the candour of the reader may pardon them.

Scene—SOUTH AMERICA.

Characters.—Valdivia, commander of the Spanish armies—Lautaro, his page, a native of Chili—Anselmo, the missionary—Indiana, his adopted daughter, wife of Lautaro—Zariuel, the wandering minstrel.

Indians.—Attacpac, father of Lautaro—Olola, his daughter, sister of Lautaro—Caupolican, chief of the Indians—Indian warriors.

The chief event of the poem turns upon the conduct of Lautaro; but as the Missionary acts so distinguished a part, and as the whole of the moral depends upon him, it was thought better to retain the title which was originally given to the poem.

* Dedicated to the Marquis of Lansdowne.

THE MISSIONARY.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN o'er the Atlantic wild, rocked by the blast,
Sad Lusitania's exiled sovereign passed,
Reft of her pomp, from her paternal throne
Cast forth, and wandering to a clime unknown,
To seek a refuge on that distant shore,
That once her country's legions dyed with gore ;—
Sudden, methought, high towering o'er the flood,
Hesperian world ! thy mighty genius stood ;
Where spread, from cape to cape, from bay to bay,
Serenely blue, the vast Pacific lay ;
And the huge Cordilleras to the skies
With all their burning summits seemed to rise.

10

Then the stern spirit spoke, and to his voice
The waves and woods replied :—Mountains, rejoice !
Thou solitary sea, whose billows sweep
The margin of my forests, dark and deep,
Rejoice ! the hour is come : the mortal blow,
That smote the golden shrines of Mexico,
In Europe is avenged ; and thou, proud Spain,
Now hostile hosts insult thy own domain ;

20

Now Fate, vindictive, rolls, with reflux flood, 21
 Back on thy shores the tide of human blood,
 Think of my murdered millions! of the cries
 That once I heard from all my kingdoms rise;
 Of Famine's feeble plaint, of Slavery's tear;—
 Think, too, if Valour, Freedom, Fame, be dear,
 How my Antarctic sons, undaunted, stood,
 Exacting groan for groan, and blood for blood;
 And shouted, (may the sounds be hailed by thee!)
 Tyrants, the virtuous and the brave are free! 30

CANTO FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

One Day and Part of Night.

Valley in the Andes—Old Indian warrior—Loss of his son and daughter.

BENEATH aërial cliffs, and glittering snows,
 The rush-roof of an aged warrior rose,
 Chief of the mountain tribes: high overhead,
 The Andes, wild and desolate, were spread,
 Where cold Sierras shot their icy spires,
 And Chillan¹ trailed its smoke and smouldering fires.
 A glen beneath, a lonely spot of rest,
 Hung, scarce discovered, like an eagle's nest.
 Summer was in its prime;—the parrot-flocks
 Darkened the passing sunshine on the rocks; 10

¹ A volcano in Chili.

The chrysomel¹ and purple butterfly,² 11
 Amid the clear blue light, are wandering by;
 The humming-bird, along the myrtle bowers,
 With twinkling wing, is spinning o'er the flowers,
 The woodpecker is heard with busy bill,
 The mock-bird sings—and all beside is still,
 And look! the cataract that bursts so high,
 As not to mar the deep tranquillity,
 The tumult of its dashing fall suspends,
 And, stealing drop by drop, in mist descends; 20
 Through whose illumined spray and sprinkling dews,
 Shine to the adverse sun the broken rainbow hues.

Chequering, with partial shade, the beams of noon,
 And arching the gray rock with wild festoon,
 Here its gay net-work, and fantastic twine,
 The purple cogul³ threads from pine to pine,
 And oft, as the fresh airs of morning breathe,
 Dips its long tendrils in the stream beneath.
 There, through the trunks with moss and lichens white,
 The sunshine darts its interrupted light, 30
 And, 'mid the cedar's darksome boughs, illumines,
 With instant touch, the Lori's scarlet plumes.

So smiles the scene;—but can its smiles impart
 Aught to console yon mourning warrior's heart?
 He heeds not now, when beautifully bright,
 The humming-bird is circling in his sight;
 Nor ev'n, above his head, when air is still,
 Hears the green woodpecker's resounding bill;

¹ The chrysomela is a beautiful insect of which the young women of Chili make necklaces. — ² The parrot butterfly, peculiar to this part of America, the largest and most brilliant of its kind.—*Papilio psittacus*. — ³ A most beautiful climbing plant. The vine is of the size of packthread: it climbs on the trees without attaching itself to them: when it reaches the top, it descends perpendicularly; and as it continues to grow, it extends itself from tree to tree, until it offers to the eye a confused tissue, exhibiting some resemblance to the rigging of a ship.—*Molina*.

But gazing on the rocks and mountains wild, 39
 Rock after rock, in glittering masses piled
 To the volcano's cone, that shoots so high
 Gray smoke whose column stains the cloudless sky,
 He cries, Oh! if thy spirit yet be fled
 To the pale kingdoms of the shadowy dead,—
 In yonder tract of purest light above,
 Dear long-lost object of a father's love,
 Dost thou abide; or like a shadow come,
 Circling the scenes of thy remembered home,
 And passing with the breeze, or, in the beam
 Of evening, light the desert mountain stream! 50
 Or at deep midnight are thine accents heard,
 In the sad notes of that melodious bird,¹
 Which, as we listen with mysterious dread,
 Brings tidings from our friends and fathers dead?
 Perhaps, beyond those summits, far away,
 Thine eyes yet view the living light of day;
 Sad, in the stranger's land, thou may'st sustain
 A weary life of servitude and pain,
 With wasted eye gaze on the orient beam,
 And think of these white rocks and torrent stream, 60
 Never to hear the summer cocoa wave,
 Or weep upon thy father's distant grave.

Ye, who have waked, and listened with a tear,
 When cries confused, and clangours rolled more
 near;

¹ I chanced once to lodge in a village named Upec by the Frenchmen: there, in the night, I heard *those birds, not singing*, but making a lamentable noise. I saw the barbarians most attentive, and, being ignorant of the whole matter, reproved their folly. But when I smiled a little upon a Frenchman standing by me, a certain old man, severely enough, restrained me with these words: "Hold your peace, lest you hinder us who attentively hearken *to the happy tidings of our ancestors*; for as often as we hear these birds, so often also are we cheered, and our strength receiveth increase." — *Callender's Voyage*.

With murmured prayer, when Mercy stood aghast, 65
 As War's black trump pealed its terrific blast,
 And o'er the withered earth the armed giant passed!
 Ye, who his track with terror have pursued,
 When some delightful land, all blood-imbrued,
 He swept; where silent is the champaign wide, 70
 That echoed to the pipe of yester-tide,
 Save, when far off, the moonlight hills prolong
 The last deep echoes of his parting gong;
 Nor aught is seen, in the deserted spot
 Where trailed the smoke of many a peaceful cot,
 Save livid corpses that unburied lie,
 And conflagrations, reeking to the sky;—
 Come listen, whilst the causes I relate
 That bowed the warrior to the storms of fate,
 And left these smiling scenes forlorn and desolate. 80

In other days, when, in his manly pride,
 Two children for a father's fondness vied,—
 Oft they essayed, in mimic strife, to wield
 His lance, or laughing peeped behind his shield;
 Oft in the sun, or the magnolia's shade,
 Lightsome of heart as gay of look they played,
 Brother and sister. She, along the dew,
 Blithe as the squirrel of the forest flew;
 Blue rushes wreathed her head; her dark-brown hair
 Fell, gently lifted, on her bosom bare; 90
 Her necklace shone, of sparkling insects made,
 That flit, like specks of fire, from sun to shade.
 Light was her form; a clasp of silver braced
 The azure-dyed ichella¹ round her waist;
 Her ancles rung with shells, as unconfined
 She danced, and sung wild carols to the wind.

¹ The ichella is a short cloak, of a greenish-blue colour, of wool, fastened before with a silver buckle.—*Molina*.

With snow-white teeth, and laughter in her eye, 97
So beautiful in youth she bounded by.

Yet kindness sat upon her aspect bland,—
The tame alpaca¹ stood and licked her hand ;
She brought him gathered moss, and loved to deck
With flowery twine his tall and stately neck,
Whilst he with silent gratitude replies,
And bends to her caress his large blue eyes.

These children danced together in the shade,
Or stretched their hands to see the rainbow fade ;
Or sat and mocked, with imitative glee,
The paroquet, that laughed from tree to tree ;
Or through the forest's wildest solitude,
From glen to glen, the marmozet pursued ; 110
And thought the light of parting day too short,
That called them, lingering, from their daily sport.

In that fair season of awakening life,
When dawning youth and childhood are at strife ;
When on the verge of thought gay boyhood stands
Tiptoe, with glistening eye and outspread hands ;
With airy look, and form and footsteps light,
And glossy locks, and features berry-bright,
And eye like the young eaglet's, to the ray
Of noon unblenching as he sails away ; 120
A brede of sea-shells on his bosom strung,
A small stone-hatchet o'er his shoulder slung,
With slender lance, and feathers blue and red,
That, like the heron's² crest, waved on his head,—
Buoyant with hope, and airiness, and joy,
Lautaro was a graceful Indian boy :
Taught by his sire, ev'n now he drew the bow,
Or tracked the jagguar on the morning snow ;

¹ The alpaca is perhaps the most beautiful, gentle, and interesting of living animals: one was to be seen in London in 1812. — ² *Ardea cristata*.

Startled the condor, on the craggy height ; 129
 Then silent sat, and marked its upward flight,
 Lessening in ether to a speck of white.

But when the impassioned chieftain spoke of war,
 Smote his broad breast, or pointed to a scar,—
 Spoke of the strangers of the distant main,
 And the proud banners of insulting Spain,—
 Of the barbed horse and iron horseman spoke,
 And his red gods, that, wrapped in rolling smoke,
 Roared from the guns ;—the boy, with still-drawn breath,
 Hung on the wondrous tale, as mute as death ;
 Then raised his animated eyes, and cried, 140
 Oh, let me perish by my father's side !

Once, when the moon, o'er Chillan's cloudless height,
 Poured, far and wide, its softest, mildest light,
 A predatory band of mailed men
 Burst on the stillness of the sheltered glen :
 They shouted, Death ! and shook their sabres high,
 That shone terrific to the moonlight sky ;
 Where'er they rode, the valley and the hill
 Echoed the shrieks of death, till all again was still.

The warrior, ere he sank in slumber deep, 150
 Had kissed his son, soft-breathing in his sleep,
 Where on a Llama's skin he lay, and said,
 Placing his hand, with tears, upon his head,
 Aërial nymphs !¹ that in the moonlight stray,
 O gentle spirits ! here awhile delay ;
 Bless, as ye pass unseen, my sleeping boy,
 Till blithe he wakes to daylight and to joy.
 If the GREAT SPIRIT will, in future days,
 O'er the fall'n foe his hatchet he shall raise,

¹ Every warrior of Chili, according to Molina, has his attendant "nymph" or fairy—the belief in which is nearly similar to the popular and poetical idea of those beings in Europe. Meulen is the benevolent spirit.

And, 'mid a grateful nation's high applause, 160
 Avenge his violated country's cause !

Now, nearer points of spears, and many a cone
 Of moving helmets, in the moonlight shone,
 As, clanking through the pass, the band of blood
 Sprang, like hyænas, from the secret wood.
 They rush, they seize their unresisting prey,
 Ruthless they tear the shrieking boy away ;
 But, not till gashed by many a sabre wound,
 The father sank, expiring, on the ground.
 He waked from the dark trance to life and pain, 70
 But never saw his darling child again.

Seven snows had fallen, and seven green summers passed,
 Since here he heard that son's loved accents last.
 Still his beloved daughter soothed his cares,
 Whilst time began to strew with white his hairs.
 Oft as his painted feathers he unbound,
 Or gazed upon his hatchet on the ground,
 Musing with deep despair, nor strove to speak,
 Light she approached, and climbed to reach his cheek,
 Held with both hands his forehead, then her head 180
 Drew smiling back, and kissed the tear he shed.

But late, to grief and hopeless love a prey,
 She left his side, and wandered far away.
 Now in this still and shelter'd glen, that smiled
 Beneath the crags of precipices wild,
 Wrapt in a stern yet sorrowful repose,
 The warrior half forgot his country's woes ;
 Forgot how many, impotent to save,
 Shed their best blood upon a father's grave ;
 How many, torn from wife and children, pine 190
 In the dark caverns of the hopeless mine,
 Never to see again the blessed morn ;—
 Slaves in the lovely land where they were born ;

How many at sad sunset, with a tear, 194
 The distant roar of sullen cannons hear,
 Whilst evening seems, as dies the sound, to throw
 A deadlier stillness on a nation's woe!

So the dark warrior, day succeeding day,
 Wore in distempered thought the noons away ;
 And still, when weary evening came, he sighed, 200
 My son, my son ! or, with emotion, cried,
 When I descend to the cold grave alone,
 Who shall be there to mourn for me ?—Not one !¹

The crimson orb of day now westering flung
 His beams, and o'er the vast Pacific hung ;
 When from afar a shrilling sound was heard,
 And, hurrying o'er the dews, a scout appeared.
 The watchful warrior knew the piercing tones,
 The signal-call of war, from human bones,—
 What tidings ? with impatient look, he cried. 210
 Tidings of war, the hurrying scout replied ;
 Then the sharp pipe² with shriller summons blew,
 And held the blood-red arrow high in view.³

CHIEF.

Where speed the foes ?

INDIAN.

Along the southern main,
 Have passed the vultures of accursed Spain.

¹ I have taken this line from the conclusion of the celebrated speech of the old North American warrior, Logan, "Who is there to mourn for Logan?—not one!" — ² Their pipes of war are made of the bones of their enemies, who have been sacrificed. — ³ The way in which the warriors are summoned, is something like the "running the cross" in Scotland, which is so beautifully described by Walter Scott. The scouts on this occasion bear an arrow bound with red fillets.

CHIEF.

Ruin pursue them on the distant flood, 217
 And be their deadly portion—blood for blood!

INDIAN.

When, round and red, the moon shall next arise,
 The chiefs attend the midnight sacrifice 220
 In Encol's wood, where the great wizard dwells,
 Who wakes the dead man by his thrilling spells;
 Thee,¹ Ulmen of the Mountains, they command
 To lift the hatchet for thy native land;
 Whilst in dread circle, round the sere-wood smoke,
 The mighty gods of vengeance they invoke;
 And call the spirits of their fathers slain,
 To nerve their lifted arm, and curse devoted Spain.

So spoke the scout of war;—and o'er the dew,
 Onward along the craggy valley, flew. 230
 Then the stern warrior sang his song of death—
 And blew his conch, that all the glens beneath
 Echoed, and rushing from the hollow wood,
 Soon at his side three hundred warriors stood.

WARRIOR.

Children, who for his country dares to die?

Three hundred brandished spears shone to the sky:
 We perish, or we leave our country free;
 Father, our blood for Chili and for thee!

The mountain-chief essayed his club to wield,
 And shook the dust indignant from the shield. 240
 Then spoke:—

¹ Ulmen is the same as Casique, or chief.

O Thou! that with thy lingering light 242
 Dost warm the world, till all is hushed in night ;
 I look upon thy parting beams, O sun !

And say, ev'n thus my course is almost run.

When thou dost hide thy head, as in the grave,

And sink to glorious rest beneath the wave,

Dost thou, majestic in repose, retire,

Below the deep, to unknown worlds of fire !

Yet though thou sinkest, awful, in the main, 250

The shadowy moon comes forth, and all the train

Of stars, that shine with soft and silent light,

Making so beautiful the brow of night.

Thus, when I sleep within the narrow bed,

The light of after-fame around shall spread ;

The sons of distant Ocean, when they see

The grass-green heap beneath the mountain tree,

And hear the leafy boughs at evening wave,

Shall pause and say, There sleep in dust the brave !

All earthly hopes my lonely heart have fled ! 260

Stern Guecubu,¹ angel of the dead,

Who laughest when the brave in pangs expire ;

Whose dwelling is beneath the central fire

Of yonder burning mountain ; who hast passed

O'er my poor dwelling, and with one fell blast

Scattered my summer-leaves that clustered round,

And swept my fairest blossoms to the ground ;

Angel of dire despair, oh ! come not nigh,

Nor wave thy red wings o'er me where I lie ;

But thou, O mild and gentle spirit ! stand, 270

Angel² of hope and peace, at my right hand,

(When blood-drops stagnate on my brow) and guide

My pathless voyage o'er the unknown tide,

¹ Guecuba is the evil spirit of the Chilians. — ² They have their evil and good spirits.

To scenes of endless joy, to that fair isle, 274
 Where bowers of bliss, and soft savannahs smile :
 Where my forefathers oft the fight renew,
 And Spain's black visionary steeds pursue ;
 Where, ceased the struggles of all human pain,
 I may behold thee—thee, my son, again !

He spoke, and whilst at evening's glimmering close
 The distant mist, like the gray ocean, rose, 281
 With patriot sorrows swelling at his breast,
 He sank upon a jagguar's hide to rest.

'Twas night : remote on Caracalla's bay,
 Valdivia's army, hushed in slumber, lay.
 Around the limits of the silent camp,
 Alone was heard the steed's patrolling tramp
 From line to line, whilst the fixed sentinel
 Proclaimed the watch of midnight—All is well !
 Valdivia dreamed of millions yet untold, 290
 Villrica's gems, and El Dorado's gold !

What different feelings, by the scene impressed,
 Rose in sad tumult o'er Lautaro's breast !
 On the broad ocean, where the moonlight slept,
 Thoughtful he turned his waking eyes, and wept,
 And whilst the thronging forms of memory start,
 Thus holds communion with his lonely heart :

Land of my fathers, still I tread your shore,
 And mourn the shade of hours that are no more ;
 Whilst night-airs, like remembered voices, sweep, 300
 And murmur from the undulating deep.
 Was it thy voice, my father ! Thou art dead,
 The green rush waves on thy forsaken bed.
 Was it thy voice, my sister ! Gentle maid,
 Thou too, perhaps, in the dark cave art laid ;
 Perhaps, even now, thy spirit sees me stand
 A homeless stranger in my native land ;

Perhaps, even now, along the moonlight sea, 308
 It bends from the blue cloud, remembering me !
 Land of my fathers ! yet, oh yet forgive,
 That with thy deadly enemies I live :
 The tenderest ties (it boots not to relate)
 Have bound me to their service, and their fate ;
 Yet, whether on Peru's war-wasted plain,
 Or visiting these sacred shores again,
 Whate'er the struggles of this heart may be,
 Land of my fathers, it shall beat for thee !

CANTO SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

The Second Day.

Night—Spirit of the Andes—Valdivia—Lautaro—Missionary—The
 Hermitage.

THE night was still and clear, when, o'er the snows,
 Andes ! thy melancholy Spirit rose,—
 A shadow stern and sad : he stood alone,
 Upon the topmost mountain's burning cone ;
 And whilst his eyes shone dim, through surging smoke,
 Thus to the spirits of the fire he spoke :—

Ye, who tread the hidden deeps,
 Where the silent earthquake sleeps ;
 Ye, who track the sulphurous tide,
 Or on hissing vapours ride,—
 Spirits, come !

Into thin air it faded from the sight, 48
 Lost in the ambient haze of slow-returning light.
 Its feathery-seeming crown, its giant spear,
 Its limbs of huge proportion, disappear ;
 And the bare mountains to the dawn disclose
 The same long line of solitary snows.

The morning shines, the military train
 Streams far and wide along the tented plain ; 50
 And plaited cuirasses, and helmets of steel,
 Throw back the sunbeams, as the horsemen wheel :
 Thus, with arms glancing to the eastern light,
 Pass, in review, proud steeds and cohorts bright ;
 For all the host, by break of morrow's gray,
 Wind back their march to Penco's northern bay,
 Valdivia, fearful lest confederate foes,
 Ambushed and dark, his progress might oppose,
 Marshals to-day the whole collected force,
 File and artillery, cuirassier and horse : 60
 Himself yet lingers ere he joins the train,
 That moves, in ordered march, along the plain,
 While troops, and Indian slaves beneath his eye,
 The labours of the rising city ply :¹
 Wide glows the general toil ; the mole extends,
 The watch-tower o'er the desert surge ascends ;
 And battlements, and rising ramparts, shine
 Above the ocean's blue and level line.

The sun ascended to meridian height,
 And all the northern bastions shone in light ; 70
 With hoarse acclaim, the gong and trumpet rung,
 The Moorish slaves aloft their cymbals swung,
 When the proud victor, in triumphant state,
 Rode forth, in arms, through the portcullis' gate.

¹ The city Baldivia.

With neck high-arching as he smote the ground, 75
 And restless pawing to the trumpet's sound,—
 With mantling mane, o'er his broad shoulders spread,
 And nostrils blowing, and dilated red,—
 The coal-black steed, in rich caparison
 Far trailing to the ground, went proudly on. 80
 Proudly he tramped, as conscious of his charge,
 And turned around his eye-balls, bright and large,
 And shook the frothy boss, as in disdain ;
 And tossed the flakes, indignant, off his mane ;
 And, with high-swelling veins, exulting pressed
 Proudly against the barb his heaving breast.

The fate of empires glowing in his thought,
 Thus armed, the tented field Valdivia sought.
 On the left side his poised shield he bore,
 With quaint devices richly blazoned o'er ; 90
 Above the plumes, upon his helmet's cone,
 Castile's imperial crest illustrious shone ;
 Blue in the wind the escutcheoned mantle flowed,
 O'er the chained mail, which tinkled as he rode.
 The barred vizor raised, you might discern
 His clime-changed countenance,¹ though pale, yet stern,
 And resolute as death,—whilst in his eye
 Sat proud Assurance, Fame, and Victory.

Lautaro, now in manhood's rising pride,
 Rode, with a lance, attendant at his side, 100
 In Spanish mantle gracefully arrayed ;
 Upon his brow a tuft of feathers played :
 His glossy locks, with dark and mantling grace,
 Shaded the noonday sunbeams on his face.
 Though passed in tears the dayspring of his youth,
 Valdivia loved his gratitude and truth :

¹ He had served in the wars of Italy.

He, in Valdivia, owned a nobler friend ; 107
 Kind to protect, and mighty to defend.
 So, on he rode ; upon his youthful mien
 A mild but sad intelligence was seen ;
 Courage was on his open brow, yet care
 Seemed like a wandering shade to linger there ;
 And though his eye shone, as the eagle's, bright,
 It beamed with humid, melancholy light

When now Valdivia saw the embattled line,
 Helmets, and swords, and shields, and matchlocks, shine ;
 Now the long phalanx still and steady stand,
 Fixed every eye, and motionless each hand ;
 Then slowly clustering, into columns wheel,
 Each with the red-cross banners of Castile ; 120
 While trumps, and drums, and cymbals, to his ear
 Made music such as soldiers love to hear ;
 While horsemen checked their steeds, or, bending low
 With levelled lances, o'er the saddle-bow,
 Rode gallantly at tilt ; and thunders broke,
 Instant involving van and rear in smoke,
 Till winds the obscuring volume rolled away,
 And the red file, stretched out in long array,
 More radiant moved beneath the beams of day ;
 While ensigns, arms, and crosses, glittered bright,— 130
 Philip !¹ he cried, seest thou the glorious sight ?
 And dost thou deem the tribes of this poor land
 Can men, and arms, and steeds, like these, withstand ?

Forgive !—the youth replied, and checked a tear,—
 The land where my forefathers sleep is dear !—
 My native land !—this spot of blessed earth,
 The scene where I, and all I love, had birth !
 What gratitude fidelity can give
 Is yours, my lord !—you shielded—bade me live,

¹ Lautaro had been baptized by that name.

When, in the circuit of the world so wide, 140
 I had but one, one only friend beside.
 I bowed resigned to fate ; I kissed the hand,
 Red with the best blood of my father's land !¹
 But mighty as thou art, Valdivia, know,
 Though Cortes' desolating march laid low
 The shrines of rich, voluptuous Mexico ;
 With carcasses, though proud Pizarro strew
 The Sun's imperial temple in Peru,
 Yet the rude dwellers of this land are brave,
 And the last spot they lose will be their grave ! 150

A moment's crimson crossed Valdivia's cheek—
 Then o'er the plain he spurred, nor deigned to speak,
 Waving the youth, at distance, to retire ;
 None saw the eye that shot terrific fire.
 As their commander sternly rode along,
 Troop after troop, halted the martial throng ;
 And all the pennoned trumps a louder blast
 Blew, as the Southern World's great victor passed.

Lautaro turned, scarce heeding, from the view,
 And from the noise of trumps and drums withdrew ; 160
 And now, while troubled thoughts his bosom swell,
 Seeks the gray Missionary's humble cell.

Fronting the ocean, but beyond the ken
 Of public view, and sounds of murmuring men,
 Of unhewn roots composed, and gnarled wood,
 A small and rustic oratory stood ;
 Upon its roof of reeds appeared a cross,
 The porch within was lined with mantling moss ;
 A crucifix and hour-glass, on each side—
 One to admonish seemed, and one to guide ; 170
 This, to impress how soon life's race is o'er ;
 And that, to lift our hopes where time shall be no more.

¹ Valdivia had before been in Chili.

O'er the rude porch, with wild and gadding stray, 173
 The clustering copu weaved its trellis gay ;
 Two mossy pines, high bending, interwove
 Their aged and fantastic arms above.

In front, amid the gay surrounding flowers,
 A dial counted the departing hours,
 On which the sweetest light of summer shone,—
 A rude and brief inscription marked the stone : 180

To count, with passing shade, the hours,
 I placed the dial 'mid the flowers ;
 That, one by one, came forth, and died,
 Blooming, and withering, round its side.
 Mortal, let the sight impart
 Its pensive moral to thy heart !

Just heard to trickle through a covert near,
 And soothing, with perpetual lapse, the ear,
 A fount, like rain-drops, filtered through the stone,
 And, bright as amber, on the shallows shone. 190

Intent his fairy pastime to pursue,
 And, gem-like, hovering o'er the violets blue,
 The humming-bird, here, its unceasing song
 Heedlessly murmured, all the summer long ;
 And when the winter came, retired to rest,
 And from the myrtles hung its trembling nest.
 No sounds of a conflicting world were near ;
 The noise of ocean faintly met the ear,
 That seemed, as sunk to rest the noontide blast,
 But dying sounds of passions that were past ; 200
 Or closing anthems, when, far off, expire
 The lessening echoes of the distant choir.

Here, every human sorrow hushed to rest,
 His pale hands meekly crossed upon his breast,
 Anselmo sat : the sun, with westering ray,
 Just touched his temples, and his locks of gray.

There was no worldly feeling in his eye ; 207
 The world to him was "as a thing gone by."

Now, all his features lit, he raised his look,
 Then bent it thoughtful, and unclasped the book ;
 And whilst the hour-glass shed its silent sand,
 A tame opossum¹ licked his withered hand.
 That sweetest light of slow-declining day,
 Which through the trellis poured its slanting ray,
 Resting a moment on his few gray hairs,
 Seemed light from heaven sent down to bless his
 prayers.

When the trump echoed to the quiet spot,
 He thought upon the world, but mourned it not ;
 Enough if his meek wisdom could control,
 And bend to mercy, one proud soldier's soul ; 220
 Enough, if, while these distant scenes he trod,
 He led one erring Indian to his God.

Whence comes my son ? with kind complacent look
 He asked, and closed again the embossed book.

I come to thee for peace, the youth replied :
 Oh, there is strife, and cruelty, and pride,
 In this sad Christian world ! My native land
 Was happy, ere the soldier, with his band
 Of fell destroyers, like a vulture, came,
 And gave its peaceful scenes to blood and flame. 230
 When will the turmoil of earth's tempests cease ?
 Father, I come to thee for peace—for peace !

Seek peace, the father cried, with God above :
 In His good time, all will be peace and love.
 We mourn, indeed, mourn that all sounds of ill,
 Earth's fairest scenes with one deep murmur fill ;
 That yonder sun, when evening paints the sky,
 Sinks, beauteous, on a world of misery ;

¹ A small and beautiful species, which is domesticated.

The course of wide destruction to withstand, 239
 We lift our feeble voice—our trembling hand ;
 But still, bowed low, or smitten to the dust,
 Father of mercy, still in Thee we trust !
 'Through good or ill, in poverty or wealth,
 In joy or woe, in sickness or in health,
 Meek Piety thy awful hand surveys,
 And the faint murmur turns to prayer and praise !
 We know—whatever evils we deplore—
 Thou hast permitted, and we know no more !
 Behold, illustrious on the subject plain,
 Some tow'r-crowned city of imperial Spain ! 250
 Hark ! 'twas the earthquake !¹ clouds of dust alone
 Ascend from earth, where tower and temple shone !
 Such is the conqueror's dread path : the grave
 Yawns for its millions where his banners wave ;
 But shall vain man, whose life is but a sigh,
 With sullen acquiescence gaze and die ?
 Alas, how little of the mighty maze
 Of Providence our mortal ken surveys !
 Heaven's awful Lord, pavilioned in the clouds,
 Looks through the darkness that all nature shrouds ; 260
 And, far beyond the tempest and the night,
 Bids man his course hold on to scenes of endless light.

¹ No part of the world is so subject to earthquakes as Peru.

CANTO THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

Evening and Night of the same Day.

Anselmo's story—Converted Indians—Confession of the Wandering Minstrel—
Night-Scene.

COME,—for the sun yet hangs above the bay,—
 And whilst our time may brook a brief delay
 With other thoughts, and, haply with a tear,
 An old man's tale of sorrow thou shalt hear.
 I wished not to reveal it ;—thoughts that dwell
 Deep in the lonely bosom's inmost cell
 Unnoticed, and unknown, too painful wake,
 And, like a tempest, the dark spirit shake,
 When, starting from our slumberous apathy,
 We gaze upon the scenes of days gone by. 10
 Yet, if a moment's irritating flush,
 Darkens thy cheek,¹ as thoughts conflicting rush,
 When I disclose my hidden griefs, the tale
 May more than wisdom or reproof prevail.
 Oh, may it teach thee, till all trials cease,
 To hold thy course, though sorrowing, yet in peace ;
 Still looking up to Him, the soul's best stay,
 Who Faith and Hope shall crown, when worlds are
 swept away !

Where fair Seville's Morisco² turrets gleam
 On Guadalquiver's gently-stealing stream ; 20
 Whose silent waters, seaward as they glide,
 Reflect the wild-rose thickets on its side,

¹ Indians of Chili are of the lightest class, called by some "white Indians."
 —² Of Moorish architecture.

My youth was passed. Oh, days for ever gone ! 23
 How touched with Heaven's own light your mornings shone'

Even now, when lonely and forlorn I bend,
 My weary journey hastening to its end,
 A drooping exile on a distant shore,
 I mourn the hours of youth that are no more.
 The tender thought amid my prayers has part,
 And steals, at times, from Heaven my aged heart. 30

Forgive the cause, O God !—forgive the tear,
 That flows, even now, o'er Leonora's bier ;
 For, 'midst the innocent and lovely, none
 More beautiful than Leonora shone.

As by her widowed mother's side she knelt,
 A sad and sacred sympathy I felt.
 At Easter-tide, when the high mass was sung,
 And, fuming high, the silver censer swung ;
 When rich-hued windows, from the arches' height,
 Poured o'er the shrines a soft and yellow light ; 40
 From aisle to aisle, amid the service clear,
 When " Adoremus " swelled upon the ear.
 (Such as to Heaven thy rapt attention drew
 First in the Christian churches of Peru),
 She seemed, methought, some spirit of the sky,
 Descending to that holy harmony.

But wherefore tell, when life and hope were new,
 How by degrees the soul's first passion grew !
 I loved her, and I won her virgin heart ;
 But fortune whispered, we a while must part. 50

The minster tolled the middle hour of night,
 When, waked to agony and wild affright,
 I heard those words, words of appalling dread—
 " The Holy Inquisition ! "—from the bed
 I started ; snatched my dagger, and my cloak—
 Who dare accuse me !—none, in answer, spoke.

The demons seized, in silence, on their prey,
And tore me from my dreams of bliss away.

57

How frightful was their silence, and their shade,
In torch-light, as their victim they conveyed,
By dark-inscribed, and massy-windowed walls,
Through the dim twilight of terrific halls ;
(For thou hast heard me speak of that foul stain
Of pure religion, and the rights of Spain ;)
Whilst the high windows shook to night's cold blast,
And echoed to the foot-fall as we passed !

They left me, faint and breathless with affright,
In a cold cell, to solitude and night ;
Oh ! think, what horror through the heart must thrill 69
When the last bolt was barred, and all at once was still !

Nor day nor night was here, but a deep gloom,
Sadder than darkness, wrapped the living tomb.
Some bread and water, nature to sustain,
Duly was brought when eve returned again ;
And thus I knew, hoping it were the last,
Another day of lingering life was passed.

Five years immured in that deep den of night,
I never saw the sweet sun's blessed light.
Once as the grate, with sullen sound, was barred,
And to the bolts the inmost cavern jarred, 80
Methought I heard, as clanged the iron door,
A dull and hollow echo from the floor ;
I stamped ; the vault, and winding caves around,
Returned a long and melancholy sound.

With patient toil I raised a massy stone,
And looked into a depth of shade unknown ;
The murky twilight of the lurid place
Helped me, at length, a secret way to trace :
I entered ; step by step explored the road,
In darkness, from my desolate abode ; 90

Till, winding through long passages of night, 91
 I saw, at distance, a dim streak of light :—
 It was the sun—the bright, the blessed beam
 Of day ! I knelt—I wept ;—the glittering stream
 Rolled on beneath me, as I left the cave,
 Concealed in woods above the winding wave.

I rested on a verdant bank a while,
 I saw around the summer landscape smile ;
 I gained a peasant's hut ; nor dared to leave,
 Till, with slow step, advanced the glimmering eve. 100
 Remembering still affection's fondest hours,
 I turned my footsteps to the city towers ;
 In pilgrim's dress, I traced the streets unknown :
 No light in Leonora's lattice shone.

The morning came ; the busy tumult swells ;
 Knolling to church, I heard the minster bells ;
 Involuntary to that scene I strayed,
 Disguised, where first I saw my faithful maid.
 I saw her, pallid, at the altar stand,
 And yield, half-shrinking, her reluctant hand ; 110
 She turned her head ; she saw my hollow eyes,
 And knew me, wasted, wan, in my disguise ;
 She shrieked, and fell ;—breathless, I left the fane
 In agony—nor saw her form again ;
 And from that day her voice, her look were given,
 Her name, her memory, to the winds of heaven.

Far off I bent my melancholy way,
 Heart-sick and faint, and, in this gown of gray,
 From every human eye my sorrows hid,
 Unknown, amidst the tumult of Madrid. 120
 Grief in my heart, despair upon my look,
 With no companion save my beads and book,
 My morsel with Affliction's sons to share,
 To tend the sick and poor, my only care,

Forgotten, thus I lived ; till day by day 125
 Had worn nigh thirteen years of grief away.

One winter's night, when I had closed my cell,
 And bid the labours of the day farewell,
 An aged crone approached, with panting breath,
 And bade me hasten to the house of death. 130

I came. With moving lips intent to pray,
 A dying woman on a pallet lay ;
 Her lifted hands were wasted to the bone,
 And ghastly on her look the lamp-light shone ;
 Beside the bed a pious daughter stands
 Silent, and, weeping, kisses her pale hands.
 Feebly she spoke, and raised her languid head,
 Forgive, forgive !—they told me he was dead !—
 But in the sunshine of that dreadful day,
 That gave me to another's arms away, 140

I saw him, like a ghost, with deadly stare ;
 I saw his wasted eye-balls' ghastly glare ;
 I saw his lips (oh, hide them, God of love !)
 I saw his livid lips, half-muttering, move,
 To curse the maid—forgetful of her vow :—
 Perhaps he lives to curse—to curse me now !

He lives to bless ! I cried ; and, drawing nigh,
 Held up the crucifix ; her heavy eye
 She raised, and scarce pronounced—Does he yet live ?
 Can he his lost, his dying child forgive ? 150
 Will God forgive—the Lord who bled—will He ?—
 Ah, no, there is no mercy left for me !

Words were but vain, and colours all too faint,
 That awful moment of despair to paint.
 She knew me ; her exhausted breath, with pain,
 Drawing, she pressed my hand, and spoke again :

By a false guardian's cruel wiles deceived,
 The tale of fraudulent falsehood I believed,

And thought thee dead ; he gave the stern command, 159
And bade me take the rich Antonio's hand.

I knelt, implored, embraced my guardian's knees ;
Ruthless inquisitor, he held the keys

Of the dark torture-house.¹ Trembling for life,

Yes, I became a sad, heart-broken wife !

Yet curse me not ; of every human care

Already my full heart has had its share :

Abandoned, left in youth to want and woe,

Oh ! let these tears, that agonising flow,

Witness how deep ev'n now my heart is rent !

Yet one is lovely—one is innocent !

170

Protect, protect, (and faint in death she smiled)

When I am dead, protect my orphan child !

The dreadful prison, that so long detained

My wasting life, her dying words explained.

The wretched priest, who wounded me by stealth,

Bartered her love, her innocence for wealth !

I laid her bones in earth ; the chanted hymn

Echoed along the hollow cloister dim ;

I heard, far off, the bell funereal toll,

And sorrowing said : Now peace be with her soul ! 180

Far o'er the Western Ocean I conveyed,

And Indiana called the orphan maid ;

Beneath my eye she grew, and, day by day,

Seemed, grateful, every kindness to repay.

Renouncing Spain, her cruelties and crimes,

Amid untutored tribes, in distant climes,

'Twas mine to spread the light of truth, or save

From stripes and torture the poor Indian slave.

I saw thee, young and innocent, alone,

Cast on the mercies of a race unknown ;

190

¹ Seville was the first place in Spain in which the Inquisition was established, in 1481.

I saw, in dark adversity's cold hour, 191
 Thy virtues blooming, like a winter's flower ;
 From chains and slavery I redeemed thy youth,
 Poured on thy mental sight the beams of truth ;
 By thy warm heart and mild demeanour won,
 Called thee my other child—my age's son.
 I need not tell the sequel ;—not unmoved
 Poor Indiana heard thy tale, and loved ;
 Some sympathy a kindred fate might claim ;
 Your years, your fortunes, and your friend the same ;
 Both early of a parent's care bereft, 201
 Both strangers in a world of sadness left ;
 I marked each slowly-struggling thought ; I shed
 A tear of love paternal on each head ;
 And, while I saw her timid eyes incline,
 Blessed the affection that had made her thine !
 Here let the murmurs of despondence cease :
 There is a God—believe—and part in peace !

Rich hues illumed the track of dying day
 As the great sun sank in the western bay, 210
 And only its last light yet lingering shone,
 Upon the highest palm-tree's feathery cone ;
 When at a distance on the dewy plain,
 In mingled group appeared an Indian train ;
 Men, women, children, round Anselmo press,
 Farewell ! they cried. He raised his hand to bless,
 And said : My children, may the God above
 Still lead you in the paths of peace and love ;
 To-morrow, we must part ;—when I am gone,
 Raise on this spot a cross, and place a stone, 220
 That tribes unborn may some memorial have,
 When I far off am mouldering in the grave,
 Of that poor messenger, who tidings bore
 Of Gospel-mercy to your distant shore.

The crowd retired ; along the twilight gray, 225
 The condor kept its solitary way,
 The fire-flies shone, when to the hermit's cell
 Who hastens but the minstrel Zarinel !
 In foreign lands, far from his native home,
 'Twas his, a gay, romantic youth, to roam, 230
 With a light cittern o'er his shoulders slung,
 Where'er he passed he played, and loved, and sung ;
 And thus accomplished, late had joined the train
 Of gallant soldiers on the southern plain.
 Father, he cried, uncertain of the fate
 That may to-morrow's toilsome march await,
 For long will be the road, I would confess
 Some secret thoughts that on my bosom press.
 They are of one I left, an Indian maid,
 Whose trusting love my careless heart betrayed. 240
 Say, may I speak ?

Say on, the father cried,
 Nor be to penitence all hope denied.

Then hear, Anselmo ! From a very child
 I loved all fancies marvellous and wild ;
 I turned from truth, to listen to the lore
 Of many an old and fabling troubadour.
 Thus, with impassioned heart, and wayward mind,
 To dreams and shapes of shadowy things resigned,
 I left my native vales and village home, 250
 Wide o'er the world a minstrel boy to roam.

I never shall forget the day, the hour,
 When, all my soul resigned to Fancy's power,
 First, from the snowy Pyrenees, I cast
 My labouring vision o'er the landscape vast,
 And saw beneath my feet long vapours float,
 Streams, mountains, woods, and ocean's mist re-
 mote.

There once I met a soldier, poor and old, 258
 Who tales of Cortes and Bilboa told,
 And this new world ; he spoke of Indian maids,
 Rivers like seas, and forests whose deep shades
 Had never yet been pierced by morning ray,
 And how the green bird mocked, and talked all day.

Imagination thus, in colours new,
 This distant world presented to my view ;
 Young, and enchanted with the fancied scene,
 I crossed the toiling seas that roared between,
 And with ideal images impressed,
 Stood on these unknown shores a wondering guest.

Still to romantic phantasies resigned, 270
 I left Callao's crowded port behind,
 And climbed the mountains which their shadow threw
 Upon the lessening summits of Peru.

Some sheep the armed peasants drove before,
 That all our food through the wild passes bore,
 Had wandered in the frost-smoke of the morn,
 Far from the track ; I blew the signal horn—
 But echo only answered : 'mid the snows,
 Wildered and lost, I saw the evening close.
 The sun was setting in the crimson west ; 280
 In all the earth I had no home of rest ;
 The last sad light upon the ice-hills shone ;
 I seemed forsaken in a world unknown ;
 How did my cold and sinking heart rejoice,
 When, hark ! methought I heard a human voice !
 It might be some wild Indian's roving troop,
 Or the dread echo of their distant whoop ;
 Still it was human, and I seemed to find
 Again some commerce with remote mankind.
 The voice comes nearer, rising through the shade— 290
 Is it the song of some rude mountain-maid ?

And now I heard the tread of hastening feet, 292
 And, in the western glen, a Llama bleat.
 I listened—all is still ; but hark ! again
 Near and more near is heard the welcome strain ;
 It is a wild maid's carolling, who seeks
 Her wandering Llama 'midst the snowy peaks :
 Truant, she cried, thy lurking place is found !

With languid touch I waked the cittern's sound,
 And soon a maid, by the pale light, I saw 300
 Gaze breathless with astonishment and awe :
 What instant terrors to her fancy rose,
 Ha ! is it not the Spirit of the snows !
 But when she saw me, weary, cold, and weak,
 Stretch forth my hand (for now I could not speak),
 She pitied, raised me from the snows, and led
 My faltering footsteps to her father's shed ;
 The Llama followed with her tinkling bell ;
 The dwelling rose within a craggy dell,
 O'erhung with icy summits. To be brief, 310
 She was the daughter of an aged chief ;
 He, by her gentle voice to pity won,
 Showed mercy, for himself had lost a son.
 The father spoke not ; by the pine-wood blaze,
 The daughter stood, and turned a cake of maize ;
 And then, as sudden shone the light, I saw
 Such features as no artist hand might draw.
 Her form, her face, her symmetry, her air,
 Father ! thy age must such recital spare :—
 She saved my life ; and kindness, if not love, 320
 Might sure in time the coldest bosom move !
 Mine was not cold ; she loved to hear me sing,
 And sometimes touched with playful hand the string ;
 And when I waked some melancholy strain,
 She wept, and smiled, and bade me sing again.

So many a happy day, in this deep glen, 326
 Far from the noise of life, and sounds of men,
 Was passed ! Nay, father, the sad sequel hear :
 'Twas now the leafy spring-time of the year—
 Ambition called me : true, I knew to part
 Would break her generous, warm, and trusting heart ;
 True, I had vowed, but now estranged and cold,
 She saw my look, and shuddered to behold :—
 She would go with me, leave the lonely glade
 Where she grew up, but my stern voice forbade ;
 She hid her face and wept : Go then away,
 (Father, methinks, ev'n now, I hear her say)
 Go to thy distant land, forget this tear,
 Forget these rocks, forget I once was dear ;
 Fly to the world, o'er the wide ocean fly, 240
 And leave me unremembered here to die !

Yet to my father should I all relate,
 Death, instant death, would be a traitor's fate !
 Nor fear, nor pity moved my stubborn mind,
 I left her sorrows and the scene behind ;
 I sought Valdivia on the southern plain,
 And joined the careless military train ;
 Oh ! ere I sleep, thus, lowly on my knee,
 Father, I absolution crave from thee !

Anselmo spoke, with look and voice severe : 250
 Yes, thoughtless youth, my absolution hear.
 First, by deep penitence the wrong atone,
 Then absolution ask from God alone !
 Yet stay, and to my warning voice attend,
 And hear me as a father, and a friend.
 Let Truth severe be wayward Fancy's guide,
 Let stern-eyed Conscience o'er each thought preside ;
 The passions, that on noblest natures prey,
 Oh ! cast them, like corroding bonds, away !

Disdain to act mean falsehood's coward part, 360
 And let religion dignify thine art.

If, by thy bed, thou seest at midnight stand
 Pale Conscience, pointing, with terrific hand,
 To deeds of darkness done, whilst, like a corse,
 To shake thy soul, uprises dire Remorse ;
 Fly to God's mercy, fly, ere yet too late—
 Perhaps one hour marks thy eternal fate ;
 Let the warm tear of deep contrition flow,
 The heart obdurate melt, like softening snow,
 The last vain follies of thy youth deplore, 370
 Then go, in secret weep, and sin no more !

The stars innumerable in their watches shone—
 Anselmo knelt before the cross alone.

Ten thousand glowing orbs their pomp displayed,
 Whilst, looking up, thus silently he prayed :—

Oh ! how oppressive to the aching sense,
 How fearful were this vast magnificence,
 This prodigality of glory, spread
 Above a poor and dying emmet's head,
 That toiled his transient hour upon the shore 380
 Of mortal life, and then was seen no more ;
 If man beheld, on his terrific throne,
 A dark, cold, distant Deity, alone !
 Felt no relating, no endearing tie,
 That Hope might upwards raise her glistening eye,
 And think, with deep unutterable bliss,
 In yonder radiant realm my kingdom is !

More glorious than those orbs that silent roll,
 Shines Heaven's redeeming mercy on the soul—
 Oh, pure effulgence of unbounded love ! 390
 In Thee, I think—I feel—I live—I move ;
 Yet when, O Thou, whose name is Love and Light,
 When will thy Dayspring on these realms of night

Arise! Oh! when shall severed nations raise 394
 One hallelujah of triumphant praise,
 Tibet on Fars, Andes on Atlas call,
 And "roll the loud hosannah" round the ball!

Soon may Thy kingdom come, that love, and peace,
 And charity, may bid earth's chidings cease!
 Meantime, in life or death, through good or ill, 400
 Thy poor and feeble servant, I fulfil,
 As best I may, Thy high and holy will,
 Till, weary, on the world my eyelids close,
 And I enjoy my long and last repose!

CANTO FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

Assembly of Indian warriors—Caupolican, Ongolmo, Teucapel, Mountain-
 chief—Song of the Indian Wizard—White woman and child.

FAR in the centre of the deepest wood,
 The assembled fathers of their country stood.
 'Twas midnight now; the pine-wood fire burned red,
 And to the leaves a shadowy glimmer spread;
 The struggling smoke, or flame with fitful glance,
 Obscured, or showed, some dreadful countenance;
 And every warrior, as his club he reared,
 With larger shadow, indistinct, appeared;
 While more terrific, his wild locks and mien,
 And fierce eye, through the quivering smoke, was seen. 10

In sea-wolf's skin, here Mariantu stood;
 Gnashed his white teeth, impatient, and cried, blood!
 His lofty brow, with crimson feathers bound,
 Here, brooding death, the huge Ongolmo frowned;

And, like a giant of no earthly race, . . . 15
 To his broad shoulders heaved his ponderous mace.
 With lifted hatchet, as in act to fell,
 Here stood the young and ardent Teucapel.
 Like a lone cypress, stately in decay,
 When time has worn its summer boughs away, 20
 And hung its trunk with moss and lichens sere,
 The Mountain-warrior rested on his spear.
 And thus, and at this hour, a hundred chiefs,
 Chosen avengers of their country's griefs ;
 Chiefs of the scattered tribes that roam the plain,
 That sweeps from Andes to the western main,
 Their country-gods, around the coiling smoke,
 With sacrifice, and silent prayers, invoke.
 For all, at first, were silent as the dead ;
 The pine was heard to whisper o'er their head, 30
 So stood the stern assembly ; but apart,
 Wrapped in the spirit of his fearful art,
 Alone, to hollow sounds of hideous hum,
 The wizard-seer struck his prophetic drum.

Silent they stood, and watched with anxious eyes,
 What phantom-shape might from the ground arise ;
 No voices came, no spectre-form appeared ;
 A hollow sound, but not of winds, was heard
 Among the leaves, and distant thunder low,
 Which seemed like moans of an expiring foe. 40
 His crimson feathers quivering in the smoke,
 Then, with loud voice, first Mariantu spoke :

Hail we the omen ! Spirits of the slain,
 I hear your voices ! Mourn, devoted Spain !
 Pale-visaged tyrants ! still, along our coasts,
 Shall we despairing mark your iron hosts !
 Spirits of our brave fathers, curse the race
 Who thus your name, your memory disgrace !

No ; though yon mountain's everlasting snows 49
 In vain Almagro's¹ toilsome march oppose ;
 Though Atacama's long and wasteful plain
 Be heaped with blackening carcasses in vain ;
 Though still fresh hosts those snowy summits scale,
 And scare the Llamas with their glittering mail ;
 Though sullen castles lour along our shore ;
 Though our polluted soil be drenched with gore ;
 Insolent tyrants ! we, prepared to die,
 Your arms, your horses, and your gods, defy !

He spoke : the warriors stamped upon the ground,
 And tore the feathers that their foreheads bound. 60
 Insolent tyrants ! burst the general cry,
 We, met for vengeance—we, prepared to die,
 Your arms, your horses, and your gods, defy !

Then Teucapel, with warm emotion, cried :
 This hatchet never yet in blood was dyed ;
 May it be buried deep within my heart,
 If living from the conflict I depart,
 Till loud, from shore to shore, is heard one cry,
 See ! in their gore where the last tyrants lie !

The Mountain-warrior : Oh, that I could raise 70
 The hatchet too, as in my better days,
 When victor on Maypocha's banks I stood ;
 And while the indignant river rolled in blood,
 And our swift arrows hissed like rushing rain,
 I cleft Almagro's iron helm in twain !
 My strength is well-nigh gone ! years marked with woe
 Have o'er me passed, and bowed my spirit low !
 Alas, I have no son ! Beloved boy,
 Thy father's last, best hope, his pride, his joy !

¹ The first Spaniard who visited Chili. He entered it by the dreadful passage of the snows of the Andes ; but afterwards the passage was attempted through the desert of Atacama.

Oh, hadst thou lived, sole object of my prayers, 80
 To guard my waning life, and these gray hairs,
 How bravely hadst thou now, in manhood's pride,
 Swung the uplifted war-club by my side !
 But the Great Spirit willed not ! Thou art gone ;
 And, weary, on this earth I walk alone ;
 Thankful if I may yield my latest breath,
 And bless my country in the pangs of death !

With words deliberate, and uplifted hand,
 Mild to persuade, yet dauntless to command,
 Raising his hatchet high, Caupolican 90
 Surveyed the assembled chiefs, and thus began :

Friends, fathers, brothers, dear and sacred names !
 Your stern resolve each ardent look proclaims ;
 On then to conquest ; let one hope inspire,
 One spirit animate, one vengeance fire !
 Who doubts the glorious issue ! To our foes
 A tenfold strength and spirit we oppose.
 In them no god protects his mortal sons,
 Or speaks, in thunder, from their roaring guns.
 Nor come they children of the radiant sky ; 100
 But, like the wounded snake, to writhe and die.
 Then, rush resistless on their prostrate bands,
 Snatch the red lightning from their feeble hands,
 And swear to the great spirits, hovering near,
 Who now this awful invocation hear,
 That we shall never see our household hearth,
 Till, like the dust, we sweep them from the earth.
 But vain our strength, that idly, in the fight,
 Tumultuous wastes its ineffectual might,
 Unless to one the hatchet we confide ; 110
 Let one our numbers, one our counsels guide.
 And, lo ! for all that in this world is dear,
 I raise this hatchet, raise it high, and swear,

Never again to lay it down, till we, 114
 And all who love this injured land, are free !

At once the loud acclaim tumultuous ran :
 Our spears, our life-blood, for Caupolican !
 With thee, for all that in this world is dear,
 We lift our hatchets, lift them high, and swear,
 Never again to lay them down, till we, 120
 And all who love this injured land, are free !

Then thus the chosen chief : Bring forth the slave,
 And let the death-dance recreate the brave.

Two warriors led a Spanish captive, bound
 With thongs ; his eyes were fixed upon the ground.
 Dark cypresses the mournful spot inclose :
 High in the midst an ancient mound arose,
 Marked on each side with monumental stones,
 And white beneath with skulls and scattered bones.
 Four poniards, on the mound, encircling stood, 130
 With points erect, dark with forgotten blood.

Forthwith, with louder voice, the chief commands :
 Bring forth the lots, unbind the captive's hands ;
 Then north, towards his country, turn his face,
 And dig beneath his feet a narrow space.¹

Caupolican uplifts his axe, and cries :
 Gods, of our land be yours this sacrifice !—
 Now, listen, warriors !—and forthwith commands
 To place the billets in the captive's hands—
 Soldier, cast in the lot ! 140

With looks aghast,
 The captive in the trench a billet cast.

Soldier, declare, who leads the arms of Spain,
 Where Santiago frowns upon the plain ?

¹ The reader is referred to Molina for a particular description of the war sacrifice, which is very striking and poetical.

CAPTIVE.

Villagra !

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WARRIOR.

Earth upon the billet heap ;
 So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep !
 The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
 Accursed be his nation and his name !

150

WARRIOR.

Captive, declare who leads the Spanish bands,
 Where the proud fortress shades Coquimbo's sands.

CAPTIVE.

Ocampo !

WARRIOR.

Earth upon the billet heap ;
 So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep !
 The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
 Accursed be his nation and his name !

WARRIOR.

Cast in the lot.

Again, with looks aghast,
 The captive in the trench a billet cast.
 Pronounce his name who here pollutes the plain,
 The leader of the mailed hosts of Spain !

160

CAPTIVE.

Valdivia !

At that name a sudden cry
 Burst forth, and every lance was lifted high.

WARRIOR.

Valdivia !

166

Earth upon the billet heap ;
 So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep !
 The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
 Accursed be his nation and his name !

170

And now loud yells, and whoops of death resound ;
 The shuddering captive ghastly gazed around,
 When the huge war-club smote him to the ground.
 Again deep stillness hushed the listening crowd,
 While the prophetic wizard sang aloud.

SONG TO THE GOD OF WAR.

By thy habitation dread,
 In the valley of the dead,
 Where no sun, nor day, nor night,
 Breaks the red and dusky light ;
 By the grisly troops, that ride,
 Of slaughtered Spaniards, at thy side,—
 Slaughtered by the Indian spear,
 Mighty Epananum,¹ hear !
 Hark, the battle ! Hark, the din !
 Now the deeds of Death begin !
 The Spaniards come, in clouds ! above,
 I hear their hoarse artillery move !
 Spirits of our fathers slain,
 Haste, pursue the dogs of Spain !
 The noise was in the northern sky !
 Haste, pursue ! They fly—they fly !
 Now from the cavern's secret cell,
 Where the direst phantoms dwell,

180

190

¹ Name of the War-deity.

See they rush,¹ and, riding high, 194
 Break the moonlight as they fly ;
 And, on the shadowed plain beneath,
 Shoot, unseen, the shafts of Death !
 O'er the devoted Spanish camp,
 Like a vapour, dark and damp,
 May they hover, till the plain 200
 Is hid beneath the countless slain ;
 And none but silent women tread
 From corse to corse, to seek the dead !

The wavering fire flashed with expiring light,
 When shrill and hollow, through the cope of night,
 A distant shout was heard ; at intervals,
 Increasing on the listening ear it falls.
 It ceased ; when, bursting from the thickest wood,
 With lifted axe, two gloomy warriors stood ;
 Wan in the midst, with dark and streaming hair, 210
 Blown by the winds upon her bosom bare,
 A woman, faint from terror's wild alarms,
 And folding a white infant in her arms,
 Appeared. Each warrior stooped his lance to gaze
 On her pale looks, seen ghastlier through the blaze.
 Save ! she exclaimed, with harrowed aspect wild ;
 Oh, save my innocent, my helpless child !
 Then fainting fell, as from death's instant stroke ;
 Caupolican, with stern inquiry, spoke :
 Whence come, to interrupt our awful rite, 220
 At this dread hour, the warriors of the night ?
 From ocean.

Who is she who fainting lies,
 And now scarce lifts her supplicating eyes ?

¹ Terrific imaginary beings, called "man-animals," that leave their caves by night, and scatter pestilence and death as they fly.—See *Molina*.

The Spanish ship went down ; the seamen bore, 225
 In a small boat, this woman to the shore :
 They fell beneath our hatchets,—and again,
 We gave them back to the insulted main.¹
 The child and woman—of a race we hate—
 Warriors, 'tis yours, here to decide their fate. 230

Vengeance ! aloud fierce Mariantu cried :
 Let vengeance on the race be satisfied !
 Let none of hated Spanish blood remain,
 Woman or child, to violate our plain !

Amid that dark and bloody scene, the child
 Stretched to the mountain-chief his hands and smiled.
 A starting tear of pity dimmed the eye
 Of the old warrior, though he knew not why.
 Oh, think upon your little ones ! he cried,
 Nor be compassion to the weak denied. 240

Caupolican then fixed his aspect mild
 On the white woman and her shrinking child,
 Then firmly spoke :—

White woman, we were free,
 When first thy brethren of the distant sea
 Came to our shores ! White woman, theirs the guilt !
 Theirs, if the blood of innocence be spilt !
 Yet blood we seek not, though our arms oppose
 The hate of foreign and remorseless foes ;
 Thou camest here a captive, so abide, 250
 Till the Great Spirit shall our cause decide.

He spoke : the warriors of the night obey ;
 And, ere the earliest streak of dawning day,
 They lead her from the scene of blood away.

¹ “ Render them back upon the insulted ocean.”—*Coleridge*.

CANTO FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

Ocean Cave—Spanish Captive—Wild Indian Maid—Genius of Andes,
and Spirits.

'Tis dawn :—the distant Andes' rocky spires,
One after one, have caught the orient fires.
Where the dun condor shoots his upward flight,
His wings are touched with momentary light.
Meantime, beneath the mountains' glittering heads,
A boundless ocean of gray vapour spreads,
That o'er the champaign, stretching far below,
Moves now, in clustered masses, rising slow,
Till all the living landscape is displayed
In various pomp of colour, light, and shade, 10
Hills, forests, rivers, lakes, and level plain,
Lessening in sunshine to the southern main.
The Llama's fleece fumes with ascending dew ;
The gem-like humming-birds their toils renew ;
And there, by the wild river's devious side,
The tall flamingo, in its crimson pride,
Stalks on, in richest plumage bright arrayed,
With snowy neck superb,¹ and legs of lengthening shade.

Sad maid, for others may the valleys ring,
For other ears the birds of morning sing ; 20
For other eyes the palms in beauty wave,
Dark is thy prison in the ocean-cave !

Amid that winding cavern's inmost shade,
A dripping rill its ceaseless murmur made :

¹ The neck of the flamingo is white, and its wings of rich and beautiful crimson.

Masses of dim-discovered crags aloof, 25
 Hung, threatening, from the vast and vaulted roof :
 And through a fissure, in its glimmering height,
 Seen like a star, appeared the distant light ;
 Beneath the opening, where the sunbeams shine,
 Far down, the rock-weed hung its slender twine. 30

Here, pale and bound, the Spanish captive lay,
 Till morn on morn, in silence, passed away ;
 When once, as o'er her sleeping child she hung,
 And sad her evening supplication sung ;
 Like a small gem, amidst the gloom of night,
 A glow-worm shot its green and trembling light,—
 And, 'mid the moss and craggy fragments, shed
 Faint lustre o'er her sleeping infant's head ;
 And hark ! a voice—a woman's voice, its sound
 Dies in faint echoes, 'mid the vault profound : 40

Let us pity the poor white maid !¹

She has no mother near !

No friend to dry her tear !

Upon the cold earth she is laid :

Let us pity the poor white maid !

It seemed the burden of a song of woe ;
 And see, across the gloom an Indian girl move
 slow !

Her nearer look is sorrowful, yet mild,
 Her hanging locks are wreathed with rock-weed
 wild ;

Gently she spoke, Poor Christian, dry thy tear : 50
 Art thou afraid ? all are not cruel here.

Oh ! still more wretched may my portion be,
 Stranger, if I could injure thine and thee !
 And, lo ! I bring, from banks and thickets wild,
 Wood-strawberries, and honey for thy child.

¹ From Mungo Park.

Round Chillan's crater-smoke, whose lurid light 118
Streams high against the hollow cope of night.

Thy genius, Andes, towering o'er the rest,
Rose vast, and thus a phantom-shape addressed :

Who comes so swift amid the storm ?

Ha ! I know thy bloodless form,
I know thee, angel, who thou art,
By the hissing of thy dart !

'Tis Death, the king ! the rocks around,
Hark ! echo back the fearful sound ;—

'Tis Death, the king ! away, away !

The famished vulture scents its prey.

Spectre, hence ! we cannot die— 130

Thy withering weapons we defy ;

Dire and potent as thou art !

Then spoke the phantom of the uplifted dart :

Spirits who in darkness dwell,

I heard far off your secret spell !

Enough, on yonder fatal shore,

My fiends have drank your children's gore ;

Lo ! I come, and doom to fate

The murderers, and the foe you hate !

Of all who shook their hostile spears, 140

And marked their way through blood and tears,

(Now sleeping still on yonder plain)

But one—one only shall remain,

Ere thrice the morn shall shine again.

Then sang the mighty spirits. Thee, they sing,
Hail to thee, Death, all hail to Death, the king !

The penguin flaps her wings in gore,

Devoted Spain, along the shore.

Whence that shriek ? with ghastly eyes,

Thy victor-chief abandoned lies ! 150

Victor of the southern world,

Whose crimson banners were unfurled 153
 O'er the silence of the waves,—
 O'er a land of bleeding slaves!
 Victor, where is now thy boast;
 Thine iron steeds, thy mailed host?
 Hark! hark! even now I hear his cries!--
 Spirits, hence!--he dies! he dies!

CANTO SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.

The City of Conception—The City of Penco—Castle—Lautaro—Wild Indian
 Maid—Zarinel—Missionary.

THE second moon had now begun to wane,
 Since bold Valdivia left the southern plain;
 Goal of his labours, Penco's port and bay,
 Far gleaming to the summer sunset lay.

The wayworn veteran, who had slowly passed
 Through trackless woods, or o'er savannahs vast,
 With hope impatient sees the city spires
 Gild the horizon, like ascending fires.

Now well-known sounds salute him, as more near
 The citadel and battlements appear; 10
 The approaching trumpets ring at intervals;
 The trumpet answers from the rampart walls,
 Where many a maiden casts an anxious eye,
 Some long-lost object of her love to espy,
 Or watches, as the evening light illumines
 The points of lances, or the passing plumes.

The grating drawbridge and the portal-arch, 17
 Now echo to the long battalion's march ;
 Whilst every eye some friend remembered greets,
 Amid the gazing crowd that throngs the streets.

As bending o'er his mule, amid the throng,
 Pensive and pale, Anselmo rode along,
 How sacred, 'mid the noise of arms, appeared
 His venerable mien and snowy beard !

Whilst every heart a silent prayer bestowed,
 Slow to the convent's massy gate he rode :
 Around, the brothers, gratulating, stand,
 And ask for tidings of the southern land.

As from the turret tolls the vesper bell,
 He seeks, a weary man, his evening cell. 30
 No sounds of social cheer, no beds of state,
 Nor gorgeous canopies his coming wait ;
 But o'er a little bread, with folded hands,
 Thanking the God that gave, a while he stands ;
 Then, while all thoughts of earthly sorrow cease,
 Upon his pallet lays him down in peace.

The scene how different, where the castle-hall
 Rings to the loud triumphant festival :
 A hundred torches blaze, and flame aloof,
 Long quivering shadows streak the vaulted roof,— 40
 Whilst, seen far off, the illumined windows throw
 A splendour on the shore and seas below.

Amid his captains, in imperial state,
 Beneath a crimson canopy, elate,
 Valdivia sits—and, striking loud the strings,
 The wandering minstrel of Valentia sings.
 For Chili conquered, fill the bowl again !
 For Chili conquered, raise the heroic strain !

Lautaro left the hall of jubilee
 Unmarked, and wandered by the moonlit sea : 50

The weary soldiers by their toils oppressed, 119
 Had now retired to silence and to rest.
 The minstrel only, who the song had sung
 Of noble Cid, as o'er the strings he hung,
 Upon the instrument had fall'n asleep,
 Weary, and now was hushed in slumbers deep.
 Tracing the scenes long past, in busy dreams
 Again he wanders by his native streams ;
 Or sits, his evening saraband to sing
 To the clear Garonne's gentle murmuring.

Cold o'er the fleckered clouds the morning broke
 Aslant ere from his slumbers he awoke ; 130
 Still as he sat, nor yet had left the place,
 The first dim light fell on his pallid face.
 He wakes—he gazes round—the dawning day
 Comes from the deep, in garb of cloudy gray.
 The woods with crow of early turkeys ring,
 The glancing birds beneath the castle sing,
 And the sole sun his rising orb displays,
 Radiant and reddening, through the scattered haze.

To recreate the languid sense a while,
 When earth and ocean wore their sweetest smile, 140
 He wandered to the beach : the early air
 Blew soft, and lifted, as it blew, his hair ;
 Flushed was his cheek ; his faded eye, more bright,
 Shone with a faint but animated light,
 While the soft morning ray seemed to bestow
 On his tired mind a transient kindred glow.
 As thus, with shadow stretching o'er the sand,
 He mused and wandered on the winding strand,
 At distance tossed upon the tumbling tide,
 A dark and floating substance he espied. 150
 He stood, and where the eddying surges beat,
 An Indian corse was rolled beneath his feet :

The hollow wave retired with sullen sound ; 153
 The face of that sad corse was to the ground ;
 It seemed a female, by the slender form ;
 He touched the hand—it was no longer warm ;
 He turned its face—O God ! that eye, though dim,
 Seemed with its deadly glare as fixed on him !
 How sunk his shuddering sense, how changed his hue,
 When poor Olola in that corse he knew ! 160
 Lautaro, rushing from the rocks, advanced ;
 His keen eye, like a startled eagle's glanced :
 'Tis she !—he knew her by a mark impressed
 From earliest infancy beneath her breast.

Oh, my poor sister ! when all hopes were past
 Of meeting, do we meet—thus meet—at last !
 Then full on Zarinel, as one amazed,
 With rising wrath and stern suspicion gazed ;
 For Zarinel still knelt upon the sand,
 And to his forehead pressed the dead maid's hand. 170
 Speak ! whence art thou ?

Pale Zarinel, his head
 Upraising answered,
 Peace is with the dead !
 Him dost thou seek who injured thine and thee ?
 Here—strike the fell assassin—I am he !

Die ! he exclaimed, and with convulsive start
 Instant had plunged the dagger in his heart,
 When the meek father, with his holy book,
 And placid aspect, met his frenzied look. 180
 He trembled—struck his brow—and, turning round,
 Flung the uplifted dagger to the ground.
 Then murmured : Father, Heaven has heard thy prayer—
 But oh ! the sister of my soul lies there !
 The Christian's God has triumphed ! father, heap
 Some earth upon her bones, whilst I go weep !

Anselmo with calm brow approached the place,
 And hastened with his staff his faltering pace:
 Ho! child of guilt and wretchedness, he cried,
 Speak!—Holy father, the sad youth replied,
 God bade the seas the accusing victim roll
 Dead at my feet, to teach my shuddering soul
 Its guilt: Oh! father, holy father, pray
 That heaven may take the deep, dire curse away!

187

Oh! yet, Anselmo cried, live and repent,
 For not in vain was this dread warning sent;
 The deep reproaches of thy soul I spare,
 Go! seek Heaven's peace by penitence and prayer.

The youth arose, yet trembling from the shock,
 And severed from the dead maid's hair a lock;
 This to his heart with trembling hand he pressed,
 And dried the salt-sea moisture on his breast.

200

They laid her limbs within the sea-beat grave,
 And prayed: Her soul, O blessed Mary, save!

CANTO SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

Midnight—Valdivia's tent—Missionary—March to the Valley Arauco—First sight of assembled Indians.

THE watchman on the tower his bugle blew,
 And swelling to the morn the streamers flew;
 The rampart-guns a dread alarum gave,
 Smoke rolled, and thunder echoed o'er the wave;
 When, starting from his couch, Valdivia cried,
 What tidings? Of the tribes! a scout replied;
 Ev'n now, prepared thy bulwarks to assail,
 Their gathering numbers darken all the vale!

Valdivia called to the attendant youth, 9
 Philip, he cried, belike thy words have truth ;
 The formidable host, by holy James,
 Might well appal our priests and city dames !
 Dost thou not fear ? Nay—dost thou not reply ?
 Now by the rood, and all the saints on high,
 I hold it sin that thou shouldst lift thy hand
 Against thy brothers in thy native land !
 But, as thou saidst, those mighty enemies
 Me and my feeble legions would despise.
 Yes, by our holy lady, thou shalt ride,
 Spectator of their prowess, by my side ! 20
 Come life, come death, our battle shall display
 Its ensigns to the earliest beam of day !
 With louder summons ring the rampart-bell,
 And haste the shriving father from his cell ;
 A soldier's heart rejoices in alarms :
 And let the trump at midnight sound to arms !
 And now, obedient to the chief's commands,
 The gray-haired priest before the soldier stands.
 Father, Valdivia cried, fierce are our foes,—
 The last event of war God only knows ;— 30
 Let mass be sung ; father, this very night
 I would attend the high and holy rite.
 Yet deem not that I doubt of victory,
 Or place defeat or death before mine eye ;
 It blenches not ! But, whatsoe'er befall,
 Good father, I would part in peace with all.
 So, tell Lautaro—his ingenuous mind
 Perhaps may grieve, if late I seemed unkind :—
 Hear my heart speak, though far from virtue's way
 Ambition's lure hath led my steps astray, 40
 No wanton exercise of barbarous power
 Harrows my shrinking conscience at this hour.

Now beautiful, beneath the heaven's gray arch, 104
 Appeared the main battalion's moving march ;
 The banner of the cross was borne before,
 And next, with aspect sad, and tresses hoar,
 The holy man went thoughtfully and pressed
 A crucifix, in silence, to his breast.
 Valdivia, all in burnished steel arrayed, 110
 Upon whose crest the morn's effulgence played,
 Majestic reined his steed, and seemed alone,
 Worthy the southern world's imperial throne.
 His features through the barred casque that glow,
 His pole-axe pendent from the saddle-bow ;
 His dazzling armour, and the glitter bright
 Of his drawn sabre, in the orient light,
 Speak him not, now, for knightly tournament
 Arrayed, but on emprise of prowess bent,
 And deeds of deadly strife. In blooming pride, 120
 The attendant youth rode, pensive, by his side.
 Their pennoned lances, waving in the wind,
 Two hundred clanking horsemen tramped behind,
 In iron harness clad. The bugles blew,
 And high in air the sanguine ensigns flew.
 The arbalasters next, with cross-bows slung,
 Marched, whilst the plumed Moors their cymbals swung.
 Auxiliar Indians here, a various train,
 With spears and bows, darkened the distant plain ;
 Drums rolled, and fifes re-echoed shrill and clear, 130
 At intervals, as near and yet more near,
 While flags and intermingled halberds shine,
 The long battalion drew its passing line.
 Last rolled the heavy guns, a sable tier,
 By Indians drawn, with matchmen in the rear ;
 And many a straggling mule and sumpter-train
 Closed the embattled order on the plain,

Till nought beneath the azure sky appears 138
 But the projecting points of scarce-discovered spears,
 Slow up the hill, with floating vapours hoar,
 Or by the blue lake's long retiring shore,
 Now seen distinct, through the departing haze,
 The glittering file its bannered length displays ;
 Now winding from the woods, again appears
 The moving line of matchlocks and of spears,
 Part seen, part lost ; the long illustrious march
 Circling the swamp, now draws its various arch ;
 And seems, as on it moves, meandering slow,
 A radiant segment of a living bow.

Five days the Spaniards, trooping in array, 150
 O'er plains and headlands, held their eastern way.
 On the sixth early dawn, with shuddering awe
 And horror, in the last defile they saw
 Ten pendent heads, from which the gore still run,
 All gashed, and grim, and blackening in the sun.
 These were the gallant troop that passed before,
 The Indians' vast encampment to explore,
 Led by Del Oro, now with many a wound
 Pierced, and a headless trunk upon the ground.
 The horses startled, as they tramped in blood ; 160
 The troops a moment half-recoiling stood.

But boots not now to pause, or to retire ;
 Valdivia's eye flashed with indignant fire :
 Follow ! he cried, brave comrades, to the hill !
 And instant shouts the pealing valley fill.

And now, up to the hill's ascending crest,
 With animated look and beating breast,
 He urged his steed ; when, wide beneath his eye,
 He saw, in long expanse, Arauco's valley lie.

Far as the labouring sight could stretch its glance.
 One undulating mass of club and lance, 171

His force a-right, where Harratomac led, 205
 A thousand spears went hissing overhead,
 And feathered arrows, of each varying hue,
 In glancing arch, beneath the sunbeams flew.

Dire was the strife, when ardent Teucapel
 Advancing in the front of carnage fell. 210

At once, Ongolmo, Elicura, rushed,
 And swaying their huge clubs together, crushed
 Horseman and horse ; then bathed their hands in gore,
 And limb from limb the panting carcass tore.

Caupolican, where the main battle bleeds,
 Hosts and succeeding hosts undaunted leads,
 Till, torn and shattered by the ceaseless fire,
 Thousands, with gnashing teeth, and clenched spears,
 expire.

Pierced by a hundred wounds, Ongolmo lies,
 And grasps his club terrific as he dies. 220

With breathless expectation, on the height,
 Lautaro watched the long and dubious fight :
 Pale and resigned the meek man stood, and pressed
 More close the holy image to his breast.

Now nearer to the fight Lautaro drew,
 When on the ground a warrior met his view,
 Upon whose features memory seemed to trace
 A faint resemblance of his father's face ;
 O'er him a horseman, with collected might,
 Raised his uplifted sword, in act to smite, 230

When the youth springing on, without a word,
 Snatched from a soldier's wearied grasp his sword,
 And smote the horseman through the crest : a yell
 Of triumph burst, as to the ground he fell.

Lautara shouted, On ! brave brothers, on !
 Scatter them like the snow !—the day is won !
 Lo, I ! Lautara,—Attacapac's son !

The Indians turn : again the battle bleeds, 238
 Cleft are the helms and crushed the struggling steeds.
 The bugle sounds, and faint with toil and heat,
 Some straggling horsemen to the hills retreat.
 Stand, brave companions ! bold Valdivia cried,
 And shook his sword, in recent carnage dyed ;
 Oh ! droop not—droop not yet—all is not o'er—
 Brave, faithful friends, one glorious sally more.
 Where is Lautaro ! leaps his willing sword
 Now to avenge his long-indulgent lord !
 He waited not for answer, but again
 Spurred to the centre of the horrid plain.
 Clubs, arrows, spears, the spot of death inclose, 250
 And fainter now the Spanish shouts arose.
 'Mid ghastly heaps of many a bleeding corse,
 Lies the caparisoned and dying horse.

While still the rushing multitudes assail,
 Vain is the fiery tube, the twisted mail !
 The Spanish horsemen faint ; long yells resound,
 As the dragged ensign trails the gory ground :
 Shout, for the chief is seized !—a thousand cries
 Burst forth—Valdivia ! for the sacrifice !
 And lo, in silent dignity resigned, 260
 The meek Anselmo, led in bonds, behind !
 His hand upon his breast, young Zarinel
 Amidst a group of mangled Indians fell ;
 The spear that to his heart a passage found
 Left poor Olola's hair within the wound.

Now all is hushed, save where, at times, alone,
 Deep midnight listens to a distant moan ;
 Save where the condors clamour, overhead,
 And strike with sounding beaks the helmets of the dead.

CANTO EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT.

Indian festival for victory—Old Warrior brought in wounded—Recognises his long-lost son, and dies—Discovery—Conclusion with the Old Warrior's funeral, and prophetic oration by the Missionary.

THE morn returns, and, reddening, seems to shed
 One ray of glory on the patriot-dead.
 Round the dark stone, the victor-chiefs behold!
 Still on their locks the goutts of gore hang cold!
 There stands the brave Caupolican, the pride
 Of Chili, young Lautaro, by his side!
 Near the grim circle, pendent from the wood,
 Twelve hundred Spanish heads are dripping blood.
 Shrill sound the notes of death : in festive dance,
 The Indian maids with myrtle boughs advance ; 10
 The tinkling sea-shells on their ancles ring,
 As, hailing thus the victor-youth, they sing:—

SONG OF INDIAN MAIDS.

Oh, shout for Lautaro, the young and the brave!
 The arm of whose strength was uplifted to save,
 When the steeds of the strangers came rushing amain,
 And the ghosts of our fathers looked down on the slain!
 'Twas eve, and the noise of the battle was o'er,
 Five thousand brave warriors were cold in their gore ;
 When, in front, young Lautaro invincible stood,
 And the horses and iron-men rolled in their blood!
 As the snows of the mountain are swept by the blast,
 The earthquake of death o'er the white men has passed ;
 Shout, Chili, in triumph ! the battle is won,
 And we dance round the heads that are black in the sun !

Lautaro, as if wrapt in thought profound,
 Oft turned an anxious look inquiring round.

He is not here!—Say, does my father live? 15
 Ere eager voices could an answer give,
 With faltering footsteps and declining head,
 And slowly by an aged Indian led,
 Wounded and weak the mountain chief appears :
 Live, live! Lautaro cried, with bursting tears, 20
 And fell upon his neck, and, kissing, pressed,
 With folding arms, his gray hairs to his breast.
 Oh, live! I am thy son—thy long-lost child!
 The warrior raised his look, and faintly smiled ;
 Chili, my country, is avenged! he cried :
 My son!—then sunk upon a shield—and died.

Lautaro knelt beside him, as he bowed,
 And kissed his bleeding breast, and wept aloud.
 The sounds of sadness through the circle ran,
 When thus, with lifted axe, Caupolican : 30
 What, for our fathers, brothers, children, slain,
 Canst thou repay, ruthless, inhuman Spain?
 Here, on the scene with recent slaughter red,
 To sooth the spirits of the brave who bled,
 Raise we, to-day, the war-feast of the dead.
 Bring forth the chief in bonds! Fathers, to-day
 Devote we to our gods the noblest prey!

Lautaro turned his eyes, and, gazing round,
 Beheld Valdivia and Anselmo bound!
 One stood in arms, as with a stern despair, 40
 His helmet cleft in twain, his temples bare,
 Where streaks of blood that dropped upon his mail,
 Served but to show his face more deadly pale :
 His eyebrows, dark and resolute, he bent,
 And stood, composed, to wait the dire event.

Still on the cross his looks Anselmo cast,
 As if all thought of this vain world was passed,
 And in a world of light, without a shade,
 Ev'n now his meek and guileless spirit strayed.

Where stood the Spanish chief, a muttering sound 50
 Rose, and each club was lifted from the ground ;
 When, starting from his father's corse, his sword
 Waving before his once-triumphant lord,
 Lautaro cried, My breast shall meet the blow :
 But save—save him, to whom my life I owe !

Valdivia marked him with unmoving eye,
 Then looked upon his bonds, nor deigned reply ;
 When Harratomac, stealing with slow pace,
 And lifting high his iron-jagged mace,
 Smote him to earth ; a thousand voices rose, 60
 Mingled with shouts and yells, So fall our foes !

Lautaro gave to tears a moment's space,
 As black in death he marked Valdivia's face,
 Then cried—Chiefs, friends, and thou, Caupolican,
 Oh, spare this innocent and holy man !
 He never sailed, rapacious, o'er the deep,
 The gold of blood-polluted lands to heap ;
 He never gave the armed hosts his aid,
 But meekly to the Mighty Spirit prayed,
 That in all lands the sounds of woe might cease, 70
 And brothers of the wide world dwell in peace !
 The victor-youth saw generous sympathy
 Already steal to every warrior's eye ;
 Then thus again : Oh, if this filial tear
 Bear witness my own father was most dear ;
 If this uplifted arm, this bleeding steel
 Speak for my country what I felt and feel ;
 If, at this hour, I meet her high applause,
 While my heart beats still ardent in her cause ;—
 Hear, and forgive these tears that grateful flow, 80
 Oh ! hear, how much to this poor man I owe !

I was a child—when to my sire's abode,
 In Chillan's vale, the armed horsemen rode :
 Me, whilst my father cold and breathless lay,

Far off the crested soldiers bore away, 85
 And for a captive sold. No friend was near,
 To mark a young and orphan stranger's tear!
 This humble man, with kind parental care,
 Snatched me from slavery—saved from dark despair;
 And as my years increased, protected, fed, 90
 And breathed a father's blessings on my head.
 A Spanish maid was with him: need I speak?
 Behold, affection's tear still wets my cheek!
 Years, as they passed, matured in ripening grace
 Her form unfolding, and her beauteous face:
 She heard my orphan tale; she loved to hear,
 And sometimes for my fortunes dropped a tear.
 I could have bowed to direst ills resigned,
 But wept at looks so sweet, at words so kind.
 Valdivia saw me, now in blooming age, 100
 And claimed me from the father as his page;
 The chief too cherished me, yea, saved my life,
 When in Peru arose the civil strife.
 Yet still remembering her I loved so well,
 Oft I returned to the gray father's cell:
 His voice instructed me; recalled my youth
 From rude idolatry to heavenly truth:
 Of this hereafter; he my darkling mind
 Cleared, and from low and sensual thoughts refined.
 Then first, with feelings new impressed, I strove 110
 To hide the tear of tenderness and love:
 Amid the fairest maidens of Peru,
 My eyes, my heart, one only object knew:
 I lived that object's love and faith to share;
 He saw, and blessed us with a father's prayer.
 Here, at Valdivia's last and stern command,
 I came, a stranger in my native land!
 Anselmo (so him call—now most in need—
 And standing here in bonds, for whom I plead)

With lowering brows, and mace yet drooping blood, 155
And clotted hair, there Mariantu stood.

Anselmo here, sad, yet in sorrow mild,
Appeared : she cried, A blessing on your child,
And knelt, as slow revived her waking sense,
And then, with looks aghast, Oh bear us hence ! 160

Now all the assembled chiefs, assenting, cried,
Live, live ! Lautaro and his beauteous bride !
With eager arms Lautaro snatched his boy,
And kissed him in an agony of joy ;
Then to Anselmo gave, who strove to speak,
And felt the tear first burning on his cheek :
The infant held his neck with strict embrace,
And kissed his pale emaciated face.

From the dread scene, wet with Valdivia's gore,
His wan and trembling charge Lautaro bore. 170

There was a bank, where slept the summer-light,
A small stream whispering went in mazes bright,
And stealing from the sea, the western wind
Waved the magnolias on the slope inclined :
The woodpecker, in glittering plumage green,
And echoing bill, beneath the boughs was seen ;
And, arched with gay and pendent flowers above,
The floripondio¹ its rich trellis wove.

Lautaro bent, with looks of love and joy,
O'er his yet trembling wife and beauteous boy : 180

Oh, by what miracle, beloved ! say,
Hast thou escaped the perils of the way
From Lima, where our humble dwelling stood,
To these tumultuous scenes, this vale of blood ?

Roused by his voice, as from the sleep of death,
Faint she replied, with slow-recovering breath,
Who shall express, when thou, best friend ! wert gone,
How sunk my heart !—deserted and alone !

¹ One of the most beautiful of the beautiful climbing plants of South America.

Would I were with thee! oft I sat and sighed, 139
 When the pale moon shone on the silent tide—
 At length resolved, I sought thee o'er the seas :
 The brave bark cheer'ly went before the breeze,
 That arms and soldiers to Valdivia bore,
 From Lima bound to Chili's southern shore :
 I seized the fair occasion—ocean smiled,
 As to the sire I bore his lisping child.

The storm arose : with loud and sudden shock
 The vessel sunk, disparting on a rock.
 Some mariners, amidst the billows wild,
 Scarce saved, in one small boat, me and my child. 200
 What I have borne, a captive since that day—
 Forgive these tears—I scarce have heart to say !
 None pitied, save one gentle Indian maid—
 A wild maid—of her looks I was afraid ;
 Her long black hair upon her shoulders fell,
 And in her hand she bore a wreathed shell.

Lautaro for a moment turned aside,
 And, Oh, my sister! with faint voice he cried.

Already free from sorrow and alarms,
 I clasped in thought a husband in my arms, 210
 When a dark warrior, stationed on the height,
 Who held his solitary watch by night,
 Before me stood, and lifting high his lance,
 Exclaimed : No further, on thy life, advance !
 Faint, wearied, sinking to the earth with dread,
 Back to the dismal cave my steps he led.

Only at eve, within the craggy cleft,
 Some water, and a cake of maize, were left.
 The thirteenth sun unseen went down the sky ;
 When morning came, they brought me forth to die ;
 But hushed be every sigh, each boding fear, 221
 Since all I sought on earth, and all I love, is here !

Her infant raised his hands, with glistening eye, 223
 To reach a large and radiant butterfly,
 That fluttered near his face ; with looks of love,
 And truth and tenderness, Lautaro strove
 To calm her wounded heart ; the holy sire,
 His eyes faint-lighted with a transient fire,
 Hung o'er them, and to Heaven his prayer addressed,
 While, with uplifted hands, he wept and blest. 230

An aged Indian came, with feathers crowned,
 And knelt before Lautaro on the ground.
 What tidings, Indian ?

INDIAN.

When I led thy sire,
 Whom late thou saw'st upon his shield expire,
 Son of our Ulmen, didst thou mark no trace,
 In these sad looks, of a remembered face ?
 Dost thou remember Izdabel ? Look here !
 It is thy father's hatchet and his spear.

Friend of my infant days, how I rejoice, 240
 Lautaro cried, once more to hear that voice !
 Life like a dream, since last we met, has fled—
 Oh, my beloved sister, thou art dead !

INDIAN.

I come to guide thee through untrodden ways,
 To the lone valley, where thy father's days
 Were passed ; where every cave and every tree,
 From morn to morn, reminded him of thee !

Lautaro cried : Here, faithful Indian, stay ;
 I have a last sad duty yet to pay.
 A little while we part :—thou here remain. 250
 He spake, and passed like lightning o'er the plain.
 Ah, cease, Castilian maid, thy vain alarms !
 See where he comes—his father in his arms !

Now lead, he cried. The Indian, sad and still, 254
 Paced on from wood to vale, from vale to hill ;
 Her infant tired, and hushed a while to rest,
 Smiled, in a dream, upon its mother's breast ;
 The pensive mother gray Anselmo led ;
 Behind, Lautaro bore his father dead.

Beneath the branching palms they slept at night ; 260
 The small birds waked them ere the morning light.
 Before their path, in distant view, appeared
 The mountain-smoke, that its dark column reared
 O'er Andes' summits, in the pale blue sky,
 Lifting their icy pinnacles so high.
 Four days they onward held their eastern way ;
 On the fifth rising morn, before them lay
 Chillan's lone glen, amid whose windings green,
 The Warrior's loved and last abode was seen.
 No smoke went up, a stillness reigned around, 270
 Save where the waters fell with soothing sound,
 Save where the Thenca sang so loud and clear,
 And the bright humming-bird was spinning near.
 Yet here all human tumults seemed to cease,
 And sunshine rested on the spot of peace ;
 The myrtles bloomed as fragrant and as green
 As if Lautaro scarce had left the scene ;
 And in his ear the falling waters' spray
 Seemed swelling with the sounds of yesterday.

Where yonder rock the aged cedars shade, 280
 There shall my father's bones in peace be laid.

Beneath the cedar's shade they dug the ground ;
 The small and sad communion gathered round.
 Beside the grave stood aged Izdabel,
 And broke the spear, and cried : Farewell, farewell !
 Lautaro hid his face, and sighed Adieu !
 As the stone hatchet in the grave he threw.

The little child that to its mother clung,
 Stretched out its arm, then on her garment hung,
 With sidelong looks, half-shrinking, half-amazed,
 And dropped its flowers, unconscious, as it gazed.

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And now Anselmo, his pale brow inclined,
 The honoured relics, dust to dust, consigned
 With Christian rites, and sung, on bending knee,
 "Eternam pacem dona, Domine."

Then rising up he closed the holy book ;
 And lifting in the beam his lighted look,
 (The cross, with meekness, folded on his breast),
 Here, too, he cried, my bones in peace shall rest !

Few years remain to me, and never more
 Shall I behold, O Spain ! thy distant shore !
 Here lay my bones, that the same tree may wave
 O'er the poor Christian's and the Indian's grave.

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Oh, may it (when the sons of future days
 Shall hear our tale and on the hillock gaze),
 Oh, may it teach, that charity should bind,
 Where'er they roam, the brothers of mankind !
 The time shall come, when wildest tribes shall hear
 Thy voice, O Christ ! and drop the slaughtering spear.

Yet we condemn not him who bravely stood,
 To seal his country's freedom with his blood ;
 And if, in after-times, a ruthless band
 Of fell invaders sweep my native land,
 May she, by Chili's stern example led,
 Hurl back his thunder on the assailant's head ;
 Sustained by Freedom, strike the avenging blow,
 And learn one virtue from her ancient foe !

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END OF VOLUME I.