

And as the birds of heaven begin to sing,
Then, one by one, to sleep they go away,
As fainter on the air the music rings;
The lovers lightly to their couch repair,
And, locked in love's embrace, the mystic
spell

Of spirit sleep creeps sweetly o'er them there,
As soft as murmurings of an ocean shell.

They slept; to him it was a dreamless sleep,
But hers was not as other spirits slept—
Of earth she was, her slumber was not deep—
She woke ere high the shining sun had crept.
O, horrors dread! In what strange place is she!
She fell asleep midst splendors bright,
But wakes where nought but fearful terrors be,
With loathsome smells and ghastly, horrid
sights.

Around, she sees but skulls and rotting bones,
And shriveled corpses lying everywhere,
While, to her fancy, come the dying groans
Of those poor souls who lie in silence there;
Her handsome lover by her side there lies,
A skeleton, who, to her, turns his face,
With horrid, grinning teeth, and hollow eyes;
His bony arms are clasped about her waist.

In terrors wild, she leaped and screamed,
And fled as if by horrid ghosts pursued,
Till open air and light upon her streamed,
And scarcely turned the wretched place to
view;

She swiftly hurried to the river shore,
And then, alone, she started o'er the tide,
And safely found her friends of earth once more,
That she had left, to be a spirit bride.

—
She told what she had seen among the dead,
And blamed her friends for selling her away,
A horrid, mouldering skeleton to wed,

With bones and dust and crawling worms to
stay;
They told her that the spirits sleep all day,
Among the dead, and then come forth at
night,

To life renewed, and pleasures bright and gay,
No horrid dreams their slumbers ever fright.

"If you," said they, "till evening's shades had
slept,

And only waked to music's swelling tones,
Your holy marriage vow you would have kept,
And never seen your lover's mouldering
bones."

That night, three spirits came and made de-
mand

That they send back the mourning husband's
bride,

The girl should come with haste, was their com-
mand,

And with her spouse among the dead abide.

They went; the spirits met them on the shore,
And in the lover's arms they gave the girl,
And back they sent the friends, the waters o'er,
And kept the maid to live in spirit world.
Again the lovers danced and sang all night,
With joy and feasting, till the morning call,
And then they slept through all the sunny light,
The bride wakes not till dark'ning shadows
fall.

And ever after that, she dreamless slept,
To wake and find herself in heav'n—
Forgot the tears of woe she oft had wept,
And all the anguish that her soul had riv'n;
He now no longer mourned an absent bride,
And heaven no more could lonely seem to be;
'Twas bliss to him when she was by his side,
With her and heaven, he was supremely
blest.

—
Their time, unreckoned, sped in bliss away,
Softer than the filmy splendors of a dream,
A year or more flits by, and then one day,
A new-born child in spirit land is seen;
No snowy marble from the Aegean sea
Was ever cut in cherub form so fair,
No Houris' orbs, of Orient dreams, could be
Seraphic as the babe's that nestled there.

Ah, who can tell the depth of mother's love,
As fond she gazed upon her treasure fair?
No lily that in garland e'er was wove,
Nor asphodel, with it could half compare;
A thousand Kohinoors with sparkling glow,
With all the brightest pearls beneath the sea,
And yellow, gleaming gold of Idaho,
Compared to it, would dross and nothing be.

How sweetly tender was the gentle swell
Of first deep father's love and yearning pride,
When helpless innocence he first beheld,
There, softly sleeping, by its mother's side;
And as he fondly watched the infant's smile,
There came a mem'ry of his mother's face,
He longed that she might see the baby's wiles,
Its little, cherub form, and angel grace.

"Go, swiftly, spirit messenger," said he,
"Go, speed thee, to the land where mortals
stay.

A message carry o'er the lethean sea,
And bid our friends to come without delay;
Go tell my mother she may take our child,
And, with its mother, bear it to her home,
Then all the spirits of the dead, erewhile,
Again, to live with men on earth, shall come."