

THE
WORKS
OF
THOMAS MOORE.

PARIS : PRINTED BY A. BELIN.

THE
WORKS
OF
THOMAS MOORE,

COMPREHENDING

ALL HIS MELODIES, BALLADS, ETC.

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED WITHOUT THE ACCOMPANYING MUSIC.



VOL. V.



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THE
LOVES OF THE ANGELS.

PREFACE.

THIS Poem, somewhat different in form, and much more limited in extent, was originally designed as an episode for a work, about which I have been, at intervals, employed during the last two years. Some months since, however, I found that my friend Lord Byron had, by an accidental coincidence, chosen the same subject for a Drama ; and, as I could not but feel the disadvantage of coming after so formidable a rival, I thought it best to publish my humble sketch immediately, with such alterations and additions as I had time to make, and thus, by an earlier appearance in the literary horizon, give myself the chance of what astronomers call an *Heliacal rising*, before the luminary, in whose light I was to be lost, should appear.

As objections may be made, by persons whose opinions I respect, to the selection of a subject of this nature from the Scripture, I think it right to

remark, that, in point of fact, the subject is *not* scriptural—the notion upon which it is founded (that of the love of Angels for women) having originated in an erroneous translation by the LXX. of that verse in the sixth chapter of Genesis, upon which the sole authority for the fable rests.* The foundation of my story, therefore, has as little to do with Holy Writ as have the dreams of the later Platonists, or the reveries of the Jewish divines; and, in appropriating the notion thus to the uses of poetry, I have done no more than establish it in that region of fiction, to which the opinions of the most rational Fathers, and of all other Christian theologians, have long ago consigned it.

In addition to the fitness of the subject for poetry, it struck me also as capable of affording an allegorical medium, through which might be shadowed out (as I have endeavoured to do in the following stories), the fall of the soul from its original purity—the loss of light and happiness which it suffers, in the pursuit of this world's perishable pleasures—and the punishments, both

* See Note.

from conscience and Divine justice, with which impurity, pride, and presumptuous inquiry into the awful secrets of God, are sure to be visited. The beautiful story of Cupid and Psyche owes its chief charm to this sort of “veiled meaning,” and it has been my wish (however I may have failed in the attempt) to communicate the same *moral* interest to the following pages.

THE
LOVES OF THE ANGELS.

'TWAS when the world was in its prime,
When the fresh stars had just begun
Their race of glory, and young Time
Told his first birth-days by the sun ;
When, in the light of Nature's dawn
Rejoicing, men and angels met
On the high hill and sunny lawn,—
Ere Sorrow came, or Sin had drawn
'Twixt man and Heaven her curtain yet !
When earth lay nearer to the skies
Than in these days of crime and woe,
And mortals saw, without surprise,
In the mid-air, angelic eyes
Gazing upon this world below.

Alas, that Passion should profane,
Even then, that morning of the earth !
That, sadder still, the fatal stain
Should fall on hearts of heavenly birth—
And oh, that stain so dark should fall
From Woman's love, most sad of all !

One evening, in that time of bloom,
On a hill's side, where hung the ray
Of sunset, sleeping in perfume,
Three noble youths conversing lay ;
And, as they look'd, from time to time,
To the far sky, where Daylight furl'd
His radiant wing, their brows sublime
Bespoke them of that distant world—
Creatures of light, such as still play,
Like motes in sunshine, round the Lord,
And through their infinite array
Transmit each moment, night and day,
The echo of His luminous word !

Of Heaven they spoke, and, still more oft,
Of the bright eyes that charm'd them thence ;

Till, yielding gradual to the soft
And balmy evening's influence—
The silent breathing of the flowers—
The melting light that beam'd above,
As on their first, fond, erring hours,
Each told the story of his love,
The history of that hour unblest,
When, like a bird from its high nest
Won down by fascinating eyes,
For Woman's smile he lost the skies.

The First who spoke was one, with look
The least celestial of the three—
A Spirit of light mould, that took
The prints of earth most yieldingly;
Who, even in Heaven, was not of those
Nearest the Throne, but held a place
Far off, among those shining rows
That circle out through endless space,
And o'er whose wings the light from Him
In the great centre falls most dim.

Still fair and glorious, he but shone
Among those youths th' unheavenliest one—