

To put all controversy to an end,
 A man pluck'd off his shoe, and gave his friend;
 And this in Israel was an evidence,
 When e'er they changed an inheritance.
 Then said the kinsman unto Boaz, do
 Thou take my right. And off he pluck'd his
 shoe.

Then Boaz to the elders thus did say
 And to the people, all of you this day
 Appear for me as witnesses, that I
 Have bought all of the land of Naomi,
 That was Elimelech's or did belong
 Either to Mahlon or to Chilion:
 And Ruth the Moabite, who some time
 Was Mahlon's wife, I've purchas'd to be mine,
 Still to preserve alive the dead man's name
 On his inheritance, lest that the same
 Should in the gate where he inhabited,
 Or 'mongst his brethren be extinguished:
 Behold, this day, my witnesses you are.
 Then all the people that were present there,
 And elders said, We are thy witnesses:
 May God this woman thou hast taken bless,
 That she, like Rachel, and like Leah be,
 Which two did build up Israel's family:

And thou in Ephratah exalt thy name,
 And through the town of Bethl'hem spread thy
 fame;

And may the seed which God shall give to thee
 Of this young woman, full as prosperous be,
 As was the house of Pharez heretofore,
 (Pharez, whom Tamar unto Judah bore.)
 So he took Ruth, and as his wife he knew her,
 And God was pleased, when he went in to her
 To grant the blessing of conception,
 And she accordingly bare him a son.
 Then said the woman, Blessed be the Lord!
 Bless thou him Naomi, who doth afford
 To thee this day a kinsman, which shall be
 Famous in Israel; and shall be to thee
 As the restorer of thy life again,
 And in thy drooping age shall thee sustain:
 For that thy daughter-in-law, who loves thee
 well

And in thy sight doth seven sons excel,
 Hath born this child. Then Naomi took the boy
 To nurse; and did him in her bosom lay.
 Her neighbours too, gave him a name, for why,
 This son, say they, is born to Naomi:
 They called him Obed, from whose loins did
 spring
 Jesse, the sire of David, Israel's king.

THE HISTORY OF SAMSON

JUDGES, CHAP. XIII.

When Israel's sins th' Almighty did provoke,
 To make them subject to Philistine yoke
 For forty years: in Zorah dwelt a man,
 His name Manoah, of the tribe of Dan;
 His wife was barren, unto whom appeared
 The angel of the Lord, and thus declared:
 Though thou, said he, art barren, time shall
 come
 Thou shalt enjoy the blessing of thy womb;
 Now therefore I entreat thee to refrain
 From wine, strong drink, and things that are
 unclean,
 For lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son,
 Upon whose head there shall no razor come:

For he to God a Nazarite shall be,
 And shall begin to set his people free
 From the Philistine yoke. The woman came
 And told her husband, she had seen a man
 Of God: his dreadful look made me, said she,
 Think him an angel of the Lord to be:
 But I inquired not from whence he came,
 Neither did he make known to me his name:
 But thus he said, Thou shalt conceive a son;
 Wherefore strong drink and wine, see that thou
 shun,
 And have a care that thou be not defil'd
 With things that are unclean; for why, the child
 Shall from his separation from the womb,
 Become a Nazarite, ev'n to his tomb.
 Manoah then did supplicate the Lord,
 And said, O Lord, be pleased to afford

This favour unto me, to send again
 The man of God, more fully to explain
 Thy will to us, that we may rightly know,
 When this child shall be born, what we must
 do.

And to Manoah's prayer God gave ear,
 And to his wife the angel did appear
 Again, as she did in the field retire,
 At such time as her husband was not nigh her.
 And she made haste, and ran, and strait
 declared

Unto her husband, that the man appeared
 Again, whom she had seen the other day.
 Manoah then arose, and went his way,
 And when he came, he said, Art thou the man
 That spakest to my wife? He said, I am.
 Manoah said, Now let thy words be true;
 How shall we use the child, What must we do?
 Then said the angel of the Lord, let her
 Of all that I have charged her beware:
 She may not taste of what comes of the vine,
 Nor may she drink strong drink, or any wine,
 Nor may she eat of things that are unclean,
 From all that I have said let her refrain.
 Manoah said unto the angel, stay
 With us, till we have dress'd a kid, I pray.
 But he reply'd, though thou shalt me detain,
 I'll eat no bread, but if thou dost design
 A sacrifice unto the Lord, then offer:
 For ne'er till now, Manoah did discover
 It was a man of God he spake unto.
 Then said he to the angel, Let me know
 Thy name, that when these things shall be
 perform'd,
 The honour due to thee may be return'd.
 Whereto the man of God made this reply,
 Why askest thou, since 'tis a mystery?
 So he a kid, and a meat-off'ring took,
 And offer'd to the Lord upon a rock.
 And there the man of God did wond'rously,
 The whilst Manoah and his wife stood by:
 For as the altar did send up the flame,
 The man of God ascended in the same.
 Manoah and his wife stood looking on,
 And on their faces to the ground fell down.
 But then the angel did appear no more.
 Manoah then knew who he was: therefore
 He said unto his wife, most surely we
 Shall die, for we the face of God did see.

But she reply'd, If God would such a thing,
 He would not now accept our offering,
 Or would he have to us these things made
 known;

Or told us, as at this time he hath done.
 And now, according to the angel's word,
 The woman bare a son, to whom the Lord
 Was pleas'd, his blessing graciously to give:
 She call'd him Samson, and the child did thrive.
 And lo! the spirit of the Lord began,
 At times to move him in the camp of Dan.

CHAP. XIV.

Now down to Timnath Samson's steps incline,
 Where seeing the daughter of a Philistine,
 He came up and did of his parents crave,
 That he in marriage might the woman have.
 Then thus his father and his mother said,
 'Mongst all thy kin can'st thou find ne'er a
 maid;

Nor yet among my people, fit to make
 A wife, but thou wilt this Philistine take,
 Of race uncircumcised? He replied,
 Get her for me, for I'm well satisfied.
 But neither of his parents then did know,
 It was the Lord that moved him thereto,
 To seek a way to accomplish his designs,
 Upon the then o'er-ruling Philistines.
 Then Samson and his parents both went down
 To Timnath, and as they came near the town,
 Among the vineyards a young lion roar'd:
 Then on him came the spirit of the Lord,
 And though unarm'd, he rent him like a kid,
 But he discovered not to them the deed.
 And he went down, and with the woman
 treated,
 And was well pleas'd to have the match
 completed.

And in a while as he returned again
 To take his wife, behold, where he had slain
 The beast, he there a swarm of bees set eye on,
 And honey in the carcase of the lion:
 He took thereof, and eating, on he went,
 And to his parents did a part present:
 And they did also eat, but did not know
 That from the lion's carcase it did flow.
 So down his father went unto the woman,
 And Samson made a feast, as it was common

Among young men. The Philistines provide
 Thirty companions with him to abide
 And Samson said unto them, now behold,
 I have a riddle for you to unfold;
 Which if you do before the seven days' feast
 Be ended, I will give to every guest
 A sheet and change of garments; but if ye
 Cannot declare it, ye shall give to me
 Full thirty sheets, and thirty changes too.
 Then said they, What's thy riddle, let us know?
 And Samson said, The eater sent forth meat,
 And from the strong there came a thing most
 sweet.

And they could not in three days find it out,
 Wherefore before the seventh came about,
 They said unto his wife, Thou must entice
 Thy husband to discover this device
 Lest we burn thee, and all thy father's house:
 Is it not so, that ye have called us
 To make a spoil? And Samson's wife wept sore,
 And said, thou dost but hate me, and no more;
 To put a riddle to my countrymen
 And not tell't me. And he reply'd again,
 I have not told my father or my mother,
 And shall I now to thee this thing discover.
 And she continually before him wept,
 During the time the feasting days were kept.
 And now behold it came to pass that he,
 By reason of her importunity,
 Did on the seventh day to her unfold
 The riddle, which she to her brethren told;
 And e'er the sun went down on that same day,
 The Philistines to Samson thus did say,
 What is more sweet than honey? What more
 strong

Than is a lion? And he said, how long
 Would it have been, e'er you had understood
 This thing, had you not with my heifer plow'd?
 Then came the spirit of the Lord upon
 Him, and he hasted down to Askelon,
 And thirty of the Philistines he slew,
 And took their clothes, and gave the garments
 due.

To every one of them that had disclosed
 The meaning of the riddle he proposed;
 And towards them his anger fiercely burned,
 And he unto his father's house returned.
 But Samson's wife was given unto one
 That was his friend and chief companion.

CHAP. XV.

But in a while, as Samson visited
 His wife, in the wheat harvest with a kid,
 To her into her chamber he would go,
 The which her father would not let him do;
 But said, I thought that thou had'st quite
 forsook her,
 Wherefore I gave consent, and thy friend took
 her;

Doth not her sister's beauty her's exceed,
 Though young? I pray then take her in her
 stead.

And Samson said, I shall more blameless be
 Than they, though I shall do them injury.
 And then he caught three hundred foxes, and
 Turn'd tail to tail, and put a fiery brand
 Between two tails, and setting fire thereto,
 Into the standing corn he let them go,
 And burnt both shocks and standing corn and
 vines,

And all the olives of the Philistines.
 Then they inquired who this thing had done,
 And were inform'd it was the Timnite's son;
 Because his father took his wife away,
 And gave her his companion to enjoy.
 And the Philistines came up, full of wrath,
 And burnt with fire, her and her father both.
 And Samson said, though you have done this
 thing,

A further evil I will on you bring;
 And my avenging hand shall cease hereafter;
 And hip and thigh he smote them with great
 slaughter.

And he return'd, and came up to the top
 Of Etam, and dwelt there upon the rock.
 Then the Philistines up to Judah went,
 And in the vale of Lehi pitched their tent.
 Then said the men of Judah, for what reason
 Are you come up against us at this season?
 And they made answer, We are come to bind
 Samson, to do to him in the same kind
 As he hath done to us. Then there went up
 Three thousand men of Judah to the top
 Of the rock Etam, and to Samson said,
 Dost thou not know that we have long obey'd
 The Philistines? Wherefore is it that thou
 Hast done this thing, to bring this evil now,

Upon us, let us know it? Then said he
 I did to them as they have done to me.
 Then said they we are come, and have brought
 bands,
 To bind, and give thee up into their hands.
 And he made answer, you shall swear unto me,
 That you yourselves no injury will do me.
 And they reply'd, no no, we will but bind thee,
 We will not kill thee, but to them resign thee.
 And they took two new cords, and therewith
 tied him,
 And from the rock where he abode convey him:
 Whom when they to the camp at Lehi brought,
 The Philistines against him gave a shout:
 And mightily the Spirit of the Lord
 Came on him, and like burning flax each cord
 That was upon his arms became; the bands
 Were likewise separated from his hands.
 And he the jaw-bone of an ass espied,
 And took and smote them till a thousand died.
 Then said he, with an ass's jaw-bone I
 Have made mine enemies in heaps to lie.
 Behold I have destroy'd a thousand men
 With this same worthless ass's jaw. And when
 He made an end to speak, it came to pass
 He cast away the jaw-bone of the ass,
 And said, Now let the place where this was
 done
 Be by the name of Ramath-Lehi known.
 And he was sore athirst, and to the Lord
 He cried, and said, O Lord, thou did'st afford
 This great deliverance, and now shall I,
 By reason of my thirst fall down and die,
 And fall into the most accursed hands
 Of these uncircumcis'd Philistine bands?
 But God was pleas'd to cleave an hollow place,
 Within the jaw, from whence did water pass;
 Whereof when he had drunk, his spirit came
 As heretofore, and he reviv'd again:
 Wherefore that place, which is in Lehi, bore
 Unto this day the name of En-hakkore.
 And in the days the Philistines bore sway,
 Israel for twenty years did him obey.

CHAP. XVI.

Then down to Gaza Samson went, and there
 Seeing an harlot, went in unto her.

And when the Gazites heard he was come
 thither:
 Straightway they gathered themselves together
 To compass him about, and lay in wait
 All night, to take him in the city gate;
 And they were still all night, for why? Say they,
 To-morrow we shall kill him when 'tis day.
 And he till midnight lay, and then arose,
 And with the city gates away he goes,
 Bearing the posts and bar and all away,
 And on an hill near Hebron did them lay.
 And afterward it came to pass he saw,
 And lov'd a woman named Delilah,
 Who in the vale of Sorek dwelt, to whom
 There did the lords of the Philistines come,
 And said, If thou wilt but entice him to reveal
 Where lies his strength, and which way we may
 deal
 With him, to bind him, to afflict him, we
 Each one will give a great reward to thee.
 And she to Samson said, I pray thee, tell
 Wherein thy strength doth other men excel,
 And how thou may'st be bound. And he eplied,
 If they with seven green withs that ne'er were
 dried,
 Shall bind me hand and foot, I shall be then
 As weak and impotent as other men.
 Then the Philistine lords for her provide
 The seven green withs which never had been
 dried,
 And she therewith did bind him, (now there
 were
 Men lying in wait whom she had placed there,)
 Then she cried out, and said, Now Samson
 stand
 Thy ground, for the Philistines are at hand.
 And straight he brake the withs, and they
 became
 Like to a thread of tow when touch'd with
 flame:
 So was his strength not found out. Then said
 she,
 Samson, behold, thou hast deceived me,
 And told me lies: therefore no longer blind me,
 But tell, I pray thee, wherewith I may bind thee.
 Bind me with ropes that ne'er were us'd, said
 he;
 Then weak as other men are, shall I be.

She therefore took new ropes, and bound him,
 and
 Cried, Samson, the Philistines are at hand:
 (And in the chamber there were man lay hid)
 And from his arms he brake them like a thread.
 Then said she, Thou hast mocked me hitherto,
 And told me lies: now tell me what to do
 To bind thee. He replied, Thou with the web
 Must interweave the seven locks of my head.
 Then she his locks did fasten with the pin,
 And said, The Philistines are coming in,
 Shift, Samson, for thyself; then he awoke,
 And pin and web, and all away he took.
 Then said she, How canst thou pretend to love
 me,
 When thus thy doing towards me disprove
 thee?
 For now, behold, thou hast deceived me thrice,
 And hast not told me where thy great strength
 lies.
 At length his soul being vex'd exceedingly,
 By reason of her importunity:
 He told the secrets of his heart, and said,
 Never yet razor on my head was laid;
 For I have been to God a Nazarite,
 Even from the day that first I saw the light:
 Wherefore like other men, if I am shaven,
 I shall be weak, and of my strength bereaven.
 And when she saw that he had told her all
 The secrets of his heart, she sent to call
 The lords of the Philistines. Come, said she,
 This once, for now he hath made known to me
 The very truth. Then they came up together,
 And brought the money in their hands to give
 her.
 Then down to sleep upon her knees she laid
 him,
 And call'd a man, who of his locks betray'd
 him.
 And to afflict him she began, and then
 His strength became like that of other men.
 Then said she, Samson, thy Philistine foes
 Are just at hand: and he from sleep arose,
 And as at other times went forth to shake him,
 Not knowing that the Lord did now forsake
 him.

But the Philistines seized him, and brought
 Him down to Gaza, having first put out
 His eyes, and did with brazen fetters bind
 And made him in the prison house to grind.
 Howbeit the hair upon his head began,
 After he had been shaved, to grow again.
 Then the Philistine lords together met,
 And a thanksgiving-day apart they set,
 For to rejoice, and unto Dagon pay
 Their highest service; For our God, say they,
 Did this: and when the people did behold
 Poor captive Samson, they their god extoll'd,
 And said, Our God hath given into our hand
 Him that destroy'd us, and laid waste our land.
 And in their height of mirth they sent to call
 Samson, to come and make sport for them all.
 And from the prison-house they brought him,
 and
 Between the pillars they set him to stand;
 And there he made them sport. Then to the lad
 That led him by the hand, thus Samson said;
 Let me now feel the pillars that sustain
 The house, that I myself thereon may lean.
 Now in the house there was a mighty throng
 Of men and women gather'd, and among
 Them, all the lords of the Philistines were.
 Besides, upon the roof there did appear,
 About three thousand men and women, who
 Beheld, while Samson made them sport below.
 And Samson, calling on the Lord, did say,
 O Lord, my God, remember me, I pray,
 This once give strength, that I aveng'd may be
 Of those Philistines who have blinded me.
 And with his right hand and his left, he held
 Two middle pillars which the house upheld;
 And said, Let me with the Philistines die,
 And then he bowed himself most mightily:
 And down the house fell on the lords, and all
 The people that were in't; so that the fall
 Thereof, slew at his dying many more
 Than he had slain in all his life before.
 Then did his brethren and his kinfolks come
 And took him up, and brought him with them
 home,
 And laid him in his father's sepulchre,
 When he had judged Israel twenty year.