

His shield above his head. The arrow pierced
 The shield but missed the mail. Bízhan sped on,
 And, when he reached the summit, drew his sword.
 Farúd the noble turned away from him ;
 The ramparts rang with cries. Bízhan pursued
 Apace, sharp sword in hand, and gashed the bards
 Upon the noble steed which came to dust.
 Farúd howbeit gained the castle-gate,
 The garrison secured it with all speed,
 And showered many stones down from the walls
 Upon Bízhan, who knew that 'twas no spot
 To loiter at. He cried : " O famous one !
 Hast thou—a warrior and cavalier—
 Thus turned from one on foot and felt no shame ?
 Woe for the heart and hand of brave Farúd !"

He left the scene of combat, came to Tús,
 And said : " To fight so brave a warrior
 Would need a famous lion of the desert,
 And if a mount of flint should turn to water
 In strife with him the chieftain need not marvel :
 Imagination boggleth at such prowess !"

The general Tús swore by the Lord of all :—
 " I will send up this hold's dust to the sun.
 To avenge beloved Zarásp the cavalier
 I will attack without delay, will make
 This Turkman wretch a corpse, and with his gore
 Engrain the stones like coral to the core."

§ 20

How Farúd was slain

Now when the shining sun had disappeared,
 And dark night led its host across the sky,
 The daughter of Pírán approached her son—
 Farúd—with anxious mind and aching heart,

And lay down near her darling, but all night
 Remained the spouse of grief and misery.
 She dreamed that from the lofty castle rose
 A flame in front of him she loved so well,
 Illuming Mount Sapad and burning all
 The castle and the women-slaves. She woke
 In pain, her soul in anguish and dismay,
 Went out upon the wall and looking round
 Saw all the mountain filled with mail and spears.
 Her cheek flushed up and fuming at the heart
 She hastened to Farúd, and cried to him:—
 "Awake from slumber, O my son! the stars
 Are bringing down disaster on our heads!
 The mountain is all foes, the castle-gate
 All spears and mail!"

He said: "Why such to-do?"

If life is o'er for me, and thou canst count not
 On further respite for me, mine own sire
 Was slain in youth, my life is wrecked like his.
 Gurwi's hand put a period to his days,
 And now Bízhan is eager for my death;
 Yet will I struggle, perish wretchedly,
 And not ask quarter of the Íránians."

He gave out mail and maces to the troops,
 He placed a splendid helm upon his head,
 And with a Rúman breastplate girt about him
 Came with a royal bow grasped in his hand.
 Now when the shining sun displayed its face,
 And proudly mounted to the vault of heaven,
 The war-cries of the chieftains rose on all sides,
 While massive maces whirled amid the din
 Of clarions, tymbals, pipes, and Indian bells.
 Farúd descended from the castle-ramparts
 With all his gallant Turkmans. Through the dust
 Raised by the horsemen, and the feathered shafts,
 The mountain-top was like a sea of pitch.

There was no level ground or room to fight ;
 The rocks and stones played havoc with the steeds,
 While shouts ascended as the armies strove.
 Tús ready armed for battle, grasping shield
 And trenchant falchion, led the way in person,
 Escorted by the chieftains of the host
 Afoot. Thus they attacked till noon was high,
 And then the troops of brave Farúd were thinned,
 The hills and valleys had been filled with slain,
 The youth's good fortune had abandoned him.
 The Íránians marvelled at him, none had seen
 So fierce a Lion, but as battle pressed him
 He saw his fortune adverse ; of the Turkmans
 No cavalier remained with him ; he fought
 Alone ; he turned and fled down toward the hold.
 Ruhhám sought with Bízhan to intercept him :
 They charged him from above and from below.
 When on the lower ground Bízhan appeared,
 With stirrups firmly pressed and reins held loose,
 The youth espied the helm, drew out his mace,
 And went like some fierce lion at his foe,
 Not knowing what the vaulted sky decreed.
 He thought to strike Bízhan upon the head,
 And smash both head and helmet with one buffet.
 Bízhan was staggered by the young man's stroke,
 And lost both sense and power. Ruhhám behind
 Saw this and shouted, clutched his Indian sword,
 And struck the lion-man upon the shoulder ;
 His hand fell useless. Wounded he cried out,
 And urged his steed which, as he neared the hold,
 Bízhan came up and houghed. Farúd himself
 Afoot with certain of his followers,
 Thus stricken in the battles of the brave,
 Reached and secured with speed the castle-gate.
 Woe for the heart and name of brave Farúd !
 His mother and the slaves drew near, embraced him,

And sadly laid him on his ivory throne :
 His day, his season for the crown, were over.
 His mother and the female slaves plucked out
 The scented tresses of their musky hair,
 While the beloved Farúd plucked out their lives :
 The throne was strewn with hair, the house all
 sorrow.

V. 823

Then with a faint glance and a sigh he turned
 Toward his mother and the slaves, and said,
 With one last effort to unclothe his lips :—
 “ It is no marvel that ye pluck your hair ;
 The Íránians will come with girded loins
 To sack the hold and make my slave-girls captive,
 Make castle, castle-wall, and rampart waste.
 Let all whose hearts and cheeks burn for my life
 Go fling themselves down from the battlements
 That none may be the portion of Bízhan.
 I follow soon because he severeth
 My blameless life and is, in this my day
 Of youth, my death.”

He spake, his cheeks grew wan,
 His spirit soared away 'mid grief and anguish.

As 'twere a conjurer this drunken sky
 Deludeth us with tricks—threescore and ten—
 At whiles employing blast or cloud and then

The sword or dagger or the agency
 Of some unworthy wight. At whiles to one

Plunged in calamity 'twill grant relief,
 At whiles allot crown, treasury, and throne,

At whiles chain, dungeon, bitterness, and grief !
 Man must accept his lot whate'er it be ;
 Mine own affliction is my poverty.

The man of wisdom, had he died at birth,
 Had suffered not the heat and cold of earth,
 But, living after birth, hath want and stress,
 Constrained to weep a life of wretchedness.

Woe for his heart, his usance, and intents!
His pillow is the dust in all events.

§ 21

How Jaríra slew herself

824 Now when in failure thus had passed away
Farúd, the hapless and inglorious son
Of Siyáwush, the slave-girls scaled the roof,
And dashed them to the ground. Jaríra kindled
A pyre and burned the treasures. Sword in hand
She locked the stable of the Arab steeds,
Hamstrung, and ripped them up. All blood and
sweat

She sought the couch of glorious Farúd,
Upon whose coverlet a dagger lay,
And, having pressed her cheeks upon his face,
Ripped up herself and died upon his breast.

The Íránians forced the portal of the hold,
Prepared for pillaging, but when Bahráam
Approached those walls his heart was rent with sorrow.
He sought the couch of glorious Farúd,
With cheeks all tears and heart a-fume, and thus
Addressed the Íránians: "Here is one by far
More wretched and dishonoured than his sire,
For Siyáwush did not destroy his slaves,
Nor was his mother slain upon his couch,
Though round him likewise all his palace flamed,
And all his home and goods were razed and burned.
Still heaven's hands are long enough to reach
The wicked, and it turneth not in love

825 O'er men unjust. Shall ye not shame before
Khusrau who, charging Tús so earnestly,
Sent you to take revenge for Siyáwush,
And gave you much advice and parting-counsel?