

To God for my pure soul and help me thus,
 For prayer is all in all. Behold and see
 If there be any in earth's round whose soul
 Is stricken not at death."

He sealed and closed
 The letter, and bade men on speedy steeds
 Convey these tidings from Bábil to Rúm :—
 "The Grace of king of kingship is bedimmed !"

Now when the army was aware thereof
 The world was darkened to the chiefs, who set
 Their faces toward the throne of majesty,
 And all the world was full of hue and cry.

§ 37

*How Sikandar's Life ended and how they carried
 his Coffin to Iskandariya*

On hearing how the army was bestead,
 And knowing that his time was near, Sikandar
 Bade carry from the palace to the field
 His throne. The troops bewailed his malady
 When they beheld the Sháh's pale face. The plain
 Was one great cry ; they seethed as on quick fire.
 All said : "What misadventure for the Rúmans
 To lose their king ! Ill fortune is upon us,
 And field and fell henceforth are desolate ;
 Our foes have won their wish and gained their goal ;
 The world becometh bitter to us now ;
 In public and in private we shall wail !"

With failing voice said Cæsar : "Be devout,
 Wise, modest, and heed all my last requests,
 If ye would prosper both in soul and body.
 When I have gone the work is left for you,
 And fortune is not dealing ill with me."

C. 1358

He spake, his life departed, and that Sháh

So famous, that host-shatterer, passed away.
 A cry went up from all the host and split
 The ears of heaven. The soldiers all strewed dust
 Upon their heads and strained their hearts' blood
 through
 The lashes of their eyes. They fired his palace,
 And docked a thousand steeds, reversing all
 Their saddles. Thou hadst said: "The earth lamenteth!"
 They bore the golden bier out to the plain,
 And wailing pierced the sky. A prelate laved
 The corpse with clear rose-water, and besprinkled
 Thereon pure camphor. Of gold-woven brocade
 They made his winding-sheet, while all bewailed him,
 And, having shrouded thus that noble form
 Beneath brocade of Chín, they covered it
 With honey to the feet and then sealed down
 The lid of that strait coffin: passed away
 That Tree so fruitful and so shadowing!
 Thou bidest not within this Hostel. Why
 Toy then with crown or cling to treasury?

Now when they raised the coffin from the plain,
 And passed it on from hand to hand, two voices—
 A Rúman and a Persian—rose, and all
 The talk was of the coffin. All the Persians
 Said thus: "He should be buried in Írán
 Where are the ashes of the kings of kings:
 Why should ye speed the coffin round the world?"

One of the Rúman counsellors replied:—
 "It is not fitting here to bury him.
 If ye will hear my rede aright Sikandar
 Should pass back to the soil wherefrom he sprang."

A Persian said withal: "Howe'er ye talk
 This will reach no fair ending. I will show you
 A field commemorating Sháhs of old.
 Wise ancients call it Khurm. It hath a lake
 And forest, and in answer to thy questions