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THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

S. T. COLERIDGE

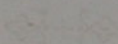
THE POETICAL WORKS

S. T. COLERIDGE

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

S. T. COLERIDGE



BY J. A. FOYLE

THE BOOKSELLERS

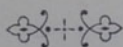
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W. & A. GILBERT

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
S. T. COLERIDGE

REPRINTED FROM THE EARLY EDITIONS

With Memoir, Notes, etc.



W. & G. FOYLE
THE BOOKSELLERS
135, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON
BRANCHES EVERYWHERE

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LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

S. T. COLERIDGE.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at Ottery St Mary's, Devonshire, on October 21, 1772. He was the tenth child of the Vicar of the parish, the Rev. John Coleridge; a man of ability, who was also Master of the Grammar School. John Coleridge died in 1781; and a former pupil of his, Sir Francis Buller (the judge) procured a presentation for little Samuel to Christ's Hospital. The boy had shown precocious genius, and has himself told us that he read the *Arabian Nights* when only in his fifth year. He was found at Christ Church, by a deputy Grecian, Middleton, reading Virgil for his own amusement; Middleton mentioned him to the head-master, Dr. Boyer or Bowyer, who was a severe but excellent master. Coleridge has himself told the story of the doctor whipping him because he professed himself to be an atheist, a mode of conversion "which," the poet says, "proved efficacious." Henceforth Middleton (who became afterwards Bishop of Calcutta) befriended the lad; and Coleridge also formed a life-long friendship with Charles Lamb.

Samuel Coleridge rose to be head boy or Grecian of the Blue Coat School, and was appointed to an exhibition of £40 a year. He went as a sizar to Jesus College, Cambridge, 1791, and won there a Rustat Scholarship of £25 a year.

In 1792 he won the Browne Medal for a Greek Ode on the Slave Trade; and he was chosen one of the four to compete for the

Craven Scholarship in 1793. He failed to win it, as his mathematical knowledge was small.

He became known at the University as a clever conversationalist, and also for his radical opinions; but he does not appear to have studied for any other competition.

His means were very small, and he soon found himself overburdened with debt; consequently he suddenly left the College and went to London, intending probably to support himself by his pen, for he sent a poem to the *Morning Chronicle*, for which Perry, the editor, gave him a guinea; and afterwards he had a series of sonnets in the same paper. But Coleridge had no idea of the value of money, and very soon found his resources so much reduced that he enlisted in the 15th Light Dragoons, and was sent to Reading for drill. Of this passage in the poet's life Southey has given us the following account:—

"I am, perhaps, the only person living who can explain all the circumstances from Mr. Coleridge's own mouth, with whom I became acquainted after a sonnet addressed to me in his poems; moreover, being intimate from our school days, and at Oxford, with that very officer in his regiment who alone procured his discharge, from whom I also heard the facts after Coleridge became known as a poet.

"The regiment was the 15th, Elliot's Light Dragoons; the officer was Nathaniel Ogle, eldest son of Dr. Newton Ogle, Dean of Winchester, and brother of the late Mrs. Sheridan; he was a scholar, and, leaving Merton College, he entered this regiment a cornet. Some years afterwards, I believe he was then captain of Coleridge's troop, going into the stables at Reading, he remarked, written on the white wall, under one of the saddles, in large pencil characters, the following sentence in Latin:—

'Eheu! quam infortunii miserrimum est fuisse felicem!'

Being struck with the circumstance, and himself a scholar, Captain Ogle inquired of a soldier whether he knew to whom the saddle belonged. 'Please your Honour, to Comberback,' answered the dragoon. 'Comberback!' said the captain; 'send him to me.' Comberback presented himself, with the inside of his hand in front of his cap. His officer mildly said, 'Comberback, did you write the Latin sentence which I have just read under your saddle?' 'Please your Honour,' answered the soldier, 'I wrote it.' 'Then, my lad, you are not what you appear to be. I shall speak to the

commanding officer, and you may depend on my speaking as a friend.' The commanding officer, I think, was General Churchill. Comberback was examined, and it was found out that, having left Jesus College, Cambridge, and being in London without resources, he had enlisted in this regiment. He was soon discharged,—not from his democratical feelings, for whatever those feelings might be, as a soldier he was remarkably orderly and obedient, though he could not rub down his own horse. He was discharged from respect to his friends and his station. His friends having been informed of his situation, a chaise was soon at the door of the Bear Inn, Reading, and the officers of the 15th cordially shaking his hands, particularly the officer who had been the means of his discharge, he drove off, not without a tear in his eye, whilst his old companions of the tap-room gave him three hearty cheers as the wheels rapidly rolled away along the Bath Road to London and Cambridge."

Coleridge's family must have arranged matters for him at the University, for he returned to Cambridge, and was publicly admonished by the master of his college.

He soon after, when on a visit to Oxford, made the acquaintance of Southey and Robert Lovell, men much connected with his after life.

Coleridge renewed his intimacy with them at Bristol in 1794, and the three planned the drama of "*The Fall of Robespierre*." Coleridge wrote the first act, Southey the second, and Lovell was to have written the third, but his effort was not deemed sufficiently suitable, and Southey completed the play, which was, however, published as Coleridge's at Cambridge in 1794. He left Cambridge in the December of that year without a degree, and went to London.

During his recent visit to Bristol he had been introduced to a family named Fricker, one of whom, Mary Fricker, was married to Lovell, and another, Edith, was engaged to Southey. Coleridge had been warmly attached to a Miss Evans, who, however, had finally rejected him, and he then considered himself engaged to Sara Fricker, another sister. But Southey had to go to London to bring his friend back to his affianced wife at Bristol, and to recall him to the scheme of reform they had planned under the name of a "Pantisocracy." Their plan was to emigrate with their wives to the banks of the Susquehanna, where they were to toil two hours a day only, for food, the rest of the time to be spent in literary pursuits.

There was to be no private property in their settlement. But they had not money enough to start with, and meantime, when living together at 48 College Street, they had not enough money to pay for their lodgings. Coleridge asked for a loan of five pounds from Joseph Cottle, a young bookseller of his acquaintance. Cottle readily lent it to him, and then offered him thirty guineas for a volume of poems, and at the same time offered Southey fifty guineas for his "*Joan of Arc*." Both offers were gladly accepted; and to increase their funds a series of lectures by Coleridge were commenced. These created a great sensation, and were received with applause; but on his leaving Bristol for other neighbourhoods the number of his auditors diminished, nor did his writings in his journal, called "*The Watchman*," attract much notice. In one of these lectures he divided readers into four classes. The first he compared to an hour-glass; their reading being as the sand—it runs in and runs out, and leaves not a vestige behind. A second class, he said, resembled a sponge—which imbibes everything, and returns it in nearly the same state, only a little dirtier. A third class he likened to a jelly-bag—which allows all that is pure to pass away, and retains only the refuse and the dregs. The fourth class, of which he trusted there were many among his auditors, he compared to the slaves in the diamond-mines of Golconda—who, casting aside all that is worthless, preserve only the gem.

A very experienced short-hand writer was employed very many years afterwards to take down Mr. Coleridge's lectures on Shakespeare, but the manuscript was almost entirely unintelligible. Yet the lecturer was always slow and measured. The writer gave this account of the difficulty: that, with regard to every other speaker whom he had ever heard, however rapid or involved, he could almost always, by long experience in his art, guess the form of the latter part, or apodosis, of the sentence by the form of the beginning; but that the conclusion of every one of Coleridge's sentences was a *surprise* upon him; he was obliged to listen to the last word. Yet this unexpectedness, as it may be termed, was not the effect of quaintness or confusion of construction; so far from it, that we believe foreigners of different nations, especially Germans and Italians, have often borne very remarkable testimony to the grammatical purity and simplicity of his language, and have declared that they generally understood what he said much better than the sustained conversation of any other Englishman whom

they had met. It is the uncommonness of the thoughts or the image which prevents your anticipating the end.

Coleridge proceeded with writing the poems, with many delays and his usual procrastination, till Cottle offered him a guinea and a half for every hundred lines after he had finished his volume.

On the strength of this offer, Coleridge married Sara Fricker, and settled with her in a small cottage one storey high, with a garden, at a rent of £5 a year. It was situated at Clevedon. Southey married Edith Fricker the following month, but left his bride at the church door for a journey to Portugal. He then wrote to Coleridge, pointing out the impossibility of their scheme of pantisocracy; and Coleridge, disappointed and angry, was for a time estranged from his friend; but they were afterwards reconciled. Lovell and Edmund Seward died in the summer of 1796; and Coleridge was left to his vain dream, now hopeless of fulfilment.

But we are forestalling.

Cottle published Coleridge's poems (including three sonnets by Lamb) at Bristol in April 1796. He started a journal called "*The Watchman*," but it went through only ten numbers, and then ceased. He also preached in Unitarian chapels.

During a tour to get subscriptions for "*The Watchman*," Coleridge became acquainted, at Birmingham, with Charles Lloyd, the son of a banker of that town. Lloyd was fascinated by the conversation of Coleridge, and abandoned his place in the bank to go to live with him.

Of this singular power of fascination a proof had been previously given in London, when the landlord of an inn, to which Lamb had taken him, was so charmed with him that he asked the poet to stay with him as a non-paying guest for as long as he pleased. In fact, this power was possessed by him to the very end of his life. Lloyd took a house with him at Kingsdown, Bristol; and here Coleridge's eldest child was born; but in 1797, another friend, living at Nether Stowey, near Bridgewater—a tanner, named Thomas Poole—found a house for him at Nether Stowey for £7 a year, and he and Lloyd removed to it. Poole got up a subscription for a small annuity for Coleridge, and was always a true friend to him.

A second edition of Coleridge's poems appeared in 1797.

Whilst living at Nether Stowey, the Lambs visited Coleridge, and soon after the poet paid a visit to Wordsworth (whom he had

met previously) at Racedown, Dorsetshire. Here his singular fascination again took effect. Wordsworth went shortly after to live near him, "for the sake of his conversation."

The two poets used to saunter, discussing poetry, on the Quantock Hills, at the foot of which Nether Stowey lies. They had each written a drama already. Wordsworth's was "*The Borderers*"; Coleridge's, "*Remorse*," then named "*Osorio*." Both were offered to Sheridan for performance. Of "*Remorse*" he took no notice; "*The Borderers*" he declined. They now agreed to join in publishing a volume of poems, and in 1798 the "*Lyrical Ballads*" appeared, in conjunction with "*The Ancient Mariner*." A greater contrast of poems can scarcely be conceived. Coleridge also added to the volume the "*Nightingale*" and two scenes from "*Remorse*." In the next edition of the poems appeared the charming "*Love*," the first part of "*Christabel*," and "*Kubla Khan*," an opium vision of great beauty. Cottle gave £30 for the "*Lyrical Ballads*," but they proved a failure, and when Cottle retired from business were valued and sold to Longmans for nothing at all!

A third edition of Coleridge's poems was being arranged, when some trouble arose between the poets because Coleridge wished to print his own poems alone. Lloyd left him and returned to Birmingham. Lamb felt annoyed, but the breach was afterwards made up.

The Wedgwoods generously sent Coleridge at this time £100 to induce him to give up the notion of devoting himself to the Unitarian sect as a regular preacher, but Coleridge returned it gratefully. Finally, however, he yielded to their advice, accepted an annuity of £150 from them, and went with the Wordsworths to Germany to study the language and the philosophy of the country. He made a walking tour through the Hartz, and ascended the Brocken. He returned to England in 1799; and the result of this residence in the Fatherland was the production of his magnificent translation of Schiller's "*Wallenstein*." It was published by Longmans in 1800.

Coleridge's religious opinions underwent a great change. By profound reflection and deep study he became convinced of the Divinity of our Lord, as the second person of the Holy Trinity; and in after years he wrote the "*Aids to Reflection*," taking as texts to each reflection a sentence or two of Bishop Leighton's, or of Jeremy Taylor's, etc.

In 1800 he became a contributor to the *Morning Post*. In 1801 Coleridge went to live at Keswick, attracted to the Lakes by Southey's residence there; and the poets shared a house. Wordsworth also lived not far off, at Grasmere. "*Wallenstein*" had no success, the first copies were sold as waste paper. Disappointed and depressed, Coleridge at this period suffered from very bad health, from rheumatism and neuralgia, and unhappily sought relief from them in opium. By 1803 the remedy had become an evil habit, ruining his health and impairing his intellect.

Change of air and scene were required for him, and Mr. Stoddart (afterwards Sir John), Hazlitt's brother-in-law, a judge in Malta, procured him the post of secretary to Sir Alexander Ball, then Governor of Malta, of whom he wrote afterwards in enthusiastic terms of admiration. But the work of this office was ill suited to him, and he returned to England in 1806. His patron, Thomas Wedgwood, had died during his absence, but had left his share of the annuity to Coleridge. On his arrival in England he settled with Wordsworth at Grasmere; his family remaining at Keswick with the generous and much enduring Southey. While at Grasmere the idea of another paper occurred to him, and he published the periodical called "*The Friend*," August 1809; but his subscribers dropped off by degrees, and the paper ended March 1810, leaving Coleridge more deeply in debt than ever.

He went to London in the same year, and stayed for a long time with the Basil Montagues, and afterwards with an old friend named Morgan, in Berners Street, and gave lectures on Shakespeare and other poets. They were much liked, and Coleridge became popular for a season, and had a good audience. He sent his earnings to his family, who remained under the generous care of Southey. Coleridge had three children: Derwent, afterwards a well-known clergyman; Sara, who inherited much of his genius; and Hartley, also a poet, and in whose genius his father always believed.

His tragedy of "*Remorse*" was acted at Drury Lane, and had a success, but not great enough for the managers to accept "*Zapolya*," which he now wrote.

At this time he arranged the poems called "*Sibylline Leaves*," with "*Christabel*," for publication.

Coleridge's life was, however, blighted by his sad addiction to

opium-eating. His neglect in not writing a life of Thomas Wedgwood, as he had promised, and his singular alienation from his family, whom he left to Southey's care, made his friend Josiah Wedgwood so angry, that he withdrew his half of the annuity; but in reality Coleridge had given the annuity to his wife and family, and kept up also a life insurance for them of £2500, which his widow received after his death.

For himself, he had £100 a year from George IV. for five years from the Society of Literature, till the king's death; but, unhappily, was afterwards dependent on the contributions of friends, who most generously supplied his wants.

In 1816 Coleridge resolved to make a strong effort to overcome his fatal habit. He consulted Sir Joseph Adams, who advised him to go and live under the care and superintendence of a surgeon of whom he had a great opinion—a Mr. Gillman. This gentleman called on Coleridge, was, of course, fascinated by his conversation, and received him gladly into his house. There, incredible as it seems in the present day, Coleridge remained for the whole remaining period of his life.

The second part of "*Christabel*" was now published by Murray, who gave him £80 for it. He at once presented the sum to the Morgans, to whom he was much indebted for past kindness.

In 1817 appeared the "*Biographia Literaria*." He gave his last lectures in the spring of 1818.

His last publications were the "*Aids to Reflection*," 1825, and "*An Essay on Church and State*."

During the last nineteen years of his life he resided at Highgate, with the Gillmans, to whom he had endeared himself; and in the home of these dear friends he breathed his last, at half-past six, on Friday, 25th July, 1834. He was interred in the vault of Highgate Church, on the 2nd August.

The fatal change was sudden and decisive; and six days before his death he knew, assuredly, that his hour was come. His few worldly affairs had been long settled, and, after many tender adieus, he expressed a wish that he might be as little interrupted as possible. His sufferings were severe and constant till within thirty-six hours of his end; but they had no power to affect the deep tranquillity of his mind, or the wonted sweetness of his temper. His prayer from the beginning was, that God would not withdraw His Spirit; and that by the way in which he would bear the last struggle,

he might be able to evince the sincerity of his faith in Christ. If ever man did so, Coleridge did.

We believe it has not been the lot of any other literary man in England, since Dr. Johnson, to command the devoted admiration and steady zeal of so many and such widely-differing disciples—some of them having become, and others being likely to become, fresh and independent sources of light and moral action in themselves upon the principles of their common master. One half of these affectionate disciples learned their lessons of philosophy from the teacher's mouth. He was to them as an oracle of the Academy or Lyceum. The fulness, the inwardness, the ultimate scope of his doctrines has never yet been published in print, and if disclosed, it has been from time to time in the higher moments of conversation, when occasion, and mood, and person begot an exalted crisis. More than once Coleridge said that with pen in hand he felt a thousand checks and difficulties in the expression of his meaning; but that—authorship aside—he never found the smallest hitch or impediment in the fullest utterance of his most subtle fancies by word of mouth. His abstrusest thoughts became rhythmical and clear when chanted to their own music.

It now only remains for us to offer a few general remarks on his poetical productions; and here we think that cold must be the temperature of that man's mind who can rise from the perusal of the poems of Coleridge without feeling that intense interest, and those vivid emotions of delight, which are ever excited by the wondrous operation of the magic wand of genius. To those whose ear is sensitive to the touch of those harmonious measures which fancy pours from her shell, the genius of Coleridge, even in its wildest aberrations, can never be listened to with indifference.

We are thankful we have no occasion yet to invest poetry with a new form; it has not exhausted all those bewitching attitudes in which may be placed all that we have so long and so ardently admired. As a proof that Mr. Coleridge delighted the imagination while he satisfied the judgment;—that he brought to the mind's eye all the treasures of his rich and elegant fancy, without having recourse to the trifling earnestness of reiteration, or the ludicrous imitation of sounds, as he occasionally had, we subjoin the following beautiful lines:—

They parted—ne'er to meet again !
 But never either found another
 To free the hollow heart from paining—
 They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
 Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
 A dreary sea now flows between,
 But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
 Shall wholly do away, I ween,
 The marks of that which once hath been.

Very few passages in ancient or modern poetry are equal to the following :—

Hence ! thou lingerer, light !
 Eve saddens into night.
 Mother of wildly-working dreams ! we view
 The sombre hours, that round thee stand
 With downcast eyes (a duteous band !)
 Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
 Sorceress of the ebon throne !
 Thy power the Pixies own,
 When round thy raven brow
 Heaven's lucent roses glow,
 And clouds, in wat'ry colours drest,
 Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest ;
 What time the pale moon sheds a softer day,
 Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam :
 For 'mid the quivering light 'tis ours to play,
 Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

Does not the following bring to the mind's eye many a spot of bliss in lovely England ?—

Low was our pretty cot ; our tallest rose
 Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
 At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
 The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
 Our myrtles blossomed ; and across the porch
 Thick jasmins twined : the little landscape round
 Was green and woody, and refreshed the eye.
 It was a spot, which you might aptly call
 The Valley of Seclusion.

The following panoramic view is in the most beautiful style of poetic painting:—

O what a goodly scene! *Here* the bleak mount,
 The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep;
 Grey clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields;
 And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed,
 Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
 And seats, and lawns, the abbey, and the wood,
 And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire:
 The channel *there*, the islands and white sails,
 Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless ocean,
 It seemed like omnipresence! God, methought,
 Had built him there a temple: the whole world
 Seemed *imaged* in its vast circumference.

And we cannot conclude these remarks without observing that, however irregular he may be in the versification of some of his poems, however harsh and obscure some of his ideas may appear, however indistinct and overstrained some of his metaphors may be, yet, take his poems as a whole, they can only tend to cause us to recollect him as the poet of truth, of nature, and of virtue.

It was a saying of Wordsworth, that many men of this age had done wonderful *things*, as Davy, Scott, Cuvier, etc.; but that Coleridge was the only wonderful *man* he ever knew. Something, of course, must be allowed in this as in all other such cases for the antithesis; but we believe the fact really to be, that the greater part of those who occasionally visited Coleridge left him with a feeling akin to the judgment indicated in the above remark. They admired the man more than his works, or they forgot the works in the absorbing impression made by the living author. And no wonder. Those who remember him in his more vigorous days can bear testimony to the peculiarity and transcendent power of his conversational eloquence. It was unlike anything that could be heard elsewhere; the kind, the manner were different. The boundless range of scientific knowledge, the brilliancy and exquisite nicety of illustration, the deep and ready reasoning, the strangeness and immensity of bookish lore—were not all; the dramatic story, the joke, the pun, the mirth, must be added—and with these the clerical-looking dress, the thick waving silver hair, the youthful-coloured cheek, the indefinable mouth and lips, the quick yet steady and penetrating greenish-grey eye, the slow and continuous

enunciation, and the everlasting music of his tones,—all went to make up the image and to constitute the living presence of the man. He was then no longer young, and bodily infirmities pressed heavily upon him. His natural force was indeed abated; but his eye was not dim, neither was his mind enfeebled. “O youth!” he says, in one of the most exquisitely finished of his later poems—

O youth! for years so many and sweet,
 'Tis known that thou and I were one,
 I'll think it but a fond conceit—
 It cannot be that thou art gone:
 Thy vesper bell hath not yet tolled:—
 And thou wert aye a masker bold:
 What strange disguise hast now put on,
 To make believe that thou art gone?
 I see these locks in silvery slips,
 This drooping gait, this altered size;—
 But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes:
 Life is but thought; so think I will
 That youth and I are house-mates still.

Coleridge's conversation, it is true, had not latterly all the brilliant versatility of his former years; yet we know not whether the contrast between his bodily weakness and his mental power did not leave a deeper and a more solemnly affecting impression than his most triumphant displays in youth could ever have done. To see the pain-stricken countenance relax, and the contracted frame dilate, under the kindling of intellectual fire alone—to watch the infirmities of the flesh shrinking out of sight, or glorified and transfigured in the brightness of the awakening spirit—is an awful object of contemplation; and we think in no other person was ever witnessed such a distinction,—nay, alienation of mind from body, such a mastery of the purely intellectual over the purely corporeal, as in the instance of this remarkable man. Even to the last his conversation was characterised by all the essentials of its former excellence; there was the same individuality, the same *unexpectedness*, the same universal grasp; nothing was too high, nothing too low for it: it glanced from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth, with a speed and a splendour, an ease and a power, which almost seemed inspired; yet its universality was not of the same kind with the superficial ranging of the clever talkers whose criticism and whose information are called

forth by, and spent upon, the particular topics in hand. No; in this more, perhaps, than in anything else was Coleridge's discourse distinguished: that it sprang from an inner centre, and was illustrated by light from the soul. His thoughts were, as we may say, as the radii of a circle, the centre of which may be in the petals of a rose, and the circumference as wide as the boundary of things visible and invisible.

A few days before his death, this distinguished poet and meta-physician wrote the following impressive letter to his godchild. It is the last letter its writer ever penned; and happy would it be if all godfathers so well applied themselves to the dissemination of those principles which they undertake to inculcate upon the young mind:—

“To Adam Steinmetz Kinnaird.

“MY DEAR GODCHILD,—I offer up the same fervent prayer for you now as I did kneeling before the altar when you were baptized into Christ, and solemnly received as a living member of his spiritual body, the Church. Years must pass before you will be able to read with an understanding heart what I now write. But I trust that the all-gracious God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, who by his only-begotten Son (all mercies in one sovereign mercy!) has redeemed you from the evil ground, and willed you to be born out of darkness, but into light; out of death, but into life; out of sin, but into righteousness, even into the ‘Lord our righteousness;’ I trust that he will graciously hear the prayers of your dear parents, and be with you as the spirit of health and growth in body and in mind. My dear godchild! you received from Christ's minister, at the baptismal font, as your Christian name, the name of a most dear friend of your father's, and who was to me even as a son, the late *Adam Steinmetz*; whose fervent aspirations and ever paramount aim, even from early youth, was to be a Christian in thought, word, and deed, in will, mind, and affections.

“I too, your godfather, have known what the enjoyments and advantages of this life are, and what the more refined pleasures which learning and intellectual power can bestow, and with all the experience that more than threescore years can give, I now, on the eve of my departure, declare to you (and earnestly pray that you may hereafter live and act on the conviction), that health is a great blessing; competence, obtained by honourable industry, a great blessing; and a great blessing it is to have kind, faithful, and loving

friends and relatives ;—but that the greatest of all blessings, as it is the most ennobling of all privileges, is to be indeed a Christian. But I have been, likewise, through a large portion of my later life, a sufferer, sorely afflicted with bodily pains, languor, and manifold infirmities ; and for the last three or four years have, with few and brief intervals, been confined to a sick-room, and at this moment, in great weakness and heaviness, write from a sick-bed, hopeless of recovery, yet without prospect of a speedy removal. And I thus, on the brink of the grave, solemnly bear witness to you, that the Almighty Redeemer, most gracious in his promises to them that truly seek him, is faithful to perform what he has promised ; and has reserved, under all my pains and infirmities, the inward peace that passeth all understanding, with the supporting assurance of a reconciled God, who will not withdraw his spirit from me in the conflict, and in his own time will *deliver* me from the evil one. O, my dear godchild ! eminently blessed are they who begin *early* to seek, fear, and love their God, trusting wholly in the righteousness and mediation of their Lord, Redeemer, Saviour, and everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ. O ! preserve this as a legacy and bequest from your unseen godfather and friend,

“S. T. COLERIDGE.

“13th July 1834,
“Grove, Highgate.”

Mr. Coleridge wrote, in his lifetime, his own epitaph, as follows :—

Stop, Christian passer-by : Stop, child of God,
And read, with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seemed he—
O, lift a thought in prayer for S. T. C.—
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death ;
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame—
He asked, and hoped through Christ. Do thou the same.

It was, however, inapplicable to the place in which he was buried ; a handsome tablet, erected in Highgate New Church, to his memory, bears the following inscription :—

Sacred to the Memory of
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE,
"Poet, Philosopher, Theologian."

*This truly great and good man resided for
The last nineteen years of his life,
In this Hamlet.*

He quitted "the body of his death,"

July 25th, 1834,

In the sixty-second year of his age.

*Of his profound learning and discursive genius,
His literary works are an imperishable record.*

*To his private worth,
His social and Christian virtues,*

JAMES AND ANN GILLMAN,
*The friends with whom he resided,
During the above period, dedicate this tablet.*

*Under the pressure of a long
And most painful disease,
His disposition was unalterably sweet and angelic.
He was an ever-enduring, ever-loving friend,
The gentlest and kindest teacher,
The most engaging home-companion.*

"O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts,
O studious Poet, eloquent for truth!
Philosopher contemning wealth and death,
Yet docile, child-like, full of life and love."

HERE,
*On this monumental stone, thy friends inscribe thy worth.
Reader! for the world mourn.*

*A Light has passed away from the earth!
But for this pious and exalted Christian,
"Rejoice, and again I say unto you, rejoice!"*

*Ubi
Thesaurus
ibi
Cor.*

S. T. C.

PREFACE.

COMPOSITIONS resembling those of the present volume are not unfrequently condemned for their querulous egotism. But egotism is to be condemned then only when it offends against time and place, as in an history or an epic poem. To censure it in a monody or sonnet is almost as absurd as to dislike a circle for being round. Why then write sonnets or monodies? Because they give me pleasure when perhaps nothing else could. After the more violent emotions of sorrow, the mind demands amusement, and can find it in employment alone; but full of its late sufferings, it can endure no employment not in some measure connected with them. Forcibly to turn away our attention to general subjects is a painful and most often an unavailing effort.

But oh! how grateful to a wounded heart
The tale of misery to impart—
From others' eyes bid artless sorrows flow,
And raise esteem upon the base of woe!—SHAW.

The communicativeness of our nature leads us to describe our own sorrows; in the endeavour to describe them, intellectual activity is exerted; and from intellectual activity there results a pleasure, which is gradually associated, and mingles as a corrective, with the

painful subject of the description. 'True!' (it may be answered) 'but how are the public interested in your sorrows or your description?' We are for ever attributing personal unities to imaginary aggregates.—What is the public, but a term for a number of scattered individuals? Of whom as many will be interested in these sorrows, as have experienced the same or similar.

'Holy be the lay

Which mourning soothes the mourner on his way.'

If I could judge of others by myself, I should not hesitate to affirm, that the most interesting passages in our most interesting poems are those in which the author develops his own feelings. The sweet voice of Cona * never sounds so sweetly, as when it speaks of itself; and I should almost suspect that man of an unkindly heart, who could read the opening of the third book of the *Paradise Lost* without peculiar emotion. By a law of our nature, he who labours under a strong feeling is impelled to seek for sympathy; but a poet's feelings are all strong.—*Quicquid amet valde amat.*—Akenside therefore speaks with philosophical accuracy when he classes Love and Poetry, as producing the same effects:

'Love and the wish of poets when their tongue
Would teach to others' bosoms, what so charms
Their own.'—PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

There is one species of egotism which is truly disgusting; not that which leads us to communicate our feelings to others, but that which would reduce the feelings of others to an identity with our own. The atheist, who exclaims, 'Pshaw!' when he glances his eye on the praises of Deity, is an egotist: an old man, when he speaks contemptuously of love verses, is an egotist: and the sleek favourites of fortune are egotists, when they condemn all 'melancholy, discontented' verses. Surely, it would be candid not merely to ask whether the poem pleases ourselves, but to consider whether or no there may

* Ossian.

not be others, to whom it is well calculated to give an innocent pleasure.

I shall only add, that each of my readers will, I hope, remember, that these poems on various subjects, which he reads at one time and under the influence of one set of feelings, were written at different times and prompted by very different feelings; and therefore that the supposed inferiority of one poem to another may sometimes be owing to the temper of mind in which he happens to peruse it.

My poems have been rightly charged with a profusion of double epithets, and a general turgidness. I have pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand; and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction. This latter fault, however, had insinuated itself into my religious musings with such intricacy of union, that sometimes I have omitted to disentangle the weed from the fear of snapping the flower. A third and heavier accusation has been brought against me, that of obscurity; but not, I think, with equal justice. An author is obscure, when his conceptions are dim and imperfect, and his language incorrect, or unappropriate, or involved. A poem that abounds in allusions, like the Bard of Gray, or one that impersonates high and abstract truths, like Collins's Ode on the poetical character, claims not to be popular, but should be acquitted of obscurity. The deficiency is in the reader. But this is a charge which every poet, whose imagination is warm and rapid, must expect from his contemporaries. Milton did not escape it; and it was adduced with virulence against Gray and Collins. We now hear no more of it; not that their poems are better understood at present than they were at their first publication; but their fame is established; and a critic would accuse himself of frigidity or inattention, who should profess not to understand them. But a living writer is yet sub judice; and if we cannot follow his conceptions or enter into his feelings, it is more consoling to our pride to consider him as

lost beneath, than as soaring above, us. If any man expect from my poems the same easiness of style which he admires in a drinking-song, for him I have not written. *Intelligibilia, non intellectum adfero.*

I expect neither profit or general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repayed without either. Poetry has been to me its own 'exceeding great reward:' it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me.

S. T. C.

EARLY POEMS.—1803

DEDICATION

TO THE REVEREND GEORGE COLERIDGE, OF JITTENY
ST MARY, DEVON.

Notus in fratres animi paterni.

Hor. Carm. lib. ii. 2.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having past
His youth and early manhood in the stir
And turmoil of the world, retreats at length,
With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
To the same dwelling where his father dwelt;
And haply views his tottering little ones
Embrace those aged knees, and climb that lap,
On which first kneeling his own infancy
Lisped its brief prayer. Such, O my earliest friend!
Thine and thy brothers' favourable lot.
At distance did ye climb life's upland road,
Yet cheered and cheering: now fraternal love
Hath drawn you to one centre. Be your days
Holy, and blest and blessing may ye live!

To me th' Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed
A different fortune and more different mind.—
Me from the spot where first I sprang to light,
Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had fixed
Its first domestic loves; and hence through life
Chasing chance-started friendships. A brief while
Some have preserved me from life's pelting ills;
But, like a tree with leaves of feeble stem,
If the clouds lasted, or a sudden breeze
Ruffled the boughs, they on my head at once

Dropt the collected shower : and some most false,
 False and fair-foliaged as the manchineel,
 Have tempted me to slumber in their shade
 E'en mid the storm ; then breathing subtlest damps,
 Mixed their own venom with the rain from heaven,
 That I woke poisoned ! But (the praise be His
 Who gives us all things) more have yielded me
 Permanent shelter : and beside one friend,
 I, as beneath the covert of an oak,
 Have raised a lowly shed, and know the names
 Of husband and of father ; nor unhearing
 Of that divine and nightly-whispering voice,
 Which from my childhood to maturer years
 Spake to me of predestinated wreaths,
 Bright with no fading colours :

Yet at times

My soul is sad, that I have roamed through life
 Still most a stranger, most with naked heart,
 At mine own home and birth-place : chiefly then,
 When I remember thee, my earliest friend !
 Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my youth ;
 Didst trace my wanderings with a father's eye ;
 And, boding evil yet still hoping good,
 Rebuked each fault and wept o'er all my woes.
 Who counts the beatings of the lonely heart,
 That Being knows, how I have loved thee ever,
 Loved as a brother, as a son revered thee !
 O 'tis to me an ever new delight,
 To talk of thee and thine ; or when the blast
 Of the shrill winter, rattling our rude sash,
 Endears the cleanly hearth and social bowl ;
 Or when, as now, on some delicious eve,
 We in our sweet sequestered orchard-plot
 Sit on the tree crooked earthward ; whose old boughs,
 That hang above us in an arborous roof,
 Stirred by the faint gale of departing May,
 Send their loose blossoms slanting o'er our heads !

Nor dost not *thou* sometimes recall those hours,
 When with the joy of hope thou gav'st thine ear

To my wild firstling lays. Since then my song
 Hath sounded deeper notes, such as be seem
 Of that sad wisdom, folly leaves behind ;
 Or the high raptures of prophetic faith ;
 Or such as, tuned to these tumultuous times
 Cope with the tempest's swell !

These various songs,
 Which I have framed in many a various mood,
 Accept, my brother ; and (for some perchance
 Will strike discordant on thy milder mind)
 If aught of error or intemperate truth
 Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
 Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it !

SONGS OF THE PIXIES.

The Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half-way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation, called the Pixies' parlour. The roots of old trees form its ceiling ; and on its sides are innumerable ciphers, among which the author discovered his own cipher and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the author conducted a party of young ladies, during the summer months of the year 1793 ; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colourless yet clear, was proclaimed the Fairy Queen : on which occasion, and at which time, the following irregular ode was written.

I.

WHOM the untaught shepherds call
 PIXIES in their madrigal,
 Fancy's children, here we dwell :
 Welcome, ladies ! to our cell.
 Here the wren of softest note
 Builds its nest and warbles well ;
 Here the blackbird strains his throat :
 Welcome, ladies ! to our cell.

II.

When fades the moon all shadowy-pale,
 And scuds the cloud before the gale,
 Ere morn with living gems bedight
 Streaks the east with purple light,
 We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dew,
 Clad in robes of rainbow hues
 Richer than the deepened bloom
 That glows on summer's scented plume :
 Or sport amid the rosy gleam
 Soothed by the distant-tinkling team,
 While lusty labour scouting sorrow
 Bids the dame a glad good-morrow,
 Who jogs th' accustomed road along,
 And paces cheery to her cheering song.

III.

But not our filmy pinion
 We scorch amid the blaze of day,
 When noontide's fiery-tressed minion
 Flashes the fervid ray.
 Aye from the sultry heat
 We to the cave retreat,
 O'er-canopied by huge roots intertwined
 With wildest texture, blackened o'er with age :
 Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
 Beneath whose foliage pale
 Fanned by the unfrequent gale
 We shield us from the tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV.

Thither, while the murmur'ing throng
 Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
 By indolence and fancy brought,
 A youthful bard, 'unknown to fame,'
 Woos the queen of solemn thought,
 And heaves the gentle mis'ry of a sigh
 Gazing with tearful eye,
 As round our sandy grot appear
 Many a rudely sculptured name
 To pensive mem'ry dear !

Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctured hue
 We glance before his view :
 O'er his hushed soul our soothing witch'ries shed,
 And twine our faery garlands round his head.

V.

When evening's dusky car
 Crowned with her dewy star
 Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight ;
 On leaves of aspen trees
 We tremble to the breeze,
 Veiled from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
 Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
 Along our wild sequestered walk,
 We listen to th' enamoured rustic's talk ;
 Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
 Where young-eyed loves have built their turtle nest ;
 Or guide of soul-subduing power
 Th' electric flash, that from the melting eye
 Darts the fond question and the soft reply.

VI.

Or thro' the mystic ringlets of the vale
 We flash our faery feet in gamesome prank ,
 Or, silent-sandalled, pay our defter court
 Circling the spirit of the western gale,
 Where, wearied with his flower-caressing sport,
 Supine he slumbers on a violet bank ;
 Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam,
 By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream ;
 Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
 Dashed o'er the rocky channel froths along ;
 Or where, his silver waters smoothed to rest,
 The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII.

Hence ! thou lingerer, light !
 Eve saddens into night.
 Mother of wildly-working dreams ! we view
 The sombre hours, that round thee stand
 With down-cast eyes (a duteous band !)
 Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.

COLERIDGE'S POEMS.

Sorceress of the ebon throne!
 Thy power the Pixies own,
 When round thy raven brow
 Heaven's lucent roses glow,
 And clouds, in wat'ry colours drest,
 Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest;
 What time the pale moon sheds a softer day,
 Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam;
 For mid the quiv'ring light 'tis ours to play,
 Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII.

Welcome, ladies! to the cell,
 Where the blameless Pixies dwell,
 But thou, sweet nymph! proclaimed our faery queen,
 With what obeisance meet
 Thy presence shall we greet?
 For lo! attendant on thy steps are seen
 Graceful ease in artless stole,
 And white-robed purity of soul,
 With honour's softer mien:
 Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,
 And meek-eyed pity eloquently fair,
 Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view,
 As snow-drop wet with dew.

IX.

Unboastful Maid! tho' now the lily pale
 Transparent grace thy beauties meek;
 Yet ere again along th' impurpling vale,
 The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove,
 Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
 We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek!
 And haply from the nectar-breathing rose
 Extract a blush for love!

THE ROSE.

As late each flower that sweetest blows
 I plucked, the garden's pride !
 Within the petals of a rose
 A sleeping Love I spied.

Around his brows a beamy wreath
 Of many a lucent hue ;
 All purple glowed his cheek, beneath,
 Inebriate with dew.

I softly seized th' unguarded power,
 Nor scared his balmy rest ;
 And placed him, caged within the flower,
 On spotless Sara's breast.

But when unweeting of the guile
 Awoke the pris'ner sweet,
 He struggled to escape awhile
 And stamped his faery feet.

Ah ! soon the soul-entrancing sight
 Subdued th' impatient boy !
 He gazed ! he thrilled with deep delight !
 Then clapped his wings for joy.

And oh ! he cried—' Of magic kind
 What charms this throne endear !
 Some other Love let Venus find—
 I'll fix *my* empire here '

KISSES.

CUPID, if storying * legends tell aright,
 Once framed a rich elixir of delight.
 A chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fixed,
 And in it nectar and ambrosia mixed :
 With these the magic dews which evening brings,
 Brushed from the Idalian star by faery wings :
 Each tender pledge of sacred faith he joined,
 Each gentler pleasure of th' unspotted mind—
 Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive brightness glow,
 And hope, the blameless parasite of woe.
 The eyeless chemist heard the process rise,
 The steamy chalice bubbled up in sighs ;
 Sweet sounds transpired, as when the enamoured dove
 Pours the soft murmuring of responsive love.
 The finished work might envy vainly blame,
 And 'kisses' was the precious compound's name.
 With half, the god his Cyprian mother blest,
 And breathed on Sara's lovelier lips the rest.

* Effinxit quondam blandum meditata laborem

Basia lascivâ Cypria diva manu.

Ambrosiæ succos occultâ temperat arte,

Fragransque infuso nectare tingit opus.

Sufficit et partem mellis, quod subdolan olim

Non impune favis surripuisset amor.

Decussos violæ foliis admiscet odores,

Et spolia æstivis plurima rapta rosis.

Addit et illecebras et mille et mille lepores,

Et quot acidalius gaudia cestus habet.

Ex his composuit dea basia ; et omnia libans

Invenias nitidæ sparsa per ora Cloës.

Carm. Quad. vol. II.

TO SARA.

ONE kiss, dear maid ! I said and sighed—
Your scorn the little boon denied.
Ah why refuse the blameless bliss ?
Can danger lurk within a kiss ?

Yon viewless wand'rer of the vale,
The spirit of the western gale,
At morning's break, at evening's close,
Inhales the sweetness of the rose,
And hovers o'er th' uninjured bloom
Sighing back the soft perfume.
Vigour to the zephyr's wing
Her nectar-breathing kisses fling ;
And he the glitter of the dew
Scatters on the rose's hue.
Bashful, lo ! she bends her head,
And darts a blush of deeper red !

Too well those lovely lips disclose
The triumphs of the op'ning rose :
O fair ! O graceful ! bid them prove
As passive to the breath of love.
In tender accents, faint and low,
Well-pleased I hear the whispered 'No !'
The whispered 'No'—how little meant !
Sweet falsehood, that endears consent !
For on those lovely lips the while
Dawns the soft relenting smile,
And tempts with feigned dissuasion coy
The gentle violence of joy.

THE SIGH.

I.

WHEN youth his faery reign began,
Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man;
While peace the present hour beguiled,
And all the lovely prospect smiled;
Then, Mary! 'mid my lightsome glee
I heaved the painless sigh for thee.

II.

And when, as tossed on waves of woe,
My harassed heart was doomed to know
The frantic burst, the outrage keen,
And the slow pang that gnaws unseen;
Then shipwrecked on life's stormy sea,
I heaved an anguish'd sigh for thee!

III.

But soon reflection's power imprest
A stiller sadness on my breast;
And sickly hope with waning eye
Was well content to droop and die:
I yielded to the stern decree,
Yet heaved a languid sigh for thee!

IV.

And tho' in distant climes to roam,
A wanderer from my native home,
I fain would soothe the sense of care
And lull to sleep the joys, that were!
Thy image may not banished be—
Still, Mary! still I sigh for thee.

GENEVIEVE,

MAID of my love ! sweet Genevieve ! *
 In beauty's light you glide along :
 Your eye is like the star of eve,
 And sweet your voice, as seraph's song.
 Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
 This heart with passion soft to glow :
 Within your soul a voice there lives !
 It bids you hear the tale of woe.
 When sinking low the sufferer wan
 Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
 Fair, as the bosom of the swan
 That rises graceful o'er the wave,
 I've seen your breast with pity heave,
 And *therefore* love I you, sweet Genevieve

ABSENCE.—A FAREWELL ODE.

WHERE graced with many a classic spoil
 Cam rolls his reverend stream along,
 I haste to urge the learned toil
 That sternly chides my love-lorn song :
 Ah me ! too mindful of the days
 Illumed by passion's orient rays,
 When peace, and cheerfulness, and health
 Enriched me with the best of wealth.

Ah, fair delights ! that o'er my soul
 On mem'ry's wing, like shadows, fly !
 Ah, flowers ! which joy from Eden stole
 While innocence stood smiling by !—
 But cease, fond heart ! this bootless moan.
 Those hours on rapid pinions flown

* This little poem was written when the author was a boy

Shall yet return, by absence crowned,
And scatter livelier roses round.

The sun, who ne'er remits his fires,
On heedless eyes may pour the day :
The moon, that oft from heaven retires,
Endears her renovated ray.
What tho' she leave the sky unblest
To mourn awhile in murky vest ?
When she relumes her lovely light,
We bless the wanderer of the night.

LINES TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

ONCE more, sweet stream ! with slow foot wand'ring near,
I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
Escaped the flashing of the noontide hours,
With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
(Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn)
My languid hand shall wreath thy mossy urn.
For not thro' pathless grove with murmur rude
Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph, solitude :
Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
The hermit-fountain of some dripping cell !
Pride of the vale ! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh.
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve with pensive look
Whistling lorn ditties leans upon his crook,
Or starting pauses with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-loved maid's accustom'd tread :
She, vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Lowers, the long-filled pitcher in her hand.
Unboastful stream ! thy fount with pebbled falls
The faded form of past delight recalls,

What time the morning sun of hope arose,
 And all was joy ; save when another's woes
 A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
 Like passing clouds impictured on thy breast.
 Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
 Or silvery stole beneath the pensive moon :
 Ah ! now it works rude brakes and thorns among,
 Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along !

WRITTEN IN EARLY YOUTH.

THE TIME,—AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.

O THOU wild fancy, check thy wing ! No more
 Those thin white flakes, those purple clouds explore !
 Nor there with happy spirits speed thy flight
 Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of light ;
 Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends the day,
 With western peasants hail the morning ray !
 Ah ! rather bid the perished pleasures move,
 A shadowy train, across the soul of love !
 O'er disappointment's wintry desert fling
 Each flower that wreathed the dewy locks of Spring,
 When blushing, like a bride, from hope's trim bower
 She leapt, awakened by the pattering shower.

Now sheds the sinking sun a deeper gleam,
 Aid, lovely sorceress ! aid thy poet's dream !
 With faery wand O bid the maid arise,
 Chaste joyance dancing in her bright blue eyes ;
 As erst when from the Muses' calm abode
 I came, with learning's meed not unbestowed :
 When, as she twined a laurel round my brow,
 And met my kiss, and half returned my vow,
 O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled heart,
 And every nerve confessed the electric dart.
 O dear deceit ! I see the maiden rise,
 Chaste joyance dancing in her bright blue eyes,

When first the lark high-soaring swells his throat,
 Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the loud note,
 I trace her footsteps on the accustomed lawn,
 I mark her glancing mid the gleams of dawn.
 When the bent flower beneath the night-dew weeps
 And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,
 Amid the paly radiance soft and sad
 She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
 With her along the streamlet's brink I rove ;
 With her I list the warblings of the grove ;
 And seems in each low wind her voice to float
 Lone-whispering pity in each soothing note !

Spirits of love ! ye heard her name ! Obey
 The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair,
 Whether on clust'ring pinions ye are there,
 Where rich snows blossom on the myrtle trees,
 Or with fond languishment around my fair
 Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair ;
 O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,
 Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze !
 Spirits ! to you the infant maid was given,
 Formed by the wondrous alchemy of Heaven !
 No fairer maid does love's wide empire know,
 No fairer maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.
 A thousand loves around her forehead fly ;
 A thousand loves sit melting in her eye ;
 Love lights her smile—in joy's bright nectar dips
 The flamy rose, and plants it on her lips !
 Tender, serene, and all devoid of guile,
 Soft is her soul, as sleeping infant's smile :
 She speaks ! and hark that passion-warbled song—
 Still, fancy ! still those mazy notes prolong.
 Sweet as th' angelic harps, whose rapturous falls
 Awake the softened echoes of heaven's halls !
 O (have I sighed) were mine the wizard's rod,
 Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful god !
 A flower-entangled arbour I would seem
 To shield my love from noontide's sultry beam :
 Or bloom a myrtle, from whose od'rous boughs
 My love might weave gay garlands for her brows.
 When twilight stole across the fading vale,
 To fan my love I'd be the evening gale ;

Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest,
 And flutter my faint pinions on her breast !
 On seraph wing I'd float a dream, by night,
 To soothe my love with shadows of delight :—
 Or soar aloft to be the spangled skies,
 And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes !

As when the savage, who his drowsy frame
 Had basked beneath the sun's unclouded flame,
 Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
 The skyey deluge, and white lightning's glare—
 Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep,
 And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep :—
 So tost by storms along life's wild'ring way
 Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,
 When by my native brook I wont to rove
 While hope with kisses nursed the infant love.

Dear native brook ! like peace, so placidly
 Smoothing thro' fertile fields thy current meek !
 Dear native brook ! where first young poesy
 Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream,
 Where blameless pleasures dimple quiet's cheek,
 As water-lilies ripple a slow stream !
 Dear native haunts ! where virtue still is gay ;
 Where friendship's fixed star sheds a mellowed ray ;
 Where love a crown of thornless roses wears :
 Where softened sorrow smiles within her tears ;
 And mem'ry, with a vestal's chaste employ,
 Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy !
 No more your skylarks melting from the sight
 Shall thrill th' attuned heart-string with delight :—
 No more shall deck your pensive pleasures sweet
 With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat.
 Yet dear to fancy's eye your varied scene
 Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook between !
 Yet sweet to fancy's ear the warbled song,
 That soars on morning's wing your vales among.

Scenes of my hope ! the aching eye ye leave
 Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds of eve !
 Tearful and sadd'ning with the saddened blaze
 Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful gaze ;

Sees shades on shades with deeper tint impend,
Till chill and damp the moonless night descend.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WITH A POEM ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

MUCH on my early youth I love to dwell,
Ere yet I bade that friendly dome farewell,
Where first, beneath the echoing cloisters, pale,
I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale !
Yet tho' the hours flew by on careless wing,
Full heavily of sorrow would I sing.
Aye as the star of evening flung its beam
In broken radiance on the wavy stream,
My soul amid the pensive twilight gloom
Mourned with the breeze, O, Lee Boo ! * o'er thy tomb.
Where'er I wandered, pity still was near,
Breathed from the heart and glistened in the tear :
No knell that tolled, but filled my anxious eye,
And suffering nature wept that *one* should die ! †

Thus to sad sympathies I soothed my breast,
Calm, as the rainbow in the weeping west :
When slumb'ring freedom roused by high disdain
With giant fury burst her triple chain !
Fierce on her front the blasting dog-star glowed ;
Her banners, like a midnight meteor flowed ;
Amid the yelling of the storm-rent skies
She came, and scattered battles from her eyes !
Then exultation waked the patriot fire,
And swept with wilder hand the Alcæan lyre :
Red from the tyrant's wound I shook the lance,
And strode in joy the reeking plains of France !

* Lee Boo, the son of Abba Thule, prince of the Pelew Islands, came over to England with Captain Wilson, died of the small-pox, and is buried in Greenwich church-yard.

† Southey's Retrospect.

Fall'n is th' oppressor, friendless, ghastly, low,
 And my heart aches tho' mercy struck the blow.
 With wearied thought once more I seek the shade,
 Where peaceful virtue weaves the myrtle braid.
 And O ! if eyes, whose holy glances roll,
 Swift messengers, and eloquent of soul ;
 If smiles more winning, and a gentler mien,
 Than the love-wildered maniac's brain hath seen
 Shaping celestial forms in vacant air,
 If these demand th' impassioned poet's care—
 If mirth, and softened sense, and wit refined,
 The blameless features of a lovely mind ;
 Then haply shall my trembling hand assign
 No fading wreath to beauty's saintly shrine.
 Nor, Sara ! thou these early flowers refuse——
 Ne'er lurked the snake beneath their simple hues
 No purple bloom the child of nature brings
 From flatt'ry's night-shade : as he feels, he sings.

September, 1794.

IMITATED FROM OSSIAN.*

THE stream with languid murmur creeps,
 In Lumin's flowery vale :
 Beneath the dew the lily weeps,
 Slow-waving to the gale.

'Cease, restless gale !' it seems to say,
 'Nor wake me with thy sighing ;
 The honours of my vernal day
 On rapid wing are flying.

* The flower hangs its head waving at times to the gale. Why dost thou awake me, O gale ! it seems to say, I am covered with the drops of heaven. The time of my fading is near, the blast that shall scatter my leaves. To-morrow shall the traveller come, he that saw me in my beauty shall come. His eyes will search the field, they will not find me. So shall they search in vain for the voice of Cona, after it has failed in the field.—*Berrathon*: see Ossian's Poems.

'To-morrow shall the trav'ler come
 Who late beheld me blooming :
 His searching eye shall vainly roam
 The dreary vale of Lumin.'

With eager gaze and wetted cheek
 My wonted haunts along,
 Thus, faithful maiden ! *thou* shalt seek
 The youth of simplest song.

But I along the breeze shall roll
 The voice of feeble power ;
 And dwell, the moon-beam of thy soul,
 In slumber's nightly hour.

THE COMPLAINT OF NINATHOMA.*

How long will ye round me be swelling,
 O ye blue-tumbling waves of the sea ?
 Not always in caves was my dwelling,
 Nor beneath the cold blast of the tree.
 Thro' the high-sounding halls of Cathlóma
 In the steps of my beauty I stray'd ;
 The warriors beheld Ninathóma,
 And they blessed the white-bosomed maid !
 A ghost ! by my cavern it darted !
 In moon-beams the spirit was drest—
 For lovely appear the departed
 When they visit the dreams of my rest !
 But disturbed by the tempest's commotion
 Fleet the shadowy forms of delight—
 Ah, cease, thou shrill blast of the ocean !
 To howl through my cavern by night.

* How long will ye roll around me, blue-tumbling waters of ocean ? My dwelling was not always in caves, nor beneath the whistling tree. My feast was spread in Torthoma's hall. The youths beheld me in my loveliness. They blessed the dark-haired Nina-thoma,—*Berrathon.*

IMITATED FROM THE WELSH.

If, while my passion I impart,
 You deem my words untrue,
 O place your hand upon my heart——
 Feel how it throbs for *you*!

Ah no! reject the thoughtless claim
 In pity to your lover!
 That thrilling touch would aid the flame,
 It wishes to discover.

TO A YOUNG ASS,

ITS MOTHER BEING TETHERED NEAR IT.

POOR little foal of an oppressed race!
 I love the languid patience of thy face:
 And oft with gentle hand I give thee bread,
 And clap thy ragged coat, and pat thy head.
 But what thy dulled spirits hath dismayed,
 That never thou dost sport along the glade?
 And (most unlike the nature of things young)
 That earth-ward still thy moveless head is hung!
 Do thy prophetic fears anticipate,
 Meek child of misery! thy future fate?
 The starving meal, and all the thousand aches
 'Which patient merit of the unworthy takes?'
 Or is thy sad heart thrilled with filial pain
 To see thy wretched mother's shortened chain?
 And truly, very piteous is *her* lot—
 Chained to a log within a narrow spot
 Where the close-eaten grass is scarcely seen,
 While sweet around her waves the tempting green!

Poor ass ! thy master should have learnt to show
 Pity—best taught by fellowship of woe !
 For much I fear me, that he lives, like thee,
 Half-famished in a land of luxury !
 How *askingly* its footsteps hither bend !
 It seems to say, ' And have I then *one* friend ?'
 Innocent foal ! thou poor despised forlorn !
 I hail thee brother—spite of the fool's scorn !
 And fain would take thee with me, in the dell
 Of peace and mild equality to dwell,
 Where toil shall call the charmer health his bride,
 And laughter tickle plenty's ribless side !
 How thou wouldst toss thy heels in gamesome play,
 And frisk about, as lamb or kitten gay !
 Yea ! and more musically sweet to me
 Thy dissonant harsh bray of joy would be,
 Than warbled melodies that sooth to rest
 The aching of pale fashion's vacant breast !

TO AN INFANT.

AN cease thy tears and sobs, my little life !
 I did but snatch away the unclasped knife :
 Some safer toy will soon arrest thine eye,
 And to quick laughter change this peevish cry !
 Poor stumbler on the rocky coast of woe,
 Tured by pain each source of pain to know !
 Alike the foodful fruit and scorching fire
 Awake thy eager grasp and young desire :
 Alike the good, the ill offend thy sight,
 And rouse the stormy sense of shrill affright !
 Untaught, yet wise ! mid all thy brief alarms
 Thou closely clingest to thy mother's arms,
 Nestling thy little face in that fond breast
 Whose anxious heavings lull thee to thy rest !
 Man's breathing miniature ! thou mak'st me sigh—
 A babe art thou—and such a thing am I !

To anger rapid and as soon appeased,
 For trifles mourning and by trifles pleased ;
 Break friendship's mirror with a tetchy blow,
 Yet snatch what coals of fire on pleasure's altar glow !

O thou that rearest with celestial aim
 The future seraph in my mortal frame,
 Thrice holy Faith ! whatever thorns I meet
 As on I totter with unpractised feet,
 Still let me stretch my arms and cling to thee,
 Meek nurse of souls through their long infancy !

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

ERE sin could blight or sorrow fade,
 Death came with friendly care ;
 The opening bud to Heaven conveyed
 And bade it blossom there.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

TELL me, on what holy ground
 May domestic peace be found ?
 Halcyon daughter of the skies,
 Far on fearful wings she flies
 From the pomp of sceptred state,
 From the rebel's noisy hate.
 In a cottaged vale she dwells,
 List'ning to the Sabbath bells !
 Still around her steps are seen
 Spotless honour's meeker mien,
 Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
 Sorrow smiling through her tears,
 And, conscious of the past employ,
 Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

LINES WRITTEN AT THE KING'S-ARMS, ROSS,

FORMERLY THE HOUSE OF THE 'MAN OF ROSS.'

RICHER than misers o'er their countless hoards,
 Nobler than kings, or king-polluted lords,
 Here dwelt the man of Ross ! O trav'ller, hear !
 Departed merit claims a reverent tear.
 If 'neath this roof thy wine-cheered moments pass,
 Fill to the good man's name one grateful glass :
 To higher zest shall mem'ry wake thy soul,
 And virtue mingle in th' ennobled bowl.
 But if, like mine, thro' life's distressful scene
 Lonely and sad thy pilgrimage hath been ;
 And if, thy breast with heart-sick anguish fraught,
 Thou journeyest onward tempest-tost in thought ;
 Here cheat thy cares ! in generous visions melt,
 And dream of goodness thou hast never felt !

 TO A FRIEND ; *

WITH AN UNFINISHED POEM.

THUS far my scanty brain hath built the rhyme
 Elaborate and swelling : yet the heart
 Not owns it. From thy spirit-breathing powers
 I ask not now, my friend ! the aiding verse,
 Tedious to thee, and from thy anxious thought
 Of dissonant mood. In fancy (well I know)
 From business wand'ring far and local cares,
 Thou creep'st round a dear-loved sister's bed

* Charles Lamb.

With noiseless step, and watchest the faint look,
 Soothing each pang with fond solicitude,
 And tenderest tones medicinal of love.
 I too a sister had, an only sister—
 She loved me dearly, and I doted on her !
 To her I poured forth all my puny sorrows
 (As a sick patient in his nurse's arms),
 And of the heart those hidden maladies
 That even from friendship's eye will shrink ashamed.
 O ! I have woke at midnight, and have wept,
 Because she was not !—Cheerily, dear Charles !
 Thou thy best friend shalt cherish many a year :
 Such warm presagings feel I of high hope.
 For not uninterested the dear maid
 I've viewed—her soul affectionate yet wise,
 Her polished wit as mild as lambent glories,
 That play around a sainted infant's head.
 He knows (the Spirit that in secret sees,
 Of whose omniscient and all-spreading love
 Aught to *implore** were impotence of mind)
 That my mute thoughts are sad before His throne,
 Prepared, when He His healing ray vouchsafes,
 To pour forth thanksgiving with lifted heart,
 And praise Him gracious with a brother's joy !

December, 1794.

* I utterly recant the sentiment contained in the lines

Of whose omniscient and all-spreading love
 Aught to *implore* were impotence of mind,

it being written in Scripture, 'Ask, and it shall be given you,' and my human reason being moreover convinced of the propriety of offering *petitions* as well as thanksgivings to Deity.

LINES ON A FRIEND.

WHO DIED OF A FRENZY FEVER, INDUCED BY CALUMNIOUS
REPORTS.

EDMUND ! thy grave with aching eye I scan,
And inly groan for heaven's poor outcast, man !
'Tis tempest all or gloom : in early youth,
If gifted with the Ithuriel lance of truth,
We force to start amid her feigned caress
Vice, siren-hag ! in native ugliness,
A brother's fate will haply rouse the tear :
Onward we move in heaviness and fear !
But if our fond hearts call to pleasure's bower
Some pigmy folly in a careless hour,
The faithless guest shall stamp th' enchanted ground
And mingled forms of mis'ry rise around :
Heart-fretting fear, with pallid look aghast,
That courts the future woe to hide the past ;
Remorse, the poisoned arrow in his side ;
And loud lewd mirth, to anguish close allied :
Till frenzy, fierce-eyed child of moping pain,
Darts her hot lightning flash athwart the brain.

Rest, injured shade ! Shall slander squatting near
Spit her cold venom in a dead man's ear ?
'Twas thine to feel the sympathetic glow
In merit's joy, and poverty's meek woe :
Thine all, that cheer the moment as it flies,
The zoneless cares, and smiling courtesies.
Nursed in thy heart the firmer virtues grew,
And in thy heart they withered ! Such chill dew
Wan indolence on each young blossom shed,
And vanity her filmy net-work spread,
With eye that rolled around in asking gaze,
And tongue that trafficked in the trade of praise.
Thy follies such ! the hard world mark'd them well—
Were they more wise, the proud who never fell ?

Rest, injured shade ! the poor man's g.a.e.f.u.l prayer
 On heaven-ward wing thy wounded soul shall bear.
 As oft at twilight gloom thy grave I pass,
 And oft sit down upon its recent grass,
 With introverted eye I contemplate
 Similitude of soul, perhaps of—fate !
 To me hath Heaven with bounteous hand assign'd
 Energic reason and a shaping mind,
 The daring ken of truth, the patriot's part,
 And pity's sigh, that breathes the gentle heart—
 Sloth-jaundiced all ! and from my graspless hand
 Drop friendship's precious pearls, like hour-glass sand.
 I weep, yet stoop not ! the faint anguish flows,
 A dreamy pang in morning's fev'rish doze.

Is this piled earth our being's passless mound ?
 Tell me, cold grave ! is death with poppies crown'd ?
 Tired centinel ! mid fitful starts I nod,
 And fain would sleep, though pillowed on a clod.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

WHEN faint and sad o'er sorrow's desert wild
 Slow journeys onward poor misfortune's child ;
 When fades each lovely form by fancy drest,
 And inly pines the self-consuming breast ;
 (No scourge of scorpions in thy right arm dread,
 No helmed terrors nodding o'er thy head ;)
 Assume, O death ! the cherub wings of peace,
 And bid the heart-sick wanderer's anguish cease !

Thee, Chatterton ! yon unblest stones protect
 From want, and the bleak freezings of neglect !
 Escaped the sore wounds of affliction's rod,
 Meek at the throne of mercy, and of God,
 Perchance, thou raisest high th' enraptured hymn
 Amid the blaze of seraphim !

Yet oft ('tis nature's call)
 I weep, that heaven-born genius so should fall ;

And oft, in fancy's saddest hour, my soul
 Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
 Now groans my sickening heart, as still I view
 Thy corse of livid hue;
 And now a flash of indignation high
 Darts thro' the tear, that glistens in mine eye.

Is this the land of song-ennobled line?
 Is this the land, where genius ne'er in vain
 Pour'd forth his lofty strain?
 Ah me! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
 Beneath chill disappointment's shade,
 His weary limbs in lonely anguish laid,
 And o'er her darling dead
 Pity hopeless hung her head,
 While 'mid the pelting of that merciless storm,
 Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form!

Sublime of thought, and confident of fame,
 From vales where Avon winds the minstrel * came.
 Light-hearted youth! he hastes along,
 And meditates the future song,
 How dauntless Ælla fray'd the Dacian foes;
 See, as floating high in air
 Glitter the sunny visions fair,
 His eyes dance rapture, and his bosom glows!

Ah! where are fled the charms of vernal grace,
 And joy's wild gleams, light-flashing o'er thy face?
 Youth of tumultuous soul, and haggard eye!
 Thy wasted form, thy hurried steps I view,
 On thy cold forehead starts the anguished dew:
 And dreadful was that bosom-rending sigh!

Such were the struggles of that gloomy hour,
 When care, of withered brow,
 Prepared the poison's power:
 Already to thy lips was raised the bowl,
 When near thee stood affection meek
 (Her bosom bare, and wildly pale her cheek);
 Thy sullen gaze she bade thee roll
 On scenes that well might melt thy soul;

* *Avon*, a river near Bristol; the birth-place of Chatterton.

Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,
 Thy native cot, where still, at close of day,
 Peace smiling sate, and listened to thy lay ;
 Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear,
 And mark thy mother's tear ;

See, see her breast's convulsive throe,
 Her silent agony of woe !
 Ah ! dash the poisoned chalice from thy hand !

And thou hadst dashed it, at her soft command,
 But that despair and indignation rose,
 And told again the story of thy woes ;
 Told the keen insult of th' unfeeling heart ;
 The dread dependence on the low-born mind ;
 Told ev'ry pang, with which thy soul must smart,
 Neglect, and grinning scorn, and want combined !
 Recoiling quick, thou bad'st the friend of pain
 Roll the black tide of death thro' every freezing vein !

Ye woods ! that wave o'er Avon's rocky steep,
 To fancy's ear sweet is your murm'ring deep !
 For *here* she loves the cypress wreath to weave ;
 Watching, with wistful eye, the sadd'ning tints of eve.
 Here, far from men, amid this pathless grove,
 In solemn thought the minstrel wont to rove,
 Like star-beam on the slow sequestered tide
 Lone-glittering, thro' the high tree branching wide.
 And here, in inspiration's eager hour,
 When most the big soul feels the madd'ning power,

These wilds, these caverns roaming o'er,
 Round which the screaming sea-gulls soar,
 With wild unequal steps he passed along,
 Oft pouring on the winds a broken song :
 Anon, upon some rough rock's fearful brow
 Would pause abrupt—and gaze upon the waves below

Poor Chatterton ! *he* sorrows for thy fate
 Who would have praised and loved thee, ere too late.
 Poor Chatterton ! farewell ! of darkest hues
 This chaplet cast I on thy shapeless tomb ;
 But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
 Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom !

Hence, gloomy thoughts ! no more my soul shall dwell
 On joys that were ! No more endure to weigh
 The shame and anguish of the evil day,
 Wisely forgetful ! O'er the ocean swell
 Sublime of hope I seek the cottaged dell
 Where virtue calm with careless step may stray ;
 And, dancing to the moonlight roundelay,
 The wizard passions weave an holy spell !

O Chatterton ! that thou wert yet alive !
 Sure thou would'st spread the canvas to the gale,
 And love, with us, the tinkling team to drive
 O'er peaceful freedom's undivided dale ;
 And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
 Hanging, enraptured, on thy stately song !
 And greet with smiles the young-eyed poesy
 All deftly mask'd, as hoar antiquity.

Alas, vain phantasies ! the fleeting brood
 Of woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood !
 Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,
 Where Susquehannah pours his untamed stream ;
 And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
 Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide,
 Will raise a solemn cenotaph to thee,
 Sweet harper of time-shrouded minstrelsy !
 And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,
 Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

SISTER of love-lorn poets, Philomel !
 How many bards in city garret pent,
 While at their window they with downward eye
 Mark the faint lamp-beam on the kennelled mud,
 And listen to the drowsy cry of watchmen,
 (Those hoarse unfeathered nightingales of time !)

* At this period Coleridge, with Southey, Wordsworth, and Lovell, contemplated the establishment of a Pantisocracy on the banks of the Susquehanna.

How many wretched bards address *thy* name,
 And hers, the full-orbed queen that shines above.
 But I *do* hear thee, and the high bough mark,
 Within whose mild moon-mellowed foliage hid,
 Thou warblest sad thy pity-pleading strains.
 Oh! I have listened, till my working soul,
 Waked by those strains to thousand phantasies,
 Absorbed hath ceased to listen! Therefore oft,
 I hymn thy name: and with a proud delight
 Oft will I tell thee, minstrel of the moon!
 'Most musical, most melancholy' bird!
 That all thy soft diversities of tone,
 Tho' sweeter far than the delicious airs
 That vibrate from a white-arm'd lady's harp,
 What time the languishment of lonely love
 Melts in her eye, and heaves her breast of snow,
 Are not so sweet as is the voice of her,
 My Sara—best beloved of human kind!
 When breathing the pure soul of tenderness
 She thrills me with the husband's promised name!

IN THE MANNER OF SPENSER.

O PEACE, that on a lilled bank dost love
 To rest thine head beneath an olive tree,
 I would that from the pinions of thy dove
 One quill withouten pain yplucked might be!
 For oh! I wish my Sara's frowns to flee,
 And fain to her some soothing song would write,
 Lest she resent my rude discourtesy,
 Who vowed to meet her ere the morning light,
 But broke my plighted word—ah! false and recreant wight!

Last night as I my weary head did pillow
 With thoughts of my dissevered fair engrossed,
 Chill fancy drooped, wreathing herself with willow,
 As tho' my breast entombed a pining ghost.

'From some blest couch, young rapture's bridal boast,
Rejected slumber! hither wing thy way;
But leave me with the matin hour, at most!
As night-closed floweret to the orient ray,
My sad heart will expand, when I the maid survey.

But Love, who 'heard the silence of my thought,'
Contrived a too successful wile, I ween:
And whispered to himself, with malice fraught—
'Too long our slave the damsel's *smiles* hath seen;
To-morrow shall he ken her altered mien!
He spake, and ambushed lay, till on my bed
The morning shot her dewy glances keen,
When as I 'gan uplift my drowsy head—
'Now, bard! I'll work thee woe!' the laughing elfin said.

Sleep, softly-breathing god! his downy wing
Was fluttering now, as quickly to depart;
When twanged an arrow from Love's mystic string,
With pathless wound it pierced him to the heart.
Was there some magic in the elfin's dart?
Or did he strike my couch with wizard lance?
For straight so fair a form did upwards start
(No fairer deck'd the bowers of old romance)
That sleep enamoured grew, nor moved from his sweet trance!

My Sara came, with gentlest look divine;
Bright shone her eye, yet tender was its beam:
I felt the pressure of her lip to mine!
Whisp'ring we went, and love was all our theme—
Love pure and spotless, as at first, I deem,
He sprang from heaven! Such joys with sleep did 'bide
That I the living image of my dream
Fondly forgot. Too late I woke, and sighed—
'O! how shall I behold my love at even-tide!'

TO THE AUTHOR OF POEMS,*

Published anonymously at Bristol, in September, 1795.

UNBOASTFUL bard ! whose verse concise yet clear
 Tunes to smooth melody unconquered sense,
 May your fame fadeless live, as 'never-sere'
 The ivy wreathes yon oak, whose broad defence
 Embowers me from noon's sultry influence !
 For, like that nameless riv'let stealing by,
 Your modest verse to musing quiet dear
 Is rich with tints heaven borrowed : the charmed eye
 Shall gaze undazzled there, and love the softened sky.

Circling the base of the poetic mount
 A stream there is, which rolls in lazy flow
 Its coal-black waters from oblivion's fount:
 The vapour-poisoned birds that fly too low,
 Fall with dead swoop, and to the bottom go.
 Escaped that heavy stream on pinion fleet
 Beneath the mountain's lofty-frowning brow,
 Ere aught of perilous ascent you meet,
 A mead of mildest charm delays th' unlab'ring feet.

Not there the cloud-climbed rock, sublime and vast,
 That, like some giant king, o'erglooms the hill ;
 Nor there the pine-grove to the midnight blast
 Makes solemn music ! but th' unceasing rill
 To the soft wren or lark's descending trill
 Murmurs sweet undersong 'mid jasmin bowers.
 In this same pleasant meadow, at your will,
 I ween, you wandered—there collecting flowers
 Of sober tint, and herbs of med'cinable powers !

There for the monarch-murdered soldier's tomb
 You wove th' unfinished wreath † of saddest hues ;
 And to that holier chaplet ‡ added bloom
 Besprinkling it with Jordan's cleansing dew.
 But lo ! your Henderson § awakes the muse—

* Mr Joseph Cottle.

† John the Baptist, a Poem.

† War, a Fragment.

§ Monody on John Henderson.

His spirit beckoned from the mountain's height !
 You left the plain and soared 'mid richer views !
 So nature mourned when sunk the first-day's light,
 With stars, unseen before, spangling her robe of night !

Still soar, my friend, those richer views among,
 Strong, rapid, fervent, flashing fancy's beam !
 Virtue and truth shall love your gentler song ;
 But poesy demands th' impassioned theme :
 Waked by heaven's silent dews at eve's mild gleam,
 What balmy sweets Pomona breathes around !
 But if the vext air rush a stormy stream,
 Or Autumn's shrill gust moan in plaintive sound,
 With fruits and flowers she loads the tempest-honoured ground

ODE TO SARA,

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM BRISTOL.

Note.—The first Stanza alludes to a passage in the Letter

NOR travels my meand'ring eye
 The starry wilderness on high ;
 Nor now with curious sight
 I mark the glow-worm as I pass,
 Move with 'green radiance' thro' the grass,
 An emerald of light.

O ever-present to my view !
 My wafted spirit is with you,
 And soothes your boding fears ;
 I see you all opprest with gloom
 Sit lonely in that cheerless room—
 Ah me ! you are in tears !

Belovèd woman ! did you fly
 Chilled friendship's dark disliking eye,
 Or mirth's untimely din ?
 With cruel weight these trifles press
 A temper sore with tenderness,
 When aches the void within.

But why with sable wand unblest
Should fancy roise within my breast
Dim-visaged shapes of dread?
Untenanted its beauteous clay,
My Sara's soul has winged its way,
And hovers round my head!

I felt it prompt the tender dream,
When, slowly sunk the day's last gleam,
You roused each gentler sense;
As sighing o'er the blossom's bloom
Meek evening wakes its soft perfume
With viewless influence.

And hark, my love! The sea-breeze moans
Thro' yon reft house! O'er rolling stones,
With broad impetuous sweep,
The fast encroaching tides supply
The silence of the cloudless sky
With mimic thunders deep.

Dark-redd'ning from the channel'd * isle
(Where stands one solitary pile
Unslated by the blast)
The watchfire, like a sullen star,
Twinkles to man a dozing tar
Rude-cradled on the mast.

Ev'n there—beneath that light-house tower—
In the tumultuous evil hour
Ere peace with Sara came,
Time was, I should have thought it sweet
To count the echoings of my feet,
And watch the troubled flame.

And there in black soul-jaundiced fit
A sad gloom-pampered man to sit,
And listen to the roar,
When mountain surges, bellowing deep.
With an uncouth monster leap
Plunged foaming on the shore.

* The Holmes, in the Bristol Channel.

Then by the lightning's blaze to mark
 Some toiling tempest-shattered bark :
 Her vain distress-guns hear :
 And when a second sheet of light
 Flashed o'er the blackness of the night—
 To see *no* vessel there !

But fancy now more gaily sings ;
 Or if awhile she droop her wings,
 As skylarks 'mid the corn,
 On summer fields she grounds her breast :
 Th' oblivious poppy o'er her nest
 Nods, till returning morn.

O mark those smiling tears, that swell
 The opened rose ! From heaven they fell,
 And with the sunbeam blend ;
 Blest visitations from above :
 Such are the tender woes of love
 Fost'ring the heart they bend !

When stormy midnight howling round
 Beats on our roof with clatt'ring sound,
 To me your arms you'll stretch :
 Great God ! you'll say—To us so kind,
 O shelter from this loud bleak wind
 The houseless, friendless wretch !

The tears that tremble down your cheek,
 Shall bathe my kisses chaste and meek
 In pity's dew divine ;
 And from your heart the sighs that steal
 Shall make your rising bosom feel
 The answ'ring swell of mine !

How oft, my love ! with shapings sweet
 I paint the moment we shall meet !

With eager speed I dart—
 I seize you in the vacant air,
 And fancy, with a husband's care,
 I press you to my heart !

TO A FRIEND,

IN ANSWER TO A MELANCHOLY LETTER.

AWAY, those cloudy looks, that lab'ring sigh,
The peevish offspring of a sickly hour !
Nor meanly thus complain of fortune's power,
When the blind gamester throws a luckless die.

Yon setting sun flashes a mournful gleam
Behind those broken clouds, his stormy train :
To-morrow shall the many-coloured main
In brightness roll beneath his orient beam !

Wild as th' autumnal gust, the hand of Time
Flies o'er his mystic lyre ! in shadowy dance
Th' alternate groups of joy and grief advance,
Responsive to his varying strains sublime !

Bears on its wing each hour a load of fate.
The swain, who lulled by Seine's mild murmurs, led
His weary oxen to their nightly shed,
To-day may rule a tempest-troubled State.

Nor shall not fortune with a vengeful smile
Survey the sanguinary despot's might,
And haply hurl the pageant from his height,
Unwept to wander in some savage isle.

There, shiv'ring sad beneath the tempest's frown,
Round his tired limbs to wrap the purple vest ;
And mixed with nails and beads, an equal jest !
Barter for food the jewels of his crown.

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

My pensive Sara ! thy soft cheek reclined
 Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
 To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
 With white-flowered jasmín, and the broad-leaved myrtle,
 And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
 Slow-sadd'ning round, and mark the star of eve
 Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents
 Snatched from yon bean-field ! and the world so hushed !
 Hark ! the still murmur of the distant sea
 Tells us of silence ! And th' Eolian lute,
 How by the desultory breeze caressed,
 Like some coy maid half-yielding to her lover,
 It pours such sweet upbraidings, as must needs
 Tempt to repeat the wrong ! And now its strings
 Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
 Over delicious surges sink and rise,
 Such a soft floating witchery of sound.—
 Methinks, it should have been impossible
 Not to love all things in a world like this,
 Where e'en the breezes of the simple air
 Possess the power and spirit of melody !
 And thus, my love ! as on the midway slope
 Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
 Whilst thro' my half-closed eyelids I behold
 The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
 And tranquil muse upon tranquillity ;
 Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
 And many idle flitting phantasies,
 Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
 As wild and various as the random gales
 That swell or flutter on this subject lute !
 And what if all of animated nature
 Be but organic harps diversely framed
 That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps.

Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
 At once the soul of each, and God of all?
 But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
 Darts, O belovèd woman! nor such thoughts
 Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject,
 And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
 Meek daughter in the family of Christ,
 Well hast thou said, and holily dispraised
 These shapings of the unregenerate mind,
 Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
 On vain philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
 For never guiltless may I speak of Him,
 Th' Incomprehensible! save when with awe
 I praise him, and with faith that inly * feels;
 Who with His saving mercies healed me,
 A sinful and most miserable man,
 Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
 Peace, and this cot, and thee, heart-honoured maid!

REFLECTIONS

ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT.

Sermoni propria.—Hor.

Low was our pretty cot! our tallest rose
 Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
 At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
 The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
 Our myrtles blossomed; and across the porch
 Thick jasmins twined: the little landscape round
 Was green and woody and refreshed the eye.
 It was a spot, which you might aptly call

* L'athée n'est point à mes yeux un faux esprit; je puis vivre avec lui aussi bien et mieux qu'avec le dévot, car il raisonne davantage, mais il lui manque un sens, et mon âme ne se fonde point entièrement avec la sienne; il est froid au spectacle le plus ravissant, et il cherche un syllogisme lorsque je rends un action de grace.—*Appel à l'Impartiale Postérité*, par la Citoyenne Roland.

The Valley of Seclusion! Once I saw
 (Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)
 A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
 Bristow's citizen: methought, it calmed
 His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
 With wiser feelings: for he paused, and looked
 With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,
 Then eyed our cottage, and gazed round again,
 And sighed, and said, *it was a blessed place.*
 And we *were* blessed. Oft with patient ear
 Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
 (Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
 Gleaming on sunny wing)—'And such,' I said,
 'The inobtrusive song of happiness—
 Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard
 When the soul seeks to hear; when all is hushed
 And the heart listens!'

But the time, when first
 From that low dell steep up the stony mount
 I climbed with perilous toil and reached the top,
 O what a goodly scene! *Here* the bleak mount,
 The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep;
 Grey clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields
 And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed,
 Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
 And seats, and lawns, the abbey, and the wood,
 And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire:
 The Channel *there*, the islands and white sails,
 Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless ocean—
 It seemed like omnipresence! God, methought,
 Had built him there a temple: the whole world
 Seemed imaged in its vast circumference.
 No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart.
 Blest hour! it was a luxury—to be!

Ah quiet dell! dear cot! and mount sublime!
 I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
 While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
 That I should dream away the entrusted hours
 On rose-leaf beds, pamp'ring the coward heart
 With feelings all too delicate for use?

Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
 Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth :
 And he, that works me good with unmoved face,
 Does it but half : he chills me while he aids,
 My benefactor, not my brother man !
 Yet even this, this cold beneficence
 Seizes my praise, when I reflect on those,
 The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe !
 Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the wretched,
 Nursing in some delicious solitude
 Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies !
 I therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand,
 Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
 Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.
 Yet oft when after honourable toil
 Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to dream,
 My spirit shall revisit thee, dear cot !
 Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,
 And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
 And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet abode !
 Ah—had none greater ! and that all had such !

TO AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN

WHOM THE AUTHOR HAD KNOWN IN THE DAYS OF HER INNOCENCE

MYRTLE leaf, that ill besped
 Pinest in the gladsome ray,
 Soiled beneath the common tread
 Far from thy protecting spray !

When the partridge o'er the sheaf
 Whirred along the yellow vale,
 Sad, I saw thee, heedless leaf !
 Love the dalliance of the gale.

Lightly didst thou, foolish thing !
 Heave and flutter to his sighs,

While the flatt'rer on his wing
 Wooed and whispered thee to rise.
 Gaily from thy mother stalk
 Wert thou danced and waded high,
 Soon on this unsheltered walk
 Flung to fade, to rot, and die !

LINES

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY, 1796

SWEET flower ! that peeping from thy russet stem,
 Unfoldest timidly (for in strange sort
 This dark, freeze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering month
 Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon thee
 With 'blue voluptuous eye') ; alas, poor flower !
 These are but flatteries of the faithless year.
 Perchance escaped its unknown polar cave
 Ev'n now the keen north-east is on its way.
 Flower, that must perish ! shall I liken thee
 To some sweet girl of too, too rapid growth
 Nipped by consumption 'mid untimely charms ?
 Or to Bristowa's bard,* the wondrous boy !
 An amaranth, which earth scarce seemed to own,
 Blooming 'mid poverty's drear wintry waste,
 Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
 Beat it to earth ? Or with indignant grief
 Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
 Bright flower of hope killed in the opening bud ?
 Farewell, sweet blossom ! better fate be thine
 And mock my boding ! dim similitudes
 Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour
 From black anxiety that gnaws my heart
 For her who droops far-off on a sick bed :
 And the warm wooings of this sunny day
 Tremble along my frame and harmonize
 Th' attuned brain, that even the saddest thoughts

* Chatterop

Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh tunes
 Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

THE HOUR WHEN WE SHALL MEET AGAIN

(Composed during illness, and in absence.)

DIM hour ! that sleep'st on pillowing clouds afar,
 O rise and yoke the turtles to thy car !
 Bend o'er the traces, blame each lingering dove,
 And give me to the bosom of my love !
 My gentle love, caressing and carest,
 With heaving heart shall cradle me to rest !
 Shed the warm tear-drop from her smiling eyes,
 Lull with fond woe, and med'cine me with sighs !
 Chilled by the night, the drooping rose of May
 Mourns the long absence of the lovely day ;
 Young day returning at her promised hour
 Weeps o'er the sorrows of her fav'rite flower ;
 Weeps the soft dew, the balmy gale she sighs,
 And darts a trembling lustre from her eyes.
 New life and joy th' expanding flowret feels :
 His pitying mistress mourns, and mourning heals !

TO C. LLOYD,

ON HIS PROPOSING TO DOMESTICATE WITH THE AUTHOR.

A MOUNT, not wearisome and bare and steep,
 But a green mountain variously up-piled
 Where o'er the jutting rocks soft mosses creep
 Or coloured lichens with slow oozing weep ;
 Where cypress and the darker yew start wild ;
 And 'mid the summer torrent's gentle dash

Dance brightened the red clusters of the ash ;
 Beneath whose boughs, by stillest sounds beguiled,
 Calm pensiveness might muse herself to sleep ;
 Till haply startled by some fleecy dam,
 That rustling on the bushy cliff above
 With melancholy bleat of anxious love
 Made meek enquiry for her wand'ring lamb :
 Such a green mountain 'twere most sweet to climb
 E'en while the bosom ached with loneliness—
 How heavenly sweet, if some dear friend should bless
 Th' advent'rous toil, and up the path sublime
 Now lead, now follow ; the glad landscape round,
 Wide and more wide, increasing without bound !

O then 'twere loveliest sympathy, to mark
 The berries of the half up-rooted ash
 Dripping and bright ; and list the torrent's dash—
 Beneath the cypress, or the yew more dark,
 Seated at ease, on some smooth mossy rock ;
 In social silence now, and now t' unlock
 The treasured heart ; arm linked in friendly arm,
 Save if the one, his muse's witching charm
 Mutt'ring brow-bent, at unwatched distance lag ;
 Till high o'er-head his beck'ning friend appears,
 And from the forehead of the topmost crag
 Shouts eagerly : for haply *there* uprears
 That shadowing pine its old romantic limbs
 Which latest shall detain the enamoured sight
 Seen from below, when eve the valley dims,
 Tinged yellow with the rich departing light ;
 And haply, basined in some unsunned cleft,
 A beauteous spring, the rock's collected tears,
 Sleeps sheltered there, scarce wrinkled by the gale !
 Together thus, the world's vain turmoil left,
 Stretched on the crag, and shadowed by the pine,
 And bending o'er the clear delicious fount,
 Ah, dearest Charles ! it were a lot divine
 To cheat our noons in moralizing mood,
 While west winds fanned our temples, toil-bedewed :
 Then downwards slope, oft-pausing, from the mount,
 To some low mansion in some woody dale,

Where, smiling with blue eye, domestic bliss
Gives *this* the husband's, *that* the brother's kiss !

Thus rudely versed in allegoric lore,
The hill of knowledge I essayed to trace ;
That verd'rous hill with many a resting-place
And many a stream, whose warbling waters pour
To glad and fertilize the subject plains ;
That hill with secret springs, and nooks untrod,
And many a fancy-blest and holy sod
Where inspiration, his diviner strains
Low-murm'ring, lay ; and starting from the rocks
Stiff evergreens, whose spreading foliage mocks
Want's barren soil, and the bleak frosts of age,
And mad oppression's thunder-clasping rage !
O meek retiring spirit ! we will climb,
Cheering and cheered, this lovely hill sublime ;
And from the stirring world uplifted high
(Whose noises faintly wafted on the wind
To quiet musings shall attune the mind,
And oft the melancholy theme supply),
There while the prospect thro' the gazing eye
Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
We'll laugh at wealth, and learn to laugh at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neighb'ring fountains image each the whole.

RELIGIOUS MUSINGS

A DESULTORY POEM, WRITTEN ON THE CHRISTMAS EVE OF 1794.

What tho' first,
 In years unseason'd, I attuned the lay
 To idle passion and unreal woe?
 Yet serious truth her empire o'er my song
 Hath now asserted: falsehood's evil brood,
 Vice and deceitful pleasure, she at once
 Excluded, and my fancy's careless toil
 Drew to the better cause!—*Akenside.*

ARGUMENT.

Introduction. Person of Christ. His prayer on the cross. The process of his doctrines on the mind of the individual. Character of the elect. Superstition. Digression to the present war. Origin and uses of government and property. The present state of society. French revolution. Millennium. Universal redemption. Conclusion.

THIS is the time, when, most divine to hear,
 The voice of adoration rouses me,
 As with a cherub's trump: and high upborne,
 Yea, mingling with the choir, I seem to view
 The vision of the heavenly multitude,
 Who hymned the song of peace o'er Bethlehem's fields!

Yet Thou more bright than all the angel host
 That harbingered thy birth, Thou, Man of Woes!
 Despised Galilæan! For the Great
 Invisible (by symbols only seen)
 With a peculiar and surpassing light
 Shines from the visage of th' oppressed good man,

When heedless of himself the scourged saint
 Mourns for the oppressor. Fair the vernal mead,
 Fair the high grove, the sea, the sun, the stars;
 True impress each of their creating Sire!
 Yet nor high grove, nor many-coloured mead,
 Nor the green ocean with his thousand isles,
 Nor the starred azure, nor the sovran sun,
 E'er with such majesty of portraiture
 Imaged the supreme beauty uncreate,
 As Thou, meek Saviour! at the fearful hour
 When thy insulted anguish winged the prayer
 Harped by archangels, when they sing of mercy!
 Which when the Almighty heard, from forth his throne,
 Diviner light filled heaven with ecstasy!
 Heav'n's hymnings paused: and hell her yawning mouth
 Closed a brief moment.

Lovely was the death
 Of Him, whose life was love! Holy with power
 He on the thought-benighted sceptic beams
 Manifest Godhead, melting into day
 What floating mists of dark idolatry
 Broke and misshaped the Omnipresent Sire:
 And first by fear uncharmed the droused soul,
 Till of its nobler nature it 'gan feel
 Dim recollections; and thence soared to hope,
 Strong to believe whate'er of mystic good
 Th' Eternal dooms for his immortal sons.
 From hope and firmer faith to perfect love
 Attracted and absorbed: and centred there
 God only to behold, and know, and feel,
 Till by exclusive consciousness of God
 All self-annihilated it shall make
 God its identity: God all in all!
 We and our Father one!

And blest are they,
 Who in this fleshly world, the elect of heaven,
 Their strong eye darting thro' the deeds of men,
 Adore with stedfast unpresuming gaze
 Him, nature's essence, mind, and energy!

And gazing, trembling, patiently ascend,
 Treading beneath their feet all visible things
 As steps, that upward to their Father's throne
 Lead gradual—else nor glorified nor loved.
 They nor contempt imbosom nor revenge :
 For they dare know of what may seem deform
 The supreme fair sole Operant : in whose sight
 All things are pure, his strong controlling love
 Alike from all educing perfect good.

Theirs, too, celestial courage, inly armed,
 Dwarfing earth's giant brood, what time they muse
 On their great Father, great beyond compare !
 And marching onwards view high o'er their heads
 His waving banners of omnipotence.

They cannot dread created might, who love
 God, the Creator !—fair and lofty thought !
 It lifts and swells my heart ! And as I muse,
 Behold ! a vision gathers in my soul,
 Voices and shadowy shapes ! In human guise
 I seem to see the phantom, fear, pass by,
 Hotly pursued, and pale ! From rock to rock
 He bounds with bleeding feet, and thro' the swamp,
 The quicksand, and the groaning wilderness,
 Struggles with feebler and yet feebler flight.
 But lo ! an altar in the wilderness,
 And eagerly, yet feebly, lo ! he grasps
 The altar of the living God ! and there
 With wan reverted face the trembling wretch
 All wildly list'ning to his hunter-fiends
 Stands, till the last faint echo of their yell
 Dies in the distance. Soon refreshed from heaven
 He calms the throb and tempest of his heart.
 His countenance settles : a soft solemn bliss
 Swims in his eyes ; his swimming eyes upraised ;
 And faith's whole armour girds his limbs ! And thus
 Transfigured, with a meek and dreadless awe,
 A solemn hush of spirit, he beholds
 All things of terrible seeming : yea, unmoved
 Views e'en th' immitigable ministers

That shower down vengeance on these latter days.
 For even these on wings of healing come,
 Yea, kindling with intenser Deity
 From the celestial mercy-seat they speed,
 And at the renovating wells of love
 Have filled their vials with salutary wrath,
 To sickly nature more medicinal
 Than what sweet balm the weeping good man pours
 Into the lone, despoiled traveller's wounds !

Thus from th' elect, regenerate thro' faith,
 Pass the dark passions * and what thirsty cares
 Drink up the spirit and the dim regards
 Self-centre. Lo, they vanish ! or acquire
 New names, new features—by supernal grace
 Enrobed with light, and naturalized in heaven.
 As when a shepherd on a vernal morn
 Thro' some thick fog creeps tim'rous with slow foot,
 Darkling with earnest eyes he traces out
 Th' immediate road, all else of fairest kind
 Hid or deform'd. But lo ! the burning sun !
 Touched by the enchantment of that sudden beam
 Straight the black vapour melteth, and in globes
 Of dewy glitter gems each plant and tree ;
 On every leaf, on every blade it hangs ;
 Dance glad the new-born intermingling rays,
 And wide around the landscape streams with glory !

There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
 Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
 Truth of subliming import ! with the which
 Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,
 He from his small particular orbit flies
 With blest outstarting ! from himself he flies,
 Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze
 Views all creation ; and he loves it all,

* Our evil passions under the influence of religion become innocent, and may be made to animate our virtue—in the same manner as the thick mist, melted by the sun, increases the light which it had before excluded. In the preceding paragraph, agreeably to this truth we had allegorically narrated the transfiguration of tear into holy awe.

And blesses it, and calls it very good !
 This is indeed to dwell with the Most High !
 The cherubs and the trembling seraphim
 Can press no nearer to th' Almighty's throne.
 But that we roam unconscious, or with hearts
 Unfeeling of our universal Sire,
 Haply for this some younger angel now
 Looks down on human nature : and, behold !
 A sea of blood bestrewed with wrecks, where mad
 Embattling interests on each other rush
 With unhelmed rage !

'Tis the sublime of man,
 Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
 Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole !
 This fraternizes man, this constitutes
 Our charities and bearings. But 'tis God
 Diffused thro' all, that doth make all one whole ;
 This the worst superstition,* him except
 Aught to desire, supreme reality !
 The plenitude and permanence of bliss !
 O fiends of superstition ! not that oft
 The erring priest hath stained with brother's blood
 Your grisly idols, not for this may wrath
 Thunder against you from the Holy One !
 But o'er some plain that steameth to the sun,
 Peopled with death ; or where more hideous trade
 Loud-laughing packs his bales of human anguish ;
 I will raise up a mourning, O ye fiends !
 And curse your spells, that film the eye of faith,
 Hiding the present God ; whose presence lost,
 The moral world's cohesion, we become
 An anarchy of spirits ! Toy-bewitched,
 Made blind by lusts, disherited of soul,
 No common centre, man no common sire

* If to make aught but the supreme reality the object of final pursuit, be superstition ; if the attributing of sublime properties to things or persons, which those things or persons neither do or can possess, be superstition ; then avarice and ambition are superstitions : and he, who wishes to estimate the evils of superstition, should transport himself, not to the temple of the Mexican deities, but to the plains of Flanders, or the coast of Africa.—Such is the sentiment conveyed in this and the subsequent lines.

Knoweth ! A sordid, solitary thing,
'Mid countless brethren, with a lonely heart
Thro' courts and cities the smooth savage roams,
Feeling himself, his own low self, the whole ;
When he by sacred sympathy might make
The whole one self ! self, that no alien knows !
Self, far diffused as fancy's wing can travel !
Self, spreading still ! oblivious of its own,
Yet all of all possessing ! This is faith !
This the Messiah's destined victory !
But first offences needs must come ! Even now
(Black hell laughs horrible—to hear the scoff !)
Thee to defend, meek Galilæan ! Thee
And thy mild laws of love unutterable,
Mistrust and enmity have burst the bands
Of social peace ; and list'ning treachery lurks
With pious fraud to snare a brother's life ;
And childless widows o'er the groaning land
Wail numberless ; and orphans weep for bread !
Thee to defend, dear Saviour of mankind !
Thee, Lamb of God ! Thee, blameless Prince of Peace !
From all sides rush the thirsty brood of war !
Austria, and that foul woman of the north,
The lustful murd'ress of her wedded lord !
And he, connatural mind ! whom (in their songs
So bards of elder time had haply feign'd)
Some fury fondled in her hate to man,
Bidding her serpent hair in mazy surge
Lick his young face, and at his mouth inbreathe
Horrible sympathy ! And leagued with these
Each petty German princeling, nursed in gore !
Soul-hardened barterers of human blood !
Death's prime slave-merchants ! scorpion-whips of fate !
Nor least in savagery of holy zeal,
Apt for the yoke, the race degenerate,
Whom Britain erst had blushed to call her sons !
Thee to defend the Moloch priest prefers
The prayer of hate, and bellows to the herd
That Deity, accomplice Deity.
In the fierce jealousy of wakened wrath,
Will go forth with our armies and our fleets

To scatter the red ruin on their foes !
 O blasphemy ! to mingle fiendish deeds
 With blessedness !

Lord of unsleeping love,*
 From everlasting Thou ! We shall not die.
 These, even these, in mercy didst thou form,
 Teachers of good thro' evil, by brief wrong
 Making truth lovely, and her future might
 Magnetic o'er the fixed untrembling heart.

In the primeval age, a dateless while,
 The vacant shepherd wandered with his flock,
 Pitching his tent where'er the green grass waved.
 But soon imagination conjured up
 An host of new desires : with busy aim,
 Each for himself, earth's eager children toiled.
 So property began, twy-streaming fount,
 Whence vice and virtue flow, honey and gall.
 Hence the soft couch, and many-coloured robe,
 The timbrel, and arched dome, and costly feast,
 With all th' inventive arts, that nursed the soul
 To forms of beauty, and by sensual wants
 Unsensualized the mind, which in the means
 Learned to forget the grossness of the end,
 Best pleased with its own activity.
 And hence disease that withers manhood's arm,
 The daggered envy, spirit-quenching want,
 Warriors, and lords, and priests—all the sore ills
 That vex and desolate our mortal life :
 Wide-wasting ills ! yet each th' immediate source
 Of mightier good. Their keen necessities
 To ceaseless action goading human thought
 Have made earth's reasoning animal her lord ;

* 'Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment,' &c., Habakkuk i. 12. In this paragraph the author recalls himself from his indignation against the instruments of evil, to contemplate the *uses* of these evils in the great process of Divine benevolence. In the first age men were innocent from ignorance of vice : they fell, that by the knowledge of consequences they might attain intellectual security, i. e. virtue, which is a wise and strong-nerved innocence.

And the pale-featured sage's trembling hand
Strong as an host of armed deities.

From avarice thus, from luxury and war,
Sprang heavenly science ; and from science freedom.
O'er wakened realms philosophers and bards
Spread in concentric circles : they whose souls,
Conscious of their high dignities from God,
Brook not wealth's rivalry ; and they who, long
Enamoured with the charms of order hate
Th' unseemly disproportion : and whoe'er
Turn with mild sorrow from the victor's car
And the low puppetry of thrones, to muse
On that blest triumph, when the patriot sage
Called the red lightnings from th' o'er-rushing cloud
And dashed the beauteous terrors on the earth,
Smiling majestic. Such a phalanx ne'er
Measured firm paces to the calming sound
Of Spartan flute ! These on the fated day,
When, stung to rage by pity, eloquent men
Have roused with pealing voice th' unnumbered tribes
That toil and groan and bleed, hungry and blind,
These, hushed awhile with patient eye serene,
Shall watch the mad career of the storm ;
Then o'er the wild and wavy chaos rush
And tame th' outrageous mass, with plastic might
Moulding confusion to such perfect forms,
As erst were wont, bright visions of the day !
To float before them, when, the summer noon,
Beneath some arched romantic rock reclined
They felt the sea-breeze lift their youthful locks
Or in the month of blossoms, at mild eve,
Wandering with desultory feet, inhaled
The wafted perfumes, gazing on the woods,
The many-tinted streams, and setting sun
With all his gorgeous company of clouds,
In ecstasy ! then homeward as they stray'd
Cast the sad eye to earth, and inly mused
Why there was misery in a world so fair.

Ah, far removed from all that glads the sense,

From all that softens or ennobles man,
 The wretched many ! Bent beneath their loads
 They gape at pageant power, nor recognize
 Their cots' transmuted plunder ! from the tree
 Of knowledge, ere the vernal sap had risen,
 Rudely disbranched ! Evil society !
 Fitliest depicted by some sun-scorcht waste,
 Where oft majestic thro' the tainted noon
 The simoom sails, before whose purple pomp
 Who falls not prostrate dies ! and where, by night,
 Fast by each precious fountain on green herbs
 The lion couches ; or hyæna dips
 Deep in the lucid stream his gore-stained jaws ;
 Or serpent plants his vast moon-glittering bulk,
 Caught in whose monstrous twine behemoth * yells,
 His bones loud-crashing !

O ye numberless,
 Ye, whom oppression's ruffian gluttony
 Drives from the feast of life ! O thou poor wretch,
 Who nursed in darkness and made wild by want
 Roamest for prey, yea, thy unnatural hand
 Dost lift to deeds of blood ! O pale-eyed form,
 The victim of seduction, doomed to know
 Nights of pollution, days of blasphemy ;
 Who in thy orgies with loathed wassailers
 Must gaily laugh, while thy remembered home
 Gnaws like a viper at thy secret heart !
 O aged women ! ye who weekly catch
 The morsel tost by law-forced charity,
 And die so slowly, that none call it murder !
 O loathly suppliants ! ye that unreceived
 Totter heart-broken from the closing gates
 Of the full lazarus-house ; or, gazing, stand
 Sick with despair ! O ye to glory's field
 Forced or ensnared, who, as ye gasp in death,
 Bleed with new wounds beneath the vulture's beak !
 O thou poor widow, who in dreams dost view

* Behemoth in Hebrew signifies wild beasts in general. Some believe it is the elephant, some the hippopotamus ; some affirm it is the wild-bull. Poetically, it designates any large quadruped.

Thy husband's mangled corse, and from short doze
 Start'st with a shriek ; or in thy half-thatched cot,
 Waked by the wintry night-storm, wet and cold,
 Cower'st o'er thy screaming baby ! Rest awhile,
 Children of wretchedness ! more groans must rise,
 More blood must steam, or ere your wrongs be full.
 Yet is the day of retribution nigh :
 The Lamb of God hath opened the fifth seal :
 And upward rush on swiftest wing of fire
 Th' innumerable multitude of wrongs
 By man on man inflicted ! Rest awhile,
 Children of wretchedness ! the hour is nigh
 And lo ! the great, the rich, the mighty men,
 The kings and the chief captains of the world,
 With all that fixed on high like stars of heaven
 Shot baleful influence, shall be cast to earth,
 Vile and down-trodden, as the untimely fruit
 Shook from the fig-tree by a sudden storm.
 Ev'n now the storm begins : each gentle name,
 Faith and meek piety, with fearful joy
 Tremble far off—for lo ! the giant frenzy,
 Uprooting empires with his whirlwind arm,
 Mocketh high Heaven ; burst hideous from the cell
 Where the old hag, unconquerable, huge,
 Creation's eyeless drudge, black ruin, sits
 Nursing th' impatient earthquake.

O return :

Pure faith ! meek piety ! The abhorred form
 Whose scarlet robe was stiff with earthly pomp,
 Who drank iniquity in cups of gold,
 Whose names were many and all blasphemous,
 Hath met the horrible judgment ! Whence that cry ?
 The mighty army of foul spirits shrieked,
 Disherited of earth ! For she hath fallen
 On whose black front was written Mystery ;
 She that reeled heavily, whose wine was blood ,
 She that worked whoredom with the demon power,
 And from the dark embrace all evil things
 Brought forth and nurtured—mitred atheism :
 And patient folly, who on bended knee

Gives back the steel that stabbed him ; and pale fear,
 Hunted by ghastlier shapings than surround
 Moon-blasted madness when he yells at midnight !
 Return, pure faith ! return, meek piety !
 The kingdoms of the world are yours : each heart
 Self-governed, the vast family of love,
 Raised from the common earth by common toil,
 Enjoy the equal produce. Such delights
 As float to earth, permitted visitants !
 When in some hour of solemn jubilee
 The massy gates of Paradise are thrown
 Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
 Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
 And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,
 And they, that from the crystal river of life
 Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales !
 The favoured good man in his lonely walk
 Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks
 Strange bliss which he shall recognize in heaven.
 And such delights, such strange beatitude
 Seize on my young anticipating heart
 When that blest future rushes on my view !
 For in his own and in his Father's sight
 The Saviour comes ! while as the thousand years *
 Lead up their mystic dance, the desert shouts !
 Old Ocean claps his hands ! The mighty dead
 Rise to new life, whoe'er from earliest time
 With conscious zeal had urged love's wondrous plan,
 Coadjutors of God. To Milton's trump
 The high groves of the renovated earth
 Unbosom their glad echoes : inly hushed
 Adoring Newton his serener eye
 Raises to heaven : and he of mortal kind
 Wisest, he † first who mark'd the ideal tribes

* The millennium :—in which I suppose, that man will continue to enjoy the highest glory of which his human nature is capable.—That all who in past ages have endeavoured to ameliorate the state of man, will rise and enjoy the fruits and flowers, the imperceptible seeds of which they had sown in their former life ; and that the wicked will, during the same period, be suffering the remedies adapted to their several bad habits. I suppose that this period will be followed by the passing away of this earth, and by our entering the state of pure intellect ; when all creation shall rest from its labours.

† David Hartley.

Up the fine fibres thro' the sentient brain
 Pass in fine surges. Pressing on his steps.
 Lo! Priestley there, patriot, and saint, and sage!
 Him, full of years, from his loved native land
 Statesmen blood-stained and priests idolatrous,
 By dark lies madd'ning the blind multitude,
 Drove with vain hate. Calm, pitying he retired,
 And mused expectant on these promised years.

O years! the blest preëminence of saints!
 Ye sweep athwart my gaze, so heavenly-bright,
 The wings that veil th' adoring seraph's eyes,
 What time he bends before the jasper throne,*
 Reflect no lovelier hues! yet ye depart,
 And all beyond is darkness! Heights most strange,
 Whence fancy falls, fluttering her idle wing.
 For who of woman born may paint the hour,
 When, seized in his mid course, the sun shall wane,
 Making noon ghastly! Who of woman born
 May image, how the red-eyed fiend outstretcht
 Beneath the unsteady feet of Nature groans,
 In feverish slumbers—destined then to wake,
 When fiery whirlwinds thunder his dread name,
 Destruction! when the sons of morning shout,
 The angels shout, Destruction!—How his arm
 The last great spirit lifting high in air
 Shall swear by Him, the ever-living One,
 Time is no more!

Believe thou, O my soul,
 Life is a vision shadowy of truth;
 And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,
 Shapes of a dream! The veiling clouds retire,
 And lo! the throne of the redeeming God
 Wraps in one light earth, heaven, and deepest hell.

Contemplant spirits! ye that hover o'er
 With untired gaze th' immeasurable fount
 Ebullient with creative Deity!
 And ye of plastic power, that interfused

* Rev. iv. 2, 3.

Roll thro' the grosser and material mass
 In organizing surge ! Holies of God !
 (And what if monads of the infinite mind ?
 I haply journeying my immortal course
 Shall sometime join your mystic choir ! Till then
 I discipline my young noviciate thought
 In ministeries of heart-stirring song,
 And aye on meditation's heaven-ward wing
 Soaring aloft I breathe th' empyreal air
 Of love, omnific, omnipresent love,
 Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul
 As the great sun, when he his influence
 Sheds on the frost-bound waters—'The glad stream
 Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

THE DESTINY OF NATIONS.

A VISION.

Auspicious Reverence ! Hush all meaner song,
 Ere we the deep preluding strain have poured
 To the Great Father, only Rightful King,
 Eternal Father ! King Omnipotent !
 To the Will Absolute, the One, the Good !
 The I AM, the Word, the Life, the Living God !

Such symphony requires best instrument.
 Seize, then, my soul ! from Freedom's trophied dome
 The harp which hangeth high between the shields
 Of Brutus and Leonidas ! With that
 Strong music, that soliciting spell, force back
 Man's free and stirring spirit that lies entranced.

For what is freedom, but the unfettered use
 Of all the powers which God for use had given ?
 But chiefly this, him first, him last, to view
 Through meaner powers and secondary things

Effulgent, as through clouds that veil his blaze.
 For all that meets the bodily sense I deem
 Symbolical, one mighty alphabet
 For infant minds ; and we in this low world
 Placed with our backs to bright reality,
 That we may learn with young unwounded ken
 The substance from its shadow. Infinite Love,
 Whose latence is the plenitude of all,
 Thou with retracted beams, and self-eclipse
 Veiling, revealest thine eternal Sun.

But some there are who deem themselves most free
 When they within this gross and visible sphere
 Chain down the winged thought, scoffing ascent,
 Proud in their meanness : and themselves they cheat
 With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,
 Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,
 Self-working tools, uncaused effects, and all
 Those blind omniscients, those almighty slaves,
 Untenanted creation of its God.

But properties are God : the naked mass
 (If mass there be, fantastic guess or ghost)
 Acts only by its inactivity.
 Here we pause humbly. Others boldlier think
 That as one body seems the aggregate
 Of atoms numberless, each organized ;
 So by a strange and dim similitude
 Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds
 Are one all-conscious Spirit, which informs
 With absolute ubiquity of thought
 (His one eternal self-affirming act !)
 All his involved Monads, that yet seem
 With various province and apt agency
 Each to pursue its own self-centring end.
 Some nurse the infant diamond in the mine ;
 Some roll the genial juices through the oak ;
 Some drive the mutinous clouds to clash in air,
 And rushing on the storm with whirlwind speed,
 Yoke the red lightnings to their volleying car.
 Thus these pursue their never-varying course,

No eddy in their stream. Others, more wild,
 With complex interests weaving human fates,
 Duteous or proud, alike obedient all,
 Evolve the process of eternal good.

And what if some rebellious o'er dark realms
 Arrogate power? yet these train up to God,
 And on the rude eye, unconfirmed for day,
 Flash meteor-lights better than total gloom.
 As ere from Licule-Oaive's vapoury head
 The Laplander beholds the far-off sun
 Dart his slant beam on unobeying snows,
 While yet the stern and solitary night
 Brooks no alternate sway, the Boreal Morn
 With mimic lustre substitutes its gleam,
 Guiding his course or by Niemi lake
 Or Balda Zhiok,* or the mossy stone
 Of Solfar-kapper,† while the snowy blast
 Drifts arrowy by, or eddies round his sledge,
 Making the poor babe at its mother's back ‡
 Scream in its scanty cradle: he the while
 Wins gentle solace as with upward eye
 He marks the streamy banners of the North
 Thinking himself those happy spirits shall join
 Who there in floating robes of rosy light
 Dance sportively. For Fancy is the power
 That first unsensualizes the dark mind,
 Giving it new delights; and bids it swell

* Balda Zhiok; i. e. mons altitudinis, the highest mountain in Lapland.

† Solfar-kapper; capitium Solfar, hic locus omnium quotquot veterum Lappo-
 num superstitio sacrificiis religiosoque cultui dedicavit, celebratissimus erat, in parte
 sinus australis situs semimilliaris spatium a mari distans. Ipse locus, quem curiosi-
 tatis gratia aliquando me invisisse memini, duabus prealtis lapidibus, sibi invicem
 oppositis, quorum alter musco circumdatus erat, constabat.—*Leemius de Laponibus.*

‡ The Lapland women carry their infants at their back in a piece of excavated
 wood, which serves them for a cradle. Opposite to the infant's mouth there is a
 hole for it to breathe through.—Mirandum prorsus est et vix credibile nisi cui vidisse
 contigit. Lappones hyeme iter facientes per vastos montes, perque horrida et in via
 tesqua, eo presertim tempore quo omnia perpetuis nivibus oblecta sunt et nives
 ventis agitantur et in gyros aguntur, viam ad destinata loca absque errore invenire
 posse, lactantem autem infantem si quem habeat, ipsa mater in dorso bajulat, in
 excavato ligno (Gieed'k ipsi vocant) quod pro cunis utuntur: in hoc infans pannis
 et pellibus convolutus colligatus jacet.—*Leemius de Laponibus.*

With wild activity ; and peopling air,
 By obscure fears of beings invisible,
 Emancipates it from the grosser thrall
 Of the present impulse, teaching self-control,
 Till Superstition with unconscious hand
 Seat Reason on her throne. Wherefore not vain,
 Nor yet without permitted power impressed,
 I deem those legends terrible, with which
 The polar ancient thrills his uncouth throng:
 Whether of pitying Spirits that make their moan
 O'er slaughtered infants, or that giant bird
 Vuokho, of whose rushing wings the noise
 Is tempest, when the unutterable * shape
 Speeds from the mother of Death, and utters once
 That shriek, which never murderer heard, and lived.

Or if the Greenland Wizard in strange trance
 Pierces the untravelled realms of Ocean's bed
 Over the abysm, even to that uttermost cave
 By mis-shaped prodigies beleaguered, such
 As earth ne'er bred, nor air, nor the upper sea:
 Where dwells the Fury Form, whose unheard name
 With eager eye, pale cheek, suspended breath,
 And lips half-opening with the dread of sound,
 Unsleeping Silence guards, worn out with fear
 Lest haply 'scaping on some treacherous blast
 The fateful word let slip the elements
 And frenzy Nature. Yet the wizard her,
 Armed with Torngarsuck's † power, the Spirit of Good,
 Forces to unchain the foodful progeny
 Of the Ocean stream ;—thence thro' the realm of Souls,
 Where live the Innocent, as far from cares
 As from the storms and overwhelming waves

* Jaibme Aibmo.

† They call the Good Spirit Torngarsuck. The other great but malignant spirit is a nameless female ; she dwells under the sea in a great house, where she can detain in captivity all the animals of the ocean by her magic power. When a leathr befalls the Greenlanders, an Angekok or magician must undertake a journey thither. He passes through the kingdom of souls, over a horrible abyss into the Palace of this phantom, and by his enchantments causes the captive creatures to ascend directly to the surface of the ocean.—See *Crantz's History of Greenland*, vol. i. 206.

That tumble on the surface of the deep,
Returns with far-heard pant, hotly pursued
By the fierce Warders of the Sea, once more,
Ere by the frost foreclosed, to repossess
His fleshly mansion, that had staid the while
In the dark tent within a cowering group
Untenanted.—Wild phantasies ! yet wise,
On the victorious goodness of high God
Teaching reliance, and medicinal hope,
Till from Bethabrah northward, heavenly Truth
With gradual steps, winning her difficult way,
Transfer their rude Faith perfected and pure.

If there be beings of higher class than Man,
I deem no nobler province they possess,
Than by disposal of apt circumstance
To rear up kingdoms : and the deeds they prompt,
Distinguishing from mortal agency,
They choose their human ministers from such states
As still the Epic song half fears to name,
Repelled from all the minstrelsies that strike
The palace-roof and soothe the monarch's pride.

And such, perhaps, the Spirit, who (if words
Witnessed by answering deeds may claim our faith)
Held commune with that warrior-maid of France
Who scourged the Invader. From her infant days,
With Wisdom, mother of retired thoughts,
Her soul had dwelt ; and she was quick to mark
The good and evil thing, in human lore
Undisciplined. For lowly was her birth,
And Heaven had doomed her early years to toil,
That pure from tyranny's least deed, herself
Unfeared by fellow-natures, she might wait
On the poor labouring man with kindly looks,
And minister refreshment to the tired
Way-wanderer, when along the rough-hewn bench
The sweltry man had stretched him, and aloft
Vacantly watched the rudely-pictured board
Which on the mulberry-bough with welcome creak
Swung to the pleasant breeze. Here, too, the Maid

Learnt more than schools could teach : Man's shifting mind,
His vices and his sorrows ! And full oft
At tales of cruel wrong and strange distress
Had wept and shivered. To the tottering eld
Still as a daughter would she run : she placed
His cold limbs at the sunny door, and loved
To hear him story, in his garrulous sort,
Of his eventful years, all come and gone.

So twenty seasons past. The Virgin's form,
Active and tall, nor sloth nor luxury
Had shrunk or paled. Her front sublime and broad,
Her flexile eye-brows wildly haired and low,
And her full eye, now bright, now unillumed,
Spake more than Woman's thought ; and all her face
Was moulded to such features as declared
That pity there had oft and strongly worked,
And sometimes indignation. Bold her mien,
And like a haughty huntress of the woods
She moved : yet sure she was a gentle maid !
And in each motion her most innocent soul
Beamed forth so brightly, that who saw would say
Guilt was a thing impossible in her !
Nor idly would have said—for she had lived
In this bad World, as in a place of tombs,
And touched not the pollutions of the dead.

'Twas the cold season, when the rustic's eye
From the drear desolate whiteness of his fields
Rolls for relief to watch the skyey tints
And clouds slow varying their huge imagery :
When now, as she was wont, the healthful Maid
Had left her pallet ere one beam of day
Slanted the fog-smoke. She went forth alone
Urged by the indwelling angel-guide, that oft,
With dim inexplicable sympathies
Disquieting the heart, shapes out Man's course
To the predoomed adventure. Now the ascent
She climbs of that steep upland, on whose top
The Pilgrim-man, who long since eve had watched

The alien shine of unconcerning stars,
 Shouts to himself, there first the Abbey-lights
 Seen in Neufchatel's vale ; now slopes adown
 The winding sheep-track vale-ward : when, behold
 In the first entrance of the level road
 An unattended team ! The foremost horse
 Lay with stretched limbs ; the others, yet alive
 But stiff and cold, stood motionless, their manes
 Hoar with the frozen night dew. Dismally
 The dark-red dawn now glimmered ; but its gleams
 Disclosed no face of man. The Maiden paused,
 Then hailed who might be near. No voice replied.
 From the thwart wain at length there reached her ear
 A sound so feeble that it almost seemed
 Distant ; and feebly, with slow effort pushed,
 A miserable man crept forth : his limbs
 The silent frost had eat, scathing like fire.
 Faint on the shafts he rested. She, meantime,
 Saw crowded close beneath the coverture
 A mother and her children—lifeless all,
 Yet lovely ! not a lineament was marred—
 Death had put on so slumber-like a form !
 It was a piteous sight ; and one, a babe,
 The crisp milk frozen on its innocent lips,
 Lay on the woman's arm, its little hand
 Stretched on her bosom.

Mutely questioning,

The Maid gazed wildly at the living wretch.
 He, his head feebly turning, on the group
 Looked with a vacant stare, and his eye spoke
 The drowsy calm that steals on worn-out anguish.
 She shuddered ; but, each vainer pang subdued,
 Quick disentangling from the foremost horse
 The rustic bands, with difficulty and toil
 The stiff cramped team forced homeward. There arrived,
 Anxiously tends him she with healing herbs,
 And weeps and prays—but the numb power of Death
 Spreads o'er his limbs ; and ere the noontide hour,
 The hovering spirits of his wife and babes
 Hail him immortal ! Yet amid his pangs,

With interruptions long from ghastly throes,
His voice had faltered out this simple tale.

The village, where he dwelt a husbandman,
By sudden inroad had been seized and fired
Late on the yester-evening. With his wife
And little ones he hurried his escape.
They saw the neighbouring hamlets flame, they heard
Uproar and shrieks ! and terror-struck drove on
Through unfrequented roads, a weary way !
But saw nor house nor cottage. All had quenched
Their evening hearth-fire : for the alarm had spread.
The air clipped keen, the night was fanged with frost,
And they provisionless ! The weeping wife
Ill hushed her children's moans ; and still they moaned,
Till fright and cold and hunger drank their life.
They closed their eyes in sleep, nor knew 'twas death.
He only, lashing his o'er-wearied team,
Gained a sad respite, till beside the base
Of the high hill his foremost horse dropped dead.
Then hopeless, strengthless, sick for lack of food,
He crept beneath the coverture, entranced,
Till wakened by the maiden.—Such his tale.

Ah ! suffering to the height of what was suffered,
Stung with too keen a sympathy, the Maid
Brooded with moving lips, mute, startful, dark !
And now her flushed tumultuous features shot
Such strange vivacity, as fires the eye
Of misery fancy-crazed ! and now once more
Naked, and void, and fixed, and all within
The unquiet silence of confused thought
And shapeless feelings. For a mighty hand
Was strong upon her, till in the heat of soul
To the high hill-top tracing back her steps,
Aside the beacon, up whose smouldered stones
The tender ivy-trails crept thinly, there,
Unconscious of the driving element,
Yea, swallowed up in the ominous dream, she sat
Ghastly as broad-eyed Slumber ! a dim anguish
Breathed from her look ! and still with pant and sob,

Inly she toiled to flee, and still subdued,
Felt an inevitable Presence near.

Thus as she toiled in troublous ecstasy,
A horror of great darkness wrapt her round,
And a voice uttered forth unearthly tones,
Calming her soul,—‘O Thou of the Most High
Chosen, whom all the perfected in Heaven
Behold expectant——

[The following fragments were intended to form part of the poem when finished

‘Maid beloved of Heaven !
(To her the tutelary Power exclaimed)
Of Chaos the adventurous progeny
Thou seest ; foul missionaries of foul sire,
Fierce to regain the losses of that hour
When Love rose glittering, and his gorgeous wings
Over the abyss fluttered with such glad noise,
As what time after long and pestful calms,
With slimy shapes and miscreated life
Poisoning the vast Pacific, the fresh breeze
Wakens the merchant-sail uprising. Night
A heavy unimaginable moan
Sent forth, when she the Protoplast beheld
Stand beauteous on confusion’s charmed wave.
Moaning she fled, and entered the Profound
That leads with downward windings to the cave
Of darkness palpable, desert of Death
Sunk deep beneath Gehenna’s massy roots.
There many a dateless age the beldam lurked
And trembled ; till engendered by fierce Hate,
Fierce Hate and gloomy Hope, a Dream arose,
Shaped like a black cloud marked with streaks of fire.
It roused the Hell-Hag : she the dew damp wiped
From off her brow, and through the uncouth maze
Retraced her steps ; but ere she reached the mouth
Of that drear labyrinth, shuddering she paused,
Nor dared re-enter the diminished Gulf.
As through the dark vaults of some mouldered tower
(Which, fearful to approach, the evening hind
Circles at distance in his homeward way)

The winds breathe hollow, deemed the plaining groan
 Of prisoned spirits ; with such fearful voice
 Night murmured, and the sound thro' Chaos went.
 Leaped at her call her hideous-fronted brood !
 A dark behest they heard, and rushed on earth ;
 Since that sad hour, in camps and courts adored,
 Rebels from God, and tyrants o'er Mankind !'

From his obscure haunt
 Shrieked Fear, of Cruelty the ghastly dam,
 Feverous yet freezing, eager-paced yet slow,
 As she that creeps from forth her swampy reeds,
 Ague, the biform hag ! when early Spring
 Beams on the marsh-bred vapours.

'Even so (the exulting Maiden said)
 The sainted heralds of good tidings fell,
 And thus they witnessed God ! But now the clouds
 Treading, and storms beneath their feet, they soar
 Higher, and higher soar, and soaring sing
 Loud songs of triumph ! O ye spirits of God,
 Hover around my mortal agonies !'
 She spake, and instantly faint melody
 Melts on her ear, soothing and sad, and slow,
 Such measures, as at calmest midnight heard
 By aged hermit in his holy dream,
 Foretell and solace death ; and now they rise
 Louder, as when with harp and mingled voice
 The white-robed * multitude of slaughtered saints
 At Heaven's wide-opened portals gratulant
 Receive some martyred patriot. The harmony
 Entranced the Maid, till each suspended sense
 Brief slumber seized, and confused ecstasy.

* Revelations, vi. 9, 11. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

At length awakening slow, she gazed around :
 And through a mist, the relique of that trance,
 Still thinning as she gazed, an Isle appeared,
 Its high, o'er-hanging, white, broad-breasted cliffs,
 Glassed on the subject ocean. A vast plain
 Stretched opposite, where ever and anon
 The plough-man following sad his meagre team
 Turned up fresh skulls unstartled, and the bones
 Of fierce hate-breathing combatants, who there
 All mingled lay beneath the common earth,
 Death's gloomy reconciliation ! O'er the fields
 Stept a fair Form, repairing all she might,
 Her temples olive-wreathed ; and where she trod,
 Fresh flowerets rose, and many a foodful herb.
 But wan her cheek, her footsteps insecure,
 And anxious pleasure beamed in her faint eye,
 As she had newly left a couch of pain,
 Pale convalescent ! (yet some time to rule
 With power exclusive o'er the willing world,
 That blest prophetic mandate then fulfilled—
 Peace be on Earth !) A happy while, but brief,
 She seemed to wander with assiduous feet,
 And healed the recent harm of chill and blight,
 And nursed each plant that fair and virtuous grew.

But soon a deep precursive sound moaned hollow
 Black rose the clouds, and now (as in a dream)
 Their reddening shapes, transformed to warrior-hosts,
 Coursed o'er the sky, and battled in mid-air.
 Nor did not the large blood-drops fall from heaven
 Portentous ! while aloft were seen to float,
 Like hideous features booming on the mist,
 Wan stains of ominous light ! Resigned, yet sad,
 The fair Form bowed her olive-crowned brow,
 Then o'er the plain with oft reverted eye
 Fled till a place of tombs she reached, and there
 Within a ruined sepulchre obscure
 Found hiding-place.

The delegated Maid
 Gazed through her tears, then in sad tones exclaimed ;—

'Thou mild-eyed Form ! wherefore, ah ! wherefore fled ?
 The power of Justice, like a name all light,
 Shone from thy brow ; but all they, who unblamed
 Dwelt in thy dwellings, call thee Happiness.
 Ah ! why, uninjured and unprofited,
 Should multitudes against their brethren rush ?
 Why sow they guilt, still reaping misery ?
 Lenient of care, thy songs, O Peace ! are sweet,
 As after showers the perfumed gale of eve,
 That flings the cool drops on a feverous cheek ;
 And gay thy grassy altar piled with fruits.
 But boasts the shrine of demon War one charm,
 Save that with many an orgie strange and foul,
 Dancing around with interwoven arms,
 The maniac Suicide and giant Murder
 Exult in their fierce union ! I am sad,
 And know not why the simple peasants crowd
 Beneath the Chieftains' standard !' Thus the Maid.

To her the tutelary Spirit said :
 'When luxury and lust's exhausted stores
 No more can rouse the appetites of kings ;
 When the low flattery of their reptile lords
 Falls flat and heavy on the accustomed ear ;
 When eunuchs sing, and fools buffoonery make,
 And dancers writhe their harlot-limbs in vain ;
 Then War and all its dread vicissitudes
 Pleasingly agitate their stagnant hearts ;
 Its hopes, its fears, its victories, its defeats,
 Insipid royalty's keen condiment !
 Therefore uninjured and unprofited
 (Victims at once and executioners),
 The congregated husbandmen lay waste
 The vineyard and the harvest. As along
 The Bothnic coast, or southward of the Line,
 Though hushed the winds and cloudless the high noon,
 Yet if Leviathan, weary of ease,
 In sports unwieldy toss his island-bulk,
 Ocean behind him billows, and before
 A storm of waves breaks foamy on the strand.
 And hence, for times and seasons bloody and dark.

Short Peace shall skin the wounds of causeless War,
 And War, his strained sinews knit anew,
 Still violate the unfinished works of Peace.
 But yonder look ! for more demands thy view !
 He said : and straightway from the opposite Isle
 A vapour sailed, as when a cloud, exhaled
 From Egypt's fields that steam hot pestilence,
 Travels the sky for many a track'less league,
 Till o'er some death-doomed land, distant in vain,
 It broods incumbent. Forthwith from the plain,
 Facing the Isle, a brighter cloud arose,
 And steered its course which way the vapour went.

The Maiden paused, musing what this might mean
 But long time passed not, ere that brighter cloud
 Returned more bright ; along the plain it swept ;
 And soon from forth its bursting sides emerged
 A dazzling form, broad-bosomed, bold of eye,
 And wild her hair, save where with laurels bound.
 Not more majestic stood the healing God,
 When from his bow the arrow sped that slew
 Huge Python. Shriek'd Ambition's giant throng,
 And with them hissed the locust-fiends that crawled
 And glittered in Corruption's slimy track.
 Great was their wrath, for short they knew their reign ;
 And such commotion made they, and uproar,
 As when the mad tornado bellows through
 The guilty islands of the western main,
 What time departing from their native shores,
 Eboe, or Koromantyn's * plain of palms,

* The Slaves in the West-Indies consider death as a passport to their native country. This sentiment is thus expressed in the introduction to a Greek Prize-Ode on the Slave-Trade, of which the thoughts are better than the language in which they are conveyed.

Ω σκότου πύλας Θάνατε, προλείπων
 'Ες γένος σπείδεις ὑποζευχθὲν Ἄττα
 Οὐ ξενισθήσῃ γένων σπαραγμοῖς,
 Οὐδ' ὀλοῦ γμψ,

'Ἀλλὰ καὶ κύκλοισι χοροῖσι τοῖσι,
 Κ' ἁσμάτων χαρᾷ φοβερὸς μὲν ἐσσι
 'Ἀλλ' ὁμῶς Ἐλευθερίᾳ συνοικεῖς,
 Στυγνὴ Τύραννε !

The infuriate spirits of the murdered make
 Fierce merriment, and vengeance ask of Heaven.
 Warmed with new influence, the unwholesome plain
 Sent up its foulest fogs to meet the morn :
 The Sun that rose on Freedom, rose in blood !

‘ Maiden beloved and Delegate of Heaven !
 (To her the tutelary Spirit said),
 Soon shall the morning struggle into day,
 The stormy morning into cloudless noon.
 Much hast thou seen, nor all canst understand—
 But this be thy best omen—Save thy Country !
 Thus saying, from the answering Maid he passed,
 And with him disappeared the heavenly Vision.

‘ Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven !
 All-conscious presence of the Universe !
 Nature’s vast ever-acting energy !
 In will, in deed, impulse of All to All !
 Whether thy Love with unrefracted ray
 Beam on the Prophet’s purged eye, or if
 Diseasing realms the enthusiast, wild of thought,
 Scatter new frenzies on the infected throng,
 Thou both inspiring and predooming both,
 Fit instruments and best, of perfect end :
 Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven !’

Δασκίοις ἐπὶ περύγεσσι σῇσι
 Ἄ ! θαλάσσιον καθορῶντες οἶδμα
 Αἰθεροπλάγκτοις ὑπὸ ποσσ’ ἀνιῖσι
 Πατρίδ’ ἐπ’ αἶαν.

Ενθα μὲν Ἔρασαι Ἐρωμενῆσιν
 Ἀμφὶ πηγῇσιν κιτρίνων ὑπ’ ἄλσων,
 Ὅσσ’ ὑπὸ βροτοῖς ἔπαθον βροτοί, τὰ
 Δεινὰ λέγοντι.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

Leaving the gates of darkness, O Death ! hasten thou to a race yoked with misery ! Thou wilt not be received with lacerations of cheeks, nor with funeral ululation—but with circling dances and the joy of songs. Thou art terrible indeed, yet thou dwellest with Liberty, stern Genius ! Borne on thy dark pinions over the swelling of Ocean, they return to their native country. There, by the side of fountains beneath citron groves, the lovers tell to their beloved what horrors, being men, they had endured from men.

And first a landscape rose
 More wild and waste and desolate than where
 The white bear, drifting on a field of ice,
 Howls to her sundered cubs with piteous rage
 And savage agony.

THE RAVEN.

A CHRISTMAS TALE, TOLD BY A SCHOOL-BOY TO HIS LITTLE
 BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

UNDERNEATH an old oak tree
 There was of swine a huge company
 That grunted as they crunched the mast :
 For that was ripe, and fell full fast.
 Then they trotted away, for the wind grew high :
 One acorn they left, and no more might you spy.
 Next came a Raven, that liked not such folly :
 He belonged, they did say, to the witch Melancholy !
 Blacker was he than blackest jet,
 Flew low in the rain, and his feathers not wet.
 He picked up the acorn and buried it straight
 By the side of a river both deep and great.
 Where then did the Raven go ?
 He went high and low,
 Over hill, over dale, did the black Raven go.
 Many Autumns, many Springs,
 Travelled he with wandering wings :
 Many Summers, many Winters—
 I can't tell half his adventures.

At length he came back, and with him a She,
 And the acorn was grown to a tall oak tree.
 They built them a nest in the topmost bough,
 And young ones they had, and were happy enow.
 But soon came a woodman in leathern guise,
 His brow, like a pent-house, hung over his eyes.

He'd an axe in his hand, not a word he spoke,
 But with many a hem ! and a sturdy stroke,
 At length he brought down the poor Raven's own oak.
 His young ones were killed, for they could not depart,
 And their mother did die of a broken heart.
 The boughs from the trunk the woodman did sever ;
 And they floated it down on the course of the river.
 They sawed it in planks, and its bark they did strip,
 And with this tree and others they made a good ship.
 The ship, it was launched ; but in sight of the land
 Such a storm there did rise as no ship could withstand.
 It bulged on a rock, and the waves rushed in fast :
 Round and round flew the Raven, and cawed to the blast.
 He heard the last shriek of the perishing souls—
 See ! See ! o'er the topmast the mad water rolls !
 Right glad was the Raven, and off he went fleet,
 And Death riding home on a cloud he did meet,
 And he thanked him again and again for this treat :
 They had taken his all, and Revenge it was sweet !

five

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY.

AN ALLEGORY.

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,
 (I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
 Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
 Two lovely children run an endless race,
 A sister and a brother !
 That far outstripp'd the other ;
 Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
 And looks and listens for the boy behind :
 For he, alas ! is blind !
 O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
 And knows not whether he be first or last.

THE FOSTER MOTHER'S TALE.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

Ter. BUT that entrance, Selma?

Sel. Can no one hear? It is a perilous tale!

Ter. No one.

Sel. My husband's father told it me,
 Poor old Sesina—angels rest his soul;
 He was a woodman, and could fell and saw
 With lusty arm. You know that huge round beam
 Which props the hanging wall of the old chapel?
 Beneath that tree, while yet it was a tree,
 He found a baby wrapt in mosses, lined
 With thistle-beards, and such small locks of wool
 As hang on brambles. Well, he brought him home,
 And reared him at the then Lord Valdez' cost,
 And so the babe grew up a pretty boy,
 A pretty boy, but most unteachable—
 And never learn'd a prayer, nor told a bead,
 But knew the names of birds, and mocked their notes,
 And whistled, as he were a bird himself.
 And all the autumn 'twas his only play
 To gather seeds of wild flowers, and to plant them
 With earth and water on the stumps of trees.
 A Friar, who gathered simples in the wood,
 A grey-haired man, he loved this little boy:
 The boy loved him, and, when the Friar taught him,
 He soon could write with the pen; and from that time
 Lived chiefly at the convent or the castle.
 So he became a rare and learned youth:
 But O! poor wretch! he read, and read, and read,
 Till his brain turned; and ere his twentieth year
 He had unlawful thoughts of many things:
 And though he prayed, he never loved to pray
 With holy men, nor in a holy place.
 But yet his speech, it was so soft and sweet,

The late Lord Valdez ne'er was wearied with him
 And once, as by the north side of the chapel
 They stood together chained in deep discourse,
 The earth heaved under them with such a groan,
 That the wall tottered, and had well nigh fallen
 Right on their heads. My Lord was sorely frightened !
 A fever seized him, and he made confession
 Of all the heretical and lawless talk
 Which brought this judgment : so the youth was seized,
 And cast into that hole. My husband's father
 Sobbed like a child—it almost broke his heart :
 And once as he was working near this dungeon,
 He heard a voice distinctly ; 'twas the youth's,
 Who sung a doleful song about green fields,
 How sweet it were on lake or wide savanna
 To hunt for food, and be a naked man,
 And wander up and down at liberty.
 He always doted on the youth, and now
 His love grew desperate ; and defying death,
 He made that cunning entrance I described,
 And the young man escaped.

Ter.

'Tis a sweet tale :

Such as would lull a listening child to sleep,
 His rosy face besoiled with unwiped tears.
 And what became of him ?

Sel.

He went on shipboard

With those bold voyagers who made discovery
 Of golden lands. Sesina's younger brother
 Went likewise, and when he returned to Spain,
 He told Sesina, that the poor mad youth,
 Soon after they arrived in that new world,
 In spite of his dissuasion, seized a boat,
 And all alone set sail by silent moonlight
 Up a great river, great as any sea,
 And ne'er was heard of more : but 'tis supposed,
 He lived and died among the savage men.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER A WALK BEFORE SUPPER.

THO' much averse, dear Jack, to flicker,
 To find a likeness for friend V——ker,
 I've made, thro' earth, and air, and sea,
 A voyage of discovery !
 And let me add (to ward off strife)
 For V——kers, and for V——kers' wife—
She, large and round, beyond belief,
 A superfluity of beef !
 Her mind and body of a piece,
 And both composed of kitchen-grease.
 In short, dame Truth might safely dub her
 Vulgarly enshrined in blubber !
He, meagre bit of littleness,
 All snuff, and musk, and politesse ;
 So thin, that strip him of his clothing,
 He'd totter on the edge of *nothing* !
 In case of foe, he well might hide
 Snug in the collops of her side.
 Ah then, what simile will suit ?
 Spindle leg in great jack-boot ?
 Pismire crawling in a rut,
 Or a spigot in a butt ?
 Thus I humm'd and ha'd awhile,
 When Madam Memory, with a smile,
 Thus touched my ear—' Why sure, I ween
 In London streets thou oft hast seen
 The very image of this pair :
 A little ape, with huge she bear
 Linked by hapless chain together :
 An unlicked mass the one—the other
 An antic huge with nimble crupper'—
 But stop, my Muse ! for here comes supper.

A CONNUBIAL RUPTURE IN HIGH LIFE, 1796.

I SIGH, fair injured stranger ! for thy fate ;
But what shall sighs avail thee ? Thy poor heart,
'Mid all the 'pomp and circumstance' of state,
Shivers in nakedness. Unbidden, start

Sad recollections of hope's gairish dream,
That shaped a seraph form, and named it Love,
Its hues gay-varying, as the orient beam
Varies the neck of Cytherea's dove.

To one soft accent of domestic joy,
Poor are the shouts that shake the high-arched dome :
Those plaudits, that thy public path annoy,
Alas ! they tell thee—Thou'rt a wretch at home !

O then retire, and weep ! Their very woes
Solace the guiltless. Drop the pearly flood
On thy sweet infant, as the full-blown rose,
Surcharged with dew, bends o'er its neighb'ring bud.

And oh that Truth some holy spell might lend
To lure thy wanderer from the syren's power,
Then bid your souls inseparably blend
Like two bright dewdrops meeting in a flower.

ON THE CHRISTENING OF A FRIEND'S CHILD.

THIS day among the faithful placed
And fed with fontal manna ;
O with maternal title graced,
Dear Anna's dearest Anna !

While others wish thee wise and fair,
A maid of spotless fame,
I'll breathe this more compendious prayer—
May'st thou deserve thy name !

Thy Mother's name, a potent spell,
That bids the Virtues hie
From mystic grove and living cell,
Confessed to Fancy's eye :

Meek Quietness without offence ;
Content in homespun kirtle ;
True Love ; and True Love's Innocence,
White blossom of the myrtle !

Associates of thy name, sweet Child !
These Virtues may'st thou win ;
With face as eloquently mild
To say, they lodge within.

So, when her tale of days all flown,
Thy mother shall be missed here ;
When Heaven at length shall claim its own
And angels snatch their sister ;

Some hoary-headed friend, perchance,
May gaze with stifled breath ;
And oft, in momentary trance,
Forget the waste of death.

Ev'n thus a lovely rose I viewed
In summer-swelling pride ;
Nor marked the bud, that, green and rude,
Peeped at the rose's side.

It chanced, I passed again that way,
In Autumn's latest hour,
And wond'ring saw the self-same spray
Rich with the self-same flower.—

Ah, fond deceit ! the rude green bud
Alike in shape, place, name,
Had bloomed, where bloomed its parent stud,
Another and the same !

SONNET.

I. ✕

My heart has thanked thee, Bowles ! for those soft strains
 Whose sadness soothes me, like the murmuring
 Of wild bees in the sunny showers of spring !
 For hence not callous to the mourner's pains
 Thro' Youth's gay prime and thornless paths I went :
 And when the darker day of life began,
 And I did roam, a thought-bewildered man !
 Their mild and manliest melancholy lent
 A mingled charm, which oft the pang consigned
 To slumber, tho' the big tear it renewed :
 Bidding such strange mysterious pleasure brood
 Over the wavy and tumultuous mind,
 As made the soul enamoured of her woe :
 No common praise, dear Bard ! to thee I owe !

II.

ON A DISCOVERY MADE TOO LATE.

Thou bleedest, my poor Heart ! and thy distress
 Reas'ning I ponder with a scornful smile
 And probe thy sore wound sternly, tho' the while
 Swollen be mine eye and dim with heaviness.
 Why didst thou listen to Hope's whisper bland ?
 Or list'ning, why forget the healing tale,
 When Jealousy with fev'rish fancies pale
 Jarred thy fine fibres with a maniac's hand ?
 Faint was that Hope, and rayless !—Yet 'twas fair,
 And soothed with many a dream the hour of rest :
 Thou shouldst have loved it most, when most opprest
 And nursed it with an agony of care,
 Even as a Mother her sweet infant heir,
 That wan and sickly droops upon her breast !

III.

Thou gentle Look, that didst my soul beguile,
 Why hast thou left me ? Still in some fond dream

Revisit my sad heart, auspicious Smile !
 As falls on closing flowers the lunar beam :
 What time, in sickly mood, at parting day
 I lay me down and think of happier years ;
 Of joys, that glimmered in Hope's twilight ray,
 Then left me darkling in a vale of tears.
 O pleasant days of Hope—for ever flown !
 Could I recall you !—But that thought is vain.
 Availeth not Persuasion's sweetest tone
 To lure the fleet-winged travellers back again :
 Yet fair, tho' faint, their images shall gleam
 Like the bright Rainbow on an evening stream.

IV.

TO THE RIVER OTTER.

DEAR native Brook ! wild Streamlet of the West !
 How many various-fated years have passed,
 What blissful and what anguished hours, since last
 I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
 Numbering its light leaps ! Yet so deep imprest
 Sink the sweet scenes of Childhood, that mine eyes
 I never shut amid the sunny blaze,
 But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
 Thy crossing plank, thy margin's willowy maze,
 And bedded sand that veined with various dyes
 Gleamed thro' thy bright transparence to the gaze !
 Visions of Childhood ! oft have ye beguiled
 Lone Manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs,
 Ah ! that once more I were a careless Child !

V.

SWEET Mercy ! how my very heart has bled
 To see thee, poor old man ! and thy grey hairs
 Hoar with the snowy blast ; while no one cares
 To clothe thy shrivelled limbs and palsied head.
 My Father ! throw away this tattered vest
 That mocks thy shiv'ring ! take my garment—use
 A young man's arm ! I'll melt these frozen dews
 That hang from thy white beard and numb thy breast.

My Sara, too, shall tend thee, like a child :
 And thou shalt talk, in our fire-side's recess,
 Of purple pride, that scowls on wretchedness.—
 He did not scowl, the Galilæan mild,
 Who met the Lazar turned from rich man's doors,
 And called him Friend, and wept upon his sores !

VI.

PALE Roamer thro' the Night ! thou poor forlorn !
 Remorse that man on his death-bed possess,
 Who in the credulous hour of tenderness
 Betrayed, then cast thee forth to Want and scorn !
 The world is pitiless ; the Chaste one's pride,
 Mimic of Virtue, scowls on thy distress ;
 Thy kindred, when they see thee, turn aside,
 And Vice alone will shelter Wretchedness !
 O ! I am sad to think, that there should be
 Men, born of woman, who endure to place
 Foul offerings on the shrine of Misery,
 And force from Famine the caress of Love !
 Man has no feeling for thy sore Disgrace :
 Keen blows the blast upon the moulting dove !

VII.

TO BURKE.

As late I lay in slumber's shadowy vale,
 With wetted cheek and in a mourner's guise
 I saw the sainted form of Freedom rise :
 She spake ! not sadder moans the autumnal gale.
 ' Great Son of Genius ! sweet to me thy name,
 Ere in an evil hour with altered voice
 Thou bad'st Oppression's hireling crew rejoice,
 Blasting with wizard spell my laurelled fame.
 Yet never, Burke ! thou drank'st Corruption's bowl !
 Thee stormy Pity, and the cherished lure
 Of Pomp, and proud Precipitance of soul,
 Wildered with meteor fires. Ah, Spirit pure !
 That error's mist had left thy purged eye :
 So might I clasp thee with a Mother's joy !'

VIII.

TO MERCY.

Not always should the tear's ambrosial dew
 Roll its soft anguish down thy furrowed cheek !
 Not always heaven-breathed tones of suppliance meek
 Beseem thee, Mercy ! Yon dark Scowler view,
 Who with proud words of dear-loved Freedom came—
 More blasting than the mildew from the south !
 And kissed his country with Iscariot mouth ;
 (Ah ! foul apostate from his Father's fame !)
 Then fixed her on the cross of deep distress,
 And at safe distance marks the thirsty lance
 Pierce her big side ! But oh ! if some strange lance
 The eye-lids of thy stern-browed Sister press,
 Seize, Mercy ! thou more terrible the brand,
 And hurl her thunderbolts with fiercer hand !

IX.

TO PRIESTLEY.

Tho' roused by that dark Visir riot rude
 Have driven our Priestley o'er the ocean swell ;
 Tho' Superstition and her wolfish brood
 Bay his mild radiance, impotent and fell ;
 Calm in his halls of Brightness he shall dwell ;
 For lo ! Religion at his strong behest
 Starts with mild anger from the Papal spell,
 And flings to Earth her tinsel-glittering vest,
 Her mitred state and cumbrous pomp unholy ;
 And Justice wakes to bid th' Oppressor wail,
 Insulting aye the wrongs of patient folly ;
 And from her dark retreat by Wisdom won,
 Meek Nature slowly lifts her matron veil
 To smile with fondness on her gazing son !

X.

TO ERSKINE.

WHEN British Freedom for an happier land
 Spread her broad wings, that fluttered with affright,
 Erskine ! thy voice she heard, and paused her flight
 Sublime of hope ! For dreadless thou didst stand
 (Thy censer glowing with the hallowed flame)
 An hireless Priest before th' insulted shrine,
 And at her altar poured'st the stream divine
 Of unmatched eloquence. Therefore thy name
 Her Sons shall venerate, and cheer thy breast
 With blessings heavenward breathed. And when the door
 Of Nature bids thee rise beyond the tomb
 Thy light shall shine : as sunk beneath the West
 Tho' the great Summer Sun eludes our gaze,
 Still burns wide Heaven with his distended blaze.

XI.

TO SHERIDAN.

It was some spirit, Sheridan ! that breath'd
 O'er thy young mind such wildly-various power !
 My soul hath marked thee in her shaping hour,
 Thy temples with Hymettian * flowrets wreath'd :
 And sweet thy voice, as when o'er Laura's bier
 Sad music trembled thro' Vaclusa's glade ;

* Hymettian flowrets. Hymettus, a mountain near Athens, celebrated for its honey. This alludes to Mr Sheridan's classical attainments, and the following four lines to the exquisite sweetness and almost *Italian* delicacy of his Poetry.—In Shakespeare's 'Lover's Complaint' there is a fine Stanza almost prophetically characteristic of Mr Sheridan.

So on the tip of his subduing tongue
 All kind of argument and question deep,
 All replication prompt and reason strong
 For his advantage still did wake and sleep
 To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weep :
 He had the dialect and different skill,
 Catching all passions in his craft of will :
 That he did in the general bosom reign
 Of young and old.

Sweet, as at dawn the love-lorn Serenade
 That wafts soft dreams to Slumber's list'ning ear.
 Now patriot Rage and Indignation high
 Swell the full tones ! And now thine eye-beams dance
 Meanings of Scorn and Wit's quaint revelry !
 Writhes inly from the bosom-probing glance
 Th' Apostate by the brainless rout adored,
 As erst that elder Fiend beneath great Michael's sword.

XII.

TO MRS SIDDONS.

As when a child on some long winter's night,
 Affrighted clinging to its Grandam's knees,
 With eager wond'ring and perturbed delight
 Listens strange tales of fearful dark decrees
 Muttered to wretch by necromantic spell ;
 Or of those hags, who at the witching time
 Of murky midnight ride the air sublime,
 And mingle foul embrace with fiends of Hell :
 Cold Horror drinks its blood ! Anon the tear
 More gentle starts, to hear the Beldame tell
 Of pretty babes, that loved each other dear,
 Murdered by cruel Uncle's mandate fell :
 Ev'n such the shiv'ring joys thy tones impart,
 Ev'n so thou, Siddons ! meltest my sad heart !

XIII.

TO LA FAYETTE.

As when far off the warbled strains are heard
 That soar on Morning's wing the vales among,
 Within his cage th' imprisoned matin bird
 Swells the full chorus with a generous song :
 He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,
 No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he shares,
 Yet still the rising radiance cheers his sight—
 His Fellows' freedom soothes the Captive's cares .
 Thou, Fayette ! who didst wake with startling voice
 Life's better Sun from that long wintry night,

Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt rejoice
 And mock with raptures high the dungeon's might :
 For lo ! the morning struggles into day,
 And Slavery's spectres shriek and vanish from the ray !

XIV.

COMPOSED WHILE CLIMBING THE LEFT ASCENT OF BROCKLEY-
 COOMB, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, MAY, 1795.

WITH many a pause and oft reverted eye
 I climb the Coomb's ascent ; sweet songsters near
 Warble in shade their wild-wood melody :
 Far off th' unvarying cuckoo soothes my ear.
 Up scour the startling stragglers of the flock
 That on green plots o'er precipices browse :
 From the forced fissures of the naked rock
 The Yew-tree bursts ! Beneath its dark green boughs
 (Mid which the May-thorn blends its blossoms white),
 Where broad smooth stones jut out in mossy seats,
 I rest—And now have gained the topmost site.
 Ah ! what a luxury of landscape meets
 My gaze ! proud towers, and cots more dear to me ;
 Elm-shadowed fields, and prospect-bounding sea ;
 Deep sighs my lonely heart : I drop the tear :
 Enchanting spot ! O were my Sara here !

XV.*

TO SCHILLER.

SCHILLER ! that hour I would have wished to die,
 If thro' the shudd'ring midnight I had sent
 From the dark Dungeon of the Tower time-rent
 That fearful voice, a famished Father's † cry—

* One night in winter on leaving a College friend's room, with whom I had supped, I carelessly took away with me *The Robbers*, a drama, the very name of which I had never heard before : A winter midnight—the wind high and *The Robbers* for the first time. The readers of Schiller will conceive what I felt. Schiller introduces no supernatural beings ; yet his human beings agitate and astonish more than all the goblin rout even of Shakespeare.

† The Father of Moor, in the Play of *The Robbers*.

That in no after moment aught less vast
 Might stamp me mortal ! A triumphant shout
 Black Horror screamed, and all her goblin rout
 From the more with'ring scene diminished past.
 Ah ! Bard tremendous in sublimity !
 Could I behold thee in thy loftier mood,
 Wand'ring at eve with finely frenzied eye
 Beneath some vast old tempest-swinging wood !
 Awhile with mute awe gazing I would brood,
 Then weep aloud in a wild ecstasy !

XVI.

TO EARL STANHOPE.

Not, Stanhope ! with the Patriot's doubtful name
 I mock thy worth—Friend of the human race
 Since scorning Faction's low and partial aim,
 Aloof thou wendest in thy stately pace,
 Thyself redeeming from that leprous stain,
 Nobility : and aye unterrified,
 Pourest thine Abdiel warnings on the train
 That sit plotting with rebellious pride
 'Gainst her,* who from the Almighty's bosom leapt
 With whirlwind arm, fierce Minister of Love !
 Wherefore, ere Virtue o'er thy tomb hath wept,
 Angels shall lead thee to the Throne above :
 And thou from forth its clouds shall hear the voice,
 Champion of Freedom and her God ! rejoice !

XVII.

COMPOSED ON A JOURNEY HOMEWARD ; THE AUTHOR HAVING RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON, SEPT. 20, 1796.

OFT o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll
 Which makes the present (while the flash doth last)
 Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,
 Mixed with such feelings, as perplex the soul

* Gallic Liberty.

Self-questioned in her sleep : and some have said *
 We lived, ere yet this fleshy robe we wore.
 O my sweet Baby ! when I reach my door,
 If heavy looks should tell me, thou wert dead
 (As sometimes, thro' excess of hope, I fear),
 I think, that I should struggle to believe
 Thou wert a Spirit, to this nether sphere
 Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve ;
 Didst scream, then spring to meet Heaven's quick reprove,
 While we wept idly o'er thy little bier.

XVIII.

TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON.

MILD Splendour of the various-vested Night !
 Mother of wildly-working visions ! hail !
 I watch thy gliding, while with wat'ry light
 Thy weak eye glimmers thro' a fleecy veil ;
 And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
 Behind the gathered blackness lost on high ;
 And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
 Thy placid lightning o'er th' awakened sky.
 Ah, such is Hope ! as changeful and as fair !
 Now dimly peering on the wistful sight ;
 Now hid behind the dragon-winged Despair
 But soon emerging in her radiant might,
 She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
 Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.

XIX.

TO A FRIEND, WHO ASKED HOW I FELT WHEN THE NURSE FIRST
PRESENTED MY INFANT TO ME.

CHARLES ! my slow heart was only sad, when first
 I scanned that face of feeble infancy ;
 For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
 All I had been, and all my babe might be !

* Ην που ημων η ψυχη πριν εν τωδε τω ανθρωπινω ειδει γενεσθαι.—*Plat. in Phædon.*

But when I saw it on its Mother's arm,
 And hanging at her bosom (she the while
 Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile),
 Then I was thrilled and melted, and most warm
 Impressed a Father's kiss : and all beguiled
 Of dark remembrance, and presageful fear,
 I seemed to see an Angel's form appear—
 'Twas even thine, beloved Woman mild !
 So for the Mother's sake the Child was dear,
 And dearer was the Mother for the Child.

XX.

THE piteous sobs that choke the Virgin's breath
 For him, the fair betrothed Youth, who lies
 Cold in the narrow dwelling, or the cries
 With which a Mother wails her Darling's death,
 These from our Nature's common impulse spring
 Unblamed, unpraised ; but o'er the piled earth,
 Which hides the sheeted corse of grey-haired Worth,
 If droops the soaring Youth with slackened wing ;
 If he recall in saddest minstrelsy
 Each tenderness bestowed, each truth impressed ;
 Such Grief is Reason, Virtue, Piety !
 And from the Almighty Father shall descend
 Comforts on his late Evening, whose young breast
 Mourns with no transient love the aged friend.

XXI.

PENSIVE, at eve, on the hard world I mused,
 And my poor heart was sad : so at the moon
 I gazed—and sighed, and sighed—for, ah ! how soon
 Eve darkens into night. Mine eye perused,
 With tearful vacancy, the dampy grass,
 Which wept and glittered in the paly ray,
 And I did pause me on my lonely way,
 And mused me on those wretched ones, who pass
 O'er the black heath of Sorrow. But, alas !
 Most of myself I thought : when it befell,
 That the sooth Spirit of the breezy wood
 Breathed in mine ear—' All this is very well ;

But much of *one* thing is for *no* thing good.
Ah ! my poor heart's inexplicable swell !

XXII.

TO SIMPLICITY.

O ! I do love thee, meek Simplicity !
For of thy lays the lulling simpleness
Goes to my heart, and soothes each small distress—
Distress tho' small, yet haply great to me !
'Tis true, on Lady Fortune's gentlest pad
I amble on ; yet tho' I know not why,
So sad I am ! but should a friend and I
Grow cool and miff, O ! I am very sad !
And then with sonnets and with sympathy
My dreamy bosom's mystic woes I pall ;
Now of my false friend plaining plaintively,
Now raving at mankind in general :
But whether sad or fierce, 'tis simple all,
All very simple, meek Simplicity.

A COUPLET,

WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF POEMS PRESENTED

BY MR COLERIDGE TO DR A.

A HIGHLY RESPECTED FRIEND, THE LOSS OF WHOSE
SOCIETY HE DEEPLY REGRETTED.

To meet, to know, to love—and then to part,
Is the sad tale of many a human heart.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

1798.

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in Tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.

T. BURNET: ARCHÆOL. PHIL., p. 68.

An ancient
Mariner meet-
eth three Gal-
lants bidden to
a wedding-
feast, and de-
taineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

'The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-
Guest is spell-
bound by the
eye of the old
sea-faring
man, and con-
strained to
hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone;
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he !
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall
Rêd as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till
it reached the
Line.

The Wedding-
Guest heareth
the bridal
music ; but
the Mariner
continueth his
tale.

The ship
drawn by a
storm toward
the south pole

sounds, where
no living
thing was to
be seen.

Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound !

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,
came through
the snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross :
Through the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steered us through !

And lo ! the
Albatross
proveth a bird
of good omen,
and followeth
the ship as it
returned
northward,
through fog
and floating
ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine ;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.

The ancient
Mariner
inhospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

' God save thee, ancient Mariner !
From the fiends, that plague thee thus !—
Why look'st thou so ? '—With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART THE SECOND.

THE Sun now rose upon the right :
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo !

And I had done an hellish thing,
 And it would work 'em woe :
 For all averred, I had killed the bird
 That made the breeze to blow.
 Ah, wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,
 That made the breeze to blow !

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 The glorious Sun uprist :
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird
 That brought the fog and mist.
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
 The furrow followed free :
 We were the first that ever burst
 Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
 'Twas sad as sad could be ;
 And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody Sun, at noon,
 Right up above the mast did stand,
 No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
 We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
 As idle as a painted ship
 Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,
 And all the boards did shrink ;
 Water, water, every where,
 Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
 That ever this should be !
 Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
 Upon the slimy sea.

His ship-
 mates cry out
 against the
 ancient Mari-
 ner, for killing
 the bird of
 good luck.

But when the
 fog cleared
 off, they jus-
 tify the same,
 and thus make
 themselves
 accomplices
 in the crime.

The fair
 breeze con-
 tinues ; the
 ship enters
 the Pacific
 Ocean and
 sails north-
 ward, even
 till it reaches
 the Line.
 The ship hath
 been suddenly
 becalmed.

And the Al-
 batross begins
 to be avenged

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so :
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

A spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed

souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constanti-
nopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate
or element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The ship-
mates in their
more distress
would fain
throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner : in
sign whereof
they hang the
dead sea-bird
round his
neck.

Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART THE THIRD.

THERE passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time !
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward I beheld,
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a sign
in the element
afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist :
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
And still it neared and neared :
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 We could not laugh nor wail ;
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
 And cried, A sail ! a sail !

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call :
 Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in,
 As they were drinking all.

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
 Hither to work us weal ;
 Without a breeze, without a tide,
 She steadies with upright keel !

The western wave was all a-flame,
 The day was well-nigh done !
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun ;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered,
 With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud,)
 How fast she nears and nears !
 Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
 Like restless gossameres !

Are those *her* ribs through which the Sun
 Did peer, as through a grate ?
 And is that Woman all her crew ?
 Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
 Is Death that Woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, *her* looks were free,
 Her locks were yellow as gold :

At its nearer
 approach, it
 seemeth him
 to be a ship ;
 and at a dear
 ransom he
 freeth his
 speech from
 the bonds of
 thirst.

A flash of joy.

And horror
 follows. For
 can it be a
 ship that
 comes onward
 without wind
 or tide ?

It seemeth
 him but the
 skeleton of a
 ship.

And its ribs
 are seen as
 bars on the
 face of the set-
 ting Sun.
 The spectre-
 woman and her
 death-mate,
 and no other on
 board the ske-
 leton-ship.
 Like vessel,
 like crew !

Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-Mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

DEATH and
Life-in-
Death have
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) winneth
the ancient
Mariner.
No twilight
within the
courts of the
sun.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
'The game is done ! I've, I've won !'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :
At one stride comes the dark ;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising
of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip !
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white ;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clombe above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sight
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates
drop down
dead,

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death be-
gins her work
on the ancient
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe !
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow !

PART THE FOURTH.

'I FEAR thee, ancient Mariner !
I fear thy skinny hand !
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.*

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a spirit is
talking to him;

'I fear thee, and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—
Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest !
This body dropt not down.

But the an-
cient Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to re-
late his horri-
ble penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea !
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful !
And they all dead did lie ;
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on ; and so did I.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away ;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls-like pulses beat ;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

* For the two last lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowcy to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the Autumn of 1797, that this Poem was planned, and in part composed.

But the curse
liveth for him,
in the eye of
the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they :
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to Hell
A spirit from on high ;
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye !
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneli-
ness and fixed-
ness he yearn-
eth towards
the journeying
Moon, and the
stars that still

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

sojourn, yet still move onward ; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of
the Moon he
beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware ?
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

He blesteth
them in his
happiness.

The self same moment I could pray ;
 And from my neck so free
 The Albatross fell off, and sank
 Like lead into the sea.

The spell be-
 gins to break.

PART THE FIFTH.

OH sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
 Beloved from pole to pole !
 To Mary Queen the praise be given !
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
 That had so long remained,
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;
 And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of
 the holy
 Mother, the
 ancient Mari-
 ner is refresh-
 ed with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank ;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 It did not come anear ;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

He heareth
 sounds, and
 seeth strange
 sights and
 commotions in
 the sky and
 the element.

The upper air burst into life !
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about !
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud ;
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side :
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
 the ship's
 crew are in-
 spired, and
 the ship moves
 on.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on !
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
 It had been strange, even in a dream,
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ;
 Yet never a breeze up blew ;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
 Where they were wont to do :
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee :
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said nought to me.

But not by
 the souls of
 the men, nor
 by demons of
 earth or mid-
 dle air, but by
 a blessed troop
 of angelic
 spirits, sent
 down by the
 invocation of
 the guardian
 saint.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner !'
 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
 Which to their corse came again,
 But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
 And clustered round the mast ;
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
 And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
 Then darted to the Sun ;
 Slowly the sounds came back again,
 Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
 I heard the sky-lark sing ;
 Sometimes all little birds that are,
 How they seemed to fill the sea and air
 With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,
 Now like a lonely flute ;
 And now it is an angel's song,
 That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
 A pleasant noise till noon,
 A noise like of a hidden brook
 In the leafy month of June,
 That to the sleeping woods all night
 Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
 Yet never a breeze did breathe :
 Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
 Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
 From the land of mist and snow,
 The spirit slid : and it was he
 That made the ship to go.
 The sails at noon left off their tune,
 And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
 Had fixed her to the ocean :
 But in a minute she 'gan stir,
 With a short uneasy motion—
 Backwards and forwards half her length
 With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
 She made a sudden bound :
 It flung the blood into my head,
 And I fell down in a swoond.

The lonesome
 spirit from the
 south pole
 carries on the
 ship as far as
 the Line, in
 obedience to
 the angelic
 troop, but
 still requireth
 vengeance.

The Polar
Spirit's fel-
low-dæmons,
the invisible
inhabitants of
the element,
take part in
his wrong ;
and two of
them relate,
one to the
other, that
penance long
and heavy for
the ancient
Mariner hath
been accorded
to the Polar
Spirit, who
returneth
southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

' Is it he ? ' quoth one, ' Is this the man ?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low,
The harmless Albatross.

' The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew :
Quoth he, ' The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART THE SIXTH.

FIRST VOICE.

BUT tell me, tell me ! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
What is the Ocean doing ?

SECOND VOICE.

Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—
If he may know which way to go ;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see ! how graciously
She looketh down on him.

FIRST VOICE.

But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?

SECOND VOICE.

The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made;

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

The superna-
tural motion is
retarded; the
Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

The curse is
finally expi-
ated.

Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too :
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
The light-house top I see ?
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God !
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn !
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

And the an-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native
country.

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

And appear
in their own
forms of light.

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light :

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot, and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast :
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
It is the Hermit good !
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART THE SEVENTH.

THIS Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve :—
He hath a cushion plump :

The Hermit
of the Wood.

It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
' Why this is strange, I trow !
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now ? '

Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.

' Strange, by my faith ! ' the Hermit said—
' And they answered not our cheer !
The planks looked warped ! and see those sails
How thin they are and sere !
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along ;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owl whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

' Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared '—' Push on, push on !
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred ;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship sud-
denly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread :
It reached the ship, it split the bay ;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient
Mariner is
saved in the
Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit ;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha ! ha !' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land !
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou ?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale ;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns ;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
I have strange power of speech ;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
To him my tale I teach.

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him ;
and the pe-
nance of life
falls on him.

And ever and
anon through-
out his future
life an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
 The wedding-guests are there :
 But in the garden-bower the bride
 And bride-maids singing are ;
 And hark the little vesper bell,
 Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
 Alone on a wide wide sea :
 So lonely 'twas, that God himself
 Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
 'Tis sweeter far to me,
 To walk together to the kirk
 With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,
 And all together pray,
 While each to his great Father bends,
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
 And youths and maidens gay !

And to teach,
 by his own
 example,
 love and
 reverence to
 all things that
 God made and
 loveth.

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
 He prayeth well, who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small ;
 For the dear God who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
 Whose beard with age is hoar,
 Is gone : and now the Wedding-Guest
 Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
 And is of sense forlorn :
 A sadder and a wiser man,
 He rose the morrow morn.

CHRISTABEL.

PREFACE.*

THE first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety seven, at Stowey in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the loveliness, of a vision; I trust that I shall yet be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come.

It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. The dates are mentioned for the exclusive purpose of precluding charges of plagiarism or servile imitation from myself. For there is among us a set of critics, who seem to hold that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would therefore charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perfloration made in some other man's tank. I am confident, however, that as far as the present poem is concerned, the celebrated poets whose writings I might be suspected of having imitated, either in particular passages, or in the tone and the spirit of the whole, would be among the first to vindicate me from the charge, and who, on any striking coincidence, would permit me to address them in this doggrel version of two monkish Latin hexameters:

'Tis mine and it is likewise yours,
But an if this will not do,
Let it be mine, good friend! for I
Am the poorer of the two.

I have only to add, that the metre of the *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion.

* To the edition of 1826.

PART THE FIRST.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
 And the owls have awakened the crowing cock !
 Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !
 And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
 How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
 Hath a toothless mastiff, which
 From her kennel beneath the rock
 Maketh answer to the clock,
 Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;
 Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
 Sixteen short howls, not over loud :
 Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?
 The night is chilly, but not dark.
 The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
 It covers but not hides the sky.
 The moon is behind, and at the full ;
 And yet she looks both small and dull.
 The night is chill, the cloud is gray :
 'Tis a month before the month of May,
 And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
 Whom her father loves so well,
 What makes her in the wood so late,
 A furlong from the castle gate ?
 She had dreams all yesternight
 Of her own betrothed knight ;
 And she in the midnight wood will pray
 For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
 The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
 And naught was green upon the oak,
 But moss and rarest mistletoe :
 She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
 And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel !
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone :
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare :
Her blue-veined feet unsandaled were ;
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly !

Mary mother, save me now !
(Said Christabel), And who art thou ?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet :—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness.

Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear,
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white;
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak,
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand
And comforted fair Geraldine:
O well bright dame may you command
The service of Sir Leoline;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.
She rose: and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious STARS the lady blest,

And thus spake on sweet Christabel ;
 All our household are at rest,
 The hall as silent as the cell,
 Sir Leoline is weak in health
 And may not well awakened be,
 But we will move as if in stealth .
 And I beseech your courtesy
 This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
 Took the key that fitted well ;
 A little door she opened straight,
 All in the middle of the gate ;
 The gate that was ironed within and without,
 Where an army in battle-array had marched out
 The lady sank, belike through pain,
 And Christabel with might and main
 Lifted her up, a weary weight,
 Over the threshold of the gate :
 Then the lady rose again,
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court : right glad they were.
 And Christabel devoutly cried
 To the lady by her side,
 Praise we the Virgin all divine
 Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !
 Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
 I cannot speak for weariness.
 So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
 The mastiff old did not awake,
 Yet she an angry moan did make !
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
 Never till now she uttered yell
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.
 Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will !
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying ;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death with stifled breath !
And now have reached her chamber door ;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.
The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !

It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?
Christabel answered—Woe is me !
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding day.
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !
I would, said Geraldine, she were !

But soon with altered voice, said she—
' Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine !
I have power to bid thee flee.'
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
' Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine—
' Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off ! 'tis given to me.'

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side.
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas ! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady ! it hath wildered you !
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, ' 'tis over now !'

Again the wild-flower wine she drank :
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright ;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel !

And you love them, and for their sake
 And for the good which me befell,
 Even I in my degree will try,
 Fair maiden, to requite you well.
 But now unrobe yourself; for I
 Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, so let it be!
 And as the lady bade, did she.
 Her gentle limbs did she undress,
 And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
 So many thoughts moved to and fro,
 That vain it were her lids to close;
 So half-way from the bed she rose,
 And on her elbow did recline
 To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
 And slowly rolled her eyes around;
 Then drawing in her breath aloud,
 Like one that shuddered, she unbound
 The cincture from beneath her breast:
 Her silken robe, and inner vest,
 Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
 Behold! her bosom and half her side—
 A sight to dream of, not to tell!
 O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs:
 Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
 Deep from within she seems half-way
 To lift some weight with sick assay,
 And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
 Then suddenly, as one defied,
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,
 And lay down by the Maiden's side!
 And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah, wel-a-day!

And with low voice and doleful look
 These words did say:

In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel !
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heardest a low moaning,
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair :
 And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST.

It was a lovely sight to see
 The lady Christabel, when she
 Was praying at the old oak tree.
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows ;
 Her slender palms together prest,
 Heaving sometimes on her breast ;
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
 Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me !)
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
 Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
 Dreaming that alone, which is—
 O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,
 The lady who knelt at the old oak tree ?
 And lo ! the worker of these harms,
 That holds the maiden in her arms,
 Seems to slumber still and mild,
 As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine ! since arms of thine
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.
 O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—
 Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,
 The night-birds all that hour were still.
 But now they are jubilant anew,
 From cliff and tower, tu—whoo ! tu—whoo !
 Tu—whoo ! tu—whoo ! from wood and fell !

And see ! the lady Christabel
 Gathers herself from out her trance ;
 Her limbs relax, her countenance
 Grows sad and soft ; the smooth thin lids
 Close o'er her eyes ; and tears she sheds—
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright !
 And oft the while she seems to smile
 As infants at a sudden light !
 Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
 Like a youthful hermitess,
 Beauteous in a wilderness,
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
 And, if she move unquietly,
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.
 No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
 What if she knew her mother near ?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call :
 For the blue sky bends over all !

PART THE SECOND.

EACH matin bell, the Baron saith,
 Knells us back to a world of death.
 These words Sir Leoline first said,
 When he rose and found his lady dead :

These words Sir Leoline will say,
 Many a morn to his dying day.
 And hence the custom and law began,
 That still at dawn the sacristan,
 Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
 Five and forty beads must tell
 Between each stroke—a warning knell,
 Which not a soul can choose but hear
 From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell !
 And let the drowsy sacristan
 Still count as slowly as he can !
 There is no lack of such, I ween
 As well fill up the space between.
 In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
 And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
 With ropes of rock and bells of air
 Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
 Who all give back, one after t'other,
 The death-note to their living brother ;
 And oft too, by the knell offended,
 Just as their one ! two ! three ! is ended,
 The devil mocks the doleful tale
 With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still ! through mist and cloud
 That merry peal comes ringing loud ;
 And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
 And rises lightly from the bed ;
 Puts on her silken vestments white,
 And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
 And nothing doubting of her spell
 Awakens the lady Christabel.
 ' Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel ?
 I trust that you have rested well.'

And Christabel awoke and spied
 The same who lay down by her side—
 O rather say, the same whom she
 Raised up beneath the old oak tree !
 Nay, fairer yet ! and yet more fair !

For she belike hath drunken deep
 Of all the blessedness of sleep !
 And while she spake, her looks, her air
 Such gentle thankfulness declare,
 That (so it seemed) her girded vests
 Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
 'Sure I have sinned !' said Christabel,
 'Now Heaven be praised if all be well !'
 And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
 Did she the lofty lady greet
 With such perplexity of mind
 As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
 Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
 That He, who on the cross did groan,
 Might wash away her sins unknown,
 She forthwith led fair Geraldine
 To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
 Are pacing both into the hall,
 And pacing on through page and groom
 Enter the Baron's presence room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
 His gentle daughter to his breast,
 With cheerful wonder in his eyes
 The lady Geraldine espies,
 And gave such welcome to the same,
 As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,
 And when she told her father's name,
 Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
 Murmuring o'er the name again,
 Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
 But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
 And constancy lives in realms above ;
 And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
 And to be wroth with one we love.

Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother :
They parted—ne'er to meet again !
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face ;
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage,
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they, who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy !
'And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men !'
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !
For the lady was ruthlessly seized ; and he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.

Which when she viewed, a vision fell
 Upon the soul of Christabel,
 The vision of fear, the touch and pain !
 She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again
 (Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,
 Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
 Again she felt that bosom cold,
 And drew in her breath with a hissing sound :
 Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
 And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
 With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
 And in its stead that vision blest,
 Which comforted her after-rest,
 While in the lady's arms she lay,
 Had put a rapture in her breast,
 And on her lips and o'er her eyes
 Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,

'What ails then my beloved child ?
 The Baron said—His daughter mild
 Made answer, 'All will yet be well !'
 I ween she had no power to tell
 Aught else : so mighty was the spell.
 Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
 Had deemed her sure a thing divine,
 Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
 As if she feared she had offended
 Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !
 And with such lowly tones she prayed,
 She might be sent without delay
 Home to her father's mansion.

'Nay !

Nay, by my soul !' said Leoline.
 'Ho ! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine !
 Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
 And take two steeds with trappings proud,
 And take the youth whom thou lov'st best

To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
 And clothe you both in solemn vest,
 And over the mountains haste along,
 Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
 Detain you on the valley road.
 And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
 My merry bard ! he hastes, he hastes
 Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
 And reaches soon that castle good
 Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

Bard Bracy ! bard Bracy ! your horses are fleet,
 Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet !
 And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
 Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !
 Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
 Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
 He bids thee come without delay
 With all thy numerous array,
 And take thy lovely daughter home ;
 And he will meet thee on the way
 With all his numerous array
 White with their panting palfreys' foam,
 And, by mine honour ! I will say,
 That I repent me of the day
 When I spake words of fierce disdain
 To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !—
 —For since that evil hour hath flown,
 Many a summer's sun have shone ;
 Yet ne'er found I a friend again
 Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
 Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ;
 And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
 His gracious hail on all bestowing :—
 Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
 Are sweeter than my harp can tell,
 Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
 This day my journey should not be ;

So strange a dream hath come to me :
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest !
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline ! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wondered what might ail the bird :
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the old tree.

And in my dream, methought, I went
To search out what might there be found :
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry ;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck.
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove's its head it crouched ;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !
I woke ; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower ;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye !
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare
Lest aught unholy loiter there.

Thus Bracy said : the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile ;

Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love ;
And said in courtly accents fine,
Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake !
He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turned her from Sir Leoline ;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again ;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel—
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread
At Christabel she looked askance !—
One moment—and the sight was fled !
But Christabel in dizzy trance,
Stumbling on the unsteady ground—
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound ;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas ! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one !
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind :

And passively did imitate
 That look of dull and treacherous *nate*,
 And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
 Still picturing that look askance,
 With forced unconscious sympathy
 Full before her father's view—
 As far as such a look could be,
 In eyes so innocent and blue !
 And when the trance was o'er, the *maid*
 Paused awhile, and inly prayed,
 Then falling at her father's feet,
 'By my mother's soul do I entreat
 That thou this woman send away !'
 She said ; and more she could not say,
 For what she knew she could not tell,
 O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
 Sir Leoline ? Thy only child
 Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
 So fair, so innocent, so mild ;
 The same, for whom thy lady died !
 O by the pangs of her dead mother
 Think thou no evil of thy child !
 For her, and thee, and for no other,
 She prayed the moment ere she died :
 Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
 Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !
 That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
 Sir Leoline !
 And would'st thou wrong thy only child,
 Her child and thine ?
 Within the Baron's heart and brain
 If thoughts, like these, had any share,
 They only swelled his rage and pain,
 And did but work confusion there.
 His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
 His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
 Dishonoured thus in his old age ;
 Dishonoured by his only child,

And all his hospitality
To th' insulted daughter of his friend,
By more than woman's jealousy,
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere—
Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence! The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND.

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks
That always finds and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

I. POEMS OCCASIONED BY POLITICAL EVENTS, OR FEELINGS
CONNECTED WITH THEM.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my country! Am I to be blamed!
But, when I think of Thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark of the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled.
What wonder if a poet, now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a Lover or a Child.—WORDSWORTH.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

Ἰὸδ, ἰὸδ, ὦ ὦ κακά.
Ἵπ' αὖ μὲ δεινὸς ὀρσομαντείας πόνοσ'
Στροβεῖ, ταράσσων φροιμίους ἐφημίους.
* * * * *
Τὸ μέλλον ἤξει. Καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν
Ἀγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτεῖρας ἐρεῖς.—Æschyl. Agam., 1225.

ARGUMENT.

THE Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November, 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the Image of the Departing Year, &c. as in a vision. The second Epode prophesies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

* This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796; and was first published on the last day of that year.

I.

SPIRIT who sweepest the wild harp of Time !

It is most hard, with an untroubled ear

Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear !

Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's unchanging clime,

Long had I listened, free from mortal fear,

With inward stillness, and a bowed mind ;

When lo ! its folds far waving on the wind,

I saw the train of the departing Year !

Starting from my silent sadness

Then with no unholy madness

Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,

I raised the impetuous song, and solemnized his flight

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,

From the prison's direr gloom,

From distemper's midnight anguish ;

And thence, where poverty doth waste and languish !

Or where, his two bright torches blending,

Love illumines manhood's maze ;

Or where o'er cradled infants bending

Hope has fixed her wishful gaze ;

Hither, in perplexed dance,

Ye Woes ! ye young-eyed Joys ! advance !

By Time's wild harp, and by the hand

Whose indefatigable sweep

Raises its fateful strings from sleep,

I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band !

From every private bower,

And each domestic hearth,

Haste for one solemn hour ;

And with a loud and yet a louder voice,

D'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,

Weep and rejoice !

Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth

Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of Hell :

And now advance in saintly jubilee

Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy spell,

They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty !

III.

I marked Ambition in his war-array !

I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry—
 'Ah! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay!
 Groans not her chariot on its onward way?'

Fly, mailed Monarch, fly !

Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,

No more on murder's lurid face

The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye !

Manes of the unnumbered slain !

Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !

Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,

When human ruin choked the streams,

Fell in conquest's glutted hour,

Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !

Spirits of the uncoffined slain,

Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,

Of, at night, in misty train,

Rush around her narrow dwelling !

The exterminating fiend is fled—

(Foul her life, and dark her doom)

Mighty armies of the dead

Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb !

Then with prophetic song relate,

Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV.

Departing Year! 'twas on no earthly shore

My soul beheld thy vision! Where alone,

Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,

Aye Memory sits: thy robe inscribed with gore,

With many an unimaginable groan

Thou storied'st thy sad hours! Silence ensued,

Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,

Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories shone.

Then, his eye wild ardours glancing,

From the choired gods advancing,

The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,

And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

v.

Throughout the blissful throng,
 Hushed were harp and song;
Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads seven
 (The mystic Words of Heaven),
 Permissive signal make :
The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings and spake !
 'Thou in stormy blackness throning
 Love and uncreated Light,
 By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,
 Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !
 By peace with proffered insult scared,
 Masked hate and envying scorn !
 By years of havoc yet unborn !
And hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
 But chief by Afric's wrongs,
 Strange, horrible, and foul !
 By what deep guilt belongs
 To the deaf Synod, "full of gifts and lies !"
By wealth's insensate laugh ! by torture's howl !
 Avenger, rise !
 For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
 Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ?
Speak ! from thy storm-black Heaven, O speak aloud !
 And on the darkling foe
 Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud !
 O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries !
 Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans below !
 Rise, God of Nature ! rise.'

vi.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled ;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
 And ever, when the dream of night
 Renews the phantom to my sight,
 Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs ;
 My ears throb hot ; my eye-balls start ;
 My brain with horrid tumult swims ;
 Wild is the tempest of my heart ;

And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of death !

No stranger agony confounds

The soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds,

Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead !

(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,

And the night-wind clamours hoarse !

See ! the starting wretch's head

Lies pillowed on a brother's corse !)

VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,

O Albion ! O my mother Isle !

Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,

Glitter green with sunny showers ;

Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells

Echo to the bleat of flocks

(Those grassy hills, those glittering dells

Proudly ramparted with rocks) ;

And Ocean mid his uproar wild

Speaks safety to his island-child.

Hence for many a fearless age

Has social Quiet loved thy shore ;

Nor ever proud invader's rage

Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with gore.

VIII.

Abandoned of Heaven ! mad avarice thy guide,

At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—

Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,

And joined the wild yelling of famine and blood !

The nations curse thee ! They with eager wondering

Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture, scream !

Strange-eyed Destruction ! who with many a dream

Of central fires through nether seas upthundering

Soothes her fierce solitude ; yet as she lies

By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,

If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,

O Albion ! thy predestined ruins rise,

The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,

Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

Away, my soul, away !

In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing---
And hark ! I hear the famished brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !

Away, my soul, away !

I, unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wailed my country with a loud Lament
Now I recentre my immortal mind

In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

FRANCE. AN ODE.

I.

YE Clouds ! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control !
Ye Ocean-Waves ! that, wheresoe'er ve roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws !
Ye Woods ! that listen to the night-birds singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind !
Where, like a man beloved of God,
'Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound !
O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high !
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared !
Thou rising Sun ! thou blue rejoicing Sky !
Yea, every thing that is and will be free
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,

With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared !
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band :
And when to whelm the disenchanting nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The Monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array ;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves,
Had swol'n the patriot emotion,
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves ;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat !
For ne'er, O Liberty ! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame ;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

'And what,' I said, 'though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove !
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream !
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light !'
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright ;
When France her front deep-scar'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp ;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,

Wriathed like a wounded dragon in his gore ;
 Then I reproached my fears that would not flee ,
 ' And soon,' I said, ' shall Wisdom teach her lore
 In the low huts of them that toil and groan !
 And, conquering by her happiness alone,
 Shall France compel the nations to be free,
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth their own.'

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams !
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
 From Bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—
 I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
 Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
 And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
 With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I cherished
 One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes !
 To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
 Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
 A patriot-race to disinherit
 Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ;
 And with inexpiable spirit
 To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
 O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
 And patriot only in pernicious toils,
 Are these thy boasts, Champion of humankind ?
 To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
 Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
 To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
 From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

V.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
 Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game
 They burst their manacles and wear the name
 Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
 O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
 Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ;
 But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
 Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power—
 Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee

(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee),
 Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
 And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
 Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
 The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves
 And there I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's verge,
 Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,
 Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
 Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
 And shot my being through earth, sea, and air,
 Possessing all things with intensest love,
 O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

February, 1797.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

WRITTEN IN APRIL, 1798, DURING THE ALARM OF AN INVASION.

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
 A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
 No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.
 The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
 Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
 All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
 Which now blooms most profusely; but the dell,
 Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
 As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
 When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
 The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
 Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
 Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
 The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
 Knew just so much of folly, as had made
 His early manhood more securely wise!
 Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
 While from the singing-lark (that sings unscen
 The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
 And from the sun, and from the breezy air,

Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame ;
 And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
 Made up a meditative joy, and found
 Religious meanings in the forms of nature !
 And so, his senses gradually wrapt
 In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
 And dreaming hears thee still, O singing-lark ;
 That singest like an angel in the clouds !

My God ! it is a melancholy thing
 For such a man, who would full fain preserve
 His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
 For all his human brethren—O my God !
 It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
 What uproar and what strife may now be stirring
 This way or that way o'er these silent hills—
 Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
 And all the crash of onset ; fear and rage,
 And undetermined conflict—even now,
 Even now, perchance, and in his native isle :
 Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun !
 We have offended, oh ! my countrymen !
 We have offended very grievously,
 And been most tyrannous. From east to west
 A groan of accusation pierces Heaven !
 The wretched plead against us ; multitudes
 Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
 Our brethren ! Like a cloud that travels on,
 Steamed up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
 Even so, my countrymen ! have we gone forth
 And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs,
 And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
 With slow perdition murders the whole man,
 His body and his soul ! Meanwhile, at home,
 All individual dignity and power
 Engulfed in courts, committees, institutions,
 Associations and societies,
 A vain, speech-mouthing, speech-reporting guild,
 One benefit-club for mutual flattery,
 We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
 Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth ;

Contemtuons of all honourable rule,
 Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
 For gold, as at a market ! The sweet words
 Of Christian promise, words that even yet
 Might stem destruction, were they wisely preached,
 Are muttered o'er by men, whose tones proclaim
 How flat and wearisome they feel their trade :
 Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
 To deem them falsehoods or to know their truth.
 Oh ! blasphemous ! the book of life is made
 A superstitious instrument, on which
 We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break ;
 For all must swear—all and in every place,
 College and wharf, council and justice-court ;
 All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed,
 Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
 The rich, the poor, the old man and the young ;
 All, all make up one scheme of perjury,
 That faith doth reel ; the very name of God
 Sounds like a juggler's charm ; and, bold with joy,
 Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
 (Portentous sight !) the owlet Atheism,
 Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
 Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them close,
 And hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven,
 Cries out, ' Where is it ? '

Thankless too for peace

(Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous seas),
 Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
 To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war !
 Alas ! for ages ignorant of all
 Its ghastlier workings (famine or blue plague,
 Battle, or siege, or flight through wintry-snows),
 We, this whole people, have been clamorous
 For war and bloodshed ; animating sports,
 The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
 Spectators and not combatants ! No guess
 Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
 No speculation or contingency,
 However dim and vague, too vague and dim

To yield a justifying cause ; and forth
 (Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
 And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)

We send our mandates for the certain death
 Of thousands and ten thousands ! Boys and girls,
 And women, that would groan to see a child
 Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
 The best amusement for our morning-meal !
 The poor wretch, who has learnt his only prayers
 From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
 'To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father,
 Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
 And technical in victories and defeats,
 And all our dainty terms for fratricide ;
 Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
 Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
 We join no feeling and attach no form !
 As if the soldier died without a wound ;
 As if the fibres of this godlike frame
 Were gored without a pang ; as if the wretch,
 Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
 Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed ;
 As though he had no wife to pine for him,
 No God to judge him ! Therefore, evil days
 Are coming on us, O my countrymen !
 And what if all-avenging Providence,
 Strong and retributive, should make us know
 The meaning of our words, force us to feel
 The desolation and the agony
 Of our fierce doings !

Spare us yet awhile,
 Father and God ! O ! spare us yet awhile !
 Oh ! let not English women drag their flight
 Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
 Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
 Laughed at the breast ! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
 Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
 Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,
 And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
 Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves pure !

Stand forth ! be men ! repel an impious foe,
 Impious and false, a light yet cruel race.
 Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
 With deeds of murder ; and still promising
 Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
 Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
 Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes
 And all that lifts the spirit ! Stand we forth ;
 Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
 And let them toss as idly on its waves
 As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-blast
 Swept from our shores ! And oh ! may we return
 Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
 Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
 So fierce a foe to frenzy !

I have told,
 O Britons ! O my brethren ! I have told
 Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
 Nor deem my zeal or factious or mis-timed ;
 For never can true courage dwell with them,
 Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not look
 At their own vices. We have been too long
 Dupes of a deep delusion ! Some, belike,
 Groaning with restless enmity, expect
 All change from change of constituted power ;
 As if a Government had been a robe,
 On which our vice and wretchedness were tagged
 Like fancy-points and fringes, with the robe
 Pulled off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
 A radical causation to a few
 Poor drudges of chastising Providence,
 Who borrow all their hues and qualities
 From our own folly and rank wickedness,
 Which gave them birth and nursed them. Others, meanwhile
 Dote with a mad idolatry ; and all
 Who will not fall before their images,
 And yield them worship, they are enemies
 Even of their country !

Such have I been deemed—
 But, O dear Britain ! O my Mother Isle !

Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
 To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
 A husband, and a father ! who revere
 All bonds of natural love, and find them all
 Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
 O native Britain ! O my Mother Isle !
 How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and holy
 To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
 Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
 Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
 All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
 All adoration of the God in nature,
 All lovely and all honourable things,
 Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
 The joy and greatness of its future being ?
 There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
 Unborrowed from my country. O divine
 And beauteous island ! thou hast been my sole
 And most magnificent temple, in the which
 I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
 Loving the God that made me !

May my fears,

My filial fears, be vain ! and may the vaunts
 And menace of the vengeful enemy
 Pass like the gust, that roared and died away
 In the distant tree : which heard, and only heard,
 In this low dell, bowed not the delicate grass.

But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
 The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze :
 The light has left the summit of the hill,
 Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
 Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
 Farewell, awhile, O soft and silent spot !
 On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
 Homeward I wind my way ; and lo ! recalled
 From bodings that have well-nigh wearied me,
 I find myself upon the brow, and pause
 Startled ! And after lonely sojourning
 In such a quiet and surrounded nook,

This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
 Dim tinted, there the mighty majesty
 Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
 And elmy fields, seems like society—
 Conversing with the mind, and giving it
 A livelier impulse and a dance of thought!
 And now, beloved Stowey! I behold
 Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four huge elms
 Clustering, which mark the mansion of my friend;
 And close behind them, hidden from my view,
 Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe
 And my babe's mother dwell in peace! With light
 And quickened footsteps thitherward I tend,
 Remembering thee, O green and silent dell!
 And grateful, that by nature's quietness
 And solitary musings, all my heart
 Is softened, and made worthy to indulge
 Love, and the thoughts that yearn for humankind.

Nether Stowey,
 April 28th, 1798.

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

A WAR ECLOGUE.

*The Scene a desolated Tract in la Vendée. FAMINE is discovered
 lying on the ground; to her enter FIRE and SLAUGHTER.*

Fam. SISTERS! sisters! who sent you here?

Slau. [*to Fire*]. I will whisper it in her ear.

Fire. No! no! no!

Spirits hear what spirits tell:
 'Twill make a holiday in Hell.

No! no! no!

Myself, I named him once below,
 And all the souls, that damned be,

Leaped up at once in anarchy,
Clapped their hands and danced for glee,
They no longer heeded me ;
But laughed to hear Hell's burning rafters
Unwillingly re-echo laughters !

No ! no ! no !

Spirits hear what spirits tell :
"Twill make a holiday in Hell !

Fam. Whisper it, sister ! so and so !
In a dark hint, soft and slow.

Slau. Letters four do form his name—
And who sent you ?

Both. The same ! the same !

Slau. He came by stealth, and unlocked my den,
And I have drunk the blood since then
Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

Both. Who bade you do it ?

Slau. The same ! the same !
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo !
To him alone the praise is due.

Fam. Thanks, sister, thanks ! the men have bled,
Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle ;
With bones and skulls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and carrion-crow
And the homeless dog—but they would not go.
So off I flew : for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare ?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,
And through the chink of a cottage-wall—
Can you guess what I saw there ?

Both. Whisper it, sister ! in our ear.

Fam. A baby beat its dying mother :
I had starved the one and was starving the other !

Both. Who bade you do't ?

Fam. The same ! the same !
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo !
To him alone the praise is due.

Fire. Sisters ! I from Ireland came !

Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,
 I triumphed o'er the setting sun!
 And all the while the work was done,
 On as I strode with my huge strides,
 I flung back my head and I held my sides,
 It was so rare a piece of fun
 To see the sweltered cattle run
 With uncouth gallop through the night,
 Scared by the red and noisy light!
 By the light of his own blazing cot
 Was many a naked rebel shot:
 The house-stream met the flame and hissed,
 While crash! fell in the roof, I wist,
 On some of those old bed-ridden nurses,
 That deal in discontent and curses.

Both. Who bade you do't?

Fire. The same! the same!

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo!

To him alone the praise is due.

All. He let us loose, and cried Halloo!

How shall we yield him honour due?

Fam. Wisdom comes with lack of food.

I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,

Till the cup of rage o'erbrim:

They shall seize him and his brood—

Slau. They shall tear him limb from limb!

Fire. O thankless beldames and untrue!

And is this all that you can do

For him, who did so much for you?

Ninety months he, by my troth!

Hath richly catered for you both:

And in an hour would you repay

An eight years' work?—Away! away!

I alone am faithful! I

Cling to him everlastingly.

1796.

II. LOVE POEMS.

Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo,
 Perlegis hic lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acuta
 Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus.
 Omnia paulatim consumit longior ætas,
 Vivendoque simul morimur, rapimurque manendo.
 Ipse mihi collatus enim non ille videbor :
 Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,
 Voxque aliud sonat—
 Pectore nunc gelido calidos miseremur amantes,
 Jamque arsisse pudet. Veteres tranquilla tumultus
 Mens horret, relegensque alium putat ista locutum.—PETRARCH.

LOVE.

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
 Live o'er again that happy hour,
 When midway on the mount I lay,
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
 Had blended with the lights of eve ;
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,
 My own dear Genevieve !

She leaned against the armed man,
 The statue of the armed knight ;
 She stood and listened to my lay,
 Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
 My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
 She loves me best, whene'er I sing
 The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright:
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
 And told her love with virgin pride ;
 And so I won my Genevieve,
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE.

A FRAGMENT.

BENEATH yon birch with silver bark,
 And boughs so pendulous and fair,
 The brook falls scattered down the rock :
 And all is mossy there '—

And there upon the moss she sits,
 The Dark Ladie in silent pain ;
 The heavy tear is in her eye,
 And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page
 Up the castled mountain's breast,
 If he might find the Knight that wears
 The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,
 And she had lingered there all day,
 Counting moments, dreaming fears—
 O wherefore can he stay ?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,
 She sees far off a swinging bough !
 'Tis He ! 'Tis my betrothed Knight !
 Lord Falkland, it is Thou !

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,
 She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,
 Her kisses glowing on his cheeks
 She quenches with her tears

'My friends with rude ungentle words
They scoff and bid me fly to thee!
O give me shelter in thy breast!
O shield and shelter me!

'My Henry, I have given thee much,
I gave what I can ne'er recall,
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,
O Heaven! I gave thee all.'

The Knight made answer to the Maid,
While to his heart he held her hand,
'Nine castles hath my noble sire,
None statelier in the land.

'The fairest one shall be my love's,
The fairest castle of the nine!
Wait only till the stars peep out,
The fairest shall be thine:

'Wait only till the hand of eve
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,
And through the dark we too will steal
Beneath the twinkling stars!'

'The dark? the dark? No! not the dark?
The twinkling stars? How, Henry? How?
O God! 'twas in the eye of noon
He pledged his sacred vow!

And in the eye of noon, my love
Shall lead me from my mother's door,
Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white
Strewing flowers before:

'But first the nodding minstrels go
With music meet for lordly bowers,
The children next in snow-white vests,
Strewing buds and flowers!

And then my love and I shall pace,
My jet black hair in pearly braids,
Between our comely bachelors
And blushing bridal maids.'



LEWTI,

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.

AT midnight by the stream I roved,
 To forget the form I loved.
 Image of Lewti! from my mind
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The moon was high, the moonlight gleam
 And the shadow of a star
 Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
 But the rock shone brighter far,
 The rock half sheltered from my view
 By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
 So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
 Gleaming through her sable hair.
 Image of Lewti! from my mind
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.
 I saw a cloud of palest hue,
 Onward to the moon it passed;
 Still brighter and more bright it grew,
 With floating colours not a few,
 Till it reached the moon at last:
 Then the cloud was wholly bright,
 With a rich and amber light!
 And so with many a hope I seek,
 And with such joy I find my Lewti;
 And even so my pale wan cheek
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
 Away it goes; away so soon?
 Alas! it has no power to stay:
 Its hues are dim, its hues are grey—
 Away it passes from the moon!

How mournfully it seems to fly,
 Ever fading more and more,
 To joyless regions of the sky—
 And now 'tis whiter than before !
 As white as my poor cheek will be,
 When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
 A dying man for love of thee.
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
 And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
 Thin, and white, and very high :
 I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
 Perhaps the breezes that can fly,
 Now below and now above,
 Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
 Of Lady fair—that died for love.
 For maids, as well as youths, have perished.
 From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
 For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush ! my heedless feet from under
 Slip the crumbling banks for ever :
 Like echoes to a distant thunder,
 They plunge into the gentle river.
 The river-swans have heard my tread,
 And startle from their reedy bed.
 O beauteous birds ! methinks ye measure
 Your movements to some heavenly tune
 O beauteous birds ! 'tis such a pleasure
 To see you move beneath the moon,
 would it were your true delight
 To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
 When silent night has closed her eyes ;
 It is a breezy jasmine-bower.
 The nightingale sings o'er her head :
 Voice of the night ! had I the power
 That leafy labyrinth to thread,
 And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,

I then might view her bosom white
 Heaving lovely to my sight,
 As these two swans together heave
 On the gently swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,
 And dreamt that I had died for care;
 All pale and wasted I would seem,
 Yet fair withal, as spirits are!
 I'd die indeed, if I might see
 Her bosom heave, and heave for me!
 Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
 To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

1795.

THE PICTURE,

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

THROUGH weeds, and thorns, and matted underwood
 I force my way; now climb, and now descend
 O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
 Crushing the purple whorts; while, oft unseen,
 Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
 The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil
 I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,
 Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
 And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
 Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
 Playmate, or guide! The master-passion quelled,
 I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
 The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
 Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
 Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
 High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;
 Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,

And of this busy human heart weary,
 Worships the spirit of unconscious life
 In tree or wild-flower.—Gentle lunatic !
 If so he might not wholly cease to be,
 He would far rather not be that, he is ;
 But would be something, that he knows not of,
 In winds or waters, or among the rocks !

But hence, fond wretch ! breathe not contagion here !
 No myrtle-walks are these : these are no groves
 Where Love dare loiter ! If in sullen mood
 He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
 His dainty feet, the brier and the thorn
 Makes his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
 Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
 Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades !
 And you, ye Earth-winds ! you that make at morn
 The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs !
 You, O ye wingless Airs ! that creep between
 The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
 Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
 The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
 Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp,
 Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
 Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin Gnomes !
 With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
 His little Godship, making him perforce
 Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's back.

This is my hour of triumph ! I can now
 With my own fancies play the merry fool,
 And laugh away worse folly, being free.
 Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
 Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
 Clothes as with net-work : here will I couch my limbs,
 Close by this river, in this silent shade,
 As safe and sacred from the step of man
 As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
 And listening only to the pebbly brook
 That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound ;
 Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk

Make honey-hoards. The breeze that visits me
Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow,
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze! thou only, if I guess aright,
Lifest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look
Contemplative! Behold! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turned, or looked by stealth
(For fear is true love's cruel nurse), he now,
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom world on which he gazed,
But not unheeded gazed: for see, ah! see,
The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells:
And suddenly, as one that toys with time,
Scatters them on the pool! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes,
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays:

And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
 Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
 The pool becomes a mirror; and behold
 Each wild-flower on the marge inverted there,
 And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
 O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned
 On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!
 Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze
 Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!
 Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
 In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
 Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
 Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
 The Naiad of the mirror!

Not to thee,
 O wild and desert stream! belongs this tale:
 Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
 Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
 Making thee doleful as a cavern-well:
 Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
 On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream!

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
 From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
 I rise and trace its devious course. O lead,
 Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
 Lo! stealing through the canopy of firs,
 How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
 Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
 Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
 How soon to re-unite! And see! they meet,
 Each in the other lost and found: and see
 Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
 Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye!
 With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds,
 The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
 Dimness o'erswum with lustre! Such the hour
 Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds:
 And hark, the noise of a near waterfall!
 I pass forth into light—I find myself
 Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful

Of forest-trees, the lady of the woods),
 Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
 That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
 The landscape on my sight! Two crescent hills
 Fold in behind each other, and so make
 A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
 With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
 Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
 The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray,
 Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.
 How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
 Swings in its winnow; all the air is calm.
 The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with light
 Rises in columns; from this house alone,
 Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
 And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this?
 That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,
 And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
 His dear head pillowed on a sleeping dog—
 One arm between its fore legs, and the hand
 Holds loosely its small handful of wild flowers,
 Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.
 A curious picture, with a master's haste
 Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
 Peeled from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!
 Yon bark her canvas, and those purple berries
 Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried
 On the fine skin! She has been newly here;
 And lo! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
 The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!
 For this mayst thou flower early, and the sun,
 Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
 Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!
 Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids!
 More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed,
 The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
 O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
 And full of love to all, save only me,
 And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart,
 Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-wood
 Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway

On to her father's house. She is alone!
 The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
 And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
 Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
 To keep the relique? 'twill but idly feed
 The passion that consumes me. Let me haste!
 The picture in my hand which she has left;
 She cannot blame me that I followed her:
 And I may be her guide the long wood through.

THE NIGHT-SCENE:

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

Sandoval. You loved the daughter of Don Manrique?

Earl Henry.

Loved?

Sandoval. Did you not say you wooed her?

Earl Henry.

Once I loved

Her whom I dared not woo!

Sandoval.

And wooed, perchance,

One whom you loved not!

Earl Henry.

Oh! I were most base,

Not loving Oropeza. True, I wooed her,

Hoping to heal a deeper wound; but she

Met my advances with impassioned pride,

That kindled love with love. And when her sire,

Who in his dream of hope already grasped

The golden circlet in his hand, rejected

My suit with insult, and in memory

Of ancient feuds poured curses on my head,

Her blessings overtook and baffled them!

But thou art stern, and with unkindly countenance

Art inly reasoning whilst thou listenest to me.

Sandoval. Anxiously, Henry! reasoning anxiously,

But Oropeza—

Earl Henry. Blessings gather round her!

Within this wood there winds a secret passage,

Beneath the walls, which opens out at length

Into the gloomiest covert of the garden.—
 The night ere my departure to the army,
 She, nothing trembling, led me through that gloom,
 And to that covert by a silent stream,
 Which, with one star reflected near its marge,
 Was the sole object visible around me.
 No leaflet stirred; the air was almost sultry;
 So deep, so dark, so close, the umbrage o'er us!
 No leaflet stirred;—yet pleasure hung upon
 The gloom and stillness of the balmy night-air.
 A little further on an arbour stood,
 Fragrant with flowering trees—I well remember
 What an uncertain glimmer in the darkness
 Their snow-white blossoms made—thither she led me,
 To that sweet bower! Then Oropeza trembled—
 I heard her heart beat—if 'twere not my own.

Sandoval. A rude and scaring note, my friend!

Earl Henry.

Oh! no!

I have small memory of aught but pleasure.
 The inquietudes of fear, like lesser streams,
 Still flowing, still were lost in those of love:
 So love grew mightier from the fear, and Nature,
 Fleeing from pain, sheltered herself in joy.
 The stars above our heads were dim and steady,
 Like eyes suffused with rapture.—Life was in us:
 We were all life, each atom of our frames
 A living soul—I vowed to die for her:
 With the faint voice of one who, having spoken,
 Relapses into blessedness, I vowed it:
 That solemn vow, a whisper scarcely heard,
 A murmur breathed against a lady's ear.
 Oh! there is joy above the name of pleasure,
 Deep self-possession, an intense repose.

Sandoval [*with a sarcastic smile*]. No other than as eastern
 sages paint

The God, who floats upon a lotos leaf,
 Dreams for a thousand ages; then awaking,
 Creates a world, and smiling at the bubble,
 Relapses into bliss.

Earl Henry.

Ah! was that bliss

Feared as an alien, and too vast for man?

For suddenly, impatient of its silence,
 Did Oropeza, starting, grasp my forehead.
 I caught her arms ; the veins were swelling on them.
 Through the dark bower she sent a hollow voice ;—
 ‘ Oh ! what if all betray me ? what if thou ? ’
 I swore, and with an inward thought that seemed
 The purpose and the substance of my being,
 I swore to her, that were she red with guilt,
 I would exchange my unblenched state with hers.—
 Friend ! by that winding passage, to that bower
 I now will go—all objects there will teach me
 Unwavering love, and singleness of heart.
 Go, Sandoval ! I am prepared to meet her—
 Say nothing of me—I myself will seek her—
 Nay, leave me, friend ! I cannot bear the torment
 And keen inquiry of that scanning eye.—

[*Earl Henry retires into the wood.*]

Sandoval [*alone*]. O Henry ! always striv'st thou to be great
 By thine own act—yet art thou never great
 But by the inspiration of great passion.
 The whirl-blast comes, the desert-sands rise up
 And shape themselves : from earth to heaven they stand,
 As though they were the pillars of a temple,
 Built by Omnipotence in its own honour !
 But the blast pauses, and their shaping spirit
 Is fled : the mighty columns were but sand,
 And lazy snakes trail o'er the level ruins !

TO AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN AT THE THEATRE

MAIDEN, that with sullen brow
 Sitt'st behind those virgins gay,
 Like a scorched and mildewed bough
 Leafless 'mid the blooms of May !

Him who lured thee and forsook,
 Oft I watched with angry gaze,
 Fearful saw his pleading look,
 Anxious heard his fervid phrase.

Soft the glances of the youth,
 Soft his speech, and soft his sigh;
 But no sound like simple truth,
 But no true love in his eye.

Loathing thy polluted lot,
 Hie thee, Maiden, hie thee hence!
 Seek thy weeping Mother's cot,
With a wiser innocence.

Thou hast known deceit and folly,
 Thou hast felt that vice is woe;
 With a musing melancholy
 Inly armed, go, Maiden! go.

Mother sage of self-dominion,
 Firm thy steps, O Melancholy!
 The strongest plume in wisdom's pinion
 Is the memory of past folly.

Mute the sky-lark and forlorn,
 While she moults the firstling plumes,
 That had skimmed the tender corn,
 Or the beanfield's odorous blooms.

Soon with renovated wing
 Shall she dare a loftier flight,
 Upward to the day-star spring,
 And embathe in heavenly light.

THREE LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM.

NOR cold, nor stern, my soul! yet I detest
 These scented rooms, where, to a gaudy throng,
 Heaves the proud harlot her distended breast
 In intricacies of laborious song.

These feel not Music's genuine power, nor deign
 To melt at Nature's passion-warbled plaint;
 But when the long-breathed singer's uptrilled strain
 Bursts in a squall—they gape for wonderment.

Hark ! the deep buzz of vanity and hate !
Scornful, yet envious, with self-torturing sneer
My lady eyes some maid of humbler state,
While the pert captain, or the primmer priest,
Prattles accordant scandal in her ear.

O give me, from this heartless scene released,
To hear our old musician, blind and gray,
(Whom stretching from my nurse's arms I kissed,)
His Scottish tunes and warlike marches play,
By moonshine, on the balmy summer-night,
The while I dance amid the tedded hay
With merry maids, whose ringlets toss in light.

Or lies the purple evening on the bay
Of the calm glossy lake, O let me hide
Unheard, unseen, behind the alder-trees,
For round their roots the fisher's boat is tied,
On whose trim seat doth Edmund stretch at ease,
And while the lazy boat sways to and fro,
Breathes in his flute sad airs, so wild and slow,
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears.

But O, dear Anne ! when midnight wind careers,
And the gust pelting on the out-house shed
Makes the cock shrilly on the rain-storm crow,
To hear thee sing some ballad full of woe,
Ballad of ship-wrecked sailor floating dead,
Whom his own true-love buried in the sands !
Thee, gentle woman, for thy voice re-measures
Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures
The things of Nature utter ; birds or trees
Or moan of ocean-gale in weedy caves,
Or where the stiff grass mid the heath-plant waves,
Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze.

THE KEEPSAKE.

THE tedded hay, the first-fruits of the soil,
 The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
 Show summer gone, ere come. The foxglove tall
 Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
 Or when it bends beneath the up-springing lark,
 Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
 (In vain the darling of successful love)
 Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
 The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
 Nor can I find, amid my lonely walk
 By rivulet, or spring, or wet road-side,
 That blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook,
 Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not ! *
 So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
 With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk
 Has worked, (the flowers which most she knew I loved,)
 And, more beloved than they, her auburn hair.

In the cool morning twilight, early waked
 By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
 Softly she rose, and lightly stole along,
 Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
 Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning breeze,
 Over their dim fast-moving shadows hung,
 Making a quiet image of disquiet
 In the smooth, scarcely moving river-pool.
 There, in that bower where first she owned her love,
 And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy
 From off her glowing cheek, she sate and stretched
 The silk upon the frame, and worked her name
 Between the Moss-Rose and Forget-me-not—

* One of the names (and meriting to be the only one) of the *Myosotis Scorpioides Palustris*, a flower from six to twelve inches high, with blue blossom and bright yellow eye. It has the same name over the whole Empire of Germany (*Vergissmeinnicht*), and, I believe, in Denmark and Sweden.

Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair !
 That forced to wander till sweet spring return,
 I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
 Her voice, (that even in her mirthful mood
 Has made me wish to steal away and weep,)
 Nor yet the entrancement of that maiden kiss
 With which she promised, that when spring returned,
 She would resign one half of that dear name,
 And own thenceforth no other name but mine !

TO A LADY.

WITH FALCONER'S 'SHIPWRECK.'

AH ! not by Cam or Isis, famous streams
 In arched groves, the youthful poet's choice ;
 Nor while half-listening, mid delicious dreams,
 To harp and song from lady's hand and voice .
 Nor yet while gazing in sublimer mood
 On cliff, or cataract, in Alpine dell ;
 Nor in dim cave with bladdery sea-weed strewed,
 Framing wild fancies to the ocean's swell ;
 Our sea-bard sang this song ! which still he sings,
 And sings for thee, sweet friend ! Hark, Pity, hark !
 Now mounts, now totters on the tempest's wings,
 Now groans, and shivers, the replunging bark !
 'Cling to the shrouds !' In vain ! The breakers roar—
 Death shrieks ! With two alone of all his clan
 Forlorn the poet paced the Grecian shore,
 No classic roamer, but a ship-wrecked man !
 Say then, what muse inspired these genial strains
 And lit his spirit to so bright a flame ?
 The elevating thought of suffered pains,
 Which gentle hearts shall mourn ; but chief, the name

Of gratitude ! remembrances of friend,
 Or absent or no more ! shades of the Past,
 Which Love makes substance ! Hence to thee I send,
 O dear as long as life and memory last !

I send with deep regards of heart and head,
 Sweet maid, for friendship formed ! this work to thee :
 And thou, the while thou canst not choose but shed
 A tear for Falconer, wilt remember me.

TO A YOUNG LADY.

ON HER RECOVERY FROM A FEVER.

WHY need I say, Louisa dear !
 How glad I am to see you here,
 A lovely convalescent ;
 Risen from the bed of pain and fear,
 And feverish heat incessant.

The sunny showers, the dappled sky,
 The little birds that warble high,
 Their vernal loves commencing,
 Will better welcome you than I
 With their sweet influencing.

Believe me, while in bed you lay,
 Your danger taught us all to pray :
 You made us grow devouter !
 Each eye looked up and seemed to say,
 How can we do without her ?

Besides, what vexed us worse, we knew,
 They have no need of such as you
 In the place where you were going :
 This World has angels all too few,
 And Heaven is overflowing !

✓ *v. good*
SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

If I had but two little wings,
 And were a little feathery bird,
 To you I'd fly, my dear !
 But thoughts like these are idle things,
 And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly :
 I'm always with you in my sleep !
 The world is all one's own.
 But then one wakes, and where am I ?
 All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids
 So I love to wake ere break of day :
 For though my sleep be gone,
 Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
 And still dreams on.

HOME-SICK.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

'Tis sweet to him who all the week
 Through city-crowds must push his way,
 To stroll alone through fields and woods,
 And hallow thus the Sabbath-day.

And sweet it is, in summer bower,
 Sincere, affectionate, and gay,
 One's own dear children feasting round,
 To celebrate one's marriage-day.

COLERIDGE'S POEMS.

But what is all, to his delight,
 Who having long been doomed to roam,
 Throws off the bundle from his back,
 Before the door of his own home ?

Home-sickness is a wasting pang ;
 This feel I hourly more and more :
 There's healing only in thy wings,
 Thou Breeze that play'st on Albion's shore !

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

v. good

Do you ask what the birds say ? The sparrow, the dove,
 The linnet, and thrush, say, ' I love and I love !'
 In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong.
 What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
 But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
 And singing, and loving—all come back together.
 But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
 The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
 That he sings, and he sings ; and for ever sings he—
 ' I love my Love, and my Love loves me !'

A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
 God grant me grace my prayers to say :
 O God ! preserve my mother dear
 In strength and health for many a year ;
 And, O ! preserve my father too,
 And may I pay him reverence due ;
 And may I my best thoughts employ
 To be my parents' hope and joy ;
 And, O ! preserve my brothers both
 From evil doings and from sloth,

And may we always love each other,
 Our friends, our father, and our mother
 And still, O Lord, to me impart
 An innocent and grateful heart,
 That after my last sleep I may
 Awake to thy eternal day ! Amen.

THE VISIONARY HOPE.

SAD lot, to have no hope ! Though lowly kneeling
 He fain would frame a prayer within his breast,
 Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of healing,
 That his sick body might have ease and rest ;
 He strove in vain ! the dull sighs from his chest
 Against his will the stifling load revealing,
 Though Nature forced ; though like some captive guest,
 Some royal prisoner at his conqueror's feast,
 An alien's restless mood but half concealing,
 The sternness on his gentle brow confessed,
 Sickness within and miserable feeling :
 Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
 And dreaded sleep, each night repelled in vain,
 Each night was scattered by its own loud screams :
 Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
 One deep full wish to be no more in pain.

That Hope, which was his inward bliss and boast,
 Which waned and died, yet ever near him stood,
 Though changed in nature, wander where he would—
 For Love's despair is but Hope's pining ghost !
 For this one hope he makes his hourly moan,
 He wishes and can wish for this alone !
 Pierced, as with light from Heaven, before its gleams
 (So the love-stricken visionary deems)
 Disease would vanish, like a summer shower,
 Whose dews fling sunshine from the noon-tide bower !
 Or let it stay ! yet this one Hope should give
 Such strength that he would bless his pains and live.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

Oft, oft methinks, the while with Thee
 I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
 And dedicated name, I hear
 A promise and a mystery,
 A pledge of more than passing life,
 Yea, in that very name of Wife !
 A pulse of love, that ne'er can sleep !
 A feeling that upbraids the heart
 With happiness beyond desert,
 That gladness half requests to weep !
 Nor bless I not the keener sense
 And unalarming turbulence
 Of transient joys, that ask no sting
 From jealous fears, or coy denying ;
 But born beneath Love's brooding wing,
 And into tenderness soon dying,
 Wheel out their giddy moment, then
 Resign the soul to love again ;—
 A more precipitated vein
 Of notes, that eddy in the flow
 Of smoothest song, they come, they go,
 And leave their sweeter understrain
 Its own sweet self—a love of Thee
 That seems, yet cannot greater be !

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

I.

How warm this woodland wild Recess !
 Love surely hath been breathing here ;
 And this sweet bed of heath, my dear !
 Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
 As if to have you yet more near.

II.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
 On sea-ward Quantock's heathy hills,
 Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
 Float here and there, like things astray.
 And high o'erhead the sky-lark shrillis.

III.

No voice as yet had made the air
 Be music with your name ; yet why
 That asking look ? that yearning sigh ?
 That sense of promise everywhere ?
 Beloved ! flew your spirit by ?

IV.

As when a mother doth explore
 The rose-mark on her long lost child,
 I met, I loved you, maiden mild !
 As whom I long had loved before—
 So deeply had I been beguiled.

V.

You stood before me like a thought,
 A dream remembered in a dream.
 But when those meek eyes first did seem
 To tell me, Love within you wrought—
 O Greta, dear domestic stream !

VI.

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
 Has not Love's whisper evermore
 Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar ?
 Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
 Dear under-song in clamour's hour.

ON REVISITING THE SEA-SHORE,

AFTER LONG ABSENCE, UNDER STRONG MEDICAL
RECOMMENDATION NOT TO BATHE.

God be with thee, gladsome Ocean !
How gladly greet I thee once more !
Ships and waves, and ceaseless motion,
And men rejoicing on thy shore.

Dissuading spake the mild physician,
' Those briny waves for thee are death !
But my soul fulfilled her mission,
And lo ! I breathe untroubled breath !

Fashion's pining sons and daughters,
That seek the crowd they seem to fly,
Trembling they approach thy waters ;
And what cares Nature, if they die ?

Me a thousand hopes and pleasures,
A thousand recollections bland,
Thoughts sublime, and stately measures,
Revisit on thy echoing strand :

Dreams, (the soul herself forsaking,)
Tearful raptures, boyish mirth ;
Silent adorations, making
A blessed shadow of this Earth !

O ye hopes, that stir within me,
Health comes with you from above !
God is with me, God is in me !
I cannot die, if Life be Love.

v. fine

III. MEDITATIVE POEMS.

IN BLANK VERSE.

YEA, he deserves to find himself deceived,
 Who seeks a Heart in the unthinking Man.
 Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life
 Impress their characters on the smooth forehead :
 Nought sinks into the bosom's silent depth.
 Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
 Moves the light fluids lightly ; but no soul
 Warmeth the inner flame.—SCHILLER.

IIYMN

BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

BESIDES the rivers, Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides ; and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers with its flowers of loveliest blue.'

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
 In his steep course ? So long he seems to pause
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc !
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
 Rave ceaselessly ; but thou, most awful Form !
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
 How silently ! Around thee and above
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
 An ebon mass : methinks thou piercest it,
 As with a wedge ! But when I look again,
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
 Thy habitation from eternity !
 O dread and silent Mount ! I gazed upon thee,
 Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
 Didst vanish from my thought : entranced in prayer
 I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
 So sweet, we know not we are listening to it

Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
 Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy :
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
 Into the mighty vision passing—there
 As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven !

Awake, my soul ! not only passive praise
 Thou owest ! not alone these swelling tears,
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy ! Awake,
 Voice of sweet song ! Awake, my Heart, awake !
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale !
 O struggling with the darkness all the night,
 And visited all night by troops of stars,
 Or when they climb the sky or when they sink :
 Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
 Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
 Co-herald : wake, O wake, and utter praise !
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth ?
 Who filled thy countenance with rosy light ?
 Who made thee parent of perpetual streams ?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !
 Who called you forth from night and utter death,
 From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged Rocks,
 For ever shattered and the same for ever ?
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?
 And who commanded (and the silence came),
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?

Ye ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge !
 Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !
 Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
 Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers

Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
 God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
 God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
 Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm!
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
 Ye signs and wonders of the element!
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
 Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base
 Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
 To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
 Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
 Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
 Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE, IN THE HARTZ FOREST

I STOOD on Brocken's * sovran height, and saw
 Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,

* The highest mountain in the Hartz, and indeed in North Germany.

A surging scene, and only limited
 By the blue distance. Heavily my way
 Downward I dragged through fir groves evermore,
 Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral forms
 Speckled with sunshine; and, but seldom heard,
 The sweet bird's song became a hollow sound;
 And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
 Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct
 From many a note of many a waterfall,
 And the brook's chatter; 'mid whose islet stones
 The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
 Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat
 Sat, his white beard slow waving. I moved on
 In low and languid mood: * for I had found
 That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
 Their finer influence from the Life within;
 Fair cyphers else: fair, but of import vague
 Or unconcerning, where the heart not finds
 History or prophecy of friend, or child,
 Or gentle maid, our first and early love,
 Or father, or the venerable name
 Of our adored country! O thou Queen,
 Thou delegated Deity of Earth,
 O dear, dear England! how my longing eye
 Turned westward, shaping in the steady clouds
 Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native Land!
 Filled with the thought of thee this heart was proud,
 Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that all the view
 From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
 Floated away, like a departing dream,
 Feeble and dim! Stranger, these impulses
 Blame thou not lightly; nor will I profane,
 With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,

..... When I have gazed
 From some high eminence on goodly vales
 And cots and villages embowered below,
 The thought would rise that all to me was strange
 Amid the scenes so fair, nor one small spot
 Where my tired mind might rest, and call it home.

Southey's Hymn to the Penates

That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
That God is everywhere ! the God who framed
Mankind to be one mighty family,
Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH.

THIS Sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
Such tents the Patriarchs loved ! O long unharm'd
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves ! Long may the Spring,
Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse ! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a Fairy's page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
Here twilight is and coolness : here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, Pilgrim, here ; here rest ! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy Spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees !

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane !
(So call him, for so mingling blame with praise,
And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest friends,
Masking his birth-name, wont to character

His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal,) 'Tis true that, passionate for ancient truths, And honouring with religious love the great Of elder times, he hated to excess, With an unquiet and intolerant scorn, The hollow puppets of a hollow age, Ever idolatrous, and changing ever Its worthless idols ! learning, power, and time (Too much of all) thus wasting in vain war Of fervid colloquy. Sickiness, 'tis true, Whole years of weary days, besieged him close, Even to the gates and inlets of his life ! But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm, And with a natural gladness, he maintained The citadel unconquered, and in joy Was strong to follow the delightful Muse. For not a hidden path, that to the shades Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads, Lurked undiscovered by him ; not a rill There issues from the fount of Hippocrene, But he had traced it upward to its source, Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell, Knew the gay wild-flowers on its banks, and culled Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone, Piercing the long-neglected holy cave, The haunt obscure of old Philosophy, He bade with lifted torch its starry walls Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame Of odorous lamps tended by Saint and Sage. O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts ! O studious Poet, eloquent for truth ! Philosopher ! contemning wealth and death, Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love ! Here, rather than on monumental stone, This record of thy worth thy Friend inscribes, Thoughtful, with quiet tears upon his cheek.

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

IN the June of 1797, some long-expected Friends paid a visit to the author's cottage; and on the morning of their arrival, he met with an accident, which disabled him from walking during the whole time of their stay. One evening, when they had left him for a few hours, he composed the following lines in the garden-bower.

WELL, they are gone, and here must I remain,
 This lime-tree bower my prison! I have lost
 Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
 Most sweet to my remembrance even when age
 Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness! They, meanwhile,
 Friends, whom I never more may meet again,
 On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,
 Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance.
 To that still roaring dell, of which I told;
 The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep,
 And only speckled by the mid-day sun;
 Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to rock
 Flings arching like a bridge;—that branchless ash,
 Unsunned and damp, whose few poor yellow leaves
 Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still,
 Fanned by the water-fall! and there my friends
 Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,*
 That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)
 Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge
 Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge
 Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and view again
 The many-steepled tract magnificent
 Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,
 With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light up
 The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two Isles

* *Of long lank weeds.*] The asplenium scolopendrium, called in some countries the Adder's Tongue, in others the Hart's Tongue: but Withering gives the Adder's Tongue as the trivial name of the ophioglossum only.

Of purple shadow ! Yes ! they wander on
 In gladness all ; but thou, methinks, most glad,
 My gentle-hearted Charles ! for thou hast pined
 And hungered after Nature, many a year,
 In the great City pent, winning thy way
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain
 And strange calamity ! Ah ! slowly sink
 Behind the western ridge, thou glorious sun !
 Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,
 Ye purple heath-flowers ! richlier burn, ye clouds !
 Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves !
 And kindle, thou blue ocean ! So my Friend
 Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have stood,
 Silent with swimming sense ; yea, gazing round
 On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem
 Less gross than bodily ; and of such hues
 As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes
 Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight

Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad
 As I myself were there ! Nor in this bower,
 This little lime-tree bower, have I not marked
 Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath the black
 Hung the transparent foliage ; and I watched
 Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to see
 The shadow of the leaf and stem above
 Dappling its sunshine ! And that walnut-tree
 Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance lay
 Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
 Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest mass
 Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue
 Through the late twilight : and though now the bat
 Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,
 Yet still the solitary humble-bee
 Sings in the bean-flower ! Henceforth I shall know
 That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure ;
 No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,
 No waste so vacant, but may well employ
 Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
 Awake to Love and Beauty ! and sometimes

'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,
 That we may lift the Soul, and contemplate
 With lively joy the joys we cannot share.
 My gentle-hearted Charles ! when the last rook
 Beat its straight path along the dusky air
 Homewards, I blest it ! deeming, its black wing
 (Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)
 Had crossed the mighty orb's dilated glory,
 While thou stood'st gazing ; or when all was still,
 Flew creaking * o'er thy head, and had a charm
 For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom
 No sound is dissonant which tells of Life.

TO A FRIEND

WHO HAD DECLARED HIS INTENTION OF WRITING NO MORE
 POETRY.

DEAR Charles ! whilst yet thou wert a babe, I ween
 That Genius plunged thee in that wizard fount
 High Castalie : and (sureties of thy faith)
 That Pity and Simplicity stood by,
 And promised for thee, that thou shouldst renounce
 The world's low cares and lying vanities,
 Steadfast and rooted in the heavenly Muse,
 And washed and sanctified to Poesy.
 Yes—thou wert plunged, but with forgetful hand
 Held, as by Thetis erst her warrior son :
 And with those recreant unbaptized heels
 Thou'rt flying from thy bounden minist'ries—
 So sore it seems and burthensome a task
 To weave unwithering flowers ! But take thou heed :

* *Flew creaking.*] Some months after I had written this line, it gave me pleasure to find that Bartram had observed the same circumstance of the Savanna Crane. 'When these birds move their wings in flight, their strokes are slow, moderate, and regular ; and even when at a considerable distance or high above us, we plainly hear the quill feathers ; their shafts and webs upon one another creak as the joints or working of a vessel in a tempestuous sea.'

For thou art vulnerable, wild-eyed boy,
 And I have arrows * mystically dipt,
 Such as may stop thy speed. Is thy Burns dead?
 And shall he die unwept, and sink to earth
 'Without the meed of one melodious tear?'
 Thy Burns, and Nature's own beloved bard,
 Who to the 'Illustrious † of his native Land
 So properly did look for patronage.'
 Ghost of Mæcenæ! hide thy blushing face!
 They snatched him from the sickle and the plough—
 To gauge ale-firkins.

Oh! for shame return!
 On a bleak rock, midway the Aonian mount,
 There stands a lone and melancholy tree,
 Whose aged branches to the midnight blast
 Make solemn music: pluck its darkest bough,
 Ere yet the unwholesome night-dew be exhaled,
 And weeping wreath it round thy Poet's tomb.
 Then in the outskirts, where pollutions grow,
 Pick the rank henbane and the dusky flowers
 Of night-shade, or its red and tempting fruit,
 These with stopped nostril and glove-guarded hand
 Knit in nice intertexture, so to twine,
 The illustrious brow of Scotch Nobility.

1796.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECITATION OF A POEM
 ON THE GROWTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL MIND.

FRIEND of the wise! and teacher of the good!
 Into my heart have I received that lay
 More than historic, that prophetic lay
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)

* Pind. Olymp. ii. 1. 150.

† Verbatim from Burns' dedication of his Poem to the Nobility and Gentry of the Caledonian Hunt.

Of the foundations and the building up
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to tell
 What may be told, to the understanding mind
 Revealable ; and what within the mind
 By vital breathings secret as the soul
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart
 Thoughts all too deep for words !—

Theme hard as high,

Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth),
 Of tides obedient to external force,
 And currents self-determined, as might seem,
 Or by some inner power ; of moments awful,
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
 When power streamed from thee, and thy soul received
 The light reflected, as a light bestowed—
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens,
 Native or outland, lakes and famous hills !
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
 Were rising ; or by secret mountain-streams,
 The guides and the companions of thy way !

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
 Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
 Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
 Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst
 Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.
 For thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
 When from the general heart of humankind
 Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity !
 —Of that dear Hope afflicted and struck down,
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and sure
 From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute self,
 With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
 Far on—herself a glory to behold,

The Angel of the vision ! Then (last strain)
 Of Duty, chosen laws controlling choice,
 Action and joy !—An Orphic song indeed,
 A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
 To their own music chanted !

O great Bard !

Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
 With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great
 Have all one age, and from one visible space
 Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
 Are permanent, and Time is not with them,
 Save as it worketh for them, they in it.
 Nor less a sacred roll, than those of old,
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
 Among the archives of mankind, thy work
 Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes !
 Ah ! as I listened with a heart forlorn,
 The pulses of my being beat anew :
 And even as life returns upon the drowned,
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of hope ;
 And hope that scarce would know itself from fear ;
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
 And genius given, and knowledge won in vain ;
 And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,
 And all which patient toil had reared, and all,
 Commune with thee had opened out—but flowers
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
 In the same coffin, for the self-same grave !

That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
 Singing of glory, and futurity,
 To wander back on such unhealthful road,
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm ! And ill

Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
Strewed before thy advancing !

Nor do thou,
Sage Bard ! impair the memory of that hour
Of thy communion with my nobler mind
By pity or grief, already felt too long !
Nor let my words import more blame than needs.
The tumult rose and ceased : for peace is nigh
Where wisdom's voice has found a listening heart.
Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours
Already on the wing.

Eve following eve,
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of Home
Is sweetest ! moments for their own sake hailed,
And more desired, more precious for thy song,
In silence listening, like a devout child,
My soul lay passive, by thy various strain
Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,
With momentary stars of my own birth,
Fair constellated foam,* still darting off
Into the darkness ; now a tranquil sea,
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when—O Friend ! my comforter and guide !
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength !—
Thy long-sustained Song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
That happy vision of beloved faces—
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought
(Thought was it ? or aspiration ? or resolve ?)
Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

* 'A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it : and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness.'—*The Friend*, p. 220.

THE NIGHTINGALE;

A CONVERSATION POEM. APRIL, 1798.

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
 Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
 Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
 Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge !
 You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
 But hear no murmuring : it flows silently,
 O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
 A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim,
 Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
 That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
 A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
 And hark ! the Nightingale begins its song,
 ' Most musical, most melancholy ' bird ! *
 A melancholy bird ! Oh ! idle thought !
 In Nature there is nothing melancholy.
 But some night-wandering man whose heart was pierce
 With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
 Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
 (And so, poor wretch ! filled all things with himself,
 And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
 Of his own sorrow,) he, and such as he,
 First named these notes a melancholy strain.
 And many a poet echoes the conceit ;
 Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
 When he had better far have stretched his limbs
 Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
 By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
 Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements

* ' Most musical, most melancholy.] This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity to a line in Milton.

Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
 And of his fame forgetful ! so his fame
 Should share in Nature's immortality,
 A venerable thing ! and so his song
 Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
 Be loved like Nature ! But 'twill not be so ;
 And youths and maidens most poetical,
 Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
 In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
 Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
 O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister ! we have learnt
 A different lore : we may not thus profane
 Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
 And joyance ! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
 That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
 With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
 As he were fearful that an April night
 Would be too short for him to utter forth
 His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
 Of all its music !

And I know a grove
 Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
 Which the great lord inhabits not ; and so
 This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
 And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
 Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
 But never elsewhere in one place I knew
 So many nightingales ; and far and near,
 In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
 They answer and provoke each other's song,
 With skirmish and capricious passagings,
 And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
 And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
 Stirring the air with such a harmony,
 That should you close your eyes, you might almost
 Forget it was not day ! On moon-lit bushes,
 Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
 You may perchance behold them on the twigs,

Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways; she knows all their notes,
That gentle Maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again!
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's play-mate. He knows well
The evening-star; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream),
I hurried with him to our orchard plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,

Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam ! Well !—
 It is a father's tale : But if that Heaven
 Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
 Familiar with these songs, that with the night
 He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
 Sweet Nightingale ! Once more, my friends ! farewell.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

THE frost performs its secret ministry,
 Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry
 Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.
 The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
 Have left me to that solitude, which suits
 Abstruser musings : save that at my side
 My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
 'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs
 And vexes meditation with its strange
 And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
 This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,
 With all the numberless goings on of life,
 Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
 Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;
 Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
 Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
 Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
 Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
 Making it a companionable form,
 Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
 By its own moods interprets, everywhere
 Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
 And makes a toy of Thought.

But O ! how oft,
 How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
 Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
 To watch that fluttering stranger ! and as oft,
 With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt

Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,
 Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
 From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
 So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
 Most like articulate sounds of things to come !
 So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams !
 And so I brooded all the following morn,
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
 Fixed with mock study on my swimming book :
 Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
 For still I hoped to see the stranger's face,
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
 My play-mate when we both were clothed alike !

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
 Fill up the interspersed vacancies
 And momentary pauses of the thought !
 My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
 And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But thou, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
 And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
 Of that eternal language, which thy God
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach
 Himself in all, and all things in himself.
 Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
 Whether the summer clothe the general earth
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing

Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
 Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eve-drops fall
 Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

THE THREE GRAVES.

A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S TALE.

[THE Author has published the following humble fragment, encouraged by the decisive recommendation of more than one of our most celebrated living Poets. The language was intended to be dramatic; that is suited to the narrator; and the metre corresponds to the homeliness of the diction. It is therefore presented as the fragment, not of a Poem, but of a common Ballad-tale. Whether this is sufficient to justify the adoption of such a style, in any metrical composition not professedly ludicrous, the Author is himself in some doubt. At all events, it is not presented as poetry, and it is in no way connected with the Author's judgment concerning poetic diction. Its merits, if any, are exclusively psychological. The story which must be supposed to have been narrated in the first and second parts is as follows.

Edward, a young farmer, meets at the house of Ellen her bosom friend Mary, and commences an acquaintance, which ends in a mutual attachment. With her consent, and by the advice of their common friend Ellen, he announces his hopes and intentions to Mary's mother, a widow-woman bordering on her fortieth year, and from constant health, the possession of a competent property, and from having had no other children but Mary and another daughter (the father died in their infancy), retaining for the greater part her personal attractions and comeliness of appearance; but a woman of low education and violent temper. The answer which she at once returned to Edward's application was remarkable—'Well, Edward! you are a handsome young fellow, and you shall have my daughter.' From this time all their wooing passed under the mother's eye; and, in fine, she became herself enamoured of her future son-in-law, and practised every art, both of endearment and of calumny, to transfer his affections from her daughter to herself. (The outlines of the Tale are positive facts, and of no very distant date, though the Author has purposely altered the names and the scene of action, as well as invented the characters of the parties and the detail of the incidents.) Edward, however, though perplexed by her strange detractions from her daughter's good qualities, yet in the innocence of his own heart still mistaking her increasing fondness for motherly affection; she at length, overcome by her miserable passion, after much abuse of Mary's temper and moral tendencies, exclaimed with violent

emotion—'O Edward! indeed, indeed, she is not fit for you—she has not a heart to love you as you deserve. It is I that love you! Marry me, Edward! and I will this very day settle all my property on you.' The Lover's eyes were now opened; and thus taken by surprise, whether from the effect of the horror which he felt, acting as it were hysterically on his nervous system, or that at the first moment he lost the sense of guilt of the proposal in the feeling of its strangeness and absurdity, he flung her from him and burst into a fit of laughter. Irritated by this almost to frenzy, the woman fell on her knees, and in a loud voice that approached to a scream, she prayed for a curse both on him and on her own child. Mary happened to be in the room directly above them, heard Edward's laugh, and her mother's blasphemous prayer, and fainted away. He, hearing the fall, ran up-stairs, and taking her in his arms, carried her off to Ellen's home; and after some fruitless attempts on her part toward a reconciliation with her mother, she was married to him.—And here the third part of the Tale begins.

I was not led to choose this story from any partiality to tragic, much less to monstrous events (though at the time that I composed the verses, somewhat more than twelve years ago, I was less averse to such subjects than at present), but from finding in it a striking proof of the possible effect on the imagination from an Idea violently and suddenly impressed on it. I had been reading Bryan Edwards's account of the effect of the Oby witchcraft on the Negroes in the West Indies, and Hearne's deeply interesting anecdotes of similar workings on the imagination of the Copper Indians (those of my readers who have it in their power will be well repaid for the trouble of referring to those works for the passages alluded to), and I conceived the design of showing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning.

The Tale is supposed to be narrated by an old Sexton, in a country church-yard, to a traveller whose curiosity had been awakened by the appearance of three graves, close by each other, to two only of which there were gravestones. On the first of these was the name, and dates, as usual: on the second, no name, but only a date, and the words, 'The Mercy of God is infinite.']

1818.

THE grapes upon the Vicar's wall
Were ripe as ripe could be;
And yellow leaves in sun and wind
Were falling from the tree.

On the hedge-elms in the narrow lane
Still swung the spikes of corn:
Dear Lord! it seems but yesterday—
Young Edward's marriage-morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,
There leads from Edward's door
A mossy track, all over-boughed,
For half a mile or more.