



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS HOOD



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SERIOUS POEMS.

THE PLEA OF THE MIDSUMMER FAIRIES.

TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I thank my literary fortune that I am not reduced, like many better wits, to barter dedications, for the hope or promise of patronage, with some nominally great man; but that where true affection points, and honest respect, I am free to gratify my head and heart by a sincere inscription. An intimacy and dearness, worthy of a much earlier date than our acquaintance can refer to, direct me at once to your name: and with this acknowledgment of your ever kind feeling towards me, I desire to record a respect and admiration for you as a writer, which no one acquainted with our literature, save Elia himself, will think disproportionate or misplaced. If I had not these better reasons to govern me, I should be guided to the same selection by your intense yet critical relish for the works of our great Dramatist, and for that favourite play in particular which has furnished the subject of my verses.

It is my design, in the following poem, to celebrate, by an allegory, that immortality which Shakspeare has conferred on the fairy mythology by his "Midsummer Night's Dream." But for him those pretty children of our childhood would leave barely their names to our maturer years; they belong, as the mites upon the plum, to the bloom of fancy, a thing generally too frail and beautiful to withstand the rude handling of time: but the Poet has made this most perishable part of the mind's creation equal to the most enduring; he has so intertwined the elfins with human sympathies, and linked them by so many delightful associations with the productions of nature, that they are as real to the mind's eye as their green magical circles to the outer sense.

It would have been a pity for such a race to go extinct, even though they were but as the butterflies that hover about the leaves and blossoms of the visible world.

I am, my dear Friend, yours most truly,
T. HOOD.

I.

T WAS in that mellow season of the year,
 When the hot sun sings the yellow leaves
 Till they be gold,—and with a broader sphere
 The Moon looks down on Ceres and her sheaves;
 When more abundantly the spider weaves,
 And the cold wind breathes from a chillier clime;
 That forth I fared, on one of those still eves,
 Touched with the dewy sadness of the time,
 To think how the bright months had spent their prime.

II.

So that, wherever I addressed my way,
 I seemed to track the melancholy feet
 Of him that is the Father of Decay,
 And spoils at once the sour weed and the sweet;
 Wherefore regretfully I made retreat
 To some unwasted regions of my brain,
 Charmed with the light of summer and the heat,
 And bade that bounteous season bloom again,
 And sprout fresh flowers in my own domain.

III.

It was a shady and sequestered scene,
 Like those famed gardens of Boccaccio,
 Planted with his own laurels evergreen,
 And roses that for endless summer blow;
 And there were fountain springs to overflow
 Their marble basins,—and cool green arcades
 Of tall o'erarching sycamores, to throw
 Athwart the dappled path their dancing shades,—
 With timid conies cropping the green blades.

IV.

And there were crystal pools, peopled with fish,
 Argent and gold; and some of Tyrian skin,
 Some crimson-barred;—and ever at a wish
 They rose obsequious till the wave grew thin
 As glass upon their backs, and then dived in,
 Quenching their ardent scales in watery gloom;
 Whilst others with fresh hues rowed forth to win
 My changeable regard, for so we doom
 Things born of thought to vanish or to bloom.

V.

And there were many birds of many eyes,
 From tree to tree still faring to and fro,
 And stately peacocks with their splendid eyes,
 And gorgeous pheasants with their golden glow,

Like Iris just bedabbled in her bow,
Besides some vocalists, without a name,
That oft on fairy errands come and go,
With accents magical;—and all were tame,
And peckled at my hand where'er I came.

VI.

And for my sylvan company, in lieu
Of Pampinea with her lively peers,
Sat Queen Titania with her pretty crew,
All in their liveries quaint, with elfin gears,
For she was gracious to my childish years,
And made me free of her enchanted round;
Wherefore this dreamy scene she still endears,
And plants her court upon a verdant mound,
Fenced with umbrageous woods and groves profound.

VII.

“Ah me,” she cries, “was ever moonlight seen
So clear and tender for our midnight trips?
Go some one forth, and with a trump convene
My lieges all!”—Away the goblin skips
A pace or two apart, and deftly strips
The ruddy skin from a sweet rose's cheek,
Then blows the shuddering leaf between his lips,
Making it utter forth a shrill small shriek,
Like a frayed bird in the grey owl's beak.

VIII.

And lo! upon my fixed delighted ken
Appeared the loyal Fays.—Some by degrees
Crept from the primrose buds that opened then,
And some from bell-shaped blossoms like the bees.
Some from the dewy meads, and rushy leas,
Flew up like chafers when the rustics pass;
Some from the rivers, others from tall trees
Dropped, like shed blossoms, silent to the grass,
Spirits and elfins small, of every class.

IX.

Peri and Pixy, and quaint Puck the Antic.
Brought Robin Goodfellow, that merry swain;
And stealthy Mab, queen of old realms romantic.
Came, too, from distance, in her tiny wain,
Fresh dripping from a cloud—some bloomy rain,
Then circling the bright Moon, had washed her car,
And still bedewed it with a various stain;
Lastly came Ariel, shooting from a star,
Who bears all fairy embassies afar.

X.

But Oberon, that night elsewhere exiled,
 Was absent, whether some distempered spleen
 Kept him and his fair mate unreconciled,
 Or warfare with the Gnome (whose race had been
 Sometime obnoxious) kept him from his queen,
 And made her now peruse the starry skies
 Prophetical with such an absent mien ;
 Howbeit, the tears stole often to her eyes,
 And oft the moon was incensed with her sighs—

XI.

Which made the elves sport drearily, and soon
 Their hushing dances languished to a stand,
 Like midnight leaves when, as the Zephyrs swoon.
 All on their drooping stems they sink unfanned—
 So into silence drooped the fairy band,
 To see their empress dear so pale and still,
 Crowding her softly round on either hand,
 As pale as frosty snowdrops, and as chill,
 To whom the sceptred dame reveals her ill.

XII.

“ Alas,” quoth she, “ ye know our fairy lives
 Are leased upon the fickle faith of men ;
 Not measured out against fate’s mortal knives,
 Like human gossamers, we perish when
 We fade, and are forgot in worldly ken,—
 Though poesy has thus prolonged our date,
 Thanks be to the sweet Bard’s auspicious pen
 That rescued us so long !—howbeit of late
 I feel some dark misgivings of our fate.

XIII.

“ And this dull day my melancholy sleep
 Hath been so thronged with images of woe,
 That even now I cannot choose but weep
 To think this was some sad prophetic show
 Of future horror to befall us so,—
 Of mortal wreck and uttermost distress,—
 Yea, our poor empire’s fall and overthrow,—
 For this was my long vision’s dreadful stress,
 And when I waked my trouble was not less.

XIV.

“ Whenever to the clouds I tried to seek,
 Such leaden weight dragged these Icarian wings,
 My faithless wand was wavering and weak,
 And slimy toads had trespassed in our rings—

The birds refused to sing for me—all things—
Disowned their old allegiance to our spells ;
The rude bees pricked me with their rebel stings ;
And, when I passed, the valley-lily's bells
Rang out, methought, most melancholy knells.

XV.

“ And ever on the faint and flagging air
A doleful spirit with a dreary note
Cried in my fearful ear, ‘ Prepare ! prepare ! ’
Which soon I knew came from a raven's throat,
Perched on a cypress bough not far remote,—
A cursed bird, too crafty to be shot,
That alway cometh with his soot-black coat
To make hearts dreary :—for he is a blot
Upon the book of life, as well ye wot !

XVI.

“ Wherefore some while I bribed him to be mute,
With bitter acorns stuffing his foul maw,
Which barely I appeased, when some fresh bruit
Startled me all aheap !—and soon I saw
The horriddest shape that ever raised my awe,—
A monstrous giant, very huge and tall,
Such as in elder times, devoid of law,
With wicked might grieved the primeval ball,
And this was sure the deadliest of them all !

XVII.

“ Gaunt was he as a wolf of Languedoc,
With bloody jaws, and frost upon his crown ;
So from his barren poll one hoary lock
Over his wrinkled front fell far adown,
Well-nigh to where his frosty brows did frown
Like jagged icicles at cottage eaves ;
And for his coronal he wore some brown
And bristled ears gathered from Ceres' sheaves,
Entwined with certain sere and russet leaves.

XVIII.

“ And lo ! upon a mast reared far aloft,
He bore a very bright and crescent blade,
The which he waved so dreadfully, and oft,
In meditative spite, that, sore dismayed,
I crept into an acorn-cup for shade ;
Meanwhile the horrid effigy went by :
I trow his look was dreadful, for it made
The trembling birds betake them to the sky,
For every leaf was lifted by his sigh.

XIX.

“And ever as he sighed, his foggy breath
 Blurred out the landscape like a flight of smoke :
 Thence knew I this was either dreary Death
 Or Time, who leads all creatures to his stroke.
 Ah wretched me !”—Here, even as she spoke,
 The melancholy Shape came gliding in,
 And leaned his back against an antique oak,
 Folding his wings, that were so fine and thin,
 They scarce were seen against the Dryad’s skin.

XX.

Then what a fear seized all the little rout !
 Look how a flock of panicked sheep will stare—
 And huddle close—and start—and wheel about,
 Watching the roaming mongrel here and there,—
 So did that sudden Apparition scare
 All close ahead those small affrighted things ;
 Nor sought they now the safety of the air,
 As if some leaden spell withheld their wings ;
 But who can fly that ancientest of Kings ?

XXI.

Whom now the Queen, with a forestalling tear
 And previous sigh, beginneth to entreat,
 Bidding him spare, for love, her lieges dear :
 “Alas !” quoth she, “is there no nodding wheat
 Ripe for thy crooked weapon, and more meet,—
 Or withered leaves to ravish from the tree,—
 Or crumbling battlements for thy defeat ?
 Think but what vaunting monuments there be
 Buildd in spite and mockery of thee.

XXII.

“O fret away the fabric walls of Fame,
 And grind down marble Cæsars with the dust :
 Make tombs inscriptionless—raze each high name,
 And waste old armours of renown with rust :
 Do all of this, and thy revenge is just :
 Make such decays the trophies of thy prime,
 And check Ambition’s overweening lust,
 That dares exterminating war with Time,—
 But we are guiltless of that lofty crime.

XXIII.

“Frail feeble sprites !—the children of a dream !
 Leased on the sufferance of fickle men,
 Like motes dependent on the sunny beam,
 Living but in the sun’s indulgent ken,

And when that light withdraws, withdrawing then ;—
So do we flutter in the glance of youth
And fervid fancy,—and so perish when
The eye of faith grows aged ;—in sad truth,
Feeling thy sway, O Time ! though not thy tooth !

XXIV.

“ Where be those old divinities forlorn,
That dwelt in trees, or haunted in a stream ?
Alas ! their memories are dimmed and torn,
Like the remaining tatters of a dream :
So will it fare with our poor thrones, I deem ;—
For us the same dark trench Oblivion delves,
That holds the wastes of every human scheme.
O spare us, then,—and these our pretty elves,
We soon, alas ! shall perish of ourselves ! ”

XXV.

Now as she ended, with a sigh, to name
Those old Olympians, scattered by the whirl
Of fortune's giddy wheel and brought to shame,
Methought a scornful and malignant curl
Showed on the lips of that malicious churl,
To think what noble havocs he had made ;
So that I feared he all at once would hurl
The harmless fairies into endless shade,—
Howbeit he stopped awhile to whet his blade.

XXVI.

Pity it was to hear the elfins' wail,
Rise up in concert from their mingled dread ;
Pity it was to see them all so pale,
Gaze on the grass as for a dying bed ;
But Puck was seated on a spider's thread,
That hung between two branches of a briar,
And 'gan to swing and gambol heels o'er head,
Like any Southwark tumbler on a wire,
For him no present grief could long inspire.

XXVII.

Meanwhile the Queen with many piteous drops,
Falling like tiny sparks full fast and free,
Bedews a pathway from her throne ; and stops
Before the foot of her arch enemy,
And with her little arms enfolds his knee,
That shows more grisly from that fair embrace ;
But she will ne'er depart. “ Alas ! ” quoth she,
“ My painful fingers I will here enlace
Till I have gained your pity for our race.

XXVIII.

“What have we ever done to earn this grudge,
 And hate—(if not too humble for thy hating?)—
 Look o'er our labours and our lives, and judge
 If there be any ills of our creating :
 For we are very kindly creatures, dating
 With nature's charities still sweet and bland :
 O think this murder worthy of debating !”
 Herewith she makes a signal with her hand,
 To beckon some one from the Fairy band.

XXIX.

Anon I saw one of those elfin things,
 Clad all in white like any chorister,
 Come fluttering forth on his melodious wings,
 That made soft music at each little stir,
 But something louder than a bee's demur
 Before he lights upon a bunch of broom,
 And thus 'gan he with Saturn to confer,—
 And O his voice was sweet, touched with the gloom
 Of that sad theme that argued of his doom !

XXX.

Quoth he, “We make all melodies our care,
 That no false discords may offend the Sun,
 Music's great master—tuning everywhere
 All pastoral sounds and melodies, each one
 Duly to place and season, so that none
 May harshly interfere. We rouse at morn
 The shrill sweet lark ; and when the day is done,
 Hush silent pauses for the bird forlorn,
 That singeth with her breast against a thorn.

XXXI.

“We gather in loud choirs the twittering race,
 That make a chorus with their single note ;
 And tend on new-fledged birds in every place
 That duly they may get their tunes by rote ;
 And oft, like echoes, answering remote,
 We hide in thickets from the feathered throng,
 And strain in rivalry each throbbing throat,
 Singing in shrill responses all day long,
 Whilst the glad truant listens to our song.

XXXII.

“Wherefore, great King of Years, as thou dost love
 The raining music from a morning cloud,
 When vanished larks are carolling above,
 To wake Apollo with their pipings loud ;

If ever thou hast heard in leafy shroud
 The sweet and plaintive Sappho of the dell
 Show thy sweet mercy on this little crowd,
 And we will muffle up the sheepfold bell
 Whene'er thou listenest to Philomel."

XXXIII.

Then Saturn thus :—" Sweet is the merry lark,
 That carols in man's ear so clear and strong ;
 And youth must love to listen in the dark
 That tuneful elegy of Tereus' wrong ;
 But I have heard that ancient strain too long,
 For sweet is sweet but when a little strange,
 And I grow weary for some newer song ;
 For wherefore had I wings, unless to range,
 Through all things mutable from change to change ?

XXXIV.

" But wouldst thou hear the melodies of Time,
 Listen when sleep and drowsy darkness roll
 Over hushed cities, and the midnight chime
 Sounds from their hundred clocks, and deep bells toll
 Like a last knell over the dead world's soul,
 Saying, Time shall be final of all things,
 Whose fate, last voice must elegize the whole,—
 O then I clap aloft my brave broad wings,
 And make the wide air tremble while it rings !"

XXXV.

Then next a fair Eve-Fay made meek address,
 Saying, " We be the handmaids of the Spring,
 In sign whereof, May, the quaint broideress,
 Hath wrought her samplers on our gauzy wing.
 We tend upon buds' birth and blossoming,
 And count the leafy tributes that they owe—
 As, so much to the earth—so much to fling
 In showers to the brook—so much to go
 In whirlwinds to the clouds that made them grow.

XXXVI.

" The pastoral cowslips are our little pets,
 And daisy stars, whose firmament is green ;
 Pansies, and those veiled nuns, meek violets,
 Sighing to that warm world from which they screen ;
 And golden daffodils, plucked for May's Queen ;
 And lonely harebells, quaking on the heath ;
 And Hyacinth, long since a fair youth seen,
 Whose tuneful voice, turned fragrance in his breath,
 Kissed by sad Zephyr, guilty of his death.

XXXVII.

“ The widowed primrose weeping to the moon,
 And saffron crocus in whose chalice bright
 A cool libation hoarded for the noon
 Is kept—and she that purifies the light,
 The virgin Lily, faithful to her white,
 Whereon Eve wept in Eden for her shame ;
 And the most dainty rose, Aurora’s spright,
 Our very godchild, by whatever name—
 Spare us our lives, for we did nurse the same ! ”

XXXVIII.

Then that old Mower stamped his heel, and struck
 His hurtful scythe against the harmless ground,
 Saying, “ Ye foolish imps, when am I stuck
 With gaudy buds, or like a wooer crowned
 With flow’ry chaplets, save when they are found
 Withered ?—Whenever have I plucked a rose,
 Except to scatter its vain leaves around ?
 For so all gloss of beauty I oppose,
 And bring decay on every flower that blows.

XXXIX.

“ Or when am I so roth as when I view
 The wanton pride of Summer ;—how she decks
 The birthday world with blossoms ever new,
 As if Time had not lived, and heaped great wrecks
 Of years on years ?—O then I bravely vex
 And catch the gay months in their gaudy plight,
 And slay them with the wreaths about their necks,
 Like foolish heifers in the holy rite,
 And raise great trophies to my ancient might.”

XL.

Then saith another, “ We are kindly things,
 And like her offspring nestle with the dove,—
 Witness these hearts embroidered on our wings,
 To show our constant patronage of love :—
 We sit at even, in sweet bowers above
 Lovers, and shake rich odours on the air,
 To mingle with their sighs ; and still remove
 The startling owl, and bid the bat forbear
 Their privacy, and haunt some other where.

XLI.

“ And we are near the mother when she sits
 Beside her infant in its wicker bed ;
 And we are in the fairy scene that flits
 Across its tender brain : sweet dreams we shed,

And whilst the tender little soul is fled
Away, to sport with our young elves, the while
We touch the dimpled cheek with roses red,
And tickle the soft lips until they smile,
So that their careful parents they beguile.

XLII.

"O then, if ever thou hast breathed a vow
At Love's dear portal, or at pale moon-rise
Crushed the dear curl on a regardful brow
That did not frown thee from thy honey prize—
If ever thy sweet son sat on thy thighs,
And wooed thee from thy careful thoughts within
To watch the harmless beauty of his eyes,
Or glad thy fingers on his smooth soft skin,
For Love's dear sake, let us thy pity win!"

XLIII.

Then Saturn fiercely thus:—"What joy have I
In tender babes, that have devoured mine own,
Whenever to the light I heard them cry,
Till foolish Rhea cheated me with stone?
Whereon, till now, is my great hunger shown,
In monstrous dints of my enormous tooth;
And,—but the peopled world is too full grown
For hunger's edge—I would consume all youth
At one great meal, without delay or ruth!"

XLIV.

"For I am well-nigh crazed and wild to hear
How boastful fathers taunt me with their breed,
Saying, We shall not die nor disappear,
But in these other selves ourselves succeed,
Even as ripe flowers pass into their seed
Only to be renewed from prime to prime,
All of which boastings I am forced to read,
Besides a thousand challenges to Time
Which bragging lovers have compiled in rhyme.

XLV.

"Wherefore, when they are sweetly met o' nights,
There will I steal, and with my hurried hand
Startle them suddenly from their delights
Before the next encounter hath been planned,
Ravishing hours in little minutes spanned;
But when they say farewell, and grieve apart,
Then like a leaden statue I will stand,
Meanwhile their many tears encrust my dart,
And with a ragged edge cut heart from heart."

XLVI.

Then next a merry Woodsman, clad in green,
 Stept vanward from his mates, that idly stood
 Each at his proper ease, as they had been
 Nursed in the liberty of old Shérwood,
 And wore the livery of Robin Hood,
 Who wont in forest shades to dine and sup,—
 So came this chief right frankly, and made good
 His haunch against his axe, and thus spoke up,
 Doffing his cap, which was an acorn's cup :—

XLVII.

“ We be small foresters and gay, who tend
 On trees, and all their furniture of green,
 Training the young boughs airily to bend,
 And show blue snatches of the sky between ;
 Or knit more close intricacies, to screen
 Birds' crafty dwellings as may hide them best
 But most the timid blackbird's—she, that seen,
 Will bear black poisonous berries to her nest,
 Lest man should cage the darlings of her breast.

XLVIII.

“ We bend each tree in proper attitude,
 And fountain willows train in silvery falls ;
 We frame all shady roofs and arches rude,
 And verdant aisles leading to Dryads' halls,
 Or deep recesses where the Echo calls ;—
 We shape all plummy trees against the sky,
 And carve tall elms' Corinthian capitals,—
 When sometimes, as our tiny hatchets ply,
 Men say the tapping woodpecker is nigh.

XLIX.

“ Sometimes we scoop the squirrel's hollow cell,
 And sometimes carve quaint letters on trees' rind,
 That haply some lone musing wight may spell
 Dainty Aminta,—Gentle Rosalind,—
 Or chastest Laura,—sweetly called to mind
 In sylvan solitudes, ere he lies down ;
 And sometimes we enrich grey stems with twined
 And vagrant ivy,—or rich moss, whose brown
 Burns into gold as the warm sun goes down.

L.

“ And, lastly, for mirth's sake and Christmas cheer,
 We bear the seedling berries, for increase,
 To graft the Druid oaks, from year to year,
 Careful that mistletoe may never cease ;

Wherefore, if thou dost prize the shady peace
Of sombre forests, or to see light break
Through sylvan cloisters, and in spring release
Thy spirit amongst leaves from careful ake,
Spare us our lives for the Green Dryad's sake."

LI.

Then Saturn, with a frown :—" Go forth, and fell
Oak for your coffins, and thenceforth lay by
Your axes for the rust, and bid farewell
To all sweet birds, and the blue peeps of sky
Through tangled branches, for ye shall not spy
The next green generation of the tree ;
But hence with the dead leaves, whene'er they fly,—
Which in the bleak air I would rather see,
Than flights of the most tuneful birds that be.

LII.

" For I dislike all prime and verdant pets,
Ivy except, that on the aged wall
Preys with its worm-like roots, and daily frets
The crumbled tower it seems to league withal,
King-like, worn down by its own coronal :
Neither in forest haunts love I to won,
Before the golden plumage 'gins to fall,
And leaves the brown bleak limbs with few leaves on,
Or bare—like Nature in her skeleton.

LIII.

" For then sit I amongst the crooked boughs,
Wooing dull Memory with kindred sighs ;
And there in rustling nuptials we espouse,
Smit by the sadness in each other's eyes ;
But Hope must have green bowers and blue skies,
And must be courted with the gauds of spring ;
Whilst Youth leans god-like on her lap, and cries
What shall we always do, but love and sing?—
And Time is reckoned a discarded thing."

LIV.

Here in my dream it made me fret to see
How Puck, the antic, all this dreary while
Had blithely jested with calamity,
With mistimed mirth mocking the doleful style
Of his sad comrades, till it raised my bile
To see him so reflect their grief aside,
Turning their solemn looks to half a smile—
Like a straight stick shown crooked in the tide ;
But soon a novel advocate I spied.

LV.

Quoth he—" We teach all natures to fulfil
 Their fore-appointed crafts, and instincts meet,—
 The bee's sweet alchemy,—the spider's skill,—
 The pismire's care to garner up his wheat,—
 And rustic masonry to swallows fleet,—
 The lapwing's cunning to preserve her nest,—
 But most, that lesser pelican, the sweet
 And shrilly ruddock, with its bleeding breast,
 Its tender pity of poor babes distrest.

LVI.

" Sometimes we cast our shapes, and in sleek skins
 Delve with the timid mole, that aptly delves
 From our example ; so the spider spins,
 And eke the silkworm, patterned by ourselves :
 Sometimes we travail on the summer shelves
 Of early bees, and busy toils commence,
 Watched of wise men, that know not we are elves,
 But gaze and marvel at our stretch of sense,
 And praise our human-like intelligence.

LVII.

" Wherefore, by thy delight in that old tale,
 And plaintive dirges the late robins sing,
 What time the leaves are scattered by the gale,
 Mindful of that old forest burying ;
 As thou dost love to watch each tiny thing,
 For whom our craft most curiously contrives,
 If thou hast caught a bee upon the wing,
 To take his honey-bag,—spare us our lives,
 And we will pay the ransom in full hives."

LVIII.

" Now by my glass," quoth Time, " ye do offend
 In teaching the brown bees that careful lore,
 And frugal ants, whose millions would have end,
 But they lay up for need a timely store,
 And travail with the seasons evermore ;
 Whereas Great Mammoth long hath passed away,
 And none but I can tell what hide he wore ;
 Whilst purblind men, the creatures of a day,
 In riddling wonder his great bones survey."

LIX.

Then came an elf, right beauteous to behold,
 Whose coat was like a brooklet that the sun
 Hath all embroidered with its crooked gold,
 It was so quaintly wrought, and overrun

With spangled tracteries,—most meet for one
That was a warden of the pearly streams ;
And as he stepped out of the shadows dun,
His jewels sparkled in the pale moon's gleams,
And shot into the air their pointed beams.

LX.

Quoth he,—“ We bear the cold and silver keys
Of bubbling springs and fountains, that below
Course thro' the veiny earth,—which when they freeze
Into hard chrysolites, we bid to flow,
Creeping like subtle snakes, when as they go,
We guide their windings to melodious falls,
At whose soft murmurings, so sweet and low,
Poets have turned their smoothest madrigals,
To sing to ladies in their banquet halls.

LXI.

“ And when the hot sun with his steadfast heat
Parches the river god,—whose dusty urn
Drips miserly, till soon his crystal feet
Against his pebbly floor wax faint and burn,
And languid fish, unpoised, grow sick and yearn,—
Then scoop we hollows in some sandy nook,
And little channels dig, wherein we turn
The thread-worn rivulet, that all forsook
The Naiad-lily, pining for her brook.

LXII.

“ Wherefore, by thy delight in cool green meads,
With living sapphires daintily inlaid,—
In all soft songs of waters and their reeds,—
And all reflections in a streamlet made,
Haply of thy own love, that, disarrayed,
Kills the fair lily with a livelier white,—
By silver trouts upspringing from green shade,
And winking stars reduplicate at night,
Spare us, poor ministers to such delight.”

LXIII.

Howbeit his pleading and his gentle looks
Moved not the spiteful Shade :—Quoth he, “ Your taste
Shoots wide of mine, for I despise the brooks
And slavish rivulets that run to waste
In noontide sweats, or, like poor vassals, haste
To swell the vast dominion of the sea,
In whose great presence I am held disgraced,
And neighboured with a king that rivals me
In ancient might and hoary majesty.

LXIV

“Whereas I ruled in Chaos, and still keep
 The awful secrets of that ancient dearth,
 Before the briny fountains of the deep
 Brimmed up the hollow cavities of earth ;
 I saw each trickling Sea-God at his birth,
 Each pearly Naiad with her oozy locks,
 And infant Titans of enormous girth,
 Whose huge young feet yet stumoled on the rocks,
 Stunning the early world with frequent shocks.

LXV.

“Where now is Titan, with his cumbrous brood,
 That scared the world?—By this sharp scythe they fell,
 And half the sky was curdled with their blood
 So have all primal giants sighed farewell.
 No Wardens now by sedgy fountains dwell,
 No pearly Naiads. All their days are done
 That strove with Time, untimely, to excel ;
 Wherefore I razed their progenies, and none
 But my great shadow intercepts the sun !”

LXVI.

Then saith the timid Fay—“O mighty Time !
 Well hast thou wrought the cruel Titans’ fall,
 For they were stained with many a bloody crime :
 Great giants work great wrongs—but we are small,
 For love goes lowly ;—but Oppression’s tall,
 And with surpassing strides goes foremost still
 Where love indeed can hardly reach at all ;
 Like a poor dwarf o’erburdened with goodwill,
 That labours to efface the tracks of ill.

LXVII.

“Man even strives with Man, but we eschew
 The guilty feud, and all fierce strifes abhor ;
 Nay, we are gentle as sweet heaven’s dew,
 Beside the red and horrid drops of war,
 Weeping the cruel hates men battle for,
 Which worldly bosoms nourish in our spite ;
 For in the gentle breast we ne’er withdraw,
 But only when all love hath taken flight,
 And youth’s warm gracious heart is hardened quite

LXVIII.

“So are our gentle natures intertwined
 With sweet humanities, and closely knit
 In kindly sympathy with human kind.
 Witness how we befriend, with elfin wit,

All hopeless maids and lovers—nor omit
Magical succours unto hearts forlorn :
We charm man's life, and do not perish it ;
So judge us by the helps we showed this morn,
To one who held his wretched days in scorn.

LXIX.

" 'Twas nigh sweet Amwell ;—for the Queen had tasked
Our skill to-day amidst the silver Lea,
Whereon the noontide sun had not yet basked ;
Wherefore some patient man we thought to see,
Planted in mossgrown rushes to the knee,
Beside the cloudy margin cold and dim ;
Howbeit no patient fisherman was he
That cast his sudden shadow from the brim,
Making us leave our toils to gaze on him.

LXX.

" His face was ashy pale, and leaden care
Had sunk the levelled arches of his brow,
Once bridges for his joyous thoughts to fare
Over those melancholy springs and slow,
That from his piteous eyes began to flow,
And fell anon into the chilly stream ;
Which, as his mimicked image showed below,
Wrinkled his face with many a needless seam,
Making grief sadder in its own esteem.

LXXI.

" And lo ! upon the air we saw him stretch
His passionate arms ; and, in a wayward strain,
He 'gan to elegize that fellow wretch
That with mute gestures answered him again,
Saying, ' Poor slave, how long wilt thou remain
Life's sad weak captive in a prison strong,
Hoping with tears to rust away thy chain,
In bitter servitude to worldly wrong ?
Thou wear'st that mortal livery too long !'

LXXII.

" This, with more spleenful speeches and some tears,
When he had spent upon the imaged wave,
Speedily I convened my elfin peers
Under the lily-cups, that we might save
This woeful mortal from a wilful grave
By shrewd diversions of his mind's regret,
Seeing he was mere melancholy's slave,
That sank wherever a dark cloud he met,
And straight was tangled in her secret net.

LXXIII.

“Therefore, as still he watched the water’s flow,
Daintily we transformed, and with bright fins
Came glancing through the gloom; some from below
Rose like dim fancies when a dream begins,
Snatching the light upon their purple skins;
Then under the broad leaves made slow retire:
One like a golden galley bravely wins
Its radiant course—another glows like fire—
Making that wayward man our pranks admire.

LXXIV.

“And so he banished thought, and quite forgot
All contemplation of that wretched face;
And so we wiled him from that lonely spot
Along the river’s brink; till by heaven’s grace,
He met a gentle haunter of the place,
Full of sweet wisdom gathered from the brooks,
Who there discussed his melancholy case
With wholesome texts learned from kind nature’s books,
Meanwhile he newly trimmed his lines and hooks.”

LXXV.

Herewith the Fairy ceased. Quoth Ariel now—
“Let me remember how I saved a man,
Whose fatal noose was fastened on a bough,
Intended to abridge his sad life’s span;
For haply I was by when he began
His stern soliloquy in life’s dispraise,
And overheard his melancholy plan,
How he had made a vow to end his days,
And therefore followed him in all his ways.

LXXVI.

“Through brake and tangled copse, for much he loathed
All populous haunts, and roamed in forests rude,
To hide himself from man. But I had clothed
My delicate limbs with plumes, and still pursued,
Where only foxes and wild cats intrude,
Till we were come beside an ancient tree
Late blasted by a storm. Here he renewed
His loud complaints—choosing that spot to be
The scene of his last horrid tragedy.

LXXVII.

“It was a wild and melancholy glen,
Made gloomy by tall firs and cypress dark,
Whose roots, like any bones of buried men,
Pushed through the rotten sod for fear’s remark;

A hundred horrid stems, jagged and stark,
Wrestled with crooked arms in hideous fray,
Besides sleek ashes with their dappled bark,
Like crafty serpents climbing for a prey,
With many blasted oaks mossgrown and grey.

LXXVIII.

“ But here upon his final desperate clause
Suddenly I pronounced so sweet a strain,
Like a panged nightingale, it made him pause,
Till half the frenzy of his grief was slain,
The sad remainder oozing from his brain
In timely ecstasies of healing tears,
Which through his ardent eyes began to drain—
Meanwhile the deadly Fates unclosed their shears :
So pity me and all my fated peers !”

LXXIX.

Thus Ariel ended, and was some time hushed :
When with the hoary Shape a fresh tongue pleads,
And red as rose the gentle Fairy blushed
To read the record of her own good deeds :—
“ It chanced,” quoth she, “ in seeking through the meads
For honeyed cowslips, sweetest in the morn,
Whilst yet the buds were hung with dewy beads,
And Echo answered to the huntsman’s horn,
We found a babe left in the swarths forlorn.

LXXX.

“ A little, sorrowful, deserted thing,
Begot of love, and yet no love begetting ;
Guiltless of shame, and yet for shame to wring ;
And too soon banished from a mother’s petting,
To churlish nurture and the wide world’s fretting,
For alien pity and unnatural care ;
Alas ! to see how the cold dew kept wetting
His childish coats, and dabbled all his hair,
Like gossamers across his forehead fair.

LXXXI.

“ His pretty pouting mouth, witless of speech,
Lay half-way open like a rose-lipped shell ;
And his young cheek was softer than a peach,
Whereon his tears, for roundness, could not dwell,
But quickly rolled themselves to pearls, and fell,
Some on the grass, and some against his hand,
Or haply wandered to the dimpled well,
Which love beside his mouth had sweetly planned,
Yet not for tears, but mirth and smilings bland.

I.LXXXII.

“ Pity it was to see those frequent tears
 Falling regardless from his friendless eyes ;
 There was such beauty in those twin blue spheres,
 As any mother’s heart might leap to prize ;
 Blue were they, like the zenith of the skies
 Softened betwixt two clouds, both clear and mild ;
 Just touched with thought, and yet not over wise,
 They showed the gentle spirit of a child,
 Not yet by care or any craft defiled.

LXXXIII.

“ Pity it was to see the ardent sun
 Scorching his helpless limbs—it shone so warm ;
 For kindly shade or shelter he had none,
 Nor mother’s gentle breast, come fair or storm.
 Meanwhile I bade my pitying mates transform
 Like grasshoppers, and then, with shrilly cries,
 All round the infant noisily we swarm,
 Haply some passing rustic to advise—
 Whilst providential Heaven our care espies,

LXXXIV.

“ And sends full soon a tender-hearted hind,
 Who, wondering at our loud unusual note,
 Strays curiously aside, and so doth find
 The orphan child laid in the grass remote,
 And laps the foundling in his russet coat,
 Who thence was nurtured in his kindly cot :
 But how he prospered let proud London quote,
 How wise, how rich, and how renowned he got,
 And chief of all her citizens, I wot.

LXXXV.

“ Witness his goodly vessels on the Thames,
 Whose holds were fraught with costly merchandize—
 Jewels from Ind, and pearls for courtly dames,
 And gorgeous silks that Samarcand supplies :
 Witness that Royal Bourse he bade arise,
 The mart of merchants from the East and West ;
 Whose slender summit, pointing to the skies,
 Still bears, in token of his grateful breast,
 The tender grasshopper, his chosen crest—

LXXXVI.

“ The tender grasshopper, his chosen crest,
 That all the summer, with a tuneful wing,
 Makes merry chirpings in its grassy nest,
 Inspired with dew to leap and sing :

So let us also live, eternal King !
Partakers of the green and pleasant earth :
Pity it is to slay the meanest thing,
That, like a mote, shines in the smile of mirth :
Enough there is of joy's decrease and dearth !

LXXXVII.

" Enough of pleasure, and delight, and beauty,
Perished and gone, and hasting to decay ;
Enough to sadden even thee, whose duty
Or spite it is to havoc and to slay :
Too many a lovely race razed quite away,
Hath left large gaps in life and human loving :
Here then begin thy cruel war to stay,
And spare fresh sighs, and tears, and groans, reproving
Thy desolating hand for our removing."

LXXXVIII.

Now here I heard a shrill and sudden cry,
And, looking up, I saw the antic Puck
Grappling with Time, who clutched him like a fly
Victim of his own sport, — the jester's luck !
He, whilst his fellows grieved, poor wight, had stuck
His freakish gauds upon the Ancient's brow,
And now his ear, and now his beard, would pluck ;
Whereas the angry churl had snatched him now,
Crying, " Thou impish mischief, who art thou ?"

LXXXIX.

" Alas !" quoth Puck, " a little random elf,
Born in the sport of nature, like a weed,
For simple sweet enjoyment of myself,
But for no other purpose, worth, or need ;
And yet withal of a most happy breed ;
And there is Robin Goodfellow besides,
My partner dear in many a prankish deed
To make Dame Laughter hold her jolly sides,
Like merry mummers twain on holy tides.

XC.

" 'Tis we that bob the angler's idle cork,
Till e'en the patient man breathes half a curse ;
We steal the morsel from the gossip's fork,
And curdling looks with secret straws disperse,
Or stop the sneezing chanter at mid verse :
And when an infant's beauty prospers ill,
We change, some mothers say, the child at nurse ;
But any graver purpose to fulfil,
We have not wit enough, and scarce the will.

XCI.

" We never let the canker melancholy
 To gather on our faces like a rust,
 But gloss our features with some change of folly,
 Taking life's fabled miseries on trust,
 But only sorrowing when sorrow must :
 We ruminatè no sage's solemn cud,
 But own ourselves a pinch of lively dust
 To frisk upon a wind,—whereas the flood
 Of tears would turn us into heavy mud.

XCII.

Beshrew those sad interpreters of nature,
 Who gloze her lively universal law,
 As if she had not formed our cheerful feature
 To be so tickled with the slightest straw !
 So let them vex their mumping mouths, and draw
 The corners downward, like a wat'ry moon,
 And deal in gusty sighs and rainy flaw—
 We will not woo foul weather all too soon,
 Or nurse November on the lap of June.

XCIII.

" For ours are winging sprites, like any bird,
 That shun all stagnant settlements of grief ;
 And even in our rest our hearts are stirred,
 Like insects settled on a dancing leaf :
 This is our small philosophy in brief,
 Which thus to teach hath set me all agape :
 But dost thou relish it? O hoary chief !
 Unclasp thy crooked fingers from my nape,
 And I will show thee many a pleasant scrape."

XCIV.

Then Saturn thus—shaking his crooked blade
 O'erhead, which made aloft a lightning flash
 In all the fairies' eyes, dismally frayed !
 His ensuing voice came like the thunder crash—
 Meanwhile the bolt shatters some pine or ash :—
 " Thou feeble, wanton, foolish, fickle thing !
 Whom nought can frighten, sadden, or abash,—
 To hope my solemn countenance to wring
 To idiot smiles !—but I will prune thy wing !

XCV.

" Lo ! this most awful handle of my scythe
 Stood once a Maypole, with a flowery crown,
 Which rustics danced around, and maidens blithe,
 To wanton pipings ;—but I plucked it down,

And robed the May Queen in a churchyard gown,
Turning her buds to rosemary and rue ;
And all their merry minstrelsy did drown,
And laid each lusty leaper in the dew ;
So thou shalt fare—and every jovial crew !”

XCVI.

Here he lets go the struggling imp, to clutch
His mortal engine with each grisly hand,
Which frights the elfin progeny so much,
They huddle in a heap, and trembling stand
All round Titania, like the queen bee's band,
With sighs and tears and very shrieks of woe !
Meanwhile, some moving argument I planned,
To make the stern Shade merciful,—when lo !
He drops his fatal scythe without a blow !

XCVII.

For, just at need, a timely Apparition*
Steps in between, to bear the awful brunt ;
Making him change his horrible position,
To marvel at this comer, brave and blunt,
That dares Time's irresistible affront,
Whose strokes have scarred even the gods of old ;
Whereas this seemed a mortal, at mere hunt
For coney, lighted by the moonshine cold,
Or stalker of stray deer, stealthy and bold.

XCVIII.

Who, turning to the small assembled fays,
Doffs to the lily queen his courteous cap,
And holds her beauty for awhile in gaze,
With bright eyes kindling at this pleasant hap ;
And thence upon the fair moon's silver map,
As if in question of this magic chance,
Laid like a dream upon the green earth's lap ;
And then upon old Saturn turns askance,
Exclaiming, with a glad and kindly glance :—

XCIX.

“ Oh, these be Fancy's revellers by night !
Stealthy companions of the downy moth—
Diana's motes, that flit in her pale light,
Shunners of sunbeams in diurnal sloth ;
These be the feasters on night's silver cloth,—
The gnat with shrilly trump is their covener,
Forth from their flowery chambers, nothing loth,
With lulling tunes to charm the air serener,
Or dance upon the grass to make it greener.

* Shakspeare.

C.

“These be the pretty genii of the flow’rs,
 Daintily fed with honey and pure dew—
 Midsummer’s phantoms in her dreamy hours,
 King Oberon, and all his merry crew,
 The darling puppets of romance’s view ;
 Fairies, and sprites, and goblin elves we call them,
 Famous for patronage of lovers true ;
 No harm they act, neither shall harm befall them,
 So do not thus with crabbed frowns appal them.”

CI.

O what a cry was Saturn’s then !—it made
 The fairies quake. “What care I for their pranks,
 However they may lovers choose to aid,
 Or dance their roundelays on flow’ry banks ?
 Long must they dance before they earn my thanks,—
 So step aside, to some far safer spot,
 Whilst with my hungry scythe I mow their ranks,
 And leave them in the sun, like weeds to rot,
 And with the next day’s sun to be forgot.”

CII.

Anon, he raised afresh his weapon keen ;
 But still the gracious shade disarmed his aim,
 Stepping with brave alacrity between,
 And made his sere arm powerless and tame.
 His be perpetual glory, for the shame
 Of hoary Saturn in that grand defeat !
 But I must tell, how here Titania came
 With all her kneeling lieges, to entreat
 His kindly succour, in sad tones, but sweet.

CIII.

Saying, “Thou seest a wretched queen before thee,
 The fading power of a failing land,
 Who for her kingdom kneeleth to implore thee,
 Now menaced by this tyrant’s spoiling hand ;
 No one but thee can hopefully withstand
 That crooked blade he longeth so to lift.
 I pray thee blind him with his own vile sand,
 Which only times all ruins by its drift,
 Or prune his eagle wings that are so swift.

CIV.

“Or take him by that sole and grizzled tuft,
 That hangs upon his bald and barren crown ;
 And we will sing to see him so rebuffed,
 And lend our little mights to pull him down,

And make brave sport of his malicious frown,
For all his boastful mockery o'er men ;
For thou wast born I know for this renown,
By my most magical and inward ken,
That readeth ev'n at Fate's forestalling pen.

CV.

" Nay, by the golden lustre of thine eye,
And by thy brow's most fair and ample span,
Thought's glorious palace, framed for fancies high,
And by thy cheek thus passionately wan,
I know the signs of an immortal man,—
Nature's chief darling, and illustrious mate,
Destined to foil old Death's oblivious plan,
And shine untarnished by the fogs of Fate,
Time's famous rival till the final date !

CVI.

" O shield us then from this usurping Time,
And we will visit thee in moonlight dreams ;
And teach thee tunes to wed unto thy rhyme,
And dance about thee in all midnight gleams,
Giving thee glimpses of our magic schemes,
Such as no mortal's eye hath even seen :
And, for thy love to us in our extremes,
Will ever keep thy chaplet fresh and green,
Such as no poet's wreath hath ever been !

CVII.

" And we'll distil thee aromatic dews,
To charm thy sense, when there shall be no flow'rs ;
And flavoured syrups in thy drinks infuse,
And teach the nightingale to haunt thy bow'rs.
And with our games divert thy weariest hours,
With all that elfin wits can e'er devise.
And, this churl dead, there'll be no hasting hours
To rob thee of thy joys, as now joy flies :"—
Here she was stopped by Saturn's furious cries.

CVIII.

Whom, therefore, the kind Shade rebukes anew,
Saying, " Thou haggard Sin, go forth, and scoop
Thy hollow coffin in some churchyard yew,
Or make th' autumnal flowers turn pale, and droop ;
Or fell the bearded corn, till gleaners stoop
Under fat sheaves—or blast the piny grove ;
But here thou shalt not harm this pretty group,
Whose lives are not so frail and feebly wove,
But leased on Nature's loveliness and love.

CIX.

"'Tis these that free the small entangled fly,
 Caught in the venom'd spider's crafty snare ;
 These be the petty surgeons that apply
 The healing balsams to the wounded hare,
 Bedded in bloody fern, no creature's care !
 These be providers for the orphan brood,
 Whose tender mother hath been slain in air,
 Quitting with gaping bill her darling's food,
 Hard by the verge of her domestic wood.

CX.

"'Tis these befriend the timid trembling stag,
 When, with a bursting heart beset with fears,
 He feels his saving speed begin to flag ;
 For then they quench the fatal taint with tears,
 And prompt fresh shifts in his alarum'd ears,
 So piteously they view all bloody morts ;
 Or if the gunner, with his arm, appears,
 Like noisy pies and jays, with harsh reports,
 They warn the wildfowl of his deadly sports.

CXI.

" For these are kindly ministers of nature,
 To soothe all covert hurts and dumb distress ;
 Pretty they be, and very small of stature—
 For mercy still consorts with littleness ;
 Wherefore the sum of good is still the less,
 And mischief grossest in this world of wrong ;
 So do these charitable dwarfs redress
 The tenfold ravages of giants strong,
 To whom great malice and great might belong.

CXII.

" Likewise to them are Poets much beholden
 For secret favours in the midnight glooms ;
 Brave Spenser quaffed out of their goblets golden,
 And saw their tables spread of prompt mushrooms,
 And heard their horns of honeysuckle blooms
 Sounding upon the air most soothing soft,
 Like humming bees busy about the brooms—
 And glanced this fair queen's witchery full oft,
 And in her magic wain soared far aloft.

CXIII.

" Nay I myself, though mortal, once was nursed
 By fairy gossips, friendly at my birth,
 And in my childish ear glib Mab rehearsed
 Her breezy travels round our planet's girta,

Telling me wonders of the moon and earth ;
My gramarye at her grave lap I conned,
Where Puck hath been convened to make me mirth ;
I have had from Queen Titania tokens fond,
And toyed with Oberon's permitted wand.

CXIV.

" With figs and plums and Persian dates they fed me,
And delicate cates after my sunset meal,
And took me by my childish hand, and led me
By craggy rocks crested with keeps of steel,
Whose awful bases deep dark woods conceal,
Staining some dead lake with their verdant dyes :
And when the West sparkled at Phœbus' wheel,
With fairy euphrasy they purged mine eyes,
To let me see their cities in the skies.

CXV.

" 'Twas they first schooled my young imagination,
To take its flights like any new-fledged bird,
And showed the span of wingèd meditation
Stretched wider than things grossly seen or heard.
With sweet swift Ariel how I soared and stirred
The fragrant blooms of spiritual bow'rs !
'Twas they endeared what I have still preferred,
Nature's blest attributes and balmy pow'rs,
Her hills and vales and brooks, sweet birds and flow'rs !

CXVI.

" Wherefore with all true loyalty and duty
Will I regard them in my honouring rhyme,
With love for love, and homages to beauty,
And magic thoughts gathered in night's cool clime,
With studious verse trancing the dragon Time,
Strong as old Merlin's necromatic spells,
So these dear monarchs of the summer's prime
Shall live unstartled by his dreadful yells,
Till shrill larks warn them to their flowery cells."

CXVII.

Look how a poisoned man turns livid black,
Drugged with a cup of deadly hellebore,
That sets his horrid features all at rack,—
So seemed these words into the ear to pour
Of ghastly Saturn, answering with a roar
Of mortal pain and spite and utmost rage,
Wherewith his grisly arm he raised once more,
And bade the clustered sinews all engage,
As if at one fell stroke to wreck an age.

CXVIII.

Whereas the blade flashed on the dinted ground,
 Down through his steadfast foe, yet made no scar
 On that immortal Shade, or death-like wound ;
 But Time was long benumbed, and stood ajar,
 And then with baffled rage took flight afar,
 To weep his hurt in some Cimmerian gloom,
 Or meaner fames (like mine) to mock and mar,
 Or sharp his scythe for royal strokes of doom,
 Whetting its edge on some old Cæsar's tomb.

CXIX.

Howbeit he vanished in the forest shade,
 Distantly heard as if some grumbling pard,
 And, like Narcissus, to a sound decayed ;
 Meanwhile the fays clustered the gracious Bard,
 The darling centre of their dear regard :
 Besides of sundry dances on the green,
 Never was mortal man so brightly starred,
 Or won such pretty homages, I ween.
 " Nod to him, Elves !" cries the melodious queen.

CXX.

" Nod to him, Elves, and flutter round about him,
 And quite enclose him with your pretty crowd,
 And touch him lovingly, for that, without him,
 The silkworm now had spun our dreary shroud ;
 But he hath all dispersed death's tearful cloud,
 And Time's dread effigy scared quite away :
 Bow to him then, as though to me ye bowed,
 And his dear wishes prosper and obey
 Wherever love and wit can find a way !

CXXI.

" Noint him with fairy dews of magic savours,
 Shaken from orient buds still pearly wet,
 Roses and spicy pinks,—and, of all favours,
 Plant in his walks the purple violet,
 And meadow-sweet under the hedges set,
 To mingle breaths with dainty eglantine
 And honeysuckles sweet,—nor yet forget
 Some pastoral flowery chaplets to entwine,
 To vie the thoughts about his brow benign !

CXXII.

" Let no wild things astonish him or fear him,
 But tell them all how mild he is of heart,
 Till e'en the timid hares go frankly near him,
 And eke the dappled does, yet never start ;

Nor shall their fawns into the the thickets dart,
Nor wrens forsake their nests among the leaves,
Nor speckled thrushes flutter far apart ;
But bid the sacred swallow haunt his eaves,
To guard his roof from lightning and from thieves.

CXXIII.

" Or when he goes the nimble squirrel's visitor,
Let the brown hermit bring his hoarded nuts,
For, tell him, this is Nature's kind Inquisitor,—
Though man keeps cautious doors that conscience shuts,
For conscious wrong all curious quest rebuts ;
Nor yet shall bees uncase their jealous stings,
However he may watch their straw-built huts ;
So let him learn the crafts of all small things,
Which he will hint most aptly when he sings."

CXXIV.

Here she leaves off, and with a graceful hand
Waves thrice three splendid circles round his head ;
Which, though deserted by the radiant wand,
Wears still the glory which her waving shed,
Such as erst crowned the old Apostle's head,
To show the thoughts there harboured were divine,
And on immortal contemplations fed :
Goodly it was to see that glory shine
Around a brow so lofty and benign !

CXXV.

Goodly it was to see the elfin brood
Contend for kisses of his gentle hand,
That had their mortal enemy withstood,
And stayed their lives, fast ebbing with the sand.
Long while this strife engaged the pretty band ;
But now bold Chanticleer, from farm to farm,
Challenged the dawn creeping o'er eastern land,
And well the fairies knew that shrill alarm,
Which sounds the knell of every elfish charm.

CXXVI.

And soon the rolling mist, that 'gan arise
From plashy mead and undiscovered stream,
Earth's morning incense to the early skies,
Crept o'er the failing landscape of my dream.
Soon faded then the Phantom of my theme—
A shapeless Shade, that fancy disavowed,
And shrank to nothing in the mist extreme.
Then flew Titania,—and her little crowd,
Like flocking linnets, vanished in a cloud.

HERO AND LEANDER.

DEDICATED TO S. T. COLERIDGE ESQ.

IT is not with a hope my feeble praise
 Can add one moment's honour to thine own,
 That with thy mighty name I grace these lays ;
 I seek to glorify myself alone :
 For that same precious favour thou hast shown
 To my endeavour in a bygone time,
 And by this token, I would have it known
 Thou art my friend, and friendly to my rhyme !
 It is my dear ambition now to climb
 Still higher in my thought—if my bold pen
 May thrust on contemplations more sublime.
 But I am thirsty for thy praise, for when
 We gain applauses from the great in name,
 We seem to be partakers of *their* fame.

I.

Oh Bards of old ! what sorrows have ye sung,
 And tragic stories, chronicled in stone—
 Sad Philomel restored her ravished tongue,
 And transformed Niobe in dumbness shown ;
 Sweet Sappho on her love for ever calls,
 And Hero on the drowned Leander falls !

II.

Was it that spectacles of sadder plights,
 Should make our blisses relish the more high ?
 Then all fair dames, and maidens, and true knights,
 Whose flourished fortunes prosper in Love's eye,
 Weep here, unto a tale of ancient grief,
 Traced from the course of an old bas-relief.

III.

There stands Abydos !—here is Sestos' steep,
 Hard by the gusty margin of the sea,
 Where sprinkling waves continually do leap ;
 And that is where those famous lovers be,
 A builded gloom shot up into the grey,
 As if the first tall watch-tow'r of the day.

IV.

Lo ! how the lark soars upward and is gone ;
 Turning a spirit as he nears the sky,
 His voice is heard, though body there is none,
 And rain-like music scatters from on high ;
 But Love would follow with a falcon spite,
 To pluck the minstrel from his dewy height.

V.

For Love hath framed a ditty of regrets,
 Tuned to the hollow sobbings on the shore,
 A vexing sense, that with like music frets,
 And chimes this dismal burthen o'er and o'er,
 Saying, Leander's joys are past and spent,
 Like stars extinguished in the firmament.

VI.

For ere the golden crevices of morn
 Let in those regal luxuries of light,
 Which all the variable east adorn,
 And hang rich fringes on the skirts of night,
 Leander, weaning from sweet Hero's side,
 Must leave a widow where he found a bride.

VII.

Hark ! how the billows beat upon the sand !
 Like pawing steeds impatient of delay ;
 Meanwhile their rider, ling'ring on the land,
 Dallies with love, and holds farewell at bay
 A too short span. How tedious slow is grief !
 But parting renders time both sad and brief.

VIII.

" Alas (he sighed), that this first glimpsing light,
 Which makes the wide world tenderly appear,
 Should be the burning signal for my flight,
 From all the world's best image, which is here ;
 Whose very shadow, in my fond compare,
 Shines far more bright than Beauty's self elsewhere."

IX.

Their cheeks are white as blossoms of the dark,
 Whose leaves close up and show the outward pale,
 And those fair mirrors where their joys did spark,
 All dim and tarnished with a dreary veil,
 No more to kindle till the night's return,
 Like stars replenished at Joy's golden urn.

X.

Ev'n thus they creep into the spectral grey,
 That cramps the landscape in its narrow brim,
 As when two shadows by old Lethe stray,
 He clasping her, and she entwining him ;
 Like trees wind-parted that embrace anon,
 True love so often goes before 'tis gone.

XI.

For what rich merchant but will pause in fear,
 To trust his wealth to the unsafe abyss?
 So Hero dotes upon her treasure here,
 And sums the loss with many an anxious kiss,
 Whilst her fond eyes grow dizzy in her head,
 Fear aggravating fear with shows of dread.

XII.

She thinks how many have been sunk and drowned,
 And spies their snow-white bones below the deep,
 Then calls huge congregated monsters round,
 And plants a rock wherever he would leap;
 Anon she dwells on a fantastic dream,
 Which she interprets of that fatal stream.

XIII.

Saying, "That honeyed fly I saw was thee,
 Which lighted on a water-lily's cup,
 When, lo! the flow'r, enamoured of my bee,
 Closed on him suddenly and locked him up,
 And he was smothered in her drenching dew;
 Therefore this day thy drowning I shall rue."

XIV.

But next, remembering her virgin fame,
 She clips him in her arms and bids him go,
 But seeing him break loose, repents her shame,
 And plucks him back upon her bosom's snow;
 And tears unfix her iced resolve again,
 As steadfast frosts are thawed by showers of rain.

XV.

O for a type of parting! Love to love
 Is like the fond attraction of two spheres,
 Which needs a godlike effort to remove,
 And then sink down their sunny atmospheres,
 In rain and darkness on each ruined heart,
 Nor yet their melodies will sound impart.

XVI.

So brave Leander sunders from his bride;
 The wrenching pang disparts his soul in twain;
 Half stays with her, half goes towards the tide—
 And life must ache, until they join again.
 Now wouldst thou know the wideness of the wound
 Mete every step he takes upon the ground.

XVII.

And for the agony and bosom throe,
 Let it be measured by the wide vast air,
 For that is infinite, and so is woe,
 Since parted lovers breathe it everywhere.
 Look how it heaves Leander's labouring chest,
 Panting, at poise, upon a rocky crest !

XVIII.

From which he leaps into the scooping brine,
 That shocks his bosom with a double chill ;
 Because, all hours, till the slow sun's decline,
 That cold divorcer will betwixt them still ;
 Wherefore he likens it to Styx' foul tide,
 Where life grows death upon the other side.

XIX.

Then sadly he confronts his twofold toil
 Against rude waves and an unwilling mind,
 Wishing, alas ! with the stout rower's toil,
 That like a rower he might gaze behind,
 And watch that lonely statue he hath left
 On her bleak summit, weeping and bereft !

XX.

Yet turning oft, he sees her troubled locks
 Pursue him still the furthest that they may ;
 Her marble arms that overstretch the rocks,
 And her pale passioned hands that seem to pray
 In dumb petition to the gods above !
 Love prays devoutly when it prays for love !

XXI.

Then with deep sighs he blows away the wave,
 That hangs superfluous tears upon his cheek,
 And bans his labour like a hopeless slave,
 That, chained in hostile galley, faint and weak,
 Plies on despairing through the restless foam,
 Thoughtful of his lost love and far-off home.

XXII.

The drowsy mist before him chill and dank,
 Like a dull lethargy o'erleans the sea,
 Where he rows on against the utter blank,
 Steering as if to dim eternity,—
 Like Love's frail ghost departing with the dawn ;
 A failing shadow in the twilight drawn.

XXIII.

And soon is gone,—or nothing but a faint
 And failing image in the eye of thought,
 That mocks his model with an after-paint,
 And stains an atom like the shape she sought ;
 Then with her earnest vows she hopes to fee,
 The old and hoary majesty of sea.

XXIV.

“ O King of waves, and brother of high Jove,
 Preserve my sunless venture there afloat ;
 A woman’s heart, and its whole wealth of love,
 Are all embarked upon that little boat ;
 Nay, but two loves, two lives, a double fate,
 A perilous voyage for so dear a freight.

XXV.

“ If impious mariners be stained with crime,
 Shake not in awful rage thy hoary locks ;
 Lay by thy storms until another time,
 Lest my frail bark be dashed against the rocks :
 Or rather smooth thy deeps, that he may fly
 Like Love himself, upon a seeming sky !

XXVI.

“ Let all thy herded monsters sleep beneath,
 Nor gore him with crooked tusks, or wreathed horns ;
 Let no fierce sharks destroy him with their teeth,
 Nor spine-fish wound him with their venom’d thorns ;
 But if he faint, and timely succour lack,
 Let ruthless dolphins rest him on their back.

XXVII.

Let no false dimpling whirlpools suck him in,
 Nor slimy quicksands smother his sweet breath ;
 Let no jagged corals tear his tender skin,
 Nor mountain billows bury him in death.”
 And with that thought forestalling her own fears,
 She drowned his painted image in her tears.

XXVIII.

By this, the climbing sun, with rest repaired,
 Looked through the gold embrasures of the sky,
 And asked the drowsy world how she had fared ;
 The drowsy world shone brightened in reply ;
 And smiling off her fogs, his slanting beam
 Spied young Leander in the middle stream.

XXIX.

His face was pallid, but the hectic morn
 Had hung a lying crimson on his cheeks,
 And slanderous sparkles in his eyes forlorn ;
 So death lies ambushed in consumptive streaks ;
 But inward grief was writhing o'er its task,
 As heart-sick jesters weep behind the mask.

XXX.

He thought of Hero and the lost delight,
 Her last embracings, and the space between ;
 He thought of Hero and the future night,
 Her speechless rapture and enamoured mien,
 When, lo ! before him, scarce two galleys' space,
 His thought's confronted with another face !

XXXI.

Her aspect's like a moon divinely fair,
 But makes the midnight darker that it lies on ;
 'Tis so beclouded with her coal-black hair
 That densely skirts her luminous horizon,
 Making her doubly fair, thus darkly set,
 As marble lies advantaged upon jet.

XXXII.

She's all too bright, too argent, and too pale,
 To be a woman :—but a woman's double,
 Reflected on the wave so faint and frail,
 She tops the billows like an air-blown bubble ;
 Or dim creation of a morning dream,
 Fair as the wave-bleached lily of the stream.

XXXIII.

The very rumour strikes his seeing dead :
 Great beauty like great fear first stuns the sense :
 He knows not if her lips be blue or red,
 Nor if her eyes can give true evidence :
 Like murder's witness swooning in the court,
 His sight falls senseless by its own report.

XXXIV.

Anon resuming, it declares her eyes
 Are tinct with azure, like two crystal wells,
 That drink the blue complexion of the skies,
 Or pearls outpeeping from their silvery shells
 Her polished brow it is an ample plain,
 To lodge vast contemplations of the main

XXXV.

Her lips might corals seem, but corals near,
 Stray through her hair like blossoms on a bower ;
 And o'er the weaker red still domineer,
 And make it pale by tribute to more power ;
 Her rounded cheeks are of still paler hue,
 Touched by the bloom of water, tender blue.

XXXVI.

Thus he beholds her rocking on the water,
 Under the glossy umbrage of her hair,
 Like pearly Amphitrite's fairest daughter
 Naiad, or Nereid—or Syren fair,
 Mislodging music in her pitiless breast,
 A nightingale within a falcon's nest.

XXXVII.

They say there be such maidens in the deep,
 Charming poor mariners, that all too near
 By mortal lullabies fall dead asleep,
 As drowsy men are poisoned through the ear ;
 Therefore Leander's fears begin to urge,
 This snowy swan is come to sing his dirge.

XXXVIII.

At which he falls into a deadly chill,
 And strains his eyes upon her lips apart ;
 Fearing each breath to feel that prelude shrill,
 Pierce through his marrow, like a death-blown dart
 Shot sudden from an Indian's hollow cane,
 With mortal venom fraught, and fiery pain.

XXXIX.

Here then, poor wretch, how he begins to crowd
 A thousand thoughts within a pulse's space ;
 There seemed so brief a pause of life allowed,
 His mind stretched universal, to embrace
 The whole wide world, in an extreme farewell—
 A moment's musing—but an age to tell.

XL.

For there stood Hero, widowed at a glance,
 The foreseen sum of many a tedious fact,
 Pale cheeks, dim eyes, and withered countenance,
 A wasting ruin that no wasting lacked ;
 Time's tragic consequents ere time began,
 A world of sorrow in a tear-drop's span.

XLI.

A moment's thinking is an hour in words—
 An hour of words is little for some woes ;
 Too little breathing a long life affords,
 For love to paint itself by perfect shows ;
 Then let his love and grief unwronged lie dumb
 Whilst Fear, and that it fears, together come.

XLII.

As when the crew, hard by some jutting cape,
 Struck pale and panicked by the billows' roar,
 Lay by all timely measures of escape,
 And let their bark go driving on the shore ;
 So frayed Leander, drifting to his wreck,
 Gazing on Scylla, falls upon her neck.

XLIII.

For he hath all forgot the swimmer's art,
 The rower's cunning, and the pilot's skill,
 Letting his arms fall down in languid part,
 Swayed by the waves, and nothing by his will,
 Till soon he jars against that glossy skin,
 Solid like glass, though seemingly as thin.

XLIV.

Lo ! how she startles at the warning shock,
 And straightway girds him to her radiant breast,
 More like his safe smooth harbour than his rock ;
 Poor wretch, he is so faint and toil-opprest,
 He cannot loose him from his grappling foe,
 Whether for love or hate, she lets not go.

XLV.

His eyes are blinded with the sleety brine,
 His ears are deafened with the wildering noise ;
 He asks the purpose of her fell design,
 But foamy waves choke up his struggling voice .
 Under the ponderous sea his body dips,
 And Hero's name dies bubbling on his lips.

XLVI.

Look how a man is lowered to his grave ;
 A yearning hollow in the green earth's lap ;
 So he is sunk into the yawning wave,
 The plunging sea fills up the watery gap ;
 Anon he is all gone, and nothing seen,
 But likeness of green turf and hillocks green.

HERO AND LEANDER.

XLVII.

And where he swam, the constant sun lies sleeping,
 Over the verdant plain that makes his bed ;
 And all the noisy waves go freshly leaping,
 Like gamesome boys over the churchyard dead ;
 The light in vain keeps looking for his face,
 Now screaming sea-fowl settle in his place.

XLVIII.

Yet weep and watch for him though all in vain !
 Ye moaning billows, seek him as ye wander !
 Ye gazing sunbeams, look for him again !
 Ye winds, grow hoarse with asking for Leander !
 Ye did but spare him for more cruel rape,
 Sea-storm and ruin in a female shape !

XLIX.

She says 'tis love hath bribed her to this deed,
 The glancing of his eyes did so bewitch her,
 O bootless theft ! unprofitable meed !
 Love's treasury is sacked, but she no richer ;
 The sparkles of his eyes are cold and dead,
 And all his golden looks are turned to lead !

L.

She holds the casket, but her simple hand
 Hath spilled its dearest jewel by the way ;
 She hath life's empty garment at command,
 But her own death lies covert in the prey ;
 As if a thief should steal a tainted vest,
 Some dead man's spoil, and sicken of his pest.

LI.

Now she compels him to her deeps below,
 Hiding his face beneath her plenteous hair,
 Which jealousy she shakes all round her brow,
 For dread of envy, though no eyes are there
 But seals', and all brute tenants of the deep,
 Which heedless through the wave their journeys keep.

LII.

Down and still downwards through the dusky green
 She bore him, murmuring with joyous haste
 In too rash ignorance, as he had been
 Born to the texture of that watery waste ;
 That which she breathed and sighed, the emerald wave,
 How could her pleasant home become his grave !

LIII.

Down and still downward through the dusky green
 She bore her treasure, with a face too nigh
 To mark how life was altered in its mien,
 Or how the light grew torpid in his eye,
 Or how his pearly breath unprisoned there,
 Flew up to join the universal air.

LIV.

She could not miss the throbbings of his heart,
 Whilst her own pulse so wantoned in its joy ;
 She could not guess he struggled to depart,
 And when he strove no more, the hapless boy !
 She read his mortal stillness for content,
 Feeling no fear where only love was meant.

LV.

Soon she alights upon her ocean-floor,
 And straight unyokes her arms from her fair prize :
 Then on his lovely face begins to pore,
 As if to glut her soul ;—her hungry eyes
 Have grown so jealous of her arms' delight ;
 It seems, she hath no other sense but sight.

LVI.

But O sad marvel ! O most bitter strange !
 What dismal magic makes his cheeks so pale,
 Why will he not embrace,—why not exchange
 Her kindly kisses ;—wherefore not exhale
 Some odorous message from life's ruby gates,
 Where she his first sweet embassy awaits ?

LVII.

Her eyes, poor watchers, fixed upon his looks,
 Are grappled with a wonder near to grief,
 As one, who pores on undeciphered books,
 Strains vain surmise, and dodges with belief ;
 So she keeps gazing with a mazy thought,
 Framing a thousand doubts that end in naught.

LVIII.

Too stern inscription for a page so young,
 The dark translation of his look was death !
 But death was written in an alien tongue,
 And learning was not by to give it breath ;
 So one deep woe sleeps buried in its seal,
 Which Time, untimely, hasteth to reveal.

LIX.

Meanwhile she sits unconscious of her hap,
Nursing Death's marble effigy, which there
With heavy head lies pillowed in her lap,
And elbows all unhinged :—his sleeking hair
Creeps o'er her knees, and settles where his hand
Leans with lax fingers crooked against the sand ;

LX.

And there lies spread in many an oozy trail,
Like glossy weeds hung from a chalky base,
That shows no whiter than his brow is pale ;
So soon the wintry death had bleached his face
Into cold marble,—with blue chilly shades,
Showing wherein the freezy blood pervades.

LXI.

And o'er his steadfast cheek a furrowed pain
Hath set, and stiffened like a storm in ice,
Showing by drooping lines the deadly strain
Of mortal anguish ;—yet you might gaze twice
Ere Death it seemed, and not his cousin, Sleep,
That through those creviced lids did underpeep.

LXII.

But all that tender bloom about his eyes,
Is death's own vi'lets, which his utmost rite
It is to scatter when the red rose dies ;
For blue is chilly, and akin to white :
Also he leaves some tinges on his lips,
Which he hath kissed with such cold frosty nips.

LXIII.

" Surely," quoth she, " he sleeps, the senseless thing,
Oppressed and faint with toiling in the stream !"
Therefore she will not mar his rest, but sing
So low, her tune shall mingle with his dream ;
Meanwhile, her lily fingers tasks to twine
His uncrispt locks uncurling in the brine.

LXIV.

" O lovely boy !"—thus she attuned her voice,—
" Welcome, thrice welcome, to a sea-maid's home,
My love-mate thou shalt be, and true heart's choice ;
How have I longed such a twin-self should come,—
A lonely thing, till this sweet chance befell,
My heart kept sighing like a hollow shell.

LXV.

" Here thou shalt live, beneath this secret dome,
 An ocean bower, defended by the shade
 Of quiet waters ; a cool emerald gloom
 To lap thee all about. Nay, be not frayed,
 Those are but shady fishes that sail by
 Like antic clouds across my liquid sky !

LXVI.

" Look how the sunbeam burns upon their scales,
 And shows rich glimpses of their Tyrian skins,
 They flash small lightnings from their vigorous tails,
 And winking stars are kindled at their fins ;
 These shall divert thee in thy weariest mood,
 And seek thy hand for gamesomeness and food.

LXVII.

" Lo ! those green pretty leaves with tassel bells,
 My flowrets those, that never pine for drouth ;
 Myself did plant them in the dappled shells,
 That drink the wave with such a rosy mouth,—
 Pearls wouldst thou have beside ? crystals to shine ?
 I had such treasures once,—now they are thine.

LXVIII.

" Now, lay thine ear against this golden sand,
 And thou shalt hear the music of the sea,
 Those hollow tunes it plays against the land,—
 Is't not a rich and wondrous melody ?
 I have lain hours, and fancied in its tone
 I heard the languages of ages gone !

LXIX.

" I too can sing when it shall please thy choice,
 And breathe soft tunes through a melodious shell,
 Though heretofore I have but set my voice
 To some long sighs, grief harmonized, to tell
 How desolate I fared ;—but this sweet change
 Will add new notes of gladness to my range !

LXX.

" Or bid me speak and I will tell thee tales,
 Which I have framed out of the noise of waves ;
 Ere now I have communed with senseless gales,
 And held vain colloquies with barren caves ;
 But I could talk to thee whole days and days,
 Only to word my love a thousand ways.

LXXI.

“ But if thy lips will bless me with their speech,
 Then ope, sweet oracles ! and I'll be mute ;
 I was born ignorant for thee to teach,
 Nay all love's lore to thy dear looks impute ;
 Then ope thine eyes, fair teachers, by whose light
 I saw to give away my heart aright ! ”

LXXII.

But cold and deaf the sullen creature lies,
 Over her knees, and with concealing clay,
 Like hoarding Avarice locks up his eyes,
 And leaves the world impoverished of day ;
 Then at his cruel lips she bends to plead,
 But there the door is closed against her need.

LXXIII.

Surely he sleeps—so her false wits infer !
 Alas ! poor sluggard, ne'er to wake again !
 Surely he sleeps, yet without any stir
 That might denote a vision in his brain ;
 Or if he does not sleep, he feigns too long,
 Twice she hath reached the ending of her song.

LXXIV.

Therefore 'tis time she tells him to uncover
 Those radiant jesters, and disperse her fears,
 Whereby her April face is shaded over,
 Like rainy clouds just ripe for showering tears ;
 Nay, if he will not wake, so poor she gets,
 Herself must rob those locked up cabinets.

LXXV.

With that she stoops above his brow, and bids
 Her busy hands forsake his tangled hair,
 And tenderly lift up those coffer-lids,
 That she may gaze upon the jewels there,
 Like babes that pluck an early bud apart,
 To know the dainty colour of its heart.

LXXVI.

Now, picture one, soft creeping to a bed,
 Who slowly parts the fringe-hung canopies,
 And then starts back to find the sleeper dead ;
 So she looks in on his uncovered eyes,
 And seeing all within so drear and dark,
 Her own bright soul dies in her like a spark.

LXXVII.

Backward she falls, like a pale prophetess,
 Under the swoon of holy divination :
 And what had all surpassed her simple guess,
 She now resolves in this dark revelation ;
 Death's very mystery—oblivious death ;
 Long sleep—deep night, and an entranced breath.

LXXVIII.

Yet life, though wounded sore, not wholly slain,
 Merely obscured, and not extinguished, lies ;
 Her breath that stood at ebb, soon flows again,
 Heaving her hollow breast with heavy sighs,
 And light comes in and kindles up the gloom,
 To light her spirit from its transient tomb.

LXXIX.

Then like the sun, awakened at new dawn,
 With pale bewildered face she peers about,
 And spies blurred images obscurely drawn,
 Uncertain shadows in a haze of doubt ;
 But her true grief grows shapely by degrees,
 A perished creature lying on her knees.

LXXX.

And now she knows how that old Murder preys,
 Whose quarry on her lap lies newly slain ;
 How he roams all abroad and grimly slays,
 Like a lean tiger in Love's own domain ;
 Parting from mates,—and oft in flowery lawns
 Bereaves mild mothers of their milky fawns.

LXXXI.

O too dear knowledge ! O pernicious earning !
 Foul curse engraven upon beauty's page !
 Ev'n now the sorrow of that deadly learning
 Ploughs up her brow, like an untimely age,
 And on her cheek stamps verdict of death's truth,
 By canker blights upon the bud of youth !

LXXXII.

For as unwholesome winds decay the leaf,
 So her cheeks' rose is perished by her sighs,
 And withers in the sickly breath of grief ;
 Whilst unacquainted rheum bedims her eyes,
 Tears, virgin tears, the first that ever leapt
 From those young lids, now plentifully wept.

LXXXIII.

Whence being shed, the liquid crystalline
 Drops straightway down, refusing to partake
 In gross admixture with the baser brine,
 But shrinks and hardens into pearls opaque,
 Hereafter to be worn on arms and ears ;
 So one maid's trophy is another's tears !

LXXXIV.

“ O foul Arch-Shadow, thou old cloud of Night,
 (Thus in her frenzy she began to wail,
 Thou blank oblivion—blotter out of light,
 Life's ruthless murderer, and dear love's bale !
 Why hast thou left thy havoc incomplete,
 Leaving me here, and slaying the more sweet ?

LXXXV.

“ Lo ! what a lovely ruin thou hast made,
 Alas ! alas ! thou hast no eyes to see,
 And blindly slew'st him in misguided shade.
 Would I had lent my doting sense to thee !
 But now I turn to thee, a willing mark,
 Thine arrows miss me in the aimless dark !

LXXXVI.

“ O doubly cruel !—twice misdoing spite,
 But I will guide thee with my helping eyes,
 Or walk the wide world through, devoid of sight,
 Yet thou shalt know me by my many sighs.
 Nay, then thou shouldst have spared my rose, false Death,
 And known Love's flow'r by smelling his sweet breath ;

LXXXVII.

“ Or, when thy furious rage was round him dealing,
 Love should have grown from touching of his skin,
 But like cold marble thou art all unfeeling,
 And hast no ruddy springs of warmth within,
 And being but a shape of freezing bone,
 Thy touching only turned my love to stone !

LXXXVIII.

“ And here, alas ! he lies across my knees,
 With cheeks still colder than the stilly wave,
 The light beneath his eyelids seems to freeze,
 Here then, since Love is dead and lacks a grave,
 O come and dig it in my sad heart's core—
 That wound will bring a balsam for its sore !

LXXXIX.

“ For art thou not a sleep where sense of ill
Lies stingless, like a sense benumbed with cold,
Healing all hurts only with sleep’s good will,
So shall I slumber, and perchance behold
My living love in dreams—O happy night,
That lets me company his banished spright !

XC.

“ O poppy Death !—sweet poisoner of sleep !
Where shall I seek for thee, oblivious drug,
That I may steep thee in my drink, and creep
Out of life’s coil. Look, Idol ! how I hug
Thy dainty image in this strict embrace,
And kiss this clay-cold model of thy face !

XCI.

“ Put out, put out these sun-consuming lamps,
I do but read my sorrows by their shine,
O come and quench them with thy oozy damps,
And let my darkness intermix with thine ;
Since love is blinded, wherefore should I see ?
Now love is death—death will be love to me !

XCII.

“ Away, away, this vain complaining breath,
It does but stir the troubles that I weep,
Let it be hushed and quieted, sweet Death,
The wind must settle ere the wave can sleep—
Since love is silent, I would fain be mute,
O Death, be gracious to my dying suit !”

XCIII.

Thus far she pleads, but pleading naught avails her,
For Death, her sullen burden, deigns no heed,
Then with dumb craving arms, since darkness fails her,
She prays to heav’n’s fair light, as if her need
Inspired her there were Gods to pity pain,
Or end it— but she lifts her arms in vain !

XCIV.

Poor gilded Grief ! the subtle light by this
With mazy gold creeps through her watery mine,
And, diving downward through the green abyss,
Lights up her palace with an amber shine ;
There, falling on her arms—the crystal skin
Reveals the ruby tide that fares within.

HERO AND LEANDER.

XCV.

Look how the fulsome beam would hang a glory
 On her dark hair, but the dark hairs repel it ;
 Look how the perjured glow suborns a story
 On her pale lips, but lips refuse to tell it ;
 Grief will not swerve from grief, however told
 On coral lips, or charactered in gold ;

XCVI.

Or else, thou maid ! safe anchored on Love's neck,
 Listing the hapless doom of young Leander,
 Thou wouldst not shed a tear for that old wreck,
 Sitting secure where no wild surges wander ;
 Whereas the woe moves on with tragic pace,
 And shows its sad reflection in thy face.

XCVII.

Thus having travelled on, and tracked the tale,
 Like the true course of an old bas-relief,
 Where Tragedy pursues her progress pale,
 Brood here awhile upon that sea-maid's grief,
 And take a deeper imprint from the frieze
 Of that young Fate, with Death upon her knees.

XCVIII.

Then whilst the melancholy muse withal
 Resumes her music in a sadder tone,
 Meanwhile the sunbeam strikes upon the wall,
 Conceive that lovely siren to live on,
 Ev'n as Hope whispered, the Promethean light
 Would kindle up the dead Leander's sprite.

XCIX.

"'Tis light," she says, " that feeds the glittering stars,
 And those were stars set in his heavenly brow,
 But this salt cloud, this cold sea-vapour, mars
 Their radiant breathing, and obscures them now,
 Therefore I'll lay him in the clear blue air,
 And see how these dull orbs will kindle there."

C.

Swiftly as dolphins glide, or swifter yet,
 With dead Leander in her fond arms' fold,
 She cleaves the meshes of that radiant net,
 The sun hath twined above of liquid gold,
 Nor slacks, till on the margin of the land,
 She lays his body on the glowing sand.

CI.

There, like a pearly waif, just past the reach
 Of foamy billows he lies cast. Just then,
 Some listless fishers, straying down the beach,
 Spy out this wonder. Thence the curious men,
 Low crouching, creep into a thicket brake,
 And watch her doings till their rude hearts ache.

CII.

First she begins to chafe him till she faints,
 Then falls upon his mouth with kisses many,
 And sometimes pauses in her own complaints
 To list his breathing, but there is not any,—
 Then looks into his eyes where no light dwells,
 Light makes no pictures in such muddy wells.

CIII.

The hot sun parches his discovered eyes,
 The hot sun beats on his discoloured limbs,
 The sand is oozy whereupon he lies,
 Soiling his fairness ; then away she swims,
 Meaning to gather him a daintier bed,
 Plucking the cool fresh weeds, brown, green, and red.

CIV.

But, simple-witted thief, while she dives under,
 Another robs her of her amorous theft ;
 The ambushed fishermen creep forth to plunder,
 And steal the unwatched treasure she has left ;
 Only his void impression dints the sands !
 Leander is purloined by stealthy hands !

CV.

Lo ! how she shudders off the beaded wave !
 Like Grief all over tears, and senseless falls,
 His void imprint seems hollowed for her grave,
 Then, rising on her knees, looks round and calls
 On Hero ! Hero ! having learned this name
 Of his last breath, she calls him by the same.

CVI.

Then with her frantic hands she rends her hairs,
 And casts them forth, sad keepsakes to the wind,
 As if in plucking those she plucked her cares ;
 But grief lies deeper, and remains behind
 Like a barbed arrow, ranking in her brain,
 Turning her very thoughts to throbs of pain.

CVII.

Anon her tangled locks are left alone,
 And down upon the sand she meekly sits,
 Hard by the foam as humble as a stone,
 Like an enchanted maid beside her wits,
 That ponders with a look serene and tragic,
 Stunned by the mighty mystery of magic.

CVIII.

Or think of Ariadne's utter trance,
 Crazed by the flight of that disloyal traitor,
 Who left her gazing on the green expanse
 That swallowed up his track,—yet this would mate her,
 Ev'n in the cloudy summit of her woe,
 When o'er the far sea-brim she saw him go.

CIX.

For even so she bows, and bends her gaze
 O'er the eternal waste, as if to sum
 Its waves by weary thousands all her days,
 Dismally doomed ! meanwhile the billows come,
 And coldly dabble with her quiet feet,
 Like any bleaching stones they wont to greet.

CX.

And thence into her lap have boldly sprung,
 Washing her weedy tresses to and fro,
 That round her crouching knees have darkly hung,
 But she sits careless of waves' ebb and flow,
 Like a lone beacon on a desert coast,
 Showing where all her hope was wrecked and lost.

CXI.

Yet whether in the sea or vaulted sky,
 She knoweth not her love's abrupt resort,
 So like a shape of dreams he left her eye,
 Winking with doubt. Meanwhile, the churl's report
 Has thronged the beach with many a curious face,
 That peeps upon her from its hiding place.

CXII.

And here a head, and there a brow half seen,
 Dodges behind a rock. Here on his hands,
 A mariner his crumpled cheeks doth lean
 Over a rugged crest. Another stands,
 Holding his harmful arrow at the head,
 Still checked by human caution and strange dread.

CXIII.

One stops his ears,—another close beholder
 Whispers unto the next his grave surmise ;
 This crouches down,—and just above his shoulder,
 A woman's pity saddens in her eyes,
 And prompts her to befriend that lonely grief,
 With all sweet helps of sisterly relief.

CXIV.

And down the sunny beach she paces slowly,
 With many doubtful pauses by the way ;
 Grief hath an influence so hushed and holy—
 Making her twice attempt, ere she can lay
 Her hand upon that sea-maid's shoulder white,
 Which makes her startle up in wild affright.

CXV.

And, like a seal, she leaps into the wave
 That drowns the shrill remainder of her scream ;
 Anon the sea fills up the watery cave,
 And seals her exit with a foamy seam—
 Leaving those baffled gazers on the beach
 Turning in uncouth wonder each to each.

CXVI.

Some watch, some call, some see her head emerge,
 Wherever a brown weed falls through the foam ;
 Some point to white eruptions of the surge :
 But she is vanished to her shady home
 Under the deep, inscrutable—and there
 Weeps in a midnight made of her own hair.

CXVII.

Now here, the sighing winds, before unheard,
 Forth from their cloudy caves begin to blow,
 Till all the surface of the deep is stirred,
 Like to the panting grief it hides below ;
 And heaven is covered with a stormy rack,
 Soiling the waters with its inky black.

CXVIII.

The screaming fowl resigns her finny prey,
 And labours shoreward with a bending wing,
 Rowing against the wind her toilsome way ;
 Meanwhile the curling billows chafe, and fling
 Their dewy frost still further on the stones,
 That answer to the wind with hollow groans.

CXIX.

And here and there a fisher's far-off bark
 Flies with the sun's last glimpse upon its sail,
 Like a bright flame amid the waters dark,
 Watched with the hope and fear of maidens pale ;
 And anxious mothers that upturn their brows,
 Freighting the gusty wind with frequent vows,

CXX.

For that the horrid deep has no sure track
 To guide love safe into his homely haven.
 And lo ! the storm grows blacker in its wrath,
 O'er the dark billow brooding like a raven,
 That bodes of death and widow's sorrowing,
 Under the dusky covering of his wing.

CXXI.

And so day ended. But no vesper spark
 Hung forth its heavenly sign ; but sheets of flame
 Played round the savage features of the dark,
 Making night horrible. That night there came
 A weeping maiden to high Sestos' steep,
 And tore her hair and gazed upon the deep.

CXXII.

And waved aloft her bright and ruddy torch,
 Whose flame the boastful wind so rudely fanned,
 That oft it would recoil, and basely scorch
 The tender covert of her sheltering hand ;
 Which yet, for love's dear sake, disdained retire,
 And, like a glorying martyr, braved the fire.

CXXIII.

For that was love's own sign and beacon guide
 Across the Hellespont's wide weary space,
 Wherein he nightly struggled with the tide ;
 Look what a red it forges on her face,
 As if she blushed at holding such a light,
 Even in the unseen presence of the night !

CXXIV.

Whereas her tragic cheek is truly pale,
 And colder than the rude and ruffian air
 That howls into her ear a horrid tale
 Of storm, and wreck, and uttermost despair,
 Saying, " Leander floats amid the surge,
 And those are dismal waves that sing his dirge."

CXXV.

And hark!—a grieving voice, trembling and faint,
 Blends with the hollow sobbings of the sea ;
 Like the sad music of a siren's plaint,
 But shriller than Leander's voice should be,
 Unless the wintry death has changed its tone—
 Wherefore she thinks she hears his spirit moan.

CXXVI.

For now, upon each brief and breathless pause,
 Made by the raging winds, it plainly calls
 On Hero ! Hero !—whereupon she draws
 Close to the dizzy brink, that ne'er appals
 Her brave and constant spirit to recoil,
 However the wild billows toss and toil.

CXXVII.

“ Oh ! dost thou live under the deep, deep sea ?
 I thought such love as thine could never die ;
 If thou hast gained an immortality,
 From the kind pitying sea-god, so will I ;
 And this false cruel tide that used to sever
 Our hearts, shall be our common home for ever !

CXXVIII.

“ There we will sit and sport upon one billow,
 And sing our ocean ditties all the day,
 And lie together on the same green pillow,
 That curls above us with its dewy spray ;
 And ever in one presence live and dwell,
 Like two twin pearls within the selfsame shell.”

CXXIX.

One moment, then, upon the dizzy verge
 She stands, with face upturned against the sky ;
 A moment more, upon the foamy surge
 She gazes, with a calm despairing eye ;
 Feeling that awful pause of blood and breath,
 Which life endures when it confronts with death ;

CXXX.

Then from the giddy steep she madly springs,
 Grasping her maiden robes, that vainly kept
 Panting abroad, like unavailing wings,
 To save her from her death.—The sea-maid wept,
 And in a crystal cave her corse enshrined,
 No meaner sepulchre should Hero find !

LYCUS, THE CENTAUR.

From an Unrolled Manuscript of Apollonius Curius.

TO J. H. REYNOLDS, ESQ.

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,—You will remember “Lycus.”—It was written in the pleasant spring-time of our friendship, and I am glad to maintain that association by connecting your name with the poem. It will gratify me to find that you regard it with the old partiality for the writings of each other which prevailed in those days. For my own sake, I must regret that your pen goes now into far other records than those which used to delight me.

Your true Friend and Brother,

T. HOOD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Lycus, detained by Circe in her magical dominion, is beloved by a Water Nymph, who, desiring to render him immortal, has recourse to the Sorceress. Circe gives her an incantation to pronounce, which should turn Lycus into a horse; but the horrible effect of the charm causing her to break off in the midst, he becomes a Centaur.

WHO hath ever been lured and bound by a spell
 To wander, fore-doomed, in that circle of hell
 Where witchery works with her will like a god,
 Works more than the wonders of time at a nod,—
 At a word,—at a touch,—at a flash of the eye,
 But each form is a cheat, and each sound is a lie,
 Things born of a wish—to endure for a thought,
 Or last for long ages—to vanish to nought,
 Or put on new semblance? O Jove, I had given
 The throne of a kingdom to know if that heaven
 And the earth and its streams were of Circe, or whether
 They kept the world's birthday and brightened together;
 For I loved them in terror, and constantly dreaded
 That the earth where I trod, and the cave where I bedded,
 The face I might dote on, should live out the lease
 Of the charm that created, and suddenly cease;
 And I gave me to slumber, as if from one dream
 To another—each other—and drank of the stream
 Like a first taste of blood, lest as water I quaffed
 Swift poison, and never should breathe from the draught,—
 Such drink as her own monarch husband drained up
 When he pledged her, and Fate closed his eyes in the cup.
 And I plucked of the fruit with held breath, and a fear
 That the branch would start back and scream out in my ear;
 For once, at my suppering, I plucked in the dusk
 An apple, juice-gushing and fragrant of musk;
 But by daylight my fingers were crimsoned with gore,
 And the half-eaten fragment was flesh at the core;

And once—only once—for the love of its blush,
 I broke a bloom bough, but there came such a gush
 On my hand, that it fainted away in weak fright,
 While the leaf-hidden woodpecker shrieked at the sight ;
 And oh ! such an agony thrilled in that note,
 That my soul, startling up, beat its wings in my throat,
 As it longed to be free of a body whose hand
 Was doomed to work torments a Fury had planned !

There I stood without stir, yet how willing to flee,
 As if rooted and horror-turned into a tree,—
 Oh ! for innocent death,—and to suddenly win it,
 I drank of the stream, but no poison was in it ;
 I plunged in its waters, but ere I could sink,
 Some invisible fate pulled me back to the brink ;
 I sprang from the rock, from its pinnacle height,
 But fell on the grass, with a grasshopper's flight ;
 I ran at my fears—they were fears and no more,
 For the bear would not mangle my limbs, nor the boar,
 But moaned,—all their brutalized flesh could not smother,
 The horrible truth,—we were kin to each other !

They were mournfully gentle, and grouped for relief,
 All foes in their skin, but all friends in their grief :
 The leopard was there,—baby-mild in its feature ;
 And the tiger, black barred, with the gaze of a creature
 That knew gentle pity ; the bristle-backed boar,
 His innocent tusks stained with mulberry gore ;
 And the laughing hyena—but laughing no more ;
 And the snake, not with magical orbs to devise
 Strange death, but with woman's attraction of eyes ;
 The tall ugly ape, that still bore a dim shine
 Through his hairy eclipse of a manhood divine ;
 And the elephant stately, with more than its reason,
 How thoughtful in sadness ! but this is no reason
 To reckon them up from the lag-bellied toad
 To the mammoth, whose sobs shook his ponderous load.
 There were woes of all shapes, wretched forms, when I came,
 That hung down their heads with a human-like shame ;
 The elephant hid in the boughs, and the bear
 Shed over his eyes the dark veil of his hair ;
 And the womanly soul turning sick with disgust,
 Tried to vomit herself from her serpentine crust ;
 While all groaned their groans into one at their lot,
 As I brought them the image of what they were not.

Then rose a wild sound of the human voice choking
 Through vile brutal organs—low tremulous croaking ;

Cries swallowed abruptly—deep animal tones
 Attuned to strange passion, and full-uttered groans ;
 All shuddering weaker, till hushed in a pause
 Of tongues in mute motion and wide-yearning jaws ;
 And I guessed that those horrors were meant to tell o'er
 The tale of their woes ; but the silence told more
 That writhed on their tongues ; and I knelt on the sod,
 And prayed with my voice to the cloud-stirring God,
 For the sad congregation of supplicants there,
 That upturned to his heaven brute faces of prayer ;
 And I ceased, and they uttered a moaning so deep,
 That I wept for my heart-ease,—but they could not weep,
 And gazed with red eyeballs, all wistfully dry,
 At the comfort of tears in a stag's human eye.
 Then I motioned them round, and, to soothe their distress,
 I caressed, and they bent them to meet my caress,
 Their necks to my arm, and their heads to my palm,
 And with poor grateful eyes suffered meekly and calm
 Those tokens of kindness, withheld by hard fate
 From returns that might chill the warm pity to hate ;
 So they passively bowed—save the serpent, that leapt
 To my breast like a sister, and pressingly crept
 In embrace of my neck, and with close kisses blistered
 My lips in rash love,—then drew backward, and glistened
 Her eyes in my face, and loud hissing affright,
 Dropt down, and swift started away from my sight !

This sorrow was theirs, but thrice wretched my lot,
 Turned brute in my soul, though my body was not
 When I fled from the sorrow of womanly faces,
 That shrouded their woe in the shade of lone places,
 And dashed off bright tears, till their fingers were wet,
 And then wiped their lids with long tresses of jet :
 But I fled—though they stretched out their hands, all entangled
 With hair, and blood-stained of the breasts they had mangled—
 Though they called—and perchance but to ask, had I seen
 Their loves, or to tell the vile wrongs that had been :
 But I stayed not to hear, lest the story should hold
 Some hell-form of words, some enchantment once told,
 Might translate me in flesh to a brute ; and I dreaded
 To gaze on their charms, lest my faith should be wedded
 With some pity,—and love in that pity perchance—
 To a thing not all lovely ; for, once at a glance
 Methought, where one sat, I descried a bright wonder
 That flowed like a long silver rivulet under
 The long fenny grass, with so lovely a breast,
 Could it be a snake-tail made the charm of the rest ?

So I roamed in that circle of horrors, and Fear
 Walked with me, by hills, and in valleys, and near
 Clustered trees for their gloom—not to shelter from heat
 But lest a brute-shadow should grow at my feet ;
 And besides that, full oft in the sunshiny place,
 Dark shadows would gather like clouds on its face,
 In the horrible likeness of demons, (that none
 Could see, like invisible flames in the sun ;)
 But grew to one monster that seized on the light,
 Like the dragon that strangles the moon in the night ;
 Fierce sphinxes, long serpents, and asps of the South ;
 Wild birds of huge beak, and all horrors that drouth
 Engenders of slime in the land of the pest,
 Vile shapes without shape, and foul bats of the West,
 Bringing Night on their wings ; and the bodies wherein
 Great Brahma imprisons the spirits of sin,
 Many-handed, that blent in one phantom fight
 Like a Titan, and threatfully warred with the light ;
 I have heard the wild shriek that gave signal to close,
 When they rushed on that shadowy Python of foes ;
 That met with sharp beaks and wide gaping of jaws,
 With flapping of wings, and fierce grasping of claws,
 And whirls of long tails :—I have seen the quick flutter
 Of fragments dissevered,—and necks stretched to utter
 Long screamings of pain,—the swift motion of blows,
 And wrestling of arms—to the flight at the close,
 When the dust of the earth startled upward in rings,
 And flew on the whirlwind that followed their wings.

Thus they fled—not forgotten—but often to grow
 Like fears in my eyes, when I walked to and fro
 In the shadows, and felt from some beings unseen
 The warm touch of kisses, but clean or unclean
 I knew not, nor whether the love I had won
 Was of heaven or hell—till one day in the sun,
 In its very noon-blaze, I could fancy a thing
 Of beauty, but faint as the cloud-mirrors fling
 On the gaze of the shepherd that watches the sky,
 Half-seen and half-dreamed in the soul of his eye.
 And when in my musings I gazed on the stream,
 In motionless trances of thought, there would seem
 A face like that face, looking upward through mine ;
 With its eyes full of love, and the dim-drowned shine
 Of limbs and fair garments, like clouds in that blue
 Serene :—there I stood for long hours but to view
 Those fond earnest eyes that were ever uplifted
 Towards me, and winked as the water-weed drifted

Between ; but the fish knew that presence, and plied
Their long curvy tails, and swift darted aside.

There I gazed for lost time, and forgot all the things
That once had been wonders—the fishes with wings,
And the glimmer of magnified eyes that looked up
From the glooms of the bottom, like pearls in a cup,
And the huge endless serpent of silvery gleam,
Slow winding along like a tide in the stream.
Some maid of the waters, some Naiad, methought
Held me dear in the pearl of her eye—and I brought
My wish to that fancy ; and often I dashed
My limbs in the water, and suddenly splashed
The cool drops around me, yet clung to the brink,
Chilled by watery fears, how that Beauty might sink
With my life in her arms to her garden, and bind me
With its long tangled grasses, or cruelly wind me
In some eddy to hum out my life in her ear,
Like a spider-caught bee,—and in aid of that fear
Came the tardy remembrance—Oh falsest of men !
Why was not that beauty remembered till then ?
My love, my safe love, whose glad life would have run
Into mine—like a drop—that our fate might be one,
That now, even now, maybe, clasped in a dream,
That form which I gave to some jilt of the stream,
And gazed with fond eyes that her tears tried to smother,
On a mock of those eyes that I gave to another !

Then I rose from the stream, but the eyes of my mind,
Still full of the tempter, kept gazing behind
On her crystalline face, while I painfully leapt
To the bank, and shook off the curst waters, and wept
With my brow in the reeds ; and the reeds to my ear
Bowed, bent by no wind, and in whispers of fear,
Growing small with large secrets, foretold me of one
That loved me,—but oh ! to fly from her, and shun
Her love like a pest—though her love was as true
To mine as her stream to the heavenly blue ;
For why should I love her with love that would bring
All misfortune, like Hate, on so joyous a thing ?
Because of her rival,—even her whose witch face
I had slighted, and therefore was doomed in that place
To roam, and had roamed, where all horrors grew rank,
Nine days ere I wept with my brow on that bank ;
Her name be not named, but her spite would not fail
To our love like a blight ; and they told me the tale
Of Scylla, and Picus, imprisoned to speak
His shrill-screaming woe through a woodpecker's beak.

Then they ceased—I had heard as the voice of my star
 That told me the truth of my fortunes—thus far
 I had read of my sorrow ; and lay in the hush
 Of deep meditation,—when lo ! a light crush
 Of the reeds, and I turned and looked round in the night
 Of new sunshine, and saw, as I sipped of the light
 Narrow-winking, the realized nymph of the stream,
 Rising up from the wave with the bend and the gleam
 Of a fountain, and o'er her white arms she kept throwing
 Bright torrents of hair, that went flowing and flowing
 In falls to her feet, and the blue waters rolled
 Down her limbs like a garment, in many a fold,
 Sun-spangled, gold-broidered, and fled far behind,
 Like an infinite train. So she came and reclined
 In the reeds, and I hungered to see her unseal
 The buds of her eyes, that would ope and reveal
 The blue that was in them ; and they ope'd, and she raised
 Two orbs of pure crystal, and timidly gazed
 With her eyes on my eyes ; but their colour and shine
 Was of that which they looked on, and mostly of mine—
 For she loved me,—except when she blushed, and they sank,
 Shame-humbled, to number the stones on the bank,
 Or her play-idle fingers, while lisping she told me
 How she put on her veil, and in love to behold me,
 Would wing through the sun till she fainted away
 Like a mist, and then flew to her waters, and lay
 In love-patience long hours, and sore dazzled her eyes
 In watching for mine 'gainst the midsummer skies.
 But now they were healed,—O my heart, it still dances
 When I think of the charm of her changeable glances,
 And my image how small when it sank in the deep
 Of her eyes where her soul was,—alas ! now they weep,
 And none knoweth where. In what stream do her eyes
 Shed invisible tears ? Who beholds where her sighs
 Flow in eddies, or sees the ascent of the leaf
 She has plucked with her tresses ? Who listens her grief
 Like a far fall of waters, or hears where her feet
 Grow emphatic among the loose pebbles, and beat
 Them together ? Ah ! surely her flowers float adown
 To the sea unaccepted, and little ones drown
 For need of her mercy,—even he, whose twin brother
 Will miss him for ever ; and the sorrowful mother
 Imploresth in vain for his body to kiss
 And cling to, all dripping and cold as it is,
 Because that soft pity is lost in hard pain !
 We loved,—how we loved !—for I thought not again
 Of the woes that were whispered like fears in that place

If I gave me to beauty. Her face was the face
 Far away, and her eyes were the eyes that were drowned
 For my absence,—her arms were the arms that sought round,
 And clasped me to nought; for I gazed, and became
 Only true to my falsehood, and had but one name
 For two loves, and called ever on *Ægle*, sweet maid
 Of the sky-loving waters,—and was not afraid
 Of the sight of her skin ;—for it never could be,
 Her beauty and love were misfortunes to me !

Thus our bliss had endured for a time-shortened space,
 Like a day made of three, and the smile of her face
 Had been with me for joy,—when she told me indeed
 Her love was self-tasked with a work that would need
 Some short hours, for in truth 'twas the veriest pity
 Our love should not last, and then sang me a ditty,
 Of one with warm lips that should love her, and love her
 When suns were burnt dim and long ages past over.
 So she fled with her voice, and I patiently nested
 My limbs in the reeds, in still quiet, and rested
 Till my thoughts grew extinct, and I sank in a sleep
 Of dreams,—but their meaning was hidden too deep
 To be read what their woe was ;—but still it was woe
 That was writ on all faces that swam to and fro
 In that river of night ;—and the gaze of their eyes
 Was sad,—and the bend of their brows,—and their cries
 Were seen, but I heard not. The warm touch of tears
 Travelled down my cold cheeks, and I shook till my fears
 Awaked me, and lo ! I was couched in a bower,
 The growth of long summers reared up in an hour !
 Then I said, in the fear of my dream, I will fly
 From this magic, but could not, because that my eye
 Grew love-idle among the rich blooms ; and the earth
 Held me down with its coolness of touch, and the mirth
 Of some bird was above me,—who, even in fear,
 Would startle the thrush ? and methought there drew near
 A form as of *Ægle*,—but it was not the face
 Hope made, and I knew the witch-queen of that place,
 Even *Circe the Cruel*, that came like a Death
 Which I feared, and yet fled not, for want of my breath.
 There was thought in her face, and her eyes were not raised
 From the grass at her foot, but I saw, as I gazed,
 Her spite—and her countenance changed with her mind
 As she planned how to thrall me with beauty, and bind
 My soul to her charms,—and her long tresses played
 From shade into shine and from shine into shade,
 Like a day in mid-autumn,—first fair, O how fair !

With long snaky locks of the adderblack hair
 That clung round her neck,—those dark locks that I prize,
 For the sake of a maid that once loved me with eyes
 Of that fathomless hue,—but they changed as they rolled,
 And brightened, and suddenly blazed into gold
 That she combed into flames, and the locks that fell down,
 Turned dark as they fell, but I slighted their brown,
 Nor loved, till I saw the light ringlets shed wild,
 That innocence wears when she is but a child ;
 And her eyes,—O I ne'er had been witched with their shine,
 Had they been any other, my Ægle, than thine !

Then I gave me to magic, and gazed till I maddened
 In the full of their light,—but I saddened and saddened
 The deeper I looked,—till I sank on the snow
 Of her bosom, a thing made of terror and woe,
 And answered its throb with the shudder of fears,
 And hid my cold eyes from her eyes with my tears,
 And strained her white arms with the still languid weight
 Of a fainting distress. There she sat like the Fate
 That is nurse unto Death, and bent over in shame
 To hide me from her—the true Ægle—that came
 With the words on her lips the false witch had foregiven
 To make me immortal—for now I was even
 At the portals of Death, who but waited the hush
 Of world-sounds in my ear to cry welcome, and rush
 With my soul to the banks of his black-flowing river.
 O would it had flown from my body for ever,
 Ere I listened those words, when I felt with a start,
 The life-blood rush back in one throb to my heart,
 And saw the pale lips where the rest of that spell
 Had perished in horror—and heard the farewell
 Of that voice that was drowned in the dash of the stream :
 How fain had I followed, and plunged with that scream
 Into death, but my being indignantly lagged
 Through the brutalized flesh that I painfully dragged
 Behind me :—“ O Circe ! O mother of Spite !
 Speak the last of that curse ! and imprison me quite
 In the husk of a brute,—that no pity may name
 The man that I was,—that no kindred may claim
 The monster I am ! Let me utterly be
 Brute-buried, and Nature's dishonour with me
 Uninscribed !”—But she listened my prayer, that was praise
 To her malice, with smiles, and advised me to gaze
 On the river for love,—and perchance she would make
 In pity a maid without eyes for my sake,
 And she left me like Scorn. Then I asked of the wave,

What monster I was, and it trembled and gave
 The true shape of my grief, and I turned with my face
 From all waters for ever, and fled through that place,
 Till with horror more strong than all magic I passed
 Its bounds, and the world was before me at last.

There I wandered in sorrow, and shunned the abodes
 Of men, that stood up in the likeness of Gods,
 But I saw from afar the warm shine of the sun
 On their cities, where man was a million, not one ;
 And I saw the white smoke of their altars ascending,
 That showed where the hearts of the many were blending,
 And the wind in my face brought shrill voices that came
 From the trumpets that gathered whole bands in one fame
 As a chorus of man,—and they streamed from the gates
 Like a dusky libation poured out to the Fates.
 But at times there were gentler processions of peace,
 That I watched with my soul in my eyes till their cease,
 There were women ! there men ! but to me a third sex
 I saw them all dots—yet I loved them as specks :
 And oft to assuage a sad yearning of eyes
 I stole near the city, but stole covert-wise
 Like a wild-beast of love, and perchance to be smitten
 By some hand that I rather had wept on than bitten !
 Oh, I once had a haunt near a cot, where a mother
 Daily sat in the shade with her child, and would smother
 Its eyelids in kisses, and then in its sleep
 Sang dreams in its ear of its manhood, while deep
 In a thicket of willows I gazed o'er the brooks
 That murmured between us and kissed them with looks ;
 But the willows unbosomed their secret, and never
 I returned to the spot I had startled for ever ;
 Though I oft longed to know, but could ask it of none,
 Was the mother still fair, and how big was her son ?

For the haunters of fields they all shunned me by flight,
 The men in their horror, the women in fright ;
 None ever remained save a child once that sported
 Among the wild bluebells, and playfully courted
 The breeze ; and beside him a speckled snake lay
 Tight strangled, because it had hissed him away
 From the flower at his finger ; he rose and drew near
 Like a Son of Immortals, one born to no fear,
 But with strength of black locks and with eyes azure bright
 To grow to large manhood of merciful might.
 He came, with his face of bold wonder, to feel
 The hair of my side, and to lift up my heel,

And questioned my face with wide eyes ; but when under
 My lids he saw tears,—for I wept at his wonder,
 He stroked me, and uttered such kindness then,
 That the once love of women, the friendship of men
 In past sorrow, no kindness e'er came like a kiss
 On my heart in its desolate day such as this !
 And I yearned at his cheeks in my love, and down bent,
 And lifted him up in my arms with intent
 To kiss him,—but he cruel-kindly, alas !
 Held out to my lips a plucked handful of grass !
 Then I dropt him in horror, but felt as I fled
 The stone he indignantly hurled at my head,
 That dissevered my ear,—but I felt not, whose fate
 Was to meet more distress in his love than his hate !

Thus I wandered, companioned of grief and forlorn,
 Till I wished for that land where my being was born,
 But what was that land with its love, where my home
 Was self-shut against me ; for why should I come
 Like an after-distress to my grey-bearded father,
 With a blight to the last of his sight ?—let him rather
 Lament for me dead, and shed tears in the urn
 Where I was not, and still in fond memory turn
 To his son even such as he left him. Oh, how
 Could I walk with the youth once my fellows, but now
 Like Gods to my humbled estate ?—or how bear
 The steeds once the pride of eyes and the care
 Of my hands ? Then I turned me self-banished, and came
 Into Thessaly here, where I met with the same
 As myself. I have heard how they met by a stream
 In games, and were suddenly changed by a scream
 That made wretches of many, as she rolled her wild eyes
 Against heaven, and so vanished.—The gentle and wise
 Lose their thoughts in deep studies, and others their ill
 In the mirth of mankind where they mingle them still.

THE TWO PEACOCKS OF BEDFONT.

I.

ALAS ! that breathing Vanity should go
 Where Pride is buried,—like its very ghost,
 Uprisen from the naked bones below,
 In novel flesh, clad in the silent boast
 Of gaudy silk that flutters to and fro,
 Shedding its chilling superstition most
 On young and ignorant natures—as it wont
 To haunt the peaceful churchyard of Bedfont !

II.

Each Sabbath morning, at the hour of prayer,
 Behold two maidens, up the quiet green
 Shining, far distant, in the summer air
 That flaunts their dewy robes and breathes between
 Their downy plumes,—sailing as if they were
 Two far-off ships,—until they brush between
 The churchyard's humble walls, and watch and wait
 On either side of the wide opened gate.

III.

And there they stand—with haughty necks before
 God's holy house, that points towards the skies—
 Frowning reluctant duty from the poor,
 And tempting homage from unthoughtful eyes:
 And Youth looks lingering from the temple door,
 Breathing its wishes in unfruitful sighs,
 With pouting lips,—forgetful of the grace,
 Of health, and smiles, on the heart-conscious face ;

IV.

Because that Wealth, which has no bliss beside,
 May wear the happiness of rich attire ;
 And those two sisters, in their silly pride,
 May change the soul's warm glances for the fire
 Of lifeless diamonds ;—and for health denied,—
 With art, that blushes at itself, inspire
 Their languid cheeks—and flourish in a glory
 That has no life in life, nor after-story.

V.

The aged priest goes shaking his grey hair
 In meekest censuring, and turns his eye
 Earthward in grief, and heavenward in prayer,
 And sighs, and clasps his hands, and passes by.
 Good-hearted man ! what sullen soul would wear
 Thy sorrow for a garb, and constantly
 Put on thy censure, that might win the praise
 Of one so grey in goodness and in days ?

VI.

Also the solemn clerk partakes the shame
 Of this ungodly shine of human pride,
 And sadly blends his reverence and blame
 In one grave bow, and passes with a stride
 Impatient :—many a red-hooded dame
 Turns her pained head, but not her glance, aside
 For wanton dress, and marvels o'er again,
 That heaven hath no wet judgments for the vain.

VII.

" I have a lily in the bloom at home,"
 Quoth one, " and by the blessed Sabbath day
 I'll pluck my lily in its pride, and come
 And read a lesson upon vain array ;
 And when stiff silks are rustling up, and some
 Give place, I'll shake it in proud eyes and say—
 Making my reverence,—' Ladies, an' you please,
 King Solomon's not half so fine as these.' "

VIII.

Then her meek partner, who has nearly run
 His earthly course,—" Nay, Goody, let your text
 Grow in the garden. We have only one—
 Who knows that these dim eyes may see the next ?
 Summer will come again, and summer sun,
 And lilies too,—but I were sorely vext
 To mar my garden, and cut short the blow
 Of the last lily I may live to grow."

IX.

" The last ! " quoth she, " and though the last it were—
 Lo ! those two wantons, where they stand so proud
 With waving plumes, and jewels in their hair,
 And painted cheeks, like Dagens to be bowed
 And curtsyed to !—last Sabbath after prayer,
 I heard the little Tomkins ask aloud
 If they were angels—but I made him know
 God's bright ones better, with a bitter blow ! "

X.

So speaking, they pursue the pebbly walk
 That leads to the white porch the Sunday throng,
 Hand-coupled urchins in restrained talk,
 And anxious pedagogue that chastens wrong,
 And posied churchwarden with solemn stalk,
 And gold-bedizened beadle flames along,
 And gentle peasant clad in buff and green,
 Like a meek cowslip in the spring serene ;

XI.

And blushing maiden—modestly arrayed
 In spotless white,—still conscious of the glass ;
 And she, the lonely widow, that hath made
 A sable covenant with grief,—alas !
 She veils her tears under the deep, deep shade,
 While the poor kindly-hearted, as they pass,
 Bend to unclouded childhood, and caress
 Her boy,—so rosy !—and so fatherless !

XII.

Thus, as good Christians ought, they all drew near
 The fair white temple, to the timely call
 Of pleasant bells that tremble in the ear.

Now the last frock, and scarlet hood, and shawl
 Fade into dusk, in the dim atmosphere

Of the low porch, and heaven has won them all,—
 Saving those two, that turn aside and pass
 In velvet blossom, where all flesh is grass.

XIII.

Ah me ! to see their silken manors trailed
 In purple luxuries—with restless gold,—
 Flaunting the grass where widowhood has wailed

In blotted black,—over the heapy mould
 Panting wave-wantonly ! They never quailed

How the warm vanity abused the cold ;
 Nor saw the solemn faces of the gone
 Sadly uplooking through transparent stone :

XIV.

But swept their dwellings with unquiet light,
 Shocking the awful presence of the dead ;
 Where gracious natures would their eyes benight,
 Nor wear their being with a lip too red,
 Nor move too rudely in the summer bright
 Of sun, but put staid sorrow in their tread,
 Meting it into steps, with inward breath,
 In very pity to bereaved death.

XV.

Now in the church, time-sobered minds resign
 To solemn prayer, and the loud-chaunted hymn,—
 With glowing picturings of joys divine

Painting the mistlight where the roof is dim ;
 But youth looks upward to the window shine,
 Warming with rose, and purple, and the swim
 Of gold, as if thought-tinted by the stains
 Of gorgeous light through many-coloured panes ;

XVI.

Soiling the virgin snow wherein God hath
 Enrobed his angels,—and with absent eyes
 Hearing of Heaven, and its directed path,
 Thoughtful of slippers,—and the glorious skies
 Clouding with satin,—till the preacher's wrath
 Consumes his pity, and he glows and cries,
 With a deep voice that trembles in its might,
 And earnest eyes grown eloquent in light :

XVII.

“ O that the vacant eye would learn to look
 On very beauty, and the heart embrace
 True loveliness, and from this holy book
 Drink the warm-breathing tenderness and grace
 Of love indeed ! O that the young soul took
 Its virgin passion from the glorious face
 Of fair religion, and addressed its strife,
 To win the riches of eternal life !

XVIII.

“ Doth the vain heart love glory that is none,
 And the poor excellence of vain attire ?
 O go, and drown your eyes against the sun,
 The visible ruler of the starry quire,
 Till boiling gold in giddy eddies run,
 Dazzling the brain with orbs of living fire :
 And the faint soul down darkens into night,
 And dies a burning martyrdom to light.

XIX.

“ O go, and gaze—when the low winds of ev'n
 Breathe hymns, and Nature's many forests nod
 Their gold-crowned heads ; and the rich blooms of heav'n
 Sun-ripened give their blushes up to God ;
 And mountain-rocks and cloudy steeps are riv'n
 By founts of fire, as smitten by the rod
 Of heavenly Moses,—that your thirsty sense
 May quench its longings of magnificence !

XX.

“ Yet suns shall perish—stars shall fade away—
 Day into darkness—darkness into death—
 Death into silence ; the warm light of day,
 The blooms of summer, the rich glowing breath
 Of even—all shall wither and decay.
 Like the frail furniture of dreams beneath
 The touch of morn—or bubbles of rich dyes
 That break and vanish in the aching eyes.”

XXI.

They hear, soul-blushing, and repentant shed
 Unwholesome thoughts in wholesome tears, and pour
 Their sin to earth,—and with low drooping head
 Receive the solemn blessing, and implore
 Its grace—then soberly with chastened tread,
 They meekly press towards the gusty door,
 With humbled eyes that go to gaze upon
 The lowly grass—like him of Babylon.

XXII.

The lowly grass !— O water-constant mind !
 Fast-ebbing holiness !— soon-fading grace
 Of serious thought, as if the gushing wind
 Through the low porch had washed it from the face
 For ever ! How they lift their eyes to find
 Old vanities. Pride wins the very place
 Of meekness, like a bird, and flutters now
 With idle wings on the curl-conscious brow !

XXIII.

And lo ! with eager looks they seek the way
 Of old temptation at the lowly gate ;
 To feast on feathers, and on vain array,
 And painted cheeks, and the rich glistening state
 Of jewel-sprinkled locks. But where are they,
 The graceless haughty ones that used to wait
 With lofty neck, and nods, and stiffened eye ?
 None challenge the old homage bending by.

XXIV.

In vain they look for the ungracious bloom
 Of rich apparel where it glowed before,—
 For Vanity has faded all to gloom,
 And lofty Pride has stiffened to the core,
 For impious Life to tremble at its doom,—
 Set for a warning token evermore,
 Whereon, as now, the giddy and the wise
 Shall gaze with lifted hands and wond'ring eyes.

XXV.

The aged priest goes on each Sabbath morn,
 But shakes not sorrow under his grey hair ;
 The solemn clerk goes lavendered and shorn,
 Nor stoops his back to the ungodly pair ;
 And ancient lips that puckered up in scorn,
 Go smoothly breathing to the house of pray'r ;
 And in the garden-plot, from day to day,
 The lily blooms its long white life away.

XXVI.

And where two haughty maidens used to be,
 In pride of plume, where plummy Death had trod,
 Trailing their gorgeous velvets wantonly,
 Most unmeet pall, over the holy sod ;
 There, gentle stranger, thou may'st only see
 Two sombre Peacocks.— Age, with sapient nod
 Marking the spot, still tarries to declare
 How they once lived, and wherefore they are there.

THE TWO SWANS.

A FAIRY TALE.

IMMORTAL Imogen, crown'd queen above
 The lilies of thy sex, vouchsafe to hear
 A fairy dream in honour of true love—
 True above ills, and frailty, and all fear—
 Perchance a shadow of his own career
 Whose youth was darkly prison'd and long-twined
 By serpent sorrow, till white Love drew near,
 And sweetly sang him free, and round his mind
 A bright horizon threw, wherein no grief may wind.

I saw a tower builded on a lake,
 Mock'd by its inverse shadow, dark and deep—
 That seem'd a still intenser night to make,
 Wherein the quiet waters sank to sleep,—
 And, whatsoever was prison'd in that keep,
 A monstrous Snake was warden :—round and round
 In sable ringlets I beheld him creep,
 Blackest amid black shadows, to the ground,
 Whilst his enormous head the topmast turret crown'd.

From whence he shot fierce light against the stars,
 Making the pale moon paler with affright ;
 And with his ruby eye out-threaten'd Mars—
 That blazed in the mid-heavens, hot and bright—
 Nor slept, nor wink'd, but with a steadfast spite
 Watch'd their wan looks and tremblings in the skies ;
 And that he might not slumber in the night,
 The curtain-lids were pluck'd from his large eyes,
 So he might never drowse, but watch his secret prize.

Prince or princess in dismal durance pent,
 Victims of old Enchantment's love or hate,
 Their lives must all in painful sighs be spent,
 Watching the lonely waters soon and late,
 And clouds that pass and leave them to their fate.
 Or company their grief with heavy tears :—
 Meanwhile that Hope can spy no golden gate
 For sweet escapement, but in darksome fears
 They weep and pine away as if immortal years.

No gentle bird with gold upon its wing
 Will perch upon the grate—the gentle bird
 Is safe in leafy dell, and will not bring
 Freedom's sweet key-note and commission-word
 Learn'd of a fairy's lips, for pity stirr'd—

Lest while he trembling sings, untimely guest !
 Watch'd by that cruel Snake and darkly heard,
 He leave a widow on her lonely nest,
 To press in silent grief the darlings of her breast.

No gallant knight, adventurous, in his bark,
 Will seek the fruitful perils of the place,
 To rouse with dipping oar the waters dark
 That bear the serpent-image on their face.
 And Love, brave Love ! though he attempt the base,
 Nerved to his loyal death, he may not win
 His captive lady from the strict embrace
 Of that foul Serpent, clasping her within
 His sable folds—like Eve enthrall'd by the old Sin.

But there is none—no knight in panoply,
 Nor Love, intrench'd in his strong steely coat ;
 No little speck—no sail—no helper nigh,
 No sign—no whispering—no splash of boat :—
 The distant shores show dimly and remote,
 Made of a deeper mist,—serene and grey,—
 And slow and mute the cloudy shadows float
 Over the gloomy wave, and pass away,
 Chased by the silver beams that on their marges play.

And bright and silvery the willows sleep
 Over the shady verge—no mad winds tease
 Their hoary heads ; but quietly they weep
 Their sprinkling leaves—half fountains and half trees :
 There lilies be—and fairer than all these,
 A solitary Swan her breast of snow
 Launches against the wave that seems to freeze
 Into a chaste reflection, still below
 Twin shadow of herself wherever she may go.

And forth she paddles in the very noon
 Of solemn midnight like an elfin thing,
 Charm'd into being by the argent moon—
 Whose silver light for love of her fair wing
 Goes with her in the shade, still worshipping
 Her dainty plumage :—all around her grew
 A radiant circlet, like a fairy ring ;
 And all behind, a tiny little clue
 Of light, to guide her back across the waters blue.

And sure she is no meaner than a fay
 Redeem'd from sleepy death, for beauty's sake.
 By old ordainment :—silent as she lay,

Touch'd by a moonlight wand I saw her wake,
 And cut her leafy slough, and so forsake
 The verdant prison of her lily peers,
 That slept amidst the stars upon the lake—
 A breathing shape—restored to human fears,
 And new-born love and grief—self-conscious of her tears.

And now she clasps her wings around her heart,
 And near that lonely isle begins to glide,
 Pale as her fears, and oft-times with a start
 Turns her impatient head from side to side
 In universal terrors—all too wide
 To watch ; and often to that marble keep
 Upturns her pearly eyes, as if she spied
 Some foe, and crouches in the shadows steep
 That in the gloomy wave go diving fathoms deep.

And well she may, to spy that fearful thing
 All down the dusky walls in circlets wound,
 Alas ! for what rare prize, with many a ring
 Girding the marble casket round and round ?
 His folded tail, lost in the gloom profound,
 Terribly darkeneth the rocky base ;
 But on the top his monstrous head is crown'd
 With prickly spears, and on his doubtful face
 Gleam his unwearied eyes, red watchers of the place.

Alas ! of the hot fires that nightly fall,
 No one will scorch him in those orbs of spite,
 So he may never see beneath the wall
 That timid little creature, all too bright,
 That stretches her fair neck, slender and white,
 Invoking the pale moon, and vainly tries
 Her throbbing throat, as if to charm the night
 With song—but, hush—it perishes in sighs,
 And there will be no dirge sad-swelling, though she dies !

She droops—she sinks—she leans upon the lake,
 Fainting again into a lifeless flower ;
 But soon the chilly springs anoint and wake
 Her spirit from its death, and with new power
 She sheds her stifled sorrows in a shower
 Of tender song, timed to her falling tears—
 That wins the shady summit of that tower,
 And, trembling all the sweeter for its fears,
 Fills with imploring moan that cruel monster's ears.

And, lo ! the scaly beast is all deprest,
 Subdued like Argus by the might of sound—

What time Apollo his sweet lute addrest
 To magic converse with the air, and bound
 The many monster eyes, all slumber-drown'd :—
 So on the turret-top that watchful Snake
 Pillows his giant head, and lists profound,
 As if his wrathful spite would never wake,
 Charm'd into sudden sleep for Love and Beauty's sake.

His prickly crest lies prone upon his crown,
 And thirsty lip from lip disparted flies,
 To drink that dainty flood of music down—
 His scaly throat is big with pent-up sighs—
 And whilst his hollow ear entranced lies,
 His looks for envy of the charmed sense
 Are fain to listen, till his steadfast eyes,
 Stung into pain by their own impotence,
 Distil enormous tears into the lake immense.

Oh, tuneful Swan ! oh, melancholy bird !
 Sweet was that midnight miracle of song,
 Rich with ripe sorrow, needful of no word
 To tell of pain, and love, and love's deep wrong—
 Hinting a piteous tale—perchance how long
 Thy unknown tears were mingled with the lake,
 What time disguised thy leafy mates among—
 And no eye knew what human love and ache
 Dwelt in those dewy leaves, and heart so nigh to break

Therefore no poet will ungently touch
 The water-lily, on whose eyelids dew
 Trembles like tears ; but ever hold it such
 As human pain may wander through and through,
 Turning the pale leaf paler in its hue—
 Wherein life dwells, transfigured, not entomb'd,
 By magic spells. Alas ! who ever knew
 Sorrow in all its shapes, leafy and plumed,
 Or in gross husks of brutes eternally inhumed ?

And now the winged song has scaled the height
 Of that dark dwelling, builded for despair,
 And soon a little casement flashing bright
 Widens self-open'd into the cool air—
 That music like a bird may enter there
 And soothe the captive in his stony cage ;
 For there is nought of grief, or painful care,
 But plaintive song may happily engage
 From sense of its own ill, and tenderly assuage.

And forth into the light, small and remote,
 A creature, like the fair son of a king,
 Draws to the lattice in his jewell'd coat
 Against the silver moonlight glistening,
 And leans upon his white hand listening
 To that sweet music that with tenderer tone
 Saisutes him, wondering what kindly thing
 Is come to soothe him with so tuneful moan,
 Singing beneath the walls as if for him alone.

And while he listens, the mysterious song,
 Woven with timid particles of speech,
 Twines into passionate words that grieve along
 The melancholy notes, and softly teach
 The secrets of true love,—that trembling reach
 His earnest ear, and through the shadows dun
 He missions like replies, and each to each
 Their silver voices mingle into one,
 Like blended streams that make one music as they run.

“ Ah ! Love, my hope is swooning in my heart,—”
 “ Ay, sweet, my cage is strong and hung full high—”
 “ Alas ! our lips are held so far apart,
 Thy words come faint,—they have so far to fly !—”
 “ If I may only shun that serpent-eye,—”
 “ Ah me ! that serpent-eye doth never sleep ;—”
 “ Then, nearer thee, Love's martyr, I will die !—”
 “ Alas, alas ! that word has made me weep !
 For pity's sake remain safe in thy marble keep !”

“ My marble keep ! it is my marble tomb—”
 “ Nay, sweet ! but thou hast there thy living breath—”
 “ Aye to expend in sighs for this hard doom ;—”
 “ But I will come to thee and sing beneath,
 And nightly so beguile this serpent wreath ;—”
 “ Nay, I will find a path from these despairs,”
 “ Ah, needs then thou must tread the back of death,
 Making his stony ribs thy stony stairs.—
 Behold his ruby eye, how fearfully it glares !”

Full sudden at these words, the princely youth
 Leaps on the scaly back that slumbers, still
 Unconscious of his foot, yet not for ruth,
 But numb'd to dulness by the fairy skill
 Of that sweet music (all more wild and shrill
 For intense fear) that charm'd him as he lay—
 Meanwhile the lover nerves his desperate will,
 Held some short throbs by natural dismay,
 Then down the serpent-track begins his darksome way.

Now dimly seen—now toiling out of sight,
 Eclipsed and cover'd by the envious wall ;
 Now fair and spangl'd in the sudden light.
 And clinging with wide arms for fear of fall ;
 Now dark and shelter'd by a kindly pall
 Of dusky shadow from his wakeful foe ;
 Slowly he winds adown—dimly and small,
 Watch'd by the gentle Swan that sings below,
 Her hope increasing, still, the larger he doth grow.

But nine times nine the serpent folds embrace
 The marble walls about—which he must tread
 Before his anxious foot may touch the base :
 Long is the dreary path, and must be sped !
 But Love, that holds the mastery of dread,
 Braces his spirit, and with constant toil
 He wins his way, and now, with arms outspread
 Impatient plunges from the last long coil :
 So may all gentle Love ungentle Malice foil !

The song is hush'd, the charm is all complete,
 And two fair Swans are swimming on the lake :
 But scarce their tender bills have time to meet,
 When fiercely drops adown that cruel Snake—
 His steely scales a fearful rustling make,
 Like autumn leaves that tremble and fortell
 The sable storm ;—the plummy lovers quake—
 And feel the troubled waters pant and swell,
 Heaved by the giant bulk of their pursuer fell.


His jaws, wide yawning like the gates of Death,
 Hiss horrible pursuit—his red eyes glare
 The waters into blood—his eager breath
 Grows hot upon their plumes :—now minstrel fair !
 She drops her ring into the waves, and there
 It widens all around, a fairy ring
 Wrought of the silver light—the fearful pair
 Swim in the very midst, and pant and cling
 The closer for their fears, and tremble wing to wing.

Bending their course over the pale grey lake,
 Against the pallid East, wherein light play'd
 In tender flushes, still the baffled Snake
 Circl'd them round continually, and bay'd
 Hoarsely and loud, forbidden to invade
 The sanctuary ring—his sable mail
 Roll'd darkly through the flood, and writhed and made
 A shining track over the waters pale,
 Lash'd into boiling foam by his enormous tail.

And so they sail'd into the distance dim,
 Into the very distance—small and white,
 Like snowy blossoms of the spring that swim
 Over the brooklets—follow'd by the spite
 Of that huge Serpent, that with wild affright
 Worried them on their course, and sore annoy,
 Till on the grassy marge I saw them 'light,
 And change, anon, a gentle girl and boy,
 Lock'd in embrace of sweet, unutterable joy !

Then came the Morn, and with her pearly showers
 Wept on them, like a mother, in whose eyes
 Tears are no grief ; and from his rosy bowers
 The Oriental sun began to rise,
 Chasing the darksome shadows from the skies ;
 Wherewith that sable Serpent far away
 Fled, like a part of night—delicious sighs
 From waking blossoms purified the day
 And little birds were singing sweetly from each spray.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM.

'  WAS in the prime of summer time,
 An evening calm and cool,
 And four-and-twenty happy boys
 Came bounding out of school :
 There were some that ran and some that leapt,
 Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
 And souls untouched by sin ;
 To a level mead they came, and there
 They drave the wickets in :
 Pleasantly shone the setting sun
 Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
 And shouted as they ran,—
 Turning to mirth all things of earth,
 As only boyhood can ;
 But the Usher sat remote from all,
 A melancholy man !

His hat was off, his vest apart,
 To catch heaven's blessed breeze ;
 For a burning thought was in his brow,
 And his bosom ill at ease :

So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book upon his knees !

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide :
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the pond'rous tome,
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp :
" Oh, God ! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp !"

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And lo ! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book.

" My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable ?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable ?"
The young boy gave an upward glance,—
" It is ' The Death of Abel.'"

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,—
Six hasty strides beyond the place.
Then slowly back again ;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain ;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves ;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves ;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves ;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod.—
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod ;

And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God !

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,—
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain :
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain !

“ And well,” quoth he, “ I know for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spill life’s sacred stream !
For why? Methought last night I wrought
A murder, in a dream !

“ One that had never done me wrong—
A feeble man and old ;
I led him to a lonely field,
The moon shone clear and cold :
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold !

“ Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done :
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone !

“ Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill ;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still :
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill !

“ And lo ! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame ;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame :
I took the dead man by his hand,
And called upon his name !

“ O God ! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain !
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out again !

For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain !

“ My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice ;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price :
A dozen times I groaned : the dead
Had never groaned but twice !

“ And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the Heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice— the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite—
‘ Thou guilty man ! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight !’

“ I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme :
My gentle Boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream !

“ Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool ;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening in the school.

“ Oh, Heaven ! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim !
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in Evening Hymn :
Like a Devil of the Pit I seemed,
’Mid holy Cherubim !

“ And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread ;
But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
That lighted me to bed ;
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red !

“ All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep,
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep :

For Sin had rendered unto her
The keys of Hell to keep !

“ All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That racked me all the time ;
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime !

“ One stern, tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave ;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The Dead Man in his grave !

“ Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursèd pool
With a wild misgiving eye ;
And I saw the Dead in the river-bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

“ Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dewdrop from its wing ;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing :
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

“ With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran ;
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began :
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man !

“ And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was elsewhere ;
As soon as the midday task was done,
In secret I was there :
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare !

“ Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep :

ODE TO MELANCHOLY.

Or land, or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

“ So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones !
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones !

“ Oh God ! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake !
Again—again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take ;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmør's at the stake.

“ And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mould allow ;
The horrid thing pursues my soul—
It stands before me now ! ”
The fearful Boy looked up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist ;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.*

* Admiral Burney (brother of Madame d'Arblay) went to school at an establishment where the unhappy Eugene Aram was usher subsequent to his crime. The admiral stated that Eugene was generally liked by the boys, and that he used to discourse to them about murder, in somewhat the spirit which is attributed to him in this poem.—*Gem*, 1829.

ODE TO MELANCHOLY.

COME, let us set our careful breasts,
Like Philomel, against the thorn,
To aggravate the inward grief,
That makes her accents so forlorn ;
The world has many cruel points,
Whereby our bosoms have been torn,
And there are dainty themes of grief,
In sadness to outlast the morn,—

True honour's dearth, affection's death,
Neglectful pride, and cankering scorn,
With all the piteous tales that tears
Have watered since the world was born.

The world!—it is a wilderness
Where tears are hung on every tree ;
For thus my gloomy phantasy
Makes all things weep with me !
Come let us sit and watch the sky,
And fancy clouds where no clouds be ;
Grief is enough to blot the eye,
And make heav'n black with misery.
Why should birds sing such merry notes,
Unless they were more blest than we ?
No sorrow ever chokes their throats,
Except sweet nightingale ; for she
Was born to pain our hearts the more
With her sad melody.
Why shines the sun, except that he
Makes gloomy nooks for Grief to hide,
And pensive shades for Melancholy,
When all the earth is bright beside ?
Let clay wear smiles, and green grass wave,
Mirth shall not win us back again,
Whilst man is made of his own grave,
And fairest clouds but gilded rain !

I saw my mother in her shroud,
Her cheek was cold and very pale :
And ever since I've looked on all
As creatures doomed to fail !
Why do buds ope, except to die ?
Ay, let us watch the roses wither,
And think of our loves' cheeks ;
And oh, how quickly time doth fly
To bring death's winter hither !
Minutes, hours, days, and weeks,
Months, years, and ages shrink to nought ;
An age past is but a thought !

Ay, let us think of Him awhile,
That, with a coffin for a boat,
Rows daily o'er the Stygian moat,
And for our table choose a tomb :
There's dark enough in any skull
To charge with black a raven plume ;
And for the saddest funeral thoughts

A winding-sheet hath ample room,
 Where Death, with his keen-pointed style,
 Hath writ the common doom.
 How wide the yew-tree spreads its gloom,
 And o'er the dead lets fall its dew,
 As if in tears it wept for them,
 The many human families
 That sleep around its stem !

How cold the dead have made these stores,
 With natural drops kept ever wet !
 Lo ! here the best, the worst, the world
 Doth now remember or forget,
 Are in one common ruin hurled,
 And love and hate are calmly met ;
 The loveliest eyes that ever shone,
 The fairest hands, and locks of jet.
 Is't not enough to vex our souls,
 And fill our eyes, that we have set
 Our love upon a rose's leaf,
 Our hearts upon a violet ?
 Blue eyes, red cheeks, are frailer yet ;
 And, sometimes, at their swift decay,
 Beforehand we must fret :
 The roses bud and bloom again ;
 But love may haunt the grave of love,
 And watch the mould in vain.

O clasp me, sweet, whilst thou art mine,
 And do not take my tears amiss ;
 For tears must flow to wash away
 A thought that shows so stern as this :
 Forgive, if sometime I forget,
 In woe to come, the present bliss.
 As frightened Proserpine let fall
 Her flowers at the sight of Dis,
 Ev'n so the dark and bright will kiss.
 The sunniest things throw sternest shade,
 And there is even a happiness
 That makes the heart afraid !

Now let us with a spell invoke
 The full-orbed moon to grieve our eyes ;
 Not bright, not bright, but, with a cloud
 Lapped all about her, let her rise
 All pale and dim, as if from rest
 The ghost of the late buried sun
 Had crept into the skies.

The Moon ! she is the source of sighs,
 The very face to make us sad ;
 If but to think in other times
 The same calm quiet look she had,
 As if the world held nothing base,
 Of vile and mean, of fierce and bad ;
 The same fair light that shone in streams,
 The fairy lamp that charmed the lad ;
 For so it is with spent delights
 She taunts men's brains and makes them mad.

All things are touched with Melancholy,
 Born of the secret soul's mistrust,
 To feel her fair ethereal wings
 Weighed down with vile degraded dust ;
 Even the bright extremes of joy
 Bring on conclusions of disgust,
 Like the sweet blossoms of the May,
 Whose fragrance ends in must.
 O give her, then, her tribute just,
 Her sighs and tears, and musings holy !
 There is no music in the life
 That sounds with idiot laughter solely ;
 There's not a string attuned to mirth,
 But has its chord in Melancholy.

THE DEPARTURE OF SUMMER

SUMMER is gone on swallows' wings,
 And Earth has buried all her flowers :
 No more the lark, the linnet sings,
 But Silence sits in faded bowers.
 There is a shadow on the plain
 Of Winter ere he comes again,—
 There is in woods a solemn sound
 Of hollow warnings whispered round,
 As Echo in her deep recess
 For once had turned a prophetess.
 Shuddering Autumn stops to list,
 And breathes his fear in sudden sighs,
 With clouded face, and hazel eyes
 That quench themselves, and hide in mist.

Yes, Summer's gone like pageant bright ;
 Its glorious days of golden light

Are gone—the mimic suns that quiver,
 Then melt in Time's dark-flowing river.
 Gone the sweetly scented breeze
 That spoke in music to the trees ;
 Gone for damp and chilly breath,
 As if fresh blown o'er marble seas,
 Or newly from the lungs of Death.
 Gone its virgin roses' blushes,
 Warm as when Aurora rushes
 Freshly from the god's embrace,
 With all her shame upon her face.
 Old Time hath laid them in the mould ;
 Sure he is blind as well as old,
 Whose hand relentless never spares
 Young cheeks so beauty-bright as theirs !
 Gone are the flame-eyed lovers now
 From where so blushing-blest they tarried
 Under the hawthorn's blossom-bough,
 Gone ; for Day and Night are married.
 All the light of love is fled :
 Alas ! that negro breasts should hide
 The lips that were so rosy red,
 At morning and at even-tide !

Delightful Summer ! then adieu
 Till thou shalt visit us anew :
 But who without regretful sigh
 Can say, adieu, and see thee fly ?
 Not he that e'er hath felt thy power,
 His joy expanding like a flower
 That cometh after rain and snow,
 Looks up at heaven, and learns to glow .
 Not he that fled from Babel-strife
 To the green Sabbath-land of life,
 To dodge dull Care 'mid clustered trees,
 And cool his forehead in the breeze,—
 Whose spirit, weary-worn perchance,
 Shook from its wings a weight of grief,
 And perched upon an aspen leaf,
 For every breath to make it dance.

Farewell !—on wings of sombre stain,
 That blacken in the last blue skies,
 Thou fly'st ; but thou wilt come again
 On the gay wings of butterflies.
 Spring at thy approach will sprout
 Her new Corinthian beauties out,

Leaf-woven homes, where twitter-words
 Will grow to songs, and eggs to birds ;
 Ambitious buds shall swell to flowers,
 And April smiles to sunny hours.
 Bright days shall be, and gentle nights
 Full of soft breath and echo-lights,
 As if the god of sun-time kept
 His eyes half open while he slept.
 Roses shall be where roses were,
 Not shadows, but reality ;
 As if they never perished there,
 But slept in immortality :
 Nature shall thrill with new delight,
 And Time's relumined river run
 Warm as young blood, and dazzling bright,
 As if its source were in the sun !

But say, hath Winter then no charms ?
 Is there no joy, no gladness warms
 His aged heart ? no happy wiles
 To cheat the hoary one to smiles :
 Onward he comes—the cruel North
 Pours his furious whirlwind forth
 Before him—and we breathe the breath
 Of famished bears that howl to death.
 Onward he comes from rocks that blanch
 O'er solid streams that never flow,
 His tears all ice, his locks all snow,
 Just crept from some huge avalanche—
 A thing half-breathing and half-warm,
 As if one spark began to glow
 Within some statue's marble form,
 Or pilgrim stiffened in the storm.
 O! will not Mirth's light arrows fail
 To pierce that frozen coat of mail ?
 O! will not Joy but strive in vain
 To light up those glazed eyes again ?

No! take him in, and blaze the oak,
 And pour the wine, and warm the ale ;
 His sides shall shake to many a joke,
 His tongue shall thaw in many a tale,
 His eyes grow bright, his heart be gay,
 And even his palsy charmed away.
 What heeds he then the boisterous shout
 Of angry winds that scold without,
 Like shrewish wives at tavern door ?
 What heeds he then the wild uproar

Of billows bursting on the shore?
 In dashing waves, in howling breeze,
 There is a music that can charm him;
 When safe, and sheltered, and at ease,
 He hears the storm that cannot harm him.

But hark! those shouts! that sudden din
 Of little hearts that laugh within.
 O! take him where the youngsters play,
 And he will grow as young as they!
 They come! they come! each blue-eyed Sport,
 The Twelfth-Night King and all his court—
 'Tis Mirth fresh crowned with mistletoe!
 Music with her merry fiddles,
 Joy "on light fantastic toe,"
 Wit with all its jests and riddles,
 Singing and dancing as they go.
 And Love, young Love, among the rest,
 A welcome—nor unbidden guest.

But still for Summer dost thou grieve?
 Then read our Poets—they shall weave
 A garden of green fancies still,
 Where thy wish may rove at will.
 They have kept for after treats
 The essences of summer sweets,
 And echoes of its songs that wind
 In endless music through the mind:
 They have stamped in visible traces
 The "thoughts that breathe," in words that shine—
 The flights of soul in sunny places—
 To greet and company with thine.
 These shall wing thee on to flowers—
 The past or future, that shall seem
 All the brighter in thy dream
 For blowing in such desert hours.
 The summer never shines so bright
 As thought of in a winter's night;
 And the sweetest, loveliest rose
 Is in the bud before it blows.
 The dear one of the lover's heart
 Is painted to his longing eyes,
 In charms she ne'er can realize—
 But when she turns again to part.
 Dream thou then, and bind thy brow
 With wreath of fancy roses now,
 And drink of Summer in the cup
 Where the Muse hath mixed it up;

The "dance and song, and sunburnt mirth,"
 With the warm nectar of the earth :
 Drink ! 'twill glow in every vein,
 And thou shalt dream the winter through :
 Then waken to the sun again,
 And find thy Summer Vision true !

ODE.—AUTUMN.

I.

I SAW old Autumn in the misty morn
 Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
 To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
 Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
 Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn ;
 Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
 With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
 Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

II.

Where are the songs of Summer?—With the sun,
 Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,
 'Till shade and silence waken up as one,
 And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
 Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,
 On panting wings through the inclement skies,
 Lest owls should prey
 Undazzled at noonday,
 And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

III.

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the west,
 Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
 When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest
 Like tearful Proserpine, snatched from her flowers
 To a most gloomy breast.
 Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime,—
 The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three
 On the mossed elm ; three on the naked lime
 Trembling,—and one upon the old oak tree !
 Where is the Dryads' immortality?
 Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
 Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through
 In the smooth holly's green eternity.

ODE TO THE MOON.

IV.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplished hoard,
 The ants have brimmed their garner with ripe grain,
 And honey bees have stored
 The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells ;
 The swallows all have winged across the main ;
 But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
 And sighs her tearful spells,
 Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.
 Alone, alone,
 Upon a mossy stone,
 She sits and reckons up the dead and gone
 With the last leaves for a love-rosary,
 Whilst all the withered world looks drearily,
 Like a dim picture of the drowned past
 In the hushed mind's mysterious far away,
 Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
 Into that distance, grey upon the grey.

V.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded
 Under the languid downfall of her hair :
 She wears a coronal of flowers faded
 Upon her forehead, and a face of care ;
 There is enough of withered everywhere
 To make her bower,—and enough of gloom ;
 There is enough of sadness to invite,
 If only for the rose that died,—whose doom
 Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom
 Of conscous cheeks most beautifies the light .
 There is enough of sorrowing, and quite
 Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,—
 Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl ;
 Enough of fear and shadowy despair,
 To frame her cloudy prison for the soul !

ODE TO THE MOON.

I.

MOTHER of light ! how fairly dost thou go
 Over those hoary crests, divinely led !
 Art thou that huntress of the silver bow
 Fabled of old ? Or rather dost thou tread
 Those cloudy summits thence to gaze below,
 Like the wild Chamois from her Alpine snow,
 Where hunter never climbed,—secure from dread ?
 How many antique fancies have I read

ODE TO THE MOON.

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Of that mild presence ! and how many wrought !
Wondrous and bright,
Upon the silver light,
Chasing fair figures with the artist, Thought !

II.

What art thou like ? Sometimes I see thee ride
A far-bound galley on its perilous way,
Whilst breezy waves toss up their silvery spray ;
Sometimes behold thee glide,
Clustered by all thy family of stars,
Like a lone widow, through the welkin wide,
Whose pallid cheek the midnight sorrow mars ;
Sometimes I watch thee on from steep to steep,
Timidly lighted by thy vestal torch,
Till in some Latmian cave I see thee creep,
To catch the young Endymion asleep,—
Leaving thy splendour at the jagged porch !

III.

Oh, thou art beautiful, howe'er it be !
Huntress, or Dian, or whatever named ;
And he, the veriest Pagan, that first framed
A silver idol, and ne'er worshipped thee !
It is too late, or thou shouldst have my knee
Too late now for the old Ephesian vows,
And not divine the crescent on thy brows !
Yet, call thee nothing but the mere mild Moon,
Behind those chestnut boughs,
Casting their dappled shadows at my feet ;
I will be grateful for that simple boon,
In many a thoughtful verse and anthem sweet,
And bless thy dainty face whene'er we meet.

IV.

In nights far gone,—ay, far away and dead,—
Before Care-fretted with a lidless eye,—
I was thy wooer on my little bed,
Letting the early hours of rest go by,
To see thee flood the heaven with milky light,
And feed thy snow-white swans before I slept ;
For thou wert then purveyor of my dreams,—
Thou wert the fairies' armourer, that kept
Their burnished helms, and crowns, and corslets bright,
Their spears and glittering mails ;
And ever thou didst spill in winding streams
Sparkles and midnight gleams,
For fishes to new gloss their argent scales !

V.

Why sighs?—why creeping tears?—why claspèd hands?
 Is it to count the boy's expended dower?
 That fairies since have broke their gifted wands?
 That young Delight, like any o'erblown flower,
 Gave, one by one, its sweet leaves to the ground?
 Why then, fair Moon, for all thou mark'st no hour,
 Thou art a sadder dial to old Time
 Than ever I have found
 On sunny garden-plot or moss-grown tower,
 Mottoed with stern and melancholy rhyme.

VI.

Why should I grieve for this?—O I must yearn,
 Whilst Time, conspirator with Memory,
 Keeps his cold ashes in an ancient urn,
 Richly embossed with childhood's revelry,
 With leaves and clustered fruits, and flowers eterne,—
 (Eternal to the world, though not to me.)
 Aye, there will those brave sports and blossoms be,
 The deathless wreath, and undecayed festoon,
 When I am hearsed within,—
 Less than the pallid primrose to the Moon,
 That now she watches through a vapour thin.

VII.

So let it be :—Before I lived to sigh
 Thou wert in Avon, and a thousand rills,
 Beautiful Orb ! and so, whene'er I lie
 Trodden, thou wilt be gazing from thy hills.
 Blest be thy loving light, where'er it spills,
 And blessed thy fair face, O Mother mild !
 Still shine, the soul of rivers as they run,
 Still lend thy lonely lamp to lovers fond,
 And blend their plighted shadows into one :
 Still smile at even on the bedded child,
 And close his eyelids with thy silver wand !

TO HOPE.



H ! take, young seraph, take thy harp,
 And play to me so cheerily ;
 For grief is dark, and care is sharp,
 And life wears on so wearily.
 Oh ! take thy harp !
 Oh ! sing as thou were wont to do,

When, all youth's sunny season long,
 I sat and listen'd to thy song,
 And yet 'twas ever, ever new,
 With magic in its heaven-tuned string—
 The future bliss thy constant theme,
 Oh ! then each little woe took wing
 Away, like phantoms of a dream ;
 As if each sound
 That fluttered round
 Had floated over Lethe's stream !
 By all those bright and happy hours
 We spent in life's sweet eastern bow'rs,
 Were thou wouldst sit and smile, and show,
 Ere buds were come, where flowers would grow,
 And oft anticipate the rise
 Of life's warm sun that scaled the skies ;
 By many a story of love and glory,
 And friendships promised oft to me ;
 By all the faith I lent to thee,—
 Oh ! take, young seraph, take thy harp,
 And play to me so cheerily ;
 For grief is dark, and care is sharp,
 And life wears on so wearily,
 Oh ! take thy harp !

Perchance the strings will sound less clear,
 That long have lain neglected by
 In sorrow's misty atmosphere :
 It ne'er may speak as it has spoken
 Such joyous notes so brisk and high ;
 But are its golden chords all broken ?
 Are there not some, though weak and low,
 To play a lullaby to woe ?
 But thou canst sing of love no more,
 For Celia show'd that dream was vain ;
 And many a fancied bliss is o'er,
 That comes not e'en in dreams again.
 Alas ! alas !
 How pleasures pass,
 And leave thee now no subject, save
 The peace and bliss beyond the grave !


Then be thy flight among the skies :
 Take, then, oh ! take the skylark's wing,
 And leave dull earth, and heavenward rise
 O'er all its tearful clouds, and sing
 On skylark's wing !

FAIR INES.

Another life-spring there adorns
 Another youth, without the dread
 Of cruel care, whose crown of thorns
 Is here for manhood's aching head.
 Oh! there are realms of welcome day,
 A world where tears are wiped away!
 Then be thy flight among the skies:
 Take, then, oh! take the skylark's wing,
 And leave dull earth, and heavenward rise
 O'er all its tearful clouds, and sing
 On skylark's wing!

FAIR INES.

I.

 SAW ye not fair Ines?
 She's gone into the West,
 To dazzle when the sun is down,
 And rob the world of rest:
 She took our daylight with her,
 The smiles that we love best,
 With morning blushes on her cheek,
 And pearls upon her breast.

II.

O turn again, fair Ines,
 Before the fall of night,
 For fear the Moon should shine alone,
 And stars unrivalled bright;
 And blessed will the lover be
 That walks beneath their light,
 And breathes the love against thy cheek
 I dare not even write!

III.

Would I had been, fair Ines,
 That gallant cavalier,
 Who rode so gaily by thy side,
 And whispered thee so near!
 Were there no bonny dames at home,
 Or no true lovers here,
 That he should cross the seas to win
 The dearest of the dear?

IV.

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
 Descend along the shore,

With bands of noble gentlemen,
 And banners waved before :
 And gentle youth and maidens gay,
 And snowy plumes they wore ;
 It would have been a beauteous dream,—
 If it had been no more !

V.

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
 She went away with song,
 With Music waiting on her steps,
 And shoutings of the throng ;
 But some were sad and felt no mirth,
 But only Music's wrong,
 In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
 To her you've loved so long.

VI.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
 That vessel never bore
 So fair a lady on its deck,
 Nor danced so light before,—
 Alas for pleasure on the sea,
 And sorrow on the shore !
 The smile that blest one lover's heart
 Has broken many more !

THE SEA OF DEATH.

A FRAGMENT.

METHOUGHT I saw

Life swiftly treading over endless space :
 And, at her footprint, but a bygone pace,
 The ocean-past, which, with increasing wave,
 Swallowed her steps like a pursuing grave.
 Sad were my thoughts that anchored silently
 On the dead waters of that passionless sea,
 Unstirred by any touch of living breath :
 Silence hung over it, and drowsy death,
 Like a gorged sea-bird, slept with folded wings
 On crowded carcasses—sad passive things
 That wore the thin grey surface, like a veil
 Over the calmness of their features pale.
 And there were spring-faced cherubs that did sleep
 Like water-lilies on that motionless deep,

How beautiful ! with bright unruffled hair
 On sleek unfretted brows, and eyes that were
 Buried in marble tombs, a pale eclipse !
 And smile-bedimpled cheeks, and pleasant lips,
 Meekly apart, as if the soul intense
 Spake out in dreams of its own innocence :
 And so they lay in loveliness, and kept
 The birth-night of their peace, that Life e'en wept
 With very envy of their happy fronts ;
 For there were neighbour brows scarred by the brunts
 Of strife and sorrowing—where Care had set
 His crooked autograph, and marred the jet
 Of glossy locks, with hollow eyes forlorn,
 And lips that curled in bitterness and scorn—
 Wretched,—as they had breathed of this world's pain,
 And so bequeathed it to the world again
 Through the beholder's heart in heavy sighs.

So lay they garmented in torpid light,
 Under the pall of a transparent night,
 Like solemn apparitions lulled sublime
 To everlasting rest,—and with them Time
 Slept, as he sleeps upon the silent face
 Of a dark dial in a sunless place.

 BALLAD.

SIGH on, sad heart, for Love's eclipse,
 And Beauty's fairest queen,
 Tho' 'tis not for my peasant lips
 To soil her name between :
 A king might lay his sceptre down,
 But I am poor and nought,
 The brow should wear a golden crown
 That wears her in its thought.

The diamonds glancing in her hair,
 Whose sudden beams surprise,
 Might bid such humble hopes beware
 The glancing of her eyes ;
 Yet looking once, I looked too long,
 And if my love is sin,
 Death follows on the heels of wrong,
 And kills the crime within.

Her dress seemed wove of lily leaves,
 It was so pure and fine,
 O lofty wears and lowly weaves,
 But hodden grey is mine ;
 And homely hose must step apart,
 Where gartered princes stand,
 But may he wear my love at heart
 That wins her lily hand !

Alas ! there's far from russet frieze
 To silks and satin gowns,
 But I doubt if God made like degrees,
 In courtly hearts and clowns'.
 My father wronged a maiden's mirth,
 And brought her cheeks to blame.
 And all that's lordly of my birth
 Is my reproach and shame !

'Tis vain to weep,—'tis vain to sigh,
 'Tis vain this idle speech,
 For where her happy pearls do lie,
 My tears may never reach ;
 Yet when I'm gone, e'en lofty pride
 May say of what has been,
 His love was nobly born and died,
 Tho' all the rest was mean !

My speech is rude,—but speech is weak
 Such love as mine to tell,
 Yet had I words, I dare not speak,
 So, lady, fare thee well ;
 I will not wish thy better state
 Was one of low degree,
 But I must weep that partial fate
 Made such a churl of me.

SERENADE.

AH, sweet, thou little knowest how
 I wake and passionate watches keep ;
 And yet while I address thee now,
 Methinks thou smilest in thy sleep.
 'Tis sweet enough to make me weep,
 That tender thought of love and thee,
 That while the world is hush'd so deep,
 Thy soul's perhaps awake to me !

RUTH.

Sleep on, sleep on, sweet bride of sleep !
 With golden visions for thy dower,
 While I this midnight vigil keep,
 And bless thee in thy silent bower ;
 To me 'tis sweeter than the power
 Of sleep, and fairy dreams unfurl'd,
 That I alone, at this still hour,
 In patient love outwatch the world.

FLOWERS.

I WILL not have the maid Clytie,
 Whose head is turned by the sun ;
 The tulip is a courtly quean,
 Whom therefore I will shun ;
 The cowslip is a country wench ;
 The violet is a nun ;—
 But I will woo the dainty rose,
 The queen of every one.

The pea is but a wanton witch
 In too much haste to wed,
 And clasps her rings on every hand ;
 The wolfsbane I should dread ;
 Nor will I dreary rosemarye,
 That always mourns the dead ;—
 But I will woo the dainty rose,
 With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
 And so is no mate for me—
 And the daisy's cheek is tipp'd with a blush,
 She is of such low degree ;
 Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
 And the broom's betroth'd to the bee ;—
 But I will plight with the dainty rose,
 For fairest of all is she.

RUTH.

SHE stood breast high amid the corn,
 Clasped by the golden light of morn,
 Like the sweetheart of the sun,
 Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
 Deeply ripened ;—such a blush
 In the midst of brown was born,
 Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
 Which were blackest none could tell,
 But long lashes veiled a light,
 That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
 Made her tressy forehead dim ;
 Thus she stood amid the stooks,
 Praising God with sweetest looks :

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean,
 Where I reap thou shouldst but glean ;
 Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
 Share my harvest and my home.

BALLAD.

SHE'S up and gone, the graceless girl !
 And robbed my failing years !
 My blood before was thin and cold,

But now 'tis turned to tears ;
 My shadow falls upon my grave,
 So near the brink I stand,
 She might have stayed a little yet,
 And led me by the hand !

Aye, call her on the barren moor,
 And call her on the hill,
 'Tis nothing but the heron's cry,
 And plover's answer shrill ;
 My child is flown on wilder wings
 Than they have ever spread,
 And I may even walk a waste
 That widened when she fled.

Full many a thankless child has been,
 But never one like mine ;
 Her meat was served on plates of gold,
 Her drink was rosy wine ;
 But now she'll share the robin's food,
 And sup the common rill,
 Before her feet will turn again
 To meet her father's will !

BALLAD.

IT was not in the winter
 Our loving lot was cast !
 It was the time of roses,
 We plucked them as we passed.

That churlish season never frowned
 On early lovers yet !
 Oh no—the world was newly crowned
 With flowers, when first we met.

'Twas twilight, and I bade you go,
 But still you held me fast ;
 It was the time of roses,—
 We plucked them as we passed !

What else could peer my glowing cheek
 That tears began to stud ?
 And when I asked the like of Love
 You snatched a damask bud;—

And oped it to the dainty core
 Still glowing to the last :
 It was the time of roses,
 We plucked them as we passed !

AUTUMN.

I.

THE Autumn skies are flushed with gold,
 And fair and bright the rivers run ;
 These are but streams of winter cold,
 And painted mists that quench the sun,

II.

In secret boughs no sweet birds sing,
 In secret boughs no bird can shroud ;
 These are but leaves that take to wing,
 And wintry winds that pipe so loud.

III.

'Tis not trees' shade, but cloudy glooms
 That on the cheerless valleys fall,
 The flowers are in their grassy tombs
 And tears of dew are on them all.

SONG.—FOR MUSIC.

A LAKE and a fairy boat
 To sail in the moonlight clear,—
 And merrily we would float
 From the dragons that watch us here !

Thy gown should be snow-white silk,
 And strings of orient pearls,
 Like gossamers dipped in milk,
 Should twine with thy raven curls !

Red rubies should deck thy hands,
 And diamonds should be thy dower—
 But Fairies have broke their wands,
 And wishing has lost its power !

TIME, HOPE, AND MEMORY.

H HEARD a gentle maiden, in the spring,
 Set her sweet sighs to music, and thus sing :
 “ Fly through the world, and I will follow thee,
 Only for looks that may turn back on me ;

“ Only for roses that your chance may throw—
 Though withered—I will wear them on my brow,
 To be a thoughtful fragrance to my brain,—
 Warm'd with such love, that they will bloom again.

“ Thy love before thee, I must tread behind,
 Kissing thy footprints, though to me unkind ;
 But trust not all her fondness, though it seem,
 Lest thy true love should rest on a false dream.

“ Her face is smiling, and her voice is sweet ;
 But smiles betray, and music sings deceit ;
 And words speak false ;— yet, if they welcome prove,
 I'll be their echo, and repeat their love.

“ Only if wakened to sad truth, at last,
 The bitterness to come, and sweetness past ;
 When thou art vex't, then turn again, and see
 Thou hast loved Hope, but Memory loved thee.”

OLD BALLAD.

Air—"There was a King in the North Countree."

THERE was a Fairy lived in a well,
 And she pronounced a magical spell :
 "Whoever looks in this wave," she said,
 "Shall see the lady that he's to wed !"

A King came by with his hunting-spear,
 And stoop'd to look in the waters clear ;
 He laid by the brim his signet of gold,
 And gave his Brother his crown to hold.

But while he knelt and was looking down,
 His Brother stood and tried on the crown ;
 The pearls were bright, and the rubies brave,
 So he tumbled his brother into the wave.

"Oh Brother, oh Brother, you've got my ring,
 And the lawful crown that made me king
 But your heart shall fail, and your hand shall quake,
 And the head that wears my jewels shall ache !"

The murderer stood and look'd from the brink,
 "The sun is so hot, I should like to drink !"
 But lo ! as he stoop'd with a silver cup,
 His head went down, and his heels flew up !

"Oh Brother, oh Brother, I've got your crown,
 But the weight of the jewels has pull'd me down ;
 You shall be crown'd in the skies again,
 But I shall be mark'd on the brow like Cain !

Down he sank in the dismal wave,
 As cold as death, and dark as the grave ;
 But when he came to the stones at last,
 The Fairy caught him, and held him fast.

She took him into her crystal hall,
 And there he saw his face in the wall ;
 She look'd rosy, but he look'd white,
 And all the tapers were burning bright.

The King leap'd down from his Fairy throne,
 With eyes that brighter than diamonds shone ;
 His left hand balanced a golden globe,
 But his right hand lifted his purple robe.

“ Oh Brother, oh Brother, bend down your knee,
 But kneel to Heaven, and not to me,
 For God may frown on your grievous sin,
 But I'm too happy you push'd me in.

“ Come hither, come hither, you're welcome now,
 To my crown of gold that decks your brow ;
 There's smiles worth heav'n on my true love's face,
 And she has made me King of this place !”

TO A COLD BEAUTY.

I.

BEAUTY, wouldst thou heiresse be
 To Winter's cold and cruel part?
 When he sets the rivers free
 Thou dost still lock up thy heart ;
 Thou that shouldst outlast the snow,
 But in the whiteness of thy brow.

II.

Scorn and cold neglect are made
 For winter gloom and winter wind,
 But thou wilt wrong the summer air,
 Breathing it to words unkind,—
 Breath which only should belong
 To love, to sunlight, and to song !

III.

When the little buds unclose,
 Red, and white, and pied, and blue,
 And that virgin flower, the rose,
 Opes her heart to hold the dew,
 Wilt thou lock thy bosom up
 With no jewel in its cup ?

IV.

Let no cold December sit
 Thus in Love's peculiar throne .
 Brooklets are not prisoned now,
 But crystal frosts are all agone,
 And that which hangs upon the spray,
 It is no snow, but flower of May !

TO JANE.

WELCOME, dear Heart, and a most kind good-morrow;

The day is gloomy, but our looks shall shine :
Flowers I have none to give thee, but I borrow
Their sweetness in a verse to speak for thine.

Here are red roses, gathered at thy cheeks,—
The white were all too happy to look white :
For love the rose, for faith the lily speaks ;
It withers in false hands, but here 'tis bright !

Dost love sweet Hyacinth ? Its scented leaf
Curls manifold,—all love's delights blow double :
'Tis said this flow'ret is inscribed with grief,—
But let that hint of a forgotten trouble.

I plucked the Primrose at night's dewy noon ;
Like Hope, it showed its blossoms in the night ;
'Twas, like Endymion, watching for the Moon !
And here are Sunflowers, amorous of light !

These golden Buttercups are April's seal,—
The Daisy stars her constellations be ;
These grew so lowly, I was forced to kneel,
Therefore I pluck no Daisies but for thee !

Here's Daisies for the Morn, Primrose for gloom,
Pansies and Roses for the noontide hours :
A wight once made a dial of their bloom,—
So may thy life be measured out by flow'rs !

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.

I.

REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn ;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away !

II.

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,

The vi'lets, and the lily-cups,
 Those flowers made of light !
 The lilacs where the robin built,
 And where my brother set
 The laburnum on his birthday,—
 The tree is living yet !

III.

I remember, I remember,
 Where I was used to swing,
 And thought the air must rush as fresh
 To swallows on the wing ;
 My spirit flew in feathers then,
 That is so heavy now,
 And summer pools could hardly cool
 The fever on my brow !

IV.

I remember, I remember,
 The fir-trees dark and high
 I used to think their slender tops
 Were close against the sky :
 It was a childish ignorance,
 But now 'tis little joy
 To know I'm farther off from heav'n
 Than when I was a boy.

SONG.

I.

THE stars are with the voyager
 Wherever he may sail ;
 The moon is constant to her time ;
 The sun will never fail ;
 But follow, follow round the world,
 The green earth and the sea ;
 So love is with the lover's heart,
 Wherever he may be.

II.

Wherever he may be, the stars
 Must daily lose their light ;
 The moon will veil her in the shade ;
 The sun will set at night.
 The sun may set, but constant love
 Will shine when he's away ;
 So that dull night is never night,
 And day is brighter day.

BALLAD.

SPRING it is cheery,
 Winter is dreary,
 Green leaves hang, but the brown must fly ;
 When he's forsaken,
 Withered and shaken,
 What can an old man do but die ?

Love will not clip him,
 Maids will not lip him,
 Maud and Marian pass him by ;
 Youth it is sunny,
 Age has no honey,—
 What can an old man do but die ?

June it was jolly,
 O for its folly !
 A dancing leg and a laughing eye ;
 Youth may be silly,
 Wisdom is chilly,—
 What can an old man do but die ?

Friends, they are scanty,
 Beggars are plenty,
 If he has followers, I know why ;
 Gold's in his clutches,
 (Buying him crutches !)
 What can an old man do but die ?

THE EXILE.

HE swallow with summer
 Will wing o'er the seas,
 The wind that I sigh to
 Will visit thy trees,
 The ship that it hastens
 Thy ports will contain,
 But me—I shall never
 See England again !

There's many that weep there,
 But one weeps alone,
 For the tears that are falling
 So far from her own ;

So far from thy own, love,
 We know not our pain :
 If death is between us,
 Or only the main.

When the white cloud reclines
 On the verge of the sea,
 I fancy the white cliffs,
 And dream upon thee ;
 But the cloud spreads its wings
 To the blue heav'n and flies,
 We never shall meet, love,
 Except in the skies !

TO MY WIFE.

STILL glides the gentle streamlet on,
 With shifting current new and strange ;
 The water, that was here, is gone,
 But those green shadows never change.

Serene or ruffled by the storm,
 On present waves, as on the past,
 The mirror'd grove retains its form,
 The self-same trees their semblance cast.

The hue each fleeting globule wears,
 That drop bequeaths it to the next ;
 One picture still the surface bears,
 To illustrate the murmur'd text.

So, love, however time may flow,
 Fresh hours pursuing those that flee,
 One constant image still shall show
 My tide of life is true to thee.

THE DEATHBED.

WE watch'd her breathing through the night,
 Her breathing soft and low,
 As in her breast the wave of life
 Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
 So slowly moved about,
 As we had lent her half our powers
 To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
 Our fears our hopes belied—
 We thought her dying when she slept,
 And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
 And chill with early showers,
 Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
 Another morn than ours.

THE POET'S PORTION.

WHAT is a mine—a treasury—a dower—
 A magic talisman of mighty power?
 A poet's wide possession of the earth.
 He has th' enjoyment of a flower's birth
 Before its budding—ere the first red streaks,
 And Winter cannot rob him of their cheeks.

Look—if his dawn be not as other men's !
 Twenty bright flushes—ere another kens
 The first of sunlight is abroad—he sees
 Its golden 'lection of the topmost trees,
 And opes the splendid fissures of the morn.

When do his fruits delay, when doth his corn
 Linger for harvesting? Before the leaf
 Is commonly abroad, in his pil'd sheaf
 The flagging poppies lose their ancient flame.
 No sweet there is, no pleasure I can name,

But he will sip it first—before the lees.
 'Tis his to taste rich honey,—ere the bees
 Are busy with the brooms. He may forestall
 June's rosy advent for his coronal ;
 Before th' expectant buds upon the bough,
 Twining his thoughts to bloom upon his brow.

Oh ! blest to see the flower in its seed,
 Before its leafy presence ; for indeed
 Leaves are but wings on which the summer flies
 And each thing perishable fades and dies,
 Escap'd in thought ; but his rich thinkings be
 Like overflows of immortality :
 So that what there is steep'd shall perish never,
 But live and bloom, and be a joy for ever.

THE FAREWELL.

FOR A FRENCH AIR.

FARE thee well,
 Gabrielle !
 Whilst I join France
 With bright cuirass and lance,
 Trumpets swell,
 Gabrielle !
 War-horses prance,
 And cavaliers advance.

In the night,
 Ere the fight,
 In the night,
 I'll think of thee !
 And in prayer,
 Lady fair,
 In thy prayer
 Think of me !

Death may knell,
 Gabrielle !
 When my plumes dance
 By arquebus or lance,
 Then farewell,
 Gabrielle !
 Take my last glance,
 Fair maid of France.

TO A FALSE FRIEND.

OUR hands have met, but not our hearts ;
 Our hands will never meet again.
 Friends, if we have ever been,
 Friends we cannot now remain :
 I only know I loved you once,
 I only know I loved in vain ;
 Our hands have met, but not our hearts ;
 Our hands will never meet again !
 Then farewell to heart and hand !
 I would our hands had never met :
 Even the outward form of love
 Must be resigned with some regret.
 Friends, we still might seem to be,
 If I my wrong could e'er forget ;
 Our hands have joined, but not our hearts ;
 I would our hands had never met !

THE FORSAKEN.

THE dead are in their silent graves,
 And the dew is cold above,
 And the living weep and sigh,
 Over the dust that once was love.

Once I only wept the dead,
 But now the living cause my pain :
 How couldst thou steal me from my tears,
 To leave me to my tears again ?

My Mother rests beneath the sod,—
 Her rest is calm and very deep :
 I wish'd that she could see our loves,—
 But now I gladden in her sleep.

Last night unbound my raven locks,
 The morning saw them turned to grey,
 Once they were black and well beloved,
 But thou art changed,— and so are they !

The useless lock I gave thee once,
 To gaze upon and think of me,
 Was ta'en with smiles,—but this was torn
 In sorrow that I send to thee !

VERSES IN AN ALBUM.

HAR above the hollow
 Tempest and its moan
 Singeth bright Apollo
 In his golden zone,—
 Cloud doth never shade him,
 Nor a storm invade him
 On his joyous throne.

So when I behold me
 In an orb as bright,
 How thy soul doth fold me
 In its throne of light !
 Sorrow never paineth,
 Nor a care attaineth,
 To that blessed height.

HYMN TO THE SUN.

GIVER of glowing light !
 Though but a god of other days,
 The kings and sages
 Of wiser ages
 Still live and gladden in thy genial rays !

King of the tuneful lyre,
 Still poets' hymns to thee belong ;
 Though lips are cold
 Whereon of old
 Thy beams all turned to worshipping and song !

Lord of the dreadful bow,
 None triumph now for Python's death :
 But thou dost save
 From hungry grave
 The life that hangs upon a summer breath.

Father of rosy day,
 No more thy clouds of incense rise ;
 But waking flowers
 At morning hours,
 Give out their sweets to meet thee in the skies.

God of the Delphic fane,
 No more thou listenest to hymns sublime ;
 But they will leave
 On winds at eve,
 A solemn echo to the end of time.

SONG.

LADY, leave that silken thread
 And flowery tapestry :
 There's living roses on the bush,
 And blossoms on the tree ;
 Stoop where thou wilt, thy careless hand
 Some random bud will meet ;
 Thou canst not tread, but thou wilt find
 The daisy at thy feet.

'Tis like the birthday of the world,
 When earth was born in bloom ;
 The light is made of many dyes,
 The air is all perfume ;

I LOVE THEE.

There's crimson buds, and white and blue—
 The very rainbow showers
 Have turn'd to blossoms where they fell,
 And sown the earth with flowers.

There's fairy tulips in the east,
 The garden of the sun ;
 The very streams reflect the hues,
 And blossoms as they run :
 While Morn opes like a crimson rose,
 Still wet with pearly showers ;
 Then, lady, leave the silken thread
 Thou twinest into flowers !

I LOVE THEE.



LOVE thee—I love thee !
 'Tis all I can say ;
 It is my vision in the night,
 My dreaming in the day ;
 The very echo of my heart,
 The blessing when I pray :
 I love thee—I love thee !
 Is all that I can say.

I love thee—I love thee !
 Is ever on my tongue ;
 In all my proudest poesy
 That chorus still is sung ;
 It is the verdict of my eyes,
 Amidst the gay and young :
 I love thee—I love thee !
 A thousand maids among.

I love thee—I love thee !
 Thy bright and hazel glance,
 The mellow lute upon those lips,
 Whose tender tones entrance ;
 But most, dear heart of hearts, thy proofs
 That still these words enhance,
 I love thee—I love thee !
 Whatever be thy chance.

BIRTHDAY VERSES.

GOOD morrow to the golden morning,
 Good morrow to the world's delight—
 I've come to bless thy life's beginning,
 Since it makes my own so bright !

I have brought no roses, sweetest,
 I could find no flowers, dear,—
 It was when all sweets were over
 Thou wert born to bless the year.*

But I've brought thee jewels, dearest,
 In thy bonny locks to shine,—
 And if love shows in their glances,
 They have learned that look of mine !

TO A CHILD EMBRACING HIS MOTHER.

LOVE thy mother, little one !
 Kiss and clasp her neck again,—
 Hereafter she may have a son
 Will kiss and clasp her neck in vain.
 Love thy mother, little one.

Gaze upon her living eyes,
 And mirror back her love to thee,—
 Hereafter thou may'st shudder sighs
 To meet them when they cannot see.
 Gaze upon her living eyes.

Press her lips the while they glow
 With love that they have often told,—
 Hereafter thou may'st press in woe,
 And kiss them till thine own are cold.
 Press her lips the while they glow !

Oh ! revere her raven hair !
 Although it be not silver grey ;
 Too early Death, led on by Care,
 May snatch save one dear lock away.
 Oh ! revere her raven hair !

Pray for her at eve and morn
 That Heaven may long the stroke defer,—
 For thou may'st live the hour forlorn
 When thou wilt ask to die with her.
 Pray for her at eve and morn !

* My mother's birthday was the 6th November.

FRAGMENT.

I HAD a dream—the summer beam
 Play'd on the wings of merry hours—
 Made long, long smiles of merry hours ;
 But Life 'gan throw a warp of woe
 Across its tapestry of flowers.
 Fear's darker shade took form and made—
 Like shadows darkling in light most sparkling.

The fragrant tombs amid the blooms
 Of April in a garden ground
 Show'd many a name that none could claim
 Half read between the roses round.
 Unbanish'd clouds like coffin-shrouds
 Neighbour'd the sun amid the blue,
 And tearful streams mix'd with his beams,
 Yet made no promise as they flew.

Young Hope indeed began to read
 The prophecies with cheerful look,
 But dark Despair look'd over there,
 And wept black blots upon her book.
 And scarce the form all bright and warm
 Of Joy was woven into birth,
 When, like her shade, black Grief was laid
 Prone at her feet along the earth.

Then do not chide—the sunny side
 Of monuments for Joy is made,
 But Sorrow still must weep her fill
 On those that lie beneath the shade.

TO AN ABSENTEE.

E'ER hill and dale, and distant sea,
 Through all the miles that stretch between,
 My thought must fly to rest on thee,
 And would though worlds should intervene.

Nay, thou art now so dear, methinks
 The farther we are forced apart,
 Affection's firm elastic links
 But bind the closer round the heart.

For now we sever each from each,
 I learn what I have lost in thee ;
 Alas ! that nothing less could teach,
 How great indeed my love should be !

Farewell! I did not know thy worth,
 But thou art gone, and now 'tis prized;
 So angels walked, unknown on earth,
 But when they flew, were recognised!

THE WATER LADY.



LAS, the moon should ever beam
 To show what man should never see!
 I saw a maiden on a stream,
 And fair was she!

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
 Her tresses back, that all beset
 The fair horizon of her brow
 With clouds of jet.

I stayed a little while to view
 Her cheek, that wore in place of red
 The bloom of water, tender blue,
 Daintily spread.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
 Her parted lips if she would sing;
 The waters closed above her face
 With many a ring.

And still I stayed a little more,
 Alas! she never comes again;
 I throw my flowers from the shore,
 And watch in vain.

I know my life will fade away,
 I know that I must vainly pine,
 For I am made of mortal clay,
 But she's divine!

STANZAS.



E did not wear a leafy crown,
 And darkly glance to darker glance,
 Under the green leaf and the brown,
 Wooing the eyes of maids of France,
 With very bloomy down:
 We stain'd not hands with purple blood
 In golden Arno's pleasant vale,
 Where the proud Brothers quench'd the stain,
 And saw two murderers in the flood
 With faces guilty-pale:

AUTUMN.

Nor on the sunny hills of Spain
 We used to drink the sun and twine
 Long amorous tendrils to entrap
 The careless finger of maid to linger
 And pluck us from the trembling vine
 To brim her dimpled lap.

AUTUMN.

THE Autumn is old,
 The sere leaves are flying ;
 He hath gathered up gold,
 And now he is dying ;—
 Old Age, begin sighing !

The vintage is ripe,
 The harvest is heaping ;
 But some that have sow'd
 Have no riches for reaping ;—
 Poor wretch, fall a-weeping !

The year's in the wane,
 There is nothing adorning,
 The night has no eve,
 And the day has no morning ;—
 Cold winter gives warning.

The rivers run chill,
 The red sun is sinking,
 And I am grown old,
 And life is fast shrinking ;—
 There's enow for sad thinking !

TO CELIA.

OLD fictions say that Love hath eyes,
 Yet sees, unhappy boy ! with none ;
 Blind as the night ! but fiction lies.
 For Love doth always see with one:

To one our graces all unveil,
 To one our flaws are all exposed ;
 But when with tenderness we hail,
 He smiles, and keeps the critic closed.

But when he's scorned, abused, estranged,
He opes the eye of evil ken,
And all his angel friends are changed
To demons—and are hated then !

Yet once it happ'd that, semi-blind,
He met thee on a summer day,
And took thee for his mother kind,
And frown'd as he was push'd away.

But still he saw thee shine the same,
Though he had oped his evil eye,
And found that nothing but her shame
Was left to know his mother by !

And ever since that morning sun
He thinks of thee, and blesses Fate
That he can look with both on one
Who hath no ugliness to hate.





SONNETS.

ON MISTRESS NICELY, A PATTERN FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.

*Written after seeing Mrs. Davenport in the character, at
Covent Garden.*

SHE was a woman peerless in her station,
With household virtues wedded to her name ;
Spotless in linen, grass-bleached in her fame ;
And pure and clear-starched in her conversation ;
Thence in my Castle of Imagination
She dwells for evermore, the dainty dame,
To keep all airy draperies from shame,
And all dream furnitures in preservation :
There walketh she with keys quite silver bright,
In perfect hose, and shoes of seemly black,
Apron and stomacher of lily-white,
And decent order follows in her track :
The burnished plate grows lustrous in her sight,
And polished floors and tables shine her back.

WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF SHAKSPEARE.

How bravely Autumn paints upon the sky
The gorgeous fame of Summer which is fled
Hues of all flowers that in their ashes lie,
Trophied in that fair light whereon they fed,
Tulip, and hyacinth, and sweet rose red,—
Like exhalations from the leafy mould,
Look here how honour glorifies the dead,
And warms their scutcheons with a glance of gold !
Such is the memory of poets old,
Who on Parnassus' hill have bloomed elate ;
Now they are laid under their marbles cold,
And turned to clay, whereof they were create :
But God Apollo hath them all enrolled,
And blazoned on the very clouds of fate !

TO FANCY.

MOST delicate Ariel ! submissive thing,
 Won by the mind's high magic to its hest,—
 Invisible embassy, or secret guest,—
 Weighing the light air on a lighter wing
 Whether into the midnight moon, to bring
 Illuminate visions to the eye of rest,—
 Or rich romances from the florid West,—
 Or to the sea, for mystic whispering,—
 Still by thy charmed allegiance to the will,
 The fruitful wishes prosper in the brain,
 As by the fingering of fairy skill,—
 Moonlight, and waters, and soft music's strain,
 Odours, and blooms, and *my* Miranda's smile,
 Making this dull world an enchanted isle.

TO AN ENTHUSIAST.

YOUNG ardent soul, graced with fair Nature's truth,
 Spring warmth of heart, and fervency of mind,
 And still a large late love of all thy kind,
 Spite of the world's cold practice and Time's tooth—
 For all these gifts, I know not, in fair sooth,
 Whether to give thee joy, or bid thee blind
 Thine eyes with tears,—that thou hast not resigned
 The passionate fire and freshness of thy youth :
 For as the current of thy life shall flow,
 Gilded by shine of sun or shadow-stained,
 Through flow'ry valley or unwholesome fen,
 Thrice blessed in thy joy, or in thy woe
 Thrice cursed of thy race,—thou art ordained
 To share beyond the lot of common men.

SONNET.

IT is not death, that sometimes in a sigh
 This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight ;
 That sometimes these bright stars, that now reply
 In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night :
 That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
 And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow ;
 That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite
 Be lapped in alien clay and laid below ;
 It is not death to know this,—but to know

That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
 In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
 So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves
 Over the past-away, there may be then
 No resurrection in the minds of men.

SONNET.

By ev'ry sweet tradition of true hearts,
 Graven by Time, in love with his own lore ;
 By all old martyrdoms and antique smarts,
 Wherein Love died to be alive the more ;
 Yea, by the sad impression on the shore,
 Left by the drowned Leander, to endear
 That coast for ever, where the billow's roar
 Moaneth for pity in the Poet's ear ;
 By Hero's faith, and the foreboding tear
 That quenched her brand's last twinkle in its fall ;
 By Sappho's leap, and the low rustling fear
 That sighed around her flight ; I swear by all,
 The world shall find such pattern in my act,
 As if Love's great examples still were lacked.

MIDNIGHT.

UNFATHOMABLE Night ! how dost thou sweep
 Over the flooded earth, and darkly hide
 The mighty city under thy full tide ;
 Making a silent palace for old Sleep,
 Like his own temple under the hush'd deep,
 Where all the busy day he doth abide,
 And forth at the late dark, outspreadeth wide
 His dusky wings, whence the cold waters sweep !
 How peacefully the living millions lie !
 Lull'd unto death beneath his poppy spells ;
 There is no breath—no living stir—no cry—
 No tread of foot—no song—no music-call—
 Only the sound of melancholy bells—
 The voice of Time—survivor of them all !

ON RECEIVING A GIFT.

LOOK how the golden ocean shines above
 Its pebbly stones, and magnifies their girth ;
 So does the bright and blessed light of love
 Its own things glorify, and raise their worth.

As weeds seem flowers beneath the flattering brine,
 And stones like gems, and gems as gems indeed,
 Even so our tokens shine ; nay, they outshine
 Pebbles and pearls, and gems and coral weed ;
 For where be ocean waves but half so clear,
 So calmly constant, and so kindly warm,
 As Love's most mild and glowing atmosphere,
 That hath no dregs to be upturned by storm ?
 Thus, sweet, thy gracious gifts are gifts of price,
 And more than gold to doting Avarice.

SONNET.

THE curse of Adam, the old curse of all,
 Though I inherit in this feverish life
 Of worldly toil, vain wishes, and hard strife,
 And fruitless thought, in Care's eternal thrall,
 Yet more sweet honey than of bitter gall
 I taste, through thee, my Eva, my sweet wife.
 Then what was Man's lost Paradise !—how rich
 Of bliss, since love is with him in his fall !
 Such as our own pure passion still might frame
 Of this fair earth, and its delightful bowers,
 If no fell sorrow, like the serpent, came
 To trail its venom o'er the sweetest flowers ;
 But oh ! as many and such tears are ours,
 As only should be shed for guilt and shame !

SONNET.

LOVE, dearest lady, such as I would speak,
 Lives not within the humour of the eye ;
 Not being but an outward phantasy,
 That skims the surface of a tinted cheek,—
 Else it would wane with beauty, and grow weak,
 As if the rose made summer,—and so lie
 Amongst the perishable things that die,
 Unlike the love which I would give and seek :
 Whose health is of no hue—to feel decay
 With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime.
 Love is its own great loveliness alway,
 And takes new lustre from the touch of time ;
 Its bough owns no December and no May,
 But bears its blossoms into Winter's clime.

SONNETS.

SILENCE.

THERE is a silence where hath been no sound,
 There is a silence where no sound may be,
 In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,
 Or in wide desert where no life is found,
 Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound ;
 No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,
 But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
 That never spoke, over the idle ground :
 But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
 Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
 Though the dun fox, or wild hyena, calls,
 And owls, that flit continually between,
 Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
 There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

SONNET.

WRITTEN IN KEATS' "ENDYMION."

I SAW pale Dian sitting by the brink
 Of silver falls, the overflow of fountains,
 From cloudy steps ; and I grew sad to think
 Endymion's foot was silent on those mountains,
 And he but a hush'd name, that silence keeps
 In dear remembrance, lonely and forlorn,
 Singing it to herself until she weeps
 Tears, that perchance still glisten in the morn ;
 And as I mused in dull imaginings,
 There came a flash of garments, and I knew
 The awful muse by her harmonious wings
 Charming the air to music as she flew—
 Anon there rose an echo through the vale,
 Gave back Endymion in a dreamlike tale.

SONNET.

LOVE, I am jealous of a worthless man
 Whom—for his merits—thou dost hold too dear :
 No better than myself, he lies as near
 And precious to thy bosom. He may span
 Thy sacred waist and with thy sweet breath fan
 His happy cheek, and thy most willing ear
 Invade with words and call his love sincere
 And true as mine, and prove it—if he can :—
 Not that I hate him for such deeds as this—

He were a devil to adore thee less,
 Who wears thy favour,—I am ill at ease
 Rather lest he should e'er too coldly press
 Thy gentle hand :— This is my jealousy
 Making myself suspect but never thee !

SONNET.

FOR THE 14TH OF FEBRUARY.

NO popular respect will I omit
 To do thee honour on this happy day,
 When every loyal lover tasks his wit
 His simple truth in studious rhymes to pay,
 And to his mistress dear his hopes convey.
 Rather than know it I would still outrun
 All calendars with Love's, whose date alway
 Thy bright eyes govern better than the sun,—
 For with thy favour was my life begun ;
 And still I reckon on from smiles to smiles,
 And not by summers, for I thrive on none.
 But those thy cheerful countenance compiles.
 Oh ! if it be to choose and call thee mine,
 Love, thou art every day my valentine !

SONNET.

LOVE, see thy lover humbled at thy feet,
 Not in servility, but homage sweet,
 Gladly inclined :—and with my bended knee
 Think that my inward spirit bows to thee—
 More proud indeed than when I stand or climb
 Elsewhere :—there is no statue so sublime
 As Love's in all the world, and e'en to kiss
 The pedestal is still a better bliss
 Than all ambitions. O ! Love's lowest base
 Is far above the reaching of disgrace
 To shame this posture. Let me then draw nigh
 Feet that have fared so nearly to the sky,
 And when this duteous homage has been given
 I will rise up and clasp the heart in Heaven.

FALSE POETS AND TRUE.

TO WORDSWORTH.

LOOK how the lark soars upward and is gone,
 Turning a spirit as he nears the sky !
 His voice is heard, but body there is none

To fix the vague excursions of the eye.
 So poets' songs are with us, tho' they die
 Obscured and hid by death's oblivious shroud,
 And Earth inherits the rich melody
 Like raining music from the morning cloud.
 Yet, few there be who pipe so sweet and loud
 Their voices reach us through the lapse of space :
 The noisy day is deafen'd by a crowd
 Of undistinguished birds, a twittering race ;
 But only lark and nightingale forlorn
 Fill up the silences of night and morn.

SONNET.

" Sweets to the sweet—farewell."—Hamlet.

TIME was I liked a cheesecake well enough—
 All human children have a sweetish taste ;
 I used to revel in a pie, or puff,
 Or tart,—we all were Tartars in our youth ;
 To meet with jam or jelly was good luck,
 All candies most complacently I crumped,
 A stick of liquorice was good to suck,
 And sugar was as often liked as lumped !
 On treacle's " linkèd sweetness long drawn out,"
 On honey I could feast like any fly ;
 I thrilled when lollipops were hawked about ;
 How pleased to compass hardbake or bull's-eye ;
 How charmed if Fortune in my power cast
 Elecampane—but that campaign is past !

TO A SLEEPING CHILD.

I.

OH, 'tis a touching thing to make one weep,—
 A tender infant with its curtain'd eye,
 Breathing as it would neither live nor die
 With that unchanging countenance of sleep !
 As if its silent dream, serene and deep,
 Had lined its slumber with a still blue sky
 So that the passive cheeks unconscious lie
 With no more life than roses—just to keep
 The blushes warm, and the mild, odorous breath.
 O blossom boy ! so calm is thy repose,
 So sweet a compromise of life and death,
 'Tis pity those fair buds should e'er unclose
 For memory to stain their inward leaf,
 Tinging thy dreams with unacquainted grief.

II.

Thine eyelids slept so beautifully, I deem'd
 No eyes could wake so beautiful as they :
 Thy rosy cheeks in such still slumbers lay.
 I loved their peacefulness, nor ever dream'd
 Of dimples :—for those parted lips so seem'd,
 I never thought a smile could sweetlier play,
 Nor that so graceful life could chase away
 Thy graceful death, till those blue eyes upheam'd.
 Now slumber lies in dimpled eddies drown'd,
 And roses bloom more rosily for joy,
 And odorous silence ripens into sound,
 And fingers move to sound.—All-beauteous boy !
 How thou dost waken into smiles, and prove,
 If not more lovely, thou art more like Love !

TO A DECAYED SEAMAN.

HAIL! seventy-four cut down ! Hail, top and lop ;
 Unless I'm much mistaken in my notion,
 Thou wast a stirring tar before that hop
 Became so fatal to thy locomotion ;
 Now, thrown on shore, like a mere weed of ocean,
 Thou readest still to men a lesson good,
 To King and Country showing thy devotion,
 By kneeling thus upon a stump of wood !
 Still is thy spirit strong as alcohol ;
 Spite of that limb, begot of acorn-egg—
 Methinks—thou Naval History in one vol.
 A virtue shines, e'en in that timber leg,
 For unlike others that desert their Poll,
 Thou walkest ever with thy " Constant Peg !"

ON STEAM.

BY AN UNDER-OSTLER.

I WISH I livd a Thowsen year Ago
 Wurking for Sober six and Seven milers
 And dubble Stages runnen safe and slo
 The Orsis cum in Them days to the Bilers
 But Now my meens of Powers of Steem forces
 A-turning Coches into Smoakey Kettls
 The Bilers seem a Cumming to the Orses
 And Helps and naggs Will sune be out of Vittels
 Poor Bruits I wunder How wee bee to Liv
 When sutch a change of Orses is our Faits
 No nothink need Be sifted in a Siv

May them Blowd ingins all Blow up their Grates
 And Theaves of Oslers crib the Coles and Giv
 Their blackgard Hannimuls a feed of Slaits!

TO A SCOTCH GIRL, WASHING LINEN AFTER HER
 COUNTRY FASHION.

WELL done and wetly, thou Fair Maid of Perth:
 Thou mak'st a washing picture well deserving
 The pen and pencilling of Washington Irving:
 Like dripping Naiad, pearly from her birth,
 Dashing about the water of the Firth,
 To cleanse the calico of Mrs. Skirving,
 And never from thy dance of duty swerving
 As there were nothing else than dirt on earth!
 Yet what is thy reward? Nay, do not start!
 I do not mean to give thee a new damper,
 But while thou fillest this industrious part
 Of washer, wearer, mangler, presser, stamper,
 Deserving better character—thou art
 What Bodkin would but call—"a common tramper."

Allegory—A moral vehicle.—*Dictionary.*

I HAD a Gig-Horse, and I called him Pleasure,
 Because on Sundays, for a little jaunt,
 He was so fast and showy, quite a treasure;
 Although he sometimes kicked and shied aslant;
 I had a Chaise, and christened it Enjoyment,
 With yellow body, and the wheels of red,
 Because 'twas only used for one employment,
 Namely, to go wherever Pleasure led.
 I had a wife, her nickname was Delight:
 A son called Frolic, who was never still:
 Alas! how often dark succeeds to bright!
 Delight was thrown, and Frolic had a spill,
 Enjoyment was upset and shattered quite,
 And Pleasure fell a splitter on *Paine's Hill!*

SONNET.

"Dornton and Co. may challenge the world:
 The house of Hope, perhaps excepted."—*Road to Ruin.*

TIME was, I sat upon a lofty stool,
 At lofty desk, and with a clerkly pen
 Began each morning, at the stroke of ten,
 To write in Bell and Co.'s commercial school;

In Warnford Court, a shady nook, and cool,
 The favourite retreat of merchant men ;
 Yet would my quill turn vagrant even then,
 And take stray dips in the Castalian pool.
 Now double entry—now a flowery trope—
 Mingling poetic honey with trade wax—
 Blogg Brothers—Milton—Grote and Prescott—Pope—
 Bristles—and Hogg—Glyn, Mills and Halifax—
 Rogers—and Towgood—Hemp—the Bard of Hope—
 Barilla—Byron—Tallow—Burns—and Flax !

SONNET.

TO LORD WHARNCLIFFE ON HIS GAME BILL.

I'm fond of partridges,—I'm fond of snipes,
 I'm fond of black cocks, for they're very good cocks—
 I'm fond of wild ducks, and I'm fond of woodcocks,
 And grouse that set up such strange moorish pipes—
 I'm fond of pheasants with their splendid stripes—
 I'm fond of hares, whether from Whig or Tory—
 I'm fond of capercalxies in their glory,—
 Teal, widgeons, plovers, birds in all their types,
 All these are in your care, Law-giving Peer,
 And when you next address your Lordly Babel,
 Some clause put in your Bill, precise and clear,
 With due and fit provision to enable
 A man that holds all kinds of game so dear
 To keep, like Crockford, a good Gaming Table !

SONNET.

THE sky is glowing in one ruddy sheet ;—
 A cry of fire ! resounds from door to door ;
 And westward still the thronging people pour ;—
 The turncock hastens to F. P. 6 feet,
 And quick unlocks the fountains of the street ;
 While rumbling engines, with increasing roar,
 Thunder along to luckless number Four,
 Where Mr. Dough makes bread for folks to eat.
 And now through blazing frames and fiery beams,
 The Globe, the Sun, the Phœnix, and what not,
 With gushing pipes throw up abundant streams,
 On burning bricks, and twists, on rolls—too hot—
 And scorching loaves,—as if there were no shorter
 And cheaper way of making toast and water !

SONNETS.

SONNET.

ALONG the Woodford road there comes a noise
 Of wheels, and Mr. Rounding's neat post-chaise
 Struggles along, drawn by a pair of bays,
 With Rev. Mr. Crow and six small boys ;
 Who ever and anon declare their joys,
 With trumping horns, and juvenile huzzas,
 At going home to spend their Christmas days,
 And changing Learning's pains for Pleasure's toys.
 Six weeks elapse, and down the Woodford way,
 A heavy coach drags six more heavy souls,
 But no glad urchins shout, no trumpets bray,
 The carriage makes a halt, the gate-bell tolls,
 And little Boys walk in as dull and mum
 As six new scholars to the Deaf and Dumb !

TO A CRITIC.

O CRUEL One ! How littel dost thou know
 How manye poetes with unhappynesse
 Thou mayest have slaine ; ere they beganne to blowe
 Like to yonge Buddes in theyre first sappynesse !
 Even as Pinkes from littel Pipinges growe
 Great Poetes yet may come of singinges small,
 Which, if an hungrede Worme doth gnawe belowe,
 Fold up theyre stripèd leaves, and dye withalle,
 Alake, that pleasaunt Flowre must fayde and falle
 Because a Grubbe hath ete into yts Hede,—
 That els had growne soe fayre and eke soe talle
 To wardes the Heaven, and opened forthe and sprede
 In soe brighte hues of Lovelinessse indeede !





ODES AND ADDRESSES.

ODE TO MR. GRAHAM, THE AERONAUT.

“Up with me!—up with me into the sky!”

WORDSWORTH—*on a Lark!*

DEAR GRAHAM, whilst the busy crowd,
The vain, the wealthy, and the proud,
Their meaner flights pursue,
Let us cast off the foolish ties
That bind us to the earth, and rise
And take a bird's-eye view!—

A few more whiffs of my cigar
And then, in Fancy's airy car,
Have with thee for the skies:—
How oft this fragrant smoke upcurled
Hath borne me from this little world,
And all that in it lies!—

Away!—away!—the bubble fills—
Farewell to earth and all its hills!—
We seem to cut the wind!—
So high we mount, so swift we go,
The chimney-tops are far below,
The Eagle's left behind!—

Ah me! my brain begins to swim!—
The world is growing rather dim;
The steeples and the trees—
My wife is getting very small!
I cannot see my babe at all!
The Dollond, if you please!

Do, Graham, let me have a quiz,
Lord! what a Lilliput it is,
That little world of Mogg's!—
Are those the London Docks?—that channel,
The mighty Thames?—a proper kennel
For that small Isle of Dogs!—

ODE TO MR. GRAHAM.

What is that seeming tea-urn there ?
 That fairy dome, St. Paul's !—I swear
 Wren must have been a Wren !—
 And that small stripe ?—it cannot be
 The City Road !—Good lack ! to see
 The little ways of men !

Little, indeed !—my eyeballs ache
 To find a turnpike.—I must take
 Their tolls upon my trust !—
 And where is mortal labour gone ?
 Look, Graham, for a little stone
 Mac Adamized to dust !

Look at the horses !—less than flies !—
 Oh, what a waste it was of sighs
 To wish to be a Mayor !
 What is the honour ?—none at all,
 One's honour must be very small
 For such a civic chair !—

And there's Guildhall !—'tis far aloof—
 Methinks, I fancy through the roof
 Its little guardian Gogs,
 Like penny dolls—a tiny show !—
 Well—I must say they're ruled below
 By very little Logs !

Oh, Graham ! how the upper air
 Alters the standards of compare ;
 One of our silken flags
 Would cover London all about—
 Nay, then—let's even empty out
 Another brace of bags !

Now for a glass of bright Champagne'
 Above the clouds !—Come, let us drain
 A bumper as we go !—
 But hold !—for God's sake do not cant
 The cork away—unless you want
 To brain your friends below.

Think ! what a mob of little men
 Are crawling just within our ken,
 Like mites upon a cheese !—
 Pshaw !—how the foolish sight rebukes
 Ambitious thoughts !—can there be *Dukes*
 Of *Gloster* such as these !—

Oh! what is glory?—what is fame?
 Hark to the little mob's acclaim,
 'Tis nothing but a hum!—
 A few near gnats would trump as loud
 As all the shouting of a crowd
 That has so far to come!—

Well—they are wise that choose the near,
 A few small buzzards in the ear,
 To organs ages hence!—
 Ah me! how distance touches all;
 It makes the true look rather small,
 But murders poor pretence.

“The world recedes—it disappears!
 Heaven opens on my eyes—my ears
 With buzzing noises ring!”—
 A fig for Southey's Laureate lore!—
 What's Rogers here?—Who cares for Moore
 That hears the Angels sing!—

A fig for earth, and all its minions!—
 We are above the world's opinions,
 Graham! we'll have our own!—
 Look what a vantage height we've got—
 Now—*do* you think Sir Walter Scott
 Is such a Great Unknown?

Speak up!—or hath he hid his name
 To crawl thro' “subways” into fame,
 Like Williams of Cornhill?—
 Speak up, my lad!—when men run *small*
 We'll show what's little in them all,
 Receive it how they will!—

Think now of Irving!—shall he preach
 The princes down—shall he impeach
 The potent and the rich,
 Merely on ethic stilts—and I
 Not moralize at two miles high—
 The true didactic pitch!

Come:—what d'ye think of Jeffrey, sir?
 Is Gifford such a Gulliver
 In Linnet's Review,
 That like Colossus he should stride
 Certain small brazen inches wide
 For poets to pass through?

ODE TO MR. GRAHAM.

Look down ! the world is but a spot.
 Now say—Is Blackwood's *low* or not,
 For all the Scottish tone ?
 It shall not weigh us here—not where
 The sandy burden's lost in air—
 Our lading—where is't flown ?

Now—like you Croly's verse indeed—
 In heaven—where one cannot read
 The "Warren" on the wall ?
 What think you here of that man's fame ?
 Tho' Jerdan magnified his name,
 To me 'tis very small !

And truly, is there such a spell
 In those three letters, L. E. L.,
 To witch a world with song ?
 On clouds the Byron did not sit,
 Yet dared on Shakspeare's head to spit,
 And say the world was wrong !

And shall not we ? Let's think aloud !
 Thus being couched upon a cloud,
 Graham, we'll have our eyes !
 We felt the great when we were less,
 But we'll retort on littleness
 Now we are in the skies.

O Graham, Graham ! how I blame
 The bastard blush—the petty shame
 That used to fret me quite—
 The little sores I covered then,
 No sores on earth, nor sorrows when
 The world is out of sight !

My name is Tims.—I am the man
 That North's unseen, diminished clan
 So scurvily abused !
 I am the very P. A. Z.
 The London Lion's small pin's head
 So often hath refused !

Campbell—(you cannot see him here)—
 Hath scorned my *lays* :—do his appear
 Such great eggs from the sky ?—
 And Longman, and his lengthy Co.
 Long, only, in a little Row,
 Have thrust my poems by !

What else?—I'm poor, and much beset
 With damned small duns—that is—in debt
 Some grains of golden dust!
 But only worth, above, is worth.—
 What's all the credit of the earth?
 An inch of cloth on trust!

What's Rothschild here, that wealthy man!
 Nay, worlds of wealth?—Oh, if you can
 Spy out—the *Golden Ball*!
 Sure as we rose, all money sank:
 What's gold or silver now?—the Bank
 Is gone—the 'Change and all!

What's all the ground-rent of the globe?—
 Oh, Graham, it would worry Job
 To hear its landlords prate!
 But after this survey, I think
 I'll ne'er be bullied more, nor shrink
 From men of large estate!

And less, still less, will I submit
 To poor mean acres' worth of wit—
 I that have heaven's span—
 I that like Shakspeare's self may dream
 Beyond the very clouds, and seem
 An Universal Man!

Mark, Graham, mark those gorgeous crowds!
 Like Birds of Paradise the clouds
 Are winging on the wind!
 But what is grander than their range?
 More lovely than their sun-set change?—
 The free creative mind!

Well! the Adults' School's in the air!
 The greatest men are lessoned there
 As well as the Lessee!
 Oh could earth's Ellistons thus small
 Behold the greatest stage of all,
 How humbled they would be!

“Oh would some Power the giftie gie 'em,
 To see themselves as others see 'em,”
 'T would much abate their fuss!
 If they could think that from the skies
 They are as little in our eyes
 As they can think of us!

ODE TO MR. M'ADAM.

Of us? are we gone out of sight?
 Lessened! diminished! vanished quite!
 Lost to the tiny town!
 Beyond the eagle's ken—the grope
 Of Dollond's longest telescope!
 Graham! we're going down!

Ah me! I've touched a string that opes
 The airy valve!—the gas elopes—
 Down goes our bright balloon!—
 Farewell the skies! the clouds! I smell
 The lower world! Graham, farewell,
 Man of the silken moon!

The earth is close! the City nears—
 Like a burnt paper it appears,
 Studded with tiny sparks!
 Methinks I hear the distant rout
 Of coaches rumbling all about—
 We're close above the Parks!

I hear the watchmen on their beats,
 Hawking the hour about the streets.
 Lord! what a cruel jar
 It is upon the earth to light!
 Well—there's the finish of our flight!
 I've smoked my last cigar!

ODE TO MR. M'ADAM.

“Let us take to the road.”—*Beggars' Opera.*

M'ADAM, hail!
 Hail, Roadian! hail, Colossus! who dost stand
 Striding ten thousand turnpikes on the land!
 Oh universal Leveller! all hail!
 To thee, a good, yet stony-hearted man,
 The kindest one, and yet the flintiest going—
 To thee—how much for thy commodious plan,
 Lanark Reformer of the Ruts, is Owing!
 The Bristol mail,
 Gliding o'er ways hitherto deemed invincible.
 When carrying Patriots now shall never fail
 Those of the most “*unshaken* public principle.”
 Hail to thee, Scot of Scots!
 Thou northern light, amid those heavy men!

Foe to Stonehenge, yet friend to all beside,
 Thou scatterest flints and favours far and wide,
 From palaces to cots ;—
 Dispenser of coagulated good !
 Distributor of granite and of food !
 Long may thy fame its even path march on
 E'en when thy sons are dead !
 Best benefactor ! though thou giv'st a stone
 To those who ask for bread !

Thy first great trial in this mighty town
 Was, if I rightly recollect, upon
 That gentle hill which goeth
 Down from "the County" to the Palace gate,
 And, like a river, thanks to thee, now floweth,
 Past the Old Horticultural Society—
 The chemist Cobb's, the house of Howell and James,
 Where ladies play high shawl and satin games—
 A little *Hell* of lace !

And past the Athenæum, made of late,
 Severs a sweet variety
 Of milliners and booksellers who grace
 Waterloo Place,

Making division, the Muse fears and guesses,
 'Twixt Mr. Rivington's and Mr. Hessey's.
 Thou stood'st thy trial, Mac ! and shaved the road
 From Barber Beaumont's to the King's abode
 So well, that paviours threw their rammers by,
 Let down their tucked shirt-sleeves, and with a sigh
 Prepared themselves, poor souls, to chip or die !

Next, from the palace to the prison, thou
 Didst go, the highway's watchman, to thy beat—
 Preventing though the *rattling* in the street,
 Yet kicking up a row
 Upon the stones—ah ! truly watchman-like,
 Encouraging thy victims all to strike,
 To further thy own purpose, Adam, daily ;—
 Thou hast smoothed, alas, the path to the Old Bailey !
 And to the stony bowers
 Of Newgate, to encourage the approach,
 By caravan or coach—
 Hast strewed the way with flints as soft as flowers.

Who shall dispute thy name !
 Insculpt in stone in every street,
 We soon shall greet
 Thy trodden down, yet all unconquered fame !

Where'er we take, even at this time, our way,
Nought see we, but mankind in open air,
Hammering thy fame, as Chantrey would not dare :—

And with a patient care
Chipping thy immortality all day!
Demosthenes of old—that rare old man—
Prophetically *followed*, Mac ! thy plan :—

For he, we know,
(History says so,)
Put *pebbles* in his mouth when he would speak
The *smoothest* Greek !

It is “impossible, and cannot be,”
But that thy genius hath,
Besides the turnpike, many another path
Trode, to arrive at popularity,
O'er Pegasus, perchance, thou hast thrown a thigh,
Nor ridden a roadster only ; mighty Mac !
And 'faith I'd swear, when on that wingèd hack,
Thou hast observed the highways in the sky !
Is the path up Parnassus rough and steep,
And “hard to climb,” as Dr. B. would say ?
Dost think it best for Sons of Song to keep
The noiseless *tenor* of their way ? (see Gray.)
What line of road *should* poets take to bring
Themselves unto those waters, loved the first !—
Those waters which can wet a man to sing !
Which, like thy fame, “from *granite* basins burst,
Leap into life, and, sparkling, woo the thirst ?”

That thou'rt a proser, even thy birthplace might
Vouchsafe ;—and Mr. Cadell *may*, God wot,
Have paid thee many a pound for many a blot—
Cadell's a wayward wight !
Although no Walter, still thou art a Scot,
And I can throw, I think, a little light
Upon some works thou hast written for the town—
And published, like a Lilliput Unknown !
“Highways and Byeways,” is thy book, no doubt,
(One whole edition's out,)
And next, for it is fair
That Fame,
Seeing her children, should confess she had 'em :—
“Some *Passages* from the life of Adam Blair”—
(Blair is a Scottish name,)
What are they, but thy own good roads, M'Adam ?

O ! indefatigable labourer
 In the paths of men ! when thou shalt die, 'twill be
 A mark of thy surpassing industry,
 That of the monument, which men shall rear
 Over thy most inestimable bone,
 Thou didst thy very self lay the first stone !—
 Of a right ancient line thou comest—through
 Each crook and turn we trace the unbroken clue,
 Until we see thy sire before our eyes—
 Rolling his gravel walks in Paradise !
 But he, our great Mac Parent, erred, and ne'er
 Have our walks since been fair !
 Yet Time, who, like the merchant, lives on 'Change,
 For ever varying, through his varying range,
 Time maketh all things even !
 In this strange world, turning beneath high heaven !
 He hath redeemed the Adams, and contrived—
 (How are Time's wonders hived !)
 In pity to mankind and to befriend 'em—
 (Time is above all praise)
 That he, who first did make our evil ways,
 Re-born in Scotland, should be first to mend 'em !

A FRIENDLY ADDRESS TO MRS. FRY, IN
 NEWGATE.

"Sermons in stones."—*As You Like It.*
 "Out ! out ! damned spot."—*Macbeth.*

LIKE you, Mrs. Fry ! I like your name !
 It speaks the very warmth you feel in pressing
 In daily act round Charity's great flame—
 I like the crisp Browne way you have of dressing,
 Good Mrs. Fry ! I like the placid claim
 You make to Christianity—professing
 Love, and good *works*—of course you buy of Barton,
 Beside the young *fry's* booksellers, Friend Darton !

I like, good Mrs. Fry, your brethren mute—
 Those serious, solemn gentlemen that sport—
 I should have said, that *wear*, the sober suit
 Shaped like a court dress—but for heaven's court.
 I like your sisters too—sweet Rachel's fruit—
 Protestant nuns ! I like their stiff support
 Of virtue—and I like to see them clad
 With such a difference—just like good from bad !

I like the sober colours—not the wet ;
 Those gaudy manufacturers of the rainbow—
 Green, orange, crimson, purple, violet—
 In which the fair, the flirting, and the vain, go—
 The others are a chaste, severer set,
 In which the good, the pious, and the plain, go—
 They're moral *standards*, to know Christians by—
 In short, they are your *colours*, Mrs. Fry !

As for the naughty tinges of the prism—
 Crimson's the cruel uniform of war—
 Blue—hue of brimstone ! minds no catechism ;
 And green is young and gay—not noted for
 Goodness, or gravity, or quietism,
 Till it is saddened down to tea-green, or
 Olive—and purple's given to wine, I guess ;
 And yellow is a convict by its dress !

They're all the devil's liveries, that men
 And women wear in servitude to sin—
 But how will they come off, poor motleys, when
 Sin's wages are paid down, and they stand in
 The Evil Presence? You and I know, then,
 How all the party colours will begin,
 To part—the *Pittite* hues will sadden there,
 Whereas the *Foxite* shades will all show fair !

Witness their goodly labours one by one !
Russet makes garments for the needy poor—
Dove-colour preaches love to all—and *dun*
 Calls every day at Charity's street-door—
Brown studies Scriptures, and bids women shun
 All gaudy furnishing—*olive* doth pour
 Oil into wounds : and *drab* and *slate* supply
 Scholar and book in Newgate, Mrs. Fry !

Well ! Heaven forbid that I should discommend
 The gratis, charitable, jail-endeavour !
 When all persuasions in your praises blend—
 The Methodist's creed and cry are, *Fry* for ever !
 No—I will be your friend—and, like a friend,
 Point out your very worst defect—Nay, never
 Start at that word ! But I *must* ask you why
 You keep your school *in* Newgate, Mrs. Fry ?

Too well I know the price our mother Eve
 Paid for *her* schooling : but must all her daughters
 Commit a petty larceny, and thief—
 Pay down a crime for "*entrance*" to your "*quarters*" ?

Your classes may increase, but I must grieve
 Over your pupils at their bread and waters !
 Oh, though it cost you rent—(and rooms run high) -
 Keep your school *out* of Newgate, Mrs. Fry !

O save the vulgar soul before it's spoiled !
 Set up your mounted sign *without* the gate—
 And there inform the mind before 'tis soiled !
 'Tis sorry writing on a greasy slate !
 Nay, if you would not have your labours foiled,
 Take it *inclining* towards a virtuous state,
 Not prostrate and laid flat—else, woman meek,
 The *upright* pencil will but hop and shriek !

Ah, who can tell how hard it is to drain
 The evil spirit from the heart it preys in—
 To bring sobriety to life again,
 Choked with the vile Anacreontic raisin—
 To wash Black Betty when her black's ingrained—
 To stick a moral lacquer on Moll Brazen,
 Of Suky Tawdry's habits to deprive her ;
 To tame the wild-fowl ways of Jenny Diver !

Ah, who can tell how hard it is to teach
 Miss Nancy Dawson on her bed of straw—
 To make long Sal sew up the endless breach
 She made in manners—to write heaven's own law
 On hearts of granite.—Nay, how hard to preach,
 In cells, that are not memory's—to draw
 The moral thread, through the immoral eye
 Of blunt Whitechapel natures, Mrs. Fry !

In vain you teach them baby-work within :
 'Tis but a clumsy botchery of crime ;
 'Tis but a tedious darning of old sin—
 Come out yourself, and stitch up souls in time—
 It is too late for scouring to begin
 When virtue's ravelled out, when all the prime
 Is worn away, and nothing sound remains ;
 You'll fret the fabric out before the stains !

I like your chocolate, good Mrs. Fry !
 I like your cookery in every way ;
 I like your shrove-tide service and supply ;
 I like to hear your sweet *Pandeans* play ;
 I like the pity in your full-brimmed eye ;
 I like your carriage and your silken gray,
 Your dove-like habits, and your silent preaching ;
 But I don't like your Newgatory teaching.

Come out of Newgate, Mrs. Fry! Repair
 Abroad, and find your pupils in the streets.
 O, come abroad into the wholesome air,
 And take your moral place, before Sin seats
 Her wicked self in the Professor's chair.

Suppose some morals raw! the true receipt's
 To dress them in the pan, but do not try
 To cook them in the fire, good Mrs. Fry!

Put on your decent bonnet, and come out!
 Good lack! the ancients did not set up schools
 In jail—but at the *Porch!* hinting, no doubt,
 That Vice should have a lesson in the rules
 Before 'twas whipt by law.—O come about,
 Good Mrs. Fry! and set up forms and stools
 All down the Old Bailey, and thro' Newgate Street.
 But not in Mr. Wontner's proper seat!

Teach Lady Barrymore, if, teaching, you
 That peerless Peeress can absolve from dolour;
 Teach her it is not virtue to pursue
 Ruin of blue, or any other colour;
 Teach her it is not Virtue's crown to rue,
 Month after month, the unpaid drunken dollar;
 Teach her that "flooring Charleys" is a game
 Unworthy one that bears a Christian name.

O come and teach our children—that aren't *ours*—
 That heaven's straight pathway is a narrow way,
 Not Broad St. Giles's, where fierce Sin devours
 Children, like Time—or rather they both prey
 On youth together—meanwhile Newgate low'rs
 Even like a black cloud at the close of day,
 To shut them out from any more blue sky:
 Think of these helpless wretches, Mrs. Fry!

You are not nice—go into their retreats,
 And make them Quakers, if you will.—'Twere best
 They wore straight collars, and their shirts sans *pleats*;
 That they had hats *with* brims—that they were drest
 In garbs without *lappels*—than shame the streets
 With so much raggedness.—You may invest
 Much cash this way—but it will cost its price,
 To give a good, round, real *cheque* to Vice!

In brief—Oh teach the child its moral rote,
 Not *in* the way from which 'twill not depart—
 But *out*—out—out! Oh, bid it walk remote!
 And if the skies are closed against the smart,

Even let him wear the single-breasted coat,
 For that ensureth singleness of heart,—
 Do what you will, his every want supply,
 Keep him—but *out* of Newgate, Mrs. Fry!

ODE TO RICHARD MARTIN, ESQUIRE,

M.P. FOR GALWAY.*

"*Martin*, in this, has proved himself a very good Man!"—*Boxiana*.



OW many sing of wars,
 Of Greek and Trojan jars—
 The butcheries of men!
 The Muse hath a "Perpetual Ruby Pen!"
 Dabbling with heroes and the blood they spill;
 But no one sings the man
 That, like a pelican,
 Nourishes Pity with his tender *Bill*!

Thou Wilberforce of hacks!
 Of whites as well as blacks,
 Piebald and dapple gray
 Chestnut and bay—
 No poet's eulogy thy name adorns!
 But oxen, from the fens
 Sheep—in their pens,
 Praise thee, and red cows with their winding horns!
 Thou art sung on brutal pipes!
 Drovers may curse thee,
 Knackers asperse thee,
 And sly M.P.'s bestow their cruel wipes;
 But the old horse neighs thee,
 And zebras praise thee,
 Asses, I mean—that have as many stripes!

Hast thou not taught the Drover to forbear,
 In Smithfield's muddy, murderous, vile environ—
 Staying his lifted bludgeon in the air!
 Bullocks don't wear
 Oxide of iron!

The cruel Jarvy thou hast summoned oft,
 Enforcing mercy on the coarse Yahoo,
 That thought his horse the *courser* of the two—
 Whilst Swift smiled down aloft!—

* The author of the Act of Parliament for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He was member for Galway in the first Parliament after the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. Died, 1834.

O worthy pair ! for this, when ye inhabit
 Bodies of birds—(if so the spirit shifts
 From flesh to feather)—when the clown uplifts
 His hands against the sparrow's nest, to *grab* it—
 He shall not harm the MARTINS and the *Swifts* !

Ah ! when Dean Swift was *quick*, how he enhanced
 The horse !—and humbled biped man like Plato !
 But now he's dead, the charger is mischanced—
 Gone backward in the world—and not advanced—
 Remember Cato !

Swift was the horse's champion—not the King's
 Whom Southey sings,
 Mounted on Pegasus—would he were thrown !
 He'll wear that ancient hackney to the bone,
 Like a mere clothes-horse airing royal things !
 Ah well-a-day ! the ancients did not use
 Their steeds so cruelly !—let it debar men
 From wonted rowelling and whip's abuse—
 Look at the ancients' *Muse* !
 Look at their *Carmen* !

O, Martin ! how thine eye—
 That one would think had put aside its lashes—
 That can't bear gashes
 Thro' any horse's side, must ache to spy
 That horrid window fronting Fetter Lane—
 For there's a nag the crows have picked for victual,
 Or some man painted in a bloody vein—
 Gods ! is there no *Horse-spital* !
 That such raw shows must sicken the humane !
 Sure Mr. Whittle
 Loves thee but little
 To let that poor horse linger in his *pane* !

O build a Brookes's Theatre for horses !
 O wipe away the national reproach—
 And find a decent Vulture for their corpses !
 And in thy funeral track
 Four sorry steeds shall follow in each coach !
 Steeds that confess "the luxury of *woe* !"
 True mourning steeds, in no extempore black,
 And many a wretched hack
 Shall sorrow for thee—sore with kick and blow
 And bloody gash—it is the Indian knack—
 (Save that the savage is his own tormentor)—

Banting shall weep too in his sable scarf—
 The biped woe the quadruped shall enter,
 And Man and Horse go half and half,
 As if their griefs met in a common *Centaur*!

ODE TO THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

“O breathe not his name!”—*Moore.*

THOU Great Unknown!
 I do not mean Eternity, nor death,
 That vast incog. !
 For I suppose thou hast a living breath,
 Howbeit we know not from whose lungs 'tis blown,
 Thou man of fog!
 Parent of many children—child of none!
 Nobody's son!
 Nobody's daughter—but a parent still!
 Still but an ostrich parent of a batch
 Of orphan eggs—left to the world to hatch.
 Superlative Nil!
 A vox and nothing more—yet not Vauxhall;
 A head in papers, yet without a curl!
 Not the Invisible Girl!
 No hand—but a handwriting on a wall—
 A popular nonentity,
 Still called the same—without identity!
 A lark, heard out of sight—
 A nothing shined upon—invisibly bright,
 “Dark with excess of light!”
 Constable's literary John-a-nokes—
 The real Scottish wizard—and not witch.
 Nobody—in a niche;
 Every one's hoax!
 Maybe Sir Walter Scott—
 Perhaps not!
 Why dost thou so conceal and puzzle curious folks!
 Thou—whom the second-sighted never saw,
 The Master Fiction of fictitious history!
 Chief Nong tong paw!
 No mister in the world—and yet all mystery!
 The “tricksy spirit” of a Scotch Cock Lane—
 A *novel* Junius puzzling the world's brain—
 A man of magic—yet no talisman!
 A man of clair obscure—not he o' the moon!
 A star—at noon.

A non-descriptus in a caravan,
 A private—of no corps—a northern light
 In a dark lantern—Bogie in a crape—
 A figure—but no shape ;
 A visor—and no knight ;
 The real abstract hero of the age ;
 The staple Stranger of the stage ;
 A Some One made in every man's presumption,
 Frankenstein's monster—but instinct with gumption ;
 Another strange state captive in the north,
 Constable-guarded in an iron mask—
 Still let me ask,
 Hast thou no silver-platter,
 No door-plate, or no card—or some such matter,
 To scrawl a name upon, and then cast forth ?

Thou Scottish Barmecide, feeding the hunger
 Of Curiosity with airy gammon !
 Thou mystery-monger,
 Dealing it out like middle cut of salmon,
 That people buy and can't make head or tail of it ;
 (Howbeit that puzzle never hurts the sale of it ;)
 Thou chief of authors mystic and abstractical,
 That lay their proper bodies on the shelf—
 Keeping thyself so truly to thyself,
 Thou Zimmerman made practical !
 Thou secret fountain of a Scottish style,
 That, like the Nile,
 Hideth its source wherever it is bred,
 But still keeps disemboguing
 (Not disemboguing)
 Thro' such broad sandy mouths without a head !
 Thou disembodied author—not yet dead—
 The whole world's literary Absentee !
 Ah ! wherefore hast thou fled,
 Thou learned Nemo—wise to a degree,
 Anonymous LL.D. !

Thou nameless captain of the nameless gang
 That do—and inquests cannot say who did it !
 Wert thou at Mrs. Donatty's death-pang ?
 Hast thou made gravy of Weare's watch—or hid it ?
 Hast thou a Blue-Beard chamber ? Heaven forbid it !
 I should be very loth to see thee hang !
 I hope thou hast an alibi well planned,
 An innocent, altho' an ink-black hand.

Tho' thou hast newly turned thy private bolt on
 The curiosity of all invaders—
 I hope thou art merely closeted with Colton,
 Who knows a little of the *Holy Land*,
 Writing thy next new novel—The Crusaders!

Perhaps thou wert even born
 To be Unknown.—Perhaps hung, some foggy morn,
 At Captain Coram's charitable wicket,
 Pinned to a ticket
 That Fate had made illegible, foreseeing
 The future great unmentionable being.—
 Perhaps thou hast ridden
 A scholar poor on St. Augustine's Back,
 Like Chatterton, and found a dusty pack
 Of Rowley novels in an old chest hidden ;
 A little hoard of clever simulation,
 That took the town—and Constable has bidden
 Some hundred pounds for a continuation—
 To keep and clothe thee in genteel starvation.

I liked thy Waverley—first of thy breeding ;
 I liked its modest "sixty years ago,"
 As if it was not meant for ages' reading.
 I don't like Ivanhoe,
 Tho' Dymoke does—it makes him think of clattering
 In iron overalls before the king,
 Secure from battering, to ladies flattering,
 Tuning his challenge to the gauntlet's ring—
 Oh better far than all that anvil clang
 It was to hear thee touch the famous string
 Of Robin Hood's tough bow and make it twang,
 Rousing him up, all verdant, with his clan,
 Like Sagittarian Pan!

I like Guy Mannering—but not that sham son
 Of Brown.—I like that literary Sampson,
 Nine-tenths a Dyer, with a smack of Porson.
 I like Dirk Hatteraick, that rough sea Orson
 That slew the Gauger ;
 And Dandie Dinmont, like old Ursa Major,
 And Merrilies, young Bertram's old defender,
 That Scottish Witch of Endor,
 That doomed thy fame. She was the Witch, I take it,
 To tell a great man's fortune—or to make it!

I like thy Antiquary. With his fit on,
 He makes me think of Mr. Britton,

Who has—or had—within his garden wall,
 A *miniature Stone Henge*, so very small
 The sparrows find it difficult to sit on ;
 And Dousterswivel, like Poyais' M'Gregor ;
 And Edie Ochiltree, that old *Blue Beggar*,
 Painted so cleverly,
 I think thou surely knowest Mrs. Beverly !
 I like thy Barber—him that fired the *Beacon*—
 But that's a tender subject now to speak on !

I like long-armed Rob Roy.—His very charms
 Fashioned him for renown !—In sad sincerity,
 The man that robs or writes must have long arms,
 If he's to hand his deeds down to posterity !
 Witness Miss Biffin's posthumous prosperity !
 Her poor brown crumpled mummy (nothing more)
 Bearing the name she bore,
 A thing Time's tooth is tempted to destroy !
 But Roys can never die—why else, in verity,
 Is Paris echoing with "*Vive le Roy !*"
 Aye, Rob shall live again, and deathless Di
 Vernon, of course, shall often live again—
 Whilst there's a stone in Newgate, or a chain,
 Who can pass by
 Nor feel the Thief's in prison and at hand ?
 There be Old Bailey Jarvys on the stand !

I like thy Landlord's Tales !—I like that Idol
 Of love and Lammermoor—the blue-eyed maid
 That led to church the mounted cavalcade,
 And then pulled up with such a bloody bridal !
 Throwing equestrian Hymen on his haunches—
 I like the family (not silver) branches
 That hold the tapers
 To light the serious legend of Montrose.—
 I like M'Aulay's second-sighted vapours,
 As if he could not walk or talk alone,
 Without the Devil—or the Great Unknown—
 Dalgetty is the dearest of Ducrows !
 I like St. Leonard's Lily—drenched with dew !
 I like thy Vision of the Covenanters,
 That bloody-minded Graham shot and slew.
 I like the battle lost and won ;
 The hurly-burly's bravely done,
 The warlike gallops and the warlike canters !
 I like that girded chieftain of the ranters,

Ready to preach down heathens, or to grapple,
 With one eye on his sword
 And one upon the Word—

How *he* would cram the Caledonian Chapel !
 I like stern Claverhouse, though he doth dapple
 His raven steed with blood of many a corse—
 I like dear Mrs. Headrigg, that unravels
 Her text of Scripture on a trotting horse—
 She is so like Rae Wilson when he travels !

I like thy Kenilworth—but I'm not going
 To take a Retrospective Re-Review
 Of all thy dainty novels—merely showing
 The old familiar faces of a few,
 The question to renew,

How thou canst leave such deeds without a name,
 Forego the unclaimed dividends of fame,
 Forego the smiles of literary houris—
 Mid Lothian's trump, and Fife's shrill note of praise,
 And all the Carse of Gowrie's,

When thou might'st have thy statue in Cromarty—
 Or see thy image on Italian trays,
 Betwixt Queen Caroline and Buonaparté,
 Be painted by the Titian of R.A.'s,
 Or vie in sign-boards with the Royal Guelph !
 P'rhaps have thy bust set cheek by jowl with Homer's,
 P'rhaps send our plaster proxies of thyself
 To other Englands with Australian roamers—
 Mayhap, in Literary Owhyhee
 Displace the native wooden gods, or be
 The China-Lar of a Canadian shelf !

It is not modesty that bids thee hide—
 She never wastes her blushes out of sight :

It is not to invite
 The word's decision, for thy fame is tried—
 And thy fair deeds are scattered far and wide,
 Even royal heads are with thy readers reckoned—
 From men in trencher caps to trencher scholars
 In crimson collars,

And learned sergeants in the Forty-second !
 Whither by land or sea art thou not beckoned ?
 Mayhap exported from the Frith of Forth,
 Defying distance and its dim control ;
 Perhaps read about Stromness, and reckoned worth
 A brace of Miltons for capacious soul—
 Perhaps studied in the whalers, further north,
 And set above ten Shakspeares near the pole !

Oh, when thou writest by Aladdin's lamp,
 With such a giant genius at command,
 For ever at thy stamp,
 To fill thy treasury from Fairy Land,
 When haply thou might'st ask the pearly hand
 Of some great British Vizier's eldest daughter,
 Tho' princes sought her,
 And lead her in procession hymeneal,
 Oh, why dost thou remain a Beau Ideal !
 Why stay, a ghost, on the Lethean Wharf,
 Enveloped in Scotch mist and gloomy fogs ?
 Why, but because thou art some puny Dwarf,
 Some hopeless Imp, like Riquet with the Tuft,
 Fearing, for all thy wit, to be rebuffed,
 Or bullied by our great reviewing Gogs ?

 What in this masquing age
 Maketh Unknowns so many and so shy ?
 What but the critic's page ?
 One hath a cast, he hides from the world's eye ;
 Another hath a wen—he won't show where ;
 A third has sandy hair,
 A hunch upon his back, or legs awry,
 Things for a vile reviewer to espy !
 Another has a mangel-wurzel nose—
 Finally, this is dimpled,
 Like a pale crumpet face, or that is pimpled,
 Things for a monthly critic to expose—
 Nay, what is thy own case—that being small,
 Thou choosest to be nobody at all !

Well, thou art prudent, with such puny bones—
 E'en like Elshender, the mysterious elf,
 That shadowy revelation of thyself—
 To build thee a small hut of haunted stones—
 For certainly the first pernicious man
 That ever saw thee, would quickly draw thee
 In some vile literary caravan—
 Shown for a shilling
 Would be thy killing,
 Think of Crachami's miserable span :
 No tinier frame the tiny spark could dwell in
 Than there it fell in—
 But when she felt herself a show, she tried
 To shrink from the world's eye, poor dwarf ! and died !

 O since it was thy fortune to be born
 A dwarf on some Scotch *Inch*, and then to flinch

From all the Gog-like jostle of great men,
 Still with thy small crow pen
 Amuse and charm thy lonely hours forlorn—
 Still Scottish story daintily adorn,
 Be still a shade—and when this age has fled,
 When we poor sons and daughters of reality
 Are in our graves forgotten and quite dead,
 And Time destroys our mottoes of morality—
 The lithographic hand of Old Mortality
 Shall still restore thy emblem on the stone,
 A featureless death's head,
 And rob Oblivion ev'n of the Unknown !

ODE TO JOSEPH GRIMALDI, SENIOR.*

"This fellow's wise enough to play the fool,
 And to do that well craves a kind of wit."—*Twelfth Night*.

JOSEPH ! they say thou'st left the stage,
 To toddle down the hill of life,
 And taste the flannelled ease of age,
 Apart from pantomimic strife—
 "Retired—(for Young would call it so)—
 The world shut out"—in Pleasant Row !

And hast thou really washed at last
 From each white cheek the red half-moon?
 And all thy public Clownship cast,
 To play the Private Pantaloon?
 All youth—all ages—yet to be,
 Shall have a heavy miss of thee !

Thou didst not preach to make us wise—
 Thou hadst no finger in our schooling—
 Thou didst not "lure us to the skies"—
 Thy simple, simple trade was—Fooling !
 And yet, Heaven knows ! we could—we can
 Much "better spare a better man !"

Oh, had it pleased the gout to take
 The reverend Croly from the stage,
 Or Southey, for our quiet's sake,
 Or Mr. Fletcher, Cupid's sage,
 Or, d—e ! namby-pamby Poole—
 Or any other clown or fool !

* The celebrated clown, who took leave of the stage in 1828, at Drury Lane Theatre. He was born in 1779, and died 1837.

Go, Dibdin—all that bear the name,
 Go, Byway Highway man! go! go!
 Go, Skeffy—man of painted fame,
 But leave thy partner, painted Joe!
 I could bear Kirby on the wane,
 Or Signor Paulo with a sprain!

Had Joseph Wilfred Parkins made
 His grey hair scarce in private peace—
 Had Waithman sought a rural shade—
 Or Cobbett ta'en a turnpike lease—
 Or Lisle Bowles gone to *Balaam Hill*—
 I think I could be cheerful still!

Had Medwin left off, to his praise,
 Dead lion kicking, like—a friend!—
 Had long, long Irving gone his ways,
 To muse on death at *Ponder's End*—
 Or Lady Morgan taken leave
 Of Letters—still I might not grieve!

But Joseph—everybody's Jo!
 Is gone—and grieve I will and must!
 As Hamlet did for Yorick, so
 Will I for thee, (tho' not yet dust,)
 And talk as he did when he missed
 The kissing-crust that he had kissed!

Ah, where is now thy rolling head!
 Thy winking, reeling, *drunken* eyes,
 (As old Catullus would have said,)
 Thy oven-mouth, that swallowed pies—
 Enormous hunger—monstrous drouth!
 Thy pockets greedy as thy mouth!

Ah, where thy ears, so often cuffed!—
 Thy funny, flapping, filching hands!—
 Thy partridge body, always stuffed
 With waifs and strays, and contrabands!
 Thy foot—like Berkeley's *Footie*—for why?
 'Twas often made to wipe an eye!

Ah, where thy legs—that witty pair—
 For “great wits jump”—and so did they!
 Lord! how they leaped in lamp-light air!
 Capered—and bounced—and strode away!—
 That years should tame the legs—alack!
 I've seen spring thro' an Almanack!

But bounds will have their bound—the shocks
 Of Time will cramp the nimblest toes ;
 And those that frisked in silken clocks
 May look to limp in fleecy hose—
 One only (Champion of the ring)
 Could ever make his Winter—Spring !

And gout, that owns no odds between
 The toe of Czar and toe of Clown,
 Will visit—but I did not mean
 To moralize, though I am grown
 Thus sad—Thy going seemed to beat
 A muffled drum for Fun's retreat !

And, may be—'tis no time to smother
 A sigh, when two prime wags of London,
 Are gone—thou, Joseph, one—the other
 A Joe !—“sic transit gloria *Munden* !”
 A third departure some insist on—
 Stage-apoplexy threatens Liston !—

Nay, then, let Sleeping Beauty sleep
 With ancient “*Dozey*” to the dregs—
 Let Mother Goose wear mourning deep,
 And put a hatchment o'er her eggs !
 Let Farly weep—for Magic's man
 Is gone—his Christmas Caliban !

Let Kemble, Forbes, and Willet rain,
 As tho' they walked behind thy bier—
 For since thou wilt not play again,
 What matters—if in heaven or here !
 Or in thy grave, or in thy bed !—
 There's *Quick*,* might just as well be dead !

Oh, how will thy departure cloud
 The lamp-light of the little breast !
 The Christmas child will grieve aloud
 To miss his broadest friend and best—
 Poor urchin ! what avails to him
 The cold New Monthly's *Ghost of Grimm* ?

For who like thee could ever stride
 Some dozen paces to the mile !
 The motley, medley coach provide—
 Or like Joe Frankenstein compile
 The *vegetable man* complete !—
 A proper *Covent Garden* feat !

* One of the old actors of “Rapid.”

Oh, who like thee could ever drink,
 Or eat—swill—swallow—bolt—and choke!
 Nod, weep, and hiccup—sneeze and wink?—
 Thy very yawn was quite a joke!
 Tho' Joseph Junior acts no ill,
 "There's no Fool like the old Fool" still!

Joseph, farewell! dear funny Joe!
 We met with mirth—we part in pain!
 For many a long, long year must go,
 Ere Fun can see thy like again—
 For Nature does not keep great stores
 Of perfect Clowns—that are not *Boors*!

AN ADDRESS TO THE STEAM WASHING COMPANY.

'Archer. How many are there, *Scrub*?
Scrub. Five and forty, sir."—*Beaux Stratagem*.

"For shame—let the linen alone."—
Merry Wives of Windsor.

MR. SCRUB—Mr. Slop—or whoever you be!
 The cock of Steam Laundries—the head Patentee
 Of Associate Cleansers—chief founder and prime
 Copartners and dealers in linen's propriety—
 That make washing public—and wash in society—
 O lend me your ear! if that ear can forego,
 For a moment, the music that bubbles below—
 From your new Surrey Geysers all foaming and hot—
 That soft "*simmer's* sang" so endeared to the Scot—
 If your hands may stand still, or your steam, without danger—
 Both to you and to washing, may put in a rub—
 O wipe out your Amazon arms from the tub—
 And lend me your ear—let me modestly plead
 For a race that your labours may soon supersede—
 For a race that, now washing no living affords—
 Like Grimaldi, must leave their aquatic old boards,
 Not with pence in their pockets to keep them at ease,
 Not with bread in the funds—or investments of cheese—
 But to droop like sad willows that lived by a stream,
 Which the sun has sucked up into vapour and steam.
 Ah, look at the Laundress, before you begrudge
 Her hard daily bread to that laudable drudge—

When chanticleer singeth his earliest matins,
 She slips her amphibious feet in her pattens,
 And beginneth her toil while the morn is still gray,
 As if she was washing the night into day—
 Not with sleeker or rosier fingers Aurora
 Beginneth to scatter the dewdrops before her ;
 Not Venus that rose from the billows so early,
 Looked down on the foam with a forehead more *pearly*—
 Her head is involved in an aerial mist,
 And a bright-beaded bracelet encircles her wrist ;
 Her visage glows warm with the ardour of duty ;
 She's Industry's moral—she's all moral beauty !
 Growing brighter and brighter at every rub—
 Would any man ruin her ?—No, Mr. Scrub !
 No man that is manly would work her mishap—
 No man that is manly would covet her cap—
 Nor her apron—her hose—nor her gown made of stuff—
 Nor her gin—nor her tea—nor her wet pinch of snuff !
 Alas ! so *she* thought—but that slippery hope
 Has betrayed her, as tho' she had trod on her soap !
 And she—whose support—like the fishes that fly,
 Was to have her fins wet, must now drop from her sky—
 She whose living it was, and a part of her fare,
 To be damped once a day, like the great white sea bear,
 With her hands like a sponge, and her head like a mop—
 Quite a living absorbent that revelled in slop—
 She that paddled in water, must walk upon sand,
 And sigh for her deeps like a turtle on land !

Lo, then, the poor Laundress, all wretched she stands,
 Instead of a counterpane, wringing her hands !
 All haggard and pinched, going down in life's vale,
 With no faggot for burning, like Allan-a-dale !
 No smoke from her flue, and no steam from her pane,
 There once she watched heaven, fearing God and the rain—
 Or gazed o'er her bleach-field so fairly engrossed,
 Till the lines wandered idle from pillar to post !
 Ah ! where are the playful young pinner—ah, where
 The harlequin quilts that cut capers in air—
 The brisk waltzing stockings—the white and the black,
 That danced on the tight-rope, or swung on the slack—
 The light sylph-like garments so tenderly pinned,
 That blew into shape, and embodied the wind !
 There was white on the grass—there was white on the spray—
 Her garden—it looked like a garden of May !
 But now all is dark—not a shirt's on a shrub—
 You've ruined her prospects in life, Mr. Scrub !
 You've ruined her custom—now families drop her—

From her silver reduced—nay, reduced from her *copper* !
 The last of her washing is done at her eye,
 One poor little kerchief that never gets dry !
 From mere lack of linen she can't lay a cloth,
 And boils neither barley nor alkaline broth—
 But her children come round her as victuals grow scant,
 And recall, with foul faces, the source of their want—
 When she thinks of their poor little mouths to be fed,
 And then thinks of her trade that is utterly dead,
 And even its pearlashes laid in the grave—
 Whilst her tub is a dry rotting, stave after stave,
 And the greatest of Coopers, ev'n he that they dub
 Sir Astley, can't bind up her heart or her tub—
 Need you wonder she curses your bones, Mr. Scrub ?
 Need you wonder, when steam has deprived her of bread,
 If she prays that the evil may visit *your* head—
 Nay, scald all the heads of your Washing Committee—
 If she wishes you all the soot blacks of the city—
 In short, not to mention all plagues without number,
 If she wishes you all in the *Wash* at the Humber !

Ah, perhaps, in some moment of drouth and despair,
 When her linen got scarce, and her washing grew rare—
 When the sum of her suds might be summed in a bowl,
 And the rusty cold iron quite entered her soul—
 When, perhaps, the last glance of her wandering eye
 Had caught "the Cock Laundresses' Coach" going by,
 Or her lines that hung idle, to waste the fine weather,
 And she thought of her wrongs and her rights both together,
 In a lather of passion that frothed as it rose,
 Too angry for grammar, too lofty for prose,
 On her sheet—if a sheet were still left her—to write,
 Some remonstrance like this then, perchance, saw the light—

LETTER OF REMONSTRANCE FROM BRIDGET JONES.

To the Noblemen and Gentlemen forming the Washing Committee.

It's a shame, so it is—men can't Let alone
 Jobs as is Woman's right to do—and go about their Own—
 Theirs Reforms enuff Alreddy without your new schools
 For washing to sit Up—and push the Old Tubs from their
 stools !
 But your just like the Raddicals—for upsetting of the Sudds
 When the world waggged well enuff—and Women washed your
 old dirty duds,
 I'm Certain sure Enuff vour Ann Sisters had no steem Indians,
 that's Flat—

ADDRESS TO THE STEAM WASHING COMPANY. 151

But I warrant your Four Fathers went as Tidy and gentlemanny
for all that—

I suppose your the Family as lived in the Great Kittle
I see on Clapham Commun, some times a very considerable
period back when I were little,

And they Said it went with Steem—But that was a joke !
For I never see none come of it—that's out of it—but only sum
Smoak—

And for All your Power of Horses about your Indians you never
had but Two

In my time to draw you About to Fairs—and hang you, you
know that's true !

And for All your fine Perspectuses—howsomever you bewhich
'em,

Theirs as Pretty ones off Primerows Hill, as ever a one at
Mitchum,

Thof I cant sea What Prospectives and washing has with one
another to Do—

It ant as if Bird'seye Hankicher could take a Birdshigh view !
But That's your look out—I've not much to do with that—But
pleas God to hold up fine,

Id show you caps and pinner's and small things as lilliwhit as
Ever crosst the Line,

Without going any Father off then Little Parodies Place,
And That's more than you Can—and Ill say it behind your
face—

But when Folks talks of washing, it ant for you to Speak—
As kept Dockter Pattyson out of his Shirt for a Weak !

Thinks I, when I heard it—Well, there's a pretty go !
That comes o' not marking of things or washing out the marks,
and Huddling 'em up so !

Till Their friends comes and owns them, like drownded corpses
in a Vault,

But may Hap you havint Larned to spel—and That ant your
Fault,

Only you ought to leafe the Linnins to them as has
Larned—

For if it warnt for Washing—and whare Bills is concerned
What's the Yuse, of all the World, for a Wommans Headica-
tion,

And Their Being maid Schollards of Sundays—fit for any
Cityation.

Well, what I says is This—when every Kittle has its spout,
Theirs no need for Companys to puff steem about !
To be sure its very Well, when Their ant enuff Wind
For blowing up Boats with—but not to hurt human kind

Like that Pearkins with his Blunderbush, that's loaded with
 hot water,
 Thof a X Sherrif might know Better, than make things for
 slaughtter,
 As if War warnt Cruel enuff—wherever it befalls,
 Without shooting poor sogers, with sich scalding hot balls—
 But thats not so Bad as a Sett of Bear Faced Scrubbs
 As joins their Sopes together, and sits up Steem rubbing
 Clubs,
 For washing Dirt Cheap—and eating other People's grubbs !
 Which is all verry Fine for you and your Patent Tea,
 But I wonders How Poor Wommen is to get Their Beau-He !
 They must drink Hunt wash (the only wash God nose there
 will be !)
 And their Little drop of Somethings as they takes for their
 Goods,
 When you and your Steem has ruined (G—d forgive mee) their
 lively Hoods,
 Poor Wommen as was born to Washing in their youth !
 And now must go and Larn other Businesses Four Sooth !
 But if so be They leave their Lines what are they to go at—
 They won't do for Angell's—nor any Trade like That,
 Nor we cant Sow Babby Work—for that's all Bespoke—
 For the Queakers in Bridle ! and a vast of the confined folk
 Do their own of Themselves—even the bettermost of em—aye,
 and evn them of middling degrees—
 Why Lauk help you Babby Linen ant Bread and Cheese !
 Nor we can't go a hammering the roads into Dust,
 But we must all go and be Bankers—like Mr. Marshes and Mr.
 Chamberses—and that's what we must !
 God nose you oght to have more Concern for our Sects,
 When you nose you have sucked us and hanged round our
 Mutherly necks,
 And remembers what you Owes to Wommen Besides washing—
 You ant, blame you ! like Men to go a slushing and sloshing
 In mop caps, and pattins, adoing of Females Labers
 And prettily jeared At you great Horse God Meril things, ant
 you now by your next door naybors—
 Lawk I thinks I see you with your Sleeves tuckt up
 No more like Washing than is drownding of a Pupp,
 And for all Your Fine Water Works going round and round,
 They'll scrunch your Bones some day—I'll be bound,
 And no more nor be a gudgement—for it cant come to good
 To sit up agin Providince, which your a doing—nor not fit It
 should,
 For man warnt maid for Wommens starvation,
 Nor to do away Laundrisses as is Links of the Creation—

And cant be dun without in any Country But a naked Hottin-
pot Nation.

Ah, I wish our Minister would take one of your Tubbs
And preach a Sermon in it, and give you some good rubs—
But I warrants you reads (for you cant spel we nose) nyther
Bybills or good Tracks,
Or youd no better than Taking the close off one's Backs—
And let your neighbors oxin and Asses alone—
And every Thing thats hern—and give every one their Hone !

Well, its God for us Al, and every Washer Wommen for
herself,

And so you might, without shoving any of us off the shelf
But if you warnt Noddis you Let wommen abe
And pull of Your Pattins—and leave the washing to we
That nose what's what—Or mark what I say,
Youl make a fine Kittle of fish of Your Close some Day—
When the Aulder men wants Their Bibs, and their ant nun at all,
And Cris mass cum—and never a Cloth to lay in Gild Hall,
Or send a damp shirt to his Woship the Mare
Till hes rumatiz Poor Man, and cant set uprite to do good in
his Harm-Chare—

Besides Miss-Matching Larned Ladys Hose, as is sent for you
not to wash (for you dont wash) but to stew

And make Peples Stockins yeller as oght to be Blew,
With a vast more like That—and all along of Steem,
Which warnt meand by Nater for any sich skeam—
But thats your Losses, and youl have to make it Good,

And I cant say I'm Sorry afore God if you shoud,
For men mought Get their Bread a great many ways
Without taking ourn—aye, and Moor to your Prays
You might go and skim the creme off Mr. Muck-Adams milky
ways—that's what you might,

Or bete Carpets—or get into Parleamint—or drive Crabrolays
from morning to night,

Or, if you must be of our sects, be Watchmen, and slepe upon
a poste !

(Which is an od way of sleping, I must say—and a very hard
pillow at most,)

Or you might be any trade, as we are not on that I'm awares,
Or be Watermen now, (not Water-wommen,) and roe peple up
and down Hungerford stares,

Or if You Was even to Turn Dust Men a *dry sifting* Dirt !
But you oughtint to Hurt Them as never Did You no Hurt !

Yourn with Anymocity,

BRIDGET JONES.

ODE TO CAPTAIN PARRY.*

By the North Pole, I do challenge thee!—*Love's Labour's Lost*.

PARRY, my man! has thy brave leg
 Yet struck its foot against the peg
 On which the world is spun?
 Or hast thou found No Thoroughfare
 Writ by the hand of Nature there
 Where man has never run!

Hast thou yet traced the Great Unknown
 Of channels in the Frozen Zone,
 Or held at Icy Bay,
 Hast still thou missed the proper track
 For homeward Indiamen that lack
 A bracing by the way?

Still hast thou wasted time and trouble
 On nothing but the North-Sea Bubble
 Of geographic scholar?
 Or found new ways for ships to shape,
 Instead of winding round the Cape,
 A short cut thro' the collar!

Hast found the way that sighs were sent to†
 The Pole—tho' God knows whom they went to!
 That track revealed to Pope—
 Or if the Arctic waters sally,
 Or terminate in some blind alley,
 A chilly path to grope?

Alas! tho' Ross, in love with snows,
 Has painted them *couleur de rose*,
 It is a dismal doom,
 As Claudio saith, to winter thrice,
 "In regions of thick-ribbèd ice"—
 All bright—and yet all gloom!

'Tis well for Gheber souls that sit
 Before the fire and worship it
 With pecks of Wallsend coals,
 With feet upon the fender's front,
 Roasting their corns—like Mr. Hunt—
 To speculate on poles.

* The Arctic Navigator, Sir William Parry, was born 1790, died 1855. He made four voyages to the North Pole. This ode was written on his third voyage.

† "And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole."—*Eloisa to Abelard*.

'Tis easy for our Naval Board—
 'Tis easy for our Civic Lord
 Of London and of ease,
 That lies in ninety feet of down,
 With fur on his nocturnal gown,
 To talk of Frozen Seas !

'Tis fine for Monsieur Ude to sit,
 And prate about the mundane spit,
 And babble of *Cook's* track—
 He'd roast the leather off his toes,
 Ere he would trudge thro' polar snows,
 To plant a British *Jack* !

Oh, not the proud licentious great,
 That travel on a carpet skate,
 Can value toils like thine !
 What 'tis to take a Hecla range,
 Through ice unknown to Mrs. Grange,
 And alpine lumps of brine !

But we, that mount the Hill o' Rhyme,
 Can tell how hard it is to climb
 The lofty slippery steep.
 Ah ! there are more Snow Hills than that
 Which doth black Newgate, like a hat,
 Upon its forehead keep.

Perchance thou'rt now—while I am writing—
 Feeling a bear's wet grinder biting
 About thy frozen spine !
 Or thou thyself art eating whale,
 Oily, and underdone, and stale,
 That, haply, crossed thy line !

But I'll not dream such dreams of ill—
 Rather will I believe thee still
 Safe cellared in the snow—
 Reciting many a gallant story,
 Of British kings and British glory,
 To crony Esquimaux—

Cheering that dismal game where Night
 Makes one slow move from black to white
 Thro' all the tedious year—
 Or smitten by some fond frost fair,
 That combed out crystals from her hair,
 Wooing a seal-skin Dear !

So much a long communion tends,
 As Byron says, to make us friends
 With what we daily view—
 God knows the daintiest taste may come
 To love a nose that's like a plum,
 In marble, cold and blue!

To dote on air, an oily fleece!
 As tho' it hung from Helen o' Greece—
 They say that love prevails
 Ev'n in the veriest polar land—
 And surely she may steal thy hand
 That used to steal thy nails!

But ah, ere thou art fixt to marry,
 And take a polar Mrs. Parry,
 Think of a six months' gloom—
 Think of the wintry waste, and hers,
 Each furnished with a dozen *furs*,
 Think of thine icy *dome*!

Think of the children born to *blubber*,
 Ah me! hast thou an Indian rubber
 Inside!—to hold a meal
 For months—about a stone and half
 Of whale, and part of a sea calf—
 A fillet of salt veal!—

Some walrus ham—no trifle but
 A decent steak—a solid cut
 Of seal—no wafer slice!
 A reindeer's tongue and drink beside!
 Gallons of Sperm—not rectified!
 And pails of water-ice!

Oh, canst thou fast and then feast thus?
 Still come away, and teach to us
 Those blessed alternations—
 To-day to run our dinners fine,
 To feed on air and then to dine
 With Civic Corporations—

To save th' Old Bailey's daily shilling,
 And then to take a half-year's filling
 In P. N.'s pious Row—
 When asked to Hock and haunch o' ven'son,
 Thro' something we have worn our pens on
 For Longman and his Co.

O come and tell us what the Pole is—
 Whether it singular and sole is—
 Or straight, or crooked bent—
 If very thick or very thin—
 Made of what wood—and if akin
 To those there be in Kent.

There's Combe, there's Spurzheim, and there's Gall,
 Have talked of polls—yet, after all,
 What has the public learned?
 And Hunt's account must still defer
 He sought the *poll* at Westminster—
 And is not yet *returned*!

Alvanly asks if whist, dear soul,
 Is played in snow-storms near the Pole,
 And how the fur-man deals?
 And Eldon doubts if it be true,
 That icy Chancellors really do
 Exist upon the *seals*!

Barrow, by well-fed office grates,
 Talks of his own bechristened Straits;
 And longs that he were there;
 And Croker, in his cabriolet,
 Sighs o'er his brown horse, at his Bay,
 And pants to cross the *mer*!

O come away, and set us right,
 And, haply, throw a northern light
 On questions such as these:—
 Whether, when this drowned world was lost,
 The surflux waves were locked in frost,
 And turned to Icy Seas!

Is Ursa Major white or black?
 Or do the Polar tribes attack
 Their neighbours—and what for?
 Whether they ever play at cuffs,
 And then, if they take off their muffs
 In pugilistic war?

Tell us is *Winter* champion there,
 As in our milder fighting air?
 Say, what are *Chilly* loams?
 What cures they have for rheums beside,
 And if their hearts get ossified
 From eating bread of bones?

ODE TO W. KITCHENER, M.D.

Whether they are such dwarfs—the quicker
 To circulate the vital liquor*—
 And then, from head to heel—
 How short the Methodist must choose
 Their dumpy envoys not to lose
 Their toes in spite of zeal?

Whether 'twill soften or sublime it
 To preach of Hell in such a climate—
 Whether may Wesley hope
 To win their souls—or that old function
 Of seals—with the extreme of unction—
 Bespeaks them for the Pope?

Whether the lamps will e'er be "learnèd"
 Where six months' "midnight oil" is burnèd,
 Or letters must defer
 With people that have never conned
 An A, B, C, but lived beyond
 The *Sound of Lancaster!*

O come away at any rate—
 Well hast thou earned a downier state—
 With all thy hardy peers—
 Good lack, thou must be glad to smell dock,
 And rub thy feet with opodeldock,
 After such frosty years.

Mayhap, some gentle dame at last,
 Smit by the perils thou hast passed,
 However coy before,
 Shall bid thee now set up thy rest
 In that *Brest Harbour*, Woman's breast,
 And tempt the Fates no more.

ODE TO W. KITCHENER, M.D.†

Author of the Cook's Oracle—Observations on Vocal Music—The Art
 of Invigorating and Prolonging Life—Practical Observations on
 Telescopes, Opera Glasses, and Spectacles—The Housekeeper's
 Ledger—And the Pleasure of making a Will.

"I rule the roast, as Milton says!"—*Caleb Quotem.*

OH! multifarious man!
 Thou Wondrous, Admirable Kitchen Crichton:
 Born to enlighten
 The laws of Optics, Peptics, Music, Cooking—
 Master of the Piano—and the Pan—

* Buffon.

† Born 1775, died 1827.

As busy with the kitchen as the skies !

Now looking

At some rich stew thro' Galileo's eyes—
Or boiling eggs—timed to a metronome—
As much at home

In spectacles as in mere isinglass—
In the art of frying brown—as a digression
On music and poetical expression—
Whereas, how few of all our cooks, alas !
Could tell Calliope from " Callipee ! "

How few there be

Could leave the lowest for the highest stories,
(Observatories,)

And turn, like thee, Diana's calculator,
However *cook's* synonymous with *Kater* ! *

Alas ! still let me say,

How few could lay

The carving-knife beside the tuning-fork,
Like the proverbial *Jack* ready for any work !

Oh, to behold thy features in thy book !
Thy proper head and shoulders in a plate,

How it would look !

With one raised eye watching the dial's date,
And one upon the roast, gently cast down—
Thy chops—done nicely brown—

The garnished brow—with " a few leaves of bay "—
The hair—" done Wiggy's way ! "

And still one studious finger near thy brains,
As if thou wert just come
From editing some

New soup—or hashing Dibdin's cold remains !
Or, Orpheus-like—fresh from thy dying strains
Of music—Epping luxuries of sound,

As Milton says, " in many a bout

Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,"

Whilst all thy tame stuffed leopards listened round !

Oh, rather thy whole length reveal,
Standing like fortune—on the jack—thy wheel.
(Thou art, like Fortune, full of chops and changes,
Thou hast a fillet too before thine eye !)
Scanning our kitchen and our vocal ranges,
As tho' it were the same to sing or fry—
Nay, so it is—hear how Miss Paton's throat
Makes " fritters " of a note !

* Captain Kater, the Moon's Surveyor.

And how Tom Cook (Fryer and Singer born
 By name and nature), oh ! how night and morn
 He for the nicest public taste doth dish up
 The good things from that *Pan* of music, Bishop !
 And is not reading near akin to feeding,
 Or why should *Oxford Sausages* be fit
 Receptacles for wit ?
 Or why should Cambridge put its little, smart,
 Minced brains into a *Tart* ?
 Nay, then, thou wert but wise to frame receipts,
 Book-treats,
 Equally to instruct the Cook and cram her—
 Receipts to be devoured, as well as read,
 The Culinary Art in gingerbread—
 The Kitchen's *Eaten Grammar* !

Oh, very pleasant is thy motley page—
 Ay, very pleasant in its chatty vein—
 So—in a kitchen—would have talked Montaigne,
 That merry Gascon—humourist, and sage !
 Let slender minds with single themes engage,
 Like Mr. Bowles with his eternal Pope—
 Or Haydon on perpetual Haydon—or
 Hume on “Twice three make four,”
 Or Lovelass upon wills—Thou goest on
 Plaiting ten topics, like Tate Wilkinson !
 Thy brain is like a rich Kaleidoscope,
 Stuffed with a brilliant medley of odd bits,
 And ever shifting on from change to change,
 Saucepans—old Songs—Pills—Spectacles—and Spits !
 Thy range is wider than a Rumford Range !
 Thy grasp a miracle !—I'll I recall
 Th' indubitable cause of thy variety—
 Thou art, of course, th' Epitome of all
 That spying—frying—singing—mixed Society
 Of Scientific Friends, who used to meet
 Welsh Rabbits—and thyself—in Warren Street !
 Oh, hast thou still those *Conversazioni*,*
 Where learned visitors discoursed—and fed ?
 There came Belzoni,
 Fresh from the ashes of Egyptian dead—
 And gentle Poki—and that Royal Pair,
 Of whom thou didst declare—
 “Thanks to the greatest *Cooke* we ever read—
 They were—what *Sandwiches* should be—half *bred* !”

* Dr. Kitchener's *conversazioni* were the resort of all the wits and celebrities of the day.

There famed M'Adam from his manual toil
 Relaxed—and freely owned he took thy hints
 On "making *Broth* with *Flints*"—
 There Parry came and showed thee polar oil
 For melted butter—Combe with his medullary
 Notions about the *Skullery*,
 And Mr. Poole, too partial to a broil—
 There witty Rogers came, that punning elf!
 Who used to swear thy book
 Would really look
 A *Delphic* "Oracle," if laid on *Delf*—
 There, once a month, came Campbell and discussed
 His own—and thy own—"Magazine of Taste"—
 There Wilberforce the Just
 Came in his old black suit, till once he traced
 Thy sly advice to *Poachers* of *Black Folks*,
 That "do not break their yolks,"—
 Which huffed him home, in grave disgust and haste!

There came John Clare, the poet, nor forbore
 Thy *Patties*—thou wert hand-and-glove with Moore,
 Who called thee "*Kitchen Addison*"—for why?
 Thou givest rules for Health and Peptic Pills,
 Forms for made dishes, and receipts for Wills,
 "Teaching us how to live and how to die!"
 There came thy Cousin-Cook, good Mrs. Fry—
 There Trench, the Thames Projector, first brought on
 His sine *Quay non*—
 There Martin would drop in on Monday eves,
 Or Fridays, from the pens, and raise his breath
 'Gainst cattle days and death—
 Answered by Mellish, feeder of fat beeves,
 Who swore that Frenchmen never could be eager
 For fighting on soup meagre—
 "And yet (as thou wouldst add) the French have seen
 A Marshall *Tureen*!"

Great was thy Evening Cluster!—often graced
 With Dollond—Burgess—and Sir Humphrey Davy!
 'Twas there M'Dermot first inclined to Taste—
 There Colburn learned the art of making paste
 For Puffs—and Accum analysed a gravy,
 Colman—the Cutter of Coleman Street, 'tis said
 Came there—and Parkins with his Ex-wise-head,
 (His claim to letters)—Kater, too, the Moon's
 Crony—and Graham, lofty on balloons—
 There Croly stalked with holy humour heated,
 Who wrote a light horse play, which Yates completed—

And Lady Morgan, that grinding organ,
 And Brasbridge telling anecdotes of spoons—
 Madame Valbrèque thrice honoured thee, and came
 With great Rossini, his own bow and fiddle—
 The Dibbins—Tom, Charles, Froggnall—came with tuns
 Of poor old books, old puns !
 And even Irving spared a night from fame—
 And talked—till thou didst stop him in the middle,
 To serve round *Tewah-diddle*.*

Then all the guests rose up, and sighed good-bye !
 So let them :—thou thyself art still a *Host* !

Dibdin—Cornaro—Newton—Mrs. Fry !
 Mrs. Glasse, Mr. Spec !—Lovelass—and Weber,
 Mathews in Quot'em—Moore's fire-worshipping
 Gheber—

Thrice-worthy Worthy, seemed by thee engrossed !
 Howbeit the Peptic Cook still rules the roast,
 Potent to hush all ventriloquial snarling—
 And ease the bosom pangs of indigestion !

Thou art, sans question,
 The Corporation's love—its Doctor *Darling* !
 Look at the Civic Palate—nay, the bed

Which set dear Mrs. Opie on supplying
 "Illustrations of *Lying* !"

Ninety square feet of down from heel to head
 It measured, and I dread

Was haunted by that terrible night *Mare*,
 A monstrous burthen on the corporation !
 Look at the Bill of Fare, for one day's share,
 Sea-turtles by the score—Oxen by droves,
 Geese, turkeys, by the flock—fishes and loaves

Countless, as when the Lilliputian nation
 Was making up the huge man-mountain's ration !

Oh ! worthy Doctor ! surely thou hast driven
 The squatting demon from great Garratt's breast—
 (His honour seemed to rest !—)

And what is thy reward ? Hath London given
 Thee public thanks for thy important service ?
 Alas ! not even

The tokens it bestowed on Howe and Jervis !
 Yet could I speak as Orators should speak
 Before the worshipful the Common Council,
 (Utter my bold bad grammar and pronounce ill,
 Thou shouldst not miss thy Freedom, for a week,

* The Doctor's composition for a *night-cap*.

Richly engrossed on vellum :—Reason urges
That he who rules our cookery—that he
Who edits soups and gravies, ought to be
A *Citizen*, where sauce can make a *Burgess* !

ODE TO DR. KITCHENER.

II.

YE Muses nine inspire,
And stir up my poetic fire ;
Teach my burning soul to speak
With a bubble and a squeak !
Of Dr. Kitchener I fain would sing,
Till pots, and pans, and mighty kettles ring.

O culinary Sage !
(I do not mean the herb in use,
That always goes along with goose),
How have I feasted on thy page !
“ When like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn,”
Till midnight, when I went to bed,
And clapped my *tewah-diddle* on my head.

Who is there cannot tell
Thou lead'st a life of living well ?
“ What baron, or squire, or knight of the shire,
Lives half so well as a holy Fry-er ?”
In doing well thou must be reckon'd
The first, and Mrs. Fry the second ;
And twice a Job—for in thy feverish toils
Thou wast all over roasts, as well as boils.

Thou wast indeed no dunce
To treat thy subjects and thyself at once.
Many a hungry poet eats
His brains like thee,
But few there be
Could live so long on their receipts.
What living soul or sinner
Would slight thy invitation to a dinner,
Ought with the Danaïdes to dwell,
Draw gravy in a cullender, and hear
Forever in his ear
The pleasant tinkling of thy dinner bell.

Immortal Kitchener ! thy fame
Shall keep itself when Time makes game

Of other men's. Yea, it shall keep all weathers,
 And thou shalt be upheld by the pen-feathers.
 Yea, by the sauce of Michael Kelly,
 Thy name shall perish never,
 But be magnified forever,
 By all whose eyes are bigger than their belly !

Yea, till the world is done
 To a turn, and Time puts out the Sun,
 Shall live the endless echo of thy name.
 But as for thy more fleshy frame,
 Oh, Death's carnivorous teeth will tittle
 Thee out of breath, and eat it for cold victual.
 But still thy fame shall be among the nations
 Preserved to the last course of generations.

Ah, me ! my soul is touched with sorrow
 To think how flesh must pass away ;
 So mutton that is warm to-day
 Is cold and turned to hashes on the morrow
 Farewell ; I would say more, but I
 Have other fish to fry.

ODE TO THE ADVOCATES FOR THE REMOVAL OF SMITHFIELD MARKET.

"Sweeping our flocks and herds."—*Douglas.*

O PHILANTHROPIC men !
 For this address I need not make apology—
 Who aim at clearing out the Smithfield pen;
 And planting further off its vile Zoology—
 Permit me thus to tell,
 I like your efforts well,
 For routing that great nest of Hornithology !

Be not dismayed, although repulsed at first,
 And driven from their Horse, and Pig, and Lamparts,
 Charge on !—you shall upon their hornworks burst,
 And carry all their *Bull*-warks and their *Ram*-parts.

Go on, ye wholesale drovers !
 And drive away the Smithfield flocks and herds !
 As wild as Tartar-Curds,
 That come so fat, and kicking, from their clovers ;
 Off with them all !—those restive brutes, that vex
 Our streets, and plunge, and lunge, and butt, and battle ;
 And save the female sex
 From being cowed—like Iö—by the cattle !

Fancy—when droves appear on
The hill of Holborn, roaring from its top,—
Your ladies—ready, as they own, to drop,
Taking themselves to Thomson's with a *Fear-on!*

Or, in St. Martin's Lane,
Scared by a bullock, in a frisky vein,—
Fancy the terror of your timid daughters,
While rushing souse
Into a coffee-house,
To find it—Slaughter's!

Or fancy this :—
Walking along the street, some stranger miss,
Her head with no such thought of danger laden,
When suddenly 'tis "Aries Taurus Virgo!"
You don't know Latin. I translate it ergo,
Into your Areas a Bull throws the Maiden!

Think of some poor old crone
Treated, just like a penny, with a toss!
At that vile spot now grown
So generally known
For making a Cow Cross!

Nay, fancy your own selves far off from stall,
Or shed, or shop—and that an Ox infuriate
Just pins you to the wall,
Giving you a strong dose of *Oxy-Muriate!*

Methinks I hear the neighbours that live round
The Market-ground
Thus make appeal unto their civic fellows—
"Tis well for you that live apart—unable
To hear this brutal Babel,
But our *firesides* are troubled with their *bellows.*"

"Folks that too freely sup
Must e'en put up
With their own troubles if they can't digest;
But we must needs regard
The case as hard
That *others'* victuals should disturb our rest,
That from our sleep *your* food should start and jump us!
We like, ourselves, a steak,
But, sirs, for pity's sake!
We don't want oxen at our doors to *rump us!*

"If we *do* doze—it really is too bad !
 We constantly are roared awake or rung,
 Through bullocks mad
 That run in all the 'Night Thoughts' of our Young !"

Such are the woes of sleepers—now let's take
 The woes of those that wish to keep a *Wake* !
 Oh, think ! when Wombwell gives his annual feasts,
 Think of these "Bulls of Basan," far from mild ones ;
 Such fierce tame beasts,
 That nobody much cares to see the wild ones !
 Think of the Show woman, "what shows a Dwarf,"
 Seeing a red Cow come
 To swallow her Tom Thumb,
 And forced with broom of birch to keep her off !

Think, too, of Messrs. Richardson and Co.,
 When looking at their public private boxes,
 To see in a back row
 Three live sheep's heads, a porker's and an Ox's !
 Think of their Orchestra, when two horns come
 Through, to accompany the double drum !
 Or, in the midst of murder and remorse,
 Just when the Ghost is certain,
 A great rent in the curtain,
 And enter two tall skeletons—of Horses !

Great Philanthropics ! pray urge these topics
 Upon the Solemn Council of the Nation,
 Get a Bill soon, and give, some noon,
 The Bulls, a Bull of Excommunication !
 Let the old Fair have fair-play as its right,
 And to each show and sight
 Ye shall be treated with a Free List latitude ;
 To Richardson's Stage Dramas,
 Dio—and Cosmo—ramas,
 Giants and Indians wild,
 Dwarf, Sea Bear, and Fat Child,
 And that most rare of Shows—a Show of Gratitude !

ODE TO THE CAMELEOPARD.



WELCOME to Freedom's birthplace—and a den !
 Great Anti-climax, hail !
 So very lofty in thy front—but then,
 So dwindling at the tail !

In truth, thou hast the most unequal legs !
 Has one pair galloped, whilst the other trotted,
 Along with other brethren, leopard-spotted,
 O'er Afric sand, where ostriches lay eggs ?
 Sure thou wert caught in some hard uphill chase,
 Those hinder heels still keeping thee in check !
 And yet thou seem'st prepared in any case,
 Tho' they had lost the race,
 To win it—by a neck !

That lengthy neck—how like a crane's it looks !
 Art thou the overseer of all the brutes ?
 Or dost thou browse on tip-top leaves or fruits—
 Or go a bird-nesting amongst the rooks ?
 How kindly nature caters for all wants ;
 Thus giving unto thee a neck that stretches,
 And high food fetches—
 To some a long nose, like the elephant's !

Oh ! had'st thou any organ to thy bellows,
 To turn thy breath to speech in human style,
 What secrets thou might'st tell us,
 Where now our scientific guesses fail ;
 For instance of the Nile,
 Whether those Seven Mouths have any tail.
 Mayhap thy luck too,
 From that high head, as from a lofty hill,
 Has let thee see the marvellous Timbuctoo—
 Or drink of Niger at its infant rill ;
 What were the travels of our Major Denham,
 Or Clapperton, to thine
 In that same line,
 If thou could'st only squat thee down and pen 'em !

Strange sights, indeed, thou must have overlooked,
 With eyes held ever in such vantage-stations !
 Hast seen, perchance, unhappy white folks cooked,
 And then made free of negro corporations ?
 Poor wretches saved from castaway three-deckers—
 By sooty wreckers—
 From hungry waves to have a loss still drearier,
 To far exceed the utmost aim of Park—
 And find themselves, alas ! beyond the mark,
 In the *insides* of Africa's interior !
 Live on, Giraffe ! genteelest of raff kind !—
 Admired by noble and by royal tongues !
 May no pernicious wind,
 Or English fog, blight thy exotic lungs !

Live on in happy peace, altho' a rarity,
 Nor envy thy poor cousin's more outrageous
 Parisian popularity—
 Whose very leopard-rash is grown contagious,
 And worn on gloves and ribbons all about,
 Alas! they'll wear him out!—
 So thou shalt take thy sweet diurnal feeds—
 When he is stuffed with undigested straw,
 Sad food that never visited his jaw!
 And staring round him with a brace of beads!

REMONSTRATORY ODE FROM THE ELEPHANT
 AT EXETER 'CHANGE, TO MR. MATHEWS,
 AT THE ENGLISH OPERA-HOUSE.

"See with what courteous action
 He beckons you to a more removed ground."—*Hamlet*.

[WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.]

I.

OH, Mr. Mathews! Sir!
 (If a plain elephant may speak his mind,
 And that I have a mind to speak I find
 By my inward stir)
 I long have thought, and wished to say, that we
 Mar our well-merited prosperity
 By being such near neighbours;
 My keeper now hath lent me pen and ink,
 Shoved in my truss of lunch, and tub of drink
 And left me to my labours.
 The whole menagerie is in repose,
 The Coatamundi is in his Sunday clothes,
 Watching the Lynx's most unnatural doze;
 The Panther is asleep and the Macaw;
 The Lion is engaged on something raw;
 The white bear cools his chin
 'Gainst the wet tin;
 And the confined old Monkey's in the straw.
 All the nine little Lionets are lying
 Slumbering in milk, and sighing;
 Miss Cross is sipping ox-tail soup,
 In her front coop,
 So here's the happy mid-day moment:—yes,
 I seize it, Mr. Mathews, to address
 A word or two
 To you
 On the subject of the ruin which must come
 By both being in the Strand, and both at home

On the same nights ; two treats
 So very near each other,
 As, oh my brother !
 To play old gooseberry with both receipts.

II.

When you begin
 Your summer fun, three times a week, at eight,
 And carriages roll up, and cits roll in,
 I feel a change in Exeter 'Change's change.
 And, dash my trunk, I hate
 To ring my bell, when you ring yours, and go
 With a diminished glory through *my* show !
 It is most strange ;
 But crowds that meant to see me eat a stack,
 And sip a water-butt or so, and crack
 A root of mangel-wurzel with my foot,
 Eat little children's fruit,
 Pick from the floor small coins,
 And then turn slowly round and show my India-rubber
 loins :
 'Tis strange—most strange, but true,
 That these same crowds seek *you* !
 Pass *my* abode, and pay at *your* next door ;
 It makes me roar
 With anguish when I think of this ; I go
 With sad severity my nightly rounds
 Before one poor front row,
 My fatal funny foe !
 And when I stoop, as duty bids, I sigh
 And feel that, while poor elephantine I
 Pick up a sixpence, you pick up the pounds !

III.

Could you not go ?
 Could you not take the Coburg or the Surrey ?
 Or Sadler's Wells—(I'm not in a hurry,
 I never am !) for the next season ?—oh !
 Woe ! woe ! woe !
 To both of us, if we remain ; for not
 In silence will I bear my altered lot,
 To have you merry, sir, at my expense ;
 No man of any sense,
 No true great person (and we both are great
 In our own ways) would tempt another's fate.
 I would myself depart
 In Mr. Cross's cart ;
 But, like Othello, "am not easily moved."

There's a nice house in Tottenham Court, they say,
 Fit for a single gentleman's small play ;
 And more conveniently near your home :
 You'll easily go and come.
 Or get a room in the City—in some street—
 Coachmaker's Hall, or the Paul's Head,
 Cateaton Street ;
 Any large place, in short, in which to get your bread ;
 But do not stay, and get
 Me into the Gazette !

IV.

Ah ! The Gazette ;
 I press my forehead with my trunk, and wet
 My tender cheek with elephantine tears,
 Shed of a walnut size
 From my wise eyes,
 To think of ruin after prosperous years.
 What a dread case would be
 For me—large me !
 To meet at Basinghall Street, the first and seventh
 And the eleventh !
 To undergo (D———n !)
 My last examination !
 To cringe and to surrender,
 Like a criminal offender,
 All my effects—my bell-pull, and my bell,
 My bolt, my stock of hay, my new deal cell.
 To *post* my ivory, sir !
 And have some curious commissioner
 Very irreverently search my trunk ;
 'Sdeath ! I should die
 With rage, to find a tiger in possession
 Of my abode ; up to his yellow knees
 In my old straw ; and my profound profession
 Entrusted to two beasts of assignees !

V.

The truth is simply this,—if you *will* stay
 Under my very nose,
 Filling your rows
 Just at my feeding time, to see *your* play,
 My mind's made up,
 No more at nine I sup,
 Except on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays,
 From eight to eleven,
 As I hope for heaven,
 On Thursdays, and on Saturdays, and Mondays,

I'll squeak and roar, and grunt without cessation,
 And utterly confound your recitation.
 And, mark me ! all my friends of the furry snout
 Shall join a chorus shout,
We will be heard—we'll spoil
 Your wicked ruination toil.
 Insolvency must ensue
 To you, sir, you ;
 Unless you move your opposition shop,
 And let me stop.

VI.

I have no more to say :—I do not write
 In anger, but in sorrow ; I must look
 However to my interests every night,
 And they detest your " Memorandum-book."
 If we could join our forces—I should like it ;
 You do the dialogue, and I the songs,
 A voice to me belongs ;
 (The Editors of the *Globe* and *Traveller* ring
 With praises of it, when I hourly sing
 God save the King.)
 If such a bargain could be schemed I'd strike it !
 I think, too, I could do the Welsh old man
 In the Youthful Days, if dressed upon your plan ;
 And the attorney in your Paris trip,—
 I'm large about the hip !
 Now think of this !—for we cannot go on
 As next-door rivals, that my mind declares.
 I must be penniless, or you be gone !
 We must live separate, or else have shares.
 I am a friend or foe
 As you take this ;
 Let me your profitable hubbub miss,
 Or be it " Mathews, Elephant, and Co. !"

ODE TO ST. SWITHIN.

"The rain it raineth every day."

THE dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,
 On every window-frame hang beaded damps
 Like rows of small illumination lamps
 To celebrate the Jubilee of Showers !
 A constant sprinkle patters from all leaves,
 The very Dryads are not dry, but soppers,
 And from the Houses' eaves
 Tumble eaves-droppers.

The hundred clerks that live along the street,
 Bondsmen to mercantile and city schemers,
 With squashing, sloshing, and galloshing feet,
 Go paddling, paddling, through the wet, like steamers,
 Each hurrying to earn the daily stipend—
 Umbrellas pass of every shade of green,
 And now and then a crimson one is seen,
 Like an umbrella ripened.

Over the way a waggon
 Stands with six smoking horses, shrinking, blinking,
 While in the George and Dragon
 The man is keeping himself dry—and drinking !
 The butcher's boy skulks underneath his tray ;
 Hats shine—shoes don't—and down droop collars,
 And one blue Parasol cries all the way
 To school, in company with four small scholars !

Unhappy is the man to-day who rides,
 Making his journey sloppier, not shorter ;
 Ay, there they go, a dozen of outsides,
 Performing on a "stage with real water !"
 A dripping pauper crawls along the way,
 The only real willing out-of-doorer,
 And says, or seems to say,
 "Well, I am poor enough—but here's a *pourer* !"

The scene in water colours thus I paint,
 Is your own festival, you Sloppy Saint !
 Mother of all the Family of Rainers !
 Saint of the Soakers !
 Making all people croakers,
 Like frogs in swampy marshes, and complainers !
 And why you mizzle forty days together,
 Giving the earth your water-soup to sup,
 I marvel—Why such wet, mysterious weather ?
 I wish you'd *clear it up* !

Why cast such cruel dampers
 On pretty Picnics, and against all wishes
 Set the cold ducks a-swimming in the hampers,
 And volunteer, unasked, to wash the dishes ?
 Why drive the Nymphs from the selected spot,
 To cling like ladybirds around a tree—
 Why spoil a Gipsy party at their tea,
 By throwing your cold water upon hot ?
 Cannot a rural maiden, or a man,
 Seek Hornsey Wood by invitation, sipping
 Their green with Pan,

But souse you come, and show their Pan all dripping !
 Why upon snow-white tablecloths and sheets,
 That do not wait, or want a second washing,
 Come squashing ?

Why task yourself to lay the dust in streets,
 As if there were no water-cart contractors,
 No potboys spilling beer, no shopboys ruddy
 Spooning out puddles muddy,
 Milkmaids, and other slopping benefactors ?

A Queen you are, raining in your own right,
 Yet, oh ! how little flattered by report !
 Even by those that seek the Court,
 Pelted with every term of spleen and spite.
 Folks rail and swear at you in every place ;
 They say you are a creature of no bowel ;
 They say you're always washing Nature's face,
 And that you then supply her
 With nothing drier

Than some old wringing cloud by way of towel !
 The whole town wants you ducked, just as you duck it,
 They wish you on your own mud porridge suppered,
 They hope that you may kick your own big bucket,
 Or in your water-butt go souse ! heels up'ard !
 They are, in short, so weary of your drizzle,
 They'd spill the water in your veins to stop it—
 Be warned ! You are too partial to a mizzle—
 Pray *drop it!*

 ODE TO M. BRUNEL.*

"Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast? a worthy pioneer!"—*Hamlet*.

WELL !—Monsieur Brunel,
 How prospers now thy mighty undertaking,
 To join by a hollow way the Bankside friends
 Of Rotherhithe and Wapping—
 Never be stopping,
 But poking, groping, in the dark keep making
 An archway, underneath the Dabs and Gudgeons,
 For Collier men and pitchy old Curmudgeons,
 To cross the water in inverse proportion,
 Walk under steamboats under the keel's ridge,
 To keep down all extortion,
 And without sculls to diddle London Bridge !

* The architect of the Tunnel under the Thames.

ODE FOR ST. CECILIA'S EVE.

In a fresh hunt, a new Great Bore to worry,
 Thou didst to earth thy human terriers follow,
 Hopeful at last from Middlesex to Surrey,
 To give us the "View Hollow."
 In short it was thy aim, right north and south,
 To put a pipe into old Thames's mouth ;
 Alas ! half-way thou hadst proceeded, when
 Old Thames, through roof, not water-proof,
 Came, like "a tide in the affairs of men ;"
 And with a mighty stormy kind of roar,
 Reproachful of thy wrong,
 Burst out in that old song
 Of Incedon's, beginning "Cease, rude Bore."
 Sad is it, worthy of one's tears,
 Just when one seems the most successful,
 To find one's self o'er head and ears
 In difficulties mosi distressful !
 Other great speculations have been nursed,
 Till want of proceeds laid them on a shelf ;
 But thy concern was at the worst,
 When it began to *liquidate* itself !
 But now Dame Fortune has her false face hidden,
 And languishes thy Tunnel—so to paint,
 Under a slow incurable complaint,
 Bed-ridden !
 Why, when thus Thames—bed-bothered—why repine !
 Do try a spare bed at the Serpentine !
 Yet let none think thee dazed, or crazed, or stupid ;
 And sunk beneath thy own and Thames's craft ;
 Let them not style thee some Mechanic Cupid
 Pining and pouting o'er a broken shaft !
 I'll tell thee with thy Tunnel what to do ;
 Light up thy boxes, build a bin or two,
 The wine does better than such water-trades :
 Stick up a sign—the sign of the Bore's Head ;
 I've drawn it ready for thee in black lead,
 And make thy cellar subterranean—Thy Shades !

ODE FOR ST. CECILIA'S EVE.

"Look out for squalls."—*The Pilot.*



COME, dear Barney Isaacs, come,
 Punch for one night can spare his drum
 As well as pipes of Pan !
 Forget not, Popkins, your bassoon,
 Nor, Mister Bray, your horn, as soon

As you can leave the Van ;
 Blind Billy, bring your violin ;
 Miss Crow, you're great in Cherry Ripe !
 And Chub, your viol must drop in
 Its bass to Soger Tommy's pipe.

Ye butchers, bring your bones :
 An organ would not be amiss ;
 If grinding Jim has spouted his,
 Lend yours, good Mister Jones.

Do, hurdy-gurdy Jenny—do
 Keep sober for an hour or two,
 Music's charms to help to paint.
 And, Sandy Gray, if you should not
 Your bagpipes bring—O tuneful Scot !
 Conceive the feelings of the Saint !

Miss Strummel issues an invite,
 For music, and turn-out to night
 In honour of Cecilia's session ;
 But ere you go, one moment stop,
 And with all kindness let me drop
 A hint to you and your profession ;
 Imprimis then : Pray keep within
 The bounds to which your skill was born ;
 Let the one-handed let alone
 Trombone,

Don't—Rheumatiz ! seize the violin,
 Or Ashmy snatch the horn !

Don't ever to such rows give birth,
 As if you had no end on earth,
 Except to "wake the lyre ;"
 Don't "strike the harp," pray never do,
 Till others long to strike it too,
 Perpetual harping's apt to tire ;
 Oh I have heard such flat-and-sharpers,
 I've blest the head
 Of good King Ned,
 For scragging all those old Welsh Harpers !

Pray, never, ere each tuneful doing,
 Take a prodigious deal of wooing ;
 And then sit down to thrum the strain,
 As if you'd never rise again—
 The least Cecilia-like of things ;
 Remember that the saint has wings.
 I've known Miss Strummel pause an hour,
 Ere she could "Pluck the Fairest Flower."

Yet without hesitation, she
 Plunged next into the "Deep, Deep Sea."
 When on the keys she *does* begin,
 Such awful torments soon you share,
 She really seems like Milton's "Sin,"
 Holding the keys of—you know where !

Never tweak people's ears so toughly,
 That urchin-like they can't help saying—
 "O dear, O dear—you call this playing,
 But oh, it's playing very roughly !"
 Oft, in the ecstasy of pain,
 I've cursed all instrumental workmen,
 Wished Broadwood Thurtelled in a lane,
 And Kirk White's fate to every Kirkman—
 I really once delighted spied
 "Clementi Collard in Cheapside."

Another word—don't be surprised
 Revered and ragged street musicians,
 You have been only half baptized,
 And each name proper, or improper,
 Is not the value of a copper,
 Till it has had the due additions,
 Husky, Rusky,
 Ninny, Tinny,
 Hummel, Bummel,
 Bowsky, Wowsky,
 All these are very good selectables ;
 But none of your plain pudding-and-tames—
 Folks that are called the hardest names
 Are music's most respectables.
 Ev'ry woman, ev'ry man,
 Look as foreign as you can,
 Don't cut your hair, or wash your skin,
 Make ugly faces and begin.

Each dingy Orpheus gravely hears.
 And now to show they understand it !
 Miss Crow her scannel throttle clears,
 And all the rest prepare to band it.
 Each scraper right for concertante,
 Rozins the hair of Rozinante :
 Then all sound A, if they know which,
 That they may join like birds in June ;
 Jack Tar alone neglects to tune,
 For he's all over concert-pitch.

A little prelude goes before,
Like a knock and ring at music's door,
Each instrument gives in its name ;

Then sitting in
They all begin

To play a musical round game.
Scrapenberg, as the eldest hand,
Leads a first fiddle to the band,

A second follows suit ;

Anon the ace of horns comes plump
On the two fiddles with a trump,

Puffindorf plays a flute.

This sort of musical revoke,
The grave bassoon begins to smoke,
And in rather grumpy kind
Of tone begins to speak his mind ;
The double drum is next to mix,
Playing the Devil on Two Sticks—

Clamour, clamour,
Hammer, hammer,

While now and then a pipe is heard,
Insisting to put in a word,

With all his shrilly best,

So to allow the little minion
Time to deliver his opinion,

They take a few bars rest.

Well, little pipe begins—with sole
And small voice going thro' the *hole*,

Beseeching,
Preaching,
Squealing,
Appealing,

Now as high as he can go
Now in language rather low,
And having done—begins once more,
Verbatim what he said before.

This twiddling, twaddling sets on fire,
All the old instrumental ire,
And fiddles for explosion ripe,
Put out the little squeaker's pipe ;
This wakes bass viol—and viol for that.
Seizing on innocent little B flat,
Shakes him like terrier shaking a rat—

They all seem miching malico !

To judge from a rumble unawares,
The drum has had a pitch downstairs :

ODE FOR ST. CECILIA'S EVE.

And the trumpet rash,
 By a violent crash,
 Seems splitting somebody's calico !
 The viol too groans in deep distress,
 As if he suddenly grew sick ;
 And one rapid fiddle sets off express,—
 Hurrying,
 Scurrying,
 Spattering,
 Clattering,
 To fetch him a Doctor of Music.
 This tumult sets the Haut-boy crying,
 Beyond the Piano's pacifying,
 The Cymbal
 Gets nimble,
 Triangle
 Must wrangle,
 The band is becoming most martial of bands,
 When just in the middle,
 A quakerly fiddle,
 Proposes a general shaking of hands !
 Quaking,
 Shaking,
 Quivering,
 Shivering,
 Long bow—short bow—each bow drawing :
 Some like filing—some like sawing ;
 At last these agitations cease,
 And they all get
 The flageolet
 To breathe "a piping time of peace."

Ah, too deceitful charm,
 Like lightning before death,
 For Scrapenberg to rest his arm,
 And Puffindorf get breath !
 Again without remorse or pity,
 They play "The Storming of a City,"
 Miss S. herself composed and planned it—
 When lo ! at this renewed attack,
 Up jumps a little man in black,—
 "The very Devil cannot stand it !"
 And with that,
 Snatching hat,
 (Not his own,)
 Off is flown,

Thro' the door,
 In his black,
 To come back,
 Never, never, never more!

O Music! praises thou hast had,
 From Dryden and from Pope,
 For thy good notes, yet none I hope,
 But I, e'er praised the bad,
 Yet are not saint and sinner even?
 Miss Strummel on Cecilia's level?
 One drew an angel down from heaven!
 The other scared away the Devil!

ODE TO MADAME HENGLER,
 FIREWORK-MAKER TO VAUXHALL.



H, Mrs. Hengler!—Madame,—I beg pardon,
 Starry Enchantress of the Surrey Garden!
 Accept an ode not meant as any scoff—
 The Bard were bold indeed at thee to quiz,
 Whose squibs are far more popular than his;
 Whose works are much more certain to go off.

Great is thy fame, but not a silent fame;
 With many a bang the public ear it courts;
 And yet thy arrogance we never blame,
 But take thy merits from thy own reports.
 Thou hast indeed the most indulgent backers.
 We make no doubting, misbelieving comments,
 Even in thy most bounceable of moments;
 But lend our ears implicit to thy crackers!—
 Strange helps to thy applause too are not missing,
 Thy Rockets raise thee,
 And Serpents praise thee,
 As none beside are ever praised—by hissing:

Mistress of Hydropyrics,
 Of glittering Pindarics, Sapphics, Lyrics,
 Professor of a Fiery Necromancy,
 Oddly thou charmest the politer sorts
 With midnight sports,
 Partaking very much of *flash* and *fancy*!

What thoughts had shaken all
 In olden time at thy nocturnal revels,
 Each brimstone ball
 They would have deemed an eyeball of the Devil's!

But now thy flaming Meteors cause no fright ;
 A modern Hubert to the royal ear,
 Might whisper without fear,
 " My Lord, they say there were five moons to-night !"
 Nor would it raise one superstitious notion
 To hear the whole description fairly out :—
 " One fixed—which t'other four whirled round about
 With wondrous motion."

Such are the very sights
 Thou workest, Queen of Fire, on earth and heaven,
 Between the hours of midnight and eleven,
 Turning our English to Arabian Nights,
 With blazing mounts, and founts, and scorching dragons,
 Blue stars and white,
 And blood-red light,
 And dazzling Wheels fit for Enchanters' waggons.
 Thrice lucky woman ! doing things that be
 With other folks past benefit of parson ;
 For burning, no Burn's Justice falls on thee,
 Altho' night after night the public see
 Thy Vauxhall palaces all end in Arson !

Sure thou wast never born,
 Like old Sir Hugh, with water in thy head,
 Nor lectured night and morn
 Of sparks and flames to have an awful dread,
 Allowed by a prophetic dam and sire
 To play with fire.
 O didst thou never, in those days gone by,
 Go carrying about—no schoolboy prouder—
 Instead of waxen doll a little Guy ;
 Or in thy pretty pyrotechnic vein,
 Up the parental pigtail lay a train,
 To let off all his powder ?

Full of the wildfire of thy youth,
 Didst never, in plain truth,
 Plant whizzing Flowers in thy mother's pots,
 Turning the garden into powder plots ?
 Or give the cook, to fright her,
 Thy paper sausages well stuffed with nitre ?
 Nay, wert thou never guilty, now, of dropping
 A lighted cracker by thy sister's Dear,
 So that she could not hear
 The question he was popping ?

Go on, Madame ! Go on—be bright and busy
 While hoaxed astronomers look up and stare

From tall observatories, dumb and dizzy,
 To see a Squib in Cassiopeia's Chair!
 A Serpent wriggling into Charles's Wain!
 A Roman Candle lighting the Great Bear!
 A Rocket tangled in Diana's train,
 And Crackers stuck in Berenice's Hair!

There is a King of Fire—Thou shouldst be Queen!
 Methinks a good connexion might come from it;
 Couldst thou not make him, in the garden scene,
 Set out per Rocket and return per Comet;

Then give him a hot treat
 Of Pyrotechnicals to sit and sup,
 Lord! how the world would throng to see him eat,
 He swallowing Fire, while thou dost throw it up!

One solitary night—true is the story,
 Watching those forms that Fancy will create
 Within the bright confusion of the grate,
 I saw a dazzling countenance of glory!

Oh Dei gratias!
 That fiery facias,
 'Twas thine, Enchantress of the Surrey Grove;
 And ever since that night,
 In dark and bright,
 Thy face is *registered* within my stove!

Long may that starry brow enjoy its rays,
 May no untimely *blow* its doom forestall;
 But when old age prepares the friendly pall,
 When the last spark of all thy sparks decays,
 Then die lamented by good people all,
 Like Goldsmith's *Madam Blaize*!

ODE TO MR. MALTHUS.

MY dear, do pull the bell,
 And pull it well,
 And send these noisy children all up stairs,—
 Now playing here like bears—
 You George, and William, go into the grounds,
 Charles, James, and Bob are there,—and take your
 string,
 Drive horses, or fly kites, or anything,
 You're quite enough to play at hare and hounds,—
 You little May, and Caroline, and Poll,
 Take each your doll,

And go, my dears, into the two back pair,
 Your sister Margaret's there—
 Harriet and Grace, thank God, are both at school,
 At far off Ponty Pool—
 I want to read, but really can't get on—
 Let the four twins, Mark, Matthew, Luke and John,
 Go—to their nursery—go—I never can
 Enjoy my Malthus among such a clan!

Oh, Mr. Malthus, I agree
 In everything I read with thee!
 The world's too full, there is no doubt,
 And wants a deal of thinning out,—
 It's plain—as plain as Harrow's steeple—
 And I agree with some thus far,
 Who say the King's too popular,
 That is,—he has too many people.
 There are too many of all trades,
 Too many bakers,
 Too many everything makers,
 But not too many undertakers,—
 Too many boys,—
 Too many hobby-de-hoys,—
 Too many girls, men, widows, wives, and maids,—
 There is a dreadful surplus to demolish.
 And yet some wrongheads,
 With thick not long heads,
 Poor metaphysicians!
 Sign petitions
 Capital punishment to abolish;
 And in the face of censuses such vast ones
 New hospitals contrive,
 For keeping life alive,
 Laying first stones, the dolts! instead of last ones!
 Others, again, in the same contrariety,
 Deem that of all Humane Society
 They really do deserve the thanks,
 Because the two banks of the Serpentine,
 By their design,
 Are Saving Banks.
 Oh! were it given but to me to weed
 The human breed,
 And root out here and there some cumbering elf,
 I think I could go through it,
 And really do it,
 With profit to the world and to myself.
 For instance, the unkind among the Editors,—

My debtors, those I mean to say
 Who cannot or who will not pay,
 And all my creditors.
 These for my own sake, I'd destroy ;
 But for the world's, and every one's,
 I'd hoe up Mrs. G——'s two sons,
 And Mrs. B——'s big little boy,
 Call'd only by herself an "only joy."
 As Mr. Irving's chapel not too full,
 Himself alone I'd pull—
 But for the peace of years that have to run,
 I'd make the Lord Mayor's a perpetual station,
 And put a period to rotation,
 By rooting up all Aldermen but one,—
 These are but hints what good might thus be done :
 But, ah ! I fear the public good
 Is little by the public understood,—
 For instance—if with flint, and steel, and tinder,
 Great Swing, for once a philanthropic man,
 Proposed to throw a light upon the plan,
 No doubt some busy fool would hinder
 His burning all the Foundling to a cinder.


Or, if the Lord Mayor, on an Easter Monday,
 That wine and bun day,
 Proposed to poison all the little Blue-Coats,
 Before they died by bit or sup,
 Some meddling marplot would blow up,
 Just at the moment critical,
 The economy political
 Of saving their fresh yellow plush and new coats.

Equally 'twould be undone,
 Suppose the Bishop of London,
 On that great day,
 In June or May,
 When all the large small family of charity,
 Brown, black, or carrotty,
 Walk in their dusty parish shoes,
 In too, too many two-and-twos,
 To sing together till they scare the walls
 Of old St. Paul's,
 Sitting in red, grey, green, blue, drab, and white,
 Some say a gratifying sight,
 Tho' I think sad—but that's a schism—
 To witness so much pauperism—
 Suppose, I say, the Bishop then, to make

In this poor over-crowded world more room,
 Proposed to shake
 Down that immense extinguisher, the dome—
 Some humane Martin in the charity Gal-way,
 I fear would come and interfere,
 Save beadle, brat and overseer,
 To walk back in their parish shoes,
 In too, too many two-and-twos
 Islington—Wapping—or Pall Mall way !

Thus, people hatch'd from goose's egg,
 Foolishly think a pest, a plague.
 And in its face their doors all shut,
 On hinges oil'd with cajeput—
 Drugging themselves with drams well spiced and cloven,
 And turning pale as linen rags
 At hoisting up of yellow flags,
 While you and I are crying "Orange Boven !"
 Why should we let precautions so absorb us,
 Or trouble shipping with a quarantine—
 When, if I understand the thing you mean,
 We ought to import the Cholera Morbus !

 ODE FOR THE NINTH OF NOVEMBER.

 Lud ! O Lud ! O Lud !
 I mean of course that venerable town,
 Mentioned in stories of renown,
 Built formerly of mud,—
 O Lud, I say, why did'st thou e'er
 Invent the office of a Mayor.
 An office that no useful purpose crowns,
 But to set Aldermen against each other,
 That should be Brother unto Brother,—
 Sisters at least, by virtue of their gowns ?

But still if one must have a Mayor
 To fill the Civic chair,
 O Lud, I say,
 Was there no better day
 To fix on than November Ninth so shivery
 And dull for showing off the Livery's livery ?
 Dimming, alas,
 The Braziers' brass,
 Soiling th' Embroiderers and all the Saddlers,
 Sopping the Furriers,
 Dragging the Curriers,

And making Merchant Tailors dirty paddlers ;
 Drenching the Skinners' Company to the skin,
 Making the crusty Vintner chiller,
 And turning the Distiller
 To cold without instead of warm within ;—
 Spoiling the bran new beavers
 Of Wax Chandlers and Weavers.
 Plaistering the Plaisterers and spotting Mercers,
 Hearty November cursers—
 And showing Cordwainers and dapper Drapers
 Sadly in want of brushes and of scrapers ;
 Making the Grocers' Company not fit
 For company a bit ;
 Dying the Dyers with a dingy flood,
 Daubing incorporated Bakers,
 And leading Patten-makers
 Over their very pattens in the mud,—
 O Lud ! O Lud ! O Lud !

“ This is a sorry sight,”
 To quote Macbeth—but oh, it grieves me quite,
 To see your wives and daughters in their plumes—
 White plumes not white—
 Sitting at open windows, catching rheums,
 Not “ Angels ever bright and fair,”
 But angels ever brown and sallow,
 With eyes—you cannot see above one pair,
 For city clouds of black and yellow—
 And artificial flowers, rose-leaf and bud,
 Such sable lilies,
 And grim daffodilies,
 Drooping, but not for drought, O Lud ! O Lud !

I may as well, while I'm inclined,
 Just go through all the faults I find :
 O Lud ! then, with a better air, say June,
 Could'st thou not find a better tune
 To sound with trumpets, and with drums,
 Than “ See the Conquering Hero comes,”
 When he who comes ne'er dealt in blood.
 Thy May'r is not a war horse, Lud,
 That ever charg'd on Turk or Tartar,
 And yet upon a march you strike
 That treats him like—
 A little French, if I may martyr—
 Lewis Cart-Horse or Henry Carter !

O Lud ! I say,
 Do change your day
 To some time when your show can really show ;
 When silk can seem like silk, and gold can glow.
 Look at your sweepers, how they shine in May !
 Have it when there's a sun to gild the coach,
 And sparkle in tiara—bracelet—brooch—
 Diamond—or paste—of sister, mother, daughter,
 When grandeur really may be grand—
 But if thy pageant's thus obscur'd by land—
 O Lud ! it's ten times worse upon the water !

Suppose, O Lud, to show its plan,
 I call, like Blue Beard's wife, to Sister Anne,
 Who's gone to Beaufort Wharf with niece and aunt,
 To see what she can see—and what she can't ;
 Chewing a saffron bun by way of cud,
 To keep the fog out of a tender lung,
 While perch'd in a verandah nicely hung
 Over a margin of thy own black mud,
 O Lud !

Now Sister Anne, I call to thee,
 Look out and see,
 Of course about the bridge you view them rally,
 And sally,
 With many a wherry, sculler, punt and cutter ;
 The Fishmongers' grand boat, but not for butter,
 The Goldsmiths' glorious galley,—
 Of course, you see the Lord Mayor's coach aquatic,
 With silken banners that the breezes fan,
 In gold all glowing,
 And men in scarlet rowing,
 Like Doge of Venice to the Adriatic ;
 Of course you see all this, O Sister Anne,

“ No, I see no such thing !
 I only see the edge of Beaufort Wharf,
 With two coal lighters fasten'd to a ring ;
 And, dim as ghosts,
 Two little boys are jumping over posts ;
 And something farther off,
 That's rather like the shadow of a dog,
 And all beyond is fog.
 If there be anything so fine and bright,
 To see it I must see by second sight.

Call this a Show? It is not worth a pin ;
 I see no barges row,
 No banners blow,
 The Show is merely a gallanty-show
 Without a lamp or any candle in."

But Sister Anne, my dear,
 Although you cannot see, you still may hear.
 Of course you hear, I'm very sure of that,
 The "Water parted from the Sea" in C,
 Or "Where the Bee sucks" set in B ;
 Or Huntsmen's chorus from the Freischütz frightful,
 Or Handel's Water Music in A flat.
 Oh, music from the water comes delightful,
 It sounds as nowhere else it can !
 You hear it first
 In some rich burst,
 Then faintly sighing,
 Tenderly dying
 Away upon the breezes, Sister Anne.

"There is no breeze to die on,
 And all their drums and trumpets, flutes and harps,
 Could never cut their way with ev'n three sharps
 Through such a fog as this, you may rely on.
 I think, but I am not sure, I hear a hum,
 Like a very muffled double drum,
 And then a something faintly shrill,
 Like Bartlemy Fair's old buzz at Pentonville.
 And now and then I hear a pop,
 As if from Pedley's Soda Water shop.
 I'm almost ill with the strong scent of mud,
 And, not to mention sneezing,
 My cough is, more than usual, teasing ;
 I really fear that I have chill'd my blood,
 O Lud ! O Lud ! O Lud ! O Lud ! O Lud !"

TO MR. WRENCH, AT THE ENGLISH OPERA-
 HOUSE.



H very pleasant Mr. Wrench,—
 The first, upon the pit's first bench,
 I've scrambled to my place,
 To hail thee on these summer boards
 With joy, even critic-craft affords,
 And watch thy welcome face !

ODE TO MR. WRENCH.

Ere thou art come, how I rejoice
 To hear thy free and easy voice,
 Lounging about the slips ;
 And then thy figure comes and owns
 The voice as careless as the tones
 That saunter from thy lips.

Oh, come and cast a quiet glance,
 To glad a nameless friend, askance
 The lamp's ascending glare ;
 Better it is than bended knees,
 Heart squeezing, and profound congés,
 That old familiar air.

Even in the street in that apt face,
 Full of gay gravity, I trace
 The soul of native whim ;
 A constant, never failing store
 Of quiet mirth that ne'er runs o'er,
 But aye is near the brim.

Quoth I, there goes a happy wight,
 Imimical to spleen and spite,
 And careless of all care ;
 Who oils the ruffled waves of strife,
 And makes the workday suit of life
 Of very easy wear.

Lord ! if he had some people's ills
 To cope—their hungry bonds and bills,
 How faintly they would tease ;
 Things that have cost both tears and sighs—
 Their foes, as motelings in his eyes—
 Their duns his summer fleas !

The stage I guess is not thy school—
 Thou dost not antic like the fool
 That wept behind his mask ;
 Thy playing is thy play—a sport—
 A revel, as perform'd at Court,
 And not a trade—a task !

Gay *Freeman*, art thou hired for *him* ?
 No—'tis thy humour and thy whim
 To be that easy guest ;
 Whereas, whoever plays for pelf,
 (Like *Bennett*,) only gives *him* self,
 Or *her*, like *Mrs. West* !

Nay, thou—to look beyond the stage,
 Thy life is but another page
 Continued of the play ;
 The same companionable sprite—
 Thy whim and pleasantry by night
 Are with thee in the day !

ODE TO N. A. VIGORS, ESQ.

On the publication of "The Gardens and Menagerie of the
 Zoological Society."

"Give you good den."—SHAKESPEARE.

SO Mr. V.,—no, Vigors—I beg pardon,
 You've published your Zoological Garden !
 A book of which I've heard a deal of talk,
 And your Menagerie—indeed 'tis too bad o' me,
 But I have never seen your Beast Academy !

Or set my feet
 In Brute-on Street,
 Or ever wandered in your "Bird-cage Walk."

Yet I believe that you were truly born
 To be a kind of brutal overseer,
 And, like the royal quarterings, appear
 Between a lion and a unicorn :
 There is a sort of reason about rhyme
 That I have pondered many, many a time ;
 Where words, like birds of feather,
 Likely to come together,
 Are quite prophetically made to chime ;
 So your own office is forestalled, O Vigors ;
 Your proper surname having but one single
 Appropriate jingle,
 Tigers !

Where is your Gardening Volume ? like old Mawe's !
 Containing rules for cultivating brutes,
 Like fruits.
 Through April, May, or June,
 As thus,—now rake your Lions' manes, and prune
 Your Tigers' claws ;
 About the middle of the month, if fair,
 Give your Chameleons air :
 Choose shady walls for Owls,
 Water your Fowls,
 And plant your Leopards in the sunniest spots ;

Earth up your Beavers ; train your Bears to climb ;
 Thin out your Elephants about this time ;
 And set some early Kangaroos in pots.
 In some warm, sheltered place,
 Prepare a hot-bed for the Boa race,
 Leaving them room to swell.
 Prick out your Porcupines, and blanch your Ermine ;
 Stick up Opossums ; trim your Monkeys well ;
 And " destroy all vermin."

Oh, tell me, Mr. Vigors ! for the fleas
 Of curiosity begin to tease—
 If they bite rudely I must crave your pardon,
 But if a man may ask,
 What is the task
 You have to do in this Exotic Garden ?
 If from your title one may guess your ends,
 You are a sort of Secretary Bird,
 To write home word
 From ignorant brute beasts to absent friends.
 Does ever the poor little Coati Mundi
 Beg you to write to ma,
 To ask papa
 To send him a new suit to wear on Sunday ?
 Does Mrs. L. request you'll be so good—
 Acting a sort of Urban to Sylvanus—
 As write to her two " Children in the Wood,"
 Addressed—post paid—to Leo Africanus ?
 Does ever the Great Sea-Bear *Londinensis*
 Make you amanuensis,
 To send out news to some old Arctic stager—
 " Pray write that Brother Bruin, on the whole,
 Has got a head on this day's pole,
 And say my Ursa has been made a Major !"

Do you not write dejected letters—very—
 Describing England for poor " Happy Jerry ?"
 Unlike those emigrants who take in flats,
 Throwing out New South *Wales* for catching *sprats* ?
 Of course your penmanship you ne'er refuse
 For " begging letters" from poor kangaroos ;
 Of course you manage b'ls and their acquittance,
 And sometimes pen for Pelican a double
 Letter to Mrs. P. and brood in trouble,
 Enclosing a small dab as a remittance ;
 Or send from Mrs. B. to her old cadger,
 Her full length, done by Harvey, that rare draughtsman

And skilful craftsman,
A game one too, for he can draw a Badger !

Does Dr. Bennett never come and trouble you
To break the death of Wolf to Mrs. W. ?
To say poor Buffalo his last has puffed,
And died quite suddenly, without a will,
Soothing the widow with a gentle quill,
And gently hinting—" would she like him stuffed ? "
Does no old sentimental monkey weary
Your hand at times to vent his scribbling itch ?
And then your pen must answer to the query
Of Dame Giraffe, who has been told her deary ?
Died on the *spot*—and wishes to know *which*.
New candidates meanwhile your help are waiting
To fill up cards of thanks, with due refinement,
For Missus 'Possum, after her confinement ;
To pen a note of pretty Poll's dictating—
Or write how Charles the Tenth's departed reign
Disquiets the crowned Crane,
And all the royal Tigers ;
To send a bulletin to brother Apes
Of Zebra's health, what sort of night he passes ;—
Is this your duty, Secretary Vigors ?

Or are your brutes but Garden-brutes indeed,
Of the old shrubby breed,
Dragons of holly—Peacocks cut in yew ?
But no—I've seen your book,
And all the creatures look
Like real creatures, natural and true !
Ready to prowl, to growl, to prey, to fight.
Thanks be to Harvey who their portraits drew,
And to the cutters praise is justly due,
To Branston always, and to always Wright.
Go on, then, publishing your monthly parts,
And let the wealthy crowd,
The noble and the proud,
Learn of brute beasts to patronise the Arts.
So may your Household flourish in the Park,
And no long Boa go to his long home,
No Antelope give up the vital spark,
But all with this your scientific tome,
Go on as swimmi:gly as old Noah's Ark !