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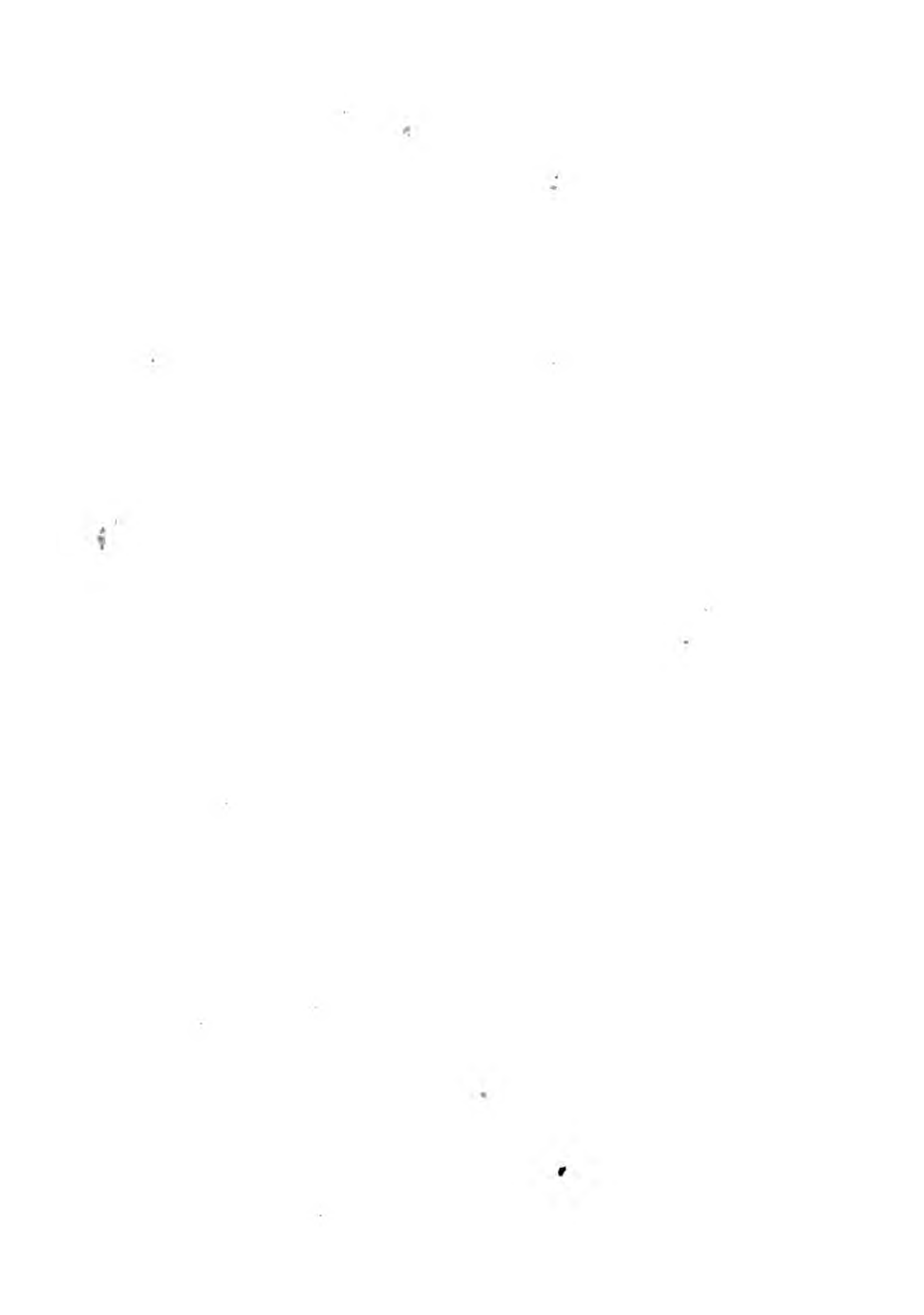
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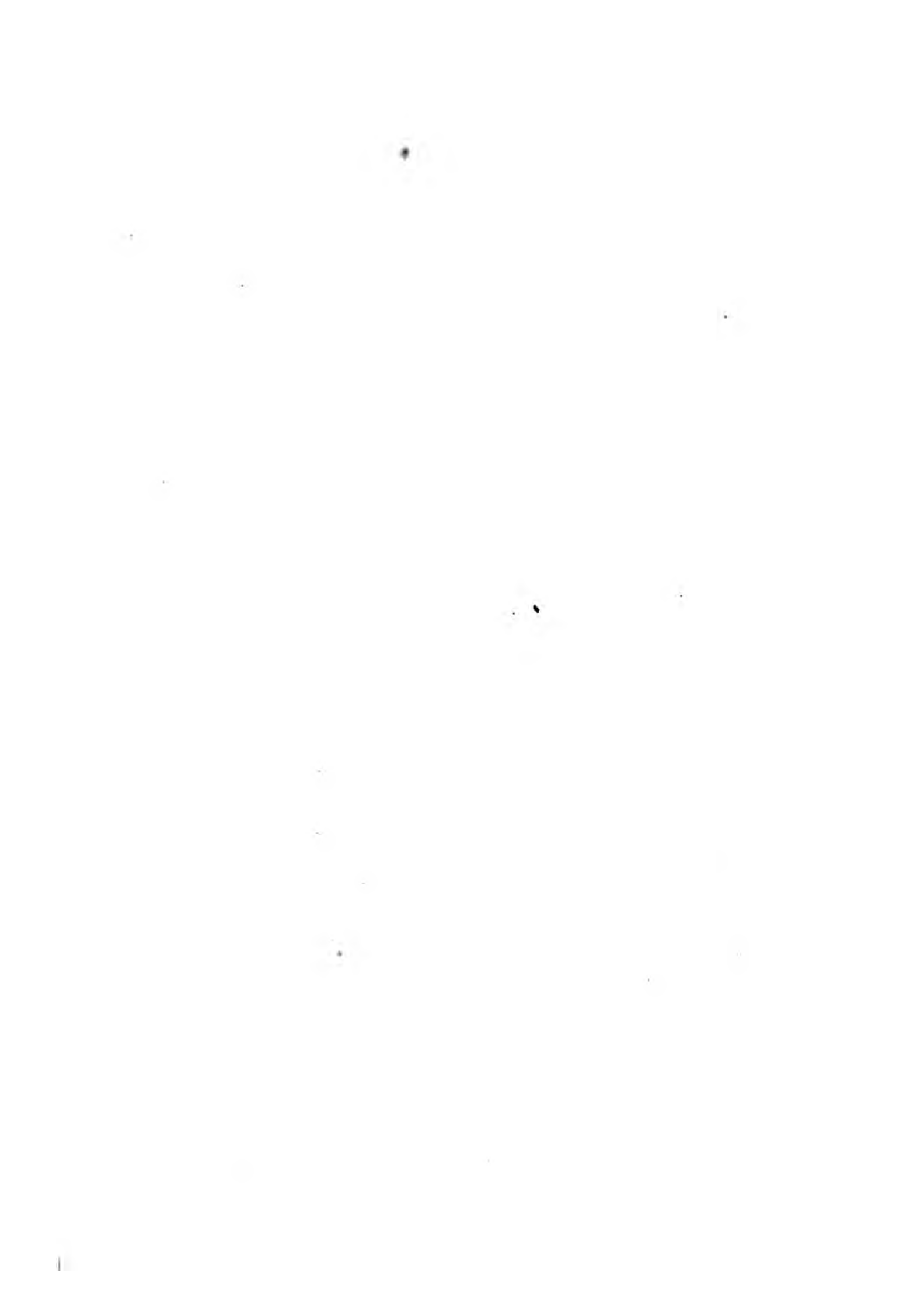
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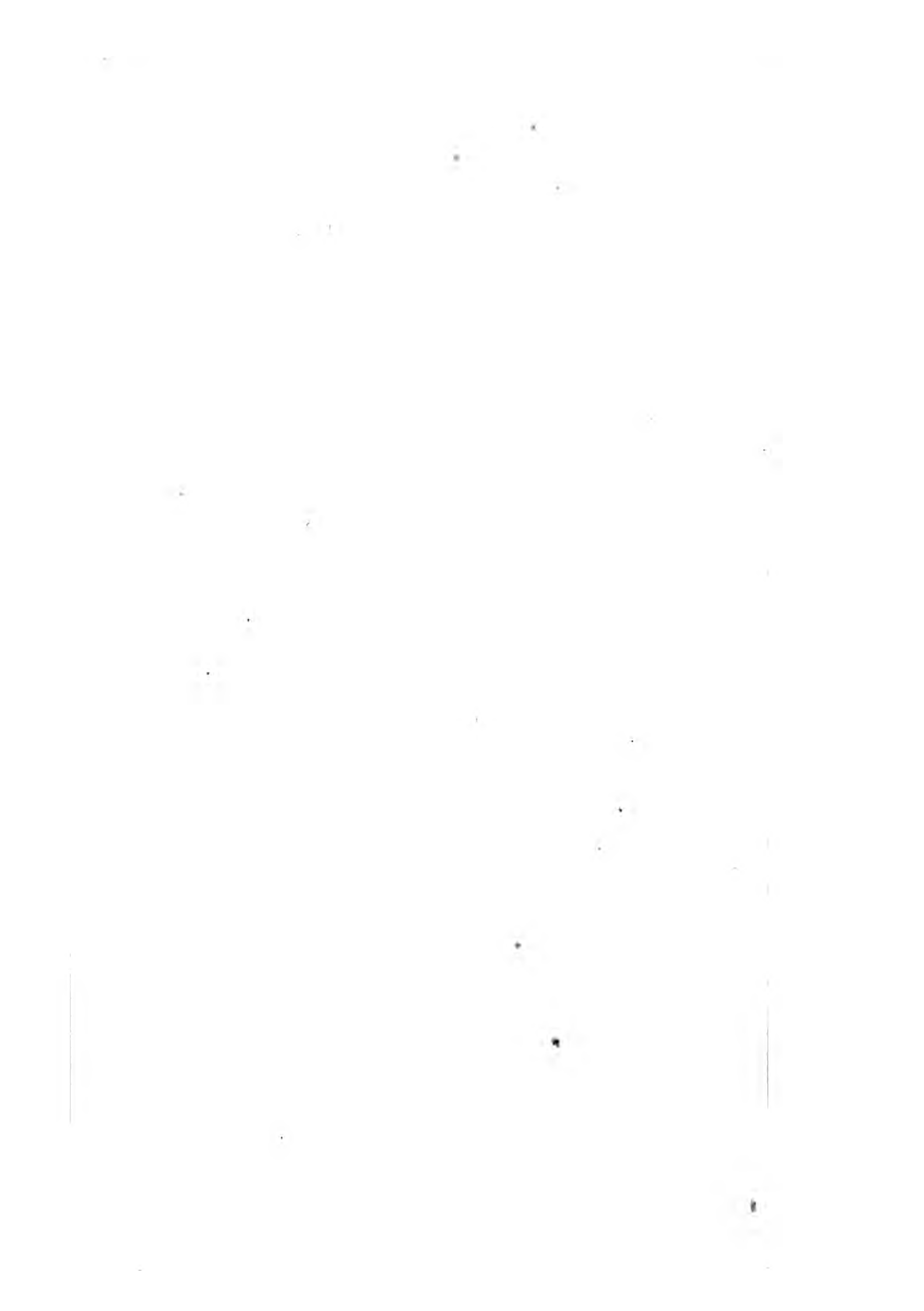


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THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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*In Five Volumes.*

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VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR  
LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,  
PATERNOSTER-RROW.

1827.



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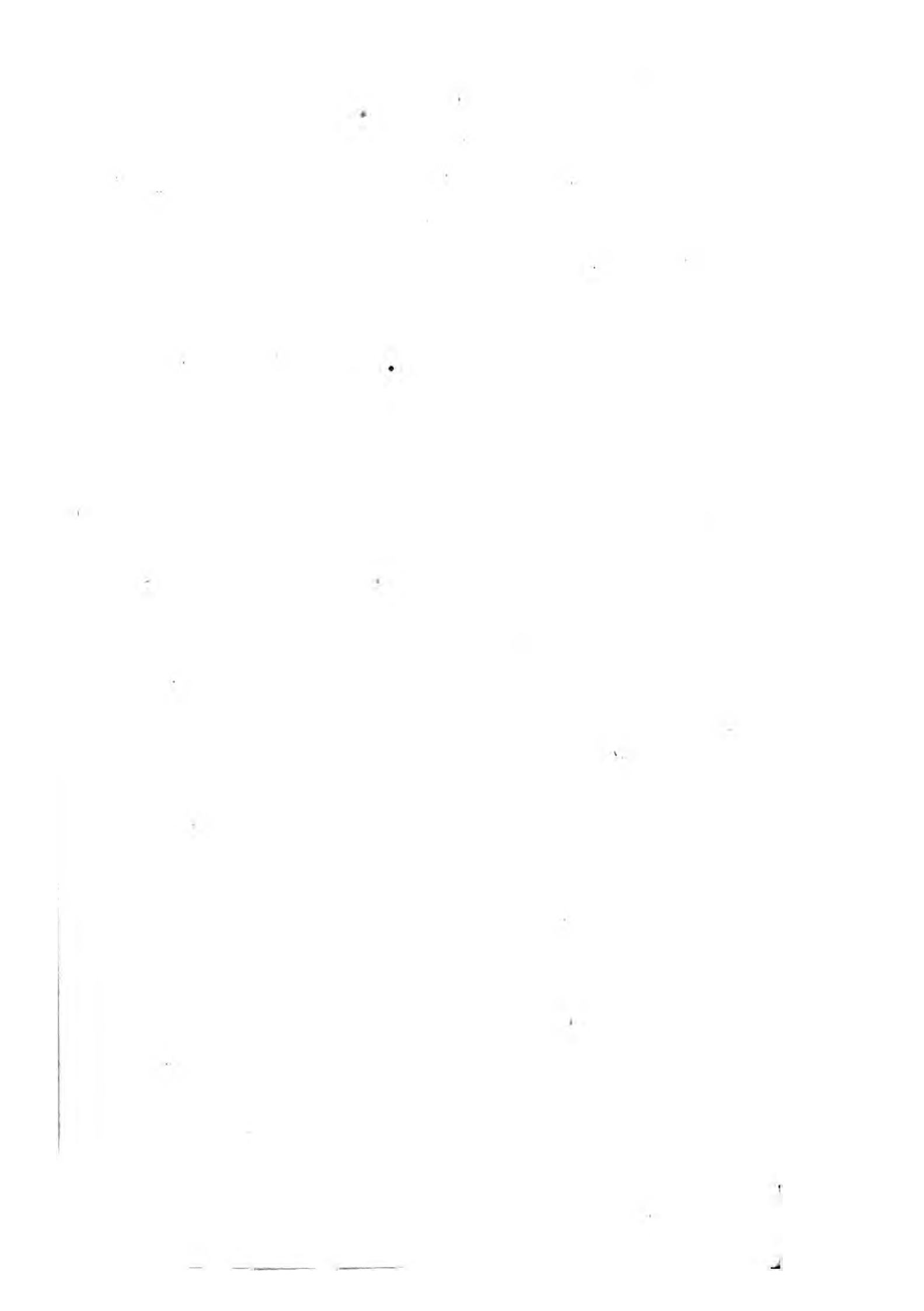
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**POEMS OF THE FANCY**

*CONTINUED.*

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### XIII.

#### A FLOWER GARDEN.

---

**T**ELL me, ye Zephyrs ! that unfold,  
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,  
Pinions that fanned the teeming mould  
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,  
Did only softly-stealing Hours  
There close the peaceful lives of flowers ?

Say, when the *moving* Creatures saw  
All kinds commingled without fear,  
Prevailed a like indulgent law  
For the still Growths that prosper here ?  
Did wanton Fawn and Kid forbear  
The half-blown Rose, the Lily spare ?

Or peeped they often from their beds  
And prematurely disappeared,  
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads  
A bosom to the Sun endeared?  
If such their harsh untimely doom,  
It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All Summer long the happy Eve  
Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind,  
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,  
From the next glance she casts, to find  
That love for little Things by Fate  
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian Fence is wound,  
So subtly is the eye beguiled  
It sees not nor suspects a Bound,  
No more than in some forest wild;  
Free as the light in semblance — crost  
Only by art in nature lost.

And, though the jealous turf refuse  
By random footsteps to be prest,  
And feeds on never-sullied dews,  
*Ye*, gentle breezes from the West,  
With all the ministers of Hope,  
Are tempted to this sunny slope !

And hither throngs of Birds resort ;  
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,  
Some, perched on stems of stately port  
That nod to welcome transient guests ;  
While Hare and Leveret, seen at play,  
*Appear* not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)  
This delicate Enclosure shows  
Of modest kindness, that would hide  
The firm protection she bestows ;  
Of manners, like its viewless fence,  
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse — her wing  
Abruptly spreading to depart,  
She left that farewell offering,  
Memento for some docile heart ;  
That may respect the good old Age  
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page ;  
And Truth would skim the flowery glade,  
Though entering but as Fancy's Shade.

## XIV.

## TO THE DAISY.

---

WITH little here to do or see  
Of things that in the great world be,  
Sweet Daisy ! oft I talk to thee,  
    For thou art worthy,  
Thou unassuming Common-place  
Of Nature, with that homely face,  
And yet with something of a grace,  
    Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease  
I sit, and play with similies,  
Loose types of Things through all degrees,  
    Thoughts of thy raising :  
And many a fond and idle name  
I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
As is the humour of the game,  
    While I am gazing.

A Nun demure, of lowly port ;  
Or sprightly Maiden, of Love's Court,  
In thy simplicity the sport  
    Of all temptations ;  
A Queen in crown of rubies drest ;  
A Starveling in a scanty vest ;  
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
    Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye  
Staring to threaten and defy,  
That thought comes next — and instantly  
    The freak is over,  
The shape will vanish, and behold  
A silver Shield with boss of gold,  
That spreads itself, some Faery bold  
    In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar ; —  
And then thou art a pretty Star ;  
Not quite so fair as many are  
    In heaven above thee !  
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ; —  
May peace come never to his nest,  
    Who shall reprove thee !

Sweet Flower ! for by that name at last,  
When all my reveries are past,  
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
    Sweet silent Creature !  
That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
My heart with gladness, and a share  
    Of thy meek nature !



## XV.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

---

BRIGHT flower, whose home is every where !  
A Pilgrim bold in Nature's care,  
And oft, the long year through, the heir  
    Of joy or sorrow,  
Methinks that there abides in thee  
Some concord with humanity,  
Given to no other Flower I see  
    The forest thorough !

And wherefore ? Man is soon deprest ;  
A thoughtless Thing ! who, once unblest,  
Does little on his memory rest,  
    Or on his reason ;  
But Thou would'st teach him how to find  
A shelter under every wind,  
A hope for times that are unkind  
    And every season.

## XVI.

TO A SKY-LARK.  

---

UP with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
Singing, singing,  
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,  
Lift me, guide me till I find  
That spot which seems so to thy mind !

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind ;  
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,  
And hope for higher raptures, when Life's day is done.

## XVII.

## TO A SEXTON.

---

LET thy wheel-barrow alone —  
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still  
In thy Bone-house bone on bone?  
'Tis already like a hill  
In a field of battle made,  
Where three thousand skulls are laid;  
— These died in peace each with the other,  
Father, Sister, Friend, and Brother.

Mark the spot to which I point!  
From this platform, eight feet square,  
Take not even a finger-joint:  
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.  
Here, alone, before thine eyes,  
Simon's sickly Daughter lies,  
From weakness now, and pain defended,  
Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride —  
How he glories, when he sees  
Roses, Lilies, side by side,  
Violets in families !  
By the heart of Man, his tears,  
By his hopes and by his fears,  
Thou, old Grey-beard ! art the Warden  
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,  
Let them all in quiet lie,  
Andrew there, and Susan here,  
Neighbours in mortality.  
And, should I live through sun and rain  
Seven widowed years without my Jane,  
O Sexton, do not then remove her,  
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover !

XVIII.

---

Who fancied what a pretty sight  
This Rock would be if edged around  
With living Snowdrops? circlet bright!  
How glorious to this Orchard-ground!  
Who loved the little Rock, and set  
Upon its head this Coronet?

Was it the humour of a Child?  
Or rather of some love-sick Maid,  
Whose brows, the day that she was styled  
The Shepherd Queen, were thus arrayed?  
Of Man mature, or Matron sage?  
Or Old-man toying with his age?

I asked — 'twas whispered, The device  
To each and all might well belong:  
It is the Spirit of Paradise  
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,  
That gives to all the self-same bent  
Where life is wise and innocent.

## XIX.

## SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW.

---

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains  
Roar down many a craggy steep,  
Yet they find among the mountains  
Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,  
Ere the storm its fury stills,  
Helmet-like themselves will fasten  
On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre  
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,  
Yet he has a home to enter  
In some nook of chosen ground.

If on windy days the Raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less she loves her haven  
In the bosom of the cliff.

Though the Sea-horse in the Ocean  
Own no dear domestic cave,  
Yet he slumbers — by the motion  
Rocked of many a gentle wave.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes  
Vagrant over Desert sands,  
Brooding on her eggs reposes  
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,  
Never nearer to the goal ;  
Night and day, I feel the trouble  
Of the Wanderer in my soul.

XX.

THE

SEVEN SISTERS;

OR,

THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE.

---

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,  
All Children of one Mother:  
I could not say in one short day  
What love they bore each other.  
A Garland of seven Lilies wrought!  
Seven Sisters that together dwell;  
But he, bold Knight as ever fought,  
Their Father, took of them no thought,  
He loved the Wars so well.  
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie!



Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,  
And from the shores of Erin,  
Across the wave, a Rover brave  
To Binnorie is steering :  
Right onward to the Scottish strand  
The gallant ship is borne ;  
The Warriors leap upon the land,  
And hark ! the Leader of the Band  
Hath blown his bugle horn.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Beside a Grotto of their own,  
With boughs above them closing,  
The Seven are laid, and in the shade  
They lie like Fawns reposing.  
But now, upstarting with affright  
At noise of Man and Steed,  
Away they fly to left, to right —  
Of your fair household, Father Knight,  
Methinks you take small heed !  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,  
And, over Hill and Hollow,  
With menace proud, and insult loud,  
The youthful Rovers follow.  
Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam :  
Enough for him to find  
The empty House when he comes home ;  
For us your yellow ringlets comb,  
For us be fair and kind !"  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Some close behind, some side by side,  
Like clouds in stormy weather,  
They run, and cry, "Nay let us die,  
And let us die together."  
A Lake was near ; the shore was steep ;  
There never foot had been ;  
They ran, and with a desperate leap  
Together plunged into the deep,  
Nor ever more were seen.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

The Stream that flows out of the Lake,  
As through the glen it rambles,  
Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,  
For those seven lovely Campbells.  
Seven little Islands, green and bare,  
Have risen from out the deep :  
The Fishers say, those Sisters fair  
By Faeries are all buried there,  
And there together sleep.  
Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
The Solitude of Binnorie.

## XXI.

## A FRAGMENT.

---

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills  
There is a spot that seems to lie  
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,  
And sacred to the sky.  
And in this smooth and open dell  
There is a tempest-stricken tree ;  
A corner-stone by lightning cut,  
The last stone of a cottage hut ;  
And in this dell you see  
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,  
The Shadow of a Danish Boy.(1)

In clouds above, the Lark is heard,  
But drops not here to earth for rest ;  
Within this lonesome nook the Bird  
Did never build her nest.  
No Beast, no Bird hath here his home ;  
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,  
Pass high above those fragrant bells  
To other flowers ; — to other dells  
Their burthens do they bear ;  
The Danish Boy walks here alone :  
The lovely dell is all his own.

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;  
He seems a Form of flesh and blood ;  
Nor piping Shepherd shall he be,  
Nor Herd-boy of the wood.  
A regal vest of fur he wears,  
In colour like a raven's wing ;  
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;  
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue  
As budding pines in Spring ;  
His helmet has a vernal grace,  
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;  
He rests the harp upon his knee ;  
And there, in a forgotten tongue,  
He warbles melody.  
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill  
He is the darling and the joy ;  
And often, when no cause appears,  
The mountain ponies prick their ears,  
— They hear the Danish Boy,  
While in the dell he sits alone  
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

There sits he : in his face you spy  
No trace of a ferocious air,  
Nor ever was a cloudless sky  
So steady or so fair.  
The lovely Danish Boy is blest  
And happy in his flowery cove :  
From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;  
And yet he warbles songs of war,  
That seem like songs of love,  
For calm and gentle is his mien ;  
Like a dead Boy he is serene.

## XXII.

THE  
PILGRIM'S DREAM;OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM.

---

A PILGRIM, when the summer day  
Had closed upon his weary way,  
A lodging begged beneath a castle's roof;  
But him the haughty Warder spurned;  
And from the gate the Pilgrim turned,  
To seek such covert as the field  
Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,  
Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along; and, pensively,  
Halting beneath a shady tree,  
Whose moss-grown root might serve for couch or seat,  
Fixed on a Star his upward eye;  
Then, from the tenant of the sky  
He turned, and watched with kindred look,  
A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,  
Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream  
Induced a soft and slumberous dream,  
A pregnant dream within whose shadowy bounds  
He recognised the earth-born Star,  
And *That* which glittered from afar ;  
And (strange to witness !) from the frame  
Of the ethereal Orb, there came  
Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humbler Light  
That now, when day was fled, and night  
Hushed the dark earth — fast closing weary eyes,  
A very Reptile could presume  
To show her taper in the gloom,  
As if in rivalry with One  
Who sate a Ruler on his throne  
Erected in the skies.

“ Exalted Star !” the Worm replied,  
“ Abate this unbecoming pride,  
Or with a less uneasy lustre shine ;  
Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays  
Are mastered by the breathing haze ;  
While neither mist, nor thickest cloud  
That shapes in Heaven its murky shroud,  
Hath power to injure mine.



But not for this do I aspire  
To match the spark of local fire,  
That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,  
With thy acknowledged glories ; — No !  
Yet, thus upbraided, I may shew  
What favours do attend me here,  
Till, like thyself, I disappear  
Before the purple dawn.”

When this in modest guise was said,  
Across the welkin seemed to spread  
A boding sound — for aught but sleep unfit !  
Hills quaked — the rivers backward ran —  
That Star, so proud of late, looked wan ;  
And reeled with visionary stir  
In the blue depth, like Lucifer  
Cast headlong to the pit !

Fire raged, — and when the spangled floor  
Of ancient ether was no more,  
New heavens succeeded, by the dream brought forth :  
And all the happy Souls that rode  
Transfigured through that fresh abode,  
Had heretofore, in humble trust,  
Shone meekly mid their native dust,  
The Glow-worms of the earth !

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice  
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice  
Of Him who slept upon the open lea :  
Waking at morn he murmured not ;  
And, till life's journey closed, the spot  
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,  
Where by that dream he had been cheered  
Beneath the shady tree.

## XXIII.

## HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS.

---

“ WHO but hails the sight with pleasure  
When the wings of geniús rise,  
Their ability to measure  
    With great enterprise ;  
But in man was ne'er such daring  
As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing  
His brave spirit with the war in  
    The stormy skies !

Mark him, how his power he uses,  
Lays it by, at will resumes !  
Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses  
    Clouds and utter glooms !  
There, he wheels in downward mazes ;  
Sunward now his flight he raises,  
Catches fire, as seems, and blazes  
    With uninjured plumes !” —

## ANSWER.

“ Stranger, 'tis no act of courage  
Which aloft thou dost discern ;  
No bold *bird* gone forth to forage  
Mid the tempest stern ;  
But such mockery as the Nations  
See, when public perturbations  
Lift men from their native stations,  
Like yon TUFT OF FERN ;

Such it is ; — the aspiring Creature  
Soaring on undaunted wing,  
(So you fancied) is by nature  
A dull helpless Thing,  
Dry and withered, light and yellow ; —  
*That* to be the tempest's fellow !  
Wait — and you shall see how hollow  
Its endeavouring !”

## XXIV.

## STRAY PLEASURES.

*“ — Pleasure is spread through the earth  
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.”*

---

By their floating Mill,  
That lies dead and still,  
Behold yon Prisoners three,  
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the Thames !  
The Platform is small, but gives room for them all ;  
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
To their Mill where it floats,  
To their House and their Mill tethered fast ;  
To the small wooden Isle where, their work to beguile,  
They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—  
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the Spires,  
All alive with the fires  
Of the Sun going down to his rest,  
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
They dance, — there are three, as jocund as free,  
While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
They themselves make the Reel,  
And their Music's a prey which they seize ;  
It plays not for them, — what matter ? 'tis theirs ;  
And if they had care, it has scattered their cares,  
While they dance, crying, " Long as ye please !"

They dance not for me,  
Yet mine is their glee !  
Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;  
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,  
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The Showers of the Spring

Rouse the Birds, and they sing ;

If the Wind do but stir for his proper delight,

Each Leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;

Each Wave, one and t'other, speeds after his brother ;

They are happy, for that is their right !

## XXV.

ON SEEING A

NEEDLECASE IN THE FORM OF A HARP,

THE WORK OF E. M. S.

---

FROWNS are on every Muse's face,  
Reproaches from their lips are sent,  
That mimickry should thus disgrace  
The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size !  
Needles for strings in apt gradation !  
Minerva's self would stigmatize  
The unclassic profanation.

Even her *own* Needle that subdued  
Arachne's rival spirit,  
Though wrought in Vulcan's happiest mood,  
Like station could not merit.



And this, too, from the Laureate's Child,  
A living Lord of melody !  
How will her Sire be reconciled  
To the refined indignity ?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,  
" Bard ! moderate your ire ;  
" Spirits of all degrees rejoice  
" In presence of the Lyre.

" The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,  
" Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,  
" Have shells to fit their tiny hands  
" And suit their slender lays.

" Some, still more delicate of ear,  
" Have lutes (believe my words)  
" Whose framework is of gossamer,  
" While sunbeams are the chords.

" Gay Sylphs this Miniature will court,  
" Made vocal by their brushing wings,  
" And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport  
" Around its polished strings ;

“ Whence strains to love-sick Maiden dear,  
“ While in her lonely Bower she tries  
“ To cheat the thought she cannot cheer,  
“ By fanciful embroideries.

“ Trust, angry Bard! a knowing Sprite,  
“ Nor think the Harp her lot deploras;  
“ Though mid the stars the Lyre shines bright,  
“ Love *stoops* as fondly as he soars.”

## XXVI.

## ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER,

ON BEING REMINDED, THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD,  
ON THAT DAY.

---

—— ———HAST thou then survived,  
Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,  
Meek Infant! among all forlornest things  
The most forlorn, one life of that bright Star,  
The second glory of the heavens? — Thou hast :  
Already hast survived that great decay ;  
That transformation through the wide earth felt,  
And by all nations. In that Being's sight  
From whom the Race of human kind proceed,  
A thousand years are but as yesterday ;  
And one day's narrow circuit is to him  
Not less capacious than a thousand years.  
But what is time? What outward glory? neither  
A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend  
Through "heaven's eternal year." — Yet hail to Thee,

Frail, feeble Monthling! — by that name, methinks,  
Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out  
Not idly. — Hadst thou been of Indian birth,  
Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,  
And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,  
Or to the churlish elements exposed  
On the blank plains, — the coldness of the night,  
Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face  
Of beauty, by the changing Moon adorned,  
Would, with imperious admonition, then  
Have scored thine age, and punctually timed  
Thine infant history, on the minds of those  
Whomight have wandered with thee. — Mother's love,  
Nor less than Mother's love in other breasts,  
Will, among us warm clad and warmly housed,  
Do for thee what the finger of the heavens  
Doth all too often harshly execute  
For thy unblest Coevals, amid wilds  
Where Fancy hath small liberty to grace  
The affections, to exalt them or refine ;  
And the maternal sympathy itself,  
Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie  
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.  
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !

Even now — to solemnize thy helpless state,  
And to enliven in the mind's regard  
Thy passive beauty — parallels have risen,  
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,  
Within the region of a Father's thoughts,  
Thee and thy Mate and Sister of the sky.  
And first ; — thy sinless progress, through a world  
By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,  
Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered clouds,  
Moving untouched in silver purity,  
And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom.  
Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :  
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn  
With brightness ! — leaving her to post along,  
And range about — disquieted in change,  
And still impatient of the shape she wears.  
Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe,  
That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now  
Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is thine ;  
Thou travell'st so contentedly, and sleep'st  
In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon  
Hath this conception, grateful to behold,  
Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er  
By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be

A mournful labour, while to her is given  
Hope — and a renovation without end.  
— That smile forbids the thought ; — for on thy face  
Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,  
To shoot and circulate ; — smiles have there been seen, —  
Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports  
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers  
Thy loneliness ; — or shall those smiles be called  
Feelers of love, — put forth as if to explore  
This untried world, and to prepare thy way  
Through a strait passage intricate and dim ?  
Such are they, — and the same are tokens, signs,  
Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,  
Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt ;  
And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own.



---

**POEMS**  
**OF THE IMAGINATION.**

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I.

---

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye Cliffs  
And islands of Winander ! — many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;  
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands  
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth  
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him.—And they would shout  
Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call,— with quivering peals,  
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud  
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild  
Of mirth and jocund din ! And, when it chanced  
That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his Mates, and died  
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.  
Fair is the spot, most beautiful the Vale  
Where he was born : the grassy Church-yard hangs  
Upon a slope above the village-school ;  
And through that Church-yard when my way has led  
At evening, I believe, that oftentimes  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute — looking at the grave in which he lies !

## II.

TO \_\_\_\_\_,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.  

---

INMATE of a mountain Dwelling,  
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed,  
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;  
Awed, delighted, and amazed !

Potent was the spell that bound thee  
Not unwilling to obey ;  
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,  
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo ! the dwindled woods and meadows !  
What a vast abyss is there !  
Lo ! the clouds, the solemn shadows,  
And the glistenings— heavenly fair !

And a record of commotion  
Which a thousand ridges yield ;  
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean  
Gleaming like a silver shield !

— Take thy flight ; — possess, inherit  
Alps or Andes — they are thine !  
With the morning's roseate Spirit,  
Sweep their length of snowy line ;

Or survey the bright dominions  
In the gorgeous colours drest,  
Flung from off the purple pinions,  
Evening spreads throughout the west !

Thine are all the choral fountains  
Warbling in each sparry vault  
Of the untrodden lunar mountains ;  
Listen to their songs ! — or halt,

To Niphate's top invited,  
Whither spiteful Satan steered ;  
Or descend where the ark alighted,  
When the green earth re-appeared ;

For the power of hills is on thee,  
As was witnessed through thine eye  
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee  
To confess their majesty !

## III.

TO THE CUCKOO.

---

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice .  
O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass  
Thy twofold shout I hear,  
That seems to fill the whole air's space,  
As loud far off as near.

Though babbling only, to the Vale,  
Of sunshine and of flowers,  
Thou bringest unto me a tale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, Darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No Bird : but an invisible Thing,  
A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my School-boy days  
I listened to ; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways  
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green ;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;  
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place ;  
That is fit home for Thee !

## IV.

## A NIGHT-PIECE.

---

———— THE sky is overcast  
With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,  
Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,  
A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,  
Checkering the ground — from rock, plant, tree, or tower.  
At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
Startles the pensive traveller while he treads  
His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
Bent earthwards; he looks up — the clouds are split  
Asunder, — and above his head he sees  
The clear Moon, and the glory of the heavens.  
There, in a black blue vault she sails along,  
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small  
And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss  
Drive as she drives; — how fast they wheel away,  
Yet vanish not! — the wind is in the tree,



But they are silent; — still they roll along  
Immeasurably distant ;— and the vault,  
Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,  
Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
At length the Vision closes ; and the mind,  
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

## WATER-FOWL.

---

“ Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions  
“ which these visitants sometimes perform, on a fine day to-  
“ wards the close of winter.”

*Extract from the Author's Book on the Lakes.*

---

MARK how the feathered tenants of the flood,  
With grace of motion that might scarcely seem  
Inferior to angelical, prolong  
Their curious pastime ! shaping in mid air  
(And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars  
High as the level of the mountain tops)  
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath,  
Their own domain ; — but ever, while intent  
On tracing and retracing that large round,  
Their jubilant activity evolves  
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
Upward and downward, progress intricate  
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
Their indefatigable flight. — 'Tis done —  
Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased ;  
But lo ! the vanished company again

Ascending ;— they approach — I hear their wings  
Faint, faint at first ; and then an eager sound  
Past in a moment — and as faint again !  
They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes ;  
They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
To shew them a fair image ;— 'tis themselves,  
Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,  
Painted more soft and fair as they descend  
Almost to touch ;— then up again aloft,  
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
As if they scorned both resting-place and rest !

## VL

## YEW-TREES.

---

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the midst  
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the Bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's Heaths ; or those that crossed the Sea  
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree ! — a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note  
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;  
Huge trunks ! — and each particular trunk a growth  
Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved, —  
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks

That threaten the profane ; — a pillared shade,  
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,  
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged  
Perennially — beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked  
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide — Fear and trembling Hope,  
Silence and Foresight — Death the Skeleton  
And Time the Shadow, — there to celebrate,  
As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship ; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

## VII.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF  
BLACK COMB.

---

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select :  
 For from the summit of BLACK COMB (dread name  
 Derived from clouds and storms !) the amplest range  
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen  
 That British ground commands : — low dusky tracts,  
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward ! Cambrian Hills  
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;  
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,  
 The hoary Peaks of Scotland that give birth  
 To Tiviot's Stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde ; —  
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth  
 Gigantic Mountains rough with crags ; beneath,  
 Right at the imperial Station's western base,  
 Main Ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched  
 Far into silent regions blue and pale ; —

And visibly engirding Mona's Isle  
That, as we left the Plain, before our sight  
Stood like a lofty Mount, uplifting slowly,  
(Above the convex of the watery globe)  
Into clear view the cultured fields that streak  
Her habitable shores ; but now appears  
A dwindled object, and submits to lie  
At the Spectator's feet. — Yon azure Ridge,  
Is it a perishable cloud? Or there  
Do we behold the frame of Erin's Coast?  
Land sometimes by the roving shepherd swain  
(Like the bright confines of another world)  
Not doubtfully perceived. — Look homeward now !  
In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene  
The spectacle, how pure ! — Of Nature's works,  
In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,  
A revelation infinite it seems ;  
Display august of man's inheritance,  
Of Britain's calm felicity and power.

Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland : its base covers a much greater extent of ground than any other mountain in these parts ; and, from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive view than any other point in Britain.

## VIII.

## NUTTING.

---

————— It seems a day,  
 (I speak of one from many singled out)  
 One of those heavenly days which cannot die ;  
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
 I left our Cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulder slung,  
 A nutting-crook in hand, and turned my steps  
 Towards the distant woods, a Figure quaint,  
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds  
 Which for that service had been husbanded,  
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame.  
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, — and, in truth,  
 More ragged than need was ! Among the woods,  
 And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my way  
 Until, at length, I came to one dear nook



Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
Of devastation, but the hazels rose  
Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung,  
A virgin scene ! — A little while I stood,  
Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
As joy delights in ; and, with wise restraint  
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
The banquet, — or beneath the trees I sate  
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played ;  
A temper known to those, who, after long  
And weary expectation, have been blest  
With sudden happiness beyond all hope. —  
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
The violets of five seasons re-appear  
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;  
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
For ever, — and I saw the sparkling foam,  
And with my cheek on one of those green stones  
That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,  
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep,  
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,  
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay  
Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,

The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,  
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
And merciless ravage; and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past,  
Even then, when from the bower I turned away  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees and the intruding sky. —  
Then, dearest Maiden! move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch — for there is a spirit in the woods.

IX.

---

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament ;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty ;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food ;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine ;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller betwixt life and death ;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command ;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of an angel light.

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art  
A Creature of a fiery heart : —  
These notes of thine — they pierce and pierce ;  
Tumultuous harmony and fierce !  
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine  
Had helped thee to a Valentine ;  
A song in mockery and despite  
Of shades, and dews, and silent Night ;  
And steady bliss, and all the loves  
Now sleeping in these peaceful Groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
His homely tale, this very day ;  
His voice was buried among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze :  
He did not cease ; but cooed — and cooed ;  
And somewhat pensively he wooed :  
He sang of love with quiet blending,  
Slow to begin, and never ending ;  
Of serious faith and inward glee ;  
That was the Song — the Song for me !

XI.

---

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the Fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

The floating Clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

The Stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where Rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy Dell."

Thus Nature spake — The work was done —  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

XII.

---

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;  
I had no human fears :  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;  
She neither hears nor sees,  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course  
With rocks and stones and trees !



## XIII.

## THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.

---

WHEN the Brothers reached the gateway,  
Eustace pointed with his lance  
To the Horn which there was hanging ;  
Horn of the inheritance.

Horn it was which none could sound,  
No one upon living ground,  
Save He who came as rightful Heir  
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from ages without record  
Had the House of Lucie born,  
Who of right had claimed the Lordship  
By the proof upon the Horn :  
Each at the appointed hour  
Tried the Horn, — it owned his power ;  
He was acknowledged : and the blast,  
Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
And to Hubert thus said he,  
“ What I speak this Horn shall witness  
For thy better memory.  
Hear, then, and neglect me not !  
At this time, and on this spot,  
The words are uttered from my heart,  
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

On good service we are going  
Life to risk by sea and land,  
In which course if Christ our Saviour  
Do my sinful soul demand,  
Hither come thou back straightway,  
Hubert, if alive that day ;  
Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
May have a living House still left in thee !”

“ Fear not,” quickly answered Hubert ;  
“ As I am thy Father’s son,  
What thou askest, noble Brother,  
With God’s favour shall be done.”  
So were both right well content :  
From the Castle forth they went.  
And at the head of their Array  
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies  
Were a line for valour famed)  
And where'er their strokes alighted,  
There the Saracens were tamed.  
Whence, then, could it come — the thought —  
By what evil spirit brought?  
Oh! can a brave Man wish to take  
His Brother's life, for Land's and Castle's sake?

“ Sir !” the Ruffians said to Hubert,  
“ Deep he lies in Jordan flood,”  
Stricken by this ill assurance,  
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.  
“ Take your earnings.” — Oh ! that I  
Could have *seen* my Brother die !  
It was a pang that vexed him then ;  
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace!  
Nor of him were tidings heard.  
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
Back again to England steered.  
To his Castle Hubert sped ;  
He has nothing now to dread.  
But silent and by stealth he came,  
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,  
Night or day, at even or morn ;  
For the sound was heard by no one  
Of the proclamation-horn.  
But bold Hubert lives in glee :  
Months and years went smilingly ;  
With plenty was his table spread ;  
And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had Sons and Daughters ;  
And, as good men do, he sate  
At his board by these surrounded,  
Flourishing in fair estate.  
And while thus in open day  
Once he sate, as old books say,  
A blast was uttered from the Horn,  
Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace !  
He is come to claim his right :  
Ancient Castle, Woods, and Mountains  
Hear the challenge with delight.  
Hubert ! though the blast be blown  
He is helpless and alone :  
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !  
And there he may be lodged, and thou be Lord

Speak! — astounded Hubert cannot ;  
And if power to speak he had,  
All are daunted, all the household  
Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
'Tis Sir Eustace ; if it be  
Living Man, it must be he !  
Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,  
And by a Postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of :  
To his Brother then he came,  
Made confession, asked forgiveness,  
Asked it by a Brother's name,  
And by all the saints in heaven ;  
And of Eustace was forgiven :  
Then in a Convent went to hide  
His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels  
Had preserved from Murderers' hands,  
And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
Lived with honour on his lands.  
Sons he had, saw Sons of theirs :  
And through ages, Heirs of Heirs,  
A long posterity renowned,  
Sounded the Horn which they alone could sound.

## XIV.

## GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

A TRUE STORY.

---

OH! what's the matter? what's the matter?  
What is 't that ails young Harry Gill?  
That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,  
Good duffle gray, and flannel fine;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
At night, at morning, and at noon,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
And who so stout of limb as he ?  
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover ;  
His voice was like the voice of three.  
Old Goody Blake was old and poor ;  
Ill fed she was, and thinly clad ;  
And any man who passed her door  
Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling :  
And then her three hours' work at night,  
Alas ! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
It would not pay for candle-light.  
Remote from sheltering village green,  
On a hill's northern side she dwelt,  
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,  
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
Will often live in one small cottage ;  
But she, poor Woman ! housed alone.  
'Twas well enough when summer came,  
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,  
Then at her door the *canty* Dame  
Would sit, as any linnet gay.

But when the ice our streams did fether,  
Oh ! then how her old bones would shake,  
You would have said, if you had met her,  
'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.  
Her evenings then were dull and dead !  
Sad case it was, as you may think,  
For very cold to go to bed ;  
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her ! whene'er in winter  
The winds at night had made a rout ;  
And scattered many a lusty splinter  
And many a rotten bough about.  
Yet never had she, well or sick,  
As every man who knew her says,  
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,  
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
And made her poor old bones to ache,  
Could any thing be more alluring  
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake ?  
And, now and then, it must be said,  
When her old bones were cold and chill,  
She left her fire, or left her bed,  
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.



Now Harry he had long suspected  
This trespass of old Goody Blake ;  
And vowed that she should be detected,  
And he on her would vengeance take.  
And oft from his warm fire he 'd go,  
And to the fields his road would take ;  
And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
Thus looking out did Harry stand :  
The moon was full and shining clearly,  
And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
— He hears a noise — he 's all awake —  
Again? — on tip-toe down the hill  
He softly creeps — 'Tis Goody Blake,  
She 's at the hedge of Harry Gill.

Right glad was he when he beheld her :  
Stick after stick did Goody pull :  
He stood behind a bush of elder,  
Till she had filled her apron full.  
When with her load she turned about,  
The by-way back again to take ;  
He started forward with a shout,  
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
And by the arm he held her fast,  
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
And cried, "I've caught you then at last!"  
Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed  
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
While Harry held her by the arm —  
"God! who art never out of hearing,  
O may he never more be warm!"  
The cold, cold moon above her head,  
Thus on her knees did Goody pray,  
Young Harry heard what she had said:  
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow  
That he was cold and very chill:  
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,  
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
That day he wore a riding-coat,  
But not a whit the warmer he:  
Another was on Thursday brought,  
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter, —  
And blankets were about him pinned ;  
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,  
Like a loose casement in the wind.  
And Harry's flesh it fell away ;  
And all who see him say, 'tis plain,  
That, live as long as live he may,  
He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,  
A-bed or up, to young or old ;  
But ever to himself he mutters,  
“ Poor Harry Gill is very cold.”  
A-bed or up, by night or day ;  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill.

XV.

---

I WANDERED lonely as a Cloud  
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden Daffodils;  
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee: —  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude,  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the Daffodils.

## XVI.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

---

At the corner of Wood-street, when daylight appears,  
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for  
three years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard  
In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees  
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;  
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;  
And a single small Cottage, a nest like a dove's,  
The one only Dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her Heart is in heaven: but they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,  
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

## XVII.

POWER OF MUSIC.  

---

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! — yes, Faith may grow  
bold,  
And take to herself all the wonders of old ; —  
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same  
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its  
name.

His station is there ; — and he works on the crowd,  
He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;  
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim —  
Was aught ever heard like his Fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !  
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ;  
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;  
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer opprest.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the  
night,

So he, where he stands, is a centre of light ;

It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,

And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste —

What matter ! he's caught — and his time runs to  
waste —

The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the  
fret,

And the half-breathless Lamplighter — he's in the net !

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;

The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store ; —

If a Thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;

She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees !

He stands, backed by the Wall ; — he abates not  
his din ;

His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,

From the Old and the Young, from the Poorest ;

and there !

The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.



O blest are the Hearers, and proud be the Hand  
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a  
Band ;

I am glad for him, blind as he is ! — all the while  
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a  
smile.

That tall Man, a Giant in bulk and in height,  
Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;  
Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh, not he !  
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his Crutch; like a  
Tower  
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour! —  
That Mother, whose Spirit in fetters is bound,  
While she dandles the babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, Coaches and Chariots ! roar on like a stream ;  
Here are twenty souls happy as Souls in a dream :  
They are deaf to your murmurs — they care not for  
you,  
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

## XVIII.

STAR-GAZERS.  

---

WHAT crowd is this? what have we here! we must  
not pass it by;

A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky:  
Long is it as a Barber's Pole, or Mast of little Boat,  
Some little Pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's  
waters float.

The Show-man chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's  
busy Square;

And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are  
blue and fair;

Calm, though impatient, is the Crowd; each stands  
ready with the fee,

Impatient till his moment comes — what an insight  
must it be!

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause? Shall  
thy Implement have blame,  
A Boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and is put to  
shame?  
Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault?  
Their eyes, or minds? or, finally, is this resplendent  
Vault?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have  
here?  
Or gives a thing but small delight that never can be  
dear?  
The silver Moon with all her Vales, and Hills of  
mightiest fame,  
Doth she betray us when they're seen? or are they  
but a name?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and strong,  
And bounty never yields so much but it seems to  
do her wrong?  
Or is it, that when human Souls a journey long  
have had,  
And are returned into themselves, they cannot but  
be sad?

Or must we be constrained to think that these Spec-  
tators rude,  
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the mul-  
titude,  
Have souls which never yet have risen, and there-  
fore prostrate lie?  
No, no, this cannot be — Men thirst for power and  
majesty !

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful  
mind employ  
Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave and  
steady joy,  
That doth reject all shew of pride, admits no out-  
ward sign,  
Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine !

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who pry  
and pore  
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than  
before :  
One after One they take their turns, nor have I one  
espied  
That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

## XIX.

## THE HAUNTED TREE.

TO \_\_\_\_\_.

---

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun  
 His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming less  
 To overshadow than multiply his beams  
 By soft reflection — grateful to the sky,  
 To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our human sense  
 Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy  
 More ample than the time-dismantled Oak  
 Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which now, attired  
 In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords  
 Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use  
 Was fashioned; whether by the hand of Art,  
 That Eastern Sultan, amid flowers enwrought  
 On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs  
 In languor; or, by Nature, for repose  
 Of panting Wood-nymph wearied of the chase.  
 O Lady! fairer in thy Poet's sight  
 Than fairest spiritual Creature of the groves,

Approach — and, thus invited, crown with rest  
The noon-tide hour: — though truly some there are  
Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid  
This venerable Tree; for, when the wind  
Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking sound  
(Above the general roar of woods and crags)  
Distinctly heard from far — a doleful note!  
As if (so Grecian shepherds would have deemed)  
The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed  
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbelieved,  
By ruder fancy, that a troubled Ghost  
Haunts this old Trunk; lamenting deeds of which  
The flowery ground is conscious. But no wind  
Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;  
Not even a zephyr stirs; — the obnoxious Tree  
Is mute, — and, in his silence, would look down,  
O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,  
On thy reclining form with more delight  
Than his Coevals, in the sheltered vale  
Seem to participate, the whilst they view  
Their own far-stretching arms and leafy heads  
Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,  
That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying stream!

## XX.

## WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF  
BROTHER'S WATER.

---

THE cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun ;  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest ;  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising ;  
There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated  
The Snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill ;  
The Plough-boy is whooping — anon — anon :  
There's joy in the mountains ;  
There's life in the fountains ;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing ;  
The rain is over and gone !



## XXI.

## G I P S I E S.

YET are they here the same unbroken knot  
Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !

Men, Women, Children, yea the frame  
Of the whole Spectacle the same !

Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,  
Now deep and red, the colouring of night ;

That on their Gipsy-faces falls,  
Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.

— Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours, are gone while I  
Have been a Traveller under open sky,

Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
Yet as I left I find them here !

The weary Sun betook himself to rest.

— Then issued Vesper from the fulgent West,  
Outshining like a visible God  
The glorious path in which he trod.

And now, ascending, after one dark hour  
And one night's diminution of her power,  
Behold the mighty Moon ! this way  
She looks as if at them — but they  
Regard not her : — oh better wrong and strife,  
(By nature transient) than such torpid life ;  
Life which the very stars reprove  
As on their silent tasks they move !  
Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !  
In scorn I speak not ; — they are what their birth  
And breeding suffers them to be ;  
Wild outcasts of society !

## XXII.

B E G G A R S.  

---

BEFORE me as the Wanderer stood,  
No bonnet screened her from the heat ;  
Nor claimed she service from the hood  
Of a blue mantle, to her feet  
Depending with a graceful flow ;  
Only she wore a cap pure as unsullied snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown ;  
Haughty as if her eye had seen  
Its own light to a distance thrown,  
She towered — fit person for a Queen,  
To head those ancient Amazonian files ;  
Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian Isles.

Her suit no faltering scruples checked ;  
Forth did she pour, in current free,  
Tales that could challenge no respect  
But from a blind credulity ;  
And yet a boon I gave her ; for the Creature  
Was beautiful to see — a weed of glorious feature !

I left her, and pursued my way ;  
And soon before me did espy  
A pair of little Boys at play,  
Chasing a crimson butterfly ;  
The Taller followed with his hat in hand,  
Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of the land.

The Other wore a rimless crown  
With leaves of laurel stuck about ;  
And, while both followed up and down,  
Each whooping with a merry shout,  
In their fraternal features I could trace  
Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face.

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit  
For finest tasks of earth or air :  
Wings let them have, and they might flit  
Precursors of Aurora's Car,  
Scattering fresh flowers ; though happier far, I ween,  
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level green.

They dart across my path — but lo,  
Each ready with a plaintive whine !  
Said I, “ not half an hour ago  
Your Mother has had alms of mine.”

“ That cannot be,” one answered — “ she is dead:” —  
I looked reproof — they saw — but neither hung his head.

“ She has been dead, Sir, many a day.” —

“ Sweet Boys ! Heaven hears that rash reply ;

It was your Mother, as I say !”

And, in the twinkling of an eye,

“ Come ! come !” cried one, and without more ado,

Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants flew !

## XXIII.

## SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING,

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

---

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?  
 For whose free range the dædal earth  
 Was filled with animated toys,  
 And implements of frolic mirth;  
 With tools for ready wit to guide;  
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,  
 More fresh, more bright, than Princes wear;  
 For what one moment flung aside,  
 Another could repair;  
 What good or evil have they seen  
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,  
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?  
 I ask — but all is dark between !

Spirits of beauty and of grace !  
 Associates in that eager chase ;  
 Ye, by a course to nature true,  
 The sterner judgment can subdue ;

And waken a relenting smile  
When she encounters fraud or guile ;  
And sometimes ye can charm away  
The inward mischief, or allay,  
Ye, who within the blameless mind  
Your favourite seat of empire find !

They met me in a genial hour,  
When universal nature breathed  
As with the breath of one sweet flower, —  
A time to overrule the power  
Of discontent, and check the birth  
Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,  
The most familiar bane of life  
Since parting Innocence bequeathed  
Mortality to Earth !  
Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,  
Sailed through the sky — the brooks ran clear ;  
The lambs from rock to rock were bounding ;  
With songs the budded groves resounding ;  
And to my heart is still endeared  
The faith with which it then was cheered ;  
The faith which saw that gladsome pair  
Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.

Or, if such thoughts must needs deceive,  
Kind Spirits ! may we not believe  
That they, so happy and so fair,  
Through your sweet influence, and the care  
Of pitying Heaven, at least were free  
From touch of *deadly* injury?  
Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,  
For mercy and immortal bloom!



## XXIV.

R U T H.

---

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
Her Father took another Mate ;  
And Ruth, not seven years old,  
A slighted Child, at her own will  
Went wandering over dale and hill,  
In thoughtless freedom bold.

And she had made a Pipe of straw,  
And from that oaten Pipe could draw  
All sounds of winds and floods ;  
Had built a Bower upon the green,  
As if she from her birth had been  
An Infant of the woods.

Beneath her Father's roof, alone  
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;  
Herself her own delight ;

Pleased with herself, nor sad nor gay ;  
And passing thus the live-long day,  
She grew to Woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore —  
A military Casque he wore,  
With splendid feathers drest ;  
He brought them from the Cherokees ;  
The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :  
Ah no ! he spake the English tongue,  
And bore a Soldier's name ;  
And, when America was free  
From battle and from jeopardy,  
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek  
In finest tones the Youth could speak.  
— While he was yet a Boy,  
The moon, the glory of the sun,  
And streams that murmur as they run,  
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth ! I guess  
The panther in the wilderness  
Was not so fair as he ;  
And, when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought ;  
And with him many tales he brought  
Of pleasure and of fear ;  
Such tales as told to any Maid  
By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
Were perilous to hear.

He told of Girls — a happy rout !  
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,  
Their pleasant Indian Town,  
To gather strawberries all day long ;  
Returning with a choral song  
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants divine and strange  
That every hour their blossoms change,  
Ten thousand lovely hues !

With budding, fading, faded flowers  
They stand the wonder of the bowers  
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the Magnolia, spread  
High as a cloud, high over head!  
The Cypress and her spire;  
— Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem  
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
And many an endless, endless lake,  
With all its fairy crowds  
Of islands, that together lie  
As quietly as spots of sky  
Among the evening clouds.

And then he said, “ How sweet it were  
A fisher or a hunter there,  
A gardener in the shade,  
Still wandering with an easy mind  
To build a household fire, and find  
A home in every glade !

“ What days and what sweet years ! Ah me !  
Our life were life indeed, with thee  
So passed in quiet bliss,  
And all the while,” said he, “ to know  
That we were in a world of woe,  
On such an earth as this !”

And then he sometimes interwove  
Dear thoughts about a Father's love :  
“ For there,” said he, “ are spun  
Around the heart such tender ties,  
That our own children to our eyes  
Are dearer than the sun.

“ Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me  
My helpmate in the woods to be,  
Our shed at night to rear ;  
Or run my own adopted Bride,  
A sylvan Huntress at my side,  
And drive the flying deer !

“ Beloved Ruth !” — No more he said.  
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed  
A solitary tear :

She thought again — and did agree  
With him to sail across the sea,  
And drive the flying deer.

“ And now, as fitting is and right,  
We in the Church our faith will plight,  
A Husband and a Wife.”  
Even so they did ; and I may say  
That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
Delighted all the while to think  
That on those lonesome floods,  
And green savannahs, she should share  
His board with lawful joy, and bear  
His name in the wild woods.

But as you have before been told,  
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
And with his dancing crest  
So beautiful, through savage lands  
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands  
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky,  
Might well be dangerous food  
For him, a Youth to whom was given  
So much of earth — so much of Heaven,  
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those Climes he found  
Irregular in sight or sound  
Did to his mind impart  
A kindred impulse, seemed allied  
To his own powers, and justified  
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,  
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
Fair trees and lovely flowers ;  
The breezes their own languor lent ;  
The stars had feelings, which they sent  
Into those gorgeous bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween  
That sometimes there did intervene  
Pure hopes of high intent :

For passions linked to forms so fair  
And stately, needs must have their share  
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw  
With men to whom no better law  
Nor better life was known;  
Deliberately, and undeceived,  
Those wild men's vices he received,  
And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame  
Were thus impaired, and he became  
The slave of low desires:  
A Man who without self-control  
Would seek what the degraded soul  
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight  
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night  
Had loved her, night and morn:  
What could he less than love a Maid  
Whose heart with so much nature played?  
So kind and so forlorn!



Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,  
“ O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;  
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,  
Encompassed me on every side  
When first, in confidence and pride,  
I crossed the Atlantic Main.

“ It was a fresh and glorious world,  
A banner bright that was unfurled  
Before me suddenly :  
I looked upon those hills and plains,  
And seemed as if let loose from chains  
To live at liberty.

“ But wherefore speak of this ? For now,  
Sweet Ruth ! with thee, I know not how,  
I feel my spirit burn —  
Even as the east when day comes forth ;  
And, to the west, and south, and north,  
The morning doth return.”

Full soon that purer mind was gone ;  
No hope, no wish remained, not one, —  
They stirred him now no more ;

New objects did new pleasure give,  
And once again he wished to live  
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
They for the voyage were prepared,  
And went to the sea-shore ;  
But, when they thither came, the Youth  
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth  
Could never find him more.

“ God help thee, Ruth !” — Such pains she had,  
That she in half a year was mad,  
And in a prison housed ;  
And there she sang tumultuous songs,  
By recollection of her wrongs,  
To fearful passion roused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,  
Nor pastimes of the May,  
— They all were with her in her cell ;  
And a wild brook with ‘cheerful knell  
Did o’er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,  
There came a respite to her pain ;  
She from her prison fled ;  
But of the Vagrant none took thought ;  
And where it liked her best she sought  
Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again :  
The master-current of her brain  
Ran permanent and free ;  
And, coming to the banks of Tone,  
There did she rest ; and dwell alone  
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools  
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
And airs that gently stir  
The vernal leaves, she loved them still,  
Nor ever taxed them with the ill  
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies ;  
But, till the warmth of summer skies  
And summer days is gone,

(And all do in this tale agree)  
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !  
And Ruth will, long before her day,  
Be broken down and old :  
Sore aches she needs must have ! but less  
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,  
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is pressed by want of food,  
She from her dwelling in the wood  
Repairs to a road-side ;  
And there she begs at one steep place,  
Where up and down with easy pace  
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten Pipe of hers is mute,  
Or thrown away ; but with a flute  
Her loneliness she cheers :  
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
At evening in his homeward walk  
The Quantock Woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
Setting her little water-mills  
By spouts and fountains wild —  
Such small machinery as she turned  
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,  
Ill-fated Ruth ! in hallowed mould  
Thy corpse shall buried be ;  
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
And all the congregation sing  
A Christian psalm for thee.

## XXV.

LAODAMIA.

---

“WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;  
And from the infernal Gods, mid shades forlorn,  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:  
Celestial pity I again implore;—  
Restore him to my sight — great Jove, restore!”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands;  
While, like the Sun emerging from a Cloud,  
Her countenance brightens — and her eye expands;  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? — O joy!  
What doth she look on? — whom doth she behold?  
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?  
His vital presence — his corporeal mould?  
It is — if sense deceive her not — ’tis He!  
And a God leads him — winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with his wand  
 That calms all fear, “Such grace hath crowned thy prayer,  
 Laodamía! that at Jove’s command  
 Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air :  
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours’ space ;  
 Accept the gift, behold him face to face !”

Forthsprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp ;  
 Again that consummation she essayed ;  
 But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
 As often as that eager grasp was made.  
 The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,  
 And re-assume his place before her sight.

“Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!  
 Confirm, I pray, the Vision with thy voice :  
 This is our Palace, — yonder is thy throne :  
 Speak, and the floor thou tread’st on will rejoice.  
 Not to appal me have the Gods bestowed  
 This precious boon, — and blest a sad Abode.”

“Great Jove, Laodamía! doth not leave  
 His gifts imperfect : — Spectre though I be,  
 I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;  
 But in reward of thy fidelity.  
 And something, also did my worth obtain ;  
 For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

“ Thou know’st, the Delphic oracle foretold  
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand  
Should die ; but me the threat could not withhold :  
A generous cause a Victim did demand ;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;  
A self-devoted Chief — by Hector slain.”

“ Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best !  
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest  
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore ;  
Thou found’st — and I forgive thee — here thou art —  
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

“ But thou, though capable of sternest deed,  
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed  
That thou should’st cheat the malice of the grave ;  
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

“ No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow this :  
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side !  
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss  
To me, this day, a second time thy bride !”  
Jove frowned in heaven ; the conscious Parcæ threw  
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.



“ This visage tells thee that my doom is past :  
Know, virtue were not virtue if the joys  
Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. — Earth destroys  
Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains :  
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic pains.

“ Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control  
Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul ;  
A fervent, not ungovernable love.  
Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn  
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn —”

“ Ah, wherefore ? — Did not Hercules by force  
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb  
Alcestis, a reanimated Corse,  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom ?  
Medea’s spells dispersed the weight of years,  
And Æson stood a Youth ’mid youthful peers.

“ The Gods to us are merciful — and they  
Yet further may relent : for mightier far  
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway  
Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,  
And though his favourite seat be feeble Woman’s breast.

“ But if thou go'st, I follow — ” “ Peace ! ” he said —  
She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered ;  
The ghastly colour from his lips had fled ;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared  
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,  
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;  
No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —  
The past unsighed for, and the future sure ;  
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there  
In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,  
An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;  
Climes which the Sun, who sheds the brightest day  
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned  
That privilege by virtue. — “ Ill,” said he,  
“ The end of man's existence I discerned,  
Who from ignoble games and revelry  
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight  
While tears were thy best pastime, — day and night :

And while my youthful peers, before my eyes,  
(Each Hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprize  
By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;  
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

The wished-for wind was given :—I then revolved  
The oracle, upon the silent sea ;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be  
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—  
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife !  
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal life, —  
The paths which we had trod — these fountains — flowers ;  
My new-planned Cities, and unfinished Towers.

But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,  
“ Behold they tremble ! — haughty their array,  
Yet of their number no one dares to die ? ” —  
In soul I swept the indignity away :  
Old frailties then recurred : — but lofty thought,  
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak  
In reason, in self-government too slow ;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek  
Our blest re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sympathized ;  
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend  
Towards a higher object. — Love was given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end :  
For this the passion to excess was driven —  
That self might be annulled ; her bondage prove  
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes re-appears !  
Round the dear Shade she would have clung — ’tis vain :  
The hours are past — too brief had they been years ;  
And him no mortal effort can detain :  
Swift, tow’rd the realms that know not earthly day,  
He through the portal takes his silent way,  
And on the palace floor a lifeless corse she lay.

By no weak pity might the Gods be moved ;  
She who thus perished not without the crime  
Of Lovers that in Reason’s spite have loved,  
Was doomed to wander in a grosser clime,  
Apart from happy Ghosts — that gather flowers  
Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.

Yet tears to human suffering are due ;  
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown  
 Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,  
 As fondly he believes. — Upon the side  
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
 From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;  
 And ever, when such stature they had gained  
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,  
 The trees' tall summits withered at the sight ;  
 A constant interchange of growth and blight !\*

\* For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's Natural History, lib. 16. cap. 44. ; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus (page 115.) see the Iphigenia in Aulis of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

————— His Laodamia

It comes. —————.

## XXVI.

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HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;  
Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,  
And she came far from over the main.  
She has a Baby on her arm,  
Or else she were alone ;  
And underneath the hay-stack warm,  
And on the green-wood stone,  
She talked and sung the woods among,  
And it was in the English tongue.

“ Sweet Babe ! they say that I am mad,  
But nay, my heart is far too glad ;  
And I am happy when I sing  
Full many a sad and doleful thing :  
Then, lovely Baby, do not fear !  
I pray thee have no fear of me,  
But, safe as in a cradle, here,  
My lovely Baby ! thou shalt be :  
To thee I know too much I owe ;  
I cannot work thee any woe.

A fire was once within my brain ;  
And in my head a dull, dull pain ;  
And fiendish faces one, two, three,  
Hung at my breast, and pulled at me.  
But then there came a sight of joy :  
It came at once to do me good ;  
I waked, and saw my little Boy,  
My little Boy of flesh and blood ;  
Oh joy for me that sight to see !  
For he was here, and only he.

Suck, little Babe, oh suck again !  
It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;  
Thy lips I feel them, Baby ! they  
Draw from my heart the pain away.  
Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;  
It loosens something at my chest ;  
About that tight and deadly band  
I feel thy little fingers prest.  
The breeze I see is in the tree ;  
It comes to cool my Babe and me.

Oh ! love me, love me, little Boy !  
Thou art thy Mother's only joy ;  
And do not dread the waves below,  
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;  
The high crag cannot work me harm,  
Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;  
The Babe I carry on my arm,  
He saves for me my precious soul :  
Then happy lie, for blest am I ;  
Without me my sweet Babe would die.



Then do not fear, my Boy ! for thee  
Bold as a lion I will be ;  
And I will always be thy guide,  
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.  
I'll build an Indian bower ; I know  
The leaves that make the softest bed :  
And, if from me thou wilt not go,  
But still be true till I am dead,  
My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing  
As merry as the birds in spring.

Thy Father cares not for my breast,  
'Tis thine, sweet Baby, there to rest ;  
'Tis all thine own ! — and, if its hue  
Be changed, that was so fair to view,  
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !  
My beauty, little Child, is flown ;  
But thou wilt live with me in love,  
And what if my poor cheek be brown ?  
'Tis well for me, thou canst not see  
How pale and wan it else would be.

Dread not their taunts, my little life ;  
I am thy Father's wedded Wife ;  
And underneath the spreading tree  
We two will live in honesty.  
If his sweet Boy he could forsake,  
With me he never would have stayed :  
From him no harm my Babe can take,  
But he, poor Man ! is wretched made ;  
And every day we two will pray  
For him that's gone and far away.

I'll teach my Boy the sweetest things ;  
I'll teach him how the owlet sings.  
My little Babe ! thy lips are still,  
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.  
— Where art thou gone, my own dear Child ?  
What wicked looks are those I see ?  
Alas ! alas ! that look so wild,  
It never, never came from me :  
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
Then I must be for ever sad.

Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !  
For I thy own dear Mother am.  
My love for thee has well been tried :  
I've sought thy Father far and wide.  
I know the poisons of the shade,  
I know the earth-nuts fit for food ;  
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid ;  
We'll find thy Father in the wood.  
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !  
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

## XXVII.

## RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

---

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods ;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters ;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops ;— on the moors  
The Hare is running races in her mirth ;  
And with her feet she from the plashy earth  
Raises a mist ; that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor ;  
I saw the Hare that raced about with joy ;  
I heard the woods, and distant waters, roar ;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a Boy :  
The pleasant season did my heart employ :  
My old remembrances went from me wholly ;  
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy !

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might  
Of joy in minds that can no farther go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low,  
To me that morning did it happen so ;  
And fears, and fancies, thick upon me came ;  
Dim sadness — and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor  
    could name.

I heard the Sky-lark warbling in the sky ;  
And I bethought me of the playful Hare :  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;  
Even as these blissful Creatures do I fare ;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;  
But there may come another day to me —  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,  
As if life's business were a summer mood ;  
As if all needful things would come unsought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;  
But how can He expect that others should  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call  
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;  
Of Him who walked in glory and in joy  
Following his plough, along the mountain-side :  
By our own spirits are we deified :  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;  
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befel, that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,  
Beside a Pool bare to the eye of Heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares :  
The oldest Man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

As a huge Stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come, and whence ;  
So that it seems a thing endued with sense :  
Like a Sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf  
Of rock or sand repositeth, there to sun itself ;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,  
Nor all asleep — in his extreme old age :  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propped, his body, limbs, and face,  
Upon a long grey Staff of shaven wood :  
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
Motionless as a Cloud the Old Man stood ;  
That heareth not the loud winds when they call ;  
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the Pond  
Stirred with his Staff, and fixedly did look  
Upon the muddy water, which he conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book :  
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
“ This morning gives us promise of a glorious day.”

A gentle answer did the Old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew :  
And him with further words I thus bespake,  
“ What occupation do you there pursue ?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you.”  
He answered, while a flash of mild surprise  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance drest ;  
Choice word, and measured phrase ; above the reach  
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and Man their dues.



He told, that to these waters he had come  
 To gather Leeches, being old and poor :  
 Employment hazardous and wearisome !  
 And he had many hardships to endure :  
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;  
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;  
 And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The Old Man still stood talking by my side ;  
 But now his voice to me was like a stream  
 Scarce heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;  
 And the whole Body of the Man did seem  
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;  
 Or like a man from some far region sent,  
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;  
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;  
 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;  
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
 — Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,  
 My question eagerly did I renew,  
 “ How is it that you live, and what is it you do ?

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;  
 And said, that, gathering Leeches, far and wide  
 He travelled; stirring thus about his feet  
 The waters of the Pools where they abide.  
 " Once I could meet with them on every side ;  
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;  
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
 The Old Man's shape, and speech, all troubled me :  
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
 About the weary moors continually,  
 Wandering about alone and silently.  
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,  
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,  
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,  
 But stately in the main ; and when he ended,  
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find  
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.  
 " God," said I, " be my help and stay secure ;  
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!"

## XXVIII.

THE THORN.  

---

“ THERE is a Thorn — it looks so old,  
In truth, you ’d find it hard to say  
How it could ever have been young,  
It looks so old and gray.  
Not higher than a two years’ child  
It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;  
No leaves it has, no thorny points ;  
It is a mass of knotted joints,  
A wretched thing forlorn.  
It stands erect, and like a stone  
With lichens it is overgrown.

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,  
With lichens to the very top,  
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
A melancholy crop :  
Up from the earth these mosses creep,  
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round  
So close, you 'd say that they were bent  
With plain and manifest intent  
To drag it to the ground ;  
And all had joined in one endeavour  
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

High on a mountain's highest ridge,  
Where oft the stormy winter gale  
Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds  
It sweeps from vale to vale ;  
Not five yards from the mountain path,  
This Thorn you on your left espy ;  
And to the left, three yards beyond,  
You see a little muddy Pond  
Of water — never dry ;  
Though but of compass small, and bare  
To thirsty suns and parching air.

And, close beside this aged Thorn,  
There is a fresh and lovely sight,  
A beauteous heap, a Hill of moss,  
Just half a foot in height.

All lovely colours there you see,  
All colours that were ever seen ;  
And mossy net-work too is there,  
As if by hand of lady fair  
The work had woven been ;  
And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
So deep is their vermilion dye.

Ah me ! what lovely tints are there !  
Of olive green and scarlet bright,  
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
Green, red, and pearly white.  
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,  
Which close beside the Thorn you see,  
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
Is like an infant's grave in size,  
As like as like can be :  
But never, never any where,  
An infant's grave was half so fair.

Now would you see this aged Thorn,  
This Pond, and beauteous Hill of moss,  
You must take care and choose your time  
The mountain when to cross,  
For oft there sits between the Heap  
So like an infant's grave in size,  
And that same Pond of which I spoke,  
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,  
And to herself she cries,  
' Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

At all times of the day and night  
This wretched Woman thither goes ;  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows ;  
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits  
When the blue daylight 's in the skies,  
And when the whirlwind 's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
' Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! '”

“ Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,  
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,  
Thus to the dreary mountain-top  
Does this poor Woman go?  
And why sits she beside the Thorn  
When the blue daylight's in the sky,  
Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And wherefore does she cry? —  
Oh wherefore? wherefore? tell me why  
Does she repeat that doleful cry?”

“ I cannot tell; I wish I could;  
For the true reason no one knows:  
But would you gladly view the spot,  
The spot to which she goes;  
The hillock like an infant's grave,  
The Pond — and Thorn, so old and gray;  
Pass by her door — 'tis seldom shut —  
And, if you see her in her hut,  
Then to the spot away! —  
I never heard of such as dare  
Approach the spot when she is there.”

“ But wherefore to the mountain-top  
Can this unhappy Woman go,  
Whatever star is in the skies,  
Whatever wind may blow ?”

“ ’Tis known, that twenty years are passed  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave with a maiden’s true good will  
Her company to Stephen Hill ;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
While friends and kindred all approved  
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

And they had fixed the wedding day,  
The morning that must wed them both ;  
But Stephen to another Maid  
Had sworn another oath ;  
And, with this other Maid, to church  
Unthinking Stephen went —  
Poor Martha ! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent ;  
A Fire was kindled in her breast,  
Which might not burn itself to rest.



They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
Alas ! her lamentable state  
Even to a careless eye was plain ;  
She was with child, and she was mad ;  
Yet often she was sober sad  
From her exceeding pain.  
O guilty Father, — would that death  
Had saved him from that breach of faith !

Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child !  
Sad case, as you may think, for one  
Who had a brain so wild !  
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,  
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen  
Held that the unborn Infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought  
Her senses back again :  
And when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

More know I not, I wish I did,  
And it should all be told to you ;  
For what became of this poor Child  
No Mortal ever knew ;  
Nay — if a Child to her was born  
No earthly tongue could ever tell ;  
And if 'twas born alive or dead,  
Far less could this with proof be said ;  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb.

And all that winter, when at night  
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,  
'Twas worth your while, though in the dark,  
The churchyard path to seek :  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain-head :  
Some plainly living voices were ;  
And others, I've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead ;  
I cannot think, whate'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray.

But that she goes to this old Thorn,  
The Thorn which I described to you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak,  
I will be sworn is true.

For one day with my telescope,  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,  
I climbed the mountain's height :  
A storm came on, and I could see  
No object higher than my knee.

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain ;  
No screen, no fence could I discover ;  
And then the wind ! in faith, it was  
A wind full ten times over.  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag, — and off I ran,  
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain ;  
And, as I am a man,  
Instead of jutting crag, I found  
A Woman seated on the ground.

I did not speak — I saw her face ;  
Her face ! — it was enough for me ;  
I turned about and heard her cry,  
‘ Oh misery ! oh misery !’  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will go ;  
And, when the little breezes make  
The waters of the Pond to shake,  
As all the country know,  
She shudders, and you hear her cry,  
‘ Oh misery ! oh misery ! ’ ”

“ But what ’s the Thorn ? and what the Pond ?  
And what the Hill of moss to her ?  
And what, the creeping breeze that comes  
The little Pond to stir ? ”  
“ I cannot tell ; but some will say  
She hanged her Baby on the tree ;  
Some say she drowned it in the Pond,  
Which is a little step beyond :  
But all and each agree,  
The little Babe was buried there,  
Beneath that Hill of moss so fair.

I've heard, the moss is spotted red  
With drops of that poor infant's blood.  
But kill a new-born infant thus,  
I do not think she could!  
Some say, if to the Pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view,  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you;  
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain  
The baby looks at you again.

And some had sworn an oath that she  
Should be to public justice brought;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have sought.  
It might not be — the Hill of moss  
Before their eyes began to stir!  
And for full fifty yards around,  
The grass — it shook upon the ground!  
Yet all do still aver  
The little Babe is buried there,  
Beneath that Hill of moss so fair,

I cannot tell how this may be :  
But plain it is, the Thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss, that strive  
To drag it to the ground ;  
And this I know, full many a time,  
When she was on the mountain high,  
By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and bright,  
That I have heard her cry,  
‘ Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! ’ ”

## XXIX.

## HART-LEAP WELL.

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Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

---

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor  
With the slow motion of a summer's cloud ;  
He turned aside towards a Vassal's door,  
And "Bring another horse !" he cried aloud.

"Another Horse !" — That shout the Vassal heard,  
And saddled his best Steed, a comely gray ;  
Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third  
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing Courser's eyes ;  
The Horse and Horseman are a happy pair ;  
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,  
That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;  
But Horse and Man are vanished, one and all ;  
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
Calls to the few tired Dogs that yet remain :  
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,  
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on  
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;  
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,  
The Dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?  
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?  
— This Chase it looks not like an earthly Chase ;  
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.



The poor Hart toils along the mountain side ;  
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,  
Nor will I mention by what death he died ;  
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting then, he leaned against a thorn ;  
He had no follower, Dog, nor Man, nor Boy :  
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,  
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,  
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;  
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;  
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched :  
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,  
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched  
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,  
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)  
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,  
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill — (it was at least  
Nine roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found  
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast  
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, “Till now  
Such sight was never seen by living eyes :  
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,  
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

I'll build a Pleasure-house upon this spot,  
And a small Arbour, made for rural joy ;  
'Twill be the Traveller's shed, the Pilgrim's cot,  
A place of love for Damsels that are coy.

A cunning Artist will I have to frame  
A basin for that Fountain in the dell !  
And they who do make mention of the same,  
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises known,  
Another monument shall here be raised ;  
Three several Pillars, each a rough-hewn Stone,  
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

And, in the summer-time when days are long,  
I will come hither with my Paramour ;  
And with the Dancers and the Minstrel's song  
We will make merry in that pleasant Bower.

Till the foundations of the mountains fail  
My Mansion with its Arbour shall endure ; —  
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,  
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure !”

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone-dead,  
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.  
— Soon did the Knight perform what he had said,  
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,  
A Cup of stone received the living Well ;  
Three Pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,  
And built a House of Pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall  
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined, —  
Which soon composed a little sylvan Hall,  
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer-days were long,  
Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ;  
And with the Dancers and the Minstrel's song  
Made merriment within that pleasant Bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,  
And his bones lie in his paternal vale. —  
But there is matter for a second rhyme,  
And I to this would add another tale.

## PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade :  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :  
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,  
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell  
Three Aspens at three corners of a square ;  
And one, not four yards distant, near a Well.

What this imported I could ill divine :  
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,  
I saw three Pillars standing in a line,  
The last Stone Pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were gray, with neither arms nor head ;  
Half-wasted the square Mound of tawny green ;  
So that you just might say, as then I said,  
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill both far and near,  
More doleful place did never eye survey;  
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,  
And Nature herē were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,  
When one, who was in Shepherd's garb attired,  
Came up the Hollow : — Him did I accost,  
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told  
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.  
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in times of old !  
But something ails it now ; the spot is curst.

You see these lifeless Stumps of aspen wood —  
Some say that they are beeches, others elms —  
These were the Bower ; and here a mansion stood,  
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

The Arbour does its own condition tell ;  
You see the Stones, the Fountain, and the Stream ;  
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well  
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,  
Will wet his lips within that Cup of stone ;  
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,  
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

Some say that here a murder has been done,  
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,  
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,  
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

What thoughts must through the Creature's brain  
    have past !  
Even from the topmost Stone, upon the Steep,  
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—  
— O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;  
And in my simple mind we cannot tell  
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,  
And come and make his death-bed near the Well.

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,  
Lulled by this Fountain in the summer-tide ;  
This water was perhaps the first he drank  
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

In April here beneath the scented thorn  
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;  
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born  
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;  
The sun on drearier Hollow never shone ;  
So will it be, as I have often said,  
Till Trees, and Stones, and Fountain, all are gone.”

“ Gray-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;  
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :  
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;  
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

The Being, that is in the clouds and air,  
That is in the green leaves among the groves,  
Maintains a deep and reverential care  
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

The Pleasure-house is dust : — behind, before,  
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;  
But Nature, in due course of time, once more  
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.



She leaves these objects to a slow decay,  
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;  
But, at the coming of the milder day,  
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shews, and what conceals,  
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

## XXX.

## SONG

AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,  
UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEPHERD,  
TO THE ESTATES AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS.

---

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,  
And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song.—  
The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
A festal Strain that hath been silent long.

“ From Town to Town, from Tower to Tower,  
The Red Rose is a gladsome Flower.  
Her thirty years of Winter past,  
The Red Rose is revived at last ;  
She lifts her head for endless spring,  
For everlasting blossoming :  
Both Roses flourish, Red and White.  
In love and sisterly delight

The two that were at strife are blended,  
And all old troubles now are ended. —  
Joy! joy to both! but most to her  
Who is the Flower of Lancaster!  
Behold her how She smiles to-day  
On this great throng, this bright array!  
Fair greeting doth she send to all  
From every corner of the Hall;  
But, chiefly, from above the Board  
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,  
A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield;  
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.  
Not long the Avenger was withstood —  
Earth helped him with the cry of blood:  
St. George was for us, and the might  
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.  
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,  
We loudest in the faithful North:  
Our Fields rejoice, our Mountains ring,  
Our Streams proclaim a welcoming;  
Our Strong-abodes and Castles see  
The glory of their loyalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour —  
Though she is but a lonely Tower !  
To vacancy and silence left ;  
Of all her guardian sons bereft —  
Knight, Squire, or Yeoman, Page or Groom ;  
We have them at the Feast of Brough'm.  
How glad Pendragon — though the sleep  
Of years be on her ! — She shall reap  
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing  
As in a dream her own renewing.  
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem  
Beside her little humble Stream ;  
And she that keepeth watch and ward  
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;  
They both are happy at this hour,  
Though each is but a lonely Tower : —  
But here is perfect joy and pride  
For one fair House by Emont's side,  
This day distinguished without peer  
To see her Master and to cheer ;  
Him, and his Lady Mother dear !

Oh ! it was a time forlorn  
When the Fatherless was born —

Give her wings that she may fly,  
Or she sees her Infant die !  
Swords that are with slaughter wild  
Hunt the Mother and the Child.  
Who will take them from the light ?  
— Yonder is a Man in sight —  
Yonder is a House — but where ?  
No, they must not enter there.  
To the Caves, and to the Brooks,  
To the Clouds of Heaven she looks ;  
She is speechless, but her eyes  
Pray in ghostly agonies.  
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
Maid and Mother undefiled,  
Save a Mother and her Child !

Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd Boy ?  
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass  
Light as the wind along the grass.  
Can this be He who hither came  
In secret, like a smothered flame ?  
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
For shelter, and a poor Man's bread !

God loves the Child ; and God hath willed  
That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
The Lady's words, when forced away,  
The last she to her Babe did say,  
“ My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,  
For lowly Shepherd's life is best !”

Alas ! when evil men are strong  
No life is good, no pleasure long.  
The Boy must part from Mosedale's Groves,  
And leave Blencathara's rugged Coves,  
And quit the Flowers that Summer brings  
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs ;  
Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
— Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !  
Hear it, good Man, old in days !  
Thou Tree of covert and of rest  
For this young Bird that is distress ;  
Among thy branches safe he lay,  
And he was free to sport and play,  
When Falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant Harp, that sings of fear  
And heaviness in Clifford's ear !  
I said, when evil Men are strong,  
No life is good, no pleasure long,  
A weak and cowardly untruth !  
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
And thankful through a weary time,  
That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
— Again he wanders forth at will,  
And tends a Flock from hill to hill :  
His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen  
Such garb with such a noble mien ;  
Among the Shepherd-grooms no Mate  
Hath he, a Child of strength and state !  
Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee,  
And a cheerful company,  
That learned of him submissive ways ;  
And comforted his private days.  
To his side the Fallow-deer  
Came, and rested without fear ;  
The Eagle, Lord of land and sea,  
Stooped down to pay him fealty ;  
And both the undying Fish that swim  
Through Bowscale-Tarn did wait on him,

The pair were Servants of his eye  
In their immortality ;  
They moved about in open sight,  
To and fro, for his delight.  
He knew the Rocks which Angels haunt  
On the Mountains visitant ;  
He hath kenned them taking wing :  
And the Caves where Faeries sing  
He hath entered ; and been told  
By Voices how Men lived of old.  
Among the Heavens his eye can see  
Face of thing that is to be ;  
And, if Men report him right,  
He could whisper words of might.  
— Now another day is come,  
Fitter hope, and nobler doom :  
He hath thrown aside his Crook,  
And hath buried deep his Book ;  
Armour rusting in his Halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls ; —  
“ Quell the Scot,” exclaims the Lance —  
Bear me to the heart of France,  
Is the longing of the Shield —  
Tell thy name, thou trembling Field ;



Field of death, where'er thou be,  
Groan thou with our victory !  
Happy day, and mighty hour,  
When our Shepherd, in his power,  
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
To his Ancestors restored,  
Like a re-appearing Star,  
Like a glory from afar,  
First shall head the Flock of War !”

Alas ! the fervent Harper did not know  
That for a tranquil Soul the Lay was framed,  
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,  
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor Men lie ;  
His daily Teachers had been Woods and Rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage Virtue of the Race,  
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :  
Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place  
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the Vales, and every cottage hearth ;  
The Shepherd Lord was honoured more and more :  
And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
“ The Good Lord Clifford ” was the name he bore.

XXXI.

---

YES, it was the mountain Echo,  
Solitary, clear, profound,  
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply  
To a babbling wanderer sent;  
Like her ordinary cry,  
Like — but oh how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?  
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!  
Slaves of Folly, Love, or Strife,  
Voices of two different Natures?

Have not We too? — yes, we have  
Answers, and we know not whence;  
Echoes from beyond the grave,  
Recognized intelligence?

Such rebounds our inward ear  
Often catches from afar; —  
Giddy Mortals! hold them dear;  
For of God, — of God they are.

## XXXII.

TO A SKY-LARK.

---

ETHEREAL Minstrel ! Pilgrim of the sky !  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?  
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?  
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,  
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring Warbler ! that love-prompted strain,  
( 'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond )  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain :  
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing  
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the Nightingale her shady wood ;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine ;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood  
Of harmony, with rapture more divine ;  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home !

XXXIII.

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It is no Spirit who from Heaven hath flown,  
And is descending on his embassy ;  
Nor Traveller gone from Earth the Heavens to espy !  
'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glittering crown,  
First admonition that the sun is down,  
For yet it is broad daylight ! clouds pass by ;  
A few are near him still — and now the sky,  
He hath it to himself — 'tis all his own.  
O most ambitious Star ! thy Presence brought  
A startling recollection to my mind  
Of the distinguished few among mankind,  
Who dare to step beyond their natural race,  
As thou seem'st now to do : — nor was a thought  
Denied — that even I might one day trace  
Some ground not mine ; and, strong her strength above,  
My Soul, an Apparition in the place,  
Tread there, with steps that no one shall reprove ?

## XXXIV.

## FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS COMMENCEMENT.\*

REPRINTED FROM "THE FRIEND."

---

OH ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !  
 For mighty were the Auxiliars, which then stood  
 Upon our side, we who were strong in love !  
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
 But to be young was very heaven ! — Oh ! times,  
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
 Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
 The attraction of a country in Romance !  
 When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,  
 When most intent on making of herself

\* This, and the Extract, Vol. I. page 44. and the first Piece of this Class, are from the unpublished Poem of which some account is given in the Preface to the EXCURSION.

A prime Enchantress — to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her name !  
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,  
The beauty wore of promise — that which sets  
(To take an image which was felt no doubt  
Among the bowers of paradise itself)  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.  
What Temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively Natures rapt away !  
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,  
The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty and strength  
Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had stirred  
Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
As if they had within some lurking right  
To wield it ; — they, too, who of gentle mood  
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these  
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,  
And in the region of their peaceful selves ; —  
Now was it that *both* found, the Meek and Lofty  
Did both find helpers to their heart's desire,  
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish, —

Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia, — subterraneous Fields, —  
Or some secreted Island, Heaven knows where !  
But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us, — the place where in the end  
We find our happiness, or not at all !



## XXXV.

O D E.

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

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## 1.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,  
A deep delight the bosom thrills,  
Oft as I pass along the fork  
Of these fraternal hills :  
Where, save the rugged road, we find  
No appanage of human kind ;  
Nor hint of man, if stone or rock  
Seem not his handy-work to mock  
By something cognizably shaped ;  
Mockery — or model roughly hewn,  
And left as if by earthquake strewn,  
Or from the Flood escaped : —  
Altars for Druid service fit ;  
(But where no fire was ever lit,  
Unless the glow-worm to the skies  
Thence offer nightly sacrifice ;)  
Wrinkled Egyptian monument ;  
Green moss-grown tower ; or hoary tent ;  
Tents of a camp that never shall be raised ;  
On which four thousand years have gazed !

## 2.

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes !  
Ye snow-white lambs that trip  
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props  
Of restless ownership !  
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall  
To feed the insatiate Prodigal !  
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,  
All that the fertile valley shields ;  
Wages of folly — baits of crime, —  
Of life's uneasy game the stake,  
Playthings that keep the eyes awake  
Of drowsy, dotard Time ; —  
O care ! O guilt ! — O vales and plains,  
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,  
A Genius dwells, that can subdue  
At once all memory of You, —  
Most potent when mists veil the sky,  
Mists that distort and magnify ;  
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies !

## 3.

List to those shriller notes ! — *that* march  
Perchance was on the blast,  
When, through this Height's inverted arch,  
Rome's earliest legion passed !  
— They saw, adventurously impelled,  
And older eyes than theirs beheld,  
This block — and yon, whose Church-like frame  
Gives to the savage Pass its name.  
Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide  
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,  
Not seldom may the hour return  
When thou shalt be my Guide ;  
And I (as often we find cause,  
When life is at a weary pause,  
And we have panted up the hill  
Of duty with reluctant will)  
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,  
For the rich bounties of Constraint ;  
Whence oft invigorating transports flow  
That Choice lacked courage to bestow !

## 4.

My Soul was grateful for delight  
That wore a threatening brow ;  
A veil is lifted — can she slight  
The scene that opens now ?  
Though habitation none appear,  
The greenness tells, man must be there ;  
The shelter — that the perspective  
Is of the clime in which we live ;  
Where Toil pursues his daily round ;  
Where Pity sheds sweet tears, and Love,  
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,  
Inflicts his tender wound.  
— Who comes not hither ne'er shall know  
How beautiful the world below ;  
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps  
The brook adown the rocky steeps.  
Farewell, thou desolate Domain !  
Hope, pointing to the cultured Plain,  
Carols like a shepherd boy ;  
And who is she ? — Can that be Joy !

Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,  
Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;  
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,  
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,  
“Whate’er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,  
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion fair !”

## XXXVI.

## EVENING ODE,

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOUR  
AND BEAUTY.

---

## 1.

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment ;  
But 'tis endued with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see —  
What is ? — ah no, but what *can* be !  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove ;  
Or, ranged like stars along some sovereign height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,  
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimier transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle — the gleam —  
The shadow — and the peace supreme !

## 2.

No sound is uttered, — but a deep  
And solemn harmony pervades  
The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
And penetrates the glades.  
Far-distant images draw nigh,  
Called forth by wondrous potency  
Of beamy radiance, that imbues  
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !  
In vision exquisitely clear,  
Herds range along the mountain side ;  
And glistening antlers are descried ;  
And gilded flocks appear.  
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve !  
But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,  
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
That this magnificence is wholly thine !  
— From worlds not quickened by the sun  
A portion of the gift is won ;  
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread  
On ground which British shepherds tread !

## 3.

And, if there be whom broken ties  
Afflict, or injuries assail,  
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
Present a glorious scale,  
Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
To stop — no record hath told where !  
And tempting fancy to ascend,  
And with immortal Spirits blend !  
— Wings at my shoulder seem to play ;  
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze  
On those bright steps that heaven-ward raise  
Their practicable way.  
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,  
And see to what fair countries ye are bound !  
And if some Traveller, weary of his road,  
Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground,  
Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;  
And wake him with such gentle heed  
As may attune his soul to meet the dower  
Bestowed on this transcendent hour !



## 4.

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
Were wont to stream before my eye,  
Where'er it wandered in the morn  
Of blissful infancy.  
This glimpse of glory, why renewed?  
Nay, rather speak with gratitude;  
For, if a vestige of those gleams  
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.  
Dread Power! whom peace and calmness serve  
No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
If aught unworthy be my choice,  
From THEE if I would swerve,  
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light  
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;  
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight  
Appears to shine, by miracle restored!  
My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
Rejoices in a second birth;  
— 'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;  
And night approaches with her shades.

*Note.* — The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described, at the commencement of the third stanza of this Ode, as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze; — in the present instance, by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode, entitled "Intimations of Immortality," at the conclusion of the fourth volume, pervade the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

## XXXVII.

## LINES,

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING  
THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR.

JULY 13, 1798.

---

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs  
With a sweet inland murmur.\* — Once again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose  
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view  
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,  
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,

\* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above  
Tintern.

Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves  
Among the woods and copses, nor disturb  
The wild green landscape. Once again I see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines  
Of sportive wood run wild ; these pastoral farms,  
Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke  
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !  
With some uncertain notice, as might seem,  
Of vagrant Dwellers in the houseless woods,  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous Forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration : — feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts

Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,  
To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened : — that serene and blessed mood,  
In which the affections gently lead us on, —  
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul :  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,  
In darkness, and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,  
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,  
How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,  
With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,  
The picture of the mind revives again :  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts  
That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first  
I came among these hills ; when like a roe  
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led : more like a man  
Flying from something that he dreads, than one  
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then  
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone by,)  
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite : a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, or any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,  
And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts  
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,  
Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes  
The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still  
A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty world

Of eye and ear, both what they half create \*,  
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognize  
In nature and the language of the sense,  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul  
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,  
If I were not thus taught, should I the more  
Suffer my genial spirits to decay :  
For thou art with me, here, upon the banks  
Of this fair river ; thou, my dearest Friend,  
My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catch  
The language of my former heart, and read  
My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while  
May I behold in thee what I was once,  
My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,  
Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy : for she can so inform

\* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young, the exact expression of which I cannot recollect.

---

The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;  
And let the misty mountain winds be free  
To blow against thee : and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,  
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts  
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance,  
If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams  
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget



That on the banks of this delightful stream  
We stood together; and that I, so long  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came,  
Unwearied in that service: rather say  
With warmer love, oh! with far deeper zeal  
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,  
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me  
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

---

PETER BELL,

A TALE.

What's in a *Name*?

\* \* \* \* \*

Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar!

---



TO

ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. P. L.

&c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority*; — for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or, rather, to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the Literature of my Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it, may laudably be

made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man, who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

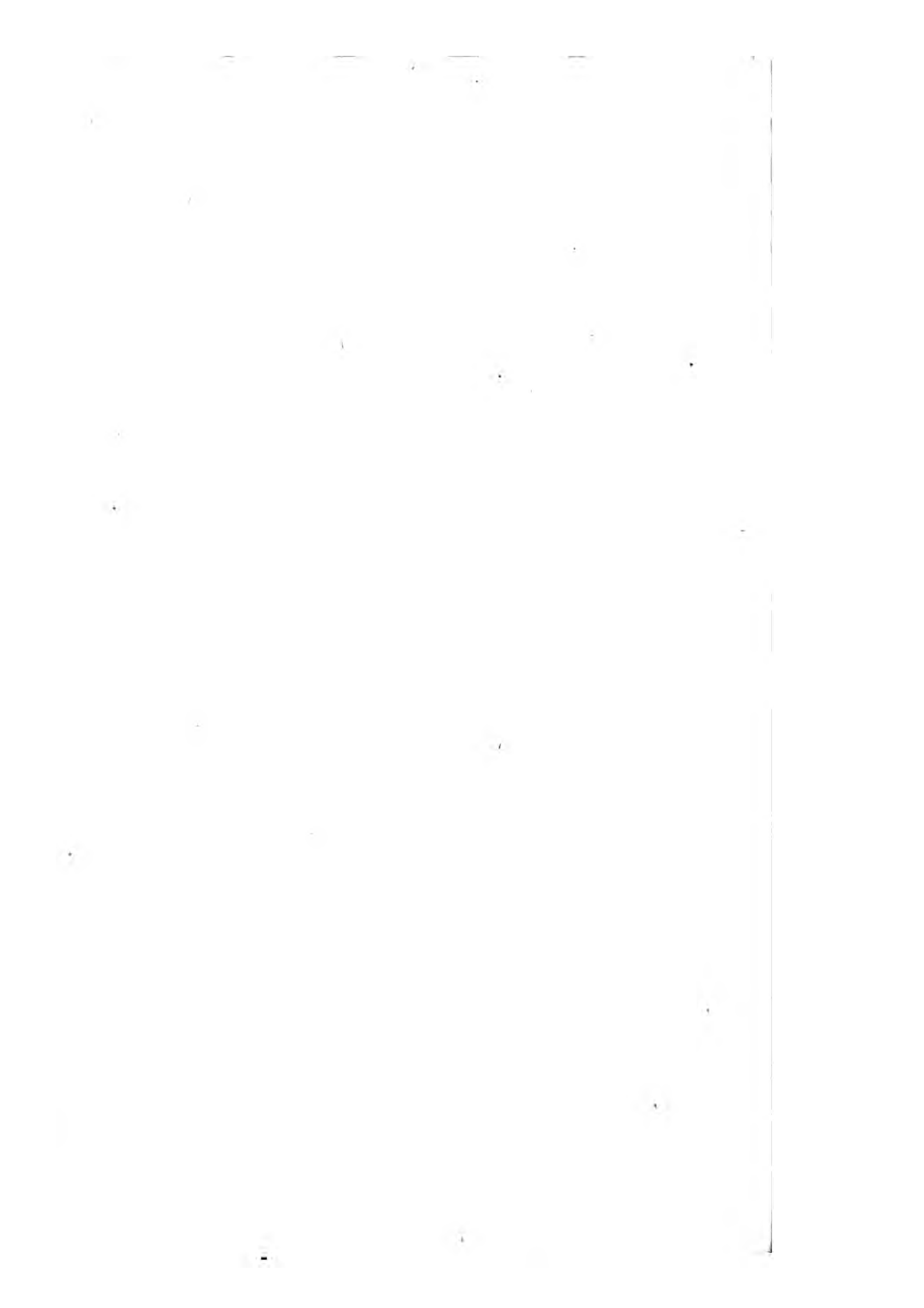
The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will shew, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously, and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted, that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with

earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT,  
*April 7. 1819.*



## PROLOGUE.

THERE'S something in a flying horse,  
There's something in a huge balloon ;  
But through the clouds I'll never float  
Until I have a little Boat,  
Whose shape is like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,  
In shape a very crescent-moon : —  
Fast through the clouds my Boat can sail ;  
But if perchance your faith should fail,  
Look up — and you shall see me soon !

The woods, my Friends, are round you roaring  
Rocking and roaring like a sea ;  
The noise of danger fills your ears,  
And ye have all a thousand fears  
Both for my little Boat and me !



Meanwhile untroubled I admire  
The pointed horns of my canoe ;  
And, did not pity touch my breast,  
To see how ye are all distress,  
Till my ribs ached, I 'd laugh at you !

Away we go, my Boat and I —  
Frail man ne'er sate in such another ;  
Whether among the winds we strive,  
Or deep into the clouds we dive,  
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go — and what care we  
For treasons, tumults, and for wars ?  
We are as calm in our delight  
As is the crescent-moon so bright  
Among the scattered stars.

Up goes my Boat among the stars  
Through many a breathless field of light,  
Through many a long blue field of ether,  
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her.  
Up goes my little Boat so bright !

The Crab — the Scorpion — and the Bull —  
We pry among them all — have shot  
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,  
Covered from top to toe with scars ;  
Such company I like it not !

The towns in Saturn are decayed,  
And melancholy Spectres throng them ;  
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss  
Each other in the vast abyss,  
With joy I sail among them !

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,  
Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;  
But these, and all that they contain,  
What are they to that tiny grain,  
That little Earth of ours ?

Then back to Earth, the dear green Earth ;  
Whole ages if I here should roam,  
The world for my remarks and me  
Would not a whit the better be ;  
I've left my heart at home.

And there it is, the matchless Earth !  
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !  
Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear  
Through the grey clouds — the Alps are here,  
Like waters in commotion !

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands —  
That silver thread the river Dnieper —  
And look, where clothed in brightest green  
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen ;  
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !  
Around those happy fields we span  
In boyish gambols — I was lost  
Where I have been, but on this coast  
I feel I am a man.

Never did fifty things at once  
Appear so lovely, never, never, —  
How tunefully the forests ring !  
To hear the earth's soft murmuring  
Thus could I hang for ever !

“ Shame on you !” cried my little Boat,  
“ Was ever such a homesick loon,  
Within a living Boat to sit,  
And make no better use of it, —  
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent moon !

Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet  
Fluttered so faint a heart before ; —  
Was it the music of the spheres  
That overpowered your mortal ears ?  
— Such din shall trouble them no more.

These nether precincts do not lack  
Charms of their own ; — then come with me —  
I want a comrade, and for you  
There 's nothing that I would not do ;  
Nought is there that you shall not see.

Haste ! and above Siberian snows  
We 'll sport amid the boreal morning,  
Will mingle with her lustres, gliding  
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,  
And now the stars adorning.

I know the secrets of a land  
Where human foot did never stray;  
Fair is that land as evening skies,  
And cool,— though in the depth it lies  
Of burning Africa.

Or we 'll into the realm of Faery,  
Among the lovely shades of things ;  
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,  
And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,  
The shades of palaces and kings !

Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal  
Less quiet regions to explore,  
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal  
How earth and heaven are taught to feel  
The might of magic lore!"

" My little vagrant Form of light,  
My gay and beautiful Canoe,  
Well have you played your friendly part ;  
As kindly take what from my heart  
Experience forces — then adieu !

Temptation lurks among your words ;  
But, while these pleasures you're pursuing  
Without impediment or let,  
My radiant Pinnacle, you forget  
What on the earth is doing.

There was a time when all mankind  
Did listen with a faith sincere  
To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;  
*Then* Poets fearlessly rehearsed  
The wonders of a wild career.

Go — (but the world's a sleepy world,  
And 'tis, I fear, an age too late :)  
Take with you some ambitious Youth ;  
For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,  
Am all unfit to be your mate.

Long have I loved what I behold,  
The night that calms, the day that cheers :  
The common growth of mother earth  
Suffices me — her tears, her mirth,  
Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,  
I shall not covet for my dower,  
If I along that lowly way  
With sympathetic heart may stray,  
And with a soul of power.

These given, what more need I desire  
To stir — to soothe — or elevate?  
What nobler marvels than the mind  
May in life's daily prospect find,  
May find or there create?

A potent wand doth Sorrow wield;  
What spell so strong as guilty Fear!  
Repentance is a tender Sprite;  
If aught on earth have heavenly might,  
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

But grant my wishes, — let us now  
Descend from this ethereal height;  
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,  
More daring far than Hippogriff,  
And be thy own delight!

To the stone-table in my garden,  
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,  
The Squire is come ; — his daughter Bess  
Beside him in the cool recess  
Sits blooming like a flower.

With these are many more convened ;  
They know not I have been so far —  
I see them there, in number nine,  
Beneath the spreading Weymouth pine —  
I see them — there they are !

There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;  
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter ;  
And, ere the light of evening fail,  
To them I must relate the Tale  
Of Peter Bell the Potter.”

Off flew my sparkling Boat in scorn,  
Spurning her freight with indignation !  
And I, as well as I was able,  
On two poor legs, tow'rd my stone-table  
Limped on with some vexation.



“ O, here he is !” cried little Bess —  
She saw me at the garden door,  
“ We ’ve waited anxiously and long,”  
They cried, and all around me throng,  
Full nine of them or more !

“ Reproach me not — your fears be still —  
Be thankful we again have met ; —  
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade  
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid  
The well-remembered debt.”

I spake with faltering voice, like one  
Not wholly rescued from the pale  
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion ;  
But, straight, to cover my confusion,  
Began the promised Tale.

## PART FIRST.

ALL by the moonlight river side  
Groaned the poor Beast — alas ! in vain ;  
The staff was raised to loftier height,  
And the blows fell with heavier weight  
As Peter struck — and struck again.

Like winds that lash the waves, or smite  
The woods, autumnal foliage thinning —  
“ Hold ! ” said the Squire, “ I pray you, hold !  
Who Peter was let that be told,  
And start from the beginning.”

—— “ A Potter \*, Sir, he was by trade,”  
Said I, becoming quite collected ;  
“ And wheresoever he appeared,  
Full twenty times was Peter feared  
For once that Peter was respected.

\* In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthen-ware is thus designated.

He, two-and-thirty years or more,  
Had been a wild and woodland rover ;  
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar  
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,  
And trod the cliffs of Dover.

And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,  
And well he knew the spire of Sarum ;  
And he had been where Lincoln bell  
Flings o'er the fen its ponderous knell,  
Its far-renowned alarum !

At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds  
And merry Carlisle had he been ;  
And all along the Lowlands fair,  
All through the bonny shire of Ayr —  
And far as Aberdeen.

And he had been at Inverness ;  
And Peter, by the mountain rills,  
Had danced his round with Highland lasses ;  
And he had lain beside his asses  
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,  
Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;  
Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky  
And little lot of stars :

And all along the indented coast,  
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;  
Where'er a knot of houses lay  
On headland, or in hollow bay ; —  
Sure never man like him did roam !

As well might Peter, in the Fleet,  
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ; —  
He travelled here, he travelled there ; —  
But not the value of a hair  
Was heart or head the better.

He roved among the vales and streams,  
In the green wood and hollow dell ;  
They were his dwellings night and day, —  
But Nature ne'er could find the way  
Into the heart of Peter Bell,

In vain, through every changeful year,  
Did Nature lead him as before ;  
A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.

Small change it made in Peter's heart  
To see his gentle panniered train  
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,  
Where'er the tender grass was leading  
Its earliest green along the lane.

In vain, through water, earth, and air,  
The soul of happy sound was spread,  
When Peter, on some April morn,  
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,  
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

At noon, when, by the forest's edge,  
He lay beneath the branches high,  
The soft blue sky did never melt  
Into his heart, — he never felt  
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

On a fair prospect some have looked  
And felt, as I have heard them say,  
As if the moving time had been  
A thing as steadfast as the scene  
On which they gazed themselves away.

Within the breast of Peter Bell  
These silent raptures found no place ;  
He was a Carl as wild and rude  
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,  
As ever ran a felon's race.

Of all that lead a lawless life,  
Of all that love their lawless lives,  
In city or in village small,  
He was the wildest far of all ;  
He had a dozen wedded wives.

Nay, start not ! — wedded wives — and twelve !  
But how one wife could e'er come near him,  
In simple truth I cannot tell ;  
For, be it said of Peter Bell,  
To see him was to fear him.

Though Nature could not touch his heart  
By lovely forms and silent weather,  
And tender sounds, yet you might see  
At once, that Peter Bell and she  
Had often been together.

A savage wildness round him hung  
As of a dweller out of doors ;  
In his whole figure and his mien  
A savage character was seen,  
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

To all the unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary Nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,  
Had Peter joined whatever vice  
The cruel city breeds.

His face was keen as is the wind  
That cuts along the hawthorn fence ;  
Of courage you saw little there,  
But, in its stead, a medley air  
Of cunning and of impudence.

He had a dark and sidelong walk,  
And long and slouching was his gait ;  
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,  
You might perceive, his spirit cold  
Was playing with some inward bait.

His forehead wrinkled was and furred ;  
A work, one half of which was done  
By thinking of his *whens* and *hows* ;  
And half, by knitting of his brows  
Beneath the glaring sun.

There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As if the man had fixed his face,  
In many a solitary place,  
Against the wind and open sky !

---

ONE NIGHT, (and now, my little Bess !  
We've reached at last the promised Tale ;)  
One beautiful November night,  
When the full moon was shining bright  
Upon the rapid river Swale,



Along the river's winding banks  
Peter was travelling all alone ;—  
Whether to buy or sell, or led  
By pleasure running in his head,  
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and brake,  
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;  
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,  
And for the stars he cared as little,  
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path  
That promised to cut short the way,  
As many a wiser man hath done,  
He left a trusty guide for one  
That might his steps betray.

To a thick wood he soon is brought  
Where cheerfully his course he weaves,  
And whistling loud may yet be heard,  
Though often buried, like a bird  
Darkling among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,  
And on he drives with cheeks that burn  
In downright fury and in wrath —  
There's little sign the treacherous path  
Will to the road return !

The path grows dim, and dimmer still ;  
Now up — now down — the rover wends  
With all the sail that he can carry,  
Till brought to a deserted quarry ;  
And there the pathway ends.

He paused — for shadows of strange shape,  
Massy and black, before him lay ;  
But through the dark, and through the cold,  
And through the yawning fissures old,  
Did Peter boldly press his way

Right through the quarry ; — and behold  
A scene of soft and lovely hue !  
Where blue and grey, and tender green,  
Together make as sweet a scene  
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw  
A little field of meadow ground ;  
But field or meadow name it not ;  
Call it of earth a small green plot,  
With rocks encompassed round.

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,  
But he flowed quiet and unseen ; —  
You need a strong and stormy gale  
To bring the noises of the Swale  
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,  
No hermit with his beads and glass ?  
And does no little cottage look  
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?  
Does no one live near this green grass ?

Across the deep and quiet spot  
Is Peter driving through the grass —  
And now he is among the trees ;  
When, turning round his head, he sees  
A solitary Ass.

“A prize,” cried Peter, stepping back  
To spy about him far and near ;  
There ’s not a single house in sight,  
No woodman’s hut, no cottage light —  
Peter, you need not fear !

There ’s nothing to be seen but woods,  
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,  
And this one beast, that from the bed  
Of the green meadow hangs his head  
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound ;  
The halter seizing, Peter leapt  
Upon the Creature’s back, and plied  
With ready heel his shaggy side ;  
But still the Ass his station kept.

“What ’s this !” cried Peter, brandishing  
A new-peeled sapling ; — though I deem,  
This threat was understood full well,  
Firm, as before, the Sentinel  
Stood by the silent stream.

Then Peter gave a sudden jirk,  
A jirk that from a dungeon floor  
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;  
But still the heavy-headed Thing  
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,  
“ There is some plot against me laid ;”  
Once more the little meadow ground  
And all the hoary cliffs around  
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent — rocks and woods,  
All still and silent — far and near !  
Only the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ? —  
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !  
Once more the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turned round his long left ear.

Suspicion ripened into dread ;  
Yet with deliberate action slow,  
His staff high-raising, in the pride  
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,  
He dealt a sturdy blow.

What followed? — yielding to the shock,  
The Ass, as if to take his ease,  
In quiet uncomplaining mood,  
Upon the spot where he had stood,  
Dropped gently down upon his knees.

And then upon his side he fell,  
And by the river's brink did lie ;  
And, as he lay like one that mourned,  
The Beast on his tormentor turned  
A shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,  
A look more tender than severe ;  
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,  
He turned the eye-ball in his head  
Towards the river deep and clear.

Upon the beast the sapling rings, —  
Heaved his lank sides, his limbs they stirred ;  
He gave a groan — and then another,  
Of that which went before the brother,  
And then he gave a third.

And Peter halts to gather breath,  
And, while he halts, was clearly shown  
(What he before in part had seen)  
How gaunt the Creature was, and lean,  
Yea, wasted to a skeleton !

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay : —  
No word of kind commiseration  
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;  
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,  
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death —  
And Peter's lips with fury quiver —  
Quoth he, “ You little mulish dog,  
I'll fling your carcass like a log  
Head-foremost down the river !”

An impious oath confirmed the threat —  
That instant, while outstretched he lay,  
To all the echoes, south and north,  
And east and west, the Ass sent forth  
A loud and piteous bray !

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,  
Seems like a note of joy to strike, —  
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ; —  
But in the echo of the rocks  
Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,  
Or that he could not break the chain,  
In this serene and solemn hour,  
Twined round him by demoniac power,  
To the blind work he turned again. —

Among the rocks and winding crags —  
Among the mountains far away —  
Once more the Ass did lengthen out  
More ruefully an endless shout,  
The long dry see-saw of his horrible bray !



What is there now in Peter's heart?  
Or whence the might of this strange sound?  
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,  
The broad blue heavens appeared to glimmer,  
And the rocks staggered all around.

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped!  
Threat has he none to execute —  
“ If any one should come and see  
That I am here, they'll think,” quoth he,  
“ I'm helping this poor dying brute.”

He scans the Ass from limb to limb ;  
And Peter now uplifts his eyes ; —  
Steady the moon doth look and clear,  
And like themselves the rocks appear,  
And quiet are the skies.

Whereat, in resolute mood, once more  
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize —  
Foul purpose, quickly put to flight !  
For in the pool a startling sight  
Meets him, beneath the shadowy trees.

Is it the moon's distorted face?  
The ghost-like image of a cloud?  
Is it a gallows there pourtrayed?  
Is Peter of himself afraid?  
Is it a coffin, — or a shroud?

A grisly idol hewn in stone?  
Or imp from witch's lap let fall?  
Or a gay ring of shining fairies,  
Such as pursue their brisk vagaries  
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall?

Is it a fiend that to a stake  
Of fire his desperate self is tethering?  
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell  
In solitary ward or cell,  
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,  
And never heart so loudly panted;  
He looks, he cannot choose but look;  
Like one intent upon a book —  
A book that is enchanted.

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell ! —  
He will be turned to iron soon,  
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !  
His hat is up — and every hair  
Bristles — and whitens in the moon !

He looks — he ponders — looks again ;  
He sees a motion — hears a groan ; —  
His eyes will burst — his heart will break —  
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,  
And drops, a senseless weight, as if his life were flown !

## PART SECOND.

WE left our Hero in a trance,  
Beneath the alders, near the river ;  
The Ass is by the river side,  
And, where the feeble breezes glide,  
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! — but at length  
He feels the glimmering of the moon ;  
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing —  
To sink perhaps, where he is lying,  
Into a second swoon !

He lifts his head — he sees his staff ;  
He touches — 'tis to him a treasure !  
Faint recollection seems to tell  
That he is yet where mortals dwell —  
A thought received with languid pleasure !

His head upon his elbow propped,  
Becoming less and less perplexed,  
Sky-ward he looks — to rock and wood —  
And then — upon the glassy flood  
His wandering eye is fixed.

Thought he, that is the face of one  
In his last sleep securely bound !  
So toward the stream his head he bent,  
And downward thrust his staff, intent  
The river's depth to sound.

*Now* — like a tempest-shattered bark,  
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,  
And in a moment to the verge  
Is lifted of a foaming surge —  
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise !

His staring bones all shake with joy —  
And close by Peter's side he stands :  
While Peter o'er the river bends,  
The little Ass his neck extends,  
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes —  
Such life is in his limbs and ears —  
That Peter Bell, if he had been  
The veriest coward ever seen,  
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

The Ass looks on — and to his work  
Is Peter quietly resigned ;  
He touches here — he touches there —  
And now among the dead man's hair  
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls — and looks — and pulls again ;  
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,  
The Man who had been four days dead,  
Head foremost from the river's bed  
Uprises — like a ghost !

And Peter draws him to dry land ;  
And through the brain of Peter pass  
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster,  
“ No doubt,” quoth he, “ he is the Master  
Of this poor miserable Ass !”

The meagre Shadow all this while —  
What aim is his? what is he doing?  
His sudden fit of joy is flown, —  
He on his knees hath laid him down,  
As if he were his grief renewing.

But no — his purpose and his wish  
The Suppliant shows, well as he can ;  
Thought Peter, whatsoe'er betide,  
I'll go, and he my way will guide  
To the cottage of the drowned man.

Encouraged by this hope, he mounts  
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;  
And then, without a moment's stay,  
That earnest Creature turned away,  
Leaving the body on the grass.

Intent upon his faithful watch,  
The Beast four days and nights had past ;  
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,  
And there the Ass four days had been,  
Nor ever once did break his fast !

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;  
The mead is crossed — the quarry's mouth  
Is reached — but there the trusty guide  
Into a thicket turns aside,  
And takes his way towards the south.

When hark a burst of doleful sound !  
And Peter honestly might say,  
The like came never to his ears,  
Though he has been, full thirty years,  
A rover — night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,  
'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;  
Nor can it be a barking fox —  
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks —  
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

The Ass is startled — and stops short  
Right in the middle of the thicket ;  
And Peter, wont to whistle loud  
Whether alone or in a crowd,  
Is silent as a silent cricket.



What ails you now, my little Bess?  
Well may you tremble and look grave!  
This cry — that rings along the wood,  
This cry — that floats adown the flood,  
Comes from the entrance of a cave:

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,  
And, if I had the power to say  
How sorrowful the wanderer is,  
Your heart would be as sad as his  
Till you had kissed his tears away!

Holding a hawthorn branch in hand,  
All bright with berries ripe and red,  
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps —  
Thence back into the moonlight creeps;  
What seeks the boy? — the silent dead —

His father! — Him doth he require,  
Whom he hath sought with fruitless pains,  
Among the rocks, behind the trees,  
Now creeping on his hands and knees,  
Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,  
When he through such a day has gone,  
By this dark cave to be distrest  
Like a poor bird — her plundered nest  
Hovering around with dolorous moan !

Of that intense and piercing cry  
The listening Ass conjectures well ;  
Wild as it is, he there can read  
Some intermingled notes that plead  
With touches irresistible ;

But Peter, when he saw the Ass  
Not only stop but turn, and change  
The cherished tenor of his pace  
That lamentable noise to chase,  
It wrought in him conviction strange ;

A faith that, for the dead man's sake  
And this poor slave who loved him well,  
Vengeance upon his head will fall,  
Some visitation worse than all  
Which ever till this night befel.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,  
Is striving stoutly as he may ;  
But, while he climbs the woody hill,  
The cry grows weak — and weaker still,  
And now at last it dies away !

So with his freight the Creature turns  
Into a gloomy grove of beech,  
Along the shade with footstep true  
Descending slowly, till the two  
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along a narrow dell,  
A fair smooth pathway you discern,  
A length of green and open road —  
As if it from a fountain flowed —  
Winding away between the fern.

The rocks that tower on either side  
Build up a wild fantastic scene ;  
Temples like those among the Hindoos,  
And mosques, and spires, and abbey windows,  
And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,  
Along this solitary dell,  
As pensively his steps advance,  
The mosques and spires change countenance,  
And look at Peter Bell !

That unintelligible cry  
Hath left him high in preparation, —  
Convinced that he, or soon or late,  
This very night, will meet his fate —  
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb  
With the green path, — and now he wends  
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,  
In undisturbed immensity  
A level plain extends.

But whence that faintly-rustling sound  
Which, all too long, the pair hath chased !  
— A dancing leaf is close behind,  
Light plaything for the sportive wind  
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spies the withered leaf,  
It yields no cure to his distress ;  
“ Where there is not a bush or tree,  
The very leaves they follow me—  
So huge hath been my wickedness !”

To a close lane they now are come,  
Where, as before, the enduring Ass  
Moves on without a moment's stop,  
Nor once turns round his head to crop  
A bramble leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,  
The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;  
And Peter, ever and anon  
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone  
Or in the dust, a crimson stain.

A stain — as of a drop of blood  
By moonlight made more faint and wan —  
Ha ! why this comfortless despair ?  
He knows not how the blood comes there,  
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,  
Where he had struck the Creature's head ;  
He sees the blood, knows what it is, —  
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,  
But then it quickly fled ;

Of him whom sudden death had seized  
He thought, — of thee, O faithful Ass !  
And once again those darting pains,  
As meteors shoot through heaven's wide plains,  
Pass through his bosom — and repass !

## PART THIRD.

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,  
Though given to sadness and to gloom,  
And for the fact will vouch, — one night  
It chanced that by a taper's light  
This man was reading in his room ;

Bending, as you or I might bend  
At night o'er any pious book,  
When sudden blackness overspread  
The snow-white page on which he read,  
And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round, —  
And to his book he turned again ;  
— The light had left the good man's taper,  
And formed itself upon the paper  
Into large letters — bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand —  
And, on the page more black than coal,  
Appeared, set forth in strange array,  
A *word* — which to his dying day  
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, full plainly seen,  
Did never from his lips depart ;  
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !  
It brought full many a sin to light  
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to torment the good  
Why wander from your course so far,  
Disordering colour, form, and stature !  
— Let good men feel the soul of Nature,  
And see things as they are.

I know you, potent Spirits ! well,  
How, with the feeling and the sense  
Playing, ye govern foes or friends,  
Yoked to your will, for fearful ends —  
And this I speak in reverence !



But might I give advice to you,  
Whom in my fear I love so well,  
From men of pensive virtue go,  
Dread Beings ! and your empire show  
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence I have often felt  
In darkness and the stormy night ;  
And well I know, if need there be,  
Ye can put forth your agency  
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,  
That powerful world in which ye dwell,  
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try  
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,  
What may be done with Peter Bell !

— O, would that some more skilful voice  
My further labour might prevent !  
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,  
I feel that I am all unfit  
For such high argument.

I've played and danced with my narration —  
I loitered long ere I began :  
Ye waited then on my good pleasure, —  
Pour out indulgence still, in measure  
As liberal as ye can !

Our travellers, ye remember well,  
Are thridding a sequestered lane ;  
And Peter many tricks is trying,  
And many anodynes applying,  
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far ;  
And, finding that he can account  
So clearly for that crimson stain,  
His evil spirit up again  
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician  
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;  
“ Blood drops — leaves rustle — yet,” quoth he,  
“ This poor man never, but for me,  
“ Could have had Christian burial.

“ And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,  
“ That here hath been some wicked dealing ;  
“ No doubt the devil in me wrought ;  
“ I 'm not the man who could have thought  
“ An Ass like this was worth the stealing !”

So from his pocket Peter takes  
His shining horn tobacco-box ;  
And, in a light and careless way,  
As men who with their purpose play,  
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds —  
Whose cunning eye can see the wind —  
Tell to a curious world the cause  
Why, making here a sudden pause,  
The Ass turned round his head — and *grinned*.

Appalling process ! — I have marked  
The like on heath — in lonely wood,  
And, verily, have seldom met  
A spectacle more hideous — yet  
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth  
He in jocose defiance showed —  
When, to confound his spiteful mirth,  
A murmur, pent within the earth,  
In the dead earth beneath the road,

Rolled audibly ! — it swept along —  
A muffled noise — a rumbling sound !  
'Twas by a troop of miners made,  
Plying with gunpowder their trade,  
Some twenty fathoms under ground.

Small cause of dire effect ! — for, surely,  
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,  
Believed that earth was charged to quake  
And yawn for his unworthy sake,  
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter !

But, as an oak in breathless air  
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;  
Or as the weakest things, if frost  
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;  
So he, beneath the gazing moon ! —

Meanwhile the pair have reached a spot  
Where, sheltered by a rocky cove,  
A little chapel stands alone,  
With greenest ivy overgrown,  
And tufted with an ivy grove.

Dying insensibly away  
From human thoughts and purposes,  
The building seems, wall, roof, and tower,  
To bow to some transforming power,  
And blend with the surrounding trees.

Deep-sighing as he passed along,  
Quoth Peter, "In the shire of Fife,  
" 'Mid such a ruin, following still  
" From land to land a lawless will,  
" I married my sixth wife !"

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,  
And now is passing by an inn  
Brim-full of a carousing crew,  
That make, with curses not a few,  
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts  
Which Peter in those noises found ; —  
A stifling power compressed his frame,  
As if confusing darkness came  
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound ;  
The language of those drunken joys  
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,  
But a few hours ago, had been  
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

*Now*, turned adrift into the past,  
He finds no solace in his course ;  
Like planet-stricken men of yore,  
He trembles, smitten to the core  
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung  
To think of one, almost a child ;  
A sweet and playful Highland girl,  
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,  
As beauteous and as wild !

A lonely house her dwelling was,  
A cottage in a heathy dell ;  
And she put on her gown of green,  
And left her mother at sixteen,  
And followed Peter Bell.

But many good and pious thoughts  
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,  
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or snow,  
To kirk she had been used to go,  
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,  
It was to lead an honest life ;  
For he, with tongue not used to falter,  
Had pledged his troth before the altar  
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers ; — but soon  
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ; —  
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;  
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,  
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,  
And took it in most grievous part ;  
She to the very bone was worn,  
And, ere that little child was born,  
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind  
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;  
Upon the rights of visual sense  
Usurping, with a prevalence  
More terrible than magic spell.

Close by a brake of flowering furze  
(Above it shivering aspens play)  
He sees an unsubstantial creature,  
His very self in form and feature,  
Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees  
The Highland girl — it is no other ;  
And hears her crying, as she cried,  
The very moment that she died,  
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”



The sweat pours down from Peter's face,  
So grievous is his heart's contrition ;  
With agony his eye-balls ache  
While he beholds by the furze-brake  
This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,  
*His* peace, hath no offence betrayed ;—  
But now, while down that slope he wends,  
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,  
Resounding from the woody glade :

Though clamorous as a hunter's horn  
Re-echoed from a naked rock,  
'Tis from that tabernacle — List !  
Within, a fervent Methodist  
Is preaching to no heedless flock !

“ Repent ! repent ! ” he cries aloud,  
“ While yet ye may find mercy ; — strive  
“ To love the Lord with all your might ;  
“ Turn to him, seek him day and night,  
“ And save your souls alive !

“ Repent ! repent ! though ye have gone,  
“ Through paths of wickedness and woe,  
“ After the Babylonian harlot,  
“ And, though your sins be red as scarlet,  
“ They shall be white as snow !”

Even as he passed the door, these words  
Did plainly come to Peter's ears ;  
And they such joyful tidings were,  
The joy was more than he could bear ! —  
He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness !  
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower !  
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt ;  
Through all his iron frame was felt  
A gentle, a relaxing power !

Each fibre of his frame was weak ;  
Weak all the animal within ;  
But, in its helplessness, grew mild  
And gentle as an infant child,  
An infant that has known no sin.

Meanwhile the persevering Ass,  
Towards a gate in open view,  
Turns up a narrow lane ; his chest  
Against the yielding gate he pressed,  
And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes ;  
No ghost more softly ever trod ;  
Among the stones and pebbles, he  
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,  
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass  
Had gone two hundred yards, not more ;  
When to a lonely house he came ;  
He turned aside towards the same,  
And stopped before the door.

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home !  
He listens — not a sound is heard  
Save from the trickling household rill ;  
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,  
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound  
In hope some tidings there to gather ; —  
No glimpse it is — no doubtful gleam —  
She saw — and uttered with a scream,  
“ My father ! here ’s my father ! ”

The very word was plainly heard,  
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother —  
Her joy was like a deep affright ;  
And forth she rushed into the light,  
And saw it was another !

And instantly, upon the earth,  
Beneath the full moon shining bright,  
Close to the Ass’s feet she fell ;  
At the same moment Peter Bell  
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

What could he do ? — The Woman lay  
Breathless and motionless ; — the mind  
Of Peter sadly was confused ;  
But, though to such demands unused,  
And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up ; and, while he held  
Her body propped against his knee,  
The Woman waked — and when she spied  
The poor Ass standing by her side,  
She moaned most bitterly.

“ Oh! God be praised — my heart’s at ease —  
“ For he is dead — I know it well !”  
— At this she wept a bitter flood ;  
And, in the best way that he could,  
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles — he is pale as death —  
His voice is weak with perturbation —  
He turns aside his head — he pauses ;  
Poor Peter from a thousand causes  
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied  
The Ass in that small meadow ground ;  
And that her Husband now lay dead,  
Beside that luckless river’s bed  
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Sufferer cast  
Upon the Beast that near her stands ;  
She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same ;  
She calls the poor Ass by his name,  
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

“ O wretched loss — untimely stroke !  
“ If he had died upon his bed !  
“ — He knew not one forewarning pain —  
“ He never will come home again —  
“ Is dead — for ever dead !”

Beside the Woman Peter stands ;  
His heart is opening more and more ;  
A holy sense pervades his mind ;  
He feels what he for human kind  
Had never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,  
The Woman rises from the ground —  
“ Oh, mercy ! something must be done, —  
“ My little Rachael, you must run, —  
“ Some willing neighbour must be found.

“ Make haste — my little Rachael — do,  
“ The first you meet with — bid him come, —  
“ Ask him to lend his horse to-night —  
“ And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,  
“ Will help to bring the body home.”

Away goes Rachael weeping loud ; —  
An Infant, waked by her distress,  
Makes in the house a piteous cry ;  
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,  
“ Seven are they, and all fatherless !”

And now is Peter taught to feel  
That man’s heart is a holy thing ;  
And Nature, through a world of death,  
Breathes into him a second breath,  
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits  
In agony of silent grief —  
From his own thoughts did Peter start ;  
He longs to press her to his heart,  
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb  
Had past a sudden shock of dread,  
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,  
And up the cottage stairs she hies,  
And to the pillow gives her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside  
Into a shade of darksome trees,  
Where he sits down, he knows not how,  
With his hands pressed against his brow,  
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit  
Until no sign of life he makes,  
As if his mind were sinking deep  
Through years that have been long asleep !  
The trance is past away — he wakes, —

He lifts his head — and sees the Ass  
Yet standing in the clear moonshine,  
“ When shall I be as good as thou ?  
“ Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now  
“ A heart but half as good as thine !”



— But *He* — who deviously hath sought  
His Father through the lonesome woods,  
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear  
Of night his inward grief and fear —  
He comes — escaped from fields and floods ; —

With weary pace is drawing nigh —  
He sees the Ass — and nothing living  
Had ever such a fit of joy  
As hath this little orphan Boy,  
For he has no misgiving !

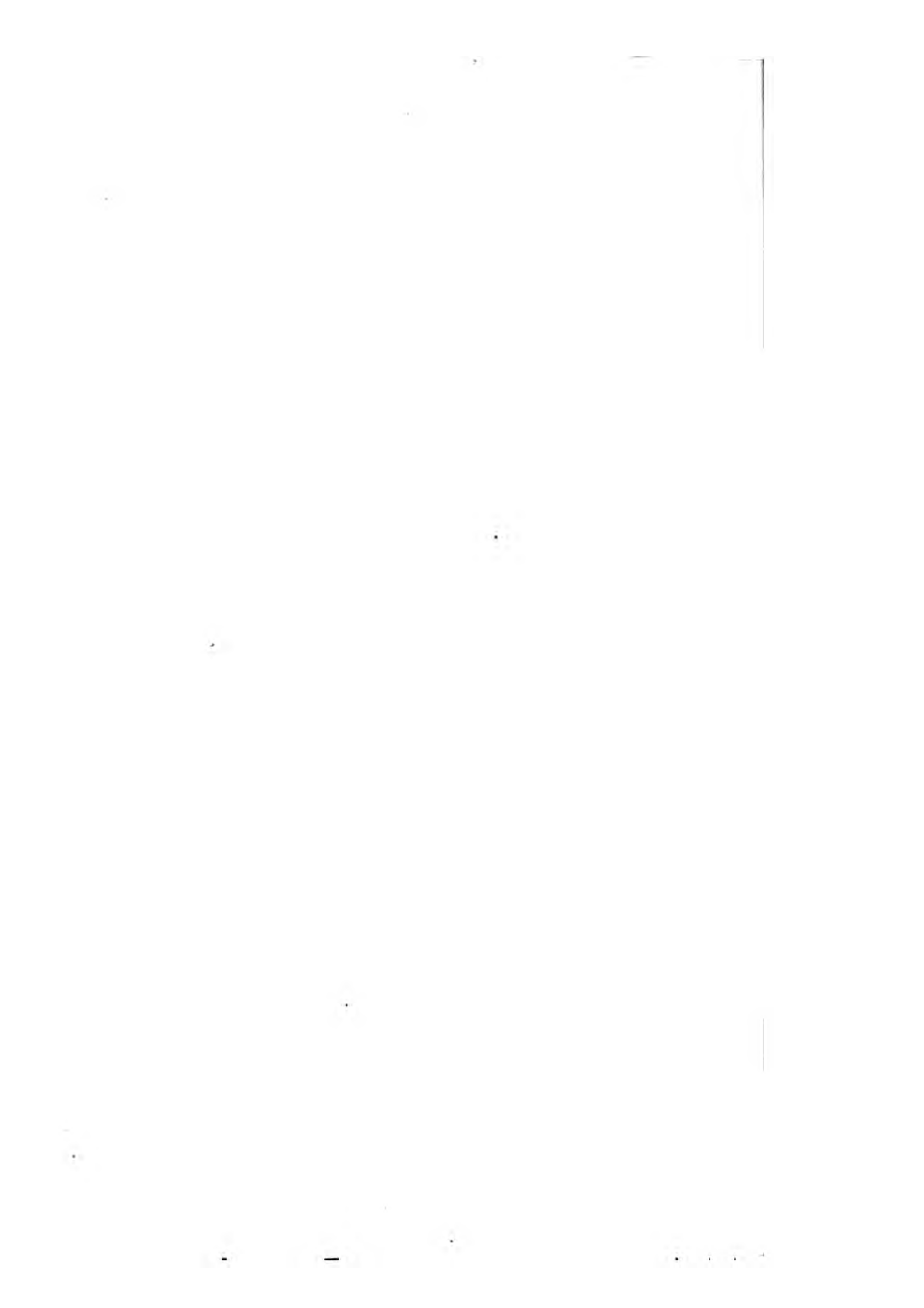
Towards the gentle Ass he springs,  
And up about his neck he climbs ;  
In loving words he talks to him,  
He kisses, kisses face and limb, —  
He kisses him a thousand times !

This Peter sees, while in the shade  
He stood beside the cottage door :  
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,  
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,  
“ Oh ! God, I can endure no more !”

— Here ends my Tale : — for in a trice  
Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;  
Peter went forth with him straightway ;  
And, with due care, ere break of day  
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,  
Whom once it was my luck to see  
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,  
Help by his labour to maintain  
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,  
Had been the wildest of his clan,  
Forsook his crimes, repressed his folly,  
And, after ten months' melancholy,  
Became a good and honest man.



---

**MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.**

**PART FIRST.**

---



## SONNETS.

---

I.

TO ———.

**H**APPY the feeling from the bosom thrown  
In perfect shape whose beauty Time shall spare  
Though a breath made it, like a bubble blown  
For summer pastime into wanton air ;  
Happy the thought best likened to a stone  
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,  
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,  
Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone  
That tempted first to gather it. O chief  
Of Friends ! such feelings if I here present,  
Such thoughts, with others mixed less fortunate ;  
Then smile into my heart a fond belief  
That Thou, if not with partial joy elate,  
Receiv'st the gift for more than mild content !

II.  

---

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;  
And Hermits are contented with their cells ;  
And Students with their pensive citadels :  
Maids at the wheel, the Weaver at his loom,  
Sit blithe and happy ; Bees that soar for bloom,  
High as the highest Peak of Furness Fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :  
In truth, the prison, unto which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence to me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground :  
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)  
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

## III.

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH.  

---

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.  
The Kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;  
The Horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal :  
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal  
O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky.  
Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, seems to heal  
That grief for which the senses still supply  
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory  
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends ! restrain  
Those busy cares that would allay my pain :  
Oh ! leave me to myself ; nor let me feel  
The officious touch that makes me droop again.



## IV.

## ADMONITION,

Intended more particularly for the Perusal of those who may  
have happened to be enamoured of some beautiful Place of  
Retreat, in the Country of the Lakes.

---

YES, there is holy pleasure in thine eye !  
— The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook  
Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear brook,  
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !  
But covet not the Abode ; — forbear to sigh,  
As many do, repining while they look ;  
Intruders who would tear from Nature's book  
This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.  
Think what the Home must be if it were thine,  
Even thine, though few thy wants ! — Roof, window, door,  
The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,  
The roses to the Porch which they entwine :  
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day  
On which it should be touched would melt, and melt away.

V.

---

“BELOVED Vale!” I said, “when I shall con  
Those many records of my childish years,  
Remembrance of myself and of my peers  
Will press me down: to think of what is gone  
Will be an awful thought, if life have one.”  
But, when into the Vale I came, no fears  
Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped no tears;  
Deep thought, or awful vision, had I none.  
By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost,  
I stood of simple shame the blushing Thrall;  
So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so small.  
A Juggler’s balls old Time about him tossed;  
I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed; and all  
The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

VI.

---

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,  
Together in immortal books enrolled :  
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;  
And that inspiring Hill, which " did divide  
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"  
Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;  
While not an English Mountain we behold  
By the celestial Muses glorified.  
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds :  
What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee,  
Mount Skiddaw? In his natural sovereignty  
Our British Hill is fairer far : He shrouds  
His double front among Atlantic clouds,  
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

VII.

---

THERE is a little unpretending Rill  
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught  
That ever among Men or Naiads sought  
Notice or name ! — It quivers down the hill,  
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious will ;  
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is brought  
Oftener than Ganges or the Nile, a thought  
Of private recollection sweet and still !  
Months perish with their moons ; year treads on year ;  
But, faithful Emma, thou with me canst say  
That, while ten thousand pleasures disappear,  
And flies their memory fast almost as they,  
The immortal Spirit of one happy day  
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

VIII.

---

HER only Pilot the soft breeze the Boat  
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied ;  
With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory, at her side,  
And the glad Muse at liberty to note  
All that to each is precious, as we float  
Gently along ; regardless who shall chide  
If the Heavens smile, and leave us free to glide,  
Happy Associates breathing air remote  
From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the Muse,  
Why have I crowded, this small Bark with you  
And others of your kind, Ideal Crew !  
While here sits One whose brightness owes it hues  
To flesh and blood ; no Goddess from above,  
No fleeting Spirit, but my own true Love ?

---

IX.

---

THE fairest, brightest hues of ether fade ;  
The sweetest notes must terminate and die ;  
O Friend ! thy flute has breathed a harmony  
Softly resounded through this rocky glade ;  
Such strains of rapture as \*the Genius played  
In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high ;  
He who stood visible to Mirzah's eye,  
Never before to human sight betrayed.  
Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening spread !  
The visionary Arches are not there,  
Nor the green Islands, nor the shining Seas ;  
Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,  
From which I have been lifted on the breeze  
Of harmony, above all earthly care.

\* See the vision of Mirzah in the Spectator.

## X.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A

BEAUTIFUL PICTURE,

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

---

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power could stay  
Yon Cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape ;  
Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,  
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the day ;  
Which stopped that Band of Travellers on their way,  
Ere they were lost within the shady wood ;  
And shewed the Bark upon the glassy flood  
For ever anchored in her sheltering Bay.  
Soul-soothing Art ! which Morning, Noon-tide, Even  
Do serve with all their changeful pageantry ;  
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast given  
To one brief moment caught from fleeting time  
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

XI.

---

“ WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful murmurings —  
Dull, flagging notes that with each other jar?”  
“ Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far  
From its own Country, and forgive the strings.”  
A simple answer ! but even so forth springs,  
From the Castalian fountain of the heart,  
The Poetry of Life, and all that Art  
Divine of words quickening insensate Things.  
From the submissive necks of guiltless Men  
Stretched on the block, the glittering axe recoils;  
Sun, Moon, and Stars, all struggle in the toils  
Of mortal sympathy ; what wonder then  
If the poor Harp distempered music yields  
To its sad Lord, far from his native Fields?



XII.

---

AERIAL Rock — whose solitary brow  
From this low threshold daily meets my sight ;  
When I step forth to hail the morning light ;  
Or quit the stars with lingering farewell — how  
Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow ?  
How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest ?  
By planting on thy naked head the crest  
Of an imperial Castle, which the plough  
Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme !  
That doth presume no more than to supply  
A grace the sinuous vale and roaring stream  
Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.  
Rise, then, ye votive Towers, and catch a gleam  
Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die !

## XIII.

TO SLEEP.

---

O GENTLE Sleep ! do they belong to thee,  
These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost love  
To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,  
A Captive never wishing to be free.  
This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to me  
A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove  
Upon a fretful rivulet, now above  
Now on the water vexed with mockery.  
I have no pain that calls for patience, no ;  
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child :  
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,  
Yet ever willing to be reconciled :  
O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,  
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

## XIV.

T O S L E E P.  

---

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,  
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;  
By turns have all been thought of ; yet I lie  
Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies  
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;  
And the first Cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,  
And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :  
So do not let me wear to-night away :  
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?  
Come, blessèd barrier betwixt day and day,  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

## XV.

TO SLEEP.  

---

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !  
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;  
The very sweetest words that fancy frames,  
When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !  
Dear bosom Child we call thee, that dost steep  
In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that tames  
All anguish ; Saint that evil thoughts and aims  
Takest away, and into souls dost creep,  
Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,  
I surely not a man ungently made,  
Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost ?  
Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,  
Mere Slave of them who never for thee prayed,  
Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

## XVI.

THE WILD DUCK'S NEST.

---

THE Imperial Consort of the Fairy King  
Owns not a sylvan bower ; or gorgeous cell  
With emerald floored, and with purpureal shell  
Ceilinged and roofed ; that is so fair a thing  
As this low structure — for the tasks of Spring  
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant swell  
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to dwell ;  
And spreads in steadfast peace her brooding wing.  
Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing yew-tree bough,  
And dimly-gleaming Nest, — a hollow crown  
Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,  
Fine as the Mother's softest plumes allow :  
I gaze — and almost wish to lay aside  
Humanity, weak slave of cumbrous pride !

## XVII.

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF IN "THE COMPLETE ANGLER."

---

WHILE flowing Rivers yield a blameless sport,  
Shall live the name of Walton ; — Sage benign !  
Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and line  
Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort  
To reverend watching of each still report  
That Nature utters from her rural shrine. —  
Meek, nobly versed in simple discipline,  
He found the longest summer day too short,  
To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee,  
Or down the tempting maze of Shawford brook !  
Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book,  
The cowslip bank and shady willow-tree,  
And the fresh meads ; where flowed, from every nook  
Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety !

## XVIII.

TO THE POET, JOHN DYER.

---

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful Genius made  
That Work a living landscape fair and bright ;  
Nor hallowed less with musical delight  
Than those soft scenes through which thy Childhood strayed,  
Those southern Tracts of Cambria, " deep embayed,  
With green hills fenced, with Ocean's murmur lulled ;"  
Though hasty Fame hath many a chaplet culled  
For worthless brows, while in the pensive shade  
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,  
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek and still,  
A grateful few, shall love thy modest Lay,  
Long as the Shepherd's bleating flock shall stray  
O'er naked Snowdon's wide aerial waste ;  
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill !

## XIX.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE  
PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM.*See Milton's Sonnet, beginning*

" A Book was writ of late called ' Tetrachordon.' "

---

A Book came forth of late, called " Peter Bell ;"  
 Not negligent the style ; — the matter ? — good  
 As aught that song records of Robin Hood ;  
 Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish dell ;  
 But some (who brook these hacknied themes full well,  
 Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, their blood)  
 Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a harpy brood,  
 On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.  
 Heed not, wild Rover once through heath and glen,  
 Who mad'st at length the better life thy choice,  
 Heed not such onset ! nay, if praise of men  
 To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,  
 Lift up that gray-haired forehead, and rejoice  
 In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen !



## XX.

TO THE RIVER DERWENT.  

---

AMONG the mountains were we nursed, loved Stream !  
Thou, near the eagle's nest — within brief sail,  
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,  
Where thy deep voice could lull me ! — Faint the beam  
Of human life when first allowed to gleam  
On mortal notice. — Glory of the Vale,  
Such thy meek outset, with a crown though frail  
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam  
Of thy soft breath ! — Less vivid wreath entwined  
Nemæan Victor's brow ; less bright was worn,  
Meed of some Roman Chief — in triumph borne  
With captives chained ; and shedding from his car  
The sunset splendours of a finished war  
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind !

## XXI.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VALLEYS OF WESTMORLAND,  
ON EASTER SUNDAY.

---

WITH each recurrence of this glorious morn  
That saw the Saviour in his human frame  
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-dame  
Put on fresh raiment — till that hour unworn :  
Domestic hands the home-bred wool had shorn,  
And she who span it culled the daintiest fleece,  
In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of Peace,  
Whose temples bled beneath the platted thorn.  
A blest estate when piety sublime  
These humble props disdained not ! O green dales !  
Sad may *I* be who heard your sabbath chime  
When Art's abused inventions were unknown ;  
Kind Nature's various wealth was all your own ;  
And benefits were weighed in Reason's scales !

XXII.

---

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever-ready Friend  
Now that the cottage spinning-wheel is mute ;  
And Care — a Comforter that best could suit  
Her froward mood, and softliest reprehend ;  
And Love — a Charmer's voice, that used to lend,  
More efficaciously than aught that flows  
From harp or lute, kind influence to compose  
The throbbing pulse, — else troubled without end:  
Ev'n Joy could tell, Joy craving truce and rest  
From her own overflow, what power sedate  
On those revolving motions did await  
Assiduously, to soothe her aching breast —  
And — to a point of just relief — abate  
The mantling triumphs of a day too blest.

## XXIII.

TO S. H.  

---

Excuse is needless when with love sincere  
Of occupation, not by fashion led,  
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with dust o'erspread;  
*My* nerves from no such murmur shrink,— tho' near,  
Soft as the Dorhawk's to a distant ear,  
When twilight shades bedim the mountain's head.  
She who was feigned to spin our vital thread  
Might smile, O Lady! on a task once dear  
To household virtues. Venerable Art,  
Torn from the Poor! yet will kind Heaven protect  
Its own, not left without a guiding chart,  
If Rulers, trusting with undue respect  
To proud discoveries of the Intellect,  
Sanction the pillage of man's ancient heart.

## XXIV.

DECAY OF PIETY.

---

OFt have I seen, ere Time had ploughed my cheek,  
Matrons and Sires — who, punctual to the call  
Of their loved Church, on Fast or Festival  
Through the long year the House of Prayer would seek :  
By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak  
Of Easter winds, unscared, from Hut or Hall  
They came to lowly bench or sculptured Stall,  
But with one fervour of devotion meek.  
I see the places where they once were known,  
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling crowds,  
Is ancient Piety for ever flown?  
Alas ! even then they seemed like fleecy clouds  
That, struggling through the western sky, have won  
Their pensive light from a departed sun !

## XXV.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND, IN  
THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

---

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribands gay,  
These humble Nuptials to proclaim or grace?  
Angels of Love, look down upon the place,  
Shed on the chosen Vale a sun-bright day!  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride display  
Even for such promise: — serious is her face,  
Modest her mien; and she, whose thoughts keep pace  
With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid appear,  
No disproportion in her soul, no strife:  
But, when the closer view of wedded life  
Hath shewn that nothing human can be clear  
From frailty, for that insight may the Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

## XXVI.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

---

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,  
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed ;  
For if of our affections none find grace  
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath God made  
The world which we inhabit? Better plea  
Love cannot have, than that in loving thee  
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,  
Who such Divinity to thee imparts  
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.  
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies  
With beauty, which is varying every hour ;  
But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the power  
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,  
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

## XXVII.

FROM THE SAME.  

---

No mortal object did these eyes behold  
When first they met the placid light of thine,  
And my Soul felt her destiny divine,  
And hope of endless peace in me grew bold :  
Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward course must hold ;  
Beyond the visible world She soars to seek  
(For what delights the sense is false and weak)  
Ideal Form, the universal mould.  
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
In that which perishes : nor will he lend  
His heart to aught which doth on time depend.  
'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true love,  
That kills the soul : love betters what is best,  
Even here below, but more in heaven above.



## XXVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

TO THE SUPREME BEING.  

---

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed  
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :  
My unassisted heart is barren clay,  
That of its native self can nothing feed :  
Of good and pious works thou art the seed,  
That quickens only where thou say'st it may :  
Unless thou shew to us thine own true way  
No man can find it : Father ! thou must lead.  
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind  
By which such virtue may in me be bred  
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread ;  
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,  
That I may have the power to sing of thee,  
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

XXIX.

---

SURPRISED by joy — impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport — Oh ! with whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent Tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind —  
But how could I forget thee ? — Through what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss ? — That thought's return  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;  
That neither present time, nor years unborn  
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

---

XXX.

---

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne  
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—  
Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed ;  
But all the steps and ground about were strown  
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone  
Ever put on ; a miserable crowd,  
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,  
“ Thou art our king, O Death ! to thee we groan.”  
I seemed to mount those steps ; the vapours gave  
Smooth way ; and I beheld the face of one  
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,  
With her face up to heaven ; that seemed to have  
Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone ;  
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave !

XXXI.

---

“ WEAK is the will of Man, his judgment blind ;  
“ Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays ;  
“ Heavy is woe ; — and joy, for human-kind,  
“ A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !”  
Thus might *he* paint our lot of mortal days  
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,  
And colour life’s dark cloud with orient rays.  
Imagination is that sacred power,  
Imagination lofty and refined :  
’Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine Flower  
Of Faith, and round the Sufferer’s temples bind  
Wreaths that endure affliction’s heaviest shower,  
And do not shrink from sorrow’s keenest wind.

XXXII.

---

It is a beauteous Evening, calm and free ;  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea :  
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder — everlastingly.  
Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,  
If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;  
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

XXXIII.

---

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go?  
Festively she puts forth in trim array;  
As vigorous as a Lark at break of day:  
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?  
What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend nor foe  
She cares for; let her travel where she may,  
She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.  
Yet still I ask, what Haven is her mark?  
And, almost as it was when ships were rare,  
(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there  
Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,  
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,  
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark!

XXXIV.

---

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,  
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed ;  
Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
Some veering up and down, one knew not why.  
A goodly Vessel did I then espy  
Come like a Giant from a haven broad ;  
And lustily along the Bay she strode,  
“ Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.”  
This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
Yet I pursued her with a Lover’s look ;  
This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
When will she turn, and whither ? She will brook  
No tarrying ; where she comes the winds must stir :  
On went She, — and due north her journey took.

XXXV.

---

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :  
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The Winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not. — Great God ! I 'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.



XXXVI.

---

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are found,  
Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round them play,  
On "coignes of vantage" hang their nests of clay ;  
How quickly from that aery hold unbound,  
Dust for oblivion ! To the solid ground  
Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye ;  
Convinced that there, there only, she can lay  
Secure foundations. As the year runs round,  
Apart she toils within the chosen ring ;  
While the stars shine, or while day's purple eye  
Is gently closing with the flowers of spring ;  
Where even the motion of an Angel's wing  
Would interrupt the intense tranquillity  
Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

XXXVII.

---

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks  
The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood !  
An old place, full of many a lovely brood,  
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-flowers in flocks ;  
And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,  
Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks  
At Wakes and Fairs with wandering Mountebanks, —  
When she stands cresting the Clown's head, and mocks  
The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,  
Such place to me is sometimes like a dream  
Or map of the whole world : thoughts, link by link,  
Enter through ears and eyesight, with such gleam  
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,  
And leap at once from the delicious stream.

## XXXVIII.

PERSONAL TALK.

---

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal talk, —  
Of Friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or Neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight :  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, Ladies bright,  
Sons, Mothers, Maidens withering on the stalk,  
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with chalk  
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night.  
Better than such discourse doth silence long,  
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;  
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

## XXXIX.

CONTINUED.

---

“YET life,” you say, “is life ; we have seen and see,  
And with a living pleasure we describe ;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee  
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe.”  
Even be it so : yet still among your tribe,  
Our daily world’s true Worldlings, rank not me !  
Children are blest, and powerful ; their world lies  
More justly balanced ; partly at their feet,  
And part far from them : — sweetest melodies  
Are those that are by distance made more sweet ;  
Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,  
He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

## XL.

CONTINUED.  

---

WINGS have we, — and as far as we can go  
We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,  
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood  
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,  
Are a substantial world, both pure and good :  
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,  
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store ;  
Matter wherein right voluble I am :  
To which I listen with a ready ear ;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear, —  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

## XLI.

CONCLUDED.  

---

NOR can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote  
From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,  
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.  
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought :  
And thus from day to day my little Boat  
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.  
Blessings be with them — and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares —  
The Poets, who on earth have made us Heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !  
Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,  
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

## XLII.

TO

R. B. HAYDON, ESQ.

---

HIGH is our calling, Friend ! — Creative Art  
(Whether the instrument of words she use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
Heroically fashioned — to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to desert.  
And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,  
Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness —  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

XLIII.

---

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,  
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,  
Rise, GILLIES, rise : the gales of youth shall bear  
Thy genius forward like a winged steed.  
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed  
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of air,  
Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,  
If aught be in them of immortal seed,  
And reason govern that audacious flight  
Which heav'n-ward they direct.—Then droop not thou,  
Erroneously renewing a sad vow  
In the low dell mid Roslin's faded grove :  
A cheerful life is what the Muses love,  
A soaring spirit is their prime delight.



XLIV.

---

FAIR Prime of life ! were it enough to gild  
With ready sunbeams every straggling shower ;  
And, if an unexpected cloud should lower,  
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to build  
For Fancy's errands, — then, from fields half-tilled  
Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy flower,  
Thee might thy Minions crown, and chant thy power,  
Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.  
Ah ! show that worthier honours are thy due ;  
Fair Prime of Life ! arouse the deeper heart ;  
Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue  
Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim ;  
And, if there be a joy that slights the claim  
Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

XLV.

---

I HEARD (alas! 'twas only in a dream)  
Strains — which, as sage Antiquity believed,  
By waking ears have sometimes been received  
Wafted adown the wind from lake or stream;  
A most melodious requiem, — a supreme  
And perfect harmony of notes, achieved  
By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,  
O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam  
For is she not the votary of Apollo?  
And knows she not, singing as he inspires,  
That bliss awaits her which the ungenial hollow\*  
Of the dull earth partakes not, nor desires?  
Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal quires!  
She soared — and I awoke, — struggling in vain to follow.

\* See the Phedo of Plato, by which this Sonnet was suggested.

## XLVI.

RETIREMENT.  

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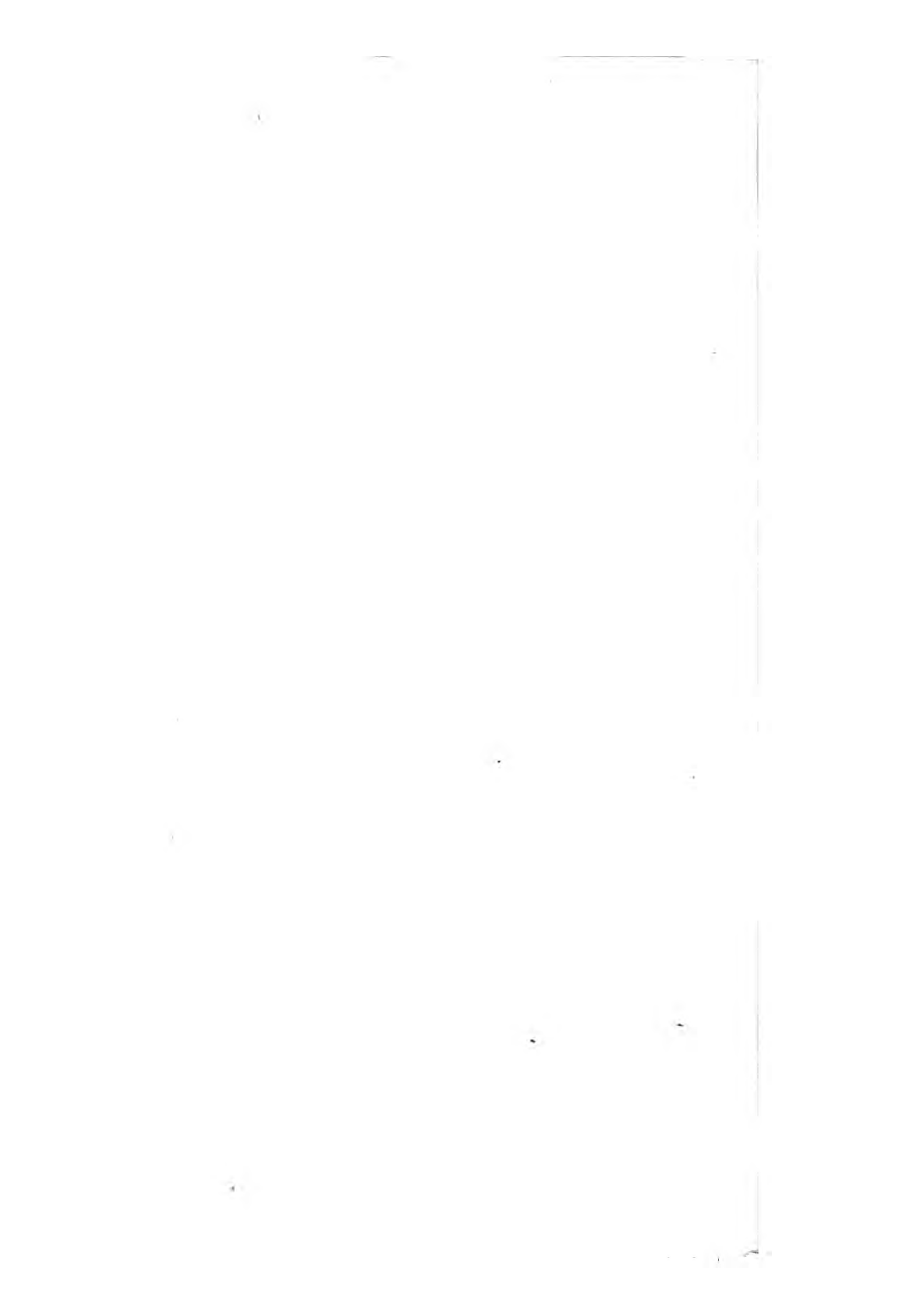
If the whole weight of what we think and feel,  
Save only far as thought and feeling blend  
With action, were as nothing, patriot Friend !  
From thy remonstrance would be no appeal ;  
But to promote and fortify the weal  
Of our own Being, is her paramount end ;  
A truth which they alone shall comprehend  
Who shun the mischief which they cannot heal.  
Peace in these feverish times is sovereign bliss ;  
Here, with no thirst but what the stream can slake,  
And startled only by the rustling brake,  
Cool air I breathe ; while the unincumbered Mind,  
By some weak aims at services assigned  
To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven amiss.

## XLVII.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

---

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them  
Who may respect my name, that I to thee  
Owed many years of early liberty.  
This care was thine when sickness did condemn  
Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem :  
That I, if frugal and severe, might stray  
Where'er I liked ; and finally array  
My temples with the Muse's diadem.  
Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth,  
If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,  
In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays  
Of higher mood, which now I meditate, —  
It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived Youth !  
To think how much of this will be thy praise.

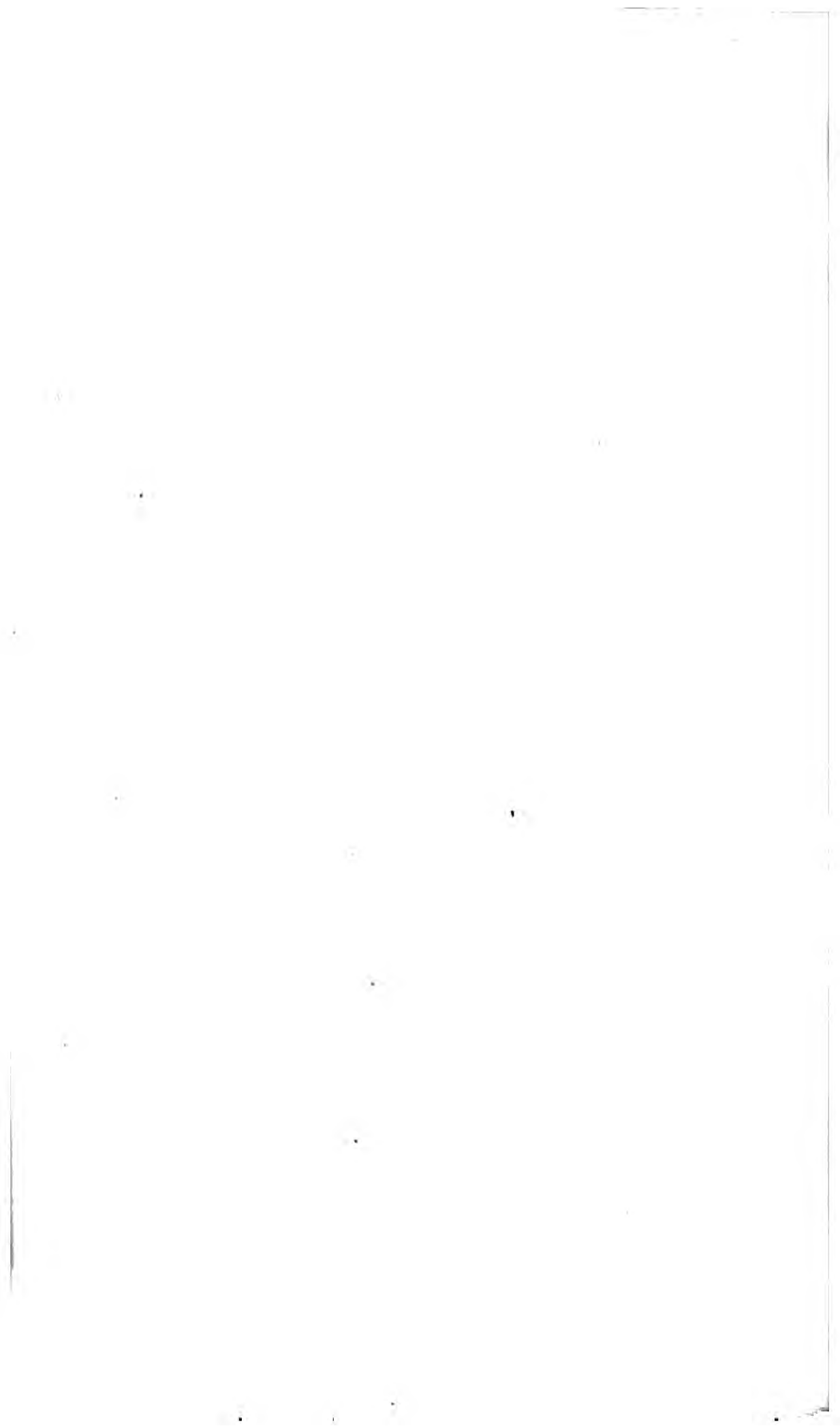


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**MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.**

**PART SECOND.**

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I.

---

SCORN not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,  
Mindless of its just honours ; — with this Key  
Shakspeare unlocked his heart ; the melody  
Of this small Lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;  
A thousand times this Pipe did Tasso sound ;  
Camöens soothed with it an Exile's grief ;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle Leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow : a glow-worm Lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land  
To struggle through dark ways ; and when a damp  
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a Trumpet, whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains — alas, too few !



II.

---

NOT Love, nor War, nor the tumultuous swell  
Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,  
Nor Duty struggling with afflictions strange,  
Not these alone inspire the tuneful shell ;  
But where untroubled peace and concord dwell,  
There also is the Muse not loth to range,  
Watching the blue smoke of the elmy grange,  
Skyward ascending from the twilight dell.  
Meek aspirations please her, lone endeavour,  
And sage content, and placid melancholy ;  
She loves to gaze upon a crystal river,  
Diaphanous, because it travels slowly ;  
Soft is the music that would charm for ever ;  
The flower of sweetest smell is shy and lowly.

## III.

SEPTEMBER, 1815.  

---

WHILE not a leaf seems faded, — while the fields,  
With ripening harvest prodigally fair,  
In brightest sunshine bask, — this nipping air,  
Sent from some distant clime where Winter wields  
His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields  
Of bitter change — and bids the Flowers beware ;  
And whispers to the silent Birds, “ Prepare  
Against the threatening Foe your trustiest shields.”  
For me, who under kindlier laws belong  
To Nature’s tuneful quire, this rustling dry  
Through leaves yet green, and yon crystalline sky,  
Announce a season potent to renew,  
Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys of song,  
And nobler cares than listless summer knew.

## IV.

NOVEMBER 1.

---

How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright  
The effluence from yon distant mountain's head,  
Which, strewn with snow as smooth as heaven can shed,  
Shines like another Sun — on mortal sight  
Uprisen, as if to check approaching night,  
And all her twinkling stars. Who now would tread,  
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering head —  
Terrestrial — but a surface, by the flight  
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,  
Unswept, unstained? Nor shall the aerial Powers  
Dissolve that beauty — destined to endure,  
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,  
Through all vicissitudes — till genial spring  
Have filled the laughing vales with welcome flowers.

## V.

COMPOSED DURING A STORM.  

---

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul  
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,  
Went forth — his course surrendering to the care  
Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings prowl  
Insidiously, untimely thunders growl ;  
While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers tear  
The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,  
And shivering wolves, surprised with darkness, howl  
As if the sun were not. He raised his eye  
Soul-smitten — for, that instant, did appear  
Large space, mid dreadful clouds, of purest sky,  
An azure orb — shield of Tranquillity,  
Invisible, unlooked-for minister  
Of providential goodness ever nigh !

## VI.

TO A SNOW-DROP.  

---

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they,  
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend  
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,  
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, way-lay  
The rising sun, and on the plains descend ;  
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
Whose zeal outruns his promise ! Blue-eyed May  
Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers ;  
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
Chaste Snow-drop, vent'rous harbinger of Spring,  
And pensive monitor of fleeting years !

## VII.

COMPOSED A FEW DAYS AFTER THE FOREGOING.

---

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,  
And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,  
Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring  
Mature release, in fair society  
Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try ;  
Like these frail snow-drops that together cling,  
And nod their helmets smitten by the wing  
Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.  
Observe the faithful flowers ! if small to great  
May lead the thoughts, thus struggling used to stand  
The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate ;  
And so the bright immortal Theban band,  
Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's command,  
Might overwhelm, but could not separate !

VIII.

---

THE Stars are mansions built by Nature's hand ;  
The Sun is peopled ; and with Spirits blest,  
Say, can the gentle Moon be unpossesst ?  
Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow strand,  
A Habitation marvellously planned,  
For life to occupy in love and rest ;  
All that we see — is dome, or vault, or nest,  
Or fort, erected at her sage command.  
Is this a vernal thought? Even so, the Spring  
Gave it while cares were weighing on my heart,  
Mid song of birds, and insects murmuring ;  
And while the youthful year's prolific art —  
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower — was fashioning  
Abodes, where self-disturbance hath no part.

X.

IX. TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER.

TO THE LADY BEAUMONT.  
FROM A SELECTION FROM THE POEMS OF ANNE, COUNTESS OF  
 WILBERRIE; AND SEVERAL OF SIMILAR CHARACTER FROM  
 OTHER WRITERS; TRANSCRIBED BY A FEMALE FRIEND.

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the grove,  
 While I was shaping beds for winter flowers;  
 While I was planting green unfading bowers,  
 And shrubs to hang upon the warm alcove,  
 And sheltering wall; and still, as fancy wove  
 The dream, to time and nature's blended powers,  
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,  
 A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall rove.  
 Yes! when the sun of life more feebly shines,  
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn gloom  
 Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;  
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring pines  
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom  
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.



## X.

## TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER,

WITH A SELECTION FROM THE POEMS OF ANNE, COUNTESS OF  
WILCHELSEA ; AND EXTRACTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER FROM  
OTHER WRITERS ; TRANSCRIBED BY A FEMALE FRIEND.

---

LADY ! I rifled a Parnassian Cave  
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore ;  
And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid store  
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave  
The azure brooks where Dian joys to lave  
Her spotless limbs ; and ventured to explore  
Dim shades — for reliques, upon Lethe's shore,  
Cast up at random by the sullen wave.  
To female hands the treasures were resigned ;  
And lo this Work ! — a grotto bright and clear  
From stain or taint ; in which thy blameless mind  
May feed on thoughts though pensive not austere ;  
Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined  
To holy musing, it may enter here.

XI.

---

*THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains*  
*Which only Poets know ; -- 'twas rightly said ;*  
Whom could the Muses else allure to tread  
Their smoothest paths, to wear their lightest chains ?  
When happiest Fancy has inspired the Strains,  
How oft the malice of one luckless word  
Pursues the Enthusiast to the social board,  
Haunts him belated on the silent plains !  
Yet he repines not, if his thought stand clear  
At last of hindrance and obscurity,  
Fresh as the Star that crowns the brow of Morn ;  
Bright, speckless as a softly-moulded tear  
The moment it has left the Virgin's eye,  
Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed Thorn.

## XII.

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,  
 "Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art bright!"  
 Forthwith, that little Cloud, in ether spread,  
 And penetrated all with tender light,  
 She cast away, and shewed her fulgent head  
 Uncovered;—dazzling the Beholder's sight  
 As if to vindicate her beauty's right,  
 Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.  
 Meanwhile that Veil, removed or thrown aside,  
 Went, floating from her, darkening as it went;  
 And a huge Mass, to bury or to hide,  
 Approached this glory of the firmament;  
 Who meekly yields, and is obscured;—content  
 With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed Thorn.

XIX.

XIII.

**HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour!**  
**Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night;**  
**But studious only to remove from sight**  
**Day's mutable distinctions. — Ancient Power!**  
**Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower,**  
**To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest**  
**Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest**  
**On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower**  
**Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him was seen**  
**The self-same Vision which we now behold,**  
**At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power! brought forth;**  
**These mighty barriers, and the gulf between;**  
**The floods, — the stars, — a spectacle as old**  
**As the beginning of the heavens and earth!**

XIV.

---

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky,  
How silently, and with how wan a face !\*  
Where art thou? Thou whom I have seen on high  
Running among the clouds a wood-nymph's race !  
Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a sigh  
Which they would stifle, move at such a pace !  
The northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,  
Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I  
The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should be :  
And the keen Stars, fast as the clouds were riven,  
Should sally forth, an emulous Company,  
Sparkling, and hurrying through the clear blue heaven ;  
But, Cynthia ! should to thee the palm be given,  
Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

\* From a Sonnet of Sir Philip Sidney.

XV.

---

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the stress  
Of a bedimming sleep, or as a lamp  
Suddenly glaring through sepulchral damp,  
So burns yon Taper mid a black recess  
Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless :  
The Lake below reflects it not ; the sky  
Muffled in clouds affords no company  
To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.  
Yet round the body of that joyless Thing,  
Which sends so far its melancholy light,  
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring  
A gay society with faces bright,  
Conversing, reading, laughing ; — or they sing,  
While hearts and voices in the song unite.

## XVI.

.VX

---

MARK the concentrated Hazels that enclose  
Yon old grey Stone, protected from the ray  
Of noontide suns : — and even the beams that play  
And glance, while wantonly the rough wind blows,  
Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows  
Upon that roof — amid embowering gloom  
The very image framing of a Tomb,  
In which some ancient Chieftain finds repose  
Among the lonely mountains. — Live, ye Trees !  
And Thou, grey Stone, the pensive likeness keep  
Of a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep :  
For more than Fancy to the influence bends  
When solitary Nature condescends  
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

## XVII.

CAPTIVITY.  

---

“ As the cold aspect of a sunless way  
Strikes through the Traveller’s frame with deadlier chill,  
Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,  
Glistening with unparticipated ray,  
Or shining slope where he must never stray ;  
So joys, remembered without wish or will,  
Sharpen the keenest edge of present ill, —  
On the crushed heart a heavier burthen lay.  
Just Heaven, contract the compass of my mind  
To fit proportion with my altered state !  
Quench those felicities whose light I find  
Reflected in my bosom all too late ! —  
O be my spirit, like my thraldom, strait ;  
And, like mine eyes that stream with sorrow, blind !”



XVIII.

---

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks  
Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;  
And whom the curious Painter doth pursue  
Through rocky passes, among flowery creeks,  
And tracks thee dancing down thy water-breaks ;  
If wish were mine some type of thee to view,  
Thee, — and not thee thyself, I would not do  
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human cheeks,  
Channels for tears ; no Naiad should'st thou be,  
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints nor hairs ;  
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in thee  
With purer robes than those of flesh and blood,  
And hath bestowed on thee a better good ;  
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

## XIX.

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM.

---

DOGOMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white fur !  
Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet hood !  
Who, with a keenness not to be withstood,  
Press the point home, — or falter and demur,  
Checked in your course by many a teasing burr ;  
These natural council-seats your acrid blood  
Might cool ; — and, as the Genius of the flood  
Stoops willingly to animate and spur  
Each lighter function slumbering in the brain,  
Yon eddying balls of foam — these arrowy gleams,  
That o'er the pavement of the surging streams  
Welter and flash — a synod might detain  
With subtle speculations, haply vain,  
But surely less so than your far-fetched themes !

## XX.

THIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOWING, WERE SUGGESTED BY MR. W.  
WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE CAVES, ETC. IN YORKSHIRE.

PURE element of waters! wheresoe'er  
 Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,  
 Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-bearing plants,  
 Rise into life and in thy train appear:  
 And, through the sunny portion of the year,  
 Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursuivants:  
 And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants;  
 And hart and hind and hunter with his spear,  
 Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt  
 In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign;  
 And, haply, far within the marble belt  
 Of central earth, where tortured Spirits pine  
 For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs melt  
 Their anguish,—and they blend sweet songs with thine.\*

\* Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the letter-press prefixed to his admirable views) are invariably found to flow through these caverns.

## XXI.

MALHAM COVE.

WAS the aim frustrated by force or guile,  
 When giants scooped from out the rocky ground  
 — Tier under tier — this semicirque profound?  
 (Giants — the same who built in Erin's isle  
 That Causeway with incomparable toil)  
 O, had this vast theatric structure wound  
 With finished sweep into a perfect round,  
 No mightier work had gained the plausive smile  
 Of all-beholding Phœbus! But, alas,  
 Vain earth! — false world! — Foundations must be laid  
 In Heaven; for, mid the wreck of is and was,  
 Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
 Make sadder transits o'er truth's mystic glass  
 Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

## XXII.

GORDALE.

---

AT early dawn, or rather when the air  
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy Eve  
Is busiest to confer and to bereave,  
Then, pensive Votary ! let thy feet repair  
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair  
Where the young lions couch ;— for so, by leave  
Of the propitious hour, thou may'st perceive  
The local Deity, with oozy hair  
And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn  
Recumbent : Him thou may'st behold, who hides  
His lineaments by day, yet there presides,  
Teaching the docile waters how to turn ;  
Or, if need be, impediment to spurn,  
And force their passage to the salt-sea tides !

## XXIII.

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG MEG AND HER  
DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE RIVER EDEN.

---

A WEIGHT of awe not easy to be borne  
Fell suddenly upon my Spirit — cast  
From the dread bosom of the unknown past,  
When first I saw that Sisterhood forlorn ;  
And Her, whose massy strength and stature scorn  
The power of years — pre-eminent, and placed  
Apart — to overlook the circle vast.  
Speak, Giant-mother ! tell it to the Morn  
While she dispels the cumbrous shades of night ;  
Let the Moon hear, emerging from a cloud,  
At whose behest uprose on British ground  
Thy Progeny ; in hieroglyphic round  
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the infinite,  
The inviolable God, that tames the proud !

1677  
XXIV.

THE SONNETS OF THE HAMILTON HILLS, YORKSHIRE.  
COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMILTON HILLS,  
YORKSHIRE.

---

DARK and more dark the shades of evening fell ;  
The wished-for point was reached, but late the hour ;  
And little could be gained from all that dower  
Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.  
Yet did the glowing west in all its power  
Salute us ; — there stood Indian Citadel,  
Temple of Greece, and Minster with its tower  
Substantially expressed — a place for Bell  
Or Clock to toll from. Many a tempting Isle,  
With Groves that never were imagined, lay  
Mid Seas how steadfast ! objects all for the eye  
Of silent rapture ; but we felt the while  
We should forget them ; they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.

## XXV.

LXXX

---

“ they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.”

---

THESE words were uttered as in pensive mood  
We turned, departing from that solemn sight;  
A contrast and reproach to gross delight,  
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily wooed!  
But now upon this thought I cannot brood;  
It is unstable as a dream of night;  
Nor will I praise a Cloud, however bright,  
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.  
Grove, Isle, with every shape of sky-built dome,  
Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,  
Find in the heart of man no natural home:  
The immortal Mind craves objects that endure:  
These cleave to it; from these it cannot roam,  
Nor they from it: their fellowship is secure.

---



## XXVI.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1803.

---

EARTH has not any thing to show more fair :  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty :  
This City now doth like a garment wear  
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !  
The river glideth at his own sweet will :  
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

## XXVII.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

---

YE sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth !  
In whose collegiate shelter England's Flowers  
Expand — enjoying through their vernal hours  
The air of liberty, the light of truth ;  
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth,  
Yet, O ye Spires of Oxford ! Domes and Towers !  
Gardens and Groves ! your presence overpowers  
The soberness of Reason ; till, in sooth,  
Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,  
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range  
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet ;  
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown  
The stream-like windings of that glorious street,  
— An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown !

---

## XXVIII.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

---

SHAME on this faithless heart ! that could allow  
Such transport — though but for a moment's space ;  
Not while — to aid the spirit of the place —  
The crescent moon clove with its glittering prow  
The clouds, or night-bird sang from shady bough,  
But in plain daylight : — She, too, at my side,  
Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,  
Maintains inviolate its slightest vow !  
Sweet Fancy ! other gifts must I receive ;  
Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim ;  
Take from *her* brow the withering flowers of eve,  
And to that brow Life's morning wreath restore ;  
Let *her* be comprehended in the frame  
Of these illusions, or they please no more.

## XXIX.

RECOLLECTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF KING HENRY EIGHTH,  
TRINITY LODGE, CAMBRIDGE.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATE MARY.

---

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,  
Are yet before me; yet do I behold  
The broad full visage, chest of amplest mould,  
The vestments brodered with barbaric pride;  
And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's side,  
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy  
With the keen threatenings of that fulgent eye,  
Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far descried.  
Who trembles now at thy capricious mood?  
Mid those surrounding worthies, haughty King!  
We rather think, with grateful mind sedate,  
How Providence educeth, from the spring  
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams of good,  
Which neither force shall check, nor time abate.

---

## XXX.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS LATE MAJESTY.

---

WARD of the LAW! — dread Shadow of a King!  
Whose Realm had dwindled to one stately room;  
Whose universe was gloom immersed in gloom,  
Darkness as thick as Life o'er Life could fling,  
Save haply for some feeble glimmering  
Of Faith and Hope; if thou, by nature's doom,  
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,  
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow cling,  
When thankfulness were best? — Fresh-flowing tears,  
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding sigh,  
Yield to such after-thought the sole reply  
Which justly it can claim. The Nation hears  
In this deep knell — silent for threescore years,  
An unexampled voice of awful memory!

## XXXI.

JUNE, 1820.

---

FAME tells of Groves — from England far away —  
\* Groves that inspire the Nightingale to trill  
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill  
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying lay ;  
Such bold report I venture to gainsay :  
For I have heard the choir of Richmond hill  
Chanting, with indefatigable bill,  
Strains, that recalled to mind a distant day ;  
When, haply under shade of that same wood,  
And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars  
Plied steadily between those willowy shores,  
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons stood —  
Listening, and listening long, in rapturous mood,  
Ye heavenly Birds ! to your Progenitors.

\* Wallachia is the country alluded to.

## XXXII.

A PARSONAGE,  
IN OXFORDSHIRE.

IN OXFORDSHIRE.

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,  
 Is marked by no distinguishable line ;  
 The turf unites, the pathways intertwine ;  
 And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,  
 Garden, and that Domain where Kindred, Friends,  
 And Neighbours rest together, here confound  
 Their several features, mingled like the sound  
 Of many waters, or as evening blends  
 With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,  
 Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave ;  
 And while those lofty Poplars gently wave  
 Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky  
 Bright as the glimpses of Eternity,  
 To Saints accorded in their mortal hour. \*

## XXXIII.

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE IN NORTH WALES.

---

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,  
Wandering with timid footstep oft betrayed,  
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid  
Old Time, though He, gentlest among the Thralls  
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid  
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,  
From the wan Moon, upon the Towers and Walls,  
Light deepening the profoundest sleep of shade.  
Relic of Kings ! Wreck of forgotten Wars,  
To winds abandoned and the prying Stars,  
Time *loves* Thee ! at his call the Seasons twine  
Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar ;  
And, though past pomp no changes can restore,  
A soothing recompense, his gift, is Thine !



## XXXIV.

TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.

COMPOSED IN THE GROUNDS OF PLASS NEWIDD, NEAR  
LLANGOLLIN, 1824.

---

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite Dee,  
Along the VALE OF MEDITATION flows ;  
So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased to see  
In Nature's face the expression of repose ;  
Or haply there some pious Hermit chose  
To live and die, the peace of Heaven his aim ;  
To whom the wild sequestered region owes,  
At this late day, its sanctifying name.  
GLYN CFAILLGARROCH, in the Cambrian tongue,  
In ours the *Vale of Friendship*, let *this* spot  
Be named ; where, faithful to a low-roofed Cot,  
On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long ;  
Sisters in love — a love allowed to climb,  
Even on this Earth, above the reach of Time !

## XXXV.

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE, NORTH WALES.

---

How art thou named? In search of what strange land  
From what huge height, descending? Can such force  
Of waters issue from a British source,  
Or hath not Pindus fed Thee, where the band  
Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with hand  
Desperate as thine? Or come the incessant shocks  
From that young Stream, that smites the throbbing rocks  
Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,  
As in Life's Morn; permitted to behold,  
From the dread chasm, woods climbing above woods  
In pomp that fades not, everlasting snows,  
And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose;  
Such power possess the Family of floods  
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

## XXXVI.

————— “ gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.”

---

THOUGH narrow be that Old Man's cares, and near,  
The poor Old Man is greater than he seems :  
For he hath waking empire, wide as dreams ;  
An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.  
Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer ;  
The region of his inner spirit teems  
With vital sounds and monitory gleams  
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.  
He the seven birds hath seen, that never part,  
Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly rounds,  
And counted them : and oftentimes will start —  
For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S HOUNDS  
Doomed, with their impious Lord, the flying Hart  
To chase for ever, on aërial grounds !

XXXVII.

---

STRANGE visitation ! at *Jemima's* lip  
Thus hadst thou pecked, wild Redbreast ! Love might say,  
A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip  
Its glistening dew ; but hallowed is the clay  
Which the Muse warms ; and I, whose head is grey,  
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship ;  
Nor could I let one thought — one motion — slip  
That might thy sylvan confidence betray.  
For are we not all His, without whose care  
Vouchsafed, no sparrow falleth to the ground ?  
Who gives his Angels wings to speed through air,  
And rolls the planets through the blue profound ;  
Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer ! nor forbear  
To trust a Poet in still vision bound.

XXXVIII.

---

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian Isle  
Lay couched ; — upon that breathless Monument,  
On him, or on his fearful bow unbent,  
Some wild Bird oft might settle, and beguile  
The rigid features of a transient smile,  
Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give vent,  
Slackening the pains of ruthless banishment  
From home affections, and heroic toil.  
Nor doubt that spiritual Creatures round us move,  
Griefs to allay that Reason cannot heal ;  
And very Reptiles have sufficed to prove  
To fettered Wretchedness, that no Bastile  
Is deep enough to exclude the light of love,  
Though Man for Brother Man has ceased to feel.

XXXIX.

---

WHILE they, her Playmates once, light-hearted tread  
The mountain turf and river's flowery marge;  
Or float with music in the festal barge;  
Rein the proud steed, or through the dance are led;  
Is Anna doomed to press a weary bed —  
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some Charge  
More urgent called, will stretch his wings at large,  
And Friends too rarely prop the languid head.  
Yet Genius is no feeble comforter :  
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for her  
Can cheat the time ; sending her fancy out  
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,  
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor shout,  
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring eyes.

## XL.

TO THE CUCKOO.

---

NOT the whole warbling grove in concert heard  
When sunshine follows shower, the breast can thrill  
Like the first summons, Cuckoo ! of thy bill,  
With its twin notes inseparably paired.  
The Captive, 'mid damp vaults unsunned, unaired,  
Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,  
That cry can reach ; and to the sick man's room  
Sends gladness, by no languid smile declared.  
The lordly Eagle-race through hostile search  
May perish ; time may come when never more  
The wilderness shall hear the Lion roar ;  
But, long as Cock shall crow from household perch  
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing,  
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the Spring !

## XLI.

THE INFANT M ————— M —————.

---

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace  
 Forgets her nature, opening like a flower  
 That neither feeds nor wastes its vital power  
 In painful struggles. Months each other chase,  
 And nought untunes that Infant's voice ; a trace  
 Of fretful temper sullies not her cheek ;  
 Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek  
 That one enrapt with gazing on her face,  
 (Which even the placid innocence of Death  
 Could scarcely make more placid, Heaven more bright,)  
 Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,  
 The Virgin, as she shone with kindred light ;  
 A Nursling couched upon her Mother's knee,  
 Beneath some shady Palm of Galilee.



## XLII.

TO ROTH A Q ———  
  
—————

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was grey  
When at the sacred Font for Thee I stood ;  
Pledged till thou reached the verge of womanhood,  
And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :  
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day  
For stedfast hope the contract to fulfil ;  
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,  
Embodied in the music of this Lay,  
Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain Stream\*  
Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear  
After her throes, this Stream of name more dear  
Since thou dost bear it, — a memorial theme  
For others ; for thy future self a spell  
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

\* The River Rotha, that flows into Windermere from the  
Lakes of Grasmere and Rydal.

## XLIII.

TO ———  
  
—————

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright,  
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined  
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind  
To something purer and more exquisite  
Than flesh and blood; whene'er thou meet'st my sight,  
When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,  
Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,  
And head that droops because the soul is meek,  
Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare;  
That Child of Winter, prompting thoughts that climb  
From desolation tow'rds the genial prime ;  
Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,  
And filling more and more with crystal light  
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

XLIV.

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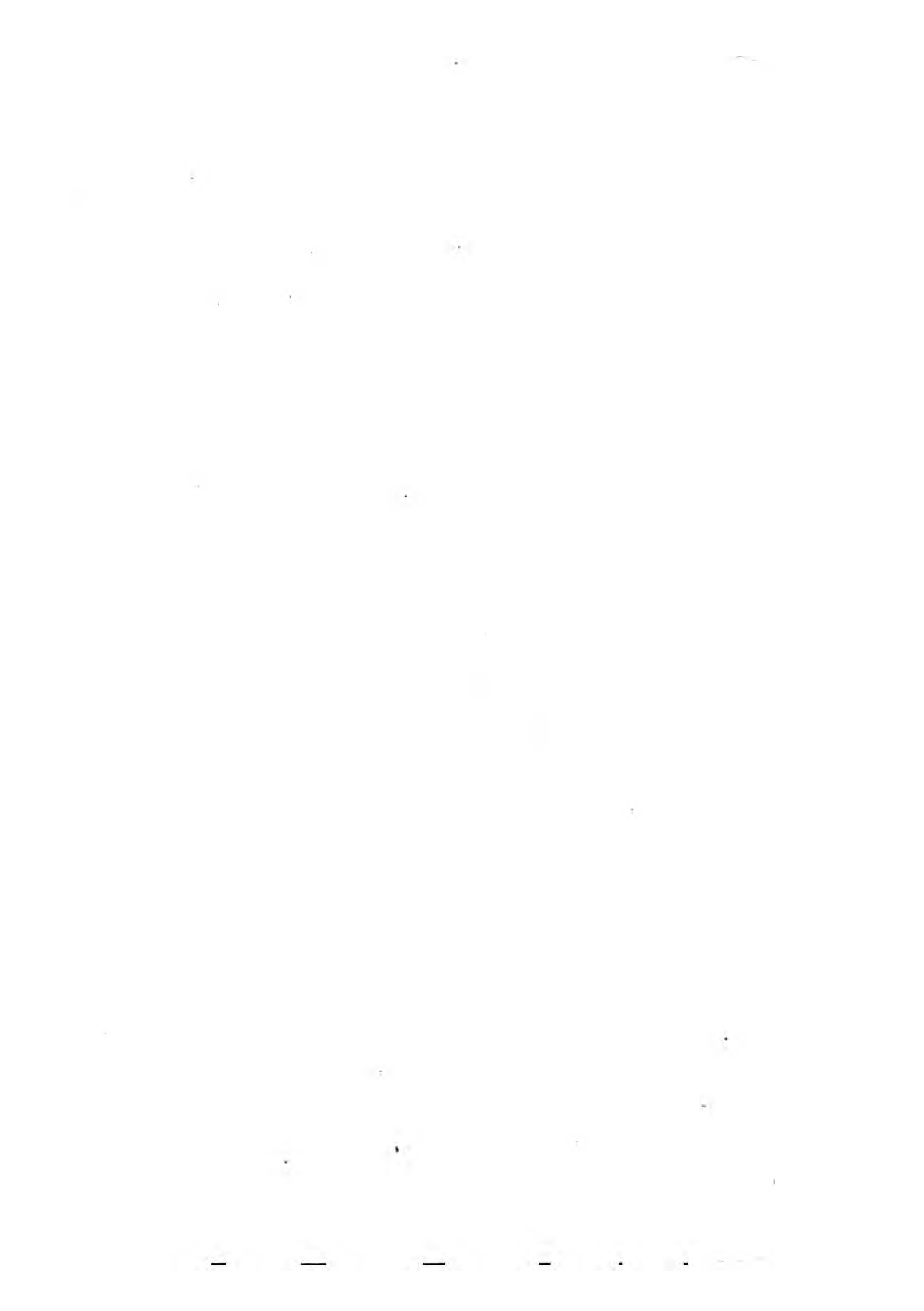
IN my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud  
Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,  
Rose out of darkness : the bright Work stood still,  
And might of its own beauty have been proud,  
But it was fashioned and to God was vowed  
By virtues that diffused, in every part,  
Spirit divine through forms of human art :  
Faith had her arch—her arch, when winds blow loud,  
Into the consciousness of safety thrilled ;  
And Love her towers of dread foundation laid  
Under the grave of things ; Hope had her spire  
Star-high, and pointing still to something higher ;  
Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice — it said,  
Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms when *we* build.

## XLV.

## CONCLUSION.

TO \_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

IF these brief Records, by the Muses' art  
Produced as lonely Nature or the strife  
That animates the scenes of public life  
Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part ;  
And if these Transcripts of the private heart  
Have gained a sanction from thy falling tears,  
Then I repent not : but my soul hath fears  
Breathed from eternity ; for as a dart  
Cleaves the blank air, Life flies : now every day  
Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift wheel  
Of the revolving week. Away, away,  
All fitful cares, all transitory zeal ;  
So timely Grace the immortal wing may heal,  
And honour rest upon the senseless clay.



## NOTES TO VOLUME II.

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Page 21. Last Line.

*“The shadow of a Danish Boy.”*

THESE Stanzas were designed to introduce a Ballad upon the Story of a Danish Prince who had fled from Battle, and, for the sake of the valuables about him, was murdered by the Inhabitant of a Cottage in which he had taken refuge. The House fell under a curse, and the Spirit of the Youth, it was believed, haunted the Valley where the crime had been committed.

Page 101. Line 4.

*“He told of the Magnolia, &c.”*

*Magnolia grandiflora.*

Page 101. Line 7.

*“Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
Cover a hundred leagues, &c.”*

The splendid appearance of these scarlet flowers, which are scattered with such profusion over the Hills in the Southern parts of North America, is frequently mentioned by Bartram in his Travels.

Page 108. Line 10.

*“And, coming to the banks of Tone,” &c.*

The Tone is a River of Somersetshire at no great distance from the Quantock Hills. These Hills, which are alluded to a few Stanzas below, are extremely beautiful, and in most places richly covered with coppice woods.

Page 155.

*“Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle.”*

Henry Lord Clifford, &c. &c., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the Reader of English History, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, “in part of revenge” (say the Authors of the History of Cumberland and Westmoreland); “for the Earl’s Father had slain his.” A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed); but who, as he adds, “dare promise any thing temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this Lord to speak.” This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; “for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this, (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke,) who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious

namé to which she was born,) that he was the next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age : and for the small distance betwixt her Children, see Austin Vincent in his book of Nobility, page 622., where he writes of them all. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading Man and Commander, two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time ; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth. — But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York : so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the Poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years ; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, “ when called to parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely ; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court ; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles.” Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn ; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd-life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of



in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles; and we have seen that after the wars of York and Lancaster they were rebuilt; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c. &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th Chap. 12th Verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grandmother) at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader. “*And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.*” The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.

Page 156. Line 15.

“*Earth helped him with the cry of blood.*”

This line is from the battle of Bosworth Field by Sir John Beaumont (Brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written

with much spirit, elegance, and harmony ; and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers's Collection of English Poets.

Page 160. Line 23.

*“ And both the undying Fish that swim  
Though Bowscale-Tarn, &c.”*

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal Fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld. — Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddle-back.

Page 161. Line 19.

*“ Armour rusting in his Halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls.”*

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English History ; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that, besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken, all died in the Field.

Page 177. Line 9.

*“ Wings at my shoulders seem to play, &c.”*

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of Jacob's Dream, by Mr. Alstone now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends.

Page 327. Line 1.

“ *A weight of awe not easy to be borne, &c.*”

The Daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number, and from more than three yards above ground, to less than so many feet : a little way out of the circle stands *Long Meg* herself, a single Stone, eighteen feet high. When the Author first saw this Monument, as he came upon it by surprise, he might overrate its importance as an object ; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, he must say, he has not seen any other Relique of those dark ages, which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

# ESSAY,

## SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

---

WITH the young of both Sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion ; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage ; or it relaxes of itself ; — the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation ; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. — In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature ; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above Classes the Readers of poetry may be divided ; Critics abound in them all ; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work.

The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses* and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged principle prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason! — When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts — is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or, if these errors always terminated of themselves in

due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark ; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause ; — that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem falls in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled ; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burthen of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so

much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i. e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves

to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, Men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the Authors by whom these truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book. — To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled as they are and must be with inward misgivings, they are jealous and sus-



picious; — and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity : — the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence ; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an “ imperfect shadowing forth ” of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry ; — between religion — making up the deficiencies of reason by faith ; and poetry — passionate for the instruction of reason ; between religion — whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription and reconciled to substitutions ; and poetry — ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error ; — so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious ; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing any thing of its quickness; and for active faculties capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, — associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it? — Among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed — that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trust-worthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mis-taught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained Censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; — who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found Critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine Poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; Men, who take upon them to re-

port of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany, — confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily “into the region;” — Men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, — who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives; — Judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of Judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits — must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: — it will be further found, that when Authors have, at length, raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerned their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes; — a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over

it ; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two Centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that can now endure to read the " Creation " of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise ; he was caressed by Kings ; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the Faery Queen faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his Countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

" The laurel meed of mighty Conquerors  
And Poets *sage* " —

are his own words ; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy ; while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power ; and bears a high name : the laurel has been awarded to him.

A Dramatic Author, if he write for the Stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the Audience, or they will not endure him ; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted ; but I am not sufficiently versed in Stage antiquities to determine whether they

did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic Writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the Admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius, is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him.\* — His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us

\* The learned Hakewill (a 3d edition of whose book bears date 1635) writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bargas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare. And so faint and limited was the perception of, the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general Reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their Buffon de Shakspeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian Critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous Poems in which Shakspeare expresses his own feelings in his own Person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though there is not a part of the writings of this Poet where is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an \* act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of these, or any production of Shakspeare, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in those little pieces; and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions, — “there sitting where he durst not soar.”

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope, in his youth, could pilfer from them without danger of detection. — Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated I will not undertake to decide: nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of Readers to suppose the con-

\* This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

trary; seeing that a Man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German Poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric Odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled Metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the Paradise Lost made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "*just to it*" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a Man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. The demand did not immediately increase; "for,"



says Dr. Johnson, "many more Readers" (he means Persons in the habit of reading poetry) "than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, 7th Edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, 4th Edition, 1686. Waller, 5th Edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine Editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know, but I well remember, that 25 years ago, the Booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable Man; but merely to shew — that, if Milton's work was not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early Editions of the Paradise Lost were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only 3000 copies of the Work were sold in 11 years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1644, that is 41 years, with only two Editions of the Works of Shakspeare; which probably did not together make 1000 Copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the "paucity of Readers." — There were Readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm, that the reception of the Paradise Lost, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous. \* — How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique

\* Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus. "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of Paradise Lost that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, every where impregnated with *original* excellence !

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles \* in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that Century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his Son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own Country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an Author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their Cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his life-time, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that

\* This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

the undue exertion of these arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which the Author intended to be burlesque. The Instigator of the work, and his Admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to shew them groveling and degraded." These Pastorals, ludicrous to those who prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than 60 years after the publication of the *Paradise Lost* appeared Thomson's *Winter*; which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? "It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary Biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for any thing in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the

softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing any thing new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the Poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination.

To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the Iliad. \* A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless \* ; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten ; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation, — nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an Enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity ! — If these two distinguished Writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a Poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder Poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to these appearances.

\* *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead :  
 The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head :  
 The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
 And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat :  
 Even Lust and Envy sleep ; yet Love denies  
 Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

*DRYDEN'S Indian Emperor.*

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance ; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the Seasons, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired Poet, but he could not work miracles ; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little *more*, though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shewn that much of what his Biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment, — how is the rest to be accounted for? — Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his Poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one : in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style ; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used Copy of the Seasons the Book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora) ; these also are prominent in our Collections of Extracts ; and are the parts of his Work, which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him “an elegant and philosophical Poet ;” nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson’s genius as an imaginative Poet \*

\* Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the 2d Edition of his Seasons, and find that even that does not contain the

were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost 40 years after the publication of the Seasons, pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope. In the Castle of Indolence (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure. Yet that fine Poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a Few !

When Thomson died, Collins breathed his regrets into an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet's remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable Editions, and are universally known ; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the Bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the Edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the Seasons of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the Relics of Ancient English Poetry ; collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This

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most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration ; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, which appeared not long after its publication; and which were modelled, as the Authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of City society; and Dr. Johnson, mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The Critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this Country, into temporary neglect; while Burger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating, or imitating these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, Poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the Persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos, (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces) yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact\* with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in

\* Shenstone, in his *Schoolmistress*, gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance, (See D'Israeli's 2d Series of the *Curiosities of Literature*) the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, shewing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.



modern times it has been cultivated. That even Burger, (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Gœthe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine Poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last,) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shewn from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

Now daye was gone, and night was come,  
 And all were fast asleepe,  
 All save the Lady Emeline,  
 Who sate in her bowre to weepe :

And soone she heard her true Love's voice  
 Low whispering at the walle,  
 Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,  
 'Tis I thy true-love call.

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal  
 Vermummt in Rabenschatten,  
 Und Hochburgs Lampen uber-all  
 Schon ausgeflimmert hatten,  
 Und alles tief entschlafen war ;  
 Doch nur das Fraulein immerdar,  
 Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,  
 Und seinen Ritter dachte :  
 Da horch ! Ein susser Liebeston  
 Kam leis' empor geflogen.  
 " Ho, Trudchen, ho ! Da bin ich schon !  
 Risch auf ! Dich angezogen ! "

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition — it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the “Reliques” had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable: how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance! — Open this far-famed Book! — I have done so at random, and the beginning of the “Epic Poem Temora,” in 8 Books, presents itself. “The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds.” Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. — Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous Country,

from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the World under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature every thing is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work it is exactly the reverse; every thing (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened, — yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steeps of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Carborne heroes; — of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface. — Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shewn that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his very “ands” and his “buts!” and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Stäel, that many of the characteristic beauties

of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fingallian ; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own. — It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland ; — a Country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns ! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as these pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding Writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration ; no Author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them — except the Boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture ; and he set himself to the work of filling a Magazine with *Saxon poems*, — counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural ; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless. — Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions ! — I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work ; and for our own Country, its Poetry has been

absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able Writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques ; I know that it is so with my friends ; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces biographical and critical for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The Booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection ; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their Books of accounts ; and decided upon the claim of Authors to be admitted into a body of the most Eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley ! — What is become of the Morning-star of English Poetry ? Where is the bright Elizabethan Constellation ? Or, if Names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer ? where is Spenser ? where Sidney ? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a Poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a Dramatist, we have vindicated, — where Shakspeare ? — These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was

to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt — Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates; Writers in metre utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes? — The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these Poems were first published, 17 years ago; who has also observed to what degree the Poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which

these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains, which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely different in value; — they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of Poetical Works, it is this, — that every Author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose Poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them; — and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road: — he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original Poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the Reader of the

pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein Men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all Men are alike, or the same ; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on Men who stand below him in the scale of society ? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of Readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted ?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does *not* lie here. — TASTE, I would remind the Reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive, — to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word, imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of taste, the process has been reversed ; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, — being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy, — which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, imagination ; but the word, Taste, has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount



among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office; — for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or in ordinary language the pathetic and the sublime; — are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor — *Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry! — But,

“ Anger in hasty *words* or *blows*  
Itself discharges on its foes.”

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid, — and soon languishes, and

dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great Poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original Writer, at his first appearance in the world. — Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before : Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe : or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the Poet? Is it to be supposed that the Reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian Prince or General — stretched on his Palanquin, and borne by his Slaves? No, he is invigorated and inspirited by his Leader, in order that he may exert himself, for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect ; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem — that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true Poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are

simple and direct, and others — that are complex and revolutionary; some — to which the heart yields with gentleness, others — against which it struggles with pride: these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected — is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the Poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself — but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime, — if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity, in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a Poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word, *popular*, applied to new works in Poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all Men should run after his productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell! — The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused

without the trouble of thought. But in every thing which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power ; — wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination ; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the Poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic annunciation of the remotest future, *there*, the Poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers. — Grand thoughts, (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth) as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the Sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing — that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good ; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age : whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes* ; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced ; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty, — with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing

humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and, their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said, above — that, of *good Poetry, the individual, as well as the species, survives.* And how does it survive but through the People? what preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

“ — Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge — ”

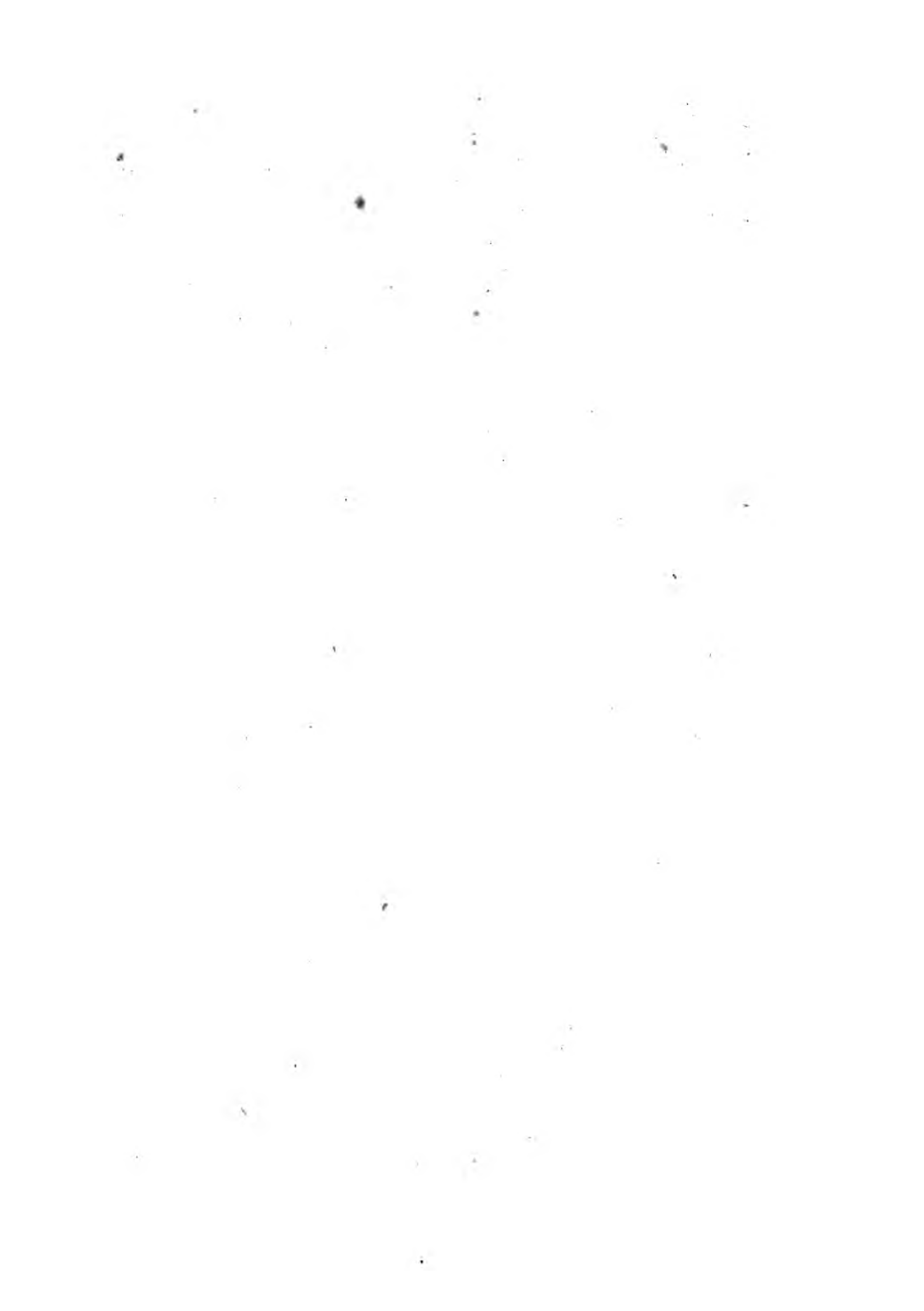
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The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that *Vox populi* which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry — transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is any thing of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the PUBLIC, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the PEOPLE. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is intitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterized, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at

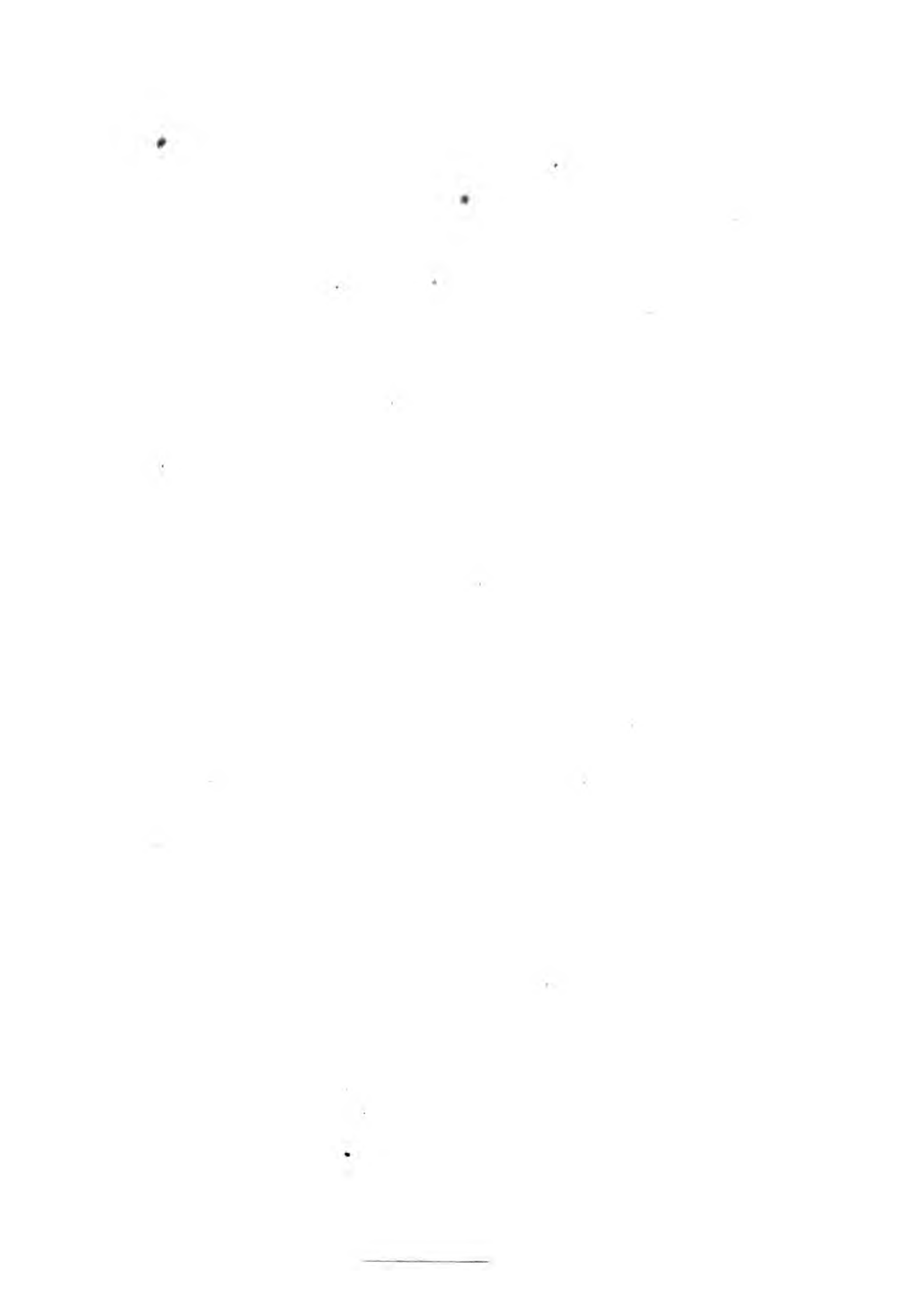
the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them — that, if he were not persuaded that the Contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evinced something of the “ Vision and the Faculty divine ;” and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction ; — from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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