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THE
EARLIER POEMS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THE
EARLIER POEMS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

CORRECTED AS IN THE LATEST EDITIONS.

WITH PREFACE, AND NOTES

SHOWING THE TEXT AS IT STOOD IN 1815.

BY WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

1857.

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TO

THE REV. JOHN MILLER, M.A.,

Formerly Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford,

A JUDICIOUS LOVER OF THE WORDSWORTHIAN MUSE,

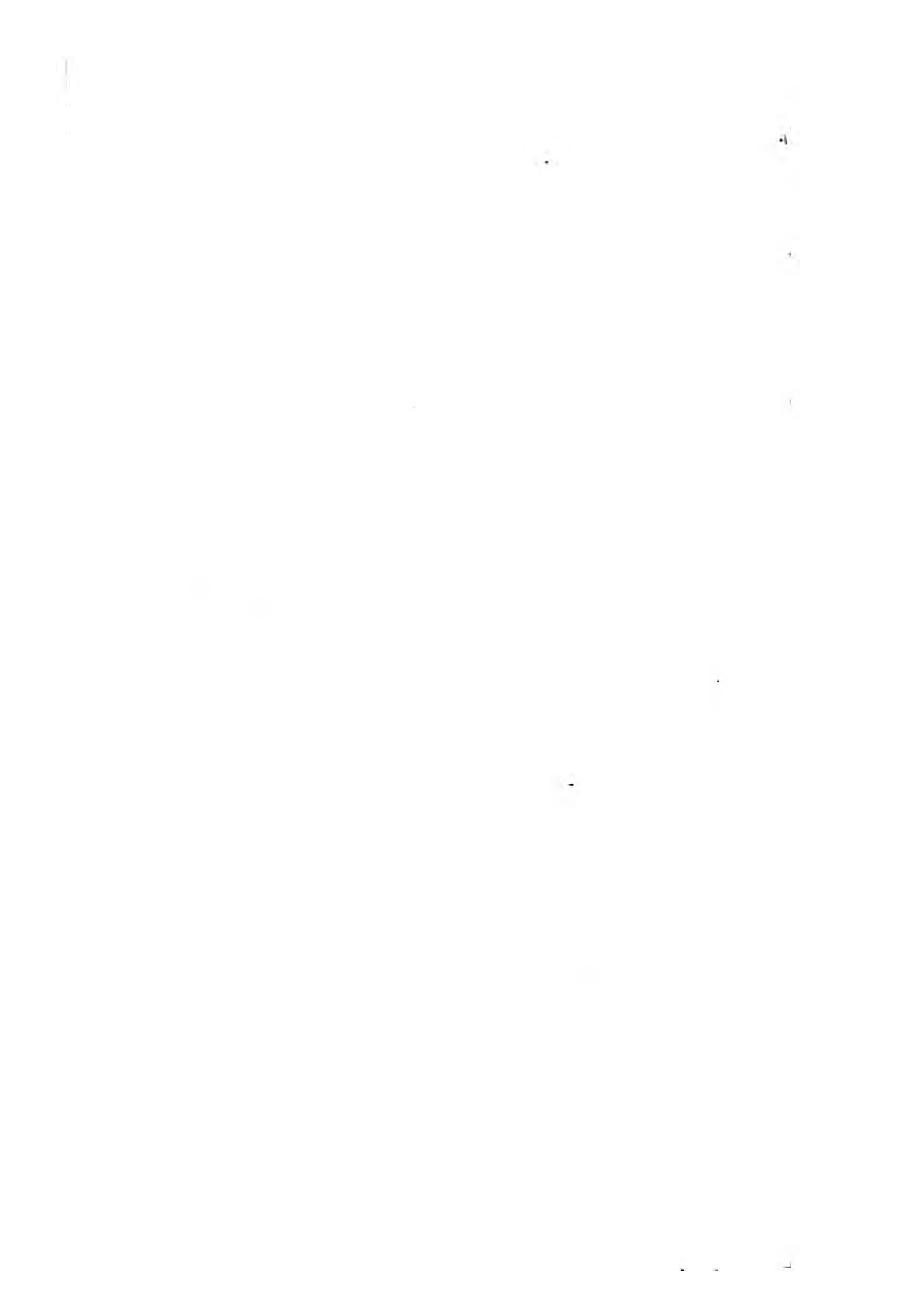
This Volume is Inscribed,

**AS A MEMORIAL OF CORDIAL ESTEEM AND
LASTING FRIENDSHIP,**

BY

THE EDITOR.

LONDON, December, 1856.



PREFACE.



IT having been determined to re-publish the Earlier Poems of William Wordsworth separately from his collected Works, some prefatory observations, specially applicable to these earlier productions, may probably be deemed acceptable by many readers. A new generation has grown up since these poems were first given to the public, and many will perhaps require to be told that in the first ten years of the present century it was a common matter of literary controversy whether Wordsworth was to be regarded as an extravagant experimentalist in poetical composition, or as a great poet? That question has long since been determined by the good sense and good feeling of his countrymen. His pure and lofty conceptions, and the majestic beauty of his verse, are now the admiration of all virtuous and cultivated minds. But his advance to fame was slow, and though he had from the beginning some enthusiastic admirers, the great body of the reading public were, for a good many years, more apt to remember those passages of his poetry which they had been taught to consider puerile and ridiculous, than to

relish the truth and beauty of his minor poems, or to reverence the noble simplicity and austere grandeur of those which were more elaborate and ambitious.

When he first began to publish,—which was about the beginning of the present century,*—he took up, with considerable boldness, the position of an antagonist of the established “poetic diction,” to the use of which almost all writers of verse had been accustomed for some time to consider themselves restricted. The principal object, he said, which he proposed to himself was “to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men.”† He carried this theory to such an extreme in several of the poems of the editions of 1798, 1800, and 1802, that some of the expressions and allusions were so familiar and prosaic as to be unsuitable to his own theory of the nature of poetry,—namely, that “poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” When a writer describes a pond as “three feet long and two feet wide,” and uses other expressions of a similar kind, we must admit that in such

* The first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* was published in 1798, and the second, with the famous preface, was published in 1800.

† Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. Mr. Coleridge in his “*Biographia Literaria*,” says: “The *Lyrical Ballads* were presented by Mr. Wordsworth, as an experiment whether subjects which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second Edition he added a preface of considerable length, in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible, all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life.”

instances, though he expresses himself in the language really used by men, he does not use the language of poetry; for we cannot associate such language with the overflow of powerful feelings. But these blemishes, which occurred only here and there in the poetry of Wordsworth, were eagerly seized upon and held up to ridicule by critics who hated the simple yet elevated sentiment and the pure moral philosophy of his writings; and who were moreover exceedingly angry with what they described as his "open violation of the established laws of poetry."* Thus the portions of Mr. Wordsworth's verses which could easily be made the subject of a sneer, were brought prominently into view, while the truth, simplicity, and exquisite beauty of far more numerous passages, were scarcely noticed: and as the common crowd generally love caricature and sarcasm better than pure feeling, and delicate perception of the good and beautiful in nature, the more general opinion of Wordsworth's poetry for a long time was that it was characterised by "babyish incidents and fantastical sensibilities."† A good many years had passed away before this popular delusion was dissipated, and a juster conception of the profound thought and exalted beauty of Wordsworth's poetry had been generally diffused.

The difficulties which a champion of the natural style in poetry had to contend with at the beginning of the nineteenth century can only be estimated by those whose reading has made them acquainted with the taste, which then had long prevailed, for an ornate

* Edinb. Rev. vol. xi. p. 231.

† Ibid. p. 228.

and artificial mode of expression. Dr. Johnson, who thought upon such subjects rather as a scholar than as a poet, had laid it down that poetry was distinguished from prose by certain combinations of fine words—certain elegancies or flowers of speech, and by artful selections of those phrases which had not been rendered familiar by ordinary use.* The poetic soul of Wordsworth, obtaining continual inspiration from the pure fountains of nature amid which he lived, revolted from such a theory, which was as little in harmony with the just principles of poetic composition, as it was with the practice of Shakspeare and the other truly great poets of our land. Had Johnson's theory been true, the politest age would have been also the most poetical, and Homer himself would necessarily have been deposed from his ancient sovereignty of the poetic realm. The notion, however, long remained among critics that a certain polish and elevation of language, rather than

* "Every language of a learned nation necessarily divides itself into diction scholastic and popular, grave and familiar, elegant and gross: and, from a nice distinction of these different parts, arises a great part of the beauty of style. But, if we except a few minds, the favorites of nature, to whom their own original rectitude was in the place of rules, this delicacy of selection was little known to our authors: our speech lay before them in a heap of confusion; and every man took for every purpose what chance might offer him.

"There was therefore, before the time of Dryden, no poetical diction, no system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestic use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts. Words too familiar, or too remote, defeat the purpose of a poet. From those sounds which we hear, on small or on coarse occasions, we do not easily receive strong impressions, or delightful images; and words to which we are nearly strangers, whenever they occur, draw that attention on themselves which they should transmit to things.

"Those happy combinations of words, which distinguish poetry from prose, had been rarely attempted: we had few elegancies or flowers of speech; the roses had not yet been plucked from the bramble; or different colours had not been joined to enliven one another."—JOHNSON, *Life of Dryden*.

simplicity and truthfulness, were necessary in all compositions pretending to the name of poetry. Something which was described as 'the canon of general taste in all large and polished societies' was not to be offended by any simpler and more rustic expression of thought. Even they who refused their full assent to the Johnsonian views of poetic diction, resented the simplicity of Mr. Wordsworth as "coarse, inelegant, or infantine."*

Conscious of the powers he possessed, it is no wonder that the poet received such criticism with indignation, and felt little disposed, at the time, to amend such real faults as were pointed out. Reflection however, and the maturity of his taste, led him in the later editions of his works to alter almost all the passages to which such epithets as those above cited could, with any show of reason, have been applied. The alterations shown in the notes to the present edition from the edition of 1815, will be found to be almost all in the direction of greater dignity and refinement; and such instances would have been largely multi-

* The following passage is from the criticism of the Edinburgh Review, on the Edition of Wordsworth's poems published in 1807:—

"The melody of words and verses is indifferent to no reader of poetry; but the chief recommendation of poetical language is certainly derived from those general associations which give it a character of dignity or elegance, sublimity or tenderness. Every one knows that there are low and mean expressions, as well as lofty and grave ones, and that some words bear the impression of coarseness and vulgarity as clearly as others do of refinement and affection. We do not mean of course to say anything in defence of the hackneyed common-places of ordinary versemen. Whatever might have been the original character of these unlucky phrases, they are now associated with nothing but ideas of school-boy imbecility and vulgar affectation. But what we do maintain is, that much of the most popular poetry in the world owes its celebrity chiefly to the beauty of its diction, and that no poetry can be long or generally acceptable, the language of which is coarse, inelegant, or infantine."

plied, had it been deemed expedient to crowd the notes with instances of the alterations from earlier editions.*

Notwithstanding all the fault which was found with the poems of Mr. Wordsworth, and all the ridicule that was poured out upon particular passages, it was evident enough that they had taken a strong hold upon the thoughtful and imaginative portion of the reading world. They had in them something to meditate upon—something that all who could reason upon works of imagination thought it worth while to discuss. It therefore became as absurd as it was unjust to treat such writings with contempt, and to try to make the world believe, on the strength of a few isolated passages, which from their extreme character were open to ridicule, that the poems taken as a whole were marked by “childishness, affectation, and conceit.” † Indeed there can be little doubt

* Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, in his biography of the Poet, (vol. i. ch. xiii.) notices these faulty passages as “affronts to the judgment of the world,” and adds that such passages, “which appear in the first three impressions of the *Lyrical Ballads*, are not found in succeeding Editions, and, upon the whole, it may now be affirmed that among all the poets of England none has surpassed him, in elaborate workmanship both in the form and expression of his thoughts.”

† Mr. Coleridge thus remarks upon the strange contrast of the heat and long continuance of the opposition to Mr. Wordsworth's Poems, with the nature of the faults stated as justifying it:—“The seductive faults, the *dulcia vitia* of Cowley, Marini, or Darwin, might reasonably be thought capable of corrupting the public judgment for half a century, and require a twenty years' war, campaign after campaign, in order to dethrone the usurper, and re-establish the legitimate taste. But that a downright simpleness under the affectation of simplicity, prosaic words in feeble metre, silly thoughts in childish phrases, and a preference of mean, degrading, or at best trivial associations and characters, should succeed in forming a school of imitators, a company of almost religious admirers, and this too among young men of ardent minds, liberal education, and not

—with academic laurels unbestowed;

and that this base and bold counterfeit of poetry, which is characterised

that at the time when Mr. Wordsworth's poems were far from popular, and when the smart criticism of the day was so constantly directed against them, he was, even then, one of the most influential writers of the age. He had found out, as it were, a new source of profound and delightful thought. He had discovered a meaning in the forms of Nature which had not been discovered before, and had given an expression to that meaning which, if not universally understood, was quite intelligible to all who combined deep thought with deep feeling.

Even those who were least willing to do justice to his genius were probably in no slight degree under its influence, and it would not be difficult, from the writings of at least some who never alluded to him in terms of respect, to show that they had at all events paid him the homage of borrowing his thoughts, or imitating his manner. His writings, if one may so express one's meaning, have had the nature of leaven, and worked in many minds for good—in the minds of many who did, and of some who did not, acknowledge whence their new sense of the influence of nature was derived.

Nor will this be thought surprising when we consider the great natural abilities of the man, and the excellence of the purpose which he held steadily in view.* That

as below criticism, should for nearly twenty years have well nigh engrossed criticism, as the main, if not the only, butt of review, magazine, pamphlet, poem, and paragraph; this is indeed matter of wonder."—*Biog. Lit.* vol. i. 73.

* "The feelings and aims with which these poems were written and published were not obvious to the world, and probably are not even now rightly understood by many readers. By some persons the 'Lyrical Ballads' are regarded merely as pictures of beautiful nature, and a simple

purpose was a very different one from the acquisition either of fortune or of fame as an author. Not that I suppose he was indifferent to these things, or less sensible than others were of their value, when they came, but he did not lay himself out for them. He aimed at something higher and better. In the preface to the "Lyrical Ballads" he says, after alluding to the triviality of thought and language which some of his contemporaries had introduced into their metrical compositions, that from such verses the poems in his volumes would be distinguished by at least one mark of difference, that each of them had "a worthy purpose." Not that I mean to say, he continues, "that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but I believe that my habits of meditation have so formed my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them *a purpose*. If in this opinion I am mistaken, I can have little right to the name of a poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, poems to which any value can be attached, were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply."

It may be useful to the attentive reader of these earlier poems to know not only that they had a purpose, but what was the general purpose of the whole, and the

state of society; but the design of the poet in the selection of his subjects, and the ends for which he laboured in treating them, deserve more attention than they appear generally to have received."—*Memoirs of W. Wordsworth*, by Dr. C. Wordsworth, vol. i. ch. xvii.

particular purpose of some of them.* The general purpose then, was to display the strength of moral attachment when early associated with the great and beautiful objects of nature ; to place the reader in the way of receiving from ordinary moral sensations another and more salutary impression than is generally derived from them ; to sketch characters under the influence of less impassioned feelings—characters of which the elements are simple, belonging rather to nature than to manners, such as will probably always exist, and which from their constitution may be distinctly and *profitably* contemplated.† The author of these poems was of opinion that the human mind was capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants, and that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. He thought that to produce or enlarge this capability would be to do excellent service to society, and that also was his purpose. He desired to oppose himself to what he called the degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation which existed at the time he wrote, and which was manifested in the reading of frantic novels, sickly and stupid German tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.‡ His deliberate pur-

* Of his poems the author himself says :—

“To console the afflicted ; to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier ; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think, and to feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous, this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform, long after we (that is, all that is mortal of us) are mouldered in our graves. I am well aware how far, it would seem to many, I overrate my own exertions when I speak in this way in direct connection with the volume I have just made public.”—*Letter to Lady Beaumont*, May, 1807.

† See the Preface to the “*Lyrical Ballads*.”

‡ *Ibid.*

pose was to do his part in supplying the public with a more wholesome literature,—with that which was more natural, more beautiful, more true.

In January, 1801, soon after the publication of the second edition of the “Lyrical Ballads,” Wordsworth sent a copy to Charles Fox, the leader of the popular party at that time, with a long letter in which he claimed the statesman’s sympathy, and particularly explained the purpose he had in view in publishing the poems entitled “The Brothers” and “Michael.”* In these poems he said he had attempted to draw a picture of the domestic affections as he knew they existed among a class of men who were then almost confined to the North of England. He lamented that there was a rapid decay of the domestic affections of the lower orders of society, of which the rulers of the country were not conscious, or were regardless of it. He entered into a description of the small proprietors in the North called “statesmen,” and complimented his distinguished correspondent as one whose public conduct had been directed to the preservation of such classes of men.† The two poems of “The Brothers” and “Michael” were written,

* See pages 66 and 121 of this volume.

† “The clue to his *poetical* theory in some of its questionable details may be found in his *political* principles; these had been democratical, and still, though in some degree modified, they were of a republican character. At this period he entertained little reverence for ancient institutions as such; and he felt little sympathy with the higher classes of society. He was deeply impressed with a sense of the true dignity of the lower orders and their sufferings, and his design was to endeavour to recover for them the rights of the human family, and the franchises of universal brotherhood, of which he appears to have thought they had been robbed by the wealthy, the noble, and the few. He desired to impart moral grandeur to poverty, and to invest the objects of irrational and inanimate nature with a beauty and grace of which it seemed to him they had been stripped by a heartless and false taste, pretending to the title of delicacy and refinement.”—*Biography, by Dr. C. Wordsworth*, vol. i. ch. xiii.

he said, "with a view to show that men who do not wear fine clothes can feel deeply. 'Pectus enim est quod disertos facit, et vis mentis. Ideoque imperitis quoque, si modo sint aliquo affectu concitati, verba non desunt.' The poems are faithful copies from nature ; and I hope whatever effect they may have upon you, you will at least be able to perceive that they may *excite profitable sympathies in many kind and good hearts*, and may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature, by showing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us." This extract serves to show the serious purpose with which poems were written, that the popular criticism of the day treated as something little better than simplicity run mad. The great merits of the two poems to which the attention of Mr. Fox was called, are now all but universally acknowledged. Upon him, however, they appear to have made but little impression. Some months after Wordsworth's letter was sent he received from Mr. Fox a short but civil reply, in which, after complimenting the poems generally, and a few of the shorter ones in particular, he proceeds to state that "he had read with particular attention the two which the author had pointed out ; but whether, from early prepossessions or whatever other cause, he was no great friend to blank verse for subjects which were to be treated of with simplicity." This must have been felt by Mr. Wordsworth to be very unsatisfactory criticism,

and probably led him to the conclusion that a man might be a very ardent popular advocate, and a lover of literary recreation, without possessing much soul for poetry, or much capability of being excited by vivid pictures of the domestic affections of the poor.*

The question, however, may now suggest itself to some readers how it came to pass that if these early poems were really good poems, instinct with genius, and of a nature to call into activity the best feelings of the human breast, they should nevertheless have been so long unpopular, and should have failed to produce any very strong impression even upon such a mind as that of Mr. Fox? We must look for the answer to this question in a consideration of the little relish which the ordinary mind has for severe and simple truth, and in certain characteristics of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry. "This same truth," says Lord Bacon, "is a naked and open daylight that doth not show the masques and mummeries, and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Doth any man doubt that if there were taken out of men's minds, vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men, poor shrunken things, full of melancholy indisposition, and displeasing to themselves?" It is because ordinary human nature answers so well to this description of it, that far the greater number, even of those who read, and who pretend to some taste, seek

* See, however, the poet's verses written when he heard the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected (page 421), in which he dwells upon the grief and fear of the thousands who regarded Mr. Fox as their stay and their glory.

that which Wordsworth called "outrageous stimulation." Nothing less than this will set their thoughts or their feelings in action. The contemplation of the simple truth of nature, with whatever beautiful conceptions it may be associated, is not sufficient to excite them. They desire something tricked out with artificial pomps. To them all writing that is not exaggerated, is tame, and all that is profound is troublesome. Not only did Mr. Wordsworth not show them the masques, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world as they would have wished to see them, but he did not show them at all.*

It is a characteristic of the poetry of Wordsworth, that it is chiefly addressed to sympathies and feelings which though simple are not very common, and to the growth of which the habits and pursuits of the busy world are not favourable. It is intended to affect persons of deep but tranquil feeling—persons of thoughtful and meditative, rather than of active and demonstrative, intellectual habits. In the preface to his first two volumes, he says he had flattered himself that they who should be pleased with his poems, would read them

* "Even he [Wordsworth] has exhibited, only one limited, however lofty, region of life, and has made it far less his aim to represent what lies around him by means of self-transference into *all* its feelings, than to choose therefrom what suits his spirit of ethical meditation, and to compel mankind, out alike of their toilsome daily paths, and pleasant nightly dreams, into his own severe and stately school of thought. The present movement of human life, nay, its various and spontaneous joys, to him are little save so far as they afford a text for a mind in which fixed will, and stern speculation, and a heart austere and measured even in its piety, are far more obvious powers than fancy, emotion, or keen and versatile sympathy. He discourses indeed with divine wisdom of life and nature, and all their sweet and various impulses, but the impression of his own great calm judicial soul is always far too mighty for any all-powerful feeling of the objects he presents to us."—*Quarterly Review*, No. 140.

with more than common pleasure ; and, on the other hand, he was well aware that by those who should dislike them, they would be read with more than common dislike. He adds ; that the result had differed from his expectation in this only, that he had pleased a greater number than he had ventured to hope he should please. A few years afterwards, in a letter to Lady Beaumont, he takes a bolder tone in speaking of himself, and a more severe one in referring to those who disrelished his productions. Of them, he says, they are incompetent judges, those people who in the senseless hurry of their idle lives, do not *read* books, but merely snatch a glance at them that they may talk about them. “ Even if this were not so,” he adds, “ never forget what I believe was observed to you by Coleridge, that every great and original writer, in proportion as he is great or original, must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished ; he must teach the art by which he is to be seen.”

It is in the same letter that he says, it is “ an awful truth that there neither is nor can be any genuine enjoyment of poetry among nineteen out of twenty of those persons who live or wish to live, in the broad light of the world, among those who either are, or are striving to make themselves, *people of consideration in society*. This is a truth, and an awful one, because to be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature, and reverence for God.” To many this will seem an overstrained expression of the importance of a feeling for poetry, but we must take into account the character of

Wordsworth, the serious purpose of his compositions, and what was *his* sense of the word Poetry, in order rightly to estimate the reasonableness of what he asserts. He was, as it were, a priest of nature, teaching pure and innocent, or high and holy, thoughts to all who would listen to his lays. It was his own theory that

“He serves the Muses erringly and ill
Whose aim is pleasure, light and fugitive.”

He never sought to amuse idle minds, but to supply thoughtful minds with objects worthy of their thought; to make even the simplest of simple things minister to profound or lofty contemplation; or conversely, to bring the noblest thoughts to bear upon the most common objects,—

“And with the lofty sanctify the low.”

We need not feel much surprise that such a Poet as this should attach an almost religious character to poetical sentiment, or that he should speak with a warmth approaching indignation, when he had to reply to remarks made upon his verses by those whose chief object in life is that of making themselves of consideration in what is called “society.” That is a kind of ambition which Wordsworth and all men of kindred feeling have a tendency to despise, perhaps more than they ought to despise it, for that too may work for good in active life, though its aims be altogether alien from the life contemplative.

Even in the less ambitious poems of our author we shall generally find that he addresses himself to the reflective part of our nature. Though his verses are

not hard to understand, yet, if we would enjoy them, we must meditate. He says himself:—

“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.”*

This is a most just account of the character of a considerable number of the poems in this volume. They are simple songs, but they are songs for thinking hearts, and it is to be hoped that they may induce that tone of mind which is necessary for their enjoyment. We must not however forget—that which many of the earlier critics of Wordsworth either overlooked, or were incapable of observing—that there is a distinction between the simplicity of childishness, and the simplicity of pure thoughtfulness. It suited the purpose of critics whose aim was to exhibit their own powers of ridicule rather than to give a just account of the poems which they criticised, to represent as childish that which was indeed simple, but which nevertheless was intended for thinking hearts. By unsophisticated and thoughtful persons these poems could be relished and appreciated, though from their want of respect to the views of excellence then current in the reading and critical world, they rather gave offence to the clever and the brilliant of literary circles. There were some of the earlier poems which called for critical reproof on account of an apparent wilfulness in throwing away great powers; but the Reviewers who attacked these were not less severe upon the best of Mr. Wordsworth's

* Poem of “*Hart-leap Well*,” Part ii.

poems, and even upon particular passages which are now the theme of universal admiration.

This may perhaps be the fitting place to mention, that though taking the Edition of 1815 for my guide generally as to the poems to be reprinted in this volume, and as to the order of them, I have thought it best to omit three, namely, "The Idiot Boy," "Goody Blake and Harry Gill," and "Andrew Jones." The last appears to have been omitted by the Poet himself in the collected edition of his Works, but the two former he retained, and, reasonably enough, considering that they may be said to belong to literary history. Yet I venture to think that in such a volume as the present they are as well omitted. The first contains many beauties, but the story, upon the whole, represents the early eccentricities rather than the genius of the author. The incidents of the second seem to me unworthy of the Muse. Though I have acted upon this judgment, I do not express it without diffidence, and it may interest some readers to know that Mr. Fox named these two poems as among those which gave him the greatest pleasure. This he did in the same letter in which he spoke so coldly of "The Brothers" and "Michael," which I should class among the noblest and most touching of all the Poet's compositions.

The pervading characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, and that in which it may be said to stand alone—though since its first appearance it has had many imitators—is its faculty of discovering in the familiar appearances of Nature, or the ordinary incidents of life, suggestions of moral sentiments, which minds of a

certain order of sensibility recognise at once as just, beautiful, and true, though they feel that without the Poet's aid, Nature would never have spoken to them in such intelligible and delightful language. Mr. Coleridge, after relating the impression made upon him by his first acquaintance with Wordsworth's poetry, goes on to say, that it was not the freedom from false taste whether as to common defects, or to those more properly the Poet's own, which made so unusual an impression on his (Coleridge's) feelings, and subsequently on his judgment; but "It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the objects observed; and, above all, the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere, and with it the depth and height, of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dewdrops."* This is the excellence which the observant reader will trace in the poems of this volume, and it is my hope and trust that many a young and earnest mind may by the perusal of them be led to scan the book of silent Nature with deeper attention, and to become better and happier by learning lessons from the common things that lie around:—

“The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

* *Biog. Lit.* vol. i.

“In common things that round us lie
 Some random truths he can impart, —
 The harvest of a quiet eye
 That broods and sleeps on his own heart.”*

Under the influence of this poet's teaching, even the common daisy may not only suggest pleasing sentiments, but a moral lesson of high value :—

“If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to *Thee* should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn,
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life our nature breeds,
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.” †

I could gladly go on quoting those beautiful passages in which the poet's exquisite sympathy with the humble and common things of Nature is shown, and then pass on to specimens of the grander and more daring flights of his genius, but to do this would swell my preface into a treatise. I content myself therefore with quoting, in support of the high opinion I hold of this poet's works, the authority of Coleridge, who says that “In imaginative power he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakspeare and Milton, and yet in a kind, perfectly unborrowed, and his own ;” ‡—of De Quincey, who says, “Meditative poetry is that which perhaps will finally maintain most power upon generations more thoughtful ; and in this department at least there is little competition to be apprehended by Wordsworth from anything that has appeared since the death

* “The Poet's Epitaph,” p. 331. † First poem “To the Daisy,” p. 147.

‡ *Biog. Lit.* vol. ii. chap. ix.

of Shakspeare ;” *—of Southey, who writes in October, 1829, “A greater poet than Wordsworth there never has been, and never will be. I could point out some of his pieces which seem to me good for nothing and not a few faulty passages, but I know of no poet in any language who has written so much that is good.” † What could I add to such authorities as these ?

Finally, let me say, that I do not think any person of ordinary sensibility can attentively read this volume without being made wiser and better—without acquiring a deeper feeling of the good and beautiful in Nature—without a raising and purifying of the affections ; without being made, at least in some degree, more thoughtful, more gentle, more dutiful, and more kind.

[*Note.*—My personal friendship with the Poet commenced in 1826, and lasted till his death in 1850. The last written of the poems in this volume is of the date of 1814, and by far the greater number of them were written in the concluding three years of the last, or in the first seven years of the present century. For such particulars therefore of the circumstances under which the poems were composed, as I have very briefly stated in foot notes, I am generally indebted to the biography of the Poet by his nephew Dr. Wordsworth, of Westminster. Of that book it may be said, that if it require any excuse, it is no other than that advanced by Pascal for a letter of unusual length, namely, that “he had not time to make it shorter.”]

* “Essay on Wordsworth’s poetry”—conclusion.

† Life and Letters of Southey, vol. vi.

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THE
EARLIER POEMS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

MY HEART LEAPS UP.

MY heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man ;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die !
The Child is father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.*

1804.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
A little longer stay in sight !
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy !

* Written at Town End, Grasmere.

B

Float near me ; do not yet depart !
 Dead times revive in thee :
 Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
 A solemn image to my heart,
 My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
 The time, when, in our childish plays,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together chased the butterfly !
 A very hunter did I rush
 Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs
 I followed on from brake to bush ;
 But she, God love her ! feared to brush
 The dust from off its wings.*

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
 Those bright blue eggs together laid !
 On me the chance-discovered sight
 Gleamed like a vision of delight.
 I started—seeming to espy
 The home and sheltered bed,
 The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
 My Father's house, in wet or dry
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

* Written March, 1802 : see Miss Wordsworth's Journal. The expression that she was afraid of brushing the dust off the butterfly's wings, was her own.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it ; *
 Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it ;
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

1801.

FORESIGHT.†

(OR, THE CHARGE OF A CHILD TO HIS YOUNGER COMPANION.)

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
 Do as Charles and I are doing !
 Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
 We must spare them—here are many :
 Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any :
 Do not touch it ! summers two
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can.
 —Here are daisies, take your fill ;
 Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower :

* She looked at it as if she feared it,
 Still wishing, dreading to be near it.—Edit. 1815.

† Written April, 1802, in consequence of an observation of his sister, that
 when she was a child she would not have pulled a strawberry blossom.

4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD.

Of the lofty daffodil
Make your bed, or make your bower ;
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;
Only spare the strawberry-blossom !

Primroses, the Spring may love them—
Summer knows but little of them :
Violets, a barren kind,
Withered on the ground must lie ;
Daisies leave no fruit behind
When the pretty flowerets die ;
Pluck them, and another year
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
To the favoured strawberry-flower.
Hither soon as Spring is fled
You and Charles and I will walk ;*
Lurking berries, ripe and red,
Then will hang on every stalk,
Each within its leafy bower ;
And for that promise spare the flower.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE
YEARS OLD.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild ;
And Innocence hath privilege in her
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes ;
And feats of cunning ; and the pretty round

* When the months of Spring are fled
Hither let us bend our walk.—Edit. 1815.

Of trespasses, affected to provoke
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
 Not less if unattended and alone
 Than when both young and old sit gathered round
 And take delight in its activity ;
 Even so this happy Creature of herself
 Is all-sufficient ; solitude to her
 Is blithe society, who fills the air
 With gladness and involuntary songs.
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couched ;
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
 Or from before it chasing wantonly
 The many-coloured images imprest
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

1811.

 LUCY GRAY ; *

OR, SOLITUDE.

OF I had heard of Lucy Gray :
 And, when I crossed the wild,
 I chanced to see at break of day
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door !

* Written at Goslar, in Germany, 1798—99.

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green ;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

“ To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go ;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.”

“ That, Father ! will I gladly do :
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon !”

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb :
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;

But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,*
“ In heaven we all shall meet ;”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill’s edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

* And turning homeward, now they cried.—Edit. 1815.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
 And never looks behind ;
 And sings a solitary song
 That whistles in the wind.*

ALICE FELL; †

OR, POVERTY.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had drowned ;
 When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound. ‡

As if the wind blew many ways,
 I heard the sound,—and more and more ;
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out ;
 He stopped his horses at the word,
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

* “ The way in which the incident is treated, and the spiritualising of the character, might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavoured to throw over common life, with Crabbe's matter of fact style of handling subjects of the same kind.”—W. W.

† This poem was written at Grasmere, February, 1802. The incident occurred with a Mr. Graham, brother of the Poet, who wrote “ The Sabbath.” The poem has been omitted from some editions of Mr. Wordsworth's works, but he restored it to the latest editions at the request of some friends, and particularly his son-in-law, Mr. Edward Quillinan.

‡ When suddenly I seemed to hear
 A moan, a lamentable sound.—Edit. 1815.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain ;
 But, hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
 " Whence comes," said I, " this piteous moan ? " *
 And there a little Girl I found,
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

" My cloak ! " no other word she spake,
 But loud and bitterly she wept,
 As if her innocent heart would break ;
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

" What ails you, child ? "—she sobbed " Look here ! "
 I saw it in the wheel entangled,
 A weather-beaten rag as e'er
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
 It hung, nor could at once be freed ;
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
 A miserable rag indeed ! †

" And whither are you going, child,
 To-night along these lonesome ways ? "
 " To Durham," answered she, half wild—
 " Then come with me into the chaise."

* Said I, alighting on the ground,
 What can it be this piteous moan ?—Edit. 1815.

† 'Twas twisted between nave and spoke,
 Her help she lent, and with good heed
 Together we released the cloak,
 A wretched, wretched rag indeed.—Edit. 1815.

Insensible to all relief
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
Sob after sob, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end.

“ My child, in Durham do you dwell ? ”
She checked herself in her distress,
And said, “ My name is Alice Fell ;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong.”
Again, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong ;
And all was for her tattered cloak !

The chaise drove on ; our journey's end
Was nigh ; and, sitting by my side,
As if she had lost her only friend
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post ;
Of Alice and her grief I told ;
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new cloak for the old.

“ And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell ! ”
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell !

WE ARE SEVEN.*

——— A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
—Her beauty made me glad.

“ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be ? ”
“ How many ? Seven in all, ” she said,
And wondering looked at me.

“ And where are they ? I pray you tell. ”
She answered, “ Seven are we ;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

* This was, perhaps, the most popular of Mr. Wordsworth's early poems. It was written at Alfoxden, Somersetshire, in the spring of 1798. The little girl who is the heroine, Mr. W. met within the area of Goderich Castle, in 1793. The last stanza was the first composed.

Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

" You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
" Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree."

" You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."

" Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little Maid replied,
" Twelve steps or more from my mother's door
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.*

* And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.—Edit. 1815.

And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,*
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

* And all the summer dry.—Edit. 1815.

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS,*

'Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges.'

EUSEBIUS.

I HAVE a boy of five years old ;
His face is fair and fresh to see ;
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
Our quiet home all full in view,
And held such intermitted talk
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,
Our pleasant home when spring began,
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
Some fond regrets to entertain ; †
With so much happiness to spare,
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet ‡
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,

* In the Edition of 1815 there was the sub-title, "Showing how the practice of lying may be taught." For this the Latin motto, which did not then appear, was afterwards substituted. The boy was Mr. Basil Montagu's son, who lived under Mr. Wordsworth's care, at Alfoxden, in 1797.

† To think—and think—and think again.—Edit. 1815.

‡ This, and the succeeding five lines, are not in the Edition of 1815. There are also several trifling alterations.

From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace
Of inward sadness had its charm ;
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
And graceful in his rustic dress !
And, as we talked, I questioned him,
In very idleness.

“ Now tell me, had you rather be,”
I said, and took him by the arm,
“ On Kilve’s smooth shore, by the green sea,
Or here at Liswyn farm ? ”

In careless mood he looked at me,
While still I held him by the arm,
And said, “ At Kilve I’d rather be
Than here at Liswyn farm.”

“ Now, little Edward, say why so :
My little Edward, tell me why.”—
“ I cannot tell, I do not know.”—
“ Why, this is strange,” said I ;

“ For, here are woods, hills smooth and warm :
There surely must some reason be
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm
For Kilve by the green sea.”

At this, my boy hung down his head,
 He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;
 And three times to the child I said,
 “ Why, Edward, tell me why ? ”

His head he raised—there was in sight,
 It caught his eye, he saw it plain—
 Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
 A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
 And eased his mind with this reply :
 “ At Kilve there was no weather-cock ;
 And that’s the reason why.”

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart
 For better lore would seldom yearn,
 Could I but teach the hundredth part
 Of what from thee I learn.

RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

THERE’S George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald
 Shore,

Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest not more
 Than the height of a counsellor’s bag ;
 To the top of GREAT HOW* did it please them to climb :
 And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
 A Man on the peak of the crag.

* GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road between Keswick and Ambleside.

They built him of stones gathered up as they lay :
 They built him and christened him all in one day,
 An urchin both vigorous and hale ;
 And so without scruple they called him Ralph Jones.
 Now Ralph is renowned for the length of his bones ;
 The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,
 And, in anger or merriment, out of the north,
 Coming on with a terrible pother,
 From the peak of the crag blew the giant away.
 And what did these school-boys ?—The very next day
 They went and they built up another.

—Some little I've seen of blind boisterous works
 By Christian disturbers more savage than Turks,
 Spirits busy to do and undo :
 At remembrance whereof my blood sometimes will flag ;
 Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the crag ;
 And I'll build up a giant with you.*

1801.

 THE PET-LAMB. †

A PASTORAL.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
 I heard a voice ; it said, “ Drink, pretty creature,
 drink ! ”
 And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
 A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its side.

* The last stanza does not appear in the Edition of 1815.

† Written at Grasmere, 1800.

Nor sheep nor kine were near ;* the lamb was all alone,
 And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
 With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden
 kneel,
 While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,
 Seemed to feast with head and ears ; and his tail with
 pleasure shook.

“ Drink, pretty creature, drink,” she said in such a tone
 That I almost received her heart into my own.

’Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty
 rare ! †

I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.
 Now with her empty can the maiden turned away :
 But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked ; and from a shady
 place

I unobserved could see the workings of her face :
 If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,
 Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might
 sing :

“ What ails thee, young One ? what ? Why pull so at
 thy cord ?

Is it not well with thee ? well both for bed and board ?
 Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be ;
 Rest, little young One, rest ; what is’t that aileth thee ?

* No other sheep were near.—Edit. 1815.

† She was still residing at Ambleside in 1843, much changed then as to beauty. She was one of two most lovely sisters.—Life, I., 163.

What is it thou wouldst seek ? What is wanting to thy
heart ?

Thy limbs are they not strong ? And beautiful thou art :
This grass is tender grass ; these flowers they have no
peers ;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears !

If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen
chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain ;
For rain and mountain-storms ! the like thou need'st
not fear,

The rain and storm are things that scarcely can come
here.

Rest, little young One, rest ; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away ;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by
none,

And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee
home :

A blessed day for thee ! then whither wouldst thou
roam ?

A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that did thee wean
Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could have been.

Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee in
this can

Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran ;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and new.

Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the
plough ;

My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the wind is cold
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

It will not, will not rest !—Poor creature, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in thee ?
Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor
hear.

Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green and fair !
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come there ;
The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky ;
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at thy chain ?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again !”

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the song ;
“Nay,” said I, “more than half to the damsel must
belong,
For she looked with such a look, and she spake with
such a tone,
That I almost received her heart into my own.”

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS; *

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE. †

A PASTORAL.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;
 Among the hills the echoes play
 A never never ending song,
 To welcome in the May.
 The magpie chatters with delight ;
 The mountain raven's youngling brood
 Have left the mother and the nest ;
 And they go rambling east and west
 In search of their own food ;
 Or through the glittering vapours dart
 In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
 Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
 Their work, if any work they have,
 Is out of mind—or done. ‡
 On pipes of sycamore they play
 The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
 Or with that plant which in our dale
 We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
 Their rusty hats they trim :

* Written at Grasmere, 1800.

† *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.‡ It seems they have no work to do,
 Or that their work is done.—Edit. 1815.

And thus, as happy as the day,
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born ! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal ;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
“ Down to the stump of yon old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race.”
—Away the shepherds flew ;
They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
“ Stop ! ” to his comrade Walter cries—
James stopped with no good will :
Said Walter then, exulting ; “ Here
You'll find a task for half a year.

Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread.”
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.*

* Now cross where I shall cross—come on,
And follow me where I shall lead—
The other took him at his word,
But did not like the deed.—Edit. 1815.

It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go ;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
The gulf is deep below ;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march ;
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.
When list ! he hears a piteous moan—
Again !—his heart within him dies—
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne ;
And, while with all a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
That sent this rueful cry ; I ween

The Boy recovered heart, and told
 The sight which he had seen.
 Both gladly now deferred their task ;
 Nor was there wanting other aid—
 A Poet, one who loves the brooks
 Far better than the sages' books,
 By chance had thither strayed ;
 And there the helpless lamb he found
 By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,*
 And brought it forth into the light :
 The Shepherds met him with his charge,
 An unexpected sight !
 Into their arms the lamb they took,
 Whose life and limbs the flood had spared ; †
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,
 And placed him at his mother's side ;
 And gently did the Bard
 Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
 And bade them better mind their trade.

TO A BUTTERFLY. ‡

I've watched you now a full half-hour,
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
 And, little Butterfly ! indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.

* He drew it gently from the pool.—Edit. 1815.

† Said they, he's neither maimed nor scarred.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Written at Grasmere, 1802.

How motionless !—not frozen seas
 More motionless ! and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours ;
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers ;
 Here rest your wings when they are weary ;
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
 And summer days, when we were young ;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.

 THE WHIRL-BLAST.*

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
 Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound ;
 Then—all at once the air was still,
 And showers of hailstones pattered round.
 Where leafless oaks towered high above,
 I sat within an undergrove
 Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;
 A fairer bower was never seen.
 From year to year the spacious floor
 With withered leaves is covered o'er,
 And all the year the bower is green.

* Written at Alfoxden, 1799.

But see! where'er the hailstones drop
 The withered leaves all skip and hop ;
 There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
 Yet here, and there, and every where
 Along the floor, beneath the shade
 By those embowering hollies made,
 The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
 As if with pipes and music rare
 Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
 And all those leaves, in festive glee,
 Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.*

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
 In which a Lady driven from France did dwell ;
 The big and lesser griefs with which she mourned,
 In friendship she to me would often tell.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,
 Where she was childless, daily would repair
 To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I found,
 For sake of a young Child whose home was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond embrace †
 This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,
 Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to trace
 Such things as she unto the Babe might say :
 And thus, from what I heard and knew, or guessed,
 My song the workings of her heart expressed.

* Written at Grasmere, March, 1802.

† This stanza is somewhat different in the earlier editions.

I.

“ Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,
One moment let me be thy mother !
An infant’s face and looks are thine
And sure a mother’s heart is mine :
Thy own dear mother’s far away,
At labour in the harvest field :
Thy little sister is at play ;—
What warmth, what comfort would it yield
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
One little hour a child to me !

II.

Across the waters I am come,
And I have left a babe at home :
A long, long way of land and sea !
Come to me—I’m no enemy :
I am the same who at thy side
Sate yesterday, and made a nest
For thee, sweet Baby !—thou hast tried,
Thou know’st the pillow of my breast ;
Good, good art thou :—alas ! to me
Far more than I can be to thee.

III.

Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;
An infant thou, a mother I !
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.
Alas ! before I left the spot,
My baby and its dwelling-place ;

The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not
 Be shed upon an infant's face,
 It was unlucky'—no, no, no ;
 No truth is in them who say so !

IV.

My own dear Little-one will sigh,
 Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.
 'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,
 And you may see his hour is come.'
 Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
 Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,
 Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
 And countenance like a summer's day,
 They would have hopes of him ;—and then
 I should behold his face again !

V.

'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget ;*
 There was a smile or two—yet—yet
 I can remember them, I see
 The smiles, worth all the world to me.
 Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down ;
 Thou troublest me with strange alarms ;
 Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own ;
 I cannot keep thee in my arms ;
 For they confound me ;—where—where is †
 That last, that sweetest smile of his ?

* 'Tis gone—forgotten—let me do
 My best ;—there was a smile or two.—Edit. 1815.

† For they confound me : as it is
 I have forgot those smiles of his.—Edit. 1815.

VI.

Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
Together here this one half day.
My sister's child, who bears my name,
From France to sheltering England came ;
She with her mother crossed the sea ;
The babe and mother near me dwell :
Yet does my yearning heart to thee
Turn rather, though I love her well :
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here !
Never was any child more dear !

VII.

—I cannot help it ; ill intent
I've none, my pretty Innocent !
I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
How cold it is ! but thou art good ;
Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
I think, to help me if they could.
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,*
My heart again is in its place !

VIII.

While thou art mine, my little Love,
This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
I seem to find them all in thee :
Here's grass to play with, here are flowers ;
I'll call thee by my darling's name ;

* Blessings upon that quiet face.—Edit. 1815.

Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
 Thy features seem to me the same ;
 His little sister thou shalt be ;
 And, when once more my home I see,
 I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

I.

His simple truths did Andrew glean
 Beside the babbling rills ;
 A careful student he had been
 Among the woods and hills.
 One winter's night, when through the trees
 The wind was roaring, on his knees
 His youngest born did Andrew hold :
 And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
 Were seated round their blazing fire,
 This Tale the Shepherd told.

II.

" I saw a crag, a lofty stone
 As ever tempest beat !
 Out of its head an Oak had grown,
 A Broom out of its feet.
 The time was March, a cheerful noon—
 The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
 Breathed gently from the warm south-west :
 When, in a voice sedate with age,

This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus addressed :—

III.

'Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain's edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up ! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred ;
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
The splinters took another road—
I see them yonder—what a load
For such a Thing as you !

IV.

You are preparing as before,
To deck your slender shape ;
And yet, just three years back—no more—
You had a strange escape :
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,
And hitherward pursued its way ;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'Tis hanging to this day !

V.

If breeze or bird to this rough steep *
Your kind's first seed did bear ;

* The thing had better been asleep,
Whatever thing it were,
Or breeze, or bird, or dog, or sheep,
That first did plant you there.—Edit. 1815.

The breeze had better been asleep,
The bird caught in a snare :
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy
To come and slumber in your bower ;
And, trust me, on some sultry noon,
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon !
Will perish in one hour.

VI.

From me this friendly warning take '—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus, to keep herself awake,
Did gently interpose :
' My thanks for your discourse are due ;
That more than what you say is true,
I know, and I have known it long ;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

VII.

Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small ;
And he is oft the wisest man,
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam ?
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage ;
My father many a happy year,
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age.

VIII.

Even such as his may be my lot.*
 What cause have I to haunt
 My heart with terrors? Am I not
 In truth a favoured plant!
 On me such bounty Summer pours,
 That I am covered o'er with flowers;
 And, when the Frost is in the sky,
 My branches are so fresh and gay
 That you might look at me and say,
 This Plant can never die.

IX.

The butterfly, all green and gold,
 To me hath often flown,
 Here in my blossoms to behold
 Wings lovely as his own.
 When grass is chill with rain or dew,
 Beneath my shade, the mother-eve
 Lies with her infant lamb; I see
 The love they to each other make,
 And the sweet joy which they partake,
 It is a joy to me.'

X.

Her voice was blithe, her heart was light;
 The Broom might have pursued
 Her speech, until the stars of night
 Their journey had renewed;

* Sara Coleridge says of this stanza and the following one, that they contain a lovely natural description. To me, the whole poem seems, of its kind, one of the most charming that ever was written.—ED.

But in the branches of the oak
 Two ravens now began to croak
 Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;
 And to her own green bower the breeze
 That instant brought two stripling bees
 To rest, or murmur there.

XI.

One night, my Children ! from the north
 There came a furious blast ;
 At break of day I ventured forth,
 And near the cliff I passed.
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
 And struck him with a mighty stroke,
 And whirled, and whirled him far away ;
 And, in one hospitable cleft,
 The little careless Broom was left
 To live for many a day."

1800.

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY.

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,
 The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
 Our little English Robin ;
 The bird that comes about our doors
 When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?
 Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?
 Their Thomas in Finland,
 And Russia far inland ?
 The bird, that by some name or other
 All men who know thee call their brother,

The darling of children and men ?
 Could Father Adam * open his eyes
 And see this sight beneath the skies,
 He'd wish to close them again.
 —If the Butterfly knew but his friend,
 Hither his flight he would bend ;
 And find his way to me,
 Under the branches of the tree :
 In and out, he darts about ;
 Can this be the bird, to man so good,
 That, after their bewildering,
 Covered with leaves the little children,
 So painfully in the wood ?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st pursue
 A beautiful creature,
 That is gentle by nature ?
 Beneath the summer sky
 From flower to flower let him fly ;
 'Tis all that he wishes to do.
 The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,
 He is the friend of our summer gladness :
 What hinders, then, that ye should be
 Playmates in the sunny weather,
 And fly about in the air together !
 His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
 A crimson as bright as thine own :
 Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,
 O pious Bird ! whom man loves best,
 Love him, or leave him alone !

1806.

* See Paradise Lost, Book XI., where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing 'two Birds of gayest plume,' and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA,
ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD THAT DAY,
SEPTEMBER 16.

—————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
Who might 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 solemnise 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 travellest 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.

1804.

 TO H. C.*

SIX YEARS OLD.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;

* This child was Hartley Coleridge, son of S. T. Coleridge, and brother of Sara, and of Derwent Coleridge. He died near Ambleside, 6th of January, 1849, and he is buried in Grasmere Church-yard, close by the grave of Wordsworth.

Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ;
O blessed vision ! happy child !
Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
But when she sate within the touch of thee.
O too industrious folly !
O vain and causeless melancholy !
Nature will either end thee quite ;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
What hast thou to do with sorrow,
Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
A gem that glitters while it lives,
And no forewarning gives ;
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
Slips in a moment out of life.

THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES.

THAT way look, my Infant,* lo !
 What a pretty baby-show !
 See the Kitten on the wall,
 Sporting with the leaves that fall,
 Withered leaves—one—two—and three—
 From the lofty elder-tree !
 Through the calm and frosty air
 Of this morning bright and fair,
 Eddying round and round they sink
 Softly, slowly : one might think,
 From the motions that are made,
 Every little leaf conveyed
 Sylph or Faery hither tending,—
 To this lower world descending,
 Each invisible and mute,
 In his wavering parachute.
 —But the Kitten, how she starts,
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts !
 First at one, and then its fellow
 Just as light and just as yellow ;
 There are many now—now one—
 Now they stop and there are none :
 What intenseness of desire
 In her upward eye of fire !
 With a tiger-leap half way
 Now she meets the coming prey,

* His daughter Dora, born in the preceding August.

Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again :
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer ;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shout and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd ?
Over happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure !

'Tis a pretty baby-treat ;
Nor, I deem, for me unmeet ;
Here, for neither Babe nor me,
Other play-mate can I see.
Of the countless living things,
That with stir of feet and wings
(In the sun or under shade,
Upon bough or grassy blade)
And with busy revellings,
Chirp and song, and murmurings,
Made this orchard's narrow space,
And this vale so blithe a place ;
Multitudes are swept away
Never more to breathe the day :
Some are sleeping ; some in bands
Travelled into distant lands ;
Others slunk to moor and wood,
Far from human neighbourhood ;

And, among the Kinds that keep
With us closer fellowship,
With us openly abide,
All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
Who was blest as bird could be,
Feeding in the apple-tree ;
Made such wanton spoil and rout,
Turning blossoms inside out ;
Hung—head pointing towards the ground—
Fluttered, perched, into a round
Bound himself, and then unbound ;
Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin !
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen !
Light of heart and light of limb ;
What is now become of Him ?
Lambs, that through the mountains went
Frisking, bleating merriment,
When the year was in its prime,
They are sobered by this time.
If you look to vale or hill,
If you listen, all is still,
Save a little neighbouring rill,
That from out the rocky ground
Strikes a solitary sound.
Vainly glitter hill and plain,
And the air is calm in vain ;
Vainly Morning spreads the lure
Of a sky serene and pure ;
Creature none can she decoy
Into open sign of joy :

Is it that they have a fear
Of the dreary season near ?
Or that other pleasures be
Sweeter even than gaiety ?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
In the impenetrable cell
Of the silent heart which Nature
Furnishes to every creature ;
Whatsoe'er we feel and know
Too sedate for outward show,
Such a light of gladness breaks,
Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—
Spreads with such a living grace
O'er my little Dora's face ;
Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
That almost I could repine
That your transports are not mine,
That I do not wholly fare
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !
And I will have my careless season
Spite of melancholy reason,
Will walk through life in such a way
That, when time brings on decay,
Now and then I may possess
Hours of perfect gladsomeness.
—Pleased by any random toy ;
By a kitten's busy joy,
Or an infant's laughing eye
Sharing in the ecstasy ;
I would fare like that or this,
Find my wisdom in my bliss ;

Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought,
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

1804.

 INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS *

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION IN
 BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH.

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought !
 And giv'st to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion ! not in vain,
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn
 Of childhood didst thou interwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul ;
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man ;
 But with high objects, with enduring things,
 With life and nature ; purifying thus
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying by such discipline
 Both pain and fear,—until we recognise
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
 With stinted kindness. In November days,

* These lines appear in the first book of the "Prelude," which was not published until after Mr. Wordsworth's death. This extract appeared first in "The Friend," conducted by Mr. Coleridge, and afterwards was reprinted in all collections of Wordsworth's works.

When vapours rolling down the valleys made
A lonely scene more lonesome ; among woods
At noon ; and mid the calm of summer nights,
When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine :
Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.
And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,
I heeded not the summons : happy time
It was indeed for all of us ; for me
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home.—All shod with steel
We hissed along the polished ice, in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle : with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron ; while far-distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars,
Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively

Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex of a star ;
 Image, that, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round !
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.*

1799.

 THERE WAS A BOY.†

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,

* Coleridge refers to this poem, as proving the perfect truth of Nature in Wordsworth's images and descriptions, as taken immediately from Nature.—*Biog. Lit.*

† Written at Goslar in Germany, 1799.

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 jocund din ! And, when there came a pause
 Of silence such as baffled his best 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.
 Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale †
 Where he was born and bred : the church-yard hangs
 Upon a slope above the village-school ;
 And, through that church-yard when my way has led
 On summer evenings, ‡ I believe, that there
 A long half-hour together I have stood
 Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

* ———concourse wild

Of mirth and jocund din ! And when it chanced
 That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill.—Edit. 1815.

† Fair are the woods, and beauteous is the spot,
 The vale where he was born.—Edit. 1815.

‡ And there, along that bank, when I have passed
 At evening, I believe that oftentimes.—Edit. 1815.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.*

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,
 Have romped enough, my little Boy !
 Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
 And you shall bring your stool and rest ;
 This corner is your own.

There ! take your seat, and let me see
 That you can listen quietly :
 And, as I promised, I will tell
 That strange adventure which befel
 A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy !—why call him so ?
 Because, my Darlings, ye must know
 That, under hills which rise like towers,
 Far higher hills than these of ours !
 He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight
 The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;
 Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
 Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
 Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
 Nor had a melancholy mind ;

* Written at Grasmere, 1803.

For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend ; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love :
For, was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk he on the sabbath day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog too, had he ; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed ;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow—
And thus from house to house would go ;
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;
But one of mighty size, and strange ;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
 And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills
And drinks up all the pretty rills
 And rivers large and strong :

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns, on errand still the same ;
This did it when the earth was new ;
And this for evermore will do,
 As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks ;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
 Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share ;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales
With warmer suns and softer gales,
 Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard

The shouting, and the jolly cheers ;
The bustle of the mariners
 In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail ?
For He must never handle sail ;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
 Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this : " My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone ;
 The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch-Leven's side
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
 Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befel)
He in a vessel of his own,
On the swift flood is hurrying down,
 Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore !
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner !
 For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen
 The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
 Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright ;
 Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
 Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
 Spread round that haven in the glen ;
 Each hut, perchance, might have its own ;
 And to the Boy they all were known—
 He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell *
 Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
 A shell of ample size, and light
 As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
 That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves †
 On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
 This shell upon the deep would swim,
 And gaily lift its fearless brim
 Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew :
 And he a story strange yet true

* And one, the rarest was a shell,
 Which he, poor child, had studied well.
 The shell of a green turtle, thin
 And hollow ;—you might sit therein,
 It was so wide and deep.—Edit. 1815.

† 'Twas even the largest of its kind,
 Large, thin, and light, as birch-tree rind ;
 So light a shell that it would swim,
 And gaily lift its fearless brim
 Above the tossing waves.—Edit. 1815.

Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss !
 Had stoutly launched from shore ;

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father's ship, and had sailed far—
To join that gallant ship of war,
 In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house that held this prize ; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day when no one was at home,
 And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,
That story flashed upon his mind ;—
A bold thought roused him, and he took
The shell from out its secret nook,
 And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel,—and in pride
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
Stepped into it—his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
 Sang through the adventurer's hair.

A while he stood upon his feet ;
He felt the motion—took his seat ;
Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
 And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.
How rapidly the Child is driven !
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me
What shrieking and what misery !
For many saw ; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy !
The bravest traveller in balloon,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay !
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue ;

And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
So have ye seen the fowler chase
On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast
A youngling of the wild duck's nest
With deftly-lifted oar ;

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shell,
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near ;
But in his darkness he can hear,
And guesses their intent.

" *Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—he then cried out,
" *Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—with eager shout ;
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
And what he meant was, " Keep away,
And leave me to myself !"

Alas ! and when he felt their hands——
You've often heard of magic wands,
That with a motion overthrow
A palace of the proudest show,
Or melt it into air :

So all his dreams—that inward light
With which his soul had shone so bright—
All vanished ;—’twas a heartfelt cross
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
As he had ever known.

But hark ! a gratulating voice,
With which the very hills rejoice :
’Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly
Have watched the event, and now can see
That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
Full sure they were a happy band,
Which, gathering round, did on the banks
Of that great Water give God thanks,
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
The blind Boy’s little dog took part ;
He leapt about, and oft did kiss
His master’s hands in sign of bliss,
With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,
She who had fainted with her fear,
Rejoiced when waking she espies
The Child ; when she can trust her eyes,
And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
When he was in the house again :

Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes ;
She kissed him—how could she chastise ?
She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;
And, though his fancies had been wild,
Yet he was pleased and reconciled
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell ;
And long the story will repeat
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
And how he was preserved.

Note.—It is recorded in Dampier's *Voyages*, that a boy, son of the captain of a *Man-of-War*, seated himself in a *Turtle-shell*, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of *Loch Leven*, as was related to me by an eye-witness. [This eye-witness was George Mackreth, for many years parish-clerk of *Grasmere*. The vessel was in reality a washing-tub, which the little fellow had met with on the shore of the *Loch*.] See *Life*, I., 209.

THE FEMALE VAGRANT.*

“By Derwent’s side my father dwelt—a man
 Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred ;
 And I believe that, soon as I began
 To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,
 And in his hearing there my prayers I said :
 And afterwards, by my good father taught,
 I read, and loved the books in which I read ;
 For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
 And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,
 A garden stored with peas, and mint, and thyme,
 And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday morn
 Plucked while the church bells rang their earliest chime.
 Can I forget our freaks at shearing time !
 My hen’s rich nest through long grass scarce espied ;
 The cowslip-gathering in June’s dewy prime ;
 The swans that with white chests upreared in pride
 Rushing and racing came to meet me at the water-side!

The staff I well remember which upbore
 The bending body of my active sire ;
 His seat beneath the honied sycamore
 Where the bees hummed, and chair by winter fire ;

* This is an extract from a poem written in 1793, and published entire in the later editions of the Author’s works, under the title of “Guilt and Sorrow, or Incidents on Salisbury Plain.” The first twelve stanzas given here were not in the Edition of 1815, but they are prefixed to give completeness to the narrative.

When market-morning came, the neat attire
 With which, though bent on haste, myself I decked ;
 Our watchful house-dog, that would tease and tire
 The stranger till its barking-fit I checked ;
 The red-breast, known for years, which at my casement
 pecked.

The suns of twenty summers danced along,—
 Too little marked how fast they rolled away :
 But, through severe mischance and cruel wrong,
 My father's substance fell into decay :
 We toiled and struggled, hoping for a day
 When Fortune might put on a kinder look ;
 But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they ;
 He from his old hereditary nook
 Must part ; the summons came ;—our final leave we
 took.

It was indeed a miserable hour
 When, from the last hill-top, my sire surveyed,
 Peering above the trees, the steeple tower
 That on his marriage day sweet music made !
 Till then, he hoped his bones might there be laid
 Close by my mother in their native bowers :
 Bidding me trust in God, he stood and prayed ;—
 I could not pray :—through tears that fell in showers
 Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas ! no longer ours !

There was a Youth whom I had loved so long,
 That when I loved him not I cannot say :
 'Mid the green mountains many a thoughtless song
 We two had sung, like gladsome birds in May ;
 When we began to tire of childish play,

We seemed still more and more to prize each other ;
We talked of marriage and our marriage day ;
And I in truth did love him like a brother,
For never could I hope to meet with such another.

Two years were passed since to a distant town
He had repaired to ply a gainful trade :
What tears of bitter grief, till then unknown !
What tender vows our last sad kiss delayed !
To him we turned :—we had no other aid :
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept ;
And her whom he had loved in joy, he said,
He well could love in grief ; his faith he kept ;
And in a quiet home once more my father slept.

We lived in peace and comfort ; and were blest
With daily bread, by constant toil supplied.
Three lovely babes had lain upon my breast ;
And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I sighed,
And knew not why. My happy father died,
When threatened war reduced the children's meal :
Thrice happy ! that for him the grave could hide
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent wheel,
And tears that flowed for ills which patience might not
 heal.

'Twas a hard change ; an evil time was come ;
We had no hope, and no relief could gain :
But soon, with proud parade, the noisy drum
Beat round to clear the streets of want and pain.
My husband's arms now only served to strain
Me and his children hungering in his view ;
In such dismay my prayers and tears were vain :

To join those miserable men he flew,
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers more, we
drew.

There were we long neglected, and we bore
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weighed ;
Green fields before us, and our native shore,
We breathed a pestilential air, that made
Ravage for which no knell was heard. We prayed
For our departure ; wished and wished—nor knew,
'Mid that long sickness and those hopes delayed,
That happier days we never more must view.
The parting signal streamed—at last the land withdrew.

But the calm summer season now was past.
On as we drove, the equinoctial deep
Ran mountains high before the howling blast,
And many perished in the whirlwind's sweep.
We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,
Untaught that soon such anguish must ensue,
Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,
That we the mercy of the waves should rue :
We reached the western world, a poor devoted crew.

The pains and plagues that on our heads came down,
Disease and famine, agony and fear,
In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
It would unman the firmest heart to hear.
All perished—all in one remorseless year,
Husband and children ! one by one, by sword
And ravenous plague, all perished : every tear
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored.

Peaceful as some immeasurable plain
 By the first beams of dawning light imprest,
 In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main ;
 The very ocean hath its hour of rest.
 I too forgot the heavings of my breast.
 How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were !
 As quiet all within me.* I was blest,
 And looked, and fed upon the silent air
 Until it seemed to bring a joy to my despair.

Ah ! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,
 And groans that rage of racking famine spoke ;
 The unburied dead that lay in festering heaps,
 The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke,
 The shriek that from the distant battle broke,
 The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host
 Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke
 To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish tossed,
 Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost ! †

Some mighty gulf of separation past,
 I seemed transported to another world ;
 A thought resigned with pain, when from the mast
 The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,
 And, whistling, called the wind that hardly curled
 The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home
 And from all hope I was for ever hurled.
 For me—farthest from earthly port to roam
 Was best, could I but shun the spot where man might
 come.

* I too was calm, though heavily distrest !
 Oh me ! how quiet sky and ocean were !
 My heart was hushed within me.—Edit. 1815.

† This appears to me a line of marvellous force.—ED.

And oft I thought (my fancy was so strong)
 That I, at last, a resting-place had found ;
 ‘ Here will I dwell,’ said I, ‘ my whole life long,
 Roaming the illimitable waters round ;
 Here will I live, of all but heaven disowned,
 And end my days upon the peaceful flood.’—*
 To break my dream the vessel reached its bound ;
 And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,
 And near a thousand tables pined and wanted food.

No help I sought ; in sorrow turned adrift,
 Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare rock ; †
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,
 Nor raised my hand at any door to knock.
 I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the cock
 From the cross-timber of an out-house hung :
 Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock !
 At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely stung,
 Nor to the beggar’s language could I fit my tongue.

So passed a second day ; and, when the third
 Was come, I tried in vain the crowd’s resort.
 —In deep despair, by frightful wishes stirred,
 Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort ;
 There, pains which nature could no more support,
 With blindness linked, did on my vitals fall ;
 And, after many interruptions short
 Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could crawl :
 Unsought for was the help that did my life recal. ‡

* Ocean flood.—Edit. 1815.

† By grief enfeebled was I turned adrift
 Helpless as sailor cast on desert rock.—Edit. 1815.

‡ And thence was carried to a neighbouring hospital.—Edit. 1815.

Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain
 Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory ; *
 I heard my neighbours in their beds complain
 Of many things which never troubled me—
 Of feet still bustling round with busy glee,
 Of looks where common kindness had no part,
 Of service done with cold formality, †
 Fretting the fever round the languid heart,
 And groans which, as they said, might make a dead
 man start.

These things just served to stir the slumbering sense,
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.
 With strength did memory return ; and, thence
 Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,
 At houses, men, and common light, amazed.
 The lanes I sought, and, as the sun retired,
 Came where beneath the trees a faggot blazed ;
 The travellers saw me weep, my fate inquired,
 And gave me food—and rest, more welcome, more
 desired.

Rough potters seemed they, trading soberly
 With panniered asses driven from door to door ; ‡
 But life of happier sort set forth to me,
 And other joys my fancy to allure—
 The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor
 In barn uplighted ; and companions boon,
 Well met from far with revelry secure

* Recovery came with food : but still my brain
 Was weak, nor of the past had memory.—Edit. 1815.

† Careless cruelty.—Edit. 1815.

‡ They with their panniered asses semblance made
 Of Potters, wandering on from door to door.—Edit. 1815.

Among the forest glades, while jocund June
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

But ill they suited me—those journeys dark
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch !
To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,
Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.
The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,
The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill,
And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill :
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding
still.

What could I do, unaided and unblest ?
My father ! gone was every friend of thine :
And kindred of dead husband are at best
Small help ; and, after marriage such as mine,
With little kindness would to me incline.
Nor was I then for toil or service fit ;
My deep-drawn sighs no effort could confine ;
In open air * forgetful would I sit
Whole hours, with idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

The roads I paced, I loitered through the fields ; †
Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,
Trusted my life to what chance bounty yields, ‡
Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
The ground I for my bed have often used :

* By the road side.—Edit. 1815.

† I led a wandering life among the fields.—Edit. 1815.

‡ I lived upon what casual bounty yields.—Edit. 1815.

But what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth,
 Is that I have my inner self abused,
 Foregone the home delight of constant truth,
 And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

Through tears the rising sun I oft have viewed,
 Through tears have seen him towards that world descend
 Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :
 Three years a wanderer now my course I bend—
 Oh ! tell me whither ?—for no earthly friend
 Have I.”—She ceased, and weeping turned away ;
 As if because her tale was at an end,
 She wept ; because she had no more to say
 Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay.

THE BROTHERS.*

“THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us ! needs must live
 A profitable life : some glance along,
 Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
 And they were butterflies to wheel about
 Long as the summer lasted : some, as wise,
 Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
 Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,

* In the Edition of 1815 it was stated that this Poem was intended to conclude a series of pastorals, the scene of which was laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. This was mentioned by way of apology for the abruptness with which the Poem begins. This Poem was one of two to which the Poet invited the attention of Mr. Fox, when he sent to that gentleman his two volumes of Poems in 1801. “The Brothers” was written at Grasmere in 1800, and arose out of the fact mentioned to the Poet at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep on the top of the rock called “The Pillar,” and perished as described in the Poem. It is perhaps the most touchingly pathetic of all Mr. Wordsworth’s earlier compositions.

Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
 Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
 Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.
 But, for that moping Son of Idleness,
 Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-yard
 Is neither epitaph nor monument,
 Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
 And a few natural graves.”

To Jane, his wife,

Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
 It was a July evening ; and he sate
 Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves
 Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
 Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone
 His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
 While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,
 He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
 Who, in the open air, with due accord
 Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,
 Her large round wheel was turning. Towards the field
 In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
 Many a long look of wonder : and at last,
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled,
 He laid his implements with gentle care,
 Each in the other locked ; and, down the path
 That from his cottage to the church-yard led,
 He took his way, impatient to accost
 The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,

A Shepherd-lad ; who ere his sixteenth year
 Had left that calling, tempted to entrust
 His expectations to the fickle winds
 And perilous waters ; with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner ;—and so had fared
 Through twenty seasons ; but he had been reared
 Among the mountains, and he in his heart
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees :—and, when the regular wind
 Between the tropics filled the steady sail,
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And, while the broad blue wave * and sparkling foam
 Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
 Saw mountains ; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
 On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
 And shepherds clad in the same country grey
 Which he himself had worn. †

And now, at last,
 From perils manifold, with some small wealth

* Broad *green* wave.—Edit. 1815.

† This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the "Hurricane."

Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,
To his paternal home he is returned,
With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there ; both for the sake
Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy time
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.*
—They were the last of all their race : and now,
When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
Failed in him ; and, not venturing to enquire
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,
He to the solitary church-yard turned ;
That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his Brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added.—He had found
Another grave,—near which a full half-hour
He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there grew
Such a confusion in his memory,
That he began to doubt ; and even to hope
That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
That it was not another grave ; but one
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been well known to him :
And oh what joy this recollection now
Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,
And, looking round, imagined that he saw

* The lines descriptive of the poetical temperament of the sailor appear, says Dr. Wordsworth, to have been suggested by the character of the Poet's brother, Captain John Wordsworth.

Strange alteration wrought on every side
 Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,
 And everlasting hills themselves were changed.*

By this the Priest, who down the field had come,
 Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate
 Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
 Perused him with a gay complacency.
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
 'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
 Of the world's business to go wild alone :
 His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
 The happy man will creep about the fields,
 Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
 Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
 Into his face, until the setting sun
 Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted thus
 Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
 Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared
 The good Man might have communed with himself,
 But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
 Approached ; he recognised the Priest at once,
 And, after greetings interchanged, and given
 By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life :
 Your years make up one peaceful family ;
 And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
 They cannot be remembered ? Scarce a funeral
 Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months ;

* The verbal alterations of the foregoing twenty lines, from the Edition of 1815, are too many, and too minute to be particularised.

And yet, some changes must take place among you :
 And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
 Can trace the finger of mortality,
 And see, that with our threescore years and ten
 We are not all that perish.—I remember,
 (For many years ago I passed this road)
 There was a foot-way all along the fields
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had !

Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same—

Leonard. But, surely, yonder—

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
 That does not play you false.—On that tall pike
 (It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
 There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
 As if they had been made that they might be
 Companions for each other : the huge crag
 Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared ;
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.
 For accidents and changes such as these,
 We want not store of them ;—a water-spout
 Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast
 For folks that wander up and down like you,
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
 One roaring cataract ! a sharp May-storm
 Will come with loads of January snow,
 And in one night send twenty score of sheep
 To feed the ravens ; or a shepherd dies
 By some untoward death among the rocks :
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge ;
 A wood is felled :—and then for our own homes !

A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
 A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
 The old house-clock is decked with a new face ;
 And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
 To chronicle the time, we all have here
 A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,
 For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—
 Yours was a stranger's judgment : for historians,
 Commend me to these valleys !

Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
 Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
 To say that you are heedless of the past :
 An orphan could not find his mother's grave :
 Here's neither head nor foot-stone, plate of brass,
 Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state
 Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new to
 me !
 The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
 If every English church-yard were like ours ;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :
 We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
 We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.
 And then, for our immortal part ! *we* want
 No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :
 The thought of death sits easy on the man
 Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's
 thoughts
 Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
 You, Sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,
 With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,
 Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter-evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
 Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—
 It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
 Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. 'Tis a common case.
 We'll take another : who is he that lies
 Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
 It touches on that piece of native rock
 Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbank.
 He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
 As ever were produced by youth and age
 Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
 Through five long generations had the heart
 Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
 Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
 You see it yonder ! and those few green fields.
 They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,
 Each struggled, and each yielded as before
 A little—yet a little,—and old Walter,
 They left to him the family heart, and land
 With other burthens than the crop it bore.
 Year after year the old man still kept up
 A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,
 Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
 And went into his grave before his time.
 Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last
 He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
 His pace was never that of an old man :
 I almost see him tripping down the path
 With his two grandsons after him :—but you,
 Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,
 Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths
 Even in the longest day of midsummer—

Leonard. But those two Orphans !

Priest. Orphans !—Such they were—
 Yet not while Walter lived :—for, though their parents
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
 The old man was a father to the boys,
 Two fathers in one father : and if tears,
 Shed when he talked of them where they were not,
 And hauntings from the infirmity of love,
 Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,
 This old Man, in the day of his old age,
 Was half a mother to them.—If you weep, Sir,
 To hear a stranger talking about strangers,
 Heaven bless you when you are among your kindred !
 Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave
 Which will bear looking at.

Leonard. These boys—I hope
 They loved this good old Man ?—

Priest. They did—and truly :
 But that was what we almost overlooked,
 They were such darlings of each other. Yes,
 Though from the cradle they had lived with Walter,
 The only kinsman near them, and though he
 Inclined to both by reason of his age,
 With a more fond, familiar, tenderness ;
 They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.
 Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,
 Was two years taller : 'twas a joy to see,
 To hear, to meet them !—From their house the school
 Is distant three short miles, and in the time
 Of storm and thaw, when every water-course
 And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed
 Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
 Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,
 Would Leonard then, when elder boys remained
 At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,
 Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,
 On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,
 Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone,
 Upon the hither side : and once I said,
 As I remember, looking round these rocks
 And hills on which we all of us were born,
 That God who made the great book of the world
 Would bless such piety—

Leonard. It may be then—

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English bread ;
 The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,
 Could never keep those boys away from church,
 Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.
 Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place
 That venturous foot could reach, to one or both
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
 They played like two young ravens on the crags :
 Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well

As many of their betters—and for Leonard !
 The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A bible, and I'd wager house and field
 That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

Leonard. It seems, these Brothers have not lived
 to be

A comfort to each other—

Priest. That they might
 Live to such end is what both old and young
 In this our valley all of us have wished,
 And what, for my part, I have often prayed :
 But Leonard—

Leonard. Then James still is left among you !

Priest. 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking :
 They had an uncle ;—he was at that time
 A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas :
 And, but for that same uncle, to this hour
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud :
 For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;
 And though of unripe years, a stripling only,
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.
 But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
 To strive with such a torrent ; when he died,
 The estate and house were sold ; and all their sheep,
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years :—
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,
 And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
 Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.
 If there were one among us who had heard
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,

From the Great Gavel *, down by Leeza's banks,
 And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
 The day would be a joyous festival ;
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see—
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir !
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little
 That would bring down his spirit ; and no doubt,
 Before it ended in his death, the Youth
 Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard ! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand, and said to me,
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return, †
 To live in peace upon his father's land,
 And lay his bones among us.

Leonard. If that day
 Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him ;
 He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
 As any that should meet him—

Priest. Happy ! Sir—

Leonard. You said his kindred all were in their
 graves,
 And that he had one Brother—

Priest. That is but
 A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth

* The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Lecza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale: on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont. (Note of the Author.)

† If ever the day came when he was rich
 He would return, and on his father's land
 He would grow old among us.—Edit. 1815.

James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
 And Leonard being always by his side
 Had done so many offices about him,
 That, though he was not of a timid nature,
 Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
 In him was somewhat checked ; and, when his Brother
 Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
 The little colour that he had was soon
 Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and
 pined—

Leonard. But these are all the graves of full-grown
 men !

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;
 He was the child of all the dale—he lived
 Three months with one, and six months with another ;
 And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love :
 And many, many happy days were his.
 But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief
 His absent Brother still was at his heart.
 And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found
 (A practice till this time unknown to him)
 That often, rising from his bed at night,
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
 He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !
 Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,
 I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard. But this Youth,
 How did he die at last ?

Priest. One sweet May-morning,
 (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom their course
 Of occupation led from height to height

Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,
 Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
 The humour of the moment, lagged behind.*
 You see yon precipice ;—it wears the shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags ;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called, THE PILLAR.
 Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,
 Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place
 On their return, they found that he was gone.†
 No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance
 Entering, when evening was far spent, the house
 Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day :
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of :
 The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened ; some ran to the lake : ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

Leonard. And that then *is* his grave !—Before his
 death

You say that he saw many happy years ?

Priest. Ay, that he did—

Leonard. And all went well with him?—

* Whom it chanced

Some further business summoned to a house
 Which stands at the Dale-head. James, tired, perhaps,
 Or from some other cause, remained behind.—Edit. 1815.

† James pointed to its summit over which
 They all had purposed to return together,
 And told them that he there would wait for them.—Edit. 1815.

Priest. If he had one, the youth had twenty homes.

Leonard. And you believe, then, that his mind was
easy?—

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that time
Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune,
He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I mentioned
A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong :
And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth
Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,
His shepherd's staff ; for on that Pillar of rock
It had been caught mid way ; and there for years
It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away
The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;
And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard gate,
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,—
And, looking at the grave, he said, “My Brother !”
The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,
He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating
That Leonard would partake his homely fare :
The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;

But added, that, the evening being calm,
He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
That overhung the road : he there stopped short,
And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed
All that the Priest had said : his early years
Were with him :—his long absence, cherished hopes,*
And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,
This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
A place in which he could not bear to live :
So he relinquished all his purposes.
He travelled back to Egremont : and thence,
That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
Reminding him of what had passed between them ;
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
That it was from the weakness of his heart
He had not dared to tell him who he was.
This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

* His early years
Were with him in his heart : his cherished hope
And thoughts, &c.—Edit. 1815.

A FAREWELL.*

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare ;
 Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
 Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
 Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
 And there will safely ride when we are gone ;
 The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
 Will prosper, though untended and alone :
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none :
 These narrow bounds contain our private store
 Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon ;
 Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought ;
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
 Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
 And placed together near our rocky Well.

* This was written at Grasmere in 1802, before setting out on a journey from which the Poet was to return with his bride. His sister says in her journal that she copied it out May 29th, 1802. He was not married till the 4th of October.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
 Our own contrivance, Building without peer !
 —A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gatherèd,
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
 Will come to you ; to you herself will wed ;
 And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot ! which we have watched with tender heed,
 Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
 Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
 Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
 Making all kindness registered and known ;
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
 To them who look not daily on thy face ;
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
 And say'st, when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"
 Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
 Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
 And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
 And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best ;
 Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
 Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast
 Glittered at evening like a starry sky ;

And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
Two burning months let summer overleap,
And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S CASTLE OF
INDOLENCE.*

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One
Whom without blame I may not overlook ;
For never sun on living creature shone
Who more devout enjoyment with us took :
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,
On his own time here would he float away,
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home,
And find elsewhere his business or delight ;

* These stanzas contain portraits of the Poet himself and of his brother bard S. T. Coleridge. The latter is the "noticeable man with large grey eyes."

Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
His voice came to us from the neighbouring height :
Oft could we see him driving full in view
At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;
What ill was on him, what he had to do,
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
When he came back to us, a withered flower,—
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
Look at the common grass from hour to hour :
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;
For happier soul no living creature has
Than he had, being here the long day through.
Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :
Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong ;
But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
And his own mind did like a tempest strong
Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise,
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be ;

Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
 Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy ;
 Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
 Yet some did think that he had little business here :

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right ;
 Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
 His limbs would toss about him with delight
 Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
 Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy
 To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
 He would have taught you how you might employ
 Yourself ; and many did to him repair,—
 And certes not in vain ; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
 Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay,
 Made, to his ear attentively applied,
 A pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;
 Glasses he had, that little things display,
 The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,*
 A mailèd angel on a battle-day ;
 The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,†
 And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
 His music, and to view his imagery :
 And, sooth, these two were each to the other dear :
 No livelier love in such a place could be :
 There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,

* The beetle with his radiance manifold.—Edit. 1815.

† And cups of flowers, and herbage green and gold.—Edit. 1815.

As happy spirits as were ever seen ;
 If but a bird, to keep them company,
 Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
 As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.

1802.

 ELLEN IRWIN :

OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLE.*

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
 Upon the braes of Kirtle,
 Was lovely as a Grecian maid
 Adorned with wreaths of myrtle ;
 Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
 And there did they beguile the day
 With love and gentle speeches,
 Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
 The Bruce had been selected ;
 And Gordon, fairest of them all,
 By Ellen was rejected.
 Sad tidings to that noble Youth !
 For it may be proclaimed with truth,
 If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
 That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
 His shattered hopes and crosses,

* The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place.

To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
 Reclined on flowers and mosses ? *
 Alas that ever he was born !
 The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,
 Sees them and their caressing ;
 Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts
 That through his brain are travelling,
 Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
 He launched a deadly javelin !
 Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
 And, starting up to meet the same,
 Did with her body cover
 The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
 Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
 Thus, from the heart of her True-love,
 The mortal spear repelling.
 And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
 The Gordon, sailed away to Spain ;
 And fought with rage incessant
 Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,
 And many years ensuing,
 This wretched Knight did vainly seek
 The death that he was wooing.
 So, coming his last help to crave,
 Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave †

* To them who sit by Kirtle's braes
 Upon the verdant mosses.—Edit. 1815.

† And coming back across the wave,
 Without a groan on Ellen's grave.—Edit. 1815.

His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkonnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen :
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn *Hic jacet* !

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS.*

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me ! †

* Written at Goslar, 1799.

† Thirty years ago, Mr. Wordsworth, speaking to the Editor of this volume of the distinction between an ear for verse and an ear for music, quoted this poem, and said that some one who wished to write music for it, could not make anything of the last line, on account of the word "difference." Nothing however could be more musical than Wordsworth's recitation of these delightful lines.

STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN.*

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :
 And I will dare to tell,
 But in the Lover's ear alone,
 What once to me befel.

When she I loved looked every day
 Fresh as a rose in June, †
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 All over the wide lea ;
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh ‡
 Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
 And, as we climbed the hill,
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
 And all the while my eyes I kept
 On the descending moon.

* Written at Goslar, in Germany, 1799.

† When she I loved was strong and gay,
 And like a rose in June.—Edit. 1815.

‡ My horse trudged on, and we drew nigh.—Edit. 1815.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped :
 When down behind the cottage roof,
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
 Into a Lover's head !
 " O mercy ! " to myself I cried,
 " If Lucy should be dead ! "

I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN.*

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
 In lands beyond the sea ;
 Nor, England ! did I know till then
 What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
 Nor will I quit thy shore
 A second time ; for still I seem
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
 The joy of my desire ;
 And she I cherished turned her wheel
 Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
 The bowers where Lucy played ;
 And thine too is the last green field
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

* Written at Goslar, 1799.

LOUISA.

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A MOUNTAIN EXCURSION.

I MET Louisa in the shade,
 And, having seen that lovely Maid,
 Why should I fear to say
 That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,*
 And down the rocks can leap along
 Like rivulets in May ? †

She loves her fire, her cottage-home ;
 Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
 In weather rough and bleak ;
 And, when against the wind she strains,
 Oh ! might I kiss the mountain rains
 That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine 'beneath the moon,'
 If I with her but half a noon
 May sit beneath the walls
 Of some old cave, or mossy nook,
 When up she winds along the brook
 To hunt the waterfalls.

1805.

* That she is ruddy, fleet and strong.—Edit. 1815.

† In the earlier editions the following stanza is interposed between the first and second, as at present printed :—

And she hath smiles to earth unknown,
 Smiles that with motion of their own
 Do spread, and sink and rise ;
 That come and go with endless play,
 And ever, as they pass away,
 Are hidden in her eyes.

'TIS SAID THAT SOME HAVE DIED FOR LOVE.

'Tis said, that some have died for love :
 And here and there a church-yard grave is found
 In the cold north's unhallowed ground,*
 Because the wretched man himself had slain,
 His love was such a grievous pain.
 And there is one whom I five years have known ;
 He dwells alone
 Upon Helvellyn's side :
 He loved—the pretty Barbara died ;
 And thus he makes his moan :
 Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid
 When thus his moan he made :

“Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak !
 Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
 That in some other way yon smoke
 May mount into the sky !
 The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :
 I look—the sky is empty space ;
 I know not what I trace ;
 But when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

O ! what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves,
 That murmur once so dear, when will it cease ?
 Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
 It robs my heart of peace.

* In Cumberland and Westmorland, there is an unwillingness to use the churchyard ground north of the church, for Christian burial.

Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,
 Into yon row of willows flit,
 Upon that alder sit ;
 Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy mountain-bounds,
 And there for ever be thy waters chained !
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
 That cannot be sustained ;
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,
 Oh let it then be dumb !
 Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,*
 Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
 Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers,
 And stir not in the gale.
 For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
 To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
 Thus rise and thus descend,—
 Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can bear."

The Man who makes this feverish complaint
 Is one of giant stature, who could dance
 Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.
 Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine
 To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
 Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me walk
 Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor know
 Such happiness as I have known to-day.

1800.

* whose arch so proudly towers,
 Even like a rainbow.—Edit. 1815.

THE COMPLAINT OF A FORSAKEN
INDIAN WOMAN.

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work HEARNE'S JOURNEY from HUDSON'S BAY to the NORTHERN OCEAN. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.]

I.

BEFORE I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !
In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;
The stars, they were among my dreams ;
In rustling conflict through the skies,
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,*
And yet they are upon my eyes,
And yet I am alive ;
Before I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !

II.

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
Yet is it dead, and I remain :

* I saw the crackling flashes drive.—Edit. 1815.

All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
 And they are dead, and I will die.
 When I was well, I wished to live,
 For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;
 But they to me no joy can give,
 No pleasure now, and no desire.
 Then here contented will I lie !
 Alone, I cannot fear to die.

III.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on
 Another day, a single one !
 Too soon I yielded to despair ;
 Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
 When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;
 And oh, how grievously I rue,
 That, afterwards, a little longer,
 My friends, I did not follow you !
 For strong and without pain I lay,
 Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

IV.

My Child ! they gave thee to another,
 A woman who was not thy mother.
 When from my arms my Babe they took,
 On me how strangely did he look !
 Through his whole body something ran,
 A most strange working did I see ;
 —As if he strove to be a man,
 That he might pull the sledge for me :
 And then he stretched his arms, how wild !
 Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

v.

My little joy ! my little pride !
In two days more I must have died.
Then do not weep and grieve for me ;
I feel I must have died with thee.
O wind, that o'er my head art flying
The way my friends their course did bend,
I should not feel the pain of dying,
Could I with thee a message send ;
Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;
For I had many things to say.

vi.

I'll follow you across the snow ;
Ye travel heavily and slow ;
In spite of all my weary pain
I'll look upon your tents again.
—My fire is dead, and snowy white
The water which beside it stood :
The wolf has come to me to-night,
And he has stolen away my food.
For ever left alone am I ;
Then wherefore should I fear to die ?

vii.

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun ;
I cannot lift my limbs to know
If they have any life or no.
My poor forsaken Child, if I
For once could have thee close to me,

With happy heart I then would die,
 And my last thought would happy be ;
 But thou, dear Babe, art far away,
 Nor shall I see another day.*

1798.

 THE LAST OF THE FLOCK.†

I.

In distant countries have I been,
 And yet I have not often seen
 A healthy man, a man full grown,
 Weep in the public roads, alone.
 But such a one, on English ground,
 And in the broad highway, I met ;
 Along the broad highway he came,
 His cheeks with tears were wet :
 Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad ;
 And in his arms a Lamb he had.

II.

He saw me, and he turned aside,
 As if he wished himself to hide :
 And with his coat did then essay
 To wipe those briny tears away.
 I followed him, and said, " My friend,
 What ails you ? wherefore weep you so ?"
 —" Shame on me, Sir ! this lusty Lamb,
 He makes my tears to flow.

* In the earlier editions the poem ends with the sixth stanza.

† Written at Alfoxden, 1798. Mr. Wordsworth said the incident occurred in the village of Holford, near Alfoxden.

To-day I fetched him from the rock ;
He is the last of all my flock.

III.

When I was young, a single man,
And after youthful follies ran,
Though little given to care and thought,
Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought ;
And other sheep from her I raised,
As healthy sheep as you might see ;
And then I married, and was rich
As I could wish to be ;
Of sheep I numbered a full score,
And every year increased my store.

IV.

Year after year my stock it grew ;
And from this one, this single ewe,
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
As fine a flock as ever grazed !
Upon the Quantock hills they fed ;
They throve, and we at home did thrive :
—This lusty Lamb of all my store
Is all that is alive ;
And now I care not if we die,
And perish all of poverty.

V.

Six Children, Sir ! had I to feed ;
Hard labour in a time of need !
My pride was tamed, and in our grief
I of the Parish asked relief.

They said, I was a wealthy man ;
 My sheep upon the uplands fed,
 And it was fit that thence I took
 Whereof to buy us bread.
 'Do this ! how can we give to you,'
 They cried, ' what to the poor is due ?'

VI.

I sold a sheep, as they had said,
 And bought my little children bread,
 And they were healthy with their food ;
 For me—it never did me good.
 A woeful time it was for me,
 To see the end of all my gains,
 The pretty flock which I had reared
 With all my care and pains,
 To see it melt like snow away—
 For me it was a woeful day.

VII.

Another still ! and still another !
 A little lamb, and then its mother !
 It was a vein that never stopped—
 Like blood-drops from my heart they dropped.
 'Till thirty were not left alive
 They dwindled, dwindled, one by one ;
 And I may say, that many a time
 I wished they all were gone—
 Reckless of what might come at last
 Were but the bitter struggle past.*

* This couplet, explanatory of the wish, is an improvement of the later editions. Formerly the stanza ended thus :—

They dwindled one by one away—
 For me it was a woeful day.

VIII.

To wicked deeds I was inclined,
And wicked fancies crossed my mind ;
And every man I chanced to see,
I thought he knew some ill of me :
No peace, no comfort could I find,
No ease, within doors or without ;
And, crazily and wearily
I went my work about ;
And oft was moved to flee from home,
And hide my head where wild beasts roam.*

IX.

Sir ! 'twas a precious flock to me,
As dear as my own children be ;
For daily with my growing store
I loved my children more and more.
Alas ! it was an evil time ;
God cursed me in my sore distress ;
I prayed, yet every day I thought
I loved my children less ;
And every week, and every day,
My flock it seemed to melt away.

X.

They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see !
From ten to five, from five to three,
A lamb, a wether, and an ewe ;—
And then at last from three to two ;
And, of my fifty, yesterday
I had but only one :

* Ofttimes I thought to run away—
For me it was a woeful day.—Edit. 1815.

And here it lies upon my arm,
 Alas ! and I have none ;—
 To-day I fetched it from the rock ;
 It is the last of all my flock.”

A COMPLAINT.

THERE is a change—and I am poor ;
 Your love hath been, nor long ago,
 A fountain at my fond heart's door,
 Whose only business was to flow ;
 And flow it did ; not taking heed
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count !
 Blest was I then all bliss above !
 Now, for that consecrated fount
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
 What have I ? shall I dare to tell ?
 A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
 I trust it is,—and never dry :
 What matter ? if the waters sleep
 In silence and obscurity.
 —Such change, and at the very door
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

RUTH.*

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 music from that pipe could draw
 Like 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.

* Written at Goslar, in Germany, 1798. It is remarkable that at so early an age the Poet should have produced a work of such pure and delicate pathos.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :
But 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 that hourly change
 Their blossoms, through a boundless range
 Of intermingling 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.

“ How pleasant,” then he said, “ it were
 A fisher or a hunter there,
 In sunshine or in shade †
 To wander with an easy mind ;
 And build a household fire, and find
 A home in every glade !

* He spake of plants divine and strange
 That every hour their blossoms change,
 Ten thousand lovely hues.—Edit. 1815.

† And then he said, how sweet it were
 A fisher or a hunter there,
 A gardener in the shade.—Edit. 1815.

What days and what bright 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
Fond 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 gorgeous flowers ;
The breezes their own languor lent ;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those favored 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 I, in confidence and pride,
Had crossed the Atlantic main.

Before me shone a glorious world—
 Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled
 To music suddenly :
 I looked upon those hills and plains,
 And seemed as if let loose from chains,
 To live at liberty.

No more of this ; for now, by thee
 Dear Ruth ! more happily set free
 With nobler zeal I burn ;
 My soul from darkness is released,
 Like the whole sky when to the east
 The morning doth return." *

Full soon that better 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,

* The three stanzas of which this is the last, did not appear in the Edition of 1815.

† But now the pleasant dream was gone.—Edit. 1815.

And in a prison housed ;
 And there, with many a doleful song
 Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
 She fearfully caroused.*

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 clear 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 there, exulting in her wrongs,
 Among the music of her songs
 She fearfully caroused.—Edit. 1815.

† The Tone is a river of Somersetshire, at no great distance from the Quantock hills. These hills are extremely beautiful, and in most places richly covered with coppice woods.

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 prest 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.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.*

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—
 A foggy day in winter time)
 A Woman on the road I met,
 Not old, though something past her prime :
 Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;
 And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there ;
 Proud was I that my country bred
 Such strength, a dignity so fair :
 She begged an alms, like one in poor estate ;
 I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate.

* Written at Grasmere, February, 1802. In Miss Wordsworth's journal this poem is called "The Singing Bird."

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
 "What is it," said I, "that you bear,*
 Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
 Protected from this cold damp air?"
 She answered, soon as she the question heard,
 "A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,
 "I had a Son, who many a day
 Sailed on the seas, but he is dead ;
 In Denmark he was cast away :
 And I have travelled weary miles to see
 If aught which he had owned might still remain for me.†

The bird and cage they both were his :
 'Twas my Son's bird ; and neat and trim
 He kept it : many voyages
 The singing-bird had gone with him ;
 When last he sailed, he left the bird behind ;
 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,
 And pipe its song in safety ;—there ‡
 I found it when my Son was dead ;
 And now, God help me for my little wit !
 I bear it with me, Sir ;—he took so much delight in it."

* With the first word I had to spare
 I said to her, "Beneath your cloak
 What's that which on your arm you bear?"—Edit. 1815.

† And I have travelled far as Hull to see
 What clothes he might have left, or other property.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Till he came back again, and there.—Edit. 1815.

THE CHILDLESS FATHER.

“UP, Timothy, up with your staff and away !
 Not a soul in the village this morning will stay ;
 The hare has just started from Hamilton’s grounds,
 And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds.”

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,
 On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen ;
 With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as snow,
 The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six months before,
 Filled the funeral basin * at Timothy’s door ;
 A coffin through Timothy’s threshold had past ;
 One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,
 The horse and the horn, and the hark ! hark away !
 Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut
 With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said ;
 ‘The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead.’
 But of this in my ears not a word did he speak ;
 And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

1800.

* In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET —.

I.

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,
 Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?
 Oh find me, prosperous or undone !
 Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
 Why am I ignorant of the same
 That I may rest ; and neither blame
 Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

II.

Seven years, alas ! to have received
 No tidings of an only child ;
 To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
 And been for evermore beguiled ;
 Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !
 I catch at them, and then I miss ;
 Was ever darkness like to this ?

III.

He was among the prime in worth,
 An object beauteous to behold ;
 Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :
 If things ensued that wanted grace,
 As hath been said, they were not base ;
 And never blush was on my face.

IV.

Ah ! little doth the young-one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother unawares !
He knows it not, he cannot guess :
Years to a mother bring distress ;
But do not make her love the less.

V.

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought ; and, being blind,
Said, 'Pride shall help me in my wrong
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed : ' and that is true ;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

VI.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour and of gain,
Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;
Think not of me with grief and pain :
I now can see with better eyes ;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

VII.

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight ;
They mount—how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight !

Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

VIII.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den ;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

IX.

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
Their way to me : 'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead ;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

X.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
I dread the rustling of the grass ;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass :
I question things and do not find
One that will answer to my mind ;
And all the world appears unkind.

XI.

Beyond participation lie
 My troubles, and beyond relief :
 If any chance to heave a sigh,
 They pity me, and not my grief.
 Then come to me, my Son, or send
 Some tidings that my woes may end ;
 I have no other earthly friend ! *

1804.

 HER EYES ARE WILD.†

I.

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 greenwood stone,
 She talked and sung the woods among,
 And it was in the English tongue.

II.

“Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,
 But nay, my heart is far too glad ;

* The poetical student would do well to compare this admirable picture of maternal grief and anxiety, with the grief of the bereaved lover for his pretty Barbara, in the poem entitled, “ ’Tis said that some have died for love.” The distinction between the grief of affection and the grief of passion is traced with singular skill.

† Written at Alfoxden, 1797.

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.

III.

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.

IV.

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.

v.

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.

vi.

Then do not fear, my boy ! for thee
Bold as a lion will I 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.

vii.

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.

VIII.

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.

IX.

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.

X.

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."

 MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.*

IF from the public way you turn your steps
 Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
 You will suppose that with an upright path
 Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
 But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook
 The mountains have all opened out themselves,
 And made a hidden valley of their own.
 No habitation can be seen ; but they
 Who journey thither find themselves alone
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
 That overhead are sailing in the sky.
 It is in truth an utter solitude ;
 Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
 But for one object which you might pass by,

* Written at Grasmere, 1800. In Wordsworth's letter to Charles James Fox, written in January, 1801, he says,—“In the two poems, ‘The Brothers’ and ‘Michael,’ I have attempted to draw a picture of the domestic affections as I know they exist among a class of men who are now almost confined to the North of England. They are small, independent *proprietors* of land, here called statesmen, men of respectable education, who daily labour on their own little properties. The poems are faithful copies from Nature.”

Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones !
 And to that simple object appertains
 A story—unenriched with strange events,*
 Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me
 Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved ;—not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects, led me on to feel
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,

* And to that place a story appertains,
 Which though it be ungarnished with events.—Edit. 1815.

And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
' The winds are now devising work for me !'
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains : he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed ; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain ;
Those fields, those hills—what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections,* were to him

* These fields, these hills,
Which were his living being, even more
Than his own blood.—Edit. 1815.

A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—
Though younger than himself full twenty years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;
That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then,
Their labour did not cease ; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fire-side ; perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair

Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country style
With huge and black projection overbrowed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn—and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake ;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named **THE EVENING STAR.**

Thus living on through such a length of years,
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—
 Than that a child, more than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,*
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And strivings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.†
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
 Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,

* This line is not in the early editions.

† Here are interposed in the Edition of 1815 these three lines :—

From such and other causes, to the thoughts
 Of the old man, his only son was now
 The dearest object that he knew on earth.

Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The CLIPPING TREE,* a name which yet it bears.
There, while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old ;
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help ;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the heights,
Nor fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they

* Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

Were as companions, why should I relate
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came
 Feelings and emanations—things which were
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
 In surety for his brother's son, a man
 Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
 Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
 A grievous penalty, but little less
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
 At the first hearing, for a moment took
 More hope out of his life than he supposed
 That any old man ever could have lost.
 As soon as he had armed himself with strength *
 To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
 A portion of his patrimonial fields.

* As soon as he had gathered so much strength
 That he could look his trouble in the face,
 It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell
 A portion, &c.—Edit. 1815.

Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
 And his heart failed him. “ Isabel,” said he,
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,
 “ I have been toiling more than seventy years,
 And in the open sunshine of God’s love
 Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours
 Should pass into a stranger’s hand, I think
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but
 ’Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind
 That passes over it. We have, thou know’st,
 Another kinsman—he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,
 And with his kinsman’s help and his own thrift
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 He may return to us. If here he stay,
 What can be done ? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained ?”

At this the old Man paused,

And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence
And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought
A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares ;
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and monies to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
And thus resumed :—" Well, Isabel ! this scheme
These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger ;—but this hope is a good hope.
—Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :
—If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.

But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work : for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep :
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go :
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away,
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;
And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart.* That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;
To which, requests were added, that forthwith
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over ; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbours round ;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
"He shall depart to-morrow." To this word

* How exquisitely true to Nature this is !—ED.

The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold ; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked :
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
And thus the old Man spake to him :—" My Son,
To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart
I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should touch
On things thou canst not know of.*—After thou
First cam'st into the world—as oft befals
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
And still I loved thee with increasing love.
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own fire-side
First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;

* even if I should speak
Of things thou canst not know of.—Edit. 1815.

While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains ; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
And said, " Nay, do not take it so—I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
—Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father : and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands ; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together : here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done ; and when
At length their time was come, they were not loth
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived :
But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burthened when they came to me ;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
—It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,

If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused ;
Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
"This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ;
I will do mine.—I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to thee :
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Boy !
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—yes—
I knew that thou could'st never have a wish
To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me
Only by links of love : when thou art gone,
What will be left to us ?—But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
And God will strengthen thee : amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived,
Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
A work which is not here : a covenant
'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
Befal thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,
And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight
The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept ;
And to the house together they returned.
—Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy
Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face ;
And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
'The prettiest letters that were ever seen.'
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on : and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,

He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain, or break the heart : *
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old Man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
 And for the land, his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time
 Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went,
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he seen
 Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time,
 He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,
 And left the work unfinished when he died.

* which else

Would break the heart ;—old Michael found it so.—Edit. 1815.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her Husband : at her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
 Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood ; great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighbourhood :—yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains
 Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

 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 ?

* With sacrifice, before the rising morn
 Performed, my slaughtered lord have I required,
 And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
 Him of the infernal Gods have I desired.—Edit. 1815.

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 !”

Forth sprang 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 knowest, 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
 Thou should’st elude 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 :
 Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys *

* For this second line of the stanza, the earlier editions had :—

“ 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 goest, 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

* The fervor, not the impotence of love.—Edit. 1815.

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 enterprise
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

* Spake as a witness of a second birth,
For all that is most perfect upon earth.—Edit. 1815.

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 sympathised ;
 Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
 Seeking 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, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corpse She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reprov'd,
She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
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 ;

* Instead of the foregoing six lines, the Edition of 1815 contained the following :—

“ Ah, judge her gently who so deeply loved :
Her, who in reason's spite, yet without crime,
Was in a trance of passion thus removed ;
Delivered from the galling yoke of time
And these frail elements—to gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.”

Several critics, and especially Julius C. Hare, in the “ Guesses at Truth,” have censured the new reading as a very wilful alteration, though the present version is more conformable with classical authority.

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 ! *

1814.

TO THE DAISY.

' Her † divine skill taught me this,
 That from every thing I saw
 I could some instruction draw,
 And raise pleasure to the height
 Through the meanest object's sight.
 By the murmur of a spring,
 Or the least bough's rustelling ;
 By a Daisy whose leaves spread
 Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
 Or a shady bush or tree ;
 She could more infuse in me
 Than all Nature's beauties can
 In some other wiser man.'

G. WITHER.

In youth from rock to rock I went,
 From hill to hill in discontent
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,
 Most pleased when most uneasy ;
 But now my own delights I make,—
 My thirst at every rill can slake,
 And gladly Nature's love partake,
 Of Thee, sweet Daisy !

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

———His Laodamia
 It Comes———

† His muse.

Thee Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
 That she may sun thee ;*
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
 Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought :
 And oft alone in nooks remote
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling,
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame ;
 Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
 Or, some bright day of April sky,
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie

* When soothed a while by milder airs
 Thee, Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly shades his few gray hairs ;
 Spring cannot shun thee.—Edit. 1815.

Near the green holly,
 And wearily at length should fare ;
 He needs but look about, and there
 Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
 Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life, our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
 As ready to salute the sun*
 As lark or leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
 Nor be less dear to future men †
 Than in old time ;—thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favourite. ‡

1802.

 TO THE SAME FLOWER.

WITH little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be,
 Daisy ! again I talk to thee,
 For thou art worthy,

* Child of the year ! that round dost run
 Thy course ; bold lover of the sun,
 And cheerful when the day's begun
 As morning Leveret.—Edit. 1815.

† Dear shalt thou be to future men
 As in old time.—Edit. 1815.

‡ See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

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 !

* Oft do I sit by thee at ease
 And weave a web of similies.—Edit. 1815.

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 !

Bright *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 !

1805.

 TO THE SAME FLOWER,

BRIGHT Flower ! whose home is everywhere,
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,
 And all 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 !

Is it that Man is soon deprest ?
 A thoughtless Thing ! who, once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,

Or on his reason,
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season ?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ;
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

1803.

 TO THE SAME FLOWER.*

SWEET Flower ! belike one day to have
 A place upon thy Poet's grave,
 I welcome thee once more :
 But He, who was on land, at sea,
 My Brother, too, in loving thee,
 Although he loved more silently,
 Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day
 When to that Ship he bent his way,

* This beautiful poem was written in commemoration of the death of the Poet's brother, John Wordsworth, who commanded the "Abergavenny," E. I. Company's ship, and was wrecked near the shore of the Isle of Wight, February, 1805.

To govern and to guide :
His wish was gained : a little time
Would bring him back in manhood's prime
And free for life, these hills to climb ;
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight ;
The May had then made all things green ;
And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen,
His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought :
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word !—the ship is gone ;—
Returns from her long course :—anon
Sets sail :—in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand :
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel !—ghastly shock !
—At length delivered from the rock,

The deep she hath regained ;
 And through the stormy night they steer ;
 Labouring for life, in hope and fear,
 To reach a safer shore—how near,
 Yet not to be attained !

“ Silence ! ” the brave Commander cried ;
 To that calm word a shriek replied,
 It was the last death-shriek.
 —A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
 Survive upon the tall mast’s height ;
 But one dear remnant of the night—
 For Him in vain I seek.*

Six weeks beneath the moving sea
 He lay in slumber quietly ;
 Unforced by wind or wave
 To quit the Ship for which he died,
 (All claims of duty satisfied ;)
 And there they found him at her side ;
 And bore him to the grave.

Vain service ! yet not vainly done
 For this, if other end were none,

* As this stanza was originally published, it contained—probably through inadvertence—eight lines, while the rest of the stanzas contained but seven. The condensation required in order to get rid of the line, certainly improves the stanza, and it shows how much at home Wordsworth was in “ the accomplishment of verse. ” The stanza stood thus :—

Silence ! the brave commander cried,
 To that calm word a shriek replied,
 It was the last death-shriek.
 —A few appear by morning light
 Preserved upon the tall mast’s height :
 Oft on my soul I see that sight ;
 But one dear remnant of the night—
 For him in vain I seek.

That He, who had been cast
 Upon a way of life unmeet
 For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
 Should find an undisturbed retreat
 Near what he loved, at last—

That neighbourhood of grove and field
 To Him a resting-place should yield,
 A meek man and a brave !
 The birds shall sing and ocean make
 A mournful murmur for *his* sake ;
 And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and wake
 Upon his senseless grave.

1805.

 THE GREEN LINNET.

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequestered nook how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat !
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
 In all this covert of the blest ;
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion !
 Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,
 Dost lead the revels of the May ;
 And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
 Make all one band of paramours,
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment :
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,
 Scattering thy gladness without care,
 Too blest with any one to pair ;
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
 Behold him perched in ecstacies,
 Yet seeming still to hover ;
 There ! where the flutter of his wings
 Upon his back and body flings
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
 A Brother of the dancing leaves ;
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
 Pours forth his song in gushes ;
 As if by that exulting strain
 He mocked and treated with disdain
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
 While fluttering in the bushes.*

1803.

* While thus before my eyes he gleams,
 A brother of the leaves he seems,
 When in a moment forth he teems
 His little song in gushes ;
 As if it pleased him to disdain
 And mock the form which he did feign,
 While he was dancing with the train
 Of leaves among the bushes.—Edit. 1815.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.*

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ;
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !
 I'm as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little Flower !—I'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know ;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

* Common Pilewort. "It is remarkable," Mr. Wordsworth said, "that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse."

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about her nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call,
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless Prodigal ;
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !
 Travel with the multitude :
 Never heed them ; I aver
 That they all are wanton wooers ;
 But the thrifty cottager,
 Who stirs little out of doors,
 Joys to spy thee near her home ;
 Spring is coming, Thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
 Kindly, unassuming Spirit !
 Careless of thy neighbourhood,
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face
 On the moor, and in the wood,
 In the lane ;—there's not a place,
 Howsoever mean it be,
 But 'tis good enough for thee.*

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
 Children of the flaring hours !
 Buttercups, that will be seen,
 Whether we will see or no ;

* This is a most accurate description of the local habits of the little star-like flower. It is of the same colour, and about the same size as the buttercup, but grows more in clusters, and closer to the ground.—ED.

Others, too, of lofty mien ;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine,
 Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Ill-requited upon earth ;*
 Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,†
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

1803.

 TO THE SAME FLOWER.

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet :
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad ;
 All unheard of as thou art,
 Thou must needs, I think, have had,
 Celandine ! and long ago,
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
 Whosoe'er the man might be,
 Who the first with pointed rays
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)

* Scorned and slighted upon earth.—Edit. 1815.

† Singing at my heart's command,
 In the lanes my thoughts pursuing.—Edit. 1815.

Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring,
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think, I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me ;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek ;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slip'st into thy sheltering hold ;
Liveliest of the vernal train *
When ye all are out again.

* Bright as any of the train.—Edit. 1815.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
 By what charm of sight or smell,
 Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
 Labouring for her waxen cells,
 Fondly settle upon Thee
 Prized above all buds and bells
 Opening daily at thy side,
 By the season multiplied ? *

Thou art not beyond the moon,
 But a thing 'beneath our shoon :'
 Let the bold Discoverer thrid
 In his bark the polar sea ; †
 Rear who will a pyramid ;
 Praise it is enough for me,
 If there be but three or four
 Who will love my little Flower.

1803.

 THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.

I.

"BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"
 Exclaimed an angry Voice, †
 "Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
 Between me and my choice !"
 A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows §
 Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,

* This stanza is not in the Edition of 1815.

† Let, as old Magellan did,
 Others roam about the sea.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Exclaimed a thundering voice.—Edit. 1815.

§ A falling water swollen with snow.—Edit. 1815.

That, all bespattered with his foam,
And dancing high and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home.

II.

“Dost thou presume my course to block ?
Off, off ! or, puny Thing !
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
To which thy fibres cling.”
The Flood was tyrannous and strong ;
The patient Briar suffered long,
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
Hoping the danger would be past ;
But, seeing no relief, at last,
He ventured to reply.

III.

“Ah !” said the Briar, “blame me not ;
Why should we dwell in strife ?
We who in this sequestered spot
Once lived a happy life !
You stirred me on my rocky bed—
What pleasure through my veins you spread
The summer long, from day to day,
My leaves you freshened and bedewed ;
Nor was it common gratitude
That did your cares repay.

IV.

When spring came on with bud and bell,
Among these rocks did I
Before you hang my wreaths to tell
That gentle days were nigh !

And in the sultry summer hours,
 I sheltered you with leaves and flowers ;
 And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
 The linnet lodged, and for us two
 Chanted his pretty songs, when you
 Had little voice or none.

v.

But now proud thoughts are in your breast—
 What grief is mine you see,
 Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest
 Together we might be !
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
 Some ornaments to me are left—
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
 With which I, in my humble way,
 Would deck you many a winter day,
 A happy Eglantine !”

vi.

What more he said I cannot tell,
 The Torrent down the rocky dell
 Came thundering loud and fast ;*
 I listened, nor aught else could hear ;
 The Briar quaked—and much I fear
 Those accents were his last.

1800.

* The torrent thundered down the dell
 With unabating haste.—Edit. 1815.

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 !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary
 And to-day my heart is weary ;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine ;
 Lift me, guide me high and high *
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
 Thou art laughing and scorning ;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark ! thou would'st be loth
 To be such a traveller as I.
 Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river
 Pouring out praise to the almighty Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both !

* Up with me, up with me, high and high.—Edit. 1815.

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.*

1805.

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.

* In the Edition of 1815 the last stanza runs thus :—

Hearing thee, or else some other,
 As merry a brother,
 I on the earth will go plodding on
 By myself, cheerfully, till the day is done.

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, too heedless, 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 !

1799.

 THE ROCK IN THE ORCHARD.

Who fancied what a pretty sight
 This Rock would be if edged around
 With living snow-drops ? 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 gentle maid, †

* Thou, old Greybeard ! art the Warden.—Edit. 1815.

† love-sick maid.—Edit. 1815.

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.

1803.

 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 : †

* This stanza is not in the earlier editions.

† Though as if with eagle-pinion
 O'er the rocks the chamois roam,
 Yet he has some small dominion
 Where he feels himself at home.—Edit. 1815.

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean
Yield him no domestic cave,
Slumbers without sense of motion,
Couched upon the rocking wave.*

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

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.

1800.

THE SEVEN SISTERS;

OR, THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE.

I.

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,
All children of one mother :
You could not say in one short day
What love they bore each other.

* Yet he slumbers without motion
On the calm and silent wave.—Edit. 1815.

† This stanza is not in the earlier editions.

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 !

II.

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.

III.

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.

IV.

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.

V.

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.

VI.

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 all are buried there,
 And there together sleep.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

1804.

 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 !

1806.

 THE DANISH BOY.

A FRAGMENT.

I.

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 lonely hut ;
And in this dell you see
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

II.

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.

III.

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;
Yet 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.

* Nor ever linger there.—Edit. 1815.

IV.

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;
Resting the harp upon his knee ;
To words of a forgotten tongue,
He suits its 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 sings alone
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

V.

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.

1799.

* And there, in a forgotten tongue,
He warbles melody.—Edit. 1815.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.*



I.

PREFATORY SONNET.

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,

* "This form of poetry (the Sonnet), not admitting of the breadth and magnitude which is requisite to give effect to his more characteristic style, has led Mr. Wordsworth to lay aside the implements of the architect, and to assume those of the sculptor. Few are the works of art in this kind which are so pure in their material, so graceful in their execution, so delicately wrought, so exquisitely chiselled. Yet bright and ornate as many of these productions are, there is in them, no less than in his other poems, a constant abstinence from antithesis and false effects. The words are always felt to be used, first and mainly because they are those which best express the meaning; secondly, and subordinately, because they convey to the ear the sounds which best harmonise with the meaning, and with each other. There is hardly one of Mr. Wordsworth's sonnets which ends in a point. Pointed lines will sometimes occur in the course of them, as thought will sometimes naturally take a pointed shape in the mind; but whether it takes that shape or another is obviously treated as a matter of indifference; nothing is sacrificed to it, and at the close of the sonnet, where the adventitious effect of the point might be apt to outshine the intrinsic value of the subject, it seems to have been studiously avoided. Mr. Wordsworth's sonnet never goes off, as it were, with a clap, or repercussion at the close; but is thrown up like a rocket, breaks into light, and falls in a soft shower of brightness. To none, indeed, of the minor forms of poetry are Mr. Wordsworth's powers better adapted; there is none to which discrimination in thought, and aptitude in language are more essential; and there never was a poet who reached so near to perfection in these particulars as Mr. Wordsworth."—*Quarterly Review*, No. 104—from an article contributed by Henry Taylor, author of *Philip Van Artevelde*.

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 for 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.

 II.

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 showed the Bark upon the glassy flood
 For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.
 Soul-soothing Art ! whom 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.

III.

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 Génius played
 In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high ;
 He who stood visible to Mirza'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,
 Whence I have risen, uplifted on the breeze †
 Of harmony, above all earthly care.

IV.

'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.

* See the Vision of Mirza in the Spectator.

† From which I have been lifted on the breeze.—Edit. 1815.

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.

 v.

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 flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old
 As the beginning of the heavens and earth !

 vi.

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 showed her fulgent head
Uncovered ; dazzling the Beholder's sight
As if to vindicate her beauty's right,
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparagèd.
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.

VII.

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.

* Like to a bonny lass, who plays her pranks.—Edit. 1815.

VIII.

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,*
Festively she puts forth in trim array ;
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 !

IX.

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,

* As vigorous as a lark at break of day.—Edit. 1815.

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.*

 X.

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.

 XI.

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMBLETON
 HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

DARK and more dark the shades of evening fell ;
 The wished-for point was reached—but at an hour

* This sonnet is a remarkable instance of what may be done, by such a poet as Wordsworth, with so ordinary an incident as the sight of a lighted candle by night in a mountain cottage.

When little could be gained from that rich dower
 Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.
 Yet did the glowing west with marvellous 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.*

XII.

—— ‘ they are of the sky,
 And from our earthly memory fade away.’

THOSE 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 !

* This sonnet has been much altered and improved since 1815. In the edition of that year the first twelve lines stood as follows :—

Dark and more dark the shades of evening fell ;
 The wished-for point was reached—but late the hour ;
 And little could we see of all that power
 Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.
 The western sky did recompense us well
 With Grecian temple, minaret, and bower ;
 And in one part a minster with its tower
 Substantially expressed—a place for bell
 Or clock to toll from ! Many a glorious pile
 Did we behold, fair sights that might repay
 All disappointment ! and, as such, the eye
 Delighted in them ;

† Mine eyes yet lingering on that solemn sight.—Edit. 1815.

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.

XIII.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.†

DEGENERATE Douglas ! oh, the unworthy Lord !
 Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
 And love of havoc, (for with such disease
 Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
 To level with the dust a noble horde,
 A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
 Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
 Beggared and outraged !—Many hearts deplored
 The fate of those old Trees ; and oft with pain
 The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
 On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed :
 For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
 And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
 And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

* It is unstable, and deserts me quite.—Edit. 1815.

† This sonnet was composed after Wordsworth's Scotch tour of 1803. The Castle is Nidpath Castle, near Peebles. The degenerate Douglas was the Duke of Queensbury. The anecdote was told to Wordsworth by Walter Scott.

XIV.

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 lull'd ;'
 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 aërial waste ;
 Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill !

XV.

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.

* "The three sonnets to Sleep are very beautiful and peculiar ; not Miltonic, or Shaksperian, or Petrarchian, nor like the productions of any later sonnetteers, but entirely Wordsworthian and inimitable."—SARA COLERIDGE.

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.

XVI.

TO SLEEP.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;
The very sweetest, Fancy culls or 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 !

XVII.

TO SLEEP.

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 ;
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do 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, blessed barrier between day and day,*
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

XVIII.

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

* Of this line Mr. Wordsworth says, with a curious candour of self-satisfaction, in a letter to Lady Beaumont, that it had been mentioned to him by Coleridge, and indeed by almost every one who had heard it, as eminently beautiful !

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.*

 XIX.

THE RIVER DUDDON.

O MOUNTAIN Stream ! the Shepherd and his Cot
 Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude ;
 Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
 A field or two of brighter green, or plot
 Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
 Of stationary sunshine :—thou hast viewed
 These only, Duddon ! with their paths renewed
 By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
 Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to leave,
 Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
 Though simple thy companions were and few ;
 And through this wilderness a passage cleave
 Attended but by thy own voice, save when
 The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue !

* There is a defensive and eulogistic criticism on this sonnet from the pen of the poet himself, in a letter to Lady Beaumont. See *Life*, by Dr. Wordsworth, I. pp. 336—338.

XX.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

I.

YES ! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
 And I be undeluded, unbetrayed ;
 For if of our affections none finds 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.

XXI.

FROM THE SAME.

II.

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.*

XXII.

FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME BEING.

III.

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 show 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.

* The last line and a half of this sonnet reminds one of Shakspeare's manner.

XXIII.

TO LADY BEAUMONT.

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.*

XXIV.

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 ;

* The rapturousness of Spring was perhaps never more nobly expressed than in the last two lines of this sonnet.

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.

 XXV.

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, comes 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.

* Is up, and cropping yet his later meal.—Edit. 1815.

The line is wonderfully improved by the alteration, and the improvement shows how carefully the poet studied the truth of Nature, even in the commonest matters.

XXVI.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.*

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.

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

* This sonnet was composed on the outside of the Dover coach, going from London, July 30, 1802. See *Life*, by Dr. Wordsworth, I., p. 186, *note*.

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 safer good ;
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

XXVIII.

SKIDDAW.

1801.

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 nobler far ; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

XXIX.

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.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with brightening
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 away.

XXX.

“ 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

* In earlier editions this sonnet commenced —

“ Yes, there is holy pleasure in thine eye.”

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 dread remembrance, 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.

 XXXI.

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.†

* There are several alterations in this sonnet from the Edition of 1815, and this line is new, and comes in the place of

“To see the trees which I had thought so tall.”

† The allusion is probably to his brother who was lost by shipwreck in February, 1805.

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 broods o'er 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 untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

XXXIII.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND
 IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE, 1812.

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,

* The gentleness of heaven is on the sea.—Edit. 1815.

† Even for such omen would the Bride display
 No mirthful gladness.—Edit. 1815.

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 shown that nothing human can be clear
 From frailty, for that insight may the Wife
 To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

 XXXIV.

ON APPROACHING HOME.*

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-dale !
 Say that we come, and come by this day's light ;
 Fly upon swiftest wing round field and height,
 But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale ;
 There let a mystery of joy prevail,
 The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,
 And Rover whine, as at a second sight
 Of near-approaching good that shall not fail :
 And from that Infant's face let joy appear ;
 Yea, let our Mary's one companion child—
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
 With intimations manifold and dear,
 While we have wandered over wood and wild—
 Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

* This sonnet was written between Dalston and Grasmere, in returning from a tour in Scotland, September, 1803.

XXXV.

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 wingèd 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 heaven-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.

XXXVI.

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

* Raisley Calvert was son of R. Calvert, Esq., Steward to the Duke of Norfolk. Wordsworth nursed the young man in a fatal illness, and after his death received what was for him a most important bequest of £900, to enable him to live without the drudgery of authorship for his daily bread, while cultivating his poetic genius.

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.

SONNETS
DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE
AND LIBERTY.*

—◆—
PART I.†

I.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS,
AUGUST, 1802.

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west,
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom ; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem ; and should'st wink,
Bright Star ! with laughter on her banners, drest

* In a letter to Lady Beaumont, of May, 1807, Mr. Wordsworth says—
“The Sonnets to Liberty have a connection with, or a bearing upon each other, and therefore if individually they want weight, perhaps as a body, they may not be so deficient : * * but I would boldly say at once that these Sonnets, while they each fix the attention upon some important sentiment separately considered, do at the same time collectively make a Poem on the subject of Civil Liberty and National Independence, which either for simplicity of style, or grandeur of moral sentiment, is likely to have few parallels in the poetry of the present day.”

† Sara Coleridge says, in the notes to her father's *Biographia Literaria*, that the finest set of Wordsworth's Sonnets, is, in her opinion, Part I. of those dedicated to Liberty.

In thy fresh beauty. There ! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England ; there she lies.
Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory !—I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

II.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see ?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and blind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
In France, before the new-born Majesty.
'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
A seemly reverence may be paid to power ;
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
In haste, nor springing with a transient shower :
When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
What hardship had it been to wait an hour ?
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone !

III.

Composed near Calais, on the road leading to Ardres, August 7, 1802.

JONES!* as from Calais southward you and I
 Went pacing side by side, this public Way
 Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day,†
 When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :
 A homeless sound of joy was in the sky :
 From hour to hour the antiquated Earth,
 Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands, mirth,‡
 Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh !
 And now, sole register that these things were,
 Two solitary greetings have I heard,
 ‘ *Good morrow, Citizen !* ’ a hollow word,
 As if a dead man spake it ! Yet despair
 Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
 Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.

* This gentleman was Wordsworth’s companion in a continental pedestrian tour twelve years before. The poet describes him as one of his earliest and dearest friends. He was a clergyman, and died in 1835.

† 14th July, 1790.

‡ In the Edition of 1815 the first seven lines ran thus :—

JONES ! when from Calais southward you and I
 Travelled on foot together, then this way
 Which I am pacing now, was like the May
 With festivals of new-born Liberty.
 A homeless sound of joy was in the sky,
 The antiquated earth, as one might say,
 Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands, play,

IV.

1801.*

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
 And an unthinking grief! † The tenderest mood
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be? what food
 Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could *he* gain?
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
 The Governor who must be wise and good,
 And temper with the sternness of the brain
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
 Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
 Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
 Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
 Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
 By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
 True Power doth grow on; and her rights are these.

v.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names:
 This is young Buonaparté's natal day,

* One evening in 1801, after hearing Milton's read, Wordsworth "took fire," as he said, and produced three, of which this was one. He could not particularize the others. They were his first sonnets, except an irregular one which he wrote at school. See *ante*, "Calm is all Nature as a resting wheel."

† for who aspires
 To genuine greatness but from just desires,
 And knowledge such as *He* could never gain?—Edit. 1815.

And his is henceforth an established sway—
Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay !
Calais is not : and I have bent my way
To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames
His business as he likes. Far other show
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time ;
The senselessness of joy was then sublime !
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

VI.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee ;
And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day :
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great, is passed away.

VII.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

THE Voice of song from distant lands shall call
 To that great King ; shall hail the crownèd Youth
 Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
 By one example hath set forth to all
 How they with dignity may stand ; or fall,
 If fall they must. Now, whither doth it tend ?
 And what to him and his shall be the end ?
 That thought is one which neither can appal
 Nor cheer him ; for the illustrious Swede hath done
 The thing which ought to be ; is raised *above*
 All consequences : work he hath begun
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve :
 The heroes bless him, him their rightful son.

VIII.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.*

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 † Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;—

* This St. Domingo chief was treacherously seized by the General of the French, and sent to France, where he was closely imprisoned by Napoleon. He died in 1803, when he had been ten months a prisoner.

† Whether the all-cheering sun be free to shed
 His beams around thee, or thou rest thy head
 Pillowed in some dark dungeon's noisome den.—Edit. 1815.

O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
 Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and skies ;
 There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

IX.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times, was the chasing of all Negroes from France by decree of the government : we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.

WE had a female Passenger who came*
 From Calais with us, spotless in array,—
 A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,
 Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame ;

* This sonnet is quite recast ; in 1815 it stood thus :—

WE had a fellow passenger who came
 From Calais with us, gaudy in array,—
 A Negro woman, like a lady gay,
 Yet silent as a woman fearing blame ;
 Dejected, meek, yea, pitiably tame
 She sate, from notice turning not away,
 But on our proffered kindness still did lay
 A weight of languid speech, or at the same
 Was silent, motionless in eyes and face.
 She was a Negro woman driven from France,
 Rejected like all others of that race,
 Not one of whom may now find footing there ;
 This the poor out-cast did to us declare,
 Nor murmured at the unfeeling ordinance.

Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim
 She sate, from notice turning not away,
 But on all proffered intercourse did lay
 A weight of languid speech, or to the same
 No sign of answer made by word or face :
 Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,
 That, burning independent of the mind,
 Joined with the lustre of her rich attire
 To mock the Outcast—O ye Heavens, be kind !
 And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race !

x.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE
 DAY OF LANDING.

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once more.
 The cock that crows, the smoke that curls, that sound
 Of bells ;—those boys who in yon meadow-ground
 In white-sleeved shirts are playing ; and the roar
 Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore ;—
 All, all are English. Oft have I looked round
 With joy in Kent's green vales ; but never found
 Myself so satisfied in heart before.
 Europe is yet in bonds ; but let that pass,
 Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
 My Country ! and 'tis joy enough and pride
 For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
 Of England once again, and hear and see,
 With such a dear Companion at my side.*

* His sister.

XI.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER.

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
The coast of France—the coast of France how near !
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
What mightiness for evil and for good !
Even so doth God protect us if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ;
Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

XII.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF
SWITZERLAND.

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

 XIII.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

XIV.

LONDON, 1802.

MILTON ! thou should'st be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XV.

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that penned
And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none :
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
These moralists could act and comprehend :
They knew how genuine glory was put on ;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour : what strength was, that would not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
 Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road ;
 But equally a want of books and men !

 XVI.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,*
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish ; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible Knights of old :
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakspeare spake ; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

* Road by which all might come and go that would,
 And bear our freights of worth to foreign lands.—Edit. 1815.

XVII.

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

XVIII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

ONE might believe that natural miseries
Had blasted France, and made of it a land
Unfit for men; and that in one great band
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease.
But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and breeze
Shed gentle favours: rural works are there,
And ordinary business without care;
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and please!

How piteous then that there should be such dearth
Of knowledge ; that whole myriads should unite
To work against themselves such fell despite :
Should come in phrensy and in drunken mirth,
Impatient to put out the only light
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth !

XIX.

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear
Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall :
'Tis his who walks about in the open air,
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear
Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
Who, even the best, in such condition, free
From self-reproach, reproach that he must share
With Human-nature ? Never be it ours
To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
And know that noble feelings, manly powers,
Instead of gathering strength, must droop and pine ;
And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
Fade, and participate in man's decline.

XX.

OCTOBER, 1803.

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay :
Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
With words of apprehension and despair :
While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
Men unto whom sufficient for the day
And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
What do we gather hence but firmer faith
That every gift of noble origin
Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath ;
That virtue and the faculties within
Are vital,—and that riches are akin
To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death ?

XXI.

ENGLAND ! the time is come when thou should'st wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food ;
The truth should now be better understood ;
Old things have been unsettled ; we have seen
Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,
If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
Aught good were destined, thou would'st step between

England ! all nations in this charge agree :
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
 Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy :
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee !

 XXII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

WHEN, looking on the present face of things,
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too !
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,
 The great events with which old story rings
 Seem vain and hollow ; I find nothing great :
 Nothing is left which I can venerate ;
 So that a doubt almost within me springs
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God !
 I measure back the steps which I have trod ;
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the strength *
 Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts sublime
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

* And tremble, seeing as I do the strength.—Edit. 1815.

XXIII.

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803.

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
To France be words of invitation sent !
They from their fields can see the countenance
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ;
Confirmed the charters that were yours before ;—
No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath ;
We all are with you now from shore to shore :—
Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death !

XXIV.

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY,

An invasion being expected, October 1803.

SIX thousand veterans practised in war's game,
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,

Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
 Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame
 For them whom precept and the pedantry
 Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
 O for a single hour of that Dundee,
 Who on that day the word of onset gave !
 Like conquest would the Men of England see ;
 And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

 XXV.

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803.

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won !
 On British ground the Invaders are laid low ;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again !—the work is done.
 Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show
 And greet your sons ! drums beat and trumpets blow !
 Make merry, wives ! ye little children, stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise !
 Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine must be
 That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
 And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart enjoys :—
 In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

XXVI.

NOVEMBER, 1806.

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !
Another mighty Empire overthrown !
And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;
The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,*
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

* venal band.—Edit. 1815.

PART II.

I.

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian ground,
 And to the people at the Isthmian Games
 Assembled, He, by a herald's voice, proclaims
 THE LIBERTY OF GREECE :—the words rebound
 Until all voices in one voice are drowned ;
 Glad acclamation by which air was rent !
 And birds, high flying in the element,
 Dropped to the earth, astonished at the sound !
 Yet were the thoughtful grieved ; and still that voice
 Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's ear : *
 Ah ! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so dear :
 Ah ! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous joys !
 A gift of that which is not to be given
 By all the blended powers of Earth and Heaven.

II.

UPON THE SAME EVENT.

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn
 The tidings passed of servitude repealed,
 And of that joy which shook the Isthmian Field,
 The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.

* A melancholy echo of that voice
 Doth sometimes hang on musing Fancy's ear.—Edit. 1815.

"Tis known," cried they, "that he, who would adorn
 His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,
 Must either win, through effort of his own,
 The prize, or be content to see it worn
 By more deserving brows.—Yet so ye prop,
 Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
 Your feeble spirits! Greece her head hath bowed,
 As if the wreath of liberty thereon
 Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,
 Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's top."

 III.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE
 BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

March, 1807.

CLARKSON! it was an obstinate hill to climb:
 How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee
 Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly:
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
 Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
 Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
 First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,
 Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
 Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn!
 The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;
 And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
 A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find
 Repose at length, firm friend of human kind!

IV.

A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807.

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come from you !
 Thus in your books the record shall be found,
 ' A watchword was pronounced, a potent sound—
 ARMINIUS !—all the people quaked like dew
 Stirred by the breeze ; they rose, a Nation, true,
 True to herself—the mighty Germany,
 She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,
 She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.
 All power was given her in the dreadful trance ;
 Those new-born Kings she withered like a flame.'
 —Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and shame
 To that Bavarian who could first advance
 His banner in accursed league with France,
 First open traitor to the German name !

V.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING
 A TRACT, OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

1808.

NOT 'mid the World's vain objects that enslave
 The free-born Soul—that World whose vaunted skill
 In selfish interest perverts the will,
 Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave—

Not there ; but in dark wood and rocky cave,
And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill
With omnipresent murmur as they rave
Down their steep beds, that never shall be still :
Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sublime
I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain ;
For her consult the auguries of time,
And through the human heart explore my way ;
And look and listen—gathering, whence I may,
Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

VI.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE SAME
OCCASION.

I DROPPED my pen ; and listened to the Wind
That sang of trees up-torn and vessels tost—
A midnight harmony ; and wholly lost
To the general sense of men by chains confined
Of business, care, or pleasure ; or resigned
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impassioned strain,
Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,
Like acceptance from the World will find.
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows past ;
And to the attendant promise will give heed—
The prophecy,—like that of this wild blast,
Which, while it makes the heart with sadness shrink,
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

VII.

HOFFER.

OF mortal parents is the Hero born
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?
 Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
 Returned to animate an age forlorn ?
 He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn
 When dreary darkness is discomfited,
 Yet mark his modest state ! upon his head,
 That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.
 O Liberty ! they stagger at the shock
 From van to rear—and with one mind would flee,*
 But half their host is buried :—rock on rock
 Descends :—beneath this godlike Warrior, see !
 Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock
 The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

VIII.

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,
 Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul untamed ;
 Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains named !
 Through the long chain of Alps from mound to mound
 And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound ;
 Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn

* The murderers are aghast ! they strive to flee.—Edit. 1815.

Have roused her from her sleep : and forest-lawn,
Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps resound
And babble of her pastime !—On, dread Power !
With such invisible motion speed thy flight,
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to height,
Through the green vales and through the herdsman's
 bower—
That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

IX.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

THE Land we from our fathers had in trust,
And to our children will transmit, or die :
This is our maxim, this our piety ;
And God and Nature say that it is just.
That which we *would* perform in arms—we must !
We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;
In the wife's smile ; and in the placid sky ;
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the heart !
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind !
While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to assert
Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

x.

ALAS ! what boots the long laborious quest
 Of moral prudence, sought through good and ill ;
 Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,
 And lead us on to that transcendent rest
 Where every passion shall the sway attest
 Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill ;
 What is it but a vain and curious skill,
 If sapient Germany must lie deprest,
 Beneath the brutal sword ?—Her haughty Schools
 Shall blush ; and may not we with sorrow say,
 A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,
 Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought
 More for mankind at this unhappy day
 Than all the pride of intellect and thought ?

xi.

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,
 There, and there only, that the heart is true ?
 And, rising to repel or to subdue,
 Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails ?
 Ah no ! though Nature's dread protection fails,
 There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew
 Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew
 In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
 Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was felt
 By Palafox,* and many a brave compeer,

* The Spanish leader who twice defended Zaragoza with heroic bravery,

Like him of noble birth and noble mind ;
 By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear ;
 And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt
 The bread which without industry they find.

 XII.

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
 Dwells in the affections and the soul of man
 A Godhead, like the universal PAN ;
 But more exalted, with a brighter train :
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
 Showered equally on city and on field,
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
 In these usurping times of fear and pain ?
 Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it Heaven !
 We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws
 To which the triumph of all good is given,
 High sacrifice, and labour without pause,
 Even to the death :—else wherefore should the eye
 Of man converse with immortality ?

 XIII.

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE.

It was a *moral* end for which they fought ;
 Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,

but, on the second occasion, without success. When the French, on first approaching the Town, demanded, with laconic insolence, its capitulation, Palafox gave the answer now grown into a proverb—Guerra al cuchillo—“ War to the knife.”

Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,
 A resolution, or enlivening thought ?
 Nor hath that moral good been *vainly* sought ;
 For in their magnanimity and fame
 Powers have they left, an impulse, and a claim
 Which neither can be overturned nor bought.
 Sleep, Warriors, sleep ! among your hills repose !
 We know that ye, beneath the stern control
 Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul :
 And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,
 Europe breaks forth ; then, Shepherds ! shall ye rise
 For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

 XIV.

HAIL, Zaragoza ! If with unwet eye
 We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
 Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold ;
 Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
 These desolate remains are trophies high
 Of more than martial courage in the breast
 Of peaceful civic virtue : they attest
 Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
 Blood flowed before thy sight without remorse ;
 Disease consumed thy vitals ; War upheaved
 The ground beneath thee with volcanic force :
 Dread trials ! yet encountered and sustained
 Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,
 And law was from necessity received.

xv.

SAY, what is Honour?—'Tis the finest sense
Of *justice* which the human mind can frame,
Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
And guard the way of life from all offence
Suffered or done. When lawless violence
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the scale*
Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,
Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence
Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill
Endangered States may yield to terms unjust ;
Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the dust—
A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil :
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
Are forfeited ; but infamy doth kill.

xvi.

THE martial courage of a day is vain,
An empty noise of death the battle's roar,
If vital hope be wanting to restore,
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain
Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore
A weight of hostile corses : drenched with gore
Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped with slain.

* A kingdom doth assault, and in the scale.—Edit. 1815.

Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)
Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath sold !
And her Tyrolean Champion we behold
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,
Murdered without relief. Oh ! blind as bold,
To think that such assurance can stand fast !

XVII.

BRAVE Schill ! * by death delivered, take thy flight
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,
Or in the fields of empyrean light.
A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night :
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,
Stand in the spacious firmament of time,
Fixed as a star : such glory is thy right.
Alas ! it may not be : for earthly fame
Is Fortune's frail dependant ; yet there lives
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit, gives ;
To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed ;
In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

* Schill was a Prussian Major of Hussars, who made an attempt, even without the commands of his King, for the liberation of his country from the domination of the French. He threw himself into Stralsund, where fighting he was slain in 1809.

XVIII.

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,*
 Who never did to Fortune bend the knee ;
 Who slighted fear ; rejected steadfastly
 Temptation ; and whose kingly name and state
 Have ‘perished by his choice, and not his fate !’
 Hence lives He, to his inner self endeared ;
 And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
 He sits a more exalted Potentate,
 Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven ordain
 That this great Servant of a righteous cause
 Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to endure,
 Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,
 Admonished by these truths, and quench all pain
 In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

XIX.

LOOK now on that Adventurer † who hath paid
 His vows to Fortune ; who, in cruel slight
 Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
 Hath followed wheresoe’er a way was made
 By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, undismayed ;
 And so hath gained at length a prosperous height,

* Gustavus IV. He favored the French Republic, but opposed the pretensions of Napoleon. He was deposed by his subjects in 1809.

† Napoleon Buonaparte.

Round which the elements of worldly might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless force !
Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death.

xx.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,
Forced to descend into his destined tomb—
A dungeon dark ! where he must waste the year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear ;
What time his injured country is a stage
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage
Of righteous Vengeance side by side appear,
Filling from morn to night the heroic scene
With deeds of hope and everlasting praise :—
Say can he think of this with mind serene
And silent fetters ? Yes, if visions bright
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days
When he himself was tried in open light.

XXI.

1810.

AH ! where is Palafox ? * Nor tongue nor pen
Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave !
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave ?
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken
Of pitying human-nature ? Once again
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion brave,
Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,
And through all Europe cheer desponding men
With new-born hope. Unbounded is the might
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
Hark, how thy Country triumphs !—Smilingly
The Eternal looks upon her sword that gleams,
Like his own lightning, over mountains high,
On rampart, and the banks of all her streams.

XXII.

IN due observance of an ancient rite,
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white ;
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph bright,
They bind the unoffending creature's brows
With happy garlands of the pure white rose :

* See note to Sonnet XI. of this series.

Then do* a festal company unite
 In choral song ; and, while the uplifted cross
 Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
 Uncovered to his grave : 'tis closed,—her loss †
 The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs must mourn ;
 But soon, through Christian faith, is grief subdued ;
 And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

 XXIII.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF
 THOSE FUNERALS.

1810.

YET, yet, Biscayans ! we must meet our Foes
 With firmer soul, yet labour to regain
 Our ancient freedom ; else 'twere worse than vain
 To gather round the bier these festal shows.
 A garland fashioned of the pure white rose
 Becomes not one whose father is a slave :
 Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave !
 These venerable mountains now enclose
 A people sunk in apathy and fear.
 If this endure, farewell, for us, all good !
 The awful light of heavenly innocence
 Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier ;
 And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,
 Descend on all that issues from our blood.

* This done.—Edit. 1815.

† her piteous loss

The lonesome mother cannot choose but mourn,
 Yet soon by Christian faith is grief subdued,
 And joy attends upon her fortitude.—Edit. 1815.

XXIV.

THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME. 1810.

OAK of Guernica ! Tree of holier power
 Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
 (So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine
 Heard from the depths of its aërial bower—
 How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour ?
 What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to thee,
 Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,
 The dews of morn, or April's tender shower ?
 Stroke merciful and welcome would that be
 Which should extend thy branches on the ground,
 If never more within their shady round
 Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,
 Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,
 Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

XXV.

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

1810.

WE can endure that He should waste our lands,
 Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame

Return us to the dust from which we came ;
 Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :
 And we can brook the thought that by his hands
 Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
 For his delight, a solemn wilderness
 Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of bands
 Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
 Of benefits, and of a future day
 When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway ;
Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak ;
 Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
 That he has power to inflict what we lack strength to
 bear.

 XXVI.

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind
 In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !
 I better like a blunt indifference,
 And self-respecting slowness, disinclined
 To win me at first sight : and be there joined
 Patience and temperance with this high reserve,
 Honour that knows the path and will not swerve ;
 Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind ;
 And piety towards God. Such men of old
 Were England's native growth ; and, throughout Spain,
 (Thanks to high God) forests of such remain : *
 Then for that Country let our hopes be bold ;
 For matched with these shall policy prove vain,
 Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

* Forests of such do at this day remain.—Edit. 1815.

XXVII.

1810.

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long relied
 On fleets and armies, and external wealth :
 But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health ;
 Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride
 To the paternal floor ; or turn aside,
 In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,
 As being all unworthy to detain
 A Soul by contemplation sanctified.
 There are who cannot languish in this strife,
 Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good
 Of such high course was felt and understood ;
 Who to their Country's cause have bound a life
 Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given
 To labour, and to prayer, to nature, and to heaven.*

XXVIII.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERILLAS.

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast
 From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night
 Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height—
 These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,

* See Laborde's character of the Spanish people ; from him the sentiment of these last two lines is taken.

The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,
 Charged, and dispersed like foam : but as a flight
 Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,
 So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased
 With combinations of long-practised art
 And newly-kindled hope ; but they are fled—
 Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead :
 Where now ?—Their sword is at the Foeman's heart !
 And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,
 And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

 XXIX.

SPANISH GUERILLAS.

1811.

THEY seek, are sought ; to daily battle led,
 Shrink not, though far outnumbered by their Foes,
 For they have learnt to open and to close
 The ridges of grim war ; and at their head
 Are captains such as erst their country bred
 Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like those
 Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose ;
 Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.
 In One who lived unknown a shepherd's life
 Redoubted Viriatus breathes again ;
 And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,
 With that great Leader* vies, who, sick of strife
 And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid
 In some green island of the western main.

* Sertorius.

xxx.

1811.

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space ;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed ? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to year
Springs this indigenious produce far and near ;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

xxxI.

1811.

HERE pause : the poet claims at least this praise,
That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
In the worst moment of these evil days ;
From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.

Never may from our souls one truth depart—
 That an accursed thing it is to gaze
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;
 Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
 And justice labours in extremity—
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !

XXXII.

NOVEMBER, 1813.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,
 Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow
 Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
 Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,
 And lamentably wrapt in twofold night,
 Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose mind ensued,
 Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
 Peace that should claim respect from lawless Might.
 Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray divine
 To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace
 Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;
 Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace
 (Though it were only for a moment's space)
 The triumphs of this hour ; for they are THINE !

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,
 Chequering 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.

* Composed on the road between Nether Stowey and Alfoxden, 1797.

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, ‡
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and 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 ;

* This was a favourite poem of the Author, and he dwells upon it in his preface to the Edition of 1815, theorising upon several of its passages.

† "This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence, the imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of Spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight."—W. W.

‡ Thy loud note smites my ear.—Edit. 1815.

§ I hear thee babbling to the vale.—Edit. 1815.

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 !

1804.

 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

* The Shaksperian grandeur of the latter part of this short poem has given it great interest with many readers. I never can forget the quivering energy of articulation with which (when walking in an avenue of very ancient Yews in Westmorland) I have heard the Poet recite the lines which describe the peculiar growth of the Yew-tree trunk.—ED.

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.

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,

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

† The Isle of Man : the view of this island from the coast near Bootle, is elaborately described in a letter to Sir George Beaumont. See Life I., 277.

Is it a perishable cloud? Or there
 Do we behold the line 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!

1813.

 NUTTING.*

————— It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out)
 One of those heavenly days that cannot die;
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope, †
 I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
 A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps
 Tow'rd some far-distant wood, 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! O'er pathless rocks,
 Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,

* Written at Goslar in Germany, 1799.

† This line is not in the earlier editions.

Forcing my way,* 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 tempting 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, under 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 kindness 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

* among the woods,
 And o'er the pathless rocks I forced my way.—Edit. 1815.

† with milk-white clusters hung.—Edit. 1815.

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 ;
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned †
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
 The silent trees, and saw 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.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.‡

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 !

* This passage, describing the ravage, is quoted by Sir Walter Scott, in his *Essay on Planting*.

† Even then, when from the bower I turned away.—*Edit.* 1815.

‡ This most charming poem relates to the Poet's wife. It was written in the third year of their marriage.

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 between 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 angelic light.

1804.

 TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

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 ;

* A creature of ebullient heart.—Edit. 1815.

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 !

1806.

LUCY.*

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.

* Written at Goslar, in Germany, 1798—99.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's 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 !

* This stanza and the two preceding are dwelt upon with much admiration by Sara Coleridge in her notes to the *Biographia Literaria*. She calls the poem "exquisitely Wordsworthian."

She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.*

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.

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.

ERE the Brothers through the gateway
 Issued forth with old and young,
 To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed
 Which for ages there had hung.†
 Horn it was which none could sound,
 No one upon living ground,

* Written at Goslar, 1798—99.

† When the Brothers reached the gateway
 Eustace pointed with his lance,
 To the Horn which there was hanging,
 Horn of the Inheritance.—Edit. 1815.

Save He who came as rightful Heir
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record *
Had the House of Lucie born,
Who of right had held the Lordship
Claimed by 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,

* Heirs from ages without record.—Edit. 1815.

What thou askest, noble Brother,
With God's favour shall be done." *
So were both right well content :
Forth they from the Castle 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 Lands' 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 ;
Nothing has he 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 ;
No one's eye had seen him enter,
No one's ear had heard the 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.

* For the sound was heard by no one
Of the proclamation-horn.—Edit. 1815.

'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.

1806.

DAFFODILS.*

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 ;

* Written at Grasmere, 1804. The Daffodils were seen April 15, on the shore of Ullswater, below Gowbarrow Park.

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.

* This line, and the one preceding, which Mr. Wordsworth called the best lines in the poem, were written by Mrs. Wordsworth. See Life, I., 182—188.

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 !

* This poem, says Mr. Wordsworth, "was written in 1801 or 1802. It arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning."

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 !

* Written in London, 1806.

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 !

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,†
 And envies him that's looking ; what an insight must
 it be !

Yet, Show-man, 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 yon resplendent
 vault ?

* Written in London, 1806.

† each is ready with the fee.—Edit. 1815.

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 Spectators
rude,

Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,
Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore
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 show of pride, admits no outward
sign,

Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine !

* Do they betray us.—Edit. 1815.

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 turn, nor have I one
 espied
 That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.*

 STEPPING WESTWARD.†

While my Fellow traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"

"*WHAT, you are stepping westward?*"—"Yea."
 —'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance :
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ;

* Mr. Coleridge commends this poem for its "just and original reflections."

† The occurrence which gave rise to this poem took place during a Scotch tour September 11, 1803. The verses were not written till long afterwards.

And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of *heavenly* destiny :
 I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound
 Of something without place or bound ;
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy :
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

GLEN-ALMAIN ;

OR, THE NARROW GLEN.*

IN this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN ;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one :
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death ;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last

* Written after the Poet's Scotch tour, 1803.

Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
As by a spirit turbulent ;
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled ;
In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet ;
But this is calm ; there cannot be
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?
Or is it but a groundless creed ?
What matters it ?—I blame them not
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
Was moved ; and in such way expressed
Their notion of its perfect rest.
A convent, even a hermit's cell,
Would break the silence of this Dell :
It is not quiet, is not ease ;
But something deeper far than these :
The separation that is here
Is of the grave ; and of austere
Yet happy feelings of the dead :
And, therefore, was it rightly said
That Ossian, last of all his race !
Lies buried in this lonely place.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.*

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands †
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard ‡
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago :
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day ?

* " Suggested by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson's Tour in Scotland."—Miss Wordsworth's Journal.

† So sweetly to reposing bands.—Edit. 1815.

‡ No sweeter voice was ever heard.—Edit. 1815.

Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;—
I listened, motionless and still ;*
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.†

(AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND.)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;

* I listened till I had my fill.—Edit. 1815.

† “When we were beginning to descend the hill towards Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry till evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful, and the figures of both of them in grey plaids falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them ; but they answered us so sweetly that we were quite delighted, at the same time that they stared at us with an innocent look of wonder. I think I never heard the English language sound more sweetly than from the mouth of the elder of these girls, while she stood at the gate answering our inquiries, her face flushed with the rain : her pronunciation was clear and distinct, without difficulty, yet slow as if like a foreign speech.”—Miss Wordsworth's Journal, August 28, 1803.

This fall of water that doth make
 A murmur near the silent lake ;
 This little bay ; a quiet road
 That holds in shelter thy Abode—
 In truth together do ye seem
 Like something fashioned in a dream ;
 Such Forms as from their covert peep
 When earthly cares are laid asleep !
 But, O fair Creature ! in the light
 Of common day, so heavenly bright,*
 I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
 I bless thee with a human heart ;
 God shield thee to thy latest years !
 Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers ;
 And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away :
 For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here scattered, like a random seed,
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need
 The embarrassed look of shy distress,
 And maidenly shamefacedness :
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles,† by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways

* This line and that which precedes it are not in the Edition of 1815.

† Sweet looks.—Edit. 1815.

Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech :
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life !
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful ?
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father—anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :

Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
 I feel this place was made for her ;
 To give new pleasure like the past,
 Continued long as life shall last.
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part :
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
 And Thee, the Spirit of them all !*

 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 !

* In his 73rd year, Wordsworth said "The sort of prophecy with which the poem of the 'Highland Girl' concludes, has, through God's goodness, been realised, and I have now a most vivid remembrance of her, and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded."

† Miss Wordsworth gives a circumstantial account of the writing of these verses under date 16th *April*, 1802. They were written on that day, in the open air. See *Life*, i. 184.

Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The Ploughboy 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 !

GIPSIES.

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 this 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 suffer them to be ;
 Wild outcasts of society ! *

1807.

BEGGARS.†

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;
 Her face from summer's noontide heat
 No bonnet shaded, but she wore
 A mantle, to her very feet
 Descending with a graceful flow,
 And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.‡

* In the Edition of 1815 the poem concludes thus :—

oh better wrong and strife,
 Better vain deeds, or evil, than such life !
 The silent heavens have goings-on ;
 The stars have tasks, but these have none.

There can be little doubt that, in this case, the alteration is an improvement.

† This poem was written, March, 1802, from Miss Wordsworth's description of what she had seen two years before in her brother's absence. "It presents a remarkable illustration," says Dr. C. Wordsworth, "of the fact that the sister's eye was ever on the watch to provide for the brother's pen. His poems are sometimes little more than poetical versions of her descriptions of the objects which she had seen, and he treated them as seen by himself." Strangely enough, this scene so dwelt upon the Poet's mind that he wrote a sequel to the poem in 1817.

‡ In the Edition of 1815 the stanza runs thus :—

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;
 No bonnet screened her from the heat ;

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 lead those ancient Amazonian files ;
 Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand
 And begged an alms with doleful plea
 That ceased not ; on our English land †
 Such woes, I knew, could never be ;
 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 ;

A long drab-coloured cloak she wore,
 A mantle reaching to her feet :
 What other dress she had I could not know,
 Only she wore a cap that was as white as snow.

* In all my walks through field or town
 Such figure had I never seen ;
 Her face was of Egyptian brown ;
 Fit person was she for a Queen.—Edit. 1815.

† Before me begging did she stand,
 Pouring out sorrows like a sea,
 Grief after grief : on English land, &c.—Edit. 1815.

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 to 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.”—
 “ Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie ;§
 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 ! ||

* Two brothers seemed they, eight and ten years old,
 And like that woman's face as gold is like to gold.—Edit. 1815.

† This stanza is not in the Edition of 1815.

‡ Nay, but I gave her pence, and she will buy you bread.—Edit. 1815.

§ Sweet boys, you're telling me a lie.—Edit. 1815.

|| they both together flew.—Edit. 1815.

YARROW UNVISITED.*

(See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

'Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !'—)

FROM Stirling castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my '*winsome Marrow,*'
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;

* Miss Wordsworth says in her journal of the Scotch tour in August and September, 1803,—“ Being so near the Yarrow when we were at Clovenford, we could not but think of the possibility of going thither, and debated concerning it, but came to the conclusion of reserving the pleasure for some future time ; in consequence of which, after our return, William wrote this poem.”

And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
 The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
 There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
 Made blithe with plough and harrow :
 Why throw away a needful day
 To go in search of Yarrow ?

What's Yarrow but a river bare,
 That glides the dark hills under ?
 There are a thousand such elsewhere
 As worthy of your wonder."
 —Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
 My True-love sighed for sorrow ;
 And looked me in the face, to think
 I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh ! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,
 And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
 Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,*
 But we will leave it growing.
 O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
 We'll wander Scotland thorough ;
 But, though so near, we will not turn
 Into the dale of Yarrow.

Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
 The swan on still St. Mary's Lake †
 Float double, swan and shadow !

* See Hamilton's Ballad as above.

† This is the line which has been so often quoted as—

"The swan on *sweet* St. Mary's lake,"

much to the Poet's dissatisfaction, and no wonder ; for a very perfect image is thereby made common-place.

We will not see them ; will not go,
To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
It must, or we shall rue it :
We have a vision of our own ;
Ah ! why should we undo it ?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow !

If Care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly,—
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy ;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow !”

YARROW VISITED.*

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream
 Of which my fancy cherished,
 So faithfully, a waking dream?
 An image that hath perished!
 O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
 To utter notes of gladness,
 And chase this silence from the air,
 That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
 With uncontrolled meanderings;
 Nor have these eyes by greener hills
 Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
 And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
 Is visibly delighted;
 For not a feature of those hills
 Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
 Save where that pearly whiteness
 Is round the rising sun diffused,
 A tender hazy brightness;
 Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
 All profitless dejection;

* Wordsworth's first visit to the Yarrow was in 1814, accompanied by Hogg (the "Etrick Shepherd") and Dr. Anderson, editor of an edition of "The British Poets."

Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding ?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding :
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The Water-wraith ascended thrice—
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
The haunts of happy Lovers,*
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers :
And Pity sanctifies the Verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love ;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow !

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation :
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy ;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,

* And most delicious is the verse in which this sentiment is expressed.
—ED.

With Yarrow winding through the pomp
 Of cultivated nature ;
 And, rising from those lofty groves,
 Behold a Ruin hoary !
 The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
 Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
 For sportive youth to stray in ;
 For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
 And age to wear away in !
 Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
 A covert for protection *
 Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
 The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
 The wild-wood fruits to gather,
 And on my True-love's forehead plant
 A crest of blooming heather !
 And what if I enwreathed my own !
 'Twere no offence to reason ;
 The sober Hills thus deck their brows
 To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
 Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
 A ray of fancy still survives—
 Her sunshine plays upon thee !
 Thy ever-youthful waters keep
 A course of lively pleasure ;

* It promises protection
 To studious ease and generous cares
 And every chaste affection.—Edit. 1815.

And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
 Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the Heights,
 They melt, and soon must vanish ;
 One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
 Sad thought, which I would banish,
 But that I know, where'er I go,
 Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
 Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
 And cheer my mind in sorrow.*

THE LEECH-GATHERER ;

OR, RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.†

I.

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.

* "I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion."—W. W.

† "This fine poem is especially characteristic of the author. There is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen."—S. T. Coleridge, *Biog. Lit.* Miss Wordsworth's journal says this poem was written May 7, 1802. The circumstance of meeting with the man will be found described in the Biography by Dr. C. Wordsworth, i. 17 Mr. Wordsworth put the date of 1807 to the poem.

II.

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.

III.

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.

IV.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
 Of joy in minds that can no further 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.

V.

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.

VI.

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 ?

VII.

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 come in the end despondency and madness.

VIII.

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.

* Behind his plough.—Edit. 1815.

† When up and down my fancy thus was driven,
 And I with these untoward thoughts had striven.—Edit. 1815.

IX.

* 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 ;

X.

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.

XI.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale 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 ‡

* In the Edition of 1815, there is a stanza following the eighth, which runs thus :—

My course I stopped as soon as I espied
 The old man in that naked wilderness ;
 Close by a pond upon the further side
 He stood alone—a minute's space I guess
 I watched him, he continuing motionless ;
 To the pool's further margin then I drew,
 He being all the while before me full in view.

Probably Coleridge had this stanza in his mind's eye when he spoke of "defects."

† Coming together in their pilgrimage.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Beside the little pond or moorish flood.—Edit. 1815.

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.

XII.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he coned,
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.”

XIII.

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.”
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes. ‡

XIV.

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.

* And now such freedom as I could, I took.—Edit. 1815.

† What kind of work is that which you pursue?—Edit. 1815.

‡ He answered me with pleasure and surprise ;
And there was, while he spake, a fire about his eyes.—Edit. 1815.

XV.

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.

XVI.

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.†

XVII.

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 ? ”

XVIII.

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet

* He told me that he to this pond had come.—Edit. 1815.

† and strong admonishment.—Edit. 1815.

‡ But now perplexed by what the old man had said.—Edit. 1815.

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."

XIX.

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.

XX.

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 !"

* Mr. Wordsworth says in one of his letters, "it is of importance that you should have had pleasure in contemplating the fortitude, independence, persevering spirit, and the general moral dignity of this old man's character. * * * You speak of his speech as tedious. Everything is tedious when one does not read with the feelings of the author."—See *Life*, i. 172.

THE THORN.

I.

"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 grey.
 Not higher than a two years' child
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;
 No leaves it has, no prickly points ;
 It is a mass of knotted joints,
 A wretched thing forlorn.
 It stands erect, and like a stone
 With lichens is it overgrown.

II.

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 the poor Thorn they clasp it round
 So close, you'd say that they are bent
 With plain and manifest intent
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And all have joined in one endeavour
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

III.

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.*

IV.

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 network 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.

V.

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,

* I've measured it from side to side,
 'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.—Edit. 1815.

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.

VI.

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 !'

VII.

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 !"

VIII.

"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 ?”

IX.

“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 grey ;
 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.”

X.

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

* In the Edition of 1815 the following lines are here interposed :—

Nay rack your brain, 'tis all in vain ;
 I'll tell you every thing I know ;
 But to the thorn and to the pond,
 Which is a little step beyond,
 I wish that you would go :

“ Full twenty years are passed and gone
 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.*

XI.

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.

XII.

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.

Perhaps when you are at the place
 You something of her tale may trace.
 I’ll give you the best help I can
 Before you up the mountain go,
 Up to the dreary mountain-top,
 I’ll tell you all I know.
 ’Tis now some two and twenty years, &c.

* And she was happy, happy still,
 Whene’er she thought of Stephen Hill.—Edit. 1815.

What could she seek ?—or wish to hide ?
 Her state to any eye was plain ;
 She was with child, and she was mad ;
 Yet often was she sober sad
 From her exceeding pain.
 O guilty Father—would that death
 Had saved him from that breach of faith !*

XIII.

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.

XIV.

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,

* Oh me ! ten thousand times I'd rather
 That he had died, that cruel father !—Edit. 1815.

† Old farmer Simpson did maintain
 That in her womb the infant wrought.—Edit. 1815.

Far less could this with proof be said ; *
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

xv.

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.

xvi.

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.

* There's no one knows, as I have said.—Edit. 1815.

XVII.

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain :
 No screen, no fence could I discover ;
 And then the wind ! in sooth, 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.

XVIII.

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 ! ’ ”

XIX.

“ 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.

xx.

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.

xxi.

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.
 But instantly 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 lies buried there,
 Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXII.

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,
 ‘ O misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! ’”

1798.

HART-LEAP WELL.*

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
 And now, as he approached a vassal's door,†
 “Bring forth another horse !” he cried aloud.

* “The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening (1799—1800) in the cottage (at Grasmere), when after having tired and disgusted myself with labouring at an awkward passage in ‘The Brothers,’ I started with a sudden impulse to this, to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My Sister and I had passed the place a few weeks before in our wild journey from Sockburn, on the banks of the Tees, to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story, so far as concerned the name of the Well, and the Hart, and pointed out the stones.”—W. W. (See Life, i. 155.)

† He turned aside towards a vassal's door.—Edit. 1815.

“ Another horse ! ” — That shout the vassal heard
And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey ;
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,

* In 1815 the name of this dog was “ Brach.”

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
Four roods of sheer ascent)|| Sir Walter found
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ¶ ground.

* And foaming like a mountain cataract.—Edit. 1815.

† His nose half touched, &c.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Was never man in such a joyful case.—Edit. 1815.

§ place.—Edit. 1815.

|| It was "nine roods" in 1815.

¶ The epithet in the Edition of 1815 is "verdant." This is one of the very few instances of an alteration to a more simple and familiar term.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
Such sight was never seen by human 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.

* "gallant brute" in the Edition of 1815.

—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.

* Sir Walter journeyed with his paramour.—Edit. 1815.

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 grey, 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 here 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
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep, [past !
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 the 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 flowering thorn *
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;

* the scented thorn.—Edit. 1815.

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."

"Grey-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.*

* "Over the poem of *Hart-Leap Well* the mysterious spirit of the noon-day, Pan, seems to brood. Out of suffering is there evoked the image of peace. Out of the cruel leap, and the agonising race through thirteen hours ; out of the anguish in the perishing brute, and the headlong courage of his final despair,

'Not unobserved by sympathy divine,'

the Poet calls up a vision of *palingenesis* ; he interposes his solemn images of suffering, of decay, and ruin, only as a visionary haze, through which gleams transpire of a trembling dawn far off, but surely on the road."—
DE QUINCEY.

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

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 !

* There is a delightful harmony here between the benignity of the sentiment, and the sweetness of the verse.—ED.

† Written at Coleorton, Leicestershire, 1806.

‡ “The transitions and vicissitudes in this noble lyric, I have always thought, rendered it one of the finest specimens of modern subjective poetry which our age has seen.”—SARA COLERIDGE. See the notes to the *Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii.

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 lonely, a deserted Tower ; †
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and 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.

* The glory of their *royalty*.—Edit. 1815.

† Though she is but a lonely tower,
 Silent, deserted of her best,
 Without an inmate or a guest.—Edit. 1815.

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 distrest ;
 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 simple glee,
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.*
 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 ;
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,†
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
 Upon the mountains visitant ;
 He hath kenned them taking wing :
 And into caves where Faeries sing

* Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee
 And a cheerful company,
 That learned of him submissive ways,
 And comforted his private days.—Edit. 1815.

† They moved about in open sight.—Edit. 1815.

He hath entered ; and been told
 By Voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 The face of thing that is to be ;
 And, if that men report him right,
 His tongue 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 impassioned minstrel did not know *
 How, by Heaven’s grace, this Clifford’s heart was framed :
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

* Alas ! the fervent Harper did not know,
 That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
 Who long compelled in humble walks to go.—Edit. 1815.

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.*

HESPERUS.

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 day-light : clouds pass by ;
 A few are near him still—and now the sky,
 He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.

* " I know nothing in lyric poetry more beautiful or affecting than the final transition from the rapid metre, to the slow elegiac stanzas at the end, when from the warlike fervor and eagerness, the jubilant menacing strain, the Poet passes back into the sublime silence of Nature, gathering amid her deep and quiet bosom a more subdued and solemn tenderness than he had manifested before :—it is as if from the heights of the imaginative intellect his spirit had retreated into the recesses of a profoundly thoughtful Christian heart."—SARA COLERIDGE.

O most ambitious Star ! an inquest wrought
 Within me when I recognised thy light ;
 A moment I was startled at the sight :
 And, while I gazed, there came to me a thought
 That I might step beyond my natural race *
 As thou seem'st now to do ; 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 !

1803.

 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
 A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,
 Which then was going forward in her name !
 Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,

* That even I beyond my natural race

Might step as thou dost now : might one day trace.—Edit. 1815.

† This short poem is an extract from Book XI. of "The Prelude," published since the author's death.

The beauty wore of promise, that which sets
(As at some moment might not be unfelt
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, subterranean 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 !

ECHOES.

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,
 Recognised intelligence !

Such rebounds our inward ear
 Catches sometimes from afar—‡
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;
 For of God,—of God they are.

1806.

* Yes ! full surely 'twas the Echo.—Edit. 1815.

† Answering to *Thee*, shouting Cuckoo !
 Giving to *thee* sound for sound.—Edit. 1815.

‡ Such within ourselves we hear
 Ofttimes, ours though sent from far.—Edit. 1815.

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 soft 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

* Of all Wordsworth's earlier poems this one has probably made the deepest impression upon the philosophic mind of his time. It has also, on religious grounds, given rise to more objection than any other. His nephew and biographer says, that if the reflective reader, as is not improbable, should be of opinion that a "worshipper of Nature" is in danger of divinizing the creation, and of dishonouring the Creator, and that therefore some portions of this poem might be perverted to serve the purposes of a popular and pantheistic philosophy, he will remember that the author of the "Lines on Tintern Abbey" composed also the "Evening Voluntaries," and that he who professes himself an ardent votary of Nature has explained the sense in which he wishes these words to be understood, by saying that

"By grace divine,
Not otherwise, O Nature, we are thine."

† "No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol, in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, nor any part of it written down till I reached Bristol."—W. W. (See Life, I. 119.)

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

These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. 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,

* Though absent long
 These forms of beauty, &c.—Edit. 1815.

† As may have had no trivial influence.—Edit. 1815.

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, nor 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 recompence. 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 :

* “to me
 High mountains are a feeling.”
 BYRON, *Childe Harold*, canto iii.

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 recognise
 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

* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young's, the exact expression of which I do not recollect.—*Author's note.*

† “ Are not the mountains, waves, and skies a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion ? ”—BYRON, *Childe Harold*, canto iii.

‡ “ Wordsworth and his exquisite sister are with me. She is a woman indeed ;—in mind I mean, and in heart ; for her person is such that if you expected to see a pretty woman you would think her ordinary ; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty ; but her manners are simple, ardent, impressive.”—S. T. COLERIDGE. 1797.

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
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 !

LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE, WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE
 OF ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF THE SHORE, COM-
 MANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT.

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
 Far from all human dwelling : what if here
 No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
 What if the bee love not these barren boughs ? *
 Yet, if the wind breathes soft, the curling waves,
 That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
 By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

—————Who he was
 That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
 First covered, and here taught this aged Tree
 With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
 I well remember.—He was one who owned
 No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
 And led by nature into a wild scene
 Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
 A favoured Being, knowing no desire
 Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the taint
 Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
 And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,
 All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,

* What if these barren boughs the bee not loves?—Edit. 1815.

Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once
 With indignation turned himself away,
 And with the food of pride sustained his soul
 In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
 Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,
 The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper :*
 And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
 And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,†
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
 A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
 And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze
 On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis
 Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
 The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor, that time,
 When nature had subdued him to herself,
 Would he forget those Beings to whose minds
 Warm from the labours of benevolence
 The world, and human life,‡ appeared a scene
 Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,
 Inly disturbed,§ to think that others felt
 What he must never feel : and so, lost Man !
 On visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
 He died,—this seat his only monument.

* The stone-chat, or the sand-lark, restless bird,
 Piping along the margin of the lake.—Edit. 1815.

† And on these barren rocks, with juniper,
 And heath, and thistle, thinly sprinkled o'er.—Edit. 1815.

‡ The world, and man himself.—Edit. 1815.

§ With mournful joy, to think.—Edit. 1815.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger! henceforth be warned ; and know that pride,
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
 Is littleness ; that he who feels contempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties
 Which he has never used ; that thought with him
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who might move
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou !
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to love ;
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.*

1795.

 CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.†

Who is the happy Warrior ? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be ?
 —It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :

* The thought that such a poem as this was written by a man of five-and-twenty, strikes me with astonishment.—Ed.

† This noble poem was written in 1806. Many passages in it were suggested, the author said, by what was generally known as excellent in the conduct of Lord Nelson. He also said that "many elements of the character portrayed were found in his brother John, who perished by shipwreck." (See note to "The Brothers," and to the last of the poems on the Daisy.)

Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright :
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
 But makes his moral being his prime care ;
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;
 Is placable—because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice ;
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
 As tempted more ; more able to endure,
 As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
 —'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
 Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
 To evil for a guard against worse ill,
 And what in quality or act is best
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
 He labours good on good to fix, and owes*
 To virtue every triumph that he knows :
 —Who, if he rise to station of command,
 Rises by open means ; and there will stand

* He fixes good on good alone, and owes.—Edit. 1815.

On honourable terms, or else retire,
 And in himself possess his own desire ;
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
 And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
 For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
 Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
 Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
 Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
 A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
 But who, if he be called upon to face
 Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
 Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
 Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
 With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;
 And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
 In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
 Or if an unexpected call succeed,
 Come when it will, is equal to the need :
 —He who, though thus endued as with a sense
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,
 Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;
 Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
 Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
 It is his darling passion to approve ;
 More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
 'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
 Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
 Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—

Plays, in the many games of life, that one
 Where what he most doth value must be won :
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last,
 From well to better, daily self-surpast :
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,*
 And leave a dead unprofitable name—
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
 That every Man in arms should wish to be.†

 ROB ROY'S GRAVE.‡

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known ; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
 The English ballad-singer's joy !
 And Scotland has a thief as good,
 An outlaw of as daring mood ;
 She has her brave ROB ROY !

* Or he must go to dust without his fame.—Edit. 1815.

† They of the present generation will scarcely read this poem without thinking of the Duke of Wellington.—ED.

‡ Written after Wordsworth's Scotch tour in 1803. He was afterwards told that he had been misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy.

Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
 And let us chant a passing stave,
 In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
 And wondrous length and strength of arm :
 Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
 Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;
 Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
 A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.*

Say, then, that he was wise as brave ;
 As wise in thought as bold in deed :
 For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of books ?
 Burn all the statutes and their shelves :
 They stir us up against our kind ;
 And worse, against ourselves.

We have a passion—make a law,
 Too false to guide us or control !
 And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
 Distinctions that are plain and few :
 These find I graven on my heart :
That tells me what to do.

* Miss Wordsworth mentions in her Journal that the lady who told them the legends concerning Rob Roy, said "he was a *good* man."

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind !
With them no strife can last ; they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

For why ?—because the good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That they should take, who have the power,
 And they should keep who can.

A lesson that is quickly learned,
A signal this which all can see !
Thus nothing here provokes the strong
 To wanton cruelty.

All freakishness of mind is checked ;
He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;
While to the measure of his might
 Each fashions his desires.

All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit :
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
 And who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
And longest life is but a day ;
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
 I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer heat and winter snow :
The Eagle, he was lord above,
 And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been
 But through untowardness of fate ;
 For Polity was then too strong—
 He came an age too late ;

Or shall we say an age too soon ?
 For, were the bold Man living *now*,
 How might he flourish in his pride,
 With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
 Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
 Would all have seemed but paltry things,
 Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
 To these few meagre Vales confined ;
 But thought how wide the world, the times
 How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said,
 "Do Thou my sovereign will enact
 From land to land through half the earth !
 Judge thou of law and fact !

'Tis fit that we should do our part,
 Becoming, that mankind should learn
 That we are not to be surpassed
 In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
 Of good things none are good enough :—
 We'll shew that we can help to frame
 A world of other stuff.

I, too, will have my kings that take
 From me the sign of life and death :
 Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
 Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
 As *might* have been, then, thought of joy !
 France would have had her present Boast,
 And we our own Rob Roy !*

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;
 I would not wrong thee, Champion brave !
 Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all
 Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
 Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !
 Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love
 The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
 With us who now behold the light,
 Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
 And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
 The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand ;
 And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
 Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
 Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays

* The reader will recognise more of the power of irony and satire in this, than in any other of the author's poems.—ED.

Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
And by Loch Lomond's braes !

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same ;
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,*
At sound of ROB ROY's name.

A POET'S EPITAPH.†

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred ? ‡
—First learn to love one living man ;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.§

Art thou a Man of purple cheer ?
A rosy Man, right plump to see ?
Approach ; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

* And kindle like a fire new-stirred.—Edit. 1815.

† This poem was composed in the winter of 1798—99 at Goslar, while the poet walked up and down by the margin of the frozen pond in the public garden of that place. It is a curious illustration of the little connection which often subsists between a poet's thoughts, and the scenes or circumstances which actually surround him.

‡ Art thou a statesman in the van
Of public business trained and bred ?—Edit. 1815.

§ Go, carry to some other place
The hardness of thy coward eye,
The falsehood of thy sallow face.—Edit. 1815.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
 A Soldier and no man of chaff?
 Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,
 And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,
 Philosopher! a fingering slave,
 One that would peep and botanize
 Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
 O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
 That he below may rest in peace,
 Thy ever-dwindling soul, away!*

A Moralist perchance appears;
 Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod:
 And he has neither eyes nor ears;
 Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
 Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;
 A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
 An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the latch;
 Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
 Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
 Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
 And clad in homely russet brown?

* That abject thing thy soul, away!—Edit. 1815.

He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.*

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land ;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
Here stretch thy body at full length ;
Or build thy house upon this grave.

* Who but Wordsworth would have ventured to write thus? The last six stanzas of this poem appear to me to be exquisitely beautiful in thought and in expression.—ED.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.*

“WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!”

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply.

“The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;

* Written at Alfoxden in 1798. Mr. Wordsworth said this poem was a favorite with the Quakers.

That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking ?

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away.”

THE TABLES TURNED.*

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your books ;
Or surely you'll grow double :
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks ;
Why all this toil and trouble ? †

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife :
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

* Written at Alfoxden in 1798.

† The positions of the lines in this stanza are transposed from the Edition of 1815. The third and fourth lines are now first and second.

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !
He, too, is no mean preacher :
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.*

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art ;
Close up those barren leaves ;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

* There is a great deal of the Wordsworthian philosophy condensed into this stanza.—ED.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.*

'The Poet's grave is in a corner of the churchyard. We looked at
'it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each
'other his own verses—

' 'Is there a man whose judgment clear,' &c.'

Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-traveller.

'MID crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
 With sorrow true ;
And more would grieve, but that it turns
 Trembling to you ! †

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,
And more than common strength and skill
 Must ye display ;
If ye would give the better will
 Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
Intemperance with less harm, beware !
But if the Poet's wit ye share,

* Miss Wordsworth in her Journal minutely describes this visit, which, she says, took place on the 18th of August, 1803. She remarks that there is no thought surviving in connection with Burns' daily life that is not heart-depressing.

† This stanza is not in the Edition of 1815.

Like him can speed
 The social hour—of tenfold care
 There will be need ; *

For honest men delight will take
 To spare your failings for his sake, †
 Will flatter you,—and fool and rake
 Your steps pursue ;
 And of your Father's name will make
 A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
 And add your voices to the quire
 That sanctify the cottage fire
 With service meet ;
 There seek the genius of your Sire,
 His spirit greet ;

Or where, 'mid 'lonely heights and hows,'
 He paid to Nature tuneful vows ;
 Or wiped his honourable brows
 Bedewed with toil,
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
 Upturned the soil ;

His judgment with benignant ray
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way ;
 But ne'er to a seductive lay

* Strong-bodied if ye be to bear
 Intemperance with less harm, beware !
 But if your father's wit ye share,
 Then, then indeed,
 Ye sons of Burns ! for watchful care
 There will be need.—Edit. 1815.

† To show you favor for his sake.—Edit. 1815.

Let faith be given ;
 Nor deem that 'light which leads astray,
 Is light from Heaven. '*

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
 Be independent, generous, brave ;
 Your Father such example gave,
 And such revere ;
 But be admonished by his grave,
 And think, and fear !

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND. †

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING TOGETHER IN HIS
 PLEASURE-GROUND.

SPADE ! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands, †
 And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,
 Thou art a tool of honour in my hands ;
 I press thee, through the yielding soil, with pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know ;
 Long hast Thou served a man to reason true ;
 Whose life combines the best of high and low,
 The labouring many § and the resting few ;

* The three stanzas of which this is the last, did not appear in the Edition of 1815.

† Written in 1804.

‡ There is an interesting notice of this person dictated by Mr. Wordsworth. (See Life, I. 323.) He was, says Mr. W., "a Quaker by religious profession ; by natural constitution of mind—or shall I venture to say by God's grace?—he was something better."

§ The toiling many.—Edit. 1815.

Health, meekness, ardour, quietness secure,*
 And industry of body and of mind ;
 And elegant enjoyments, that are pure
 As nature is ;—too pure to be refined.†

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing
 In concord with his river murmuring by ;
 Or in some silent field, while timid spring
 Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has laid
 Low in the darksome cell thine own dear lord ?
 That man will have a trophy, humble Spade !
 A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part
 False praise from true, or, greater from the less,
 Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,
 Thou monument of peaceful happiness !

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome day—
 Thee his loved servant, his inspiring mate !
 And, when thou art past service, worn away,
 No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.‡

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn ;
 An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou be :—
 High will he hang thee up, well pleased to adorn
 His rustic chimney with the last of Thee !

* Health, quiet, meekness, ardour, hope secure.—Edit. 1815.

† This is a remarkable expression, which invites more commentary than there is room for in a foot-note.—ED.

‡ Thee a surviving soul shall consecrate.—Edit. 1815.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,*

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves in North-Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse !
 Let me have the song of the kettle ;
 And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
 That gallops away with such fury and force
 On this dreary dull plate of black metal. †

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature ! perhaps
 A child of the field or the grove ;
 And, sorrow for him ! the dull treacherous heat
 Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
 And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains
 Which this comfortless oven environ !
 He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
 Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,
 And now on the brink of the iron.

* Written at Goslar in the winter of 1798—99, which was one of remarkably severe cold.

† After this, the Edition of 1815 contained the following stanza :—

Our Earth is no doubt made of excellent stuff,
 But her pulses beat slower and slower :
 The weather in Forty was cutting and rough,
 And then, as Heaven knows, the Glass stood low enough ;
 And *now* it is four degrees lower.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed :
The best of his skill he has tried ;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the north ;
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh !
His eyesight and hearing are lost ;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws ;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love ;
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing !
Thy life I would gladly sustain
Till summer come up from the south, and with crowds
Of thy brethren a march thou should'st sound through
the clouds.

And back to the forests again !

TO MY SISTER.*

It is the first mild day of March :
 Each minute sweeter than before
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch
 That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
 Which seems a sense of joy to yield
 To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
 And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
 Now that our morning meal is done,
 Make haste, your morning task resign ;
 Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,
 Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
 And bring no book : for this one day
 We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
 Our living calendar :
 We from to-day, my Friend, will date
 The opening of the year.

* Written at Alfoxden, 1798. The Edward mentioned in the fourth stanza, was young Basil Montagu, by whom the Poet sent the pencilled lines to his sister.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :*
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.†

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

* Than fifty years of reason.—Edit. 1815.

† Compare this stanza with the sixth stanza of "The Tables Turned."

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.*

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
 While in a grove I sate reclined,
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
 The human soul that through me ran ;
 And much it grieved my heart to think
 What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,†
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
 And 'tis my faith that every flower
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
 Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
 But the least motion which they made,
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
 To catch the breezy air ;
 And I must think, do all I can,
 That there was pleasure there.

* Written in 1798, while sitting by the side of the brook that runs down the *Comb*, in which is the village of Alford, near Alfoxden.

† that *sweet* bower —Edit. 1815.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
 If such be Nature's holy plan,*
 Have I not reason to lament
 What man has made of man?

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS IN THE
 COUNTRY.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!
 —There is a nest in a green dale,
 A harbour and a hold;
 Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
 Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
 A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
 And treading among flowers of joy
 Which at no season fade,†
 Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
 Shalt show us how divine a thing
 A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
 Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh
 A melancholy slave;
 But an old age serene and bright,
 And lovely as a Lapland night,
 Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1803.

* If I these thoughts may not prevent,
 If such be of my creed the plan.—Edit. 1815.

† As if thy heritage were joy,
 And pleasure were thy trade.—Edit. 1815.

SIMON LEE,

THE OLD HUNTSMAN;*

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED.

IN the sweet shire of Cardigan,
 Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
 An old Man dwells, a little man,—
 'Tis said he once was tall.†
 Full five-and-thirty years he lived
 A running huntsman merry ;

* Written at Alfoxden, 1797. The old man had been huntsman to the Squires of that ilk.

† In the Edition of 1815 the first three stanzas ran thus :—

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
 Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
 An old man dwells, a little man,—
 I've heard he once was tall.
 Of years he has upon his back,
 No doubt, a burthen weighty ;
 He says he is three score and ten,
 But others say he's eighty.

A long blue livery coat has he,
 That's fair behind and fair before,
 Yet meet him where you will, you see
 At once that he is poor.
 Full five-and-twenty years he lived
 A running huntsman merry ;
 And though he has but one eye left,
 His cheek is like a cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
 And no man was so full of glee,
 To say the least, four counties round
 Had heard of Simon Lee ;
 His master's dead, and no one now
 Dwells in the hall of Ivor ;
 Men, dogs, and horses all are dead ;
 He is the sole survivor.

And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo banded, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices !*

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see !
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.†

* After this stanza the Edition of 1815 contains the following :—

His hunting feats have him bereft
Of his right eye, as you may see :
And then what limbs those feats have left
To poor old Simon Lee !
He has no son, he has no child,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

† This quatrain is not in the Edition of 1815.

His Master's dead,—and no one now
 Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;
 Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
 He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;
 His body, dwindled and awry,
 Rests upon ankles swoln and thick ;
 His legs are thin and dry.
 One prop he has, and only one,
 His wife, an aged woman,
 Lives with him, near the waterfall,
 Upon the village Common.*

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
 Not twenty paces from the door,
 A scrap of land they have, but they
 Are poorest of the poor.
 This scrap of land he from the heath
 Enclosed when he was stronger ;
 But what to them avails the land
 Which he can till no longer ?

Oft, working by her Husband's side,
 Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;
 For she, with scanty cause for pride,
 Is stouter of the two.†

* When he was young he little knew
 Of husbandry or tillage,
 And now is forced to work, though weak,
 —The weakest in the village.—Edit. 1815.

† Old Ruth works out of doors with him,
 And does what Simon cannot do,
 For she, not over stout of limb,
 Is stouter of the two.—Edit. 1815.

And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little—all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader ! you would find
A tale in every thing.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it : *
It is no tale ; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

* I hope you'll kindly take it.—Edit. 1815.

“You’re overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,” to him I said ;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.

—I’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning ;
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.*

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.†

WE walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun ;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
“The will of God be done !”

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

* S. T. Coleridge, quoting this passage, and also the beginning of the last stanza but three in this poem, remarks that even in the smaller poems of Wordsworth “there is scarcely one that is not rendered valuable by some just and original reflection.”

† Written at Goslar, 1799.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

“Our work,” said I, “was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?”

A second time did Matthew stop ;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply :

“Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang ;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free ;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine ;
I looked at her, and looked again :
And did not wish her mine !”

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.*

* Joy that wells up from constitutional sources—joy that is ebullient from youth to age, and cannot cease to sparkle, he exhibited in the person of “Matthew,” as touched and over-gloomed by memories of sorrow.—
DE QUINCEY.

MATTHEW.*

In the School of —— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been School-masters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those Names the Author wrote the following lines.

IF Nature, for a favourite child,
 In thee hath tempered so her clay,
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,
 Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears
 In such diversity of hue
 Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,
 Cipher and syllable ! thine eye
 Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
 Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
 Then be it neither checked nor stayed :
 For Matthew a request I make
 Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
 Is silent as a standing pool ;

* Dr. Wordsworth thinks that the "Matthew" referred to in this and other poems of the same period, was the master of Hawkshead school, when the Poet was a pupil there. The master's name was Taylor.

Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
Thou happy Soul ! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee ?

1799.

THE FOUNTAIN.*

A CONVERSATION.

WE talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

* Written at Goslar, 1799.

Λ Λ

“Now, Matthew!” said I, “let us match
This water’s pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer’s noon ;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !”

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee :

“No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears ;*
How merrily it goes !
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain’s brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind

* Down to the vale this water steers.—Edit. 1815.

Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own ;
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved.”*

“ Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

* Coleridge bestows especial praise on “the six beautiful quatrains” of which this is the last.

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
 I'll be a son to thee !”
 At this he grasped my hand, and said,
 “Alas ! that cannot be.”

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
 And down the smooth descent
 Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
 And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
 He sang those witty rhymes
 About the crazy old church-clock,
 And the bewildered chimes.

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS,

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR RICHMOND.

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
 O Thames ! that other bards may see
 As lovely visions by thy side
 As now, fair river ! come to me.
 O glide, fair stream ! for ever so,
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
 Till all our minds for ever flow
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought !—Yet be as now thou art,
 That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene !

Such as did once the Poet bless,
 Who murmuring here a later * ditty,
 Could find no refuge from distress
 But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
 For *him* suspend the dashing oar ;
 And pray that never child of song
 May know that Poet's sorrows more.
 How calm ! how still ! the only sound,
 The dripping of the oar suspended !
 —The evening darkness gathers round
 By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

1789.

 LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING.†

How richly glows the water's breast
 Before us, tinged with evening hues,
 While, facing thus the crimson west,
 The boat her silent course pursues !
 And see how dark the backward stream !
 A little moment past so smiling !
 And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
 Some other loiterers beguiling.

* Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.—W. W.

† Julius C. Hare remarks that many persons have so little feeling of what is original and beautiful in poetry that they wish Wordsworth had always written verses of such ordinary character as those in this short poem !

Such views the youthful Bard allure ;
 But, heedless of the following gloom,
 He deems their colours shall endure
 Till peace go with him to the tomb.
 —And let him nurse his fond deceit,
 And what if he must die in sorrow !
 Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
 Though grief and pain may come to-morrow ?

1789.

PERSONAL TALK.

I.

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.

II.

“ 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 !

III.

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.

* There do I find a never failing store
 Of personal themes, and such as I love best ;
 Matter wherein right voluble I am ;
 Two will I mention dearer than the rest.—Edit. 1815.

IV.

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.*

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

ON his morning rounds the Master †
 Goes to learn how all things fare ;
 Searches pasture after pasture,
 Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;
 And, for silence or for talk,
 He hath comrades in his walk ;
 Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
 Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

* Such writing as these four sonnets contain may well justify the praise which even the most enthusiastic admirers of Wordsworth have uttered.
 —ED.

† The dog belonged to Mr. Th. Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's brother.

See a hare before him started !
 —Off they fly in earnest chase ;
 Every dog is eager-hearted,
 All the four are in the race :
 And the hare whom they pursue,
 Knows from instinct what to do ;*
 Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;
 But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted
 Thinly by a one night's frost ;
 But the nimble Hare hath trusted
 To the ice, and safely crost ;
 She hath crost, and without heed
 All are following at full speed,
 When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,
 Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is over-head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—
 See them cleaving to the sport !
 MUSIC has no heart to follow,
 Little MUSIC, she stops short.
 She hath neither wish nor heart,
 Hers is now another part :
 A loving creature she, and brave !
 And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
 Very hands as you would say !
 And afflicting moans she fetches,
 As he breaks the ice away.

* Hath an instinct what to do.—Edit. 1815.

For herself she hath no fears,—
 Him alone she sees and hears,—
 Makes efforts with complainings ; nor gives o'er
 Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more.*

1805.

 TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,†
 Beneath a covering of the common earth!
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;
 More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.
 Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
 Shall find thee through all changes of the year ;
 This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree
 Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past ;‡
 And willingly have laid thee here at last :
 For thou hadst lived till every thing that cheers
 In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
 Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
 And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;

* Until her fellow sunk, and re-appeared no more.—Edit. 1815.

† Lie here sequestered :—be this little mound
 For ever thine, and be it holy ground ;
 Lie here without a record of thy worth,
 Beneath the covering of the common Earth.—Edit. 1815.

‡ I prayed for thee, and that thy end were past.—Edit. 1815.

Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—
 I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
 Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
 And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
 It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
 Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;
 • Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
 Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share ;
 But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
 Found scarcely any where in like degree !
 For love, that comes wherever life and sense
 Are given by God, in thee was most intense ;*
 A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind
 Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind :
 Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
 A soul of love, love's intellectual law :—
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame ;
 Our tears from passion and from reason came,
 And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name !

1805.

 THE FORCE OF PRAYER ;

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITION.

“ What is good for a bootless bene ? ”
 With these dark words begins my Tale ;
 And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
 When Prayer is of no avail ?

* For love that comes to all ; the holy sense,
 Best gift of God, in thee was most intense.—Edit. 1815.

“What is good for a bootless bene?”
The Falconer to the Lady said;
And she made answer “ENDLESS SORROW!”
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer’s words,
And from the look of the Falconer’s eye;
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep?—
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking, sorrow :
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death ;—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, " Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately Priory ! "

The stately Priory was reared ;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
 That looked not for relief !
 But slowly did her succour come,
 And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart
 That shall lack a timely end,
 If but to God we turn, and ask
 Of Him to be our friend !

1808.

 FIDELITY.*

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
 A cry as of a dog or fox ;
 He halts—and searches with his eyes
 Among the scattered rocks :
 And now at distance can discern
 A stirring in a brake of fern ;
 And instantly a dog is seen,
 Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed ;
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;
 With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
 Unusual in its cry :
 Nor is there any one in sight
 All round, in hollow or on height ;

* The young man whose death gave occasion to this poem was named Charles Gough. He had come early in the spring to Patterdale for the sake of angling. While attempting to cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere he slipped from a steep part of the rock where the ice was not thawed, and perished. His body was discovered as described in the poem. Sir Walter Scott heard of the accident, and he also wrote some verses in admiration of the dog's fidelity.

Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
 What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
 That keeps, till June, December's snow ;
 A lofty precipice in front,
 A silent tarn * below !
 Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
 Remote from public road or dwelling,
 Pathway, or cultivated land ;
 From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
 Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ; †
 The crags repeat the raven's croak,
 In symphony austere ;
 Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
 And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
 And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,
 That, if it could, would hurry past ;
 But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
 The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way
 O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
 As quickly as he may ;
 Nor far had gone before he found
 A human skeleton on the ground ;

* Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

† Regarding this line, so remarkably expressive of loneliness, Mr. Wordsworth says, "This was branded by a critic of those days in a review ascribed to Mrs. Barbauld as unnatural and absurd. I admire the genius of Mrs. Barbauld, and am certain that had her education been favourable to imaginative influences, no female of her day would have been more likely to sympathise with that image, and to acknowledge the truth of the sentiment."

The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog, had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,*
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side :
How nourished here through such long time
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate ! †

1805.

* On which the traveller thus had died.—Edit. 1815.

† The sentiment in the last four lines was uttered by a shepherd with such exactness that a traveller who afterwards reported his account in print was induced to question the man whether he had read them, which he had not.—W. W.

ODE TO DUTY.*

'Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eò perductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim.'

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !
 O Duty ! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove ;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe ;
 From vain temptations dost set free ;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth :
 Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
 Who do thy work, and know it not :
 Oh ! if through confidence misplaced
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power ! around them
 cast. †

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security.

* "In this year (1805) was produced the *Ode to Duty* on the model, as the author says, of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*, which is copied from Horace's *Ode to Fortune*."—Life, by Dr. Wordsworth, I., 314.

† May joy be theirs while life shall last,
 And Thou ! if they should totter, teach them to stand fast.—Edit. 1815.

And they a blissful course may hold
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed ;
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.*

I, loving freedom, and untried ;
 No sport of every random gust,
 Yet being to myself a guide,
 Too blindly have reposed my trust :
 And oft, when in my heart was heard
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred
 The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
 But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,
 I supplicate for thy control ;
 But in the quietness of thought :
 Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
 I feel the weight of chance-desires :
 My hopes no more must change their name,
 I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
 The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
 Nor know we any thing so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face :
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;

* And blest are they who in the main
 This faith even now do entertain,
 Live in the spirit of this creed,
 Yet find that other strength according to their need.—Edit. 1815.

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh
and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live ! *

* See some remarks from Mr. Wordsworth himself upon the philosophy of the last stanza, in the biography by Dr. Wordsworth, i. 432.

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

I.

EMMA'S DELL.*

It was an April morning : fresh and clear
 The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
 Ran with a young man's speed ; and yet the voice
 Of waters which the winter had supplied
 Was softened down into a vernal tone.
 The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
 And hopes and wishes, from all living things
 Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
 The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
 The steps of June ; as if their various hues
 Were only hindrances that stood between

* Written at Grasmere, 1800. The poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easedale.

Them and their object : but, meanwhile, prevailed
 Such an entire contentment in the air *
 That every naked ash, and tardy tree
 Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
 With which it looked on this delightful day
 Were native to the summer.—Up the brook
 I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
 Alive to all things and forgetting all.
 At length I to a sudden turning came
 In this continuous glen, where down a rock
 The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
 Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice
 Of common pleasure : beast and bird, the lamb,
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
 Or like some natural produce of the air,
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here ;
 But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze :
 And, on a summit, distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell,
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
 “ Our thoughts at least are ours ; and this wild nook,
 My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee.”
 —Soon did the spot become my other home,

* The budding groves appeared as if in haste
 To spur the steps of June, as if their shades
 Of various green were hindrances that stood
 Between them and their object : yet, meanwhile,
 There was such deep contentment in the air.—Edit. 1815.

My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

II.

TO JOANNA.*

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
The time of early youth ; and there you learned,
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living Beings by your own fire-side,
With such a strong devotion, that your heart
Is slow to meet the sympathies of them
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
Joanna ! and I guess, since you have been
So distant from us now for two long years,
That you will gladly listen to discourse,
However trivial, if you thence be taught
That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,

* Joanna Hutchinson. This poem was written at Grasmere, 1800.

Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-tower,
The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
Came forth to greet me ; and when he had asked,
“ How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid !
And when will she return to us ? ” he paused ;
And, after short exchange of village news,
He with grave looks demanded, for what cause,
Reviving obsolete idolatry,
I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
Of formidable size had chiselled out
Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
—Now, by those dear immunities of heart
Engendered between malice and true love,
I was not loth to be so catechised,
And this was my reply :—“ As it befel,
One summer morning we had walked abroad
At break of day, Joanna and myself.
—’Twas that delightful season when the broom,
Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,
Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
Our pathway led us on to Rotha’s banks ;
And when we came in front of that tall rock
That eastward looks, I there stopped short*—and stood
Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
From base to summit ; such delight I found
To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower
That intermixture of delicious hues,
Along so vast a surface, all at once,
In one impression, by connecting force
Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.

* Which looks towards the east, I there stopped short.—Edit. 1815.

—When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again ;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
 Was ready with her cavern ; Hammar-scar,
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone ;
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking-trumpet ;—back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the voice ;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.*
 —Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted, sure I am†
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.
 And, while we both were listening, to my side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished

* Mr. Wordsworth admitted that the effect of the lady's laugh, as described, is an extravagance, yet I have myself heard him suggest that from this passage Lord Byron took the hint for the conclusion of his famous ninety-second stanza of the third Canto of *Childe Harold*—

“ Far along

From peak to peak the rattling crags among
 Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud,
 But every mountain new hath found a tongue,
 And Jura answers through her misty shroud
 Back to the joyous Alps who call to her aloud.”—ED.

† Is not for me to tell, but sure I am—Edit. 1815.

To shelter from some object of her fear.
 —And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone :—
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

Note.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls into Wynandermere. On Helm-crag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns, which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

 III.

THERE IS AN EMINENCE.*

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills
 The last that parleys with the setting sun
 We can behold it from our orchard-seat ;
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk
 Along the public way, this Peak, so high †
 Above us, and so distant in its height,

* It arises above the road by the side of Grasmere Lake towards Keswick and its name is Stone Arthur. The statement that it could be seen from the orchard of the Town-end cottage was a poetic fiction.

† this Cliff, so high.—Edit. 1815.

Is visible ; and often seems to send
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
 The meteors make of it a favourite haunt :
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
 The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
 And She who dwells with me, whom I have loved
 With such communion, that no place on earth
 Can ever be a solitude to me,
 Hath to this lonely Summit given my Name.

1800.

IV.

POINT RASH-JUDGMENT.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
 A rude and natural causeway, interposed
 Between the water and a winding slope
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shore
 Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy : *
 And there myself and two beloved Friends, †
 One calm September morning, ere the mist
 Had altogether yielded to the sun,
 Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.
 — Ill suits the road with one in haste ; but we
 Played with our time ; and, as we strolled along,
 It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had tossed ashore—
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered bough,

* The character of the Eastern shore of Grasmere Lake is now quite changed by the public road being carried along by its side.

† Coleridge and Miss Wordsworth.

Each on the other heaped, along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
 Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
 That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
 Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand !
 And starting off again with freak as sudden ;
 In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.*
 —And often, trifling with a privilege
 Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
 And now the other, to point out, perchance
 To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too fair
 Either to be divided from the place
 On which it grew, or to be left alone
 To its own beauty. Many such there are,
 Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall fern,
 So stately, of the queen Osmunda named ;
 Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
 On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the side
 Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
 Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.†
 —So fared we that bright morning : from the fields,
 Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth
 Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
 Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
 And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced ‡

* Its very playmate, and its moving soul.—Edit. 1815.

† This passage is spoken of by Professor Wilson in the strongest terms of eulogy that even his expressive vocabulary could supply.

‡ And in the fashion which I have described
 Feeding unthinking fancies, we advanced —Edit. 1815.

Along the indented shore ; when suddenly,
 Through a thin veil of glittering haze was seen
 Before us, on a point of jutting land,
 The tall and upright figure of a Man
 Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
 Angling beside the margin of the lake.
 " Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,
 " The Man must be, who thus can lose a day *
 Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's hire
 Is ample, and some little might be stored
 Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."
 Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached
 Close to the spot where with his rod and line
 He stood alone ; whereat he turned his head
 To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down
 By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
 And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
 That for my single self I looked at them,
 Forgetful of the body they sustained.—
 Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
 The Man was using his best skill to gain
 A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
 That knew not of his wants. I will not say
 What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
 The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
 With all its lovely images, was changed
 To serious musing and to self-reproach.
 Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
 What need there is to be reserved in speech,

* That way we turned our steps, nor was it long
 Ere, waking ready comments on the sight
 Which then we saw, with one and the same voice
 Did all cry out that he must be indeed
 An idler, he who thus could lose a day.—Edit. 1815.

And temper all our thoughts with charity.
 —Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
 My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
 The same admonishment, have called the place
 By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
 As e'er by mariner was given to bay
 Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;
 And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name it bears.

1800

v.

TO M. H.*

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees :
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path ;
 But a thick umbrage—checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf
 Beneath the branches—of itself had made
 A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's hand
 Had shaped for their refreshment ; nor did sun,
 Or wind from any quarter, ever come,
 But as a blessing to this calm recess,
 This glade of water and this one green field.
 The spot was made by Nature for herself ;
 The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 Unknown to them ; but it is beautiful ;

* Addressed to Miss Hutchinson, afterwards the Poet's wife. The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park.

And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal,
 He would so love it, that in his death-hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts :
 And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still Nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from You !

1800.

VI.

WHEN, TO THE ATTRACTIONS.*

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
 Sharp season followed of continual storm
 In deepest winter ; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast near me hopped ; nor was I loth
 To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,

* Written at Grasmere, 1805. The allusion is to the events of 1800 when the Poet went to live at Town-end, Grasmere, and was visited by his brother, Captain John Wordsworth.

Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew
Within this grove of firs ! and, on the fork
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest ;
A last year's nest, conspicuously built
At such small elevation from the ground
As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
Of nature and of love had made their home
Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
Some nook where they had made their final stand,
Huddling together from two fears—the fear
Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
In such perplexed and intricate array ;
That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems
A length of open space, where to and fro
My feet might move without concern or care ;
And, baffled thus,* though earth from day to day
Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed,
I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and prized,
Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
Meanwhile were mine ; till, one bright April day,
By chance retiring from the glare of noon
To this forsaken covert, there I found

* The line and a half following this are not in the edition of 1815.

A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
 And winding on with such an easy line
 Along a natural opening, that I stood
 Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
 For what was now so obvious. To abide,
 For an allotted interval of ease,
 Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come
 From the wild sea a cherished Visitant ;
 And with the sight of this same path—begun,
 Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
 Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
 That, to this opportune recess allured,*
 He had surveyed it with a finer eye,
 A heart more wakeful ; and had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot
 That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.†

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,
 And taken thy first leave of those green hills
 And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,

* Much wondering at my own simplicity
 How I could ere have made a fruitless search
 For what was now so obvious. At the sight
 Conviction also flashed upon my mind,
 That this same path, (within the shady grove
 Begun and ended) by my brother's steps
 Had been impressed,—to sojourn a short while
 Beneath my roof, he from the barren seas
 Had newly come, a cherished Visitant !
 And much did it delight me to perceive
 That to this opportune recess allured,—Edit. 1815.

† With which the sailor measures o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she is travelling through the dreary sea.—Edit. 1815.

Year followed year, my Brother ! and we two,
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's mind was fashioned ; and at length,
 When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections ; Nature there
 Was with thee ; she, who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee ; and even so didst thou become
 A *silent* Poet ; from the solitude
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 —Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone ;
 Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
 Could I withhold thy honoured name,—and now
 I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.*
 Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
 Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong ;
 And there I sit at evening, when the steep
 Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
 And one green island, gleam between the stems
 Of the dark firs, a visionary scene !
 And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
 Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
 Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
 My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
 Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
 Muttering the verses which I muttered first
 Among the mountains, through the midnight watch

* And now I call the pathway by thy name,
 And love the fir-grove with a perfect love.—Edit. 1815.

Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck *
In some far region, here, while o'er my head,
At every impulse of the moving breeze,
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
Alone I tread this path ;—for aught I know,
Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
Of undistinguishable sympathies,
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.

Note.—This wish was not granted ; the lamented Person not long after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

* to and fro the vessel's deck.—Edit. 1815.

INSCRIPTIONS.



I.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE
LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED
QUARRY, UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

STRANGER ! this hillock of mis-shapen stones
Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,*
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
Of some old British Chief : 'tis nothing more
Than the rude embryo of a little Dome
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built
Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
That from the shore a full-grown man might wade,
And make himself a freeman of this spot
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight †
Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
Are monuments of his unfinished task.
The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
Was once selected as the corner-stone
Of that intended Pile, which would have been
Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
And other little builders who dwell here,

* Is not a Ruin of the ancient time.—Edit. 1815.

† the Knight forthwith.—Edit. 1815.

Had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
 For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
 Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
 With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
 And for the outrage which he had devised
 Entire forgiveness!—But if thou art one
 On fire with thy impatience to become
 An inmate of these mountains,—if, disturbed
 By beautiful conceptions,* thou hast hewn
 Out of the quiet rock the elements
 Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze
 In snow-white splendour,—think again ; and, taught
 By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
 Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose ;
 There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
 And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

1800.

II.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A STONE, ON THE
 SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB.†

STAY, bold Adventurer ; rest awhile thy limbs
 On this commodious Seat ! for much remains
 Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
 Of this huge Eminence,—from blackness named,
 And, to far-travelled storms of sea and land,
 A favourite spot of tournament and war !
 But thee may no such boisterous visitants
 Molest ; may gentle breezes fan thy brow ;

* What imaginative person has not felt this in the tumult of his youth,
 without words to express the nature of his feeling?—ED.

† See note *ante*, p. 243.

And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
 Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
 From centre to circumference, unveiled !
 Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,
 That on the summit whither thou art bound,
 A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,
 With books supplied and instruments of art,
 To measure height and distance ; lonely task,
 Week after week pursued !—To him was given
 Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed
 On timid man) of Nature's processes
 Upon the exalted hills. He made report
 That once, while there he plied his studious work
 Within that canvass Dwelling, colours, lines,
 And the whole surface of the out-spread map,
 Became invisible :* for all around
 Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, unproclaimed—
 As if the golden day itself had been
 Extinguished in a moment ; total gloom,
 In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,
 Upon the blinded mountain's silent top !

1813.

III.

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR
 GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

1808.

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine,
 Will not unwillingly their place resign ;

* suddenly

The many-colored map before his eyes
 Became invisible.—Edit. 1815.

If but the Cedar thrive that near them stands,
 Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.*
 One wooed the silent Art with studious pains :
 These groves have heard the Other's pensive strains ;
 Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
 By interchange of knowledge and delight.
 May Nature's kindest powers sustain the Tree,
 And Love protect it from all injury !
 And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,
 Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,†
 Here may some Painter sit in future days,
 Some future Poet meditate his lays ;
 Not mindless of that distant age renowned
 When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,
 The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
 In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field ; ‡
 And of that famous Youth,§ full soon removed
 From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self approved,
 Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend beloved.

 IV.

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

OFT is the medal faithful to its trust
 When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust ;

* This tree, the Poet said, was thriving and spreading when he saw it in the summer of 1841.

† Here followed in the Edition of 1815, this couplet—

“ And to a favourite resting-place invite,
 For coolness grateful, and a sober light.”

‡ Sir John Beaumont, who died in 1628.

§ Francis Beaumont, the literary associate of Fletcher. He was brother of Sir John, was born in 1586, and died in 1616.

And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
 That things obscure and small outlive the great :
 Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim
 Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
 And all its stately trees, are passed away,
 This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
 Perchance may still survive. And be it known
 That it was scooped within the living stone,—
 Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
 Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,
 But by an industry that wrought in love ;
 With help from female hands,* that proudly strove
 To aid the work, what time these walks and bowers
 Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

v.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT,
 BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY
 HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED
 AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS.

YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,
 Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's return ;
 And be not slow a stately growth to rear
 Of pillars, branching off from year to year,
 Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle ;—
 That may recal to mind that awful Pile †
 Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,
 In the last sanctity of fame is laid.

* Mrs. and Miss Wordsworth. In 1806-7 the Poet and his family resided at Coleorton.

Like a recess within that awful Pile.—Edit. 1815.

—There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep
 Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,
 Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
 Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear :
 Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I
 Raised this frail tribute to his memory ;
 From youth a zealous follower of the Art
 That he professed ; attached to him in heart ;
 Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
 Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.*

VI.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.†

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,
 Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground
 Stand yet, but, Stranger ! hidden from thy view,
 The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU ;
 Erst a religious House, which day and night
 With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite :
 And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth
 To honourable Men of various worth :
 There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
 Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child ;
 There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
 Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks ;
 Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
 Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams

* That greatest of British painters died in 1792, and was buried in Saint Paul's Cathedral.

† Composed in 1811, during a walk from Brathay to Grasmere.

Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
 With which his genius shook the buskined stage.
 Communities are lost, and Empires die,
 And things of holy use unhallowed lie ;
 They perish ;—but the Intellect can raise,
 From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

VII.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE WALL
 OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT
 GRASMERE.

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
 Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
 Proportions more harmonious, and approached
 To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
 But take it in good part :—alas ! the poor
 Vitruvius of our village had no help
 From the great City ; never, upon leaves
 Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
 In long succession, pre-existing ghosts
 Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge
 Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
 Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
 Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.*

* In the Edition of 1815, the text from the third line to this point was differently worded. It runs thus—

“ and approached
 To somewhat of a closer fellowship
 With the ideal grace. Yet as it is,
 Do take it in good part : alas !—the poor
 Vitruvius of our village, had no help
 From the great city : never on the leaves

Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these walls
 The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
 The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
 And hither does one Poet sometimes row
 His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
 With plenteous store of heath and withered fern,
 (A lading which he with his sickle cuts,
 Among the mountains) and beneath this roof
 He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
 Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the Sheep,
 Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
 Lie round him, even as if they were a part
 Of his own Household : nor, while from his bed
 He looks, through the open door-place, toward the lake
 And to the stirring breezes, does he want
 Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
 Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy ! *

Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
 The skeletons and pre-existing ghosts
 Of Beauties yet unborn, the rustic box,
 Snug cot, with coach-house, shed and hermitage."

* This poem shows in what places and in what manner the Poet *studied his art*. In truth it must have seemed a very lazy life.

POEMS
REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.



I.

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.*

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk ;
And he was seated, by the highway side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged Man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag

* This poem was written before the publication of Mr. Wordsworth's earliest volume. It is one of which perhaps less notice has been generally taken than its wondrous force of description, and its striking originality appear to deserve. It works a vein of human sympathy which English poetry had not previously gone into—the sympathy with what is humanising and elevating in the influences even of decrepitude and decay. The descriptive part is so admirable as to bring the old Cumberland beggar, and all the feebleness of extreme age clearly before our sight, and from the line

“ But deem not this man useless,” &c.

we have that strong appeal to the better feelings of human nature which constitutes the argument of the Poet.

All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
 He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one ;
 And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
 Of idle computation. In the sun,
 Upon the second step of that small pile,
 Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
 He sat, and ate his food in solitude :
 And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
 That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
 Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
 Fell on the ground ; and the small mountain birds,
 Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
 Approached within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known ; and then
 He was so old, he seems not older now ;
 He travels on, a solitary Man,
 So helpless in appearance, that for him
 The sauntering Horseman throws not with a slack
 And careless hand his alms upon the ground,
 But stops,—that he may safely lodge the coin
 Within the old Man's hat ; nor quits him so,
 But still, when he has given his horse the rein,
 Watches the aged Beggar with a look
 Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends
 The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
 The aged beggar coming, quits her work,
 And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
 The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
 Shouts to him from behind ; and, if thus warned
 The old man does not change his course, the boy

Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside,
 And passes gently by, without a curse
 Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary Man ;
 His age has no companion. On the ground
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
 Instead of common and habitual sight
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
 Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
 Impressed on the white road,—in the same line,
 At distance still the same. Poor Traveller !
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his feet
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still
 In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
 The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,
 And urchins newly breeched—all pass him by :
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this Man useless.—Statesmen ! ye
 Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
 Who have a broom still ready in your hands
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud,
 Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate

Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
 A burthen of the earth ! 'Tis Nature's law
 That none, the meanest of created things,
 Of forms created the most vile and brute,
 The dullest or most noxious, should exist
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
 A life and soul, to every mode of being
 Inseparably linked.* Then be assured
 That least of all can aught—that ever owned
 The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
 Which man is born to—sink, howe'er depressed,
 So low as to be scorned without a sin ;
 Without offence to God cast out of view ;
 Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
 Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
 Worn out and worthless. While from door to door,
 This old Man creeps, the villagers in him
 Behold a record which together binds
 Past deeds and offices of charity,
 Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
 And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
 Among the farms and solitary huts,
 Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
 The mild necessity of use compels
 To acts of love ; and habit does the work
 Of reason ; yet prepares that after-joy
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,

* The eight lines which here follow are not in the Edition of 1815.

By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
Doth find herself insensibly disposed
To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,

By their good works exalted, lofty minds
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
Will live, and spread, and kindle : even such minds
In childhood, from this solitary Being,
Or from like wanderer, haply have received *
(A thing more precious far than all that books
Or the solitudes of love can do !)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
In which they found their kindred with a world
Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
Who sits at his own door,—and, like the pear
That overhangs his head from the green wall,
Feeds in the sunshine ; the robust and young,
The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
Of their own kindred ;—all behold in him
A silent monitor, which on their minds
Must needs impress a transitory thought
Of self-congratulation, to the heart
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
His charters and exemptions ; and, perchance,
Though he to no one give the fortitude
And circumspection needful to preserve
His present blessings, and to husband up
The respite of the season, he, at least,
And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them felt.

* This helpless wanderer, have perchance received—Edit. 1815.

Yet further.—Many, I believe, there are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach ; who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers ; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood.
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace !
 —But of the poor man ask, the abject poor ;
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul ?
 No—man is dear to man ; the poorest poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they have been,
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
 Of some small blessings ; have been kind to such
 As needed kindness, for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 —Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,
 My neighbour, when with punctual care, each week
 Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
 By her own wants, she from her store of meal*
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart,
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !

* *chest* of Meal.—Edit. 1815.

“Meal-chest” used to be a household word in the cottages of the North.

And while in that vast solitude to which
 The tide of things has borne him,* he appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone,
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of Heaven
 Has hung around him : and, while life is his,
 Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts.

—Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
 The freshness of the valleys ; let his blood
 Struggle with frosty air and winter snows ;
 And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
 Beat his grey locks against his withered face.
 Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,
 Make him a captive !—for that pent-up din,
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age !
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes ;
 And have around him, whether heard or not,
 The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
 Few are his pleasures : if his eyes have now
 Been doomed so long to settle upon earth
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at least
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down

* “*led* him” in the Edition of 1815. Such amendments as this show the care, and *generally* the valuable care with which Mr. Wordsworth had revised his earlier poems.

Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
 Of highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal ; and, finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die !

1798.

II.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
 The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
 And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town ;
 His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown ;
 And his bright eyes look brighter, set off by the streak
 Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.*

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the joy
 Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy ;
 That countenance there fashioned, which, spite of a stain
 That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was ; and his house far and near
 Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer :
 How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
 Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his mild ale !

* Erect as a sun-flower he stands, and the streak
 Of the unfaded rose is expressed on his cheek.—Edit. 1815.

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
His fields seemed to know what their Master was doing ;
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
All caught the infection—as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
The fields better suited the ease of his soul :
He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought ; and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door :
He gave them the best that he had ; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm :
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out,—he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free with their
 money ;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey,
That they dreamt not of dearth ;—He continued his
 rounds,
Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds still adding
 to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself :
Then (what is too true) without hinting a word,
Turned his back on the country—and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes!—but I guess that you frame
 A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
 In him it was scarcely a business of art,
 For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
 With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the
 green ;
 And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
 As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume,—
 Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom ;
 But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
 And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is
 stout ;
 Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
 You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
 And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
 About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
 But often his mind is compelled to demur,
 And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
 Like one whose own country's far over the sea ;
 And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
 Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue ;
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats ?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets ;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the
 Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her
 flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw ;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a
 dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay ;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with him there.
The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam ! when low thou art laid,
 May one blade of grass spring up over thy head ;
 And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
 Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.*

1803.

III.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
 That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain ;
 And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
 Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
 Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
 Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
 In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
 And recognised it, though an altered form,
 Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
 And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
 " It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold :
 This neither is its courage nor its choice,
 But its necessity in being old.

* The rural heart of the old man, preserved even amid the din and distraction of London, is admirably described. The poem is no doubt open to critical cavil ; but then we should take into account the intimation of the first stanza.

The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;
 It cannot help itself in its decay ;
 Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue.”
 And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse truth,
 A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot !
 O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
 Age might but take the things Youth needed not !
 1804.

IV.

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.*

THE little hedgerow birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, is one expression : every limb,
 His look and bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought.—He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet : he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given,
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by nature led
 To peace so perfect that the young behold
 With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

1798.

* This is perhaps one of the most perfect pictures of the quiet of old age that ever was given in words ; yet it was composed by a poet of eight and twenty !

v.

THE TWO THIEVES;

OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

O NOW that the genius of Bewick were mine,
 And the skill which he learned on the banks of the
 Tyne,
 Then the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
 For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical hand !
 Book-learning and books should be banished the land :
 And, for hunger and thirst and such troublesome calls,
 Every ale-house should then have a feast on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair ;
 Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would he
 care !
 For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and his sheaves,
 Oh, what would they be to my tale of two Thieves ?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three birthdays old,*
 His Grandsire that age more than thirty times told ;
 There are ninety good seasons of fair and foul weather
 Between them, and both go a-pilfering together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor ?
 Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's door ?

* Little Dan is unbreeched, he is three birth days old.—Edit. 1815.

Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide !
And his Grandson 's as busy at work by his side.

Old Daniel begins ; he stops short—and his eye,
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly :
'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires :
And what if he cherished his purse ? 'Twas no more
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one
Who went something farther than others have gone,
And now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;
You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand : ere the sun
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun :
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
This child but half knows it, and that not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led ;
And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,
Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they roam ;
For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter at home,*
Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done ;
And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

* For grey-headed Dan has a daughter at home.—Edit. 1815.

Old Man ! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
 I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side :
 Long yet may'st thou live ! for a teacher we see
 That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

1800.

VI.

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER
 HUSBAND.*

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers,
 And call a train of laughing Hours ;
 And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;
 And thou, too, mingle in the ring !
 Take to thy heart a new delight ;
 If not, make merry in despite
 That there is One who scorns thy power :—
 But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower,
 A Matron dwells † who, though she bears
 The weight of more than seventy years,
 Lives in the light of youthful glee,
 And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay ! start not at that Figure—there !
 Him who is rooted to his chair !

* Written after a tour in Scotland with his sister, 1803.

† There liveth in the prime of glee
 A woman, whose years are seventy-three,
 And she will dance and sing with thee.—Edit. 1815.

Look at him—look again ! for he
 Hath long been of thy family.
 With legs that move not, if they can,
 And useless arms, a trunk of man,
 He sits, and with a vacant eye ;
 A sight to make a stranger sigh !
 Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom :
 His world is in this single room :
 Is this a place for mirthful cheer ?
 Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
 Of him in that forlorn estate !
 He breathes a subterraneous damp ;
 But bright as Vesper shines her lamp ;
 He is as mute as Jedborough Tower :
 She jocund as it was of yore,
 With all its bravery on ; in times
 When all alive with merry chimes,
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
 It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due
 Is praise, heroic praise, and true !
 With admiration I behold
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold :
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
 The picture of a life well spent :
 This do I see ; and something more ;
 A strength unthought of heretofore !
 Delighted am I for thy sake ;
 And yet a higher joy partake :

Our Human-nature throws away
 Its second twilight, and looks gay ;
 A land of promise and of pride
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed
 Within himself as seems, composed ;
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
 The strife of happiness and pain,
 Utterly dead ! yet in the guise
 Of little infants, when their eyes
 Begin to follow to and fro
 The persons that before them go,
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail
 Where common cheerfulness would fail ;
 She strikes upon him with the heat
 Of July suns ; he feels it sweet ;
 An animal delight though dim !
 'Tis all that now remains for him !

The more I looked, I wondered more—*
 And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,
 Some inward trouble suddenly
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye—
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something over-bright !
 Nor long this mystery did detain
 My thoughts ;—she told in pensive strain †

* I looked, I scanned her o'er and o'er,
 The more I looked, I wondered more,
 When suddenly I seemed to espy
 A trouble in her strong black eye.—Edit. 1815.

† And soon she made this matter plain,
 And told me in a thoughtful strain.—Edit. 1815.

That she had borne a heavy yoke,
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke ;
 Ill health of body ; and had pined
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it !—but let praise ascend
 To Him who is our lord and friend !
 Who from disease and suffering
 Hath called for thee a second spring ;
 Repaid thee for that sore distress
 By no untimely joyousness ;
 Which makes of thine a blissful state ;
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate !

VII.

—— ‘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 !

VIII.

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S
ISLAND, DERWENT-WATER.*

IF thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot ; and, Stranger ! not unmoved
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold ; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,

* The first fourteen lines are different in the Edition of 1815. They run thus—

This island guarded from profane approach
By mountains high, and waters widely spread,
Is that recess to which St. Herbert came
In life's decline ;—a self-secluded man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things.
—Stranger ! this shapeless heap of stones and Earth,
(Long be its mossy covering undisturbed !)
Is revered as a vestige of the abode
In which, through many seasons, from the world
Removed, and the affections of the world,
He dwelt in solitude.

In utter solitude.—But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And; when with eye upraised
To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he :—as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

1800.

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

I.

PERHAPS some needful service of the State
 Drew TITUS from the depth of studious bowers,
 And doomed him to contend in faithless courts,
 Where gold determines between right and wrong.
 Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
 And his pure native genius, lead him back
 To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,
 Whom he had early loved. And not in vain
 Such course he held ! Bologna's learned schools
 Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and hung
 With fondness on those sweet Nestorian strains.
 There pleasure crowned his days ; and all his thoughts
 A roseate fragrance breathed.*—O human life,
 That never art secure from dolorous change !
 Behold a high injunction suddenly
 To Arno's side hath brought him, and he charmed
 A Tuscan audience : but full soon was called
 To the perpetual silence of the grave.

* Ivi vivea giocondo e i suoi pensieri
 Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original.

Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
A Champion stedfast and invincible,
To quell the rage of literary War !

II.

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste !
'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born
Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.
On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate
To sacred studies ; and the Roman Shepherd
Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.
Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had power
To escape from many and strange indignities ;
Was smitten by the great ones of the world,
But did not fall ; for Virtue braves all shocks,
Upon herself resting immoveably.
Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,
And in his hands I saw a high reward
Stretched out for my acceptance,—but Death came.
Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false
How treacherous to her promise, is the world ;
And trust in God—to whose eternal doom
Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

III.

THERE never breathed a man who, when his life
 Was closing, might not of that life relate
 Toils long and hard.—The warrior will report
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,
 And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
 Envy and heart-inquietude, derived
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,
 Could represent the countenance horrible
 Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage
 Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years
 Over the well-steered galleys did I rule :—
 From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown ;
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft
 Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir
 I knew the force ; and hence the rough sea's pride
 Availed not to my Vessel's overthrow.
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I
 On regal decks beheld ! yet in the end
 I learned that one poor moment can suffice
 To equalise the lofty and the low.
 We sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds,
 And One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,
 Death is the quiet haven of us all.
 If more of my condition ye would know,

Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang
Of noble parents : seventy years and three
Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

IV.

DESTINED to war from very infancy
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross :
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun
Hazard or toil ; among the sands was seen
Of Libya ; and not seldom, on the banks
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
So lived I, and repined not at such fate :
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
That stripped of arms I to my end am brought
On the soft down of my paternal home.
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
How fleeting and how frail is human life !

V.

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He
On whom the duty fell (for at that time
The father sojourned in a distant land)
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb

A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved !
 FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had borne,
 POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house ;
 And, when beneath this stone the Corse was laid,
 The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.
 Alas ! the twentieth April of his life
 Had scarcely flowered : and at this early time,
 By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
 That greatly cheered his country : to his kin
 He promised comfort ; and the flattering thoughts
 His friends had in their fondness entertained,*
 He suffered not to languish or decay.
 Now is there not good reason to break forth
 Into a passionate lament ?—O Soul !
 Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,
 Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air ;
 And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,
 An everlasting spring ! in memory
 Of that delightful fragrance which was once
 From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

VI.

PAUSE, courteous Spirit !—Balbi supplicates
 That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for him
 Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer
 A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.
 This to the dead by sacred right belongs ;

* In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original :—

e degli amici
 Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit
 To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
 Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,
 And all the wisdom of the Stagyrice,
 Enriched and beautified his studious mind :
 With Archimedes also he conversed
 As with a chosen friend ; nor did he leave
 Those laureat wreaths ungathered which the Nymphs
 Twine near their loved Permessus.*—Finally,
 Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
 His ears he closed to listen to the songs
 Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old ;
 And his Permessus found on Lebanon.†
 A blessed Man ! who of protracted days
 Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep ;
 But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,
 Take pride in him !—O Passenger, farewell !

VII.

LINES

COMPOSED AT GRASMERE, DURING A WALK ONE EVENING, AFTER A
 STORMY DAY, THE AUTHOR HAVING JUST READ IN A NEWSPAPER
 THAT THE DISSOLUTION OF MR. FOX WAS HOURLY EXPECTED.

LOUD is the Vale ! the Voice is up
 With which she speaks when storms are gone,
 A mighty unison of streams !
 Of all her Voices, One !

* Twine on the top of Pindus.—Edit. 1815.

† And fixed his Pindus upon Lebanon.—Edit. 1815.

Loud is the Vale ;—this inland Depth
 In peace is roaring like the Sea ;
 Yon star upon the mountain-top
 Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
 Importunate and heavy load !*
 The Comforter hath found me here,
 Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad—
 Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
 For he must die who is their stay,
 Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
 To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
 But when the great and good depart †
 What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
 Doth yet again to God return ?—
 Such ebb and flow must ever be,
 Then wherefore should we mourn ?

1806.

* *Importuna e grave salma.*—MICHAEL ANGELO.

† But when the mighty pass away.—Edit. 1815.

VIII.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM
 "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF THE
 LATE VICAR OF KENDAL.

To public notice, with reluctance strong,
 Did I deliver this unfinished Song ;
 Yet for one happy issue ;—and I look
 With self-congratulation on the Book
 Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and read ;—
 Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed ;
 He conned the new-born Lay with grateful heart—
 Foreboding not how soon he must depart ;
 Unweeting that to him the joy was given
 Which good men take with them from earth to heaven.

IX.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM,
 PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
 I saw thee every day ; and all the while
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
 So like, so very like, was day to day !

Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep ;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings :
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine*
Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been giver.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made :
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A stedfast peace that might not be betrayed. †

* Thou shouldst have seemed a Treasure-house, a mine.—Edit. 1815.

† A faith, a trust, that could not be betrayed.—Edit. 1815.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
 I have submitted to a new control :
 A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
 A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
 This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have been the
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore, [Friend,
 This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and well,
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
 That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
 I love to see the look with which it braves,
 Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind !
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,
 Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

ODE.*

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS
OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

The Child is Father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.
See page 1.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

* This is the most rapturous of all Wordsworth's productions, and readers of any quickness and depth of poetic sensibility will themselves feel as they read, something of the glow of the inspiration which produced it. The theme is one closely connected with mysteriousness and awe, and the Poet seems to have delighted to group around it all the wealth and choicest treasures of an imagination populous and thronging with beautiful images. I do not myself profess to find the sense of all the passages plain, but upon that point I defer to the observations of Mr. Coleridge which will be found in the concluding note.—ED.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair ;
The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief :
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong :
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay ;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy !

IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make ; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling*
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat :
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,

* "pulling."—Edit 1815.

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,

Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity ;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;*
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality

* This line is not in the Edition of 1815.

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by ; *
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction : not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realised,

* After this line, in the Edition of 1815, came the following :—

 To whom the grave
 Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
 Of day or the warm light,
 A place of thought where we in waiting lie.

High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,
 To perish never ;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be ;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering ;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any* severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet ;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.†

1803—6.

* Think not of any.—Edit. 1815.

† The reader could scarcely have a more beautiful or touching thought to lay up in his heart as he closes the volume. It embodies also much of

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that philosophy for which the poetry of Wordsworth is distinguished—that philosophy which finds in all the forms of Nature, the simplest as well as the grandest, a voice that speaks to the human heart, and seems to tell the story of God's providence in a speech and language of its own. The Editor will here append Wordsworth's own account of this concluding poem, taken from Doctor C. Wordsworth's Biography (vol. i., p. 190), not merely on account of its applicability in this place, but because of the insight which it gives into the early *poetic* life of this extraordinary man. It will be seen that Nature had made him a poet even in his boyish years. The world of Idealism was the world in which even then he lived. The following is the note which Mr. Wordsworth dictated :—

“This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the first four stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself, but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere—

‘ A simple child
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?’

“ *We are Seven,*” see page 11, *ante.*’

“But it was not so much from the source of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recal myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines ‘Obstinate Questionings,’ &c. To that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations, and among all persons acquainted with classic literature is known as an ingredient in the Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine.

Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the 'Immortality of the Soul,' I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet."

Considering the high tone which Mr. Wordsworth sometimes took in speaking of his own poetry, these observations on so ecstatic a poem as the "ODE," will strike by their argumentative sobriety. The following observations on the poem are from Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* :—

"To the 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood,' the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

' Canzone, i' credo, che saranno radi
Color, che tua ragione intendan bene.
Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto.'

' O lyric song, there will be few, think I,
Who may thy import understand aright.
Thou art for *them* so arduous and so high !'

"But the Ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet cannot be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe, that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.'

THE END.



