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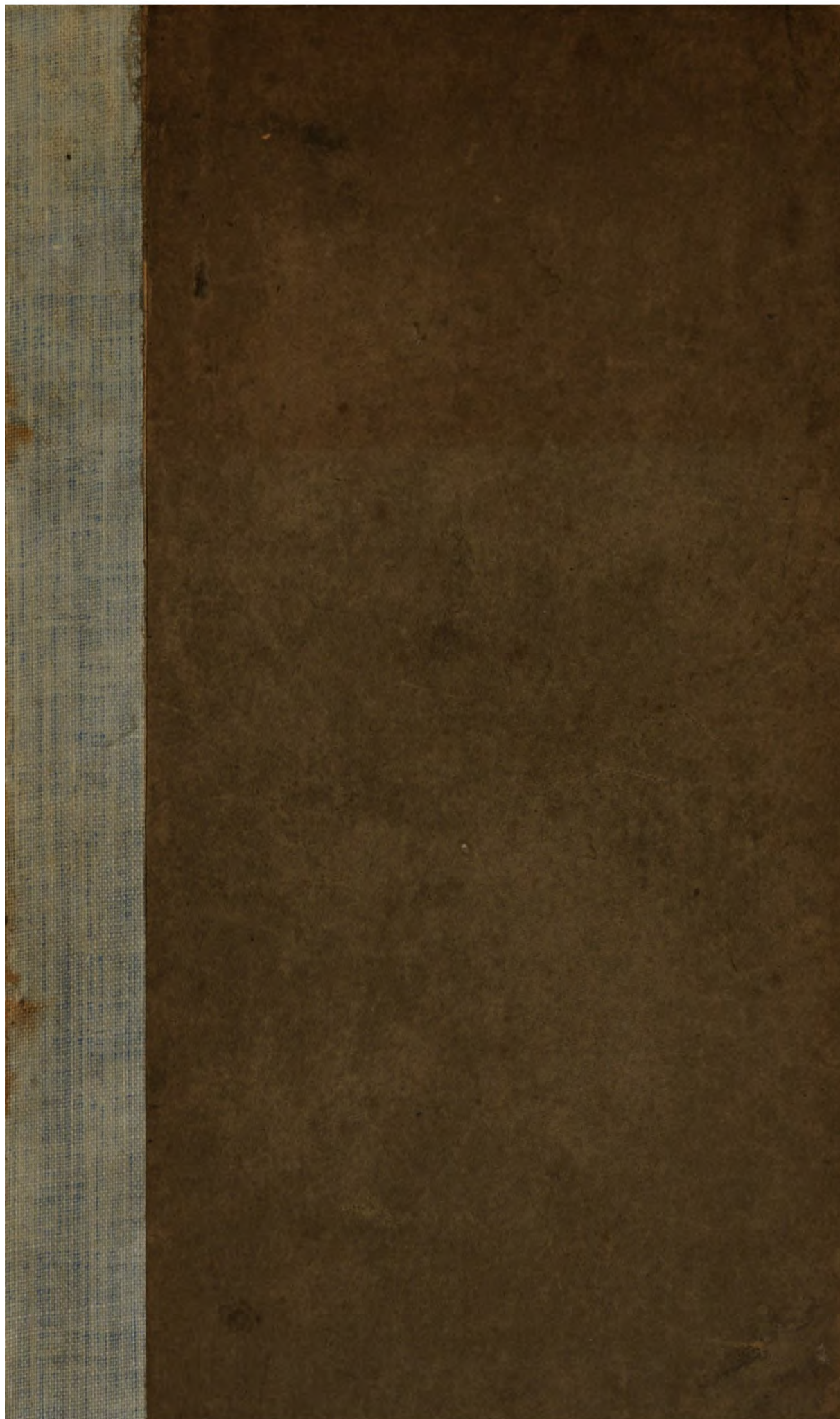
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THE RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

CONSISTING OF

Criticisms upon, Analyses of, and Extracts from curious, useful, and valuable Books in all Languages, which have been published from the revival of Literature to the Commencement of the present Century.

The objects of this Work are, in the first place—

To supply an instructive and entertaining Miscellany, which shall not, like the modern Reviews, be conversant about the literature of the day; but which will attempt to recall the attention of the Public to the valuable productions of former times.

2. To revive the memory of undeservedly neglected Books; and, by pointing out the merits of those which may be deemed worthy of recommendation, assist the reader in the formation of his Library.

3. By its numerous and carefully selected extracts, to furnish a collection of specimens of the greater part of our English and other authors, from the earliest times of modern literature.

4. To afford an abstract of those Works, which are too bulky or too tedious for general perusal, and of which an analysis may oftentimes be as useful, and more agreeable, than the originals; and to extract the only curious or valuable parts from Books otherwise worthless.

And lastly—

To open a publication for the reception of bibliographical notices and communications, and of original letters of celebrated men and curious extracts from old MSS.

This Review will be continued Quarterly, each Number containing about 200 pages of handsomely printed letter press, price 5s.

CONTENTS OF NOS. I. II. III. AND IV.

<i>Introduction.</i>	<i>Warwick's Spare Minutes.</i>
<i>Rymer on Tragedy.</i>	<i>William Lilly's Life, by himself.</i>
<i>Paul Hentzner's Travels in England.</i>	<i>The early English Drama.</i>
<i>Chamberlayne's Pharonnida.</i>	<i>Sir Thomas Overbury's Characters.</i>
<i>Heinsii Poemata.</i>	<i>Glover's Athenaid.</i>
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<i>Du Marsais on Prejudice.</i>	<i>William Browne's Pastorals.</i>
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<i>Dryden's Dramatic Works.</i>	<i>on the Progress of Literature.</i>
<i>Sir T. Browne's Letters, MS.</i>	<i>Montaigne's Essays.</i>
<i>Cibber's Apology for his Life.</i>	<i>Heath's Clarastella.</i>
<i>Ben Jonson's Works.</i>	<i>North's Life of Lord Keeper Guil-</i>
<i>Tovey's Anglia Judaica, or early</i>	<i>ford.</i>
<i>History of the Jews in England.</i>	<i>Butler's Genuine and Spurious Re-</i>
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<i>Barckley's Felicitie of Man.</i>	<i>Sir William Davenant's Gondibert.</i>
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<i>Mysteries, Moralities, and other early</i>	<i>MS.</i>
<i>Dramas.</i>	<i>Sir Thomas Elyote's Image of Gou-</i>
<i>Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia.</i>	<i>vernance.</i>

Extracts from the Introduction to the RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

The design of this Review of past Literature had its origin in the decisively modern direction of the reading of the present day—it is an attempt to recal the public from an exclusive attention to new books, by making the merits of old ones the subject of critical discussion. The interesting form and manner of the present Reviews it is intended to preserve, though from the nature of the work, and from our unfeigned horror of either political or personal invective, we shall neither pamper the depraved appetites of listless readers, by piquant abuse—nor amuse one part of the public, by holding up another to scorn and mockery—at any rate, we shall not be driven to a resource of this description through a paucity of interesting matter which we may legitimately present to our readers. While the present Reviews are confined to the Books of the day, we have the liberty of ranging over the whole extent of modern literature.

* * * * *

The literature of our own country, the most rich, varied, and comprehensive of any in the world, and replete with more interest to the English reader than any other, will have peculiar claims on our attention—and to it will the pages of the “Retrospective” be zealously devoted; not however to that portion of it whose sole recommendation is its antiquity, although we shall avail ourselves of such bibliographical information as will in any manner illustrate the history of art, or the grand, though slow and silent march of mind. We shall not pay exclusive homage to the mighty in intellect—to those of heavenly mould, who, like the giants of old, are the offspring of the gods and the daughters of men—far from it—many others less imposing, whether in philosophy, poetry, or general literature, from which any thing original in design, profound in thought, beautiful in imagination, or delicate in expression, can be extracted, will be considered worthy of a place in this work. There are few of the productions of the mind, as well as of nature, which do not possess some useful or valuable properties—many ponderous volumes, however tedious as a whole, frequently contain something useful or beautiful, but the road to which is as arid and fatiguing as journeying through the desert of Arabia, to the green spots and fresh waters with which it is sprinkled: to those green spots and fresh waters, we shall shorten the way. In our neglected or forgotten poetry in particular, we are often surprised, in the midst of dull passages or quaint conceits, with fine ideas, lofty flights of imagination, or sparkling expressions, which are too good to be lost, and too much encumbered with worthless matter to be sought for by general readers. In other works, in which the good is so diffused amidst the bad as to render

† difficult, if not impossible, to separate the different parts, we shall present our readers with an analysis, which is often more agreeable, and as useful as the originals. We shall also, by a careful selection of particular extracts, not only endeavour to give an idea of the mode of thought and style of individual authors, but to furnish a collection of specimens of the greatest part of our writers, so as to exhibit a bird's-eye view of the rise and progress of our literature. The utility of such a work to the student, in abridging his labour, and thereby increasing his gratification, is obvious—whilst to him who only reads for his own amusement, it will have the attraction of a various literary miscellany, without exacting from him a too rigid attention; and as it is our design to mingle the useful with the agreeable in due proportions, it may not be to him even without its value and instruction.

* * * *

Our Review is not one, which can derive assistance, of the most trivial kind; from any source, except the innate truth and beauty of literature. We can take up none of the questions, which divide the country “billowed high with human agitation;” we have no politics, and are the very antipodes of novelty. The subjects of our criticism are in their grave, alike deaf to the voice of praise or censure; and we are not ingenious enough, or it may be, so honest, to put our contemporaries to the rack on the monuments of the dead. We cannot supply the loungee with small talk at an easy rate, or cut out a royal road to literature, for those who would be wise, deep, and learned, at the expense of an hour's study divided with a due attention to breakfast. They who read Reviews for a “*precis*” of the last new book, that they may appear to have read it, without having seen it, will skim over our “*contents*” with sovereign disdain. We can tell them of none, save those whom they might have known long since, and whom they will get no credit for knowing now.

It is the desire of the Editors to resort to every source of information open to them, and avail themselves of all the valuable assistance they can procure, in order to render their Work as varied and interesting as possible; they therefore beg to state to the literary portion of their countrymen, as well as to the possessors and collectors of such books as come within their plan, that all communications and contributions will be respectfully received and attended to,—being addressed to the Publishers, C. & H. BALDWIN, Newgate-street, and R. TRIPHOOK, Old Bond-street, London; GOODE, Cambridge; BELL & BRADFUTE, and J. ROBERTSON, Edinburgh; and GRAHAM & SON, Dublin.

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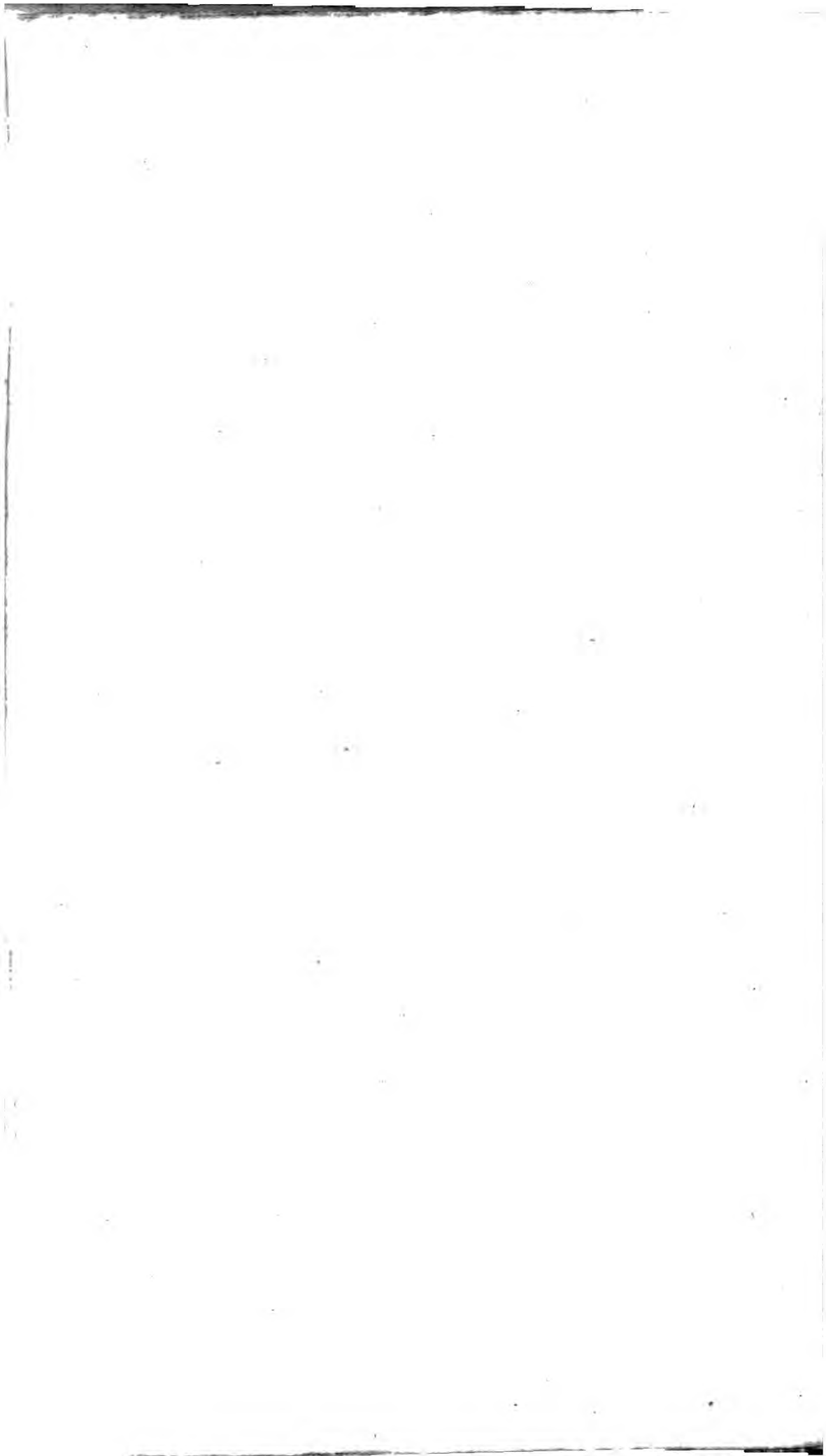
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DESULTORY THOUGHTS

IN

LONDON,

TITUS AND GISIPPUS,

WITH OTHER POEMS.

BY CHARLES LLOYD,

Author of Nugæ Canoræ, and Translator of Alfieri's Tragedies.

BRAMA ASSAI, POCO SPERA E NULLA CHIEDE.

Tasso.

LONDON:

CHARLES AND HENRY BALDWIN,

NEWGATE STREET.

1821.

Maurice, Printer, Fenchurch Street.

DEDICATORY SONNET.

TO SOPHIA.

LET it be never said, that I can bring
A tuneful *trophy*, and disloyally
To any one present it but to thee
Who doth inspire me each time that I sing!
Thou art my muse! Nay more, as with a wing
Near me thou hoverest of tranquility,
Making home, *home!* All that works silently
In me of human comfort, so that spring
(If chance they spring) flowers round my humble path,
All from thee comes! When thou wert far away,
The lays I breath'd all told of grief and scath;
They were but shadows of a better day.—
Me thou refreshest as the earth spring-showers;
Due is the wreath to Her who rais'd its flowers!

DEDICATORY LINES

TO THE

“DESULTORY THOUGHTS IN LONDON.”

ADDRESSED TO MRS. HARDING.

Written September, 1820.

1.

To whom, more suitably, can I present
Effusions, London, penn'd in thy deep haunt,
Than to a friend there, the sole friend fate lent,
Who caus'd that, homeless, home's peculiar want
I should not feel—not so—that it should daunt
With sense of loneliness my pining spirit,
That I no more should have the will to chaunt
My simple lays? Yes, thou canst boast the merit,
Though *reft of Joy*, that life did still some *Hope* inherit.

2.

'Tis a refreshing thing on thee to think,
And such as thee, on life's unsolac'd road ;

Dedicatory Lines.

v

Who from no one, though failing, e'er dost shrink
When call'd upon that aught might be bestow'd.
Frank, gen'rous, with a heart where ever glow'd,
And still glows, sympathy's most cheering flame ;
From thee, on every side, there still hath flow'd
A tributary stream, whose selfless aim,
Though it disperse to all, no eulogy doth claim.

3.

Like to a river, which, thro' covert wild,
And shrubby underwood, its smooth lapse winds ;
Or through the wide champaine, blithe as a child,
So unpresumingly its passage finds,
That by the brighter green more various kinds,
And richer hue of flowerets here and there,
Where'er its course it takes, kiss'd by the winds,
We chiefly guess, munificently fair,
That where we look, to heaven its bosom it doth bare.

4.

Like to that river too (another cause
Of its meek imperceptibility)
That 'tis so clear, that to its wave it draws
A second portrait of whate'er we see ;
A second portraiture most easily
Confounded with th' original! Thus thou
Bear'st on thy flexile countenance and free,
Whatever impress other's cares there plough,
And all their joys and griefs are pictur'd on thy brow.

'Tis their augmented happiness alone,
Except to the discerning eye of Heaven,
Which bears an evidence thou movest on ;
Without pretension so, with path so even,
To thee to be progressive, it is given !
Thus, like the stream I mention'd, whose guess'd way,
The richer hues that round that way have thriven,
So clear and calm it is, alone betray ;
To all around thee, thou mute blessings dost convey.

The following remarks had, on further consideration, been suggested to the author, since the poem, (to a passage of which it refers,) was printed; the author therefore had no other alternative, except to introduce them here, or to omit them altogether. He is most satisfied with the former decision.

Kensington, Dec. 10th, 1820.

“ How can thy creatures be tormented so?—
Say, is it not for sin? That it is not—
Is it for sins that trees, grass, blossoms, rot?”

p. 50, stanza 137, book 1.

Though the author can himself see no fallacy in the chain of argument by which the doctrine of necessity is defended, yet as so many excellent persons are scandalized at the consequences of that doctrine, and as the author is disposed to think the argumentum ad absurdum, with which in some measure, as respects the phenomena of conscience, this doctrine may be impugned, is one of considerable weight; he wishes that he had not so expressed himself as he has done in the passage alluded to. Besides, the author feels that he is wrong. Remorse, as distinct from *regret*, is a passion inalienable from human nature; and this passion tells us, by its awful voice, that it is for sin that we are tormented; and though the reasoning of necessity may make us anticipate that we never should feel remorse, yet if we do feel remorse, hypothesis there is contradicted by fact, and the whole falls to the ground.

The fact is, that when we try actions by an *à priori* process, we are almost obliged to admit the doctrine of necessity—when we try actions by *à posteriori* judgments, we are obliged, practically at least, to admit the doctrine of free-will. Should not this make us hesitate to give judgment? Is there not, in the two avenues which lead to the consideration of human action, somewhat between that of necessity and free-will, which like two parallel lines can never unite? There is a gordian knot between the two questions. Let us not presumptuously imagine that we can untie it.

DESULTORY THOUGHTS

IN
LONDON.

A Poem.

FIRST BOOK.

“ Heaven me such usage send,
Not to pick bad from bad ; but, by bad, mend.

Othello, Act 4, Scene 3.

“ Si je veux peindre le printemps, il faut que je sois en hyver ; si je
veux decrire un beau paysage, il faut que je sois dans les murs ; et j'ai dit,
cent fois, que, si jamais j'étois mis à la Bastille, j'y ferois le tableau de
la liberté.” *Les Confessions de Rousseau, tome première, p. 322.*

Come raccende il gusto il mutare esca,
Così mi par, che la mia istoria, quanto
Or quà, or la più variata sia,
Meno a chi l'udirà nojosa fia.

Ariosto. Canto 13, Stanza 80.

DESULTORY THOUGHTS

IN

LONDON.

A walk in the Park, under the circumstance of a hoar frost ; and description of a couple who are there.

1.

THE night has frosty been ; say, shall I wander
Beneath yon trees, and—ere the sun has reach'd
The zenith; and that copper fog from under
Struggled successfully; while their boughs are bleach'd
With hoar-frost; and, with what might seem the plunder
Of fairy scenes, fantastically enriched;—
The snow-white glory's crisp luxuriancy,
Fus'd into softness by the mist, espy?

2.

It is a dainty sight! See how the trees,
 With tinsel frost-work on each twig, impearl'd,
 Enchantment's forms seem more like, mimickries
 Of elfish ornament, than of this world!
 I know not where the fancy more can please
 Herself, through necromantic day-dreams whirl'd,
 Than in a woody scene, in mist half lost,
 Array'd in all the brilliancy of frost.

3.

Oh, had we eyes to see, what spot is there
 In all the world, in which we might not find
 Something of lovely, and perhaps of rare,
 T' amuse the various functions of the mind?
 With such profusion of the good, and fair,
 We need not say "we've gone" (or, like moles, blind,
 We well deserve consignment to a warren)
 "From Dan to Beersheba, and found all barren."

4.

See, through yon avenue, that mourner stealing!
 To him in friendship's tenderest relation
 Once did I stand: he's smitten past all healing;
 His wife, by him, without exaggeration,
 Of woman-heartedness, and genuine feeling,
 And generosity,—of any nation
 With proofs most noble and affecting, vies:
 At Portia's faith no more I feel surprise.

5.

They liv'd surrounded by a beauteous flock
Of children, in conversible retirement ;
A competence had they, and not to mock,
But say the truth, if ever the requirement
O'th' Seasons' Poet form'd a household stock,
Love, friendship, leisure's free arbitrement
Of occupation,—they to them *seem'd* given—
“ Progressive virtue, and approving heaven.”

6.

But he was blasted by a fell disease :
Behold him :—he who was the life of all,
With whom, in intercourse of social ease,
(And many were there) 'twas his lot to fall,
Speechless is now ! bereft of power to please !
To angels, and to men, a spectacle,
Of that, which he, who “ rideth on the storm,”
Without aid from externals, can perform.

7.

Behold how mute he creepeth on his way !
On either side each listless arm is hung !
As if he were to inward wounds a prey :
As if his nerveless joints on wires were strung !
Hark ! nothing now seems he to have to say !
Yet once persuasiveness dwelt on his tongue ;
And listening crowds, through labyrinths of sense,
Prais'd the address of his free eloquence !

8.

Oh God! might such an one as I presume,
 Thee, for a brother man, to supplicate!
 How to thy footstool weeping would I come,
 And fervently entreat thee, to his state
 Of fierce distress, and pangs, though cleaving, dumb,
 A little help to bring; to ascend, though late,
 Thy mercy-seat, and to his cruel woe
 Say, "thus far shalt thou, but no farther, go."

9.

Oh, deign to contemplate the anxious look
 Of fond inquiry to her suffering friend,
 Which, as it all her resolution shook
 To see his pangs, towards him his spouse doth send.
 Father! if not for *his*, oh, in thy book
 Of reprobation, for *her* sake, forefend
 Longer his name a station to inherit!
 From that worst death, defend him, of the spirit!

10.

I can remember, when, to have beheld
 Such scene, it had been all delight, to him;
 I can remember when no beam could gild
 The clouds of evening, which caus'd not to swim
 His eyes with living moisture: like a child
 Elastic would he bound, and lithe of limb,
 While nature's glories in his soul were waking,
 Mood self-sufficing, yet with them partaking.

11.

Look at these palaces on every side,
That raise ambitiously their heads on high ;
How few are there of all the sons of pride,
Their inmates, that could feel a sympathy,
Or have the smallest consciousness, allied
With such accumulated misery ?
Well! Let them rest!—Each on his bed of down ;
I fear far more their *favour* than their *frown*.

12.

Oh! pair disconsolate! Could I, methinks,
Beneath the face of Heaven thus canopied
With rolling mists, while through the air slow sinks
Upon the ear, sounds of the bustling tide
Of busy life ; could I, in hallow'd links,
While the earth gleams with hoar-frost far and wide,
Espouse your fates in deep participation!
The scene would to the deed lend consecration!

13.

I cannot quit you! Yet my backward look
Tarries, with stealing glances, on your paces :
There is a Providence! and, that his crook
And staff may yours be, when, in stony places,
'Tis yours to wander forth, and see no nook
Of shelter for your manifold disgraces :
This is my prayer for you, and 'tis my prayer
That I might *soothe* your sorrows while I *share*.

14.

And for that woman ; may she to his path,
 Oh, may she be a lamp, light to his feet !
 While she remains with him, still is thy wrath
 On him not pour'd with violence complete :
 It is a heavy toil, but heart she hath
 That maketh light of woe, joying to meet
 The storm, when she can turn it from her lord ;
 In her, thus Virtue is its own reward !

15.

Yes, rather had she in distress partake,
 Than not contribute to another's good ;
 Shame on that wretch could cause her heart to ache !
 'Tis like a refuge of beatitude
 To those who in its secret springs can slake
 Their thirst : oh ! that her spouse were thus endued !
 Still it he sees in all she does and says,
 In all her motions, attitudes, and ways.

16.

The treasure that he hath he cannot know,
 Till, it torn from him, he indeed were poor ;
 Then, then, in very deed, his weight of woe
 Would be too great for mortal to endure !
 Be her support, oh God ! Thee may she know,
 In thy good time to cheer her ; him to cure :
 Be her support, Thou Ruler of the skies !
 Cheer her devotion, and self-sacrifice !

17.

What sound is that which strikes upon my ear?

'Tis like the sacred anthem's choral peal;

No minster or collegiate church is near:

It is the burst of evangelic zeal!

Gladly I hail it every where;—most, *here*.

Where foes upon man's circumspection steal

So manifold, with satisfaction, I

Catch tones e'en of mistaken piety,

18.

If towards its God sincere! Oft have I thought

That, as few snares exist in *rural life*

To lure to unhallow'd pleasures, Conscience, (brought

Oft into perfect being by a strife

'Twixt duty and desire,) *there* is sought

In vain, as in those busier scenes, more rife

With manifold temptations. The rude swain

There sleeps, wakes, toils, eats, drinks, and sleeps again;

19.

And this is his life's diary; save when fair,

Or wake, or merry dance of May invite;

And then the exercise in the clear air,

The purer objects both of sound and sight

Impressing him, than those which towns prepare,

Of lawless bliss, much weaken the delight:

While few alternatives, or none at all,

Betwixt the gin-shop and conventicle,

20.

Await the town-bred son of poverty.

To the best interests of man, as friend,
Therefore I hail e'en bigot piety!—

*Whatever leads the spirit to ascend,
Draws it from temporal instincts, to espy
Imaginative interests, which befriend
Alike the servant and the master, seem
But modes to me of virtue's golden gleam.*

21.

Success attend you, and a quiet spirit,

Devoted pioneers, where'er ye be,
Who have not fear'd this world to disinherit
Of all seductions to the sympathy
Of unregenerate man: on human merit,
And its pretensions, so much we agree,
Agree to think, that, if we find true treasure,
“God worketh in us of his own good pleasure,”

22.

That I would not disparage you with praise:—

You will have praise from a far better source:
Oh, could the best philosopher but raise
His soul for once above the low discourse
Of his own reason, with what just amaze
Might he discover, that, the noblest force
Of his own will could not *conceive*, much less
Act up to, lowest motives you profess.

23.

Fair queen of Arts, I hail thee. If not here,
Where are Art's triumphs to be best secur'd?
Here are the models to their votaries dear!
Here for those votaries are their tools procur'd!
Imbued with taste here is an atmosphere!
When many men—a consequence ensur'd—
To a common centre with one view converge:
And social, here, the tasteful feelings urge.

24.

It must, methinks, much sharpen *those* of art,
To have the pleasures of *society*
Join'd with them. Industry has done her part;
Facilities e'en to satiety
Forbid here all impediments to thwart
The votaries of Taste: so that "nimiety"
Of *inward* impulse, here none need require;
For all is found taste's novice to inspire.

25.

To see how each part falls into a clan
Of man's race, is a curious spectacle;
How little people thwart each other's plan;
Though in one city's vast receptacle
They all are huddled! Casts of Indostan,
It makes us think ye quite respectable!
And quite does good to heart of metaphysician,
If heart he have, to see with what precision

26.

Class'd as by necromantic agency,
 Musician, painter, poet, and prose writer,
 Their bristles raise in stout defiance!
 And then, to make the comment seem the brighter,
 Visit poor labour in his cage, and see
 How small his knowledge of abodes politer!
 While with exactest dole of equal measure,
 As little know of him the tribes of pleasure.

27.

But really it is curious to observe
 How persons, tottering on the very brink
 Each of his neighbour's track, yet never swerve
 Upon that track, its joys and woes, to think:
 Then are the rich so exquisite in nerve
 'Twould be impossible they should not shrink
 From any gross commixture of the classes!
*In *Hunt's spite, instinct keeps mankind in masses.*

28.

Instinct, like Falstaff's, when the prince was near!
 However there is in our habitude
 Something like what in insects doth appear:
 That though with self-same powers we be endued,
 Generically speaking, yet 'tis clear
 Each specimen has its own *solitude*

~~~~~  
 \* Mr. Hunt, of radical memory.

Of incommunicable faculties !  
A *holy solitude* from thence doth rise !

29.

Nor would Benevolence annihilate  
Our natures ; only would enlarge our wishes ;  
It would not arbitrarily dictate,  
But each man leave t' enjoy his favourite dishes.  
And much, I think, that it would stipulate  
Each man should have of meat, game, fowl, and fish, his  
Quantity ; and I would assert 'twere able  
To sit, though Malthus left the crowded table.

30.

Some men think only of themselves, while some—  
But 'tis for nothing but to analyze them—  
Think most of others : those men with a plum  
In coffer, and round paunch, whose treasure buys them,  
Are, in my mind, more bearable, and come  
With honester pretensions to despise them,  
Than those who think of men like worried dog  
To galvanize—or like exhausted frog.

31.

Some men think too much of themselves ; and some  
Too much of other men, from the same cause,  
*Self-love* ; while envious miseries consume  
Their hearts, when others gain the least applause.



Some from imprudence, not benevolence, doom  
 Themselves to ruin. Thus fail general laws  
 To be of universal application.  
 E'en vice sometimes is self-annihilation !

## 32.

Religion is the principle alone  
 Which can convert man's various appetences  
 Each to some good, peculiarly its own.  
 The thoughtless man under her influences  
 Becomes benevolent. He who was prone  
 To self-analysis, his own pretences—  
 He who to that of other men, of others,  
 The baffled intrigue, ere matur'd—discovers.

## 33.

How many are there whom we're forc'd to excite  
 To think more of themselves ! How many men  
 So wrapp'd up in self-satisfied delight,  
 That e'en imprudence were in them a gain !  
 As opposite men's faults, so opposite  
 The treatment which from wisdom they obtain :  
 Here is Religion's triumph. Here we see  
 The immutable in mutability !

## 34.

But ere I treat it, I should go to school  
 Dialect to learn fit for satiric theme :  
 I've not that spirit fine of ridicule,  
 Which sheds on all things, like a careless gleam

Of sun-shine, brilliancy beyond all rule  
Of set prescription ; grace and life extreme.  
Mine is a mind that might be analytic,  
But it too literal is to be satyric.

35.

Irony delicate and exquisite,  
Delicious raillery's provoking zest ;  
Half-playful, and a half-malicious wit,  
Which, at what *stings* us *most*, makes us *smile best* :—  
A subtle, sly, insinuating hit,  
Which, in great gravity and reverence drest,  
With irresistibly demure *abord*,  
To every adversary gives *le tort* :—

36.

These are not mine ! Let me no longer talk  
About myself, but of my friends ; at least  
Of one of them ; and this would be no baulk  
To the reader, if he knew to what a feast  
He is invited : for though you should walk  
From Bow to Chelsea, nay from point most west  
Of Cornwall's coast, to house of John o' Groat,  
That you would find his match I still must doubt.

37.

He is a man whom many painful duties  
In early life mark'd as the son of grief ;  
Yet did he never render a pursuit his  
With any view of premature relief :

Or, with equivocal resource, pollute his  
 Most noble soul, by thought that could be thief  
 E'en of the tender bloom, that lay upon  
 Its lovely surface, like the ripe fruit's down.

38.

He walk'd along his path in steadiness,  
 In solitude, and in sublimity;  
 None ever knew his desolate distress,  
 And none shall ever know it now from me.  
 But with a love, temper'd with awfulness,  
 Have I beheld the forc'd serenity,  
 That, like envelope fine, on it he laid:  
 Though 'twas transparent none dar'd pierce its shade.

39.

It was respected as the sacred veil  
 That erst conceal'd the Ark of Deity,  
 When He vouchsaf'd with human-kind to dwell:  
 A holy presence, envied now by me,  
 And causing me, those, to whose lot it fell,  
 With God's regard thus signalized to be,  
 To envy too: for in our purer law  
 Truth is scarce definite enough for awe,

40.

For those who have not, by a mystic love,  
 A complete vict'ry o'er their senses won:  
 What would I not have given, did fate approve,  
 When great Jehovah to King David's son

Divulg'd his glory, to have gaz'd above,  
As o'er th' adoring host his presence shone.  
When "all the congregation stood of Israel,"  
And God descended with mankind to dwell.

41.

When e'en the very heavens bow'd down to earth,  
And all the building with God's glory flooded;  
Which pure perfumes, each of immortal birth,  
And incense, from a thousand censers, clouded.  
High anthems also of devoutest mirth  
That pierc'd the *vap'ry canopy*, which shrouded  
The place most holy, on its billows roll'd,  
And e'en of more than mortal feelings told.

42.

Then was that memorable pray'r prefer'd :  
Then was that catalogue of sins, sublime :  
For, after each, was not this pleading heard,  
If man have perpetrated any crime,  
Or this or that, and he from guilt incurr'd  
Be penitent, and here confess in time,  
"Then, hear Thou from thy dwelling place, e'en Heav'n !  
And when thou hearest be the sin forgiv'n."

43.

Then stood the priest array'd in robe of white,  
Then were the trumpets and the cymbals sounded,  
Then all rich perfumes in an exquisite  
Ocean of speechless fragrance were confounded,

While all harmonious instruments delight ;  
 One hallelujah to the skies rebounded.  
 "The Glory of the Lord," from its abode  
 On high, came down, and "fill'd the house of God!"

## 44.

Ah, hapless, hapless people ! well might ye  
 By rivers of the mighty Babylon  
 Sit down and weep : and on each willow tree  
 Hang up your harps ! Well, well, might Zion's son  
 Exclaim with passionate tears, "oh, how can we  
 Sing in a strange land the Lord's song?" well moan  
 "My right hand's cunning let it cease to be,  
 Ere I, oh Zion, cease to think of thee!"

## 45.

Ah, hapless people ! Even to recur  
 To trophies, so exclusively your own,  
 As once were yours, seems in my heart to stir  
 A sense, as if these glorious days had thrown  
 A shade on later times ! yet that "word sure  
 Of prophecy," which "in a dark place shone,"  
 As all sufficing we cannot refuse !  
 Graceless, in days of grace, were better Jews.

## 46.

Much from my theme and friend have I digress'd,  
 But poor as I am, poor in stuff for thought,  
 And poor in thought to make of it the best,  
 Blame me not, gentles, if I soon am caught

By this or that, when as my themes suggest  
Aught of collateral aid which may be wrought  
Into its service. Blame me not, I say ;  
The idly musing often miss their way.

47.

And now, my friend, I turn again to thee,  
Thou pure receptacle of all that's good !  
Thou hast contriv'd an art, I own, by me,  
As feasible, so little understood,  
That, thou being unknown, with avowal free,  
I should have said it ne'er could be pursu'd—  
*The child of impulse ever to appear,*  
*And yet through duty's path strictly to steer.*

48.

Nay, more—Thou hast contriv'd *to be* that child,  
And not alone hast held, through duty's path,  
In lofty unimpeachableness, and mild,  
Thy way, but through strange suffering, and scath  
Of worldly comfort, hast been unbeguil'd  
Of life's first innocence ; God's blessing hath,—  
Like “ Shadrach, Meshek, and Abednego,”—  
Through fiery furnace made thee safely go.

49.

Thy God hath said to thee, “ When\* through the wave  
Thou passest, servant, I with thee will be !

~~~~~  
* Isaiah chap. 43, verse 2.

When through the floods, thou shalt their fury brave ;
 When through the flames, their hurtful quality
 They shall renounce, nor shall thy garments have
 A smell of fire, recalling it to thee.
 As thou hast done by me, by thee I'll do :—
 I am, have been, and will to thee be true."

50.

Oh ——, thou art a mystery to me !
 Thou art so prudent, and so mad with wildness,
 Thou art a source of everlasting glee !
 Yet desolation of the very childless
 Has been thy lot ! Never in one like thee
 Did I see worth majestic from its mildness ;
 So far, in thee, from being an annoyance
 E'en to the vicious, 'tis a source of joyance.

51.

Like a vast castle that has sieges seen,
 Its outer walls shaken, and prostrate laid,
 Thou seem'st to me ! Each outlet to the scene,
 Where thy great wealth, like troops in ambuscade,
 Was stor'd, has oft been ransack'd ; thou hast been
 Of sympathy so frank, so overpaid
 Their price to all ! Yet much as thou'st been shaken
 Thou, like that castle's fortress, ne'er wert taken.

52.

Most men from principle their virtues draw—
In thee would principle shew like a failing,
Thy heart sublime frames thy life's safest law ;
And 'twould condense the fresh dews thence exhaling
Their rich exuberance by rule to awe ;
Others deem self-denial most availing
To rule man's conduct : but so pure thy mind is,
Thou hid'st its talents lest their beams should blind us.

53.

No! thou, in many ways, reversest all,
That may to men in general be imputed,
Better in thee the virtues natural,
Than those in other men by culture rooted.
Never thy lips, by word, or great or small,
That other men could injure, were polluted.
Thy censure, if in critic chair thou sit,
Falls but on those too great to shrink from wit.

54.

No! Let a man, in body, or in mind,
In character, condition, or estate,
Be doom'd, in form, in talents, from mankind,
To bear disadvantageous estimate ;
By thee, to him, shall never be assign'd
A word his destiny to aggravate :
In thy praise, as of Heaven, it might be sounded,
None that in thee e'er trusted were confounded.

55.

Now shall I not this living portrait wrong—
 In it the features are not very common—
 By mentioning to whom it doth belong !
 The writer trust ; its prototype is human !
 If thou that read'st it catch the likeness strong,
 Respect the secret as thou art a true man.
 He that has furnish'd matter for these lays,
 Is singular in this—he spurns at praise.

56.

There is a being still attends my couch ;—
 There is a being still, whose voice to hear
 Is music to my soul ; whose hand to touch
 Is life ;—to look upon her count'nance clear,
 She still seems able to atone for much
 Of spite, that destiny 'gainst me doth bear.
 Name her I will not ! Were she always spar'd
 To me thus, I should not think woe so hard.

57.

I well remember her years five-and-twenty,
 (Ah, now my muse is got into a gallop)
 Longer perhaps ! But time sufficient, plenty
 Of treasur'd offices of love to call up.
 She was then, as I recollect, quite dainty,
 And delicate, and seem'd a fair envelope
 Of virgin sweetness, and angelic goodness !
 That fate should treat her with such reckless rudeness !

58.

She scarcely seem'd to tread upon the ground,
But was like one of fair Diana's train,
While on her steed her sylphid form would bound,
Which felt the license of the loosen'd rein ;
While o'er her brow, with fur or ermine crown'd,
Wav'd the triumphant plume, as proud t' obtain
A station so distinguish'd ; such her grace,
Well might you deem her Lady of the Chace !

59.

But though in sense and graceful exercise,
In arts which give to wealth a magic power,
Though in accomplishments, and courtesies,
In dance in hall, and converse in the bow'r,
From many a one she bore away the prize ;
These were but buds of that " consummate flow'r"
Of excellence, whose root her bosom nourish'd ;
Charming each sense with fragrance where it flourish'd.

60.

Oh ! that the shocks of wintry gales assail'd it !
Or from its honours one small leaf should rend !
Its bloom, that smearing rains should e'er have pal'd it !
Or blasts tow'rds earth its stately head should bend !
But, though it so have been, they ne'er avail'd yet
With its more noble graces to contend :
The more they wasted it to human eyes,
The more its fragrance mounted to the skies.

61.

Oh, could the writer of these humble lays,
 Renew the hours, best friend, he's had with thee!
 When through the glimmer of life's twilight haze—
 (Like fairy forms when hoar-frost's witchery
 The rose-like bloom of the sun's straggling rays
 First catches) the fantastic imagery
 Seem'd more inviting from its dubious curtain:—
 (Youth trusts too much to shrink from the uncertain.)

62.

Could he renew those days! Yet can he call
 Charms from those days, so that his heart has leap'd!
 Charms, like those flowers, which, in a triumph, fall
 From car of conqueror, so profusely heap'd,
 That on all sides the ground is like a wall,
 Whence, wreath'd in trellis, *blooms* profusely peep'd.
 Their roses, though they long have seem'd to pale,
 Commemorative fragrance still exhale.

63.

So do the thoughts, dear being! lov'd the best
 Of any being that I yet have known!—
 So do the thoughts, join'd with those hours so blest,
 Which have been most peculiarly thine own!
 Yes! of those hours though I am disposess'd,
 The streams nectarious which from them have flown,
 Like incense which the shrine of Vesta shaded,
 Immortal dwells, where it has once pervaded!

64.

One near thee, London, dwells, to whom I fain
Tribute would pay, or ere this lay I close ;
Yet how can I—ungifted with a strain
Fit to arrest the ear of him who knows
To build such verse as Seraphim might deign
To listen to, nor break the deep repose
Of those immortal ardours that inspire
Spirit of inextinguishable fire—

65.

How shall I fitly speak on such a theme ?
He is a treasure by the world neglected,
Because he hath not, with a prescience dim,
Like those whose every aim is self-reflected,
Pil'd up some fastuous trophy, that of him
Might tell, what mighty powers the age rejected,
But taught his lips the office of a *pen*—
By fools he's deem'd a being lost to men.

66.

I grant, by fools alone he is held so—
But then most plentiful this genus is ;
And not confin'd (as all good people know)
To exoteric illegitimacies.
Nay, capp'd and gown'd, oft, in life's raree-show,
With senatorial robe, and blazonries
Of maintenance and coronet adorn'd,
Tempted we've been its meanness to have scorn'd !

67.

I honour him for that neglect for which,
From vulgar minds, he hath aspersion found,
Because that poor he hath become, though rich,
In casting nobly on ungrateful ground,
That whence more selfish souls had sought to pitch
A lasting tabernacle ; to confound
By its magnificence, all other men ;
While in its depths they lurk'd, as in a den.

68.

No ! with magnanimous self-sacrifice,
And lofty inadvertency of fame,
He felt there is a bliss in *being* wise,
Quite independent of the wise man's *name*.
Who now can say how many a soul may rise
To a nobility of moral aim
It ne'er had known, but for that spirit brave,
Which, being freely gifted, freely gave ?

69.

Sometimes I think that I'm a blossom blighted ;
But this I ken, that should it not prove so,
If I am not inexorably spited
Of all, that dignifies mankind below ;
By him I speak of, I was so excited,
While reason's scale was poisoning to and fro,
"To the better cause ;" that him I have to bless
For that which it is comfort to possess.

70.

In sickness both of body and of mind,
Was he to me a friend in very deed ;
When first I met him, you might likeness find,
To that state from the which my heart he freed,
In fallow meadow, equally inclin'd,
To be possess'd with good or evil seed :
Much toil he lavish'd on uncultur'd ground ;
In that, if fruitless, must the fault be found.

71.

Why should we deem only that virtue lives
Which to itself a self-erected fane
Hath built? Do we not know that Christ receives
The tribute of immortalizing strain,
From men, on whom, like dew on opening leaves,
Dropp'd the pure truths, they render'd back again.
The more we practise good unconsciously,
More certainly its record is on high.

72.

Weak is my strain, yet weak is not my thought,
When on that wealth I muse in lonely hour,
Which flow'd like stream 'neath grass, unseen, whence
caught
Its tints (yet none knew 'twas so) many a bower.
Which on no principle doth act, not taught
By absolute predominance of power.

But, bound, by destiny, to path sublime,
 Mocks the cold confines of decaying time.

73.

As *it* uncalculating is in good,
 Or is without an aim, commensurate
 With human reckoning, notably endued
 With vast facility to elevate,
 So is the *soul*, in its deep solitude,
 The holy organ prescient of Fate.
 In human deeds the great we never boast
 Till thought of actor in the act is lost.

74.

Weak were my muse to paint the various powers
 Heaven hath so copiously bestow'd on thee ;
 The wondrous erudition, fruit of hours
 Of deep, though unrecorded, industry.
 The metaphysic ken, that proudly towers ;
 And though pitch'd high, with such keen subtlety
 And glance discriminative, all things eyes—
 'Tis not for me aptly to eulogize !

75.

Less, should a hand which trembles as it creeps,
 With touch all unprecise, o'er its light lyre,
 Dare to commemorate one who deftly sweeps,
 With emulative skill, and Milton's fire,

The awful harp of Zion! His pulse sleeps
In dullest apathy, who could retire
From thy high theme, and, that thy lips have burn'd
With "live-coal from the altar," not have learn'd.

76.

Nor less art thou in bowers of gay romance
The gifted son of genius! None the spell
Of chivalry can weave, nor sorcery's trance,
More with a power the human heart to quell.
The Graces mingle in eternal dance;
And every vision from the holiest cell
Of high imagination, floats along,
And variegates, thy fascinating song.

77.

Deep beauty, e'en to awfulness, so rich,
Such plenitude of pomp around her beams,
Causes thy wondrous numbers to bewitch,
Like syrens chaunting by immortal streams.
Thy argument so nobly dost thou pitch,
Thou of *worst passions* turn'st the *worst extremes*
(As from deep shades the light intenselier burns)
Till e'en *in them* the mind a *charm* discerns.

78.

Say where has Mystery touch'd a potent shell,
Or Fear shriek'd audibly in 'wilder'd note,

Where Inspiration reconcil'd so well
 To sense, a strain to prodigies devote,
 Where wild tones thrill at once, and rich sounds swell,
 As in that "Lay" where necromantic boat,
 And its fantastic crew, alike recall
 The wide sea's wildness, witness of them all?

79.

Now, fare thee well! My trembling voice scarce utters
 Thoughts that thy image ever hover round:
 When thee I fain would celebrate, it mutters
 Something inadequate in sense; in sound,
 If audible, discordant; my pulse flutters,
 And meanings unexpressive, though profound,
 Puzzle my sense, and vex my reeling will,
 Of something quite surpassing my poor skill.

80.

Let a heart-withering breath insinuate not,
 That this from my pen is a flattering strain,
 More would it seem so, fell it to my lot,
 (And far more pretext give my truth to arraign)
 Thee, as though nothing I had since forgot,
 To paint as once I knew thee, when the train
 Of fairy pleasures to my path yet clung:
 Thee, had I chaunted, as I found when young.

81.

No! Those who most have seen me, since the hour
 When thou and I, in former happier days,

Frank converse held, though many an adverse power
Have sought the memory of those times to raze,
Can vouch that more it stirs me (thus a tower,
Sole remnant of vast castle, still betrays
Haply its former splendour) to have prov'd
Thy love, than by fresh friends to have been lov'd.

82.

I have had comrades both for weal and *woe* ;
I have had compeers both for good and *ill* ;
But thou 'rt the only one I e'er did know
Who sufferdst such a breeze life's sails to fill,
That all the *scath* I from the *last* did know,
Thou metamorphosedst, with wizard's skill,
Into a course more blithe, though not less sure :
And *Wisdom's* smile, in *thee*, had folly's lure.

83.

Can one for whom twice hath been strung thy harp,
To that be destin'd which is worse than death ;
That care with freezing touch his heart should warp,
'Till from his bosom breathe no vital breath?—
Must he be fated to the envious, sharp,
And cutting blast, 'till, like the sterile heath,
From his uprooted, shrivell'd stem there shoot
Nor verdant leaf, nor fragrance, bloom, nor fruit?

84.

I will not think it! I will deem these lays
Augur some good! E'en while from me they steal,

Of some compensatory bliss they raise
 Inward assurance, since from them I feel
 That still thy memory o'er my being sways
 With deeper influence, and intenser zeal,
 Than it were possible it could have been,
 If I were now, as thee I ne'er had seen.

85.

Since then, though grafted from another stock,
 Some fruit I bear ;—deep gratitude at least :—
 May not I hope, like seed in cleft of rock,
 (Though gorgeous blooms, like blossoms of the east,
 From me may never spring) that, from the shock
 Of intervening years, have not quite ceas'd
 Some straggling buds, whence yet discerning eyes
 In me thy fostering care may recognize.

* * *

86.

Once more, or ere I quit th' inspiring theme,—
 Utterance to give, to which I need not seek
 The muse's aid ; nor any fervid dream,
 Imagination, from thy sway bespeak ;
 Rather, Affection, I but need the gleam
 Stolen from thy moisten'd eye and glowing cheek ;—
 Yes, once more must I tax, ere such theme end,
 Th' indulgent suffrage of another friend.

87.

* * , thy friend feels, ere he clasp the page
Destin'd his poor effusions to contain,
As if he robb'd his spirit's heritage
Of one, its chiefest boast, if he refrain
(While somewhat glows still of poetic rage)
From twining, in commemorative strain,
Thy name and his, together. He has lov'd
Himself, oft better, since by thee approv'd.

88.

Tell him not, Worldlings! Satirists, tell him not,
That flame of hallow'd friendship, and of love,
Disinterested, free from selfish spot,
Burns not in human bosoms! to disprove
Your theme, by self-experience, 'tis his lot!
In him its mean conclusions pity move!
Though mark'd by much of suff'ring, yet his road
Has led him still where smiles of friendship glow'd.

89.

He sees, in thee, in these effeminate times,
Spirit of heroes and of Saints revived;
In thee, a man whom love of truth sublines;
That self-renouncing energy, which liv'd
In Greece and Rome, ere they from vanquish'd climes
Had their enervating delights receiv'd.
Their poorest Freedman, if high-hearted, *then*,
Was consecrated by his countrymen.

• • • • •
THEY WERE THE FIRST TO SEE
THE LIGHT OF THE DAY
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Stanzas addressed to * *

85.

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90.

Were he to speak of pure simplicity,
 With *that* united which is most profound
 In intellect, most subtle :—were he free
 To say, that past is the last visible bound
 Of the imaginative soul by thee ;
 Were he in words thy faculty to expound,
 To track deep thoughts through regions most obscure ;
 This lay, at least *in matter*, were not poor !

91.

But such the reverence, friend belov'd, for thee
 He feels : so deeply he reveres the shrine
 In which, as in religious sanctuary,
 Thou hidest attributes almost divine ;
 That his tongue falters, and unwillingly
 Traces his pen the encomiastic line,
 Till somewhat, by the *head* unshar'd, upsprings
 In his warm *heart* :—then cheerily he sings.

92.

Oft when steals on the meditative hour,
 And parlour twilight to repose invites ;
 Oft when Imagination's stirring power
 Keeps watch with hollow blasts of winter nights ;
 Thy countenance bright upon his heart doth shower,
 By Memory trac'd, the exquisite delights,
 Which from thy smile, and from thy every tone,
 And intercourse ennobling, he has known.

93.

Nor can he not indulge in mentioning
Some high peculiar gifts bestow'd on thee ;
So rarely found united, that they bring
To common systems of Humanity
Full refutation : thou canst plume thy wing
To all the holiest heights of poesy ;
And more than any other art thou fraught
With accuracy of analytic thought !

94.

It is a dainty banquet, known to few,
To thy mind's inner shrine to have access ;
While choicest stores of intellect endue
That Sanctuary, in marvellous excess.
There lambent glories, ever bright and new,
Those, privileged to be its inmates, bless !
Such as by gods, in tributary rite,
Were hail'd from earth, e'en on their thrones of light !—

95.

Yes, there Religion dwells ; there, moral worth ;
Diffusing round a holy atmosphere ;
Cause has that soul to triumph in its birth,
That once is doom'd to be admitted there !
Mere human wisdom is a theme for mirth,
To those who intuitions can revere,
As in transfiguring trance they were espied,
That float round thee, by Heaven o'ercanopied !

96.

But stop!—'tis vain!—For none will comprehend
 Though line on line dilate upon the theme :
 He simply wishes to assure his friend,
 How that his image, (like a morning beam,
 Dear to the eye, especially if end
 It bring to wicked and portentous dream)
 In transient intercourse, and seldom given,
 Is bless'd to him as visitant from Heaven.

97.

Farewell! Forget him not! He does not say
 These lines applaud, except that thou canst deem,
 (That which he certainly asseverate may)
 Beneath them dwells—*implicitest esteem.*
 Known,—or not known,—by men :—go on thy way!
 Of admiration th' universal theme,
 Or by all men forgot—to him thou'rt *one*,
 Favour'd thine inner mind to look upon!

* * *

98.

Much has that soul to bear which Heav'n has fram'd
 Of such capricious, such fantastic stuff,
 That all its joys and sorrows still are claim'd—
 Its paths are pleasantness, its ways are rough—
 From source imaginative. To be blam'd
 'Tis not, if he be churlish; that, enough,
 He hath not, of joys physical or sensual;
 With him, a cold east wind is most potential.

99.

He may be very rich, or very poor,—

Yet neither poverty nor wealth the cause be,
Or joy, to him, or misery, to procure.

No! Consequence far more important draws he
From this; that—clear'd each breath which might ob-
scure

Its surface—Fancy's glass might prove from flaws free.
And I uphold, to put this out of question,
Than a deep purse, more needs he good digestion.

100.

Yet neither good digestion, western breezes,

Nor whatsoever he his hand could lay on,
Though it may be what, in scholastic thesis,

Is call'd condition, or a *sine quâ non*,
Of that which I am talking of; though Cræsus

All his "appliances to boot" should rain on
Their fates; (they're so fastidious that I hate 'em)
Give the romantic soul's desideratum.

101.

Some* as a medium (it was not John Bunclè,

Though one, I should suppose, like him endued
With whim; or prone to build, like Shandy's Uncle,
Fort, like as much to fort as fane of Druid,)

* See Hartley's hypothesis of vibrations; and his suppositious ethereal medium through which the Impression is conveyed from objects to his vibratory nerves.

Betwixt vibration and vibratiuncle,

Have dream'd, I know not of what subtle fluid,
Where th' nerves, who're very talkative, might pack all
Like ducks in ponds, and one to th' other cackle.

102.

Now I suppose that this fine fluid is

Or very apt to freeze, or (quite as bad)
To rarefy : and that the reason is
Why nervous people are so very sad.
People, I mean, who, for their bale or bliss,
Recourse to the nerves' state have always had.
For there are some deign not the nerves to notice—
Not felt, and not to *be*, the same I wot is.

103.

However, dropping theories dialectic,

Of which I never knew to talk with unction,
May I be heard in my lament pathetic,
How very seldom there is a conjunction
Between souls exquisitely sympathetic
(Souls towards whom matter should feel more com-
punction)
And objects that upon them act? How seldom
That moment felt which holds each wish in thralldom?

104.

The immortal moment! 'Tis to be immortal
To have no thought backwards or forwards bended ;

Thought, taste, imagination, every portal
Of all the senses, ear, eye, touch, suspended,
Which, as by harmony intense, exhort all
To bliss, that, if it can be comprehended,
Cannot be told! To be all eye, all touch,
All ear, all — yet not one of these too much!

105.

There is a bliss the eye hath never seen!
There is a bliss the ear hath never heard!
Nor hath it ever comprehended been!
And though on man's heart 'tis sometimes conferr'd,
Never except on one that has that keen
Capacity for joy, which is transferr'd
To him, who,—placing all his hopes in thee—
Imagination, is thy votary!

106.

No power of volition can work this!
No power of volition can efface it!
Where once thy seal, Imagination, is
Set on the soul, no labour can erase it.
'Tis like a sixth sense which gives emphasis
(Whate'er the cause may be to which we trace it)
To each impression;—character confers:
And all life's objects are its caterers!

107.

She can make clouds to seem the abode of spirits
And raise the wailing cry when winds pipe on;

From her each impress physical inherits
 Its soul, its life, its consecration.
 What, of the grandest prospect, are the merits
 On which the sun's great eye hath ever shone,
 If its hues, sounds, and forms, be not inspected
 Through thy transcendent medium reflected?

108.

Yes! Be my guardian still, and I will bear
 All ills of body, and all ills of mind;
 By thee to be deserted, I should fear
 More than from light of day to be confin'd.
 I would not have those, who did never wear
 Thy livery, to thy service be inclin'd.
 As, to their source, streams we cannot recall,
 So thou, once felt, must still be all in all.

109.

E'en blindness, deafness, loss of ev'ry sense,—
 How much more then loss of external things?—
 May well be borne beneath thy influence :
 And when Religion bears thee on her wings,
 And thou becom'st her handmaid, all defence
 Against misfortune, whencesoe'er it springs,
 We thenceforth may discard : all woes ideal :
He who loves God sees nought but transport real.

110.

Where have I wander'd, London, from thy haunts?
 Yet still, at times, in this erratic strain

My heart has turn'd to thee, and still it pants
To pay its debt of gratitude for pain,
By thee abated : nor let him who vaunts
Of joys imaginary, where the reign
Of nature's most complete, presume to swear
Imagination's joys are only there.

111.

'Tis not the form that is th' essential thing,
It is the soul, the spirit, that is there ;
It is a mystery whence th' elastic spring
Of inspiration comes, but it is clear
That, where it is, mere trifles,—any thing,—
The passing bell, some scrannel notes we hear
From vagrant ballad-singer, may invoke
Thoughts that disclaim reality's dull yoke.

112.

Yes, I have caught from seeing—as I went
To childhood's bed—through ice-glaz'd lattice shine
The moon's cold gleam ; or when the day was spent,
From Christmas-carol, not, in notes like thine,
Oh, Mara, sung ; perhaps when the flame, sent
Towards mirror, shone in it, whence it would shine
Back bickering through the room ;—if at this hour
So apt to yield us to thy witching power ;—

113.

From distant fife, upon my ears, there fell
Some notes ;—from these—have caught such impulses :

The ice-glaz'd lattice so to me would tell
 Of winter's pleasures ; of such *jocos dulces*
 The carol speak to me ;—with such a spell,
 At close of day, would Fancy *still* my pulses ;
 In parlour twilight such sweet melancholy
 Steal over me, so passionate, so holy,

114.

That there has seem'd from all these little sources,
 Bliss to arise, which could not be exceeded !
 Thus, when the mind is rich in all its forces,
 A flower, a scent, which, in some place, I'd heeded,
 Still dear to me,—impell'd by these resources,
 That feeling* strange has risen, as if indeed it
 Were true that we elsewhere had had existence :—
 And this of past identity were instance.

115.

I wist not whether those, who may, by chance,
 Cast on these lines their eyes, have ever known it,
 But 'tis a strange sensation—this swift glance
 At past existence, which, as soon as shewn, it

~~~~~

\* Oft o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll  
 Which makes the present (while the fit doth last)  
 Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,  
 Mix'd with such feelings, as perplex the soul  
 Self-question'd in her sleep : and some have said  
 We liv'd, ere yet this mortal flesh we wore.

Vanishes ; but the mind feels, while the trance  
Doth last, (a sense of past life so doth own it)  
As if the self-same forms it saw again,  
Which, though it knew not where, it erst had seen.

116.

This chiefly happens when, or more or less,  
Some curious coincidence occurs ;  
Or when, the soul, a more than common stress,  
To somewhat of fantastic feeling, stirs ;  
It is in general when an airiness  
Of thought, the fortune of the hour confers :  
He that has felt it knows it ; and to such  
As do not know it, each word is too much.

117.

I cannot you conduct, my partial friends,  
To gaming-house, and every haunt in London,  
But for an *ignorance* I'll not make amends  
(By which most guides to places would be undone)  
By random chattering, which oft attends  
Persons whose words betray that thoughts they had  
none.  
I'll try nathless by th' analytical  
T' atone for want of the synthetical.

118.

And first—I cannot let this theme pass by,  
Without a notice of commiseration,



44      *Reflections on unfortunate Females.*

On those poor outcasts of society,  
    Who seem the refuse of thick population.  
Poor wretches ! many times, to pacify  
    The pain inflicted by your reprobation,  
I have retired, to thoughts of Him, who taught,  
“ Where little’s given, little shall be sought.”

119.

You have no children to lisp your returning,  
    When at night, slowly, and with watching weary,  
You lift the heavy latch : no hearth is burning,  
    Seen by whose light, a husband’s smile may cheer ye !  
No meal domestic, which the gladden’d yearning  
    Of human souls for comfort, shall endear t’ye.  
Yours is all penury, or ribald riot ;  
The more your *home*, the less your *heart* is quiet.

120.

I cannot so profane a thinking nature,  
    As to suppose deliberate rejection  
Of virtue’s ways, forms the o’er-ruling feature  
    Of the *pale tribes of forfeited protection.*  
I can’t but think their destiny’s the creature  
    Of fortuneless mischance, and *that* reflection,  
Which teaches them that one false step was fate :  
Thence efforts of repentance all too late.

121.

This is the reason why (from bad to worst,  
    From profligacy even to defiance,

From too much sensibility, at first,  
To passion's bliss, that, with the very science  
Of blasphemous remorselessness, they're curs'd)  
They seem in nought to place so much reliance,  
As in, at last, a formal abjuration  
Of that, to which they owe most fascination.

122.

Outcasts, most pitiable! to say the best,  
A few short hours of fierce intoxication!  
A few short hours of passion! while caress'd,  
Ye may be, by the sons of dissipation;  
And then a timeless death! or else your breast,  
By conflict torn, from sudden alternation  
To want, from fulness; to disease, from health;  
To nakedness, from grace;—death comes by stealth!

123.

Who then will come, and for your aching head  
And shivering frame, the friendly pillow place?  
Who then will come and wipe the tears you shed,  
While harrow'd memory former scenes may trace?  
Your early home, your innocence,—all fled:  
Your parents' darling, once: by your disgrace  
Brought, peradventure,—(now too late to save,  
Though now first thought on) to a timeless grave.

124.

Who now shall whisper in your deafen'd ear,—  
Deafen'd by long antipathy to truth,

The comforts of religion ? Likelier, far,  
    Ye try to lethargize the unwelcome ruth,  
That now, perforce, will madden you, by mere  
    Inebriating potions. Should they soothe,  
For one short hour, or stupify, your madness,  
Your glazed eyes glitter with a gloating gladness.

125.

Oh, wretches ! this is all that now remains !  
    E'en to the last, to fever-burning lip,  
Trembling, you raise the cup ! and, while it drains,  
    Draw in the liquid fire, with eager sip.  
Penury, perhaps, not even this retains !  
    What is left for you, but that (while the gripe  
Of fell disease, and poverty, is yours)  
Hell adds her pangs to *all* the earth endures.

126.

Draw we the curtain !—oft I wonder much  
    That in this age, fruitful of reformation,  
Those have not risen, whom the state did touch  
    Of these poor blighted blossoms of creation ;  
There have not those been, who, to watch the couch  
    Of those, which, of superfluous population,  
Abortions, we may term, devoted were ;  
Their ministers of clothing, food, and prayer !

127.

How could illustrious female better prove  
    The faithfulness of her devout pretences,

Than by performing such a task of love ?

Could not, of eyes late glazed, relaxing glances,  
With tears suffused, as generous transport move,  
As fêtes, routs, masquerades, and midnight dances ?  
Could not the grateful pressure (while the lamp  
Of penury dimly burn'd) of fingers damp

128.

With sickness' chilling dews ; could not the lean,  
Transparent hand, folded in gratitude,  
Give to the heart a joy, which, from the scene  
Of dissipation, would be vainly woo'd ?  
Think what 'twould be,—oh ye, of feelings keen,  
To one, each palliative solicitude,  
Whose state required,—while all things round her  
vex—  
The countenance to receive of her own sex.

129.

We may give money ! we give little then !  
Give yourselves too, daughters of affluence !  
Give time ! give care ! keep not your smiles for men  
Pursuing you with, or without, pretence !  
Ye would seem angels in *sick Penury's* den !  
That sweetest blossom, virgin innocence,  
Most tender, sensitive, if near *Her* bed,  
What clouds of hallow'd fragrance would'st thou shed.

130.

Talk not to me, that you would thus pollute  
     The delicate sense of virtue ! Insult it is  
 To common sense, to suffer ye to imbrute,  
     With every fop, your just unfolding graces,  
 That chuses to address you ; and be mute,  
     While ye, where histrionic common-place is,  
 With blushes learn the art, while blush you can,  
 To hide unblushing cheeks behind your fan.

131.

No ! where I fain would you exhort to go,  
     Vice of all fascination is disarm'd :—  
 While in those scenes where *you* your mothers shew,  
     'Tis for a maid perdition to be charm'd.  
 I care not if her person—yes, or no,—  
     Be yet defiled. But not to be alarm'd  
 When the “ Fop’s Fortune,” or “ Confederacy,”  
 Solicit you, seduced in heart’s to be.

132.

These things I hold not, of the theatre,  
     Essential parts, but mere excrescencies ;  
 With pruning knife, as sharp as scimitar,  
     In spite of paradoxical pretences,  
 Much do I wish that lopp’d away, they were :  
     Grant that, to our sex, they be not offences,  
 Benevolence, breeding, we should be so flush in,  
 As to resign whate’er sets one cheek blushing.

133.

Come ! ere I part from you—of this creation,  
The noblest object ! a pure minded woman !  
Let me, once more,—in the lorn situation  
Of those, who still are, though unfriended, human,—  
Entreat your interest ! by your mediation,  
(Though at first scoffed at, like all things not common)  
'Twixt them and this world ; Heaven and them betwixt ;  
They would in reconciling peace be fix'd.

134.

Come, come, my muse, two hours have I sat, waiting,  
Like conjuror, for wand to raise the devil :  
But oh ! ere I can force myself to prating,  
(As those, from pump, whose spring's beneath the level  
Of this, our earth, whose water they'd be getting,  
Must condescend to dally with the handle,—  
Ere they obtain their wish,—for a long time)  
So long I've stay'd for reason, rhythm, rhyme.

135.

But when Dejection's crass ingredients *muddle*,  
And sometimes *almost choak* the springs of thought,  
'Tis quite a chance, if from the slimy puddle,—  
Although we surely know 'tis there,—that aught  
Of bright (which *will* like eels or loaches huddle  
In any muddy crevice) can be caught.  
As lady's wishes, they're as hard to find,  
And when they're found, as difficult to bind.

136.

And then another simile to use——

Like fish, that is with difficulty caught,  
 Sometimes, the treasure we've so much abused,  
 That 'tis not (when the process is achieved) worth  
 aught.

Its lustre gone, mangled with many a bruise,  
 Such trash it seems; that prize for which we sought,  
 We scarce can recognize, and wonder how,  
 Such an abuse of time we could allow.

137.

Pardon me, patrons, if I write at random;—

I wish to put off—what I hope you'll ne'er know—  
 Thoughts,—if by any means I could command 'em,—  
 Which to the bottomless abyss should go.  
 Oh God!—if in benevolence thou'st plann'd 'em—  
 How can thy creatures be tormented so?  
 Say, is it not for sin? That it is not!  
 Is it for sins, that trees, grass, blossoms, rot?

138.

No man can purchase by his stock of merit  
 To everlasting happiness a right;  
 And, in my thoughts, no man deserves t' inherit  
 A banishment to everlasting night.  
 What is 't you say? That God's a *perfect* spirit?  
 Aught short of his perfection infinite

Is infinite delinquency? Thence just  
Punishment's infinite?—And man is\* dust!

\* It certainly only can be beings of the same nature that are amenable to the same laws.—"Till the Almighty form moral agents equal with himself, it is absurd to say that he can expect from them the fruits of an equality which does not exist. When we are told to be "perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect," it must mean, as men, to *desire* to be as perfect, as he is as a God: to have the perfection of a sincere-hearted human will, not to be invested with the attributes of Deity.

"En general, les croyans font Dieu comme ils sont eux-mêmes; les bons le font bon, les mechants le font mechant; les dévots, haineux et bilieux, ne voyent que l'enfer, parcequ'ils voudroient damner tout le monde: les âmes aimantes et douces n'y croyent guere; et l'un des etonnemens dont je ne reviens point, est de voir le bon Fénelon en parler dans son *Télémaque*, comme s'il y croyoit tout de bon: mais j'espère qu'il mentoit alors; car enfin, quelques veridique qu'on soit, il faut bien mentir quelque fois, quand on est évêque. Maman ne mentoit pas avec moi; et cette âme sans fiel, qui ne pouvoit imaginer un Dieu vindicatif, et toujours couroucé, ne voyoit que clemence et misericorde, où les devots ne voient que justice et punition. Elle disoit souvent, *qu'il n'y auroit point de JUSTICE en Dieu d'être JUSTE envers nous, parceque, ne nous ayant pas donné ce qu'il faut pour l'être, ce seroit redemander plus qu'il n'a donné.*"

*Les Confessions de J. J. Rousseau, tome 2nd, p. 106.*

The reader, it is presumed, will pardon this quotation from the *Confessions* of Rousseau, a work, though in many respects exceptionable and immoral, in which, perhaps, are to be found more eloquent passages, more depth of imaginative sentiment, more original thought, and more curious developement, useful alike for the metaphysician and for the man, of the human heart, than in any one extant in any language.

Perhaps, it may be said that God has promised "his holy spirit to them that ask him," and, though we cannot be perfect of ourselves, we may be so, by the intervention of such an aid. I wish to be considered, on this topic, as writing, rather as an inquirer than as one already



139.

We say, in speaking of eternal bliss,  
 'Tis a free gift; on no man's works dependent;  
 And yet, on the other hand if *that* we miss,  
 We say eternal woe is sin's attendant.  
 Ye Theologians, tell me how is this?  
 You grant a man may have woe without end on't,  
 And all be quite above-board as we say  
 For Vice;—yet Virtue nothing challenge may?

140.

Oh, be consistent! If—that virtue can  
 Lay claim to a reward—ye will not grant,—  
 Do not on th' other hand assert that man  
 Can merit everlasting punishment!—  
 There is no medium 'twixt the free-will plan,  
 That gives to man his own arbitrement,  
 And that of absolute fatality.—  
 Believe in merit: or in destiny!

---

enlightened. I see no objection to the doctrine of eternal punishments, if, by this, be meant, that, to all eternity, a vicious man may feel that he has missed heights of happiness, to which he might have attained with greater vigilance: so far this doctrine is in analogy with what we daily see of the enduring effects, “to the third and fourth generation,” of human indiscretions; but I, certainly, am of opinion, that, by representing religious tenets in a terrific light, as much, nay, more, harm may ensue to the cause of religion, than from representing them under a more conciliatory form:—amiable minds, at least, will, with more probability, be induced to enlist under its banners, by the latter mode of conduct.

141.

Some, with inconsequence the most perverse,  
Election take, yet spurn at reprobation :  
As if to *cease to bless*, were not to *curse*,  
Where there's omnipotence of domination.  
The more you try your argument, the worse  
You'll prove 't to be. There is no middle station !  
If you affirm *grace irresistible*,  
You must deny all liberty of will.

142.

But you reply, grace irresistible  
Our creed admits not. I am sorry for't.  
Enough, or not enough, to bend the free-will  
Grace must be. Not enough ? The dose falls short.  
This is of *cause* the prime condition still  
That it be *operative*. Yet divines exhort  
Us to deem grace *sole source* of all salvation,  
Yet if we're damned, blame but *its application*.

143.

Are we our own artificers ? Are we  
To suffer endlessly because we're frail ?  
But we've free-will ? No more than yonder\* tree !  
Which thrives or shrivels as there's sun or hail !

---

\* Bishop Horsley, in his sermon on liberty and necessity, while he is formally pleading for the former, turns out to be virtually pleading for the latter. His argument, like that of all libertarians, goes only to prove that we can *do what we will*, not that *we can will what we do*. He divides the causes that act upon material bodies, and intelligent agents,

In one the operating cause we see :—

Those unseen which o'er th' other do prevail :

Thus from invisibility to fashion

A theory, we say man has volition.—

## 144.

Thus 'tis—when, in the nature of the subject

That tasks our thoughts, there's something enigmatical,

Just in proportion as there is no object

For sense to work upon, a most pragmatistical

Absurdity, inclines us to give verdict

In favour of hypothesis dogmatistical.

Just in proportion as that facts are scantied,

Sophistry makes up what in proofs is wanted.

## 145.

If we are happy, or are wretched—so—

In this world, or in that which is to come ;

Our own volition caused it not—oh no !

*That* better care had taken of our doom.

---

into efficient and final, but then he supposes that each of these are equally governed by immutable laws, though in the latter case their agency, because of an invisible nature, is more mysterious than in the former.—Why the phenomenon of conscience should coexist with necessity, the greatest philosopher cannot explain ; but it must be received as a fact connected with human nature : perhaps it might, even on the score of the doctrine of necessity, be thus accounted for—that it gains new motives to virtue, and diminishes those to vice, by the pleasure that in it is attendant on the one, and the pain on the other.

It is, as God hath said, for weal or woe,  
He's our sole cause, of gladness or of gloom.  
As some trees bloom mature, and some are blighted ;  
Thus, some men rise, and some by fate are spited.

146.

Oh, when will good religionists be consistent ?  
They seem to like to heap upon poor mortals  
Wrongs possible and impossible. This instant  
They tell us that the Almighty guards the portals  
That lead us to our *goal*. And yet do they want  
To make us think (when thus the last resort falls,  
Of human prescience, to elude our fate)  
That God all good, and men all ill, create.

147.

What? When we're good, tell us all things we owe  
To God alone, and nothing to ourselves ;  
And when we're bad, strive with like might to shew  
That all the bad we might escape, like elves  
With power fixed laws of nature to o'erthrow ?  
'Tis most absurd ! Oh, take we from our shelves  
All our learned volumes, which of 'em does say,  
Night is day's absence ; yet night might be day.

148.

Thus, we are taught when we are good to ascribe  
Our good to God ; and, when we're bad, to find it—



Not in the absence of that whence imbibe  
 The rest their goodness, but in our purblind wit.  
 Poor mortals! worse than ass, or any tribe  
 Of creatures, does, on us, our load assign'd sit!  
 When *good*, we're told we're *weak*, to make us *humble*;  
 When *bad*, we're told we're *strong*, to make us tremble.

149.

No! we are neither good nor bad in one sense;  
 We call not the tree bad that bears no fruit;  
 We do, or we do not, ere we are gone hence,  
 Fill up our parts: we're teachers or we're mute.  
 To say in other way—'tis arrant nonsense—  
 Than we affirm it of the inferior brute,  
 That we're defaulterers, or benefactors!—  
 Else why kill wolves and snakes as malefactors?

150.

We immolate them 'cause they breed annoyance:—  
 So do *ill men*. Rest on that *one* condition,  
 The right that *thinking creatures* have to joyaunce,  
 And I'll not seek to weaken your position.  
 But you the argument cannot employ hence,  
 Except\* Paul was a scurvy metaphysician.

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\* The author once, in the company of a very excellent religious man, defended, as he here defends, the doctrine of necessity as applied to religion. His companion remarked that this surely was not the language of scripture: the author reminded him of the simile used by Ezekiel and

'Tis thus, in all, our sires we go beyond,  
They of dwarf's shapes, we of dwarf's minds, are fond.

151.

So far to t'other side I would concede,  
That as in man, more than in herb, or brute,  
High faculties are planted, we indeed,  
When force of those high powers we would compute,  
Are more than justified,—nay have a need,  
When we would prompt each nobler attribute,  
To speak in common language, as if we  
Believ'd that man could shape his destiny.

152.

I would concede too, man's more various power,  
More various predicates may well require;  
He is so organized, with such a dower  
Of that which is so infinitely higher,

~~~~~  
St. Paul, as exemplifying God's power over his creatures, of the potter and his vessel; and he said, does not St. Paul say that God makes "vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour?"—To "*dishonour*," I grant, replied the author's friendly disputant, "but not to *destruction*." Thus will good men impose on themselves by words.—Reader, peruse the two following verses from St. Paul.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, another unto dishonour?"

"What, if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to *destruction*" !!!

That when we would, in meditative hour,
 Speak of him fitly, they may well require,
 His infinite relations, mode of phrase,
 Though false, yet true, since such mode truth conveys.

153.

As in the science of astronomy,
 We are constrain'd ideal lines to draw,
 And, thus, from that, by aid of phantasy,
 Which *is not*, learn, of that *which is*, the law ;
 So towards the mind, which is essentially
 Terra-incognita, if done with awe,
 We rightly act, if we on truth would gaze,
 Asking assistance of symbolic phrase.

154.

As in proportion, as we think we can
 Controul ourselves, ourselves we shall controul,
 'Tis *wisely* order'd that the free-will plan,
 Should prompt our language when we deal the dole
 Of praise or blame, (and free is every man
 To do whate'er he wills with heart and soul),
 Here, as elsewhere, it might be made most clear,
 That that which is *not true*, *should true appear*.

155.

Practical truth, and truth in theory,
 Though never clashing, oft do not accord ;
 And ere I quit the theme, may I be free
 Of this hypothesis, to say one word ?

In meditative mind they well may be
One and the same, but to the common herd,
By antiphilosophic phrase allur'd,
Are philosophic ends full oft secur'd.

156.

As it is useful for the sake of all,
That each *the probable* should overrate ;
As it is useful for the great and small,
That *hope* in each should *end* anticipate ;
And yet how few, to whose lot it doth fall,
To find his wish the measure of his fate !
As various hues upon the vision play,
Cheering its sense, though all from one white ray.

157.

So, by illusive touch, do oft evolve
Appliances, illusive in themselves,
From man's rich heart, a triumph of resolve,
Like magic vision from the wand of elves,
Nobler than that, which, by him, who would solve
All things by science gain'd from dusty shelves,
Could e'er be e'en conceiv'd. He is truth's friend,
Though by illusion gain'd, who gains truth's end.

158.

We say the sun doth set, the stars do rise,
Yet 'tis the revolution of this earth
To such a language, offspring of the eyes,
More than of science, that hath given birth ;

As he that talks thus may be far more wise,
 In that for which day's light is chiefly worth,
Than the philosopher, so in life's span
Oft the unlearn'd we find the wiser man.

159.

'Tis tact for practical result, or this
 Not found, which men or wise or fools can make ;
To say that an abstract hypothesis,—
 This, of necessity, for instance, take,—
Can injure, strange infatuation is :—
 Who but the speculative ever wake
Their thoughts to such deep theme ? and such as he,
With error's antidote, if so it be,

160.

Is well prepar'd ; from folly, half at least,
 Is, and from misappliance enfranchis'd ;
Far less by misconception is increas'd,
 Than by misapplication unadvis'd,
Our mental maladies : oft in life's feast
 From being misplac'd our blessings are mispriz'd.
The end of all is this—when they're abus'd
Few things are good ; few bad discreetly used.

161.

One word 'bout faith, or ere I change my theme :
 The meaning of that word we quite abuse ;
Or so it seems at least, if with a beam
 Impartial we the gospel's page peruse.

*Of point dogmatical it does not seem
That any writer there the phrase doth use,
But of a trust in something good and great :
Of that presentiment which fixes fate.

162.

Read all the catalogue of instances
When Paul faith's triumph fain would certify ;
Each one of these relates to expectances
†By which the soul itself doth glorify.
Faith's triumph dwelleth in inspiring glances
At something far above mortality ;
And its dominion may be broad and spacious,
Though spurned the creed ne'er writ by Athanasius.

163.

When Christ did say, " according to thy faith
So unto thee shall it be," was not this
The meaning that the phrase couched 'neath it hath ?
He did refer to that ennobling bliss
Which souls, that trust in goodness, on their path
Feel ever brooding. Their *presentiment* is
Measure of their *salvation*. Nought can be
Real to them, like immortality.

164.

In this sense 'tis our faith that us doth save ;
By its integrity shall we be measured ;

~~~~~  
\* See the letters of William Law, on this subject, and many other of  
his works.

† By our own spirits, are we glorified.—*Wordsworth.*

And in proportion as from folly's grave  
 Hours it redeems, proportionably treasured,  
 Spoils for the future recompense will have;  
 In this sense we may say Faith hath crazur'd  
 The law of works; by its transforming might  
 Pledg'd our inheritance of endless light.

165.

He that would write on theme so peripatetic,  
 At least should have his legs to run a race on;  
 But though I'm neither gouty nor rheumatic,  
 La Trappe's recluse would have had more to gaze on  
 Than I have \*here. If I must be erratic,  
 On wings it must be, or like wife of Jason; †  
 The first we know faithless are apt to be,  
 Witness th' adventure of th' Icarian sea.

166.

Had I the art ascrib'd by Gil Blas's author  
 To Diablé Boiteux, in his merry story,  
 My legs might crippled be like those of Gloster,  
 And yet I'd sing like Improvisatore.  
 No Doctor Faustus should I need as master,  
 Ere I would mount the air in all my glory,  
 As keeps on May the sweep his "saturnalia,"  
 And like him penetrate the "penetralia."

\* This part of the poem was written when the author was confined to his bed by indisposition.

† Medea.

## 167.

Sometimes I think that misery the nurse is  
Of many quaint and humourous risibilities;  
And when the mind to 'ts state the most averse is,  
'Tis forc'd to practise impracticabilities.  
It makes one pungent when suppress'd the curse is,  
And gives a character to our futilities.  
How oft for muse has serv'd a mood splenetic,  
And given at least a style quite antithetic.

## 168.

Ye who of sorrow never knew the smart;  
Little can ye the feeling comprehend,  
Of him who has that deadness of the heart,  
That even friendship ceases to befriend.  
To soothe those sorrows, which have counterpart,  
Those sorrows, which in turn each man attend,  
Is like to vesting money, whence we may  
Be paid with interest on some future day.

## 169.

But dumb those sorrows are which dry up all  
The secret springs of life; and make all toil—  
Which from it some fecundity would call—  
Useless—to cultivate the parch'd, chapp'd, soil.  
All effort vain! Yet it seems hard to fall  
On those, who would into our wounds pour oil,  
If we sit down in utter hopelessness!  
Dumb statues of a "sabbathless" distress!

## 170.

Who, that had heard the voice of infancy?  
 And seen life's fullness in its merry smile?  
 Could think the happy being that we see  
 Had seeds maturing in him all the while  
 Of fellest passion? Cureless agony?  
 Moping despair? Ambition? Creeping guile?  
 Could think that every drop those veins produce,  
 Were mingled more or less with poisonous juice?

## 171.

When shall that morn arise when sorrow's plaint  
 No more shall fall upon the human ear?  
 When shall the heart, with death in ev'ry pant,  
 Spring at a voice that banishes all fear?  
 When shall the shriek of pain, the tale of want,  
 The wrong'd man's groan; the widow's, orphan's, tear;  
 The sword, the cannon, and the flag unfurl'd,  
 Cease to proclaim *this is a ruined world?*

## 172.

Oh London! then—and not till then, the tribes  
 Of men, no more such vast receptacles  
 Shall need, as thou art! Safety, that prescribes,  
 And Commerce, which, as her sure triumph, hails  
 Such mighty haunts, where human kind imbibes,  
 As from a common source, one hue, that dwells,  
 One dominating prejudice—on all:  
 No more shall eulogize a city-wall.

## 173.

Then, meek-ey'd Saviour! shall thy triumphs bless;  
 The hungry shall be fill'd, the thirsty quaff  
 Springs of ineffable immortality!  
 Love, then, in full fruition, on the staff—  
 (On which it, weeping, lean'd, when contumely  
 Was its sole portion from this world's vain chaff,  
 Love on that staff shall gaze still, and behold  
 A lambent sceptre of far-beaming gold!

## 174.

Reign of the Eternal, come! But how can I,  
 With my unhallow'd voice, thy glories speak?  
 Few have more cause to wish thy victory!  
 Cours'd by more scalding fears than mine, what  
 cheek?  
 Thine Advent, few more cause to dread to see!  
 To hide how many sins, in vain, I seek?  
 Come, Saviour, come! to Thee the victory be!  
 Shame and confusion of the face to me.

## 175.

My heart is dry! if I, at all, can paint  
 The gladness of thy Advent, 'tis that, driven  
 By a sad contrast, though in accents faint  
 From inanition, words to me are given.  
 A soul forsaken, whom corruptions taint,  
 Who knows *that* Hell, cannot but *talk* of Heaven!  
 To it but to *imagine* th' inward peace  
 That God may give, is his sole happiness.

## 176.

Whate'er the theme with which my will I task,  
 My will, against my will, directs my pen,  
 If aught its aid, except religion, ask,  
 Thither, unconsciously, it turns again.  
 Or else beneath an ill-adapted mask,  
 And worn not gracefully, since worn with pain,  
 To be revenged, at wretched wit it aims,  
 Whose fraud, its incoherency proclaims.

## 177.

God of all mercy ! at this very hour,  
 This hour to me of permeating fear ;  
 When I feel crushed, and crumbling 'neath thy power  
 See !—if my speechless thro' thou canst not hear.  
 Is there a soul, whom sorrow doth devour,  
 As it does mine, beneath this starry sphere ?  
 God !—Father !—it is night, and silence all !  
 None hear me ; and e'en thou but *see'st* me call.

## 178.

Yes, in these strains, I call to thee, oh God !  
 They're written in thy presence ! they're inscribed  
 With consciousness intense, as thy abode,  
 Though dimm'd with clouds and storms, their groans  
 imbib'd.  
 Oh ! shall it be—when—of thy lifted rod—  
 The time of exhibition circumscrib'd—  
 Oh, shall it be—that—I may in its place—  
 The gracious sceptre's exaltation trace ?

179.

Then with what rapture shall I contemplate  
These lines which seem as written with my blood!  
Father! oh hear me! tho' the book of fate  
Illegible be to me—nor understood!  
Oh still, in *that*, may there be set a date,  
When I, of sorrow's worm no more the food,  
Shall, as I now suppress it, my voice raise,  
To thee, my God, in tones of grateful praise!



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L O N D O N.

—  
SECOND BOOK.  
—

*On the Connection between different degrees of Spiritualization, in Religion, and a taste for the Arts in general, and a material or metaphysical taste in Poetry.*

1.

SEEMETH it not to you that speculate  
On Man, that in degree as he has gaz'd  
On a Religion Spiritual, elevate  
Above the senses,—by abstraction rais'd,—  
That e'en his tastes in arts participate  
In this propensity, and that is prais'd  
As lofty, to whose praises would demur  
A more material philosopher ?

2.

Witness the Ancients. Whence may we derive  
That which most certainly in them is found,  
A sense more exquisitely perceptive  
Of beautiful in sight, or touch, or sound,  
But from the fact that outward forms receive  
An apotheosis from the scant bound  
Of their religion, which the soul condenses  
In outward forms, not lifts above the senses.

3.

Or shall we more gratuitously deem  
That this, which we cannot, in fact, disprove,  
Is but *coincidence*? To us 'twould seem  
Less easy this hypothesis to prove.  
Trace all the links from first to last extreme,  
In all societies where ardent love  
Of Art has been, in coexistent stress  
With a Religion abstract more or less.

4.

Begin *with times of Greece and Rome most fam'd;*  
Can, of arts' triumph, instances more high,  
Than these, without the Christian faith, be nam'd;  
Go where Catholicism has well nigh  
Succeeded, and irrefragably aim'd  
To press *their* rites on Christianity;  
From these proceed to countries where the school  
Of the reformers is the establish'd rule.

5.

From high Episcopacy yet steer on  
To the more lively faith, more meagre rule,  
Which has in Scotia's land the victory won :  
From this proceed to the conventicle :  
And last of all, when ye've the gauntlet run  
Thro' all these tribes, with Quakerism dwell.  
There as an instance, in supreme perfection,  
Will ye behold the triumph of abstraction.

6.

Now have not all these classes we have nam'd,  
Just incorporeal, as their faith has been,  
Been stripp'd of art, which, when religion aim'd  
To make some compromise with taste, we've seen  
Incorporate with her rule, and with unblam'd  
Zeal, in her service press'd ? this contravene,  
Ye who can do it ! Has art ever kept  
Her state, where faith of ornament was stripp'd !

7.

Beauty, to the ancients, was a love, devotion :  
Power was their symbol of sublimity !  
Attitude, Passion, Symmetry, and Motion,  
With them were fix'd in forms of statuary !  
Methinks, as all minds are impell'd to a notion  
Of power, o'er which man has no agency,  
Thence to religion ; so, as *this* directs,  
Man's character, *in taste*, it much affects ;

8.

Whether it turn to high abstractedness ;  
Or whether, where'er there is beauty, grace,  
Love, with accommodating cheerfulness,  
To enshrine itself, as in a holy place.  
I fear that some may think that, too much stress  
We lay on this ; and say " the equal pace  
The arts may keep with sensuous zeal, is hence,  
That the same minds receive each influence."

9.

" That our religion is sublime or physical,  
Imaginative, abstract, or indulgent,  
From previous causes, which have nought at all  
To do with love of art : and that the bent  
Devotion takes, in such a line, will fall,  
As from deficiency, or from extent  
Of previous culture, squares best with our wit.  
Religion makes not *us*, but we make *it*.

10.

I grant there's action and re-action. " And,"  
Continues my opponent, " that the arts,  
More than on Christian, on the Heathen land  
Flourish'd, is not because the law imparts  
Of one, an influence to these arts bland ;  
And t'other, with contumacy, still thwarts ;  
But that it happen'd so ; perhaps, since civil  
Their sun was, Rome, Greece, lov'd the *beau ideal*."

11.

“ 'Tis more in climate, and cause physical,  
Than their religion's opposite pretensions,  
That th' ancients have, in point of taste, (though tall  
In other things we are) dwarfed our dimensions.”  
—Well! it may be so; oftentimes there's small  
(Though it give birth to violent contentions)  
Difference between causation and coincidence.  
I'll not be stiff. This may, in proof, be instance.

12.

But, if it be coincidence, or cause,  
The fact we must allow, that, in a region  
Where faith towards abstract contemplation draws,  
The *arts* are treated as, of devils, a legion.  
Again, if ever faith the arts espouse,  
As, by this means, the *latter*, with religion,  
Share all the honours, then *new motives* press  
On those whose fame's involv'd in art's success.

13.

'Tis difficult to reach the utmost length  
Of exquisite refinement in the senses,  
And to retain that venerable *strength*,  
Which turns, to moral ends, their influences.  
It must, I fear, be granted us, at length,  
To Epicurus's indulgences  
The arts owe more than to the stoic's sermons.  
The arts ne'er kept the senses on *short commons*.

14.

But since 'tis pleasanter to paint effects  
Than flounder in the dark abyss of causes ;  
And, since he who creates, than who dissects,  
'Tis probable will challenge more applauses ;  
Since 'tis more pleasant to be architects,  
Than be employ'd in pulling down old houses ;  
And other whys and wherefores, the synthetic  
I must prefer to the style analytic.

15.

Well, then, proceed we on our hobby horse,  
And pick up facts as fast as we can find 'em ;  
But when we're mounted, 'twould be worse than gorse  
In king's highway, if systems round us twin'd 'em.  
Proceed we then, for better and for worse,  
Like men that look before, around, behind 'em ;  
Not like astrologer, as if to move him  
Things indispensably must be *above* him.

16.

'Tis pleasant, no doubt, many of my readers  
Can tell, to loiter on a sunny day ;  
When e'en the fly puts forth its little feelers,  
So soft the air, so genial the sun's ray :  
To catch the gales, Nature's benignant healers,  
Bring their rich fragrance from the tedded hay,  
Whose kisses, like a dear friend's welcome home,  
Gladden, while telling of more joys to come.

17.

'Tis sweet to linger near a little brook,  
Which trips so murmuringly 'mid stones, grass,  
flowers;  
Sweet to be stretch'd at length, with favourite book,  
In Nature's own self-consecrated bowers.  
'Tis sweet on eyes of a dear friend to look,  
More, if that friend be female, and be ours.  
Sweetest of sweets! a summer day's bewildering  
With our own offspring, while, like them, we're chil-  
dren.

18.

But neither ramble on a sunny day,  
Nor ling'ring near a little brook, more sweet;  
Nor with a favourite author stretch'd, to lay  
Ourselves at length; nor dear friends' eyes to meet;—  
I scarce know what of woman's eyes to say;—  
Or when, with children, pleasure is complete!—  
Those being excepted, no, not one of these  
More sweet, than pouring out one's thoughts at ease.

19.

Proceed we once more to our theme neglected.—  
Whence comes it, that the ancients, when they 'affect  
Topics that with man's passions are connected,  
Confine themselves to *physical effect*?  
By them, as by us, mind is not dissected;  
Speak they of love? The passion they *depict*:



Its *macies*, its *pallor*;—but its throes?  
A picture's given! The rest we must suppose.

20.

Thus, in the tragic scene, where fell remorse  
Distracts the breast of Agamemnon's son;  
'Stead of describing it in all its force—  
Like Shakspeare, when hell's mysteries, one by one,  
Knell out the death of Duncan: from their source,  
When his great powers develope thoughts that shun  
A grasp less skilful, and when he reveals  
Whate'er Guilt's agonizing victim feels;

21.

Instead of these, in the more antique scene,  
The stern-ey'd Furies rise, and circle round  
Orestes' form: in *that* the *felt* is *seen*!  
Little recourse is had to the profound,  
Mysterious, and impalpable, I ween!  
In painter's art, there might as much be found  
Of thought, as we find there: I grant, there much is  
Oft, of true pathos, which profoundly touches.

22.

Now cannot we suppose, that something may  
Of this so very marked discrepancy,  
Ascribed be, to the very different way  
In which religious things we're apt to see?  
Perhaps, that no sense more than this doth sway  
The texture of the mind, we shall agree.

Let us decide the question as we will :—  
It is a stubborn fact, that all our skill

23.

Cannot o'erturn ; by *matter*, they, the *mind*—  
And by material forms, its various powers—  
Illustrate. To the *latter* is assigned  
Subserviency by them. The task is ours,  
By intellectual processes refined  
(As, in some climes, meaning's convey'd by flowers)\*  
All objects of creation to controul,  
As vassals to phenomena of soul.

24.

It seems to me, so much Religion's power  
Sways human souls, and so much is combin'd  
With all their faculties, that, when we tower  
Beneath its influence with thoughts heaven-enshrin'd,  
'Tis likely that a taste will be our dower,  
E'en in indifferent objects, more refin'd,  
More lofty far, than what can those befall,  
In whom it tends to objects physical.

25.

Besides, when we Religion thus divest  
Of what is definite, those soaring wings

---

\* See Lord Byron's poems ; in one of which, or in the notes to one of which, as far as the author remembers, he says, that flowers of different descriptions convey, from the lover to his mistress, different meanings connected with the process of passion.

The mind was forc'd to use in her behest  
 To her will minister in other things :  
 'Tis thus, the eagle, which hath built her nest  
 Upon a cloud-capt rock, aspiring springs  
 Towards the source of light, e'en when with food  
 She goes to satisfy her callow brood.

26.

Surely no blending of material hues,  
 Though language its prodigious wealth should pour,  
 Nothing that skill most exquisite could chuse,  
 (Tho' were of form, tinct, sound, the copious store  
 Exhausted) could, from the Athenian muse,  
*Equal* thy use of metaphysic lore,  
 Oh, bard of Avon; in our heart sink deep  
 As his self-cursings who had "murder'd sleep!"

27.

We grant, that much is done when *one choice word*  
 Of psychologic meaning, aptly caught,  
 By subtle application, doth afford  
 A long excursion to conjectural thought.  
 Than lavishly the philologic hoard  
 (While expletive to expletive is brought.)  
 Unlock, 'tis better to be terse, sententious :  
 Better to be laconic, than licentious.

28.

By him,\* whose idiosyncratic *verve*  
Never will be, nor yet has rivalled been,  
In course of Gallic literature, observe,  
With what relentless, though impartial, spleen  
Corneille is analyzed! The finest nerve  
(Howe'er by nice refinement made more keen)  
One little saucy word shall not distress,  
Marring its erudite voluptuousness.

29.

Like their religion is their art of writing ;  
The one an exponent of priest's finesse ;  
Of burnished phrase the other : both uniting  
The beau-ideal of fastidiousness !  
Could all the brilliant nothings, so inviting,  
But masquerade it in an English dress,  
Which gave their "*petits soupers*" such a savour,  
They'd make *us* sick, in spite of all their flavour.

30.

Of all the writers that I can recall,  
Who were, in Rome, to poetry devoted,  
As partial to the metaphysical,  
Next to Lucretius, Ovid may be quoted.  
An exquisite sense of beauty physical  
Is his first attribute ; next may be noted  
A wond'rous power to paint the human breast,  
When by conflicting impulses impressed.

---

\* Voltaire. See his remarks on the plays of Corneille.

## 31.

As instances of this, Althæa take,  
 When, in the flames, the brand she would have flung,  
 On whose safe-guard her son's life was at stake ;  
 Take Byblis, Myrrha ! (both by passion wrung,  
 And loth, at the same instant, to forsake  
 The path of virtue)—when did human tongue,  
 Ever pour forth, in words of fiercer fire,  
 Pangs of remorse, and burnings of desire ?

## 32.

On th' other hand, in Virgil, it should seem,  
 An intuition forces us to think,—  
 Although his words flow like a stately stream,  
 And, 'neath its surface plunged, he never sink,  
 From its abyss to bring, for passion's dream,  
 Mysteries that in its hidden caves might shrink—  
 That 'tis a purpos'd abstinence : his draught,  
 Tho' not charg'd with it, wakes profoundest thought.

## 33.

His words so fitly placed ; his subtle art ;  
 Impress us as a face which is so fine,—  
 (Although it promises whate'er the heart  
 Conceives, in *eloquence*, and *thought*, divine)  
 That we from injuring its repose should start :  
 Its sublime silence leads us to decline  
 (It is so satisfying) further quest !  
 We fear a dream so heavenly to molest !

34.

I've heard it said by *one*, whose praise is fame,  
That 'tis a higher triumph of the bard  
To fix the soul by a well-woven frame  
Of outward forms, than by indulged regard  
Into the secret springs, and inward aim,  
Of every character : by hues prepar'd,  
Plac'd in nice shades, as thro' transparent medium,  
To *shew* man's attributes, but not explain 'em.

35.

This, to do well, he would have said, requir'd  
More skill than that of him who brings to light  
The hidden mysteries of the mind : *attired*  
They by the former are, and though t' excite  
Less fit, have by their drapery acquir'd  
A grace, for this compensatory quite.  
Thus, well-bred gentleman a feast who gives,  
Tells not each guest whence he his cheer receives.

36.

The guest must know the power of wealth is there,  
By fruits from foreign climes, and by the train  
Of viands exquisite as they are rare :  
But as *his* business is to entertain,  
And, as *he* thinks that object tarnished were  
By an attempt its causes to explain ;  
As much as *one*, less an adept, reveals—  
The secret mechanism *he* conceals.

37.

I grant there's much in this. A poet once  
Proved, by his characters' consistency,  
That he in metaphysics was no dunce :  
Now every character we hear, or see,  
Or read of, in such haste is to announce  
The hidden motives of its agency,  
That, from anticipation, ere achieved,  
The *coup de théâtre*, with yawns received.

38.

Late novel writers of this fault partake.—  
Richardson, Fielding, Smollet, Le Sage, read,  
Cervantes—and observe the path they take,  
Would they engage our interest. 'Tis indeed  
By accurate portrait they know how to make  
Of their own species, whence from them proceed  
(As face to face in mirror is resembling)  
That which hath set the nerve of nature trembling.

39.

It is for this we love them; and love too  
Their fabled characters, as they were real;  
It is for this, when we have travelled through  
Their pages, that our own life more ideal  
Seems than the one to which we've bade adieu :  
Lastly, for this it is that we indeed feel  
For them the interest which our friends might claim !  
E'en would they rival them, gain'd is their aim.

40.

For this superiority have they  
O'er real beings of a common nature,  
That heart too much disposed to throw away  
Its love, in them can never find a traitor.  
There is, to most of us, a short-liv'd day  
In which we friendship read in every feature.  
That day soon fades ! Its night how dark it were,  
Did not feign'd beings rescue us from care.

41.

With scant accommodations that await,  
And with ill-grace received at every stage,  
How long, how toilsome, and how desolate,  
To us the melancholy pilgrimage,  
From that bright bower where youth in rapture sate  
Conning its visions, while the Archimage  
Stern truth divulging, led us from its shade  
To pathless wastes, which not a flower displayed.

42

Yet still we have this treasure, though we turn  
Slightingly from it, 'till reflection's glance  
Has taught us not at palliatives to spurn :  
Ours are your pages, authors of romance !  
No more can we imagine to sojourn  
With beings angelic ; but with you perchance  
*That* we again may find which we thought fled !  
And live with you, though to the world we're dead.



84 *Folly of making Works of Imagination, &c.*

43.

Ah! who can tell what it is, drop by drop,  
To feel the warm blood oozing from the heart?  
Now on this eminence, now that, to stop,  
As lost in haze the outlines quite depart  
Of native scenes, to bid adieu to hope?  
In early life from a high mount we start,  
What, in a future vantage station, more  
Can charm us, than its summit to restore?

44.

From that most monstrous of all monstrous things,  
A tale contrived to serve hypothesis,  
Who ever felt the pleasure which that brings  
Whose only archetype the natural is?  
While authors soar on surreptitious wings,  
All facts must wait on theory; and a Miss  
Not love, till she has, to our time's perdition,  
Proved if love govern, or obey, volition.\*

45.

There cannot be a series of action,  
In real life, that has not its own moral;

---

\* See *Emma Courtenay*, a novel, written to prove that love is at the command of a moral agent, if his understanding can once be convinced of the fitness of another, as the object of that passion.

Keep you to this, nor be your tale's construction  
Mechanical as organ with a barrel :  
Stuffed with good people, who to the least fraction,  
Of newest systems wear the quaint apparel,  
And through five volumes live on paradox ;  
You snug meanwhile like charlatan with shew-box.

46.

'Tis you, not they, are speaking all the while.  
They live by syllogism ; die by theory :  
And only prove they have, (after vast toil)  
Infallibility, when they would weary.  
Carry a system to 't, if you would spoil  
A sketch of life,—for it will then miscarry.  
'Tis as portentous as a doctor's sign is,  
And quite as emblematic of a *finis*.\*

47.

“ 'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat  
To peep at such a world.” So sung thy bard,  
Religion ! But as † *here*, where can we meet  
With such exemption from mankind's regard.  
Here, he, indulgence to his wish, complete  
May give, who social ties would fain discard.

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\* The author must here mean a *finis* not to the *voluminousness*, but to the *success*, of the writers' efforts.

† London.

86     *The blessedness of divine Communion.*

Here one may find (lost in a multitude !)  
That crowds create the deepest solitude !

48.

Live in the country where you may, you will  
    (Indeed, you must, for life's accommodation)  
One neighbour have : this one,—another still ;—  
    And thence a little world has its creation.  
*There* where few things occur the void to fill ;—  
    To satisfy man's craving for sensation,  
Your walks, your meals, visits, and visitors,  
Each is the theme of pert inquisitors.

49.

Again, the individual temper much  
    A man's perception of retirement sways ;  
No man *can* be in solitude, whose touch  
    With tremulous conformity obeys  
(Like needle at the magnet's near approach)  
    The voice of censure, or the voice of praise.  
Opinion, like a ghost, was never known  
To let him, whom she haunted, feel alone.

50.

Witness Geneva's prodigy !\*   Though woods  
    Receiv'd him in their bosom ; and though skies  
And mountains kiss'd each other ; though the floods  
    Emptied their cataracts of mighty size

---

\* Rousseau.

Amid vast lakes' profoundest solitudes ;  
To shroud him from imagined enemies ;  
Still absent hostile forms around him glared ;  
Him, with her spells, still vanity ensnared.

51.

Some find a solitude where'er they fly ;  
There are who could not find it if they would ;  
Victims of grief, where's your society ?  
And where, joy's votaries, your solitude ?  
Remorse ! Thou art alone, and thousands nigh !  
Virtue ! in converse high, 'mid desarts rude !  
The first may be 'mid millions, and alone !  
The last, in bless'd society, though one !

52.

Think ye, that He\*, who, on the mountain's height,  
Spent all the night in commune with his God,  
Was e'er alone ? Or, was his darkness, night ?  
Can solitude and darkness make abode  
With one, on whose heart, ever springing light,  
Fresh dews from heaven are ceaselessly bestowed.  
No ! To the good man, blessed in his thought,  
And blessing, loneliness can ne'er be brought !

53.

His prayers are blessedness ; his thoughts are praise ;  
His love is fellowship ! Performance high,

~~~~~  
* And Jesus went up to a mountain to pray, and he continued all night in prayer unto God.

Communion higher still, the themes that raise
His aspirations 'bove mortality.
The unseen powers that wait upon his ways,
"Millions of spiritual creatures" flitting by,
His eye almost beholds them! From the air
Their song distils! His God is every where!

54.

This is the intercourse for which I pine;
The Universal Eye of Heaven can see
With how much truth and force this wish is mine!
Then, welcome, prisons! welcome, chains, to me!
Then since I might the more my thoughts confine,
To thee, my God, the more should I be free;
Since, although fettered, more were I endued
With that which is my soul's solicitude.—

55.

My God! Wouldst Thou, e'en from this bed of pain,
Mark this one wish, the only wish I have;
All former sufferings to me were gain!—
I should have nothing left from thee to crave.
Me of all dispossess! Of all the train
Of joys which are on this side of the grave;
Of friends that once were mine, of Hope, Fame, Health,
Gav'st thou thyself, abundant were my wealth.

56.

The earth was once a mirror whence, reflected,
God's presence made each object to allure;

I revelled in the bliss, and ah ! neglected
The means such bliss in future to secure.
Oh, let my prayer be not at last rejected ;
I have lost all ! I am desolate and poor !
So am I wean'd from life, I know not how
(E'en if I might) to ask its blessings now.

57.

But in this city's vast receptacle
How many are there who are vowed to thee ?
How many are there, when it lyeth still !
At night, and when the curtained canopy
Its countless eyes,* its multitudinous will,
Shrouds from the stars, *how* many may there be
That hear thee, when the day hath ceased its noise,
To their souls whisper in the "still small voice?"

58.

Few, few, alas ! To beds of down they go—
From business, pleasure, or from idleness ;
And save the numerous progeny of woe,
Who, while, unrested, the hard earth they press,
Feel scalding tears from aching eye-balls flow ;
How few are there but sleep, nor rising, bless,

* The cast of thought in this stanza suggests the recollection of Mr. Wordsworth's glorious sonnet, "composed upon Westminster Bridge, (see his *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 172) which the author commends to the perusal of his readers.

90 *On the Inefficacy of all worldly Objects, &c.*

Nor lying down, the bounteous hand that spread
Their draperied couch, and curtain'd close their head.

59.

Father! And cannot I, in this resort,
One being find to sympathize with me?
Here came I, hoping to derive support
From one of all the many forms there be
In this vast focus, towards which, as t' a court,
Converge all phantasms of variety;
Here came I, hoping that (amidst them all)
One to my smart might be medicinal!

60.

As, in romantic legends, or feign'd tales,
'Tis said that (by some potent wizard bound)
Th' adventurous knight whom Glamourie assails
Shackles defying human power surround:
So 'twill not be! Not all man's power avails
(When from on high come fetters that confound)
Their knots to-unloose: yet He each knot who wreathes,
Could burst them, as did "Sampson his green withes."

61.

That Power alone, who arm'd the shepherd's son*
'Gainst the proud boast of the Philistine band;

* David.

That power, who, to a sling and little stone,
And in an unknown stripling's untaught hand,
Gave potency—miraculously shewn—
Shield, sword, and spear, of giant to withstand :
He only can release th' imprison'd soul,
And billowy passions of the heart controul.

62.

What aid can horses, or can chariots, bring ?
What aid can palaces, and sumptuous halls ?
What aid can theatres, whose ceilings ring
With shouts which shake its decorated walls ?
What aid can spires, and cupolas, whence fling
Roseate sun-beams, o'er crowded capitals,
At morn, or eve, their glittering golden light ?
Or splendour's triumphs, dazzling to the sight ?

63.

What aid can busy streets, or peopled marts,
Where, forest-like, the crowd of masts upsoars ;
In ports, where Commerce, with her thousand arts,
Collects the nations from a thousand shores ?
What aid, though population, from all parts
In one swift channel disembogue her stores,
Could these confer on him, on whom his God
Hath laid the chastisement of his fierce rod ?

64.

No ; in the pathless desert there's a voice,
A voice of gladness, to the soul heaven loves ;

92 *On the Possibility of divine Communion.*

“ Waste places of the wilderness” rejoice ;
And the way-faring man who through them roves :
The thickets—echoing only with the noise
Of hissing reptiles, where the thistle moves,
Or nettle, with the fierce sirocco—sing,
And their lone tenants, ’neath the Almighty’s wing.

65.

*Place me in burning sands of Araby,
Where never zephyr fann’d the thirsty waste ;
Place me on ice-cliff, ’mid a frozen sea,
Where ne’er green herb the trackless snow-drifts
grac’d ;
Tho’ atmosphere, with life at enmity,
Condens’d to heavy clouds, the scene defac’d ;
Confounding earth with heaven, the heaven with earth,
As Chaos reign’d ere Nature’s rose to birth ;

66.

Pierc’d I the veil, my God ! ’twixt Thee and me !
I should be well content, whate’er my lot ;
I should appropriate to my destiny,
That which—once gain’d—though other things were
not—
Would raise me ’bove life’s mutability ;
Reasoners, that argue of ye know not what,

* Vide *Horatii Carminum*, Lib. i. Ode 22.

Do not, as mystical, my strain deride :
By facts' criterion be its doctrine tried.

67.

The blind as well might doubt of sense of sight ;
Peruse their lives, who thus have vow'd pursuit
Of heavenly communion : in despite
Of all your arguments, ye can't dispute
Their singleness of heart : except ye fight
'Gainst facts, ye, self-convicted, must be mute.
Will ye deny, that they've a secret found
To baffle fate, and heal each mortal wound ?

68.

Will ye deny, to them alone 'tis given,
Who its existence, as a faith, embrac'd ?
'Tis mainly requisite, to partake of heaven,
That the heart's treasures there should first be plac'd.
According to thy faith shall it be given
To thee, with spiritual glories, to be grac'd.
As well all facts whence man experience hath,
As doubt immunities bound up in faith.

69.

'Tis easy thing to say, that men are knaves ;
'Tis easy thing to say, that men are fools ;
'Tis easy thing to say, an author raves ;
Easy, to him who always ridicules
The incomprehensible, to allege—and saves
Trouble of farther thought—that oft there rules

94 *On the Possibility of divine Communion.*

Fanatic feeling in a mad-man's brain :
That half-pretence oft ekes out half-insane.

70.

We know all this ; but we know also well,
These men we speak of, tried by every test
Admissible, all other men excel
In virtue, and in happiness. Since bless'd
Are they, stern Fate, spite of thy direst spell !
Infection, loathsome maladies, each pest
And plague,—for these have they,—should they assail,
A panacea which will never fail !

71.

God is their rock, their fortress of defence,
In time of trouble, a defence most holy ;
For them the wrath of man is impotence ;
His pride, a bubble ; and his wisdom, folly.
That " peace " have they—unspeakable, intense,—
" Which passeth understanding ! " Melancholy
Life's gauds to them : the unseen they explore :
Rooted in heaven, to live is—to adore !

72.

Ye, that might cavil at these humble lays,
Peruse the page of child-like Fenelon ;
Hear what the rapt, transfigur'd Guyon says,
With ills of body such as few have known ;—
Tedious imprisonment ; in youthful days
To luxuries used, they all aside are thrown ;

To poverty devoted, she defies
Its sorest ills, blessing the sacrifice.

73.

Was e'er an instance known, that man could taste,
True peace of mind, and spurn religion's laws?
In other things were this *alliance* trac'd;
Constant *coincidence*; effect, and cause,
We scruple not to call them; or, at least,
Condition indispensable, whence draws
The one, the other. This *coincidence*
But grant me *here*;—and grant the consequence.

74.

Facts, facts, are stubborn things! We trust the sense
Of sight, because th' experience of each day
Warrants our trust in it. Now, tell me whence
It is, no mortal yet could dare to say,
Man trusted in his God for his defence,
And was confounded? cover'd with dismay?
Loses he friends? Religion dries his tears!
Loses he life? Religion calms his fears!

75.

Loses he health? Religion balms his mind,
And pains of flesh seem ministers of grace,
And wait upon a rapture more refin'd,
Than e'en in lustiest health e'er found a place.
Loses he wealth? the pleasure *it can find*
He had before renounc'd; thus can he trace

No difference, but that now the *heart* bestows
 What through a *hand* less *affluent scantier* flows.

76.

He too as much enjoys the spectacle
 Of good, when done by others as by him :
 Loses he fame? the honour he loves well
 Is not of earth, but that which seraphim
 Might prize! Loses he liberty? his cell,
 And all its vaults, echo his rapturous hymn!
 He feels as free as freest bird in air!
 His heaven-shrin'd spirit finds heaven every where!

77.

'Tis not romance which we are uttering! No ;
 Thousands of volumes each word's truth attest!
 Thousands of souls redeem'd from all below
 Can bring a proof, that, e'en while earthly guest,
 'Tis possible for man that *peace* to know,
 Which maketh him impassive to the test
 Of mortal sufferance! Many and many a martyr
 Has found this bound up in religion's charter.

78.

Pleasure, or philosophical or sensual,
 Is not, ought not to be, man's primary rule ;
 We often feel bound by a law potential
 To do those things which e'en our reasons fool.
 God, and he only, sees the consequential ;
 The mind, well nurtur'd in religion's school
 Feels that *He* only—to whom all's obedient—
 Has right to guide itself by the expedient

79.

Duty is man's first law, not satisfaction !
That satisfaction comes from *this* perform'd,
We grant ! . But should this be the prime attraction
That led us to performance, soon inform'd
By finding that we've miss'd the meed of action,
We shall confess our error. Oft we're warm'd,
By a strong spirit we cannot restrain,
To deeds, which make all calculation vain.

80.

Had Regulus reason'd, whether on the scale
Of *use*, in Rome, his faculties would *most*,
Or Carthage—patriotism's cause avail,
He never had resum'd his fatal post.
Brutus, Virginius, had they tried *by tale*
Their country's cause, had never been her boast.
Yet had it not these self-doom'd heroes seen,
Rome, "the eternal city," ne'er had been !

81.

Shall Christ submit upon the cross to bleed,
And man for all he does a reason ask ?
Have martyrs died, and confessors, indeed,
That he must seek a *why* for every task ?
If it be so, to prate we've little need
Of this *enlighten'd age* ! Take off the mask !
If it be so, and ye'll find this our *proud age*,—
Its grand climacterick past, is in its *dotage*.

82.

Thy name, Thermopylæ, had ne'er been heard,
 Were not the Greeks wiser than our wise men.
 I grant, that heaven alone to man transferr'd,
 When he would raise up states for history's pen,
 This more than mortal instinct! Yet absurd
 It is (because, perhaps, our narrower ken
 Their heights cannot descry; yea, and a curse
 'Twill bring) to make a *theory* of the worse.

83.

A theory for a declining race!
 *No, let us keep at least our lips from lies;
 If we have forfeited *Truth's soaring grace*,
 Let us not *falsify* her *prodigies*.
 We well may wear a blush upon our face,
 From her past triumphs so t' apostatize
 In deeds; but let us not with this invent
 An infidelity of argument.

84.

Go to Palmyra's ruins; visit Greece,
 Behold! The wrecks of her magnificence

* Though the author here alludes to the doctrine of expediency, methodized into a system by Paley; yet he can never be insensible, how much British Society is indebted to the author of the "Natural Theology."

Seem left, in spite of man, thus to increase
The sting of satire on his impotence.
As to betray how soon man's glories cease ;
Tombs, time defying, of the most pretence
But only make us feel with more surprise,
How mean the things they would immortalize !

85.

Man is a riddle ! Lofty in his feeling !
But, like an idiot, driveling in what lends
Form to that feeling ! Tho' fire from heaven he's
stealing,
'Tis on some child's play that that fire he spends—
Dice, women, any thing ! Thus, while he's reeling,
And thus *in act* the despicable blends
With the sublime in impulse, he employs
Powers, that might immortalize, on toys.

86.

Our station we perversely abdicate :
Self-disinherited, we tumble down,
Wilfully tumble, from our Godlike state :
Wilfully barter our immortal crown
For gawds and trifles : contradict what fate
Has legibly inscrib'd of high renown
On man's imperial destiny, and die
Suicides of our immortality.

87.

Once more, oh, London, I thy worth proclaim,
 As giving all facilities to those
 Who, for their rational enjoyment, aim
 T'ensure refin'd society's repose.
 Graces and fascinations, without name,
 So versatile their lustre, while it glows,
 In "numbers without number" here resort;
 Invite attention, and acceptance court.

88.

Here, loveliest of all lovely things, may we,
 In most bewitching aspect, woman find,
 With each perfection that kind destiny
 Confers, when art and nature are combin'd!
 Fashion, and sense, and sensibility,
 Each grace of body, and each grace of mind,
 While flatteries for each sense around her shine,
 We see her plac'd as on a worthy shrine.

89.

Nature! with homeliness do not confound her!
 Without a paradox, I would affirm
 The daintiest daughter of patrician grandeur
 Has more that well may lay claim to the term,
 Than low-born maid, tho' town or country train'd her.
 Flowers spring from Nature, so does woman's charm,
 And 'tis an art to those in low degree
 Unknown, in best sense natural to be.

90.

'Tis not the things we do that vulgar are:
Who ever thought those high-born votaries
Of self-denial, who would oft repair
To prisons, hospitals, and monasteries,—
In climes where sways Rome's ritual,—vulgar were?
Go with them! See, in lowest offices,
And most repulsive maladies, their toil!
Not one of these their natural grace doth soil!

91.

All that in any way we can connect
With thoughts of *property* must vulgar be;
How difficult then is it, in effect,
From this alloy entirely to be free,
When every instant is the architect—
And all life's pressures urge necessity—
Contrivances prudential, of your sway!
And guarded interest marks the happy day!

92.

'Tis hence the poor are vulgar: now and then,
E'en among them, a soul is found above
The sway of his condition. There are men
Not by impressions ruled, who (made to move
In a particular orbit) o'er them reign.
These cause us (in what rank soe'er) to prove
For them a reverence. Menials there are,
Whom I had blush'd to see behind my chair.

93.

There is a soul, which never can admit
 (Whate'er the pressure of necessity)
 A vulgar thought. But it were lack of wit,
 In argument like this, since this *may* be,
 Exceptions such as these as rules to admit.
 Since then, most spirits have the faculty
 To allow such influence, we're forced to prefer
 That lot, whence such impressions fewest are.

94.

As Virtue sits with easiest grace on those
 In whom 'tis deeply rooted, not on such
 As wear her mask ; so Grace most truly glows
 On them who never felt an adverse touch.
 Thence, in any given hour, should we suppose
 That he so trained (wish it, however much
 He might) that vulgar he could *never* be,
 Is less than *he* polite from *mimickry*.

95.

A word, a look, a gesture, may betray
 A volume of disgusting consciousness ;
 Tho', where that consciousness exists, we may
 By extreme thought, and consummate address,
 Prevent divulging it. But then the sway
 Of circumspection will all ease repress.
 Let the glass freely circulate ; 'tis rare
 The secret's kept, in spite of all our care.

96.

A laugh, tone of the voice, glance of the eye,
All may betray us : nothing ;—any thing ;—
An instant's lapse, or inadvertency :—
With these flaws, when we them together bring,
We cannot join those of timidity ;
From want of usage, or ill health, may spring
A bashful manner ; but no one, e'er grounded
In manners, this with vulgarness confounded.

97.

An *awkward*, is not thence a *vulgar*, gesture ;
A soul the most refined may feel *mal-aise*,
In mixed society : a man, whose posture
The most constrain'd is, still no *smile* may raise.
Let our guest have all that the thought doth foster—
Respectful feeling his demeanour sways,
That he by pledges of respect, insists on
Respect again, no one his claims will question.

98.

To him, not well versed in the scenes of life,
An exquisite perception of the graces
May often with performance be at strife ;
And, of good breeding, banish all the traces.
Yet e'en low souls, (for souls like these are rife
In highest scenes) with all their *fade* grimaces,
'Twixt one ill-bred, and one too timid—well
To acquit himself—the difference can tell.

104 *Moral and religious Application of the*

99.

Failure in *manners* and in *manner*, are
Two different things : a man may not display—
When he presents himself—an easy air ;
Aukward in gesture be, and—what to say—
Know not ; and yet preserve, with nicest care,
The art of not offending. Where the sway
Of moral feeling is profoundly wrought,
Instinctively we catch another's thought.

100.

On the other hand, a man may be at ease,
And love, with brutal insolence, to wound,
With selfish vanity ; and, more than these,
E'en with *politeness*, will low pride confound.
We have seen those in all the mysteries
Of high-bred circles learnedly profound,
Yet by their egotism so inflam'd,
Manner but sharpened darts their *manners* aim'd.

101.

Manners and *manner*, be ye both combined,
Who'll not their suffrage give to your pretensions ;
Graces of body, graces of the mind,
When joined, increase their several dimensions.
'Tis to be glowing with a sense refined
That man has feelings language never mentions ;
'Tis to have full command of all the charm,
By which man's eye, speech, attitude, can warm.

102.

Yet, as with innocence, to make it pure,
It should be wholly ignorant of ill;
So for man's manners perfectly t'allure,
Supreme of grace should be th' instinctive will.
That innocence no longer doth endure
Than while all avenues are shut, whence skill
Is learn'd, to judge between the wrong and right;
So finished manners know no opposite.

103.

We e'en would say a dame with fingers gloved
Will fidget them, like bird new caught in cage,
Had custom not, like second nature, proved
That 'twas her ordinary equipage.
We scarce know why, yet on those who have moved
In rank patrician, is that heritage
Of fascination, whose charm never failed,
Chiefly, if not exclusively, entailed.

104.

Talk not to us of honest open faces;—
Talk not to us of manners frank and free;
We like the smothered tones, the stately paces,
Of those whose voice is breathing melody.
Of those whose gait of business has no traces;
There is a calm consummate mystery
In those, whate'er they do, who seem to say,
Manner, not motive, doth the action sway.

111.

It is the dwelling-place of unrepeal'd
 And unrepealable Remorse ! I would
 Not dare to bode forth its unreveal'd,
 Peculiar horrors ! Nor to freeze the blood
 By dismal catalogue (fitlier conceal'd)
 Of shapes, and shrieks, and monsters, lapping blood
 Of man, that there inhabit : nor prophane
 Your ear with clank of its *eternal chain*.

112.

Here, Sisyphus doth ever roll his stone ;
 Ixion, there lies stretched upon his wheel ;
 Tantalus, earnestly doth gaze upon—
 Stretching his hands that grasp at—waves that steal
 Within his reach, apparent ; yet doth groan,
 Still doomed an everlasting thirst to feel !
 There all the furies—all the harpies—dwell !
 All forms of Erebus ! All forms of hell !

113.

Yet could Religion's light e'en on *this* fall !
 Through cranny deep, a cheering ray might bring
 Some solace to the shapes (like shades, on wall,
 By light's effect, from optic lens we fling)
 That ever haunt it. Discords that appal,
 Henceforward with more dulcet note might ring
 Thro' the ill-mansion ; and by slow degrees
 Her triumph shew e'en o'er such scenes as these.

114.

Yet on earth is there many a smaller den
Where woes inferior still unceasing urge
On different classes of devoted men
Their merciless inevitable scourge.
It has been glorious to the glowing ken
Of those, who, o'er woes that to earth converge,
Incessant mourn, to see in time's last date
So many rais'd these woes to mitigate.

115.

Have not a Hanway, Woolman, Howard, been?
Clarkson, Bell, Lancaster, now are they not?
Have not the enslav'd and the imprison'd seen
Virtue repeal or mitigate her lot?
They who, in gloomier thralldom, were, I ween,
Of pining ignorance, hark! how it shot
Through air — the voice — 'till each with gladness
started!
“ To every man be science' truths imparted.”

116.

Thus many avenues have late been op'd,
Through which thy light, Benevolence, has cast
On man's calamity, where'er it mop'd,
Healing, not thought of in the ages past.
Beneficence 'till lately idly grop'd,
And, heedless of its tendency, still class'd

110 *On the Tendency of the present Age*

The instinctive boon among man's deeds divine ;
Now *care* and *thought* with *charity* combine.

117.

Their character much would we deprecate,
Who (clad in complete panoply of steel ;
And, from abetting schemes like these, elate)
Deem they're exempted from the toil to feel.
Co-operation, like to this, should wait—
One of its ministers—on general zeal
For general good : let it not interfere
With Charity's warm impulse, or her tear !

118.

For these, the last, we have the *highest* claim ;
For He who pledg'd himself, that those who gave
“ Cup of cold water in disciple's name,”
Though late, a certain recompense should have.
We cannot say, that He will those proclaim,
(When his elect he summons from the grave)
As of peculiar worth, who hospitals
Have built, or founded schools, or college halls.

119.

When the rich spikenard on Christ's feet was pour'd
By zealous Mary, Judas, as he view'd
The deed reprov'ingly, urg'd, that a hoard,
Had it so barter'd been, had hence accru'd,

Which to the poor might well relief afford.

“ No, rather,” said He, “ by the magnitude
Of this her offering, she the doctrine proves,
That to whom much forgiven is, much loves.”

120.

This lesson read ; ye cavillers 'bout use—

And economical expediencies ;

It tells ye, that the affections do suffuse

All the sweet scent from whence our sacrifice
To God a goodly savour can produce.

Us, he requires not as auxiliaries,

The mighty God ! It is man's *heart* he asks,
A will intense soars 'bove all merit's tasks.

121.

Would not have argued, as Christ's followers did,

The *good wise* men of our more modern time ?

The offering of the Magdalene have chid ?

With decent descant on forsaken crime ?

After such comment, must we not concede

That it is not the deed the most sublime,—

And winning most from other men renown,—

But a *devoted heart*,—that gains the crown ?

122.

Here *was full adoration* ! In *one* sense

Here, e'en to waste, was prodigality ;

That indiscriminate munificence,

Which ventures all upon a single dye !

112 *On the Tendency of the present Age*

But here were contriteness, and zeal intense ;
Here was oblivion of expediency !—
In one word—*Here* was *all* that Heaven requires ;
A soul absorb'd in self-renounc'd desires.

123.

Public munificence, no doubt, in most
Addicted to it, may but aspect be
Of that dispensing spirit, chiefest boast
Of liberal, open-handed charity.
It has (we blush to say, at human cost)
This merit, that it holds the master key,
When truth would heart of vanity unlock ;
Cleaving what else were adamant rock.

124.

'Tis an invidious task, praise to bestow
At other men's expense : willingly then
Farther pursuit of this theme we forego.
The ink flows freelier from our humble pen
When we announce the contemplation, (so
Humiliating yet consoling) that good men
See good (since 'tis from Heaven's educating hand)
E'en when our *frailties* bend to his command.

125.

When *means* are all an humble soul can give ;
E'en though the smallest, good men their aid bless ;
When *ends* are to be gain'd, good men forgive,
E'en though man's frailties work God's righteousness.

See they a *tear*—when tears are all we have—

As *herald* of our *truth* they it caress !

See they great wealth the pious structure raise,

That God who worketh all in all, they praise !

126.

'Tis as impossible for Him to be

Fastidious, his own defects who knows ;

As to examine with severity

Motives, where heart with real bounty glows.

There are souls, in the gift of Pharisee,

As in the widow's mite, whose deep repose

Is as much bound. For them a stream there gushes,

By *none* polluted, yet which *all* refreshes !

127.

My muse would still her lofty theme resume,

And hail the genial dawning of that day,

When mercy penetrates the prison's gloom,

And e'en the captive feels hope's cheering ray.

Can all the triumphs or of Greece or Rome

Commemorate such wonders, or display

So much to cheer man's heart, as thou hast done,*

Whom *Heaven* has sealed as an *elected one* ?

* See " An Inquiry whether Crime and Misery are produced or prevented by our present System of Prison Discipline." By Thomas Fowel Buxton, Esq.

128.

A timid female, arm'd with gospel faith;—
 A timid female, arm'd with gospel love;—
 To haunts hath pierc'd, where, ne'er before the path
 To virtue dedicate, led one to move;
 Not only hath confronted vice; (worst scath
 God lays on man) but those whom crimes remove
 From human pity (healing Fate's last wound)
 She to her *heart with ties of love hath bound.*

129.

Thy "praise is not of men;" I know full well
 That human lips' approval is to thee
 (E'en though made potent by the daintiest spell
 That art could cull from stores of flattery;
 E'en though its tones like "blare" of trump should
 swell)
 But "sounding brass," and solemn mockery.
 Yet as a soul is eas'd this boon to bear,
 Accept:—the *human soul* is *thy* first care.

130.

Think what it must to those be, only wont
 To hear the ribald song, or oath prophane;
 What it must be for those who—vice made gaunt
 By misery, in aspect most obscene,—
 Were used to see; whom chilling scowls did daunt,
 Or laughing madness with her clanking chain;
 To hear the truth persuasive made by thee?
 In thee religion's real charm to see?

131.

*The gospel promise is fulfill'd in thee,
The prisoner is set free ; he that is bound
Hath felt deliverance : for the unity
Of comprehensive love hath now been crown'd
By this last test of gospel verity.
For since from prison walls hath gone a sound
Through all the earth, that they who linger there
Are called in Christ, thy chains are snapp'd, Despair !

132.

We know not better liberty than this,
E'en for the veriest freeman upon earth ;
Refuse not then the *uplifted rod* to kiss ;—
And if, from *it*, the blooms of faith bud forth,
The prisoner's manacle no longer is :
There are no barriers which this *second birth*
May not despise : they do but designate
Another way to an immortal state.

133.

And had not heaven's hand been in this, could one,
A gentle female, thus all prejudice ;—
All preconceptions ;—every hindrance thrown
To bar the way ;—each proud hypothesis ;—

* See St. Luke, fourth chapter, eighteenth verse ; and Isaiah, sixty-first chapter, first verse.

116 *On the final Triumph of Religion.*

And prouder sneers of those who've never known
The "might of weakness*" in a work like this :
The wisdom of gown'd delegates countervail ?
And plant a paradise within a jail ?

134.

There is a might which the world little heeds,
The irresistible† armour of the weak,
Who only dare move onward as God leads !
As God gives utterance only dare to speak !
This faith the martyrs teach ; for this faith bleeds
The saint, who (caring not man's praise to seek)
Draws down (though none from whence it comes can
tell)
Blessing, like dew from heaven, where'er he fell.

135.

This faith a Fox proclaimed ; a Penn confirmed ;
A Barclay !—For an universal truth
Why from a sect bring evidence ? It warmed
A Fenelon, a Guion, in their youth
All to renounce, that most man's heart hath charmed.
A Sales, a Kempis, a Molinos, soothe,
By the same faith, those who devoutly feel
How poor the efforts of unhallow'd zeal !

* "The irresistible might of weakness."—See Milton's Prose Works.

† Ibid.

136.

Religion is a quiet, inward thing ;
It is all hope, all happiness, all love ;
But oft it soars not *here* on seraph wing ;
And those especially whom zeal doth move,
For human vice and misery, ere *it* bring
A sure relief, through their means, oft must prove
The billowy waves to welter o'er their head :
Long trial, ere on others balm *it* shed.

137.

God be your guide, where'er ye go, where'er
Ye be, that seek for fall'n man to repeal—
The dread anathema of vice and care
Entail'd on him,—by your devoted zeal.
God be your guide ! That he, who breathes it, were
Worthy—the blessing of this wish—to feel !
Oh ! in your mission could I with you share,
Blessed—though last in deed and name—I were !

138.

God be your guide ! And may a time soon come
When not a vice but human interest hath !
When not a woe, but hath a friend, its doom
To share in, and thus palliate its scath !
When not a misery, pang, or care, or gloom,
But some compensatory friend—whose path
Is less with these afflicted—may allure ;
Who heals himself—administering a cure !

139.

Then would the wintry wand of woe be broken !
 E'en Wretchedness would have her *pleasant bowers*,
 Since she infallibly would have a token
 Recognizable by fraternal powers !
 The language then of tears, e'en *were* it spoken,
 Would steal from hearts (like, from earth, vernal
 showers
 Rich incense raise, while they are fertilizing)
 To love responsive, blooms and sweets surprising.

140.

Thus in one family would man soon be !
 Need then no prate 'bout equal wealth or right;
 Each then would equally perceive that he—
 In charter from the source of all true light—
 Had share: soon more the sacred ministry—
 Than minister'd to be to—would excite.
 Were equal rights with fellow beings won,
 What were their price to heaven's adopted son ?

141.

Oh, did despair not weigh upon the breast,
 With utterance ardent as a seraph's hymn,
 I would put up a prayer, that thou would'st haste,—
 Thou, high enthron'd above the cherubim,—
 This glorious advent ! Oh ! could I but taste
 Of that bless'd fount (to which, while such dream
 swim
 Before us, we seem t' have made good our claim)
 What grateful raptures would my heart inflame !

142.

Some are there who not prize *religion's* treasure :
But of all miseries, 'tis a misery most
To be deplor'd, when all our sense of pleasure,
When that of which the world doth chiefly boast,
We deem as dross, and futile beyond measure,
Compar'd with *her*, yet to *her* hopes are lost !
When that which (with imagination strong)
We prized 'bove utterance of human tongue,

143.

Eludes our search ! When we believe in it
Most reverentially ; yet can't conceal
The greatest effort of our human wit
Religion's lowest truths cannot reveal.
Oh ! As the potter doth his vessel fit
To the evolutions of his shaping wheel,
Or breaks in pieces, that which doth conduce
(Till it once more be plastic) to no use ;

144

Do by me !—Do !—Almighty Father ! Thou !
I fear not !—hesitate not ;—thus to throw
Myself before thee : asking not the *how*,—
The when,—the wherefore,—with my fate below !
Only so far accept my infirm vow,
As—that—into thy hands—to let me know—
Me,—Thou dost deign to take. Knowing but this,
Blindness my faith is, and my torments bliss !

145.

Yes, with the Seer of Patmos, could I hear
 The voice that, to the thirsty, cries to "come,"
And "freely drink" of Faith's immortal, clear,
 And living, waters, human wants were dumb !
'Fore the great "bridegroom" could I so appear,
 And feel "the spirit" pointing to his home ;
Then voice there needed not—tongue—lip—nor pen—
To the soul's passive, though sublime, amen !

L O N D O N .

—
THIRD BOOK.
—

Address to the Muse.

1.

Is the muse fled, or am I self-accused
From slighting her low-whisper'd revelations ?
For often are her fosterings abused
By absent hearts, and wandering inclinations.
Oft her long-suffering waits to have infused
Her potent influence o'er our meditations.
But our unfaithful minds, and deafen'd ears,
Scorn her, except in triumph she appears.

2.

We will not wait on her, but rather hope
That she with our caprices should comply ;
To all our alienations give a scope ;
And should consent, with deep humility,

M

That we should put her by, or take her up,
 For every whim, and opportunity
 Of time and place; and thus, though she inspires,
 Act as ourselves could regulate her fires.

3.

But she is coy to those, as well she may—
 Who will not sometimes on her bidding wait :
 And if we put her off from day to day,
 We may at length so oft procrastinate,
 That that which was at first but mere child's play,
 Becomes the inexorable doom of fate.
 So apt is man with a presumptuous aim
 To be a self-conspirer 'gainst his fame.

4.

Oh ! if in after-life we could but gather
 The very refuse of our youthful hours !
 Oft—than its dull realities—we'd rather
 The very poorest of them should be ours !
 Thus 'tis save when our infancy's the father*
 Of our experience, from youth's blissful bowers

* “ So was it when my life began ;
 So is it now I am a man ;
 So be it when I do 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.”—*Wordsworth.*

Of being's progress :—progress then, alone :
Else retrograde 'till all's oblivion !

5.

'Tis nothing but our *frailty* makes us think
 (An universal thought) that infancy
Of subsequent existence, shames each link.
 What ! When unfolding our vast powers we see,
Why in life's combat from their trial shrink ?
 It is that, ere they gain maturity,
We have anticipated, by the taste
Of good and evil, that which lays them waste.

6.

Howe'er ye may receive it (whether fable,
 Or literally true) 'tis still sublime,
The lesson couch'd (for wisdom profitable)
 Beneath the history of man's earliest crime.
We know too much to make it equitable
 To impute to weakness our neglected time.
We talk of *ignorance* when our *faith* is tried
We talk of *knowledge* to defend our *pride* !

7.

Poison would I as soon administer,
 As soil the bloom of any virgin heart,
That hath not (in relation whatsoe'er)
 Yet of the fruit of knowledge had a part.

Did Innocence yet on man her light confer,
 Penance had never been a human art.
 He in whose breast no appetite doth start e'er,
 Though all possessing, holds from heaven his charter.

8.

It is not heaven that aught prohibits us ;
 The prohibition to ourselves we owe ;
 Heaven of enjoyment ne'er is envious,
 Its springs from thence immeasurably flow.
 But *human wisdom*, vain, fallacious,
 With *gratitude content not*, sought to know
 The nature of its blessings ! These detected,
 Faded like flowers by botanist dissected.

9.

Thus self-denial only is inferred,
 When through the fogs of foul concupiscence,
 We feel our hearts too consciously stirred
 By any of the pleasancesses of sense.
 As heaven comes chiefly where no wish averred
 Ever propos'd it as a consequence,
 So ne'er were sensuous pleasures fairly got,
 'Till held unconsciously as though held not.

10.

Fruition then is bless'd ! And it is evil
 To bring down those whom God hath rais'd on high,

To pitiful and scrutinizing level !

Rather should we in their immunity
Rejoice, nor imitate the sly arch Devil,
Who, as first fruits of his apostasy,
Those, for their blameless happiness, reviled,
Who had not its perennial springs defiled.

11.

'Till we can prove enjoyment is of sin,
We ne'er can prove, because a thing's enjoyed
That, if some cause exist not from within
Corrupting it, its charm should be destroyed.
We know where'er the race of man has been,
Penance has ever been by Saints employed.
But what proves this? Not that the *thing* is tainted,
But that th' applier is with vice acquainted !

12.

We speak not here of that renunciation,
Which all are call'd to, of forbidden things,
But abstinence from *lawful* recreation
To which stern conscience many good men stings.
Could *law* be laid down here: th' interpretation
Private should be of *scrup'lous* shudderings ;—
Inexorably barring compromise
With Vice, however specious her disguise.

13.

If for itself were self-renouncement good—
As Heaven is a better place than earth,

We should replenish it with all the brood
 Of penances to which Sin e'er gave birth.
 No! we confess that general aptitude
 In Man, to recognize this instinct's worth,
 Much doth confirm the doctrine of his fall!
 Th' intrinsic good of penance not at all!—

14.

Thus, when man's heart perceives a prohibition
 Growing between it and its wonted pleasure,
 Let it not tax the pleasure with perdition,
 But that false sense which would deprave its measure.
 Pleasures so tasted that their full fruition
 Never encroaches on our mental leisure,
 But leaves free umpire our unbiass'd reason,
 Ne'er can be construed into moral treason.

15.

Oh, were the eye of youth a moment ours!
 When every flower that gemm'd the various earth
 Brought down from Heaven enjoyment's genial showers!
 And every bird, of everlasting mirth
 Prophecied to us in romantic bowers!
 Love was the garniture, whose blameless birth
 Caus'd that each filmy web where dew-drops trembled,
 The gossamery haunt of elves resembled!

16.

We can remember earliest days of spring,
 When violets blue and white, and primrose pale,

Like callow nestlings 'neath their mother's wing,
Each peep'd from under the broad leaf's green veil.
When streams look'd blue ; and thin clouds clustering
O'er the wide empyrean did prevail,
Rising like incense from the breathing world,
Whose gracious aspect was with dew impearl'd.

17.

When a soft moisture, steaming every where,
To the earth's countenance mellow hues imparted ;
When sylvan choristers self-pois'd in air,
Or perched on boughs, in shrilly quiverings darted
Their little raptures forth ; when the warm glare
(While glancing lights backwards and forwards started,
As if with meteors silver-sheath'd 'twere flooded)
Sultry, and silent, on the hill's turf brooded.

18.

Oh, in these moments we such joy have felt,
As if the earth were nothing but a shrine ;
Where all, or awe inspir'd, or made one melt
Gratefully towards its architect divine !
Father ! in future (as I once have dwelt
Within that very sanctuary of thine,
When shapes, and sounds, seem'd as but modes of
Thee !)
That with experience gain'd were heaven to me !

19.

Oft in the fullness of the joy ye give,
Oh, days of youth ! in summer's noon-tide hours,

Did I a depth of quietness receive
 From insects' drowsy hum, that all my powers
 Would baffle to pourtray! Let them that live
 In vacant solitude, speak from their bowers
 What nameless pleasures letter'd ease may cheer,
 Thee, Nature! bless'd to mark with eye and ear!—

20.

Who can have watch'd the wild rose' blushing dye,
 And seen what treasures its rich cups contain;
 Who, of soft shades the fine variety,
 From white to deepest flush of vermeil stain?
 Who, when impearl'd with dew-drop's radiancy
 Its petals breath'd perfume, while he did strain
 His *very being*, lest the sense should fail
 T' imbibe each sweet its beauties did exhale?

21.

Who amid lanes, on eve of summer days,
 Which sheep brouze, could the thicket's wealth be-
 hold?
 The fragrant honey-suckle's bowery maze?
 The furze bush, with its vegetable gold?
 In every satin sheath that helps to raise
 The fox-glove's cone, the figures manifold
 With such a dainty exquisiteness wrought?—
 Nor grant that thoughtful love they all have taught?

22.

The daisy, cowslip, each have to them given—
 The wood anemone, the strawberry wild,

Grass of Parnassus, meek as star of even ;—
Bright, as the brightening eye of smiling child,
And bathed in blue transparency of heaven,
Veronica; the primrose pale, and mild ;—
Of charms (of which to speak no tongue is able)
Intercommunion incommunicable !

23.

I had a cottage in a Paradise !
'Twere hard to enumerate the charms combin'd
Within the little space, greeting the eyes,
Its unpretending precincts that confin'd.
Onward, in front, a mountain stream did rise
Up, whose long course the fascinated mind
(So apt the scene to awaken wildest themes)
Might localize the most romantic dreams.

24.

When winter torrents, by the rain and snow,
Surlily dashing down the hills, were fed,
Its mighty mass of waters seem'd to flow
With deafening course precipitous : its bed
Rocky, such steep declivities did shew
That towards us with a rapid course it sped,
Broken by frequent falls ; thus did it roam
In whirlpools eddying, and convulsed with foam.

25.

Flank'd were its banks with perpendicular rocks,
Whose scars enormous, sometimes grey and bare,

And sometimes clad with ash and gnarled oaks,
 The birch, the hazel, pine, and holly, were.
 Their tawny leaves, the sport of winter's shocks,
 Oft o'er its channel circled in the air ;
 While, on their tops, and mid-way up them, seen,
 Lower'd cone-like firs and yews in gloomiest green.

26.

So many voices from this river came
 In summer, winter, autumn, or the spring ;
 So many sounds accordant to each frame
 Of Nature's aspect, (whether the storm's wing
 Brooded on it, or pantingly, and tame,
 The low breeze crisp'd its waters) that, to sing
 Half of their tones, impossible ! or tell
 The listener's feelings from their viewless spell.

27.

When fires gleam'd bright, and when the curtain'd
 room,
 Well stock'd with books and music's implements,
 When children's faces, dress'd in all the bloom
 Of innocent enjoyments, deep content's
 Deepest delight inspir'd ; when nature's gloom
 To the domesticated heart presents
 (By consummate tranquility possess)
 Contrast, that might have stirr'd the dullest breast ;

28.

Yes,—in such hour as that—thy voice I've known.
Oh, hallow'd stream!—fitly so nam'd—(since tones
Of deepest melancholy swell'd upon
The breeze that bore it)—fearful as the groans
Of fierce night spirits! Yes, when tapers shone
Athwart the room (when, from their skiey thrones
Of ice-pil'd height abrupt, rush'd rudely forth,
Riding the blast, the tempests of the north;)

29.

Thy voice I've known to wake a dream of wonder!
For though 'twas loud, and wild with turbulence,
And absolute as is the deep-voic'd thunder,
Such fine gradations mark'd its difference
Of audibility, one scarce could sunder
Its gradual swellings from the influence
Of harp Æolian, when, upon the breeze,
Floats in a stream its plaintive harmonies.

30.

One might have thought, that spirits of the air
Warbled amid it in an undersong;
And oft one might have thought, that shrieks were there
Of spirits, driven for chastisement along
The invisible regions that above earth are.
All species seem'd of intonation (strong
To bind the soul, Imagination rouse,
Conjur'd from preternatural prison-house.

31.

But when the heavens are blue, and summer skies
 Are pictur'd in thy wave's cerulean glances,
Then thy crisp stream its course so gaily plies,
 Trips on so merrily in endless dances,
Such low sweet tone, fit for the time, does rise
 From thy swift course, methinks, that it enhances
The hue of flowers which decorate thy banks,
While each one's freshness seems to pay thee thanks.

32.

Solemn the mountains that the horizon close,
 From whose drear verge thou seem'st to issue forth,
Sorcery might fitly dwell, one could suppose,
 (Or any wondrous spell of heaven or earth,
Which e'en to name man's utterance not knows,)
 Amid the forms that mark thy place of birth.
Thither direct your eye, and you will find
All that excites the imaginative mind !

33.

Return we now to that delicious place,
 Where contravening banks impede thy course,
After that thou hast rush'd with rapid pace
 O'er many a shelving rock, where thou by force
Art check'd, and, settling for a little space
 Into a fairy lake, becom'st the source
Of other interest : here thy waves awhile
Linger, as charm'd, around a wood-crown'd isle.

34.

But see what bold majestic hill,* above
This little lake, swells into upper air !
Its undulating top might fitly prove
A test of form most exquisitely fair.
A knot of dwellings,† like a nest of love,
Hangs o'er the stream, as placed by nature there.
Beneath this hill, on a rock's beetling brow,
It peeps, 'mid trees, upon the waves below.

35.

A wide-arch'd bridge‡ here spans the stream, at last
Tir'd of confinement round that houseless isle :
A barn hangs o'er it. Fern, and ivy cast
(Clinging in part to rock, part to the pile
Of buildings there) in nature's happiest taste
A blending, which the group doth reconcile.
Here, Nature ! one, with most devoted heart
To thee, might stretch his love to forms of art.

36.

How have my children dallied with that pool !
There launch'd the little bark ; and there, in hours
Of ardent summer, sought their blood to cool,
Bathing beneath its rich and leafy bowers !
How oft, in winter, there, when freed from school,
Borne on the winged skait, melted the hours

* Loughrigg.

† Clappersgate.

‡ Brathay Bridge.

To moments, while its hollow rocks replied,
 Echoing their jocund glee from side to side.

37.

How oft have I, with book, alone, or oft
 While she, with whom society was bliss,
 Would lean upon my arm; or whispering soft
 To childhood's cherub-challenge for a kiss;
 Watch'd th' elder train—from lawn somewhat aloft—
 Bounded by every flower that beauteous is—
 Exultingly,—while from the river's side
 Headlong they plung'd, or clave its yielding tide!

38.

Ah, days for ever gone! Ye must no more
 Return to me! Yet will not I complain
 So long as it is given me to restore,
 In dreams poetic, your delights again!
 E'en now I see the child I lov'd of yore
 Rush to some cherish'd flower, nor ask in vain,
 With suppliant eye up-turn'd, where archly play'd
 The coy, sly smile,—grasping the well-aim'd spade,—

39.

Leave to transplant it to his own small plot!
 How oft has coat of mine sustain'd a rent,
 From strong solicitation, that this spot,
 Of which this blossom was chief ornament

I would repair to ! The small hand see shot,
With forked fingers, 'thwart the stalk, whence bent
The drooping floweret, that it so might raise
Its modest charms, to challenge all my praise !

40.

Ye are for ever gone, delightful days !
I linger round you, like a ghost that pines
Of one, whom Fate did prematurely raze
From being's catalogue, and still so 'twines
All its attachment round some form whose ways
Are mortal still, that, where *that* dwells, inclines
The constant sever'd one to hover ever !
Fade, of some joys, though frail, the memory never !

41.

And ye are such to me, ye, that, from union
Of parent's heart with childhood, once were mine ;
There is a blessedness in that communion,
'Tis so profound, so calm, yet so divine,
Try it—'tis perfect—by whate'er criterion :—
With manhood's deeper thoughts doth it combine
The reproduction of those days gone by,
When Heaven about our path and bed did lie.

42.

Yet, Heaven, I bend in utter passiveness
To each decree that seemeth best to Thee ;
I have no voice to ask for happiness
That's gone, to be restor'd once more to me !

Deal with me, Father, as thou wilt ! Possess
 My heart with resignation ! Finally,
 Let all things work to me for spiritual good ;
 Bless thy ways to me, though not understood ;

43.

And I am satisfied ! My prayer is heard !
 Then, while I dwell unknowing and unknown,
 In this vast city, 'mid a human herd
 Who little reck of that whence many a groan,
 And many a heaving sigh, my heart has stirr'd ;
 So might I sometimes make past joy my own,
 By thus commemorating what I keep
 Lock'd from all eyes—bless'd were the tears I weep !

44.

The flowers that deck'd that happy dwelling place,
 To me seem'd as such amaranthine flowers,
 As fitting are exclusively to grace
 The haunt of lovers, or Elysian bowers.
 On them, Love's purple light one well might trace,
 And Fancy flush'd them with aërial powers,
 And all their bloom and all their fragrance seem'd
 As if from Paradise alone they teem'd !

45.

The lavatera, paly pink and white ;
 Sweet peas of either hue ; the mignonette ;
 The queen of flowers in all its infinite
 Shades of perfection, there together met.—

And thence the breeze drew a more exquisite
Fragrance, from tufts of musky violet.—
The modest snow-drop, and the crocus there,
Pledg'd future flowery honours of the year.

46.

Liburnams, with the lilac* thrice array'd,
There droop'd with tufts of vegetable gold;
With these, Syringa form'd a screen, whose shade
Fenc'd all those flowers of whose charms we have
told.

Of branchy woof, with foliage interlaid,
The walls seem'd, of that cottage, which did hold
All my heart lov'd: on which the eye of day
Looking, knew there that all my treasure lay.

47.

Plants parasitical train'd there, aspired,
And found a fond protection; there did spread
Virginia's creeper, gorgeously attired
In leaves now brown, now green, yellow and red.
For its profuse umbrageousness desired
The traveller's joy, like curtains round a bed,
Luxuriantly wanton, with rich dower,
Transform'd our cottage to a leafy bower.

* Alluding to the white blossoms, and those of a red and blue purple,
of the lilac.

48.

The *Pyracanthus* with its glossy green,
And scarlet berries ; and, as yet unsung,
The jasmine white and yellow, deck'd this scene ;
And o'er our little porch tenacious clung,
And round each window, (while beneath them seen
Moss roses peep'd, like birds, in nests, when young,
From beds of leaves,) with red and purple flower
From thread-like stem, the pensile virgin's bower.

49.

The scene in front of our sweet dwelling place
So far I've traced.—Another now remains—
Fraught with a different, tho' as bright a grace—
T' excite from me commemorative strains.
As from the west this river ran its race,
And as it seemed with tributary pains
Purposely flowing to adorn our home—
Which, as with human eye, beheld it roam,

50.

For western was its front—so to the east
Backward, where stretch'd rich meads capaciously,
Broken by woody knolls, it seemed releas'd
From all that ruffled its tranquility.
Revert your gaze—the mountain waves compress'd,
And chaf'd by rocks, which rolled tumultuously
In eddies and o'er stones, now softly creep
Through cultivated scenes, as charmed to sleep.

51.

The river now is seen,—and now is lost
Behind a tuft of trees:—and now again
Emerges.—*Here*, its banks, with shrubs emboss'd,
Shew like a garden,—*there*, thro' wide champain
The blue sky in its calm blue channel, gloss'd
With Summer's sheen, is render'd back again.
As its lapse silent, on its surface float
The freighted barge, or more trim pleasure boat.

52.

At last, as round a wood-crown'd promontory
It slowly creeps, hid from all vulgar eyes,
In silence and in solitude most hoary,
Where rocks abrupt and naked scars arise
From forth its waves,—surrounded with meet glory
For celebrating Nature's mysteries,—
In consecrated scenes for beauty prized—
Its marriage with the lake is solemnized.

53.

Beyond these spacious meads of which I spake,
On which its waves a new charm did confer,
A mountain graciously doth seem to take
A semblance, to the stream's new character,
Adapted:—at a distance boldly break
Its outlines to the eye; like Lucifer
It seems to scale the heavens; but stretching wide,
A barrier to the horizon, its bleak pride

54.

Softens : and southward as it sweeps along,
 Each summit, tho' aspiring, still aspires
 Less than its brother, 'till at last among
 Scenes of high culture, where the eye desires
 In all a well-match'd softness, where the long,
 Long lake dies into distance, and retires,
 And mingles with the heavens, it yields its reign,
 To the soft beauties of a smiling plain.—

55.

Southward it yields its reign.—Northward, there rise—
 Screening the vale at once from each rude wind,
 And satisfactory too as boundaries
 To such a rich display as here you find
 Of all in Nature that most tempts the eyes—
 Mountains and rocks ; with trees of every kind,
 The visiting of keener winds which brook,
 Their base is varied, and each shelter'd nook.

56.

Amid this vale, by its peculiar tree
 Screen'd and half hid, full many a cot doth gleam—
 Of snowy whiteness some ; while others, see!
 Of the rough rock's grey hue ; at once, to them,
 A parent and a shelter ! willingly
 To the rude pile, with whose hard blocks did teem
 Its fostering bosom, doth it shelter lend :—
 —Thus Nature's sternest forms her sons befriend.

57.

See, at yon mountain's base, all interspers'd
With trees, *where* peeps a village-chapel tower?
Thence was my young imagination nurs'd,
There hoped I in some future favour'd hour
Of life, that every pressure might be burst
Which cripples man of half his native power.
Yes, tho' that spot unseen, with dreams I panted,
'Till *it* I saw, abiding-place they wanted.

58.

Dreams afterwards I dream'd, and this the place
To which their consummation evermore
I did refer. There is a mountain grace,
A grace peculiar, which I ne'er before,
Or since, beheld, in its romantic face :
In cove of mighty hills, amid the roar
Of unseen cataracts, whose voice you hear,
It stands !—meet haunt for visionary fear !—

59.

Can I forget, when,—after having through
The long day, for the first time, travelled
'Mid mountain scenes,—towards this spot I drew
At close of day, as eve on all things shed
A dubious curtain—while, as if with dew
Reeking, all vegetation glistened
From copious rains—since many pelting showers
Had marked the fortune of its varied hours ?—

60.

Can I forget the ravishment I felt,
 Winding my way amid the tangled trees,
 When first thy own* peculiar torrent dealt
 Out unexpectedly its melodies,—
 While as the last ray from the west did melt—
 To me; untutor'd in the mysteries
 Of nature—and as much in those ungifted
 The spirit's mysteries, by Nature lifted?

61.

No, never! Ambleside, my youth's first home—
 Home of my fancy! Haven of my heart!
 Though o'er the world I be constrain'd to roam,
 From thy dear image I shall never part!
 Thou hast been much to me! with thee did come
 My first domestic bliss! Towards thee did start,
 As to a goal, all my deep treasured schemes
 Of fairy happiness—youth's morning gleams!

62.

Still thou art much to me! I need but say
 One word, to prove how much! Of heaven's best
 gifts
 The choicest—eight dear children saw the day
 First in thy lovely precincts! and still lifts

* Stock-gill Force.

Its head but one rude chain of hills, the ray
Of morn to meet betwixt thy site, and shifts
The scene to that lone spot, whose turf beneath
I did one darling to the earth bequeath.—

63.

Dear Innocent, thou sleepest there ! could sense
Be thine within thy narrow earthy bed,
Thou dost repose where spring flowers' redolence
Might on thy powers a balmy influence shed.
The mossy stone from storms thy sole defence !
The thymy turf sole covering for thy head !
Thou moulderest, and the wild flowers on thy tomb,
Which bloom so sweet, once equall'd not thy bloom.

64.

Yet, for thy sake, dear child ! is consecrate
The region to the which I did commit
Thy mortal relics ; and I hope that fate
Will give me yet one little hour, to sit
And muse upon thy bed ! Or soon, or late,
He who writes this must fill one like to it !
Though innocent as thee he cannot die,
Yet to thy home may his freed spirit fly !

65.

To Heaven, the Infant's home ! Of Innocence
The inalienable port, the certain haven !

Souls cannot be disherited from thence,
 'Till it from them have been asunder riven.
 If of a Sinner 'tis the residence,—
 Through mercy and free grace to man is given,—
 And through the atoning blood of him who died,—
 Even to *knock*, where gates for babes ope wide.

66.

There is a time when on all things* a glory
 Lays a rich colouring tongue can never tell ;
 When e'en with mountain from snow-tempest hoary,
 By fusion fine, and by a passionate spell,
 And interminglings as of fairy story,
 Love can link forms in beauty which excel.
 When gloom voluptuous seems, and there's an union
 'Twixt all created things with strange communion.

67.

There is a powerful presence then of life !
 An impulse, which, though active, consecrates
 Scenes where most hopeless blemishes are rife !
 We bid defiance then to mortal fates !
 With spots most negative we're not at strife,
 There most man feels how much himself creates !
 While o'er the richest vision of the senses,
 The same power sheds exalting influences !

* See Mr. Wordsworth's marvellous and sublime ode, "On the intimations of Immortality," from recollections of "Early Childhood."

68.

Oh! when I've seen my little garden bloom!
With snow-drop, crocus, purple, yellow, white,
Though snow-drifts menac'd all their charms t'entomb,
I've felt a permeating full delight!—
Those blossoms seem'd first heralds of the doom
Pronounc'd on winter; and their exquisite,
Yet simple beauty, was to me a token,
That Nature's gladdening bond was yet unbroken.

69.

There is for him, to whom imagination
The faculty allows of doubling all
The joy we owe to what excites sensation,
Which never words could worthily extol!
A hue, a scent, a secret combination
Of trifles, that more serious scenes recall,
Each, and all, have, for him, however light
Or trivial, the essential infinite!—

70.

To him so gifted from rapidity
Of thought, and impulse still more rapid, rise
Such quick associating faculty,
Such aptitude whatever he espies
In wide-diverging series to apply;
That oft, from what would seem non-entities
To other men, the potent spell he sways,
Into vast structures causes him to raise.—

71.

Where this rapidity the mind possesses,
And with it perceptivity intense
Of character, in common scenes, whose stress is
On other men devoid of influence,
There is no form however mean its dress is
Where subtle interest has no prevalence.
Bare walls such temperament would fertilize,
It feels most power, where fortune most denies.

72.

E'en bleakest scenes assume a character
Amid their unproductive desolation;
Such minds from them would potently infer,
By dim and delicate association,—
While others saw in them death's register,—
By apt and energetical creation,—
Creation, that converts the negative,
By breathing powers which *to love*, only live,

73.

A sway, though saddening, not to paralyze :—
Dark heaths 'twould people with appropriate forms,
And it would give intelligence to sighs
Of Nature, in her desolating storms.—
Exulting in its strength, 'twould recognize
It's power most chiefly, when alone it warms
Benumbing dreariness, and most with awe,
Acts on, though talks not of, love's genial law !

74.

'Tis curious to observe how different men
Contemplate Nature's works with different feeling ;
One walks to botanize ; another's ken
Pierces the bowels of the earth, thence stealing
His mineralogic specimens ; again,
A third is ever frowardly repealing
Nature's untoward tricks,—in wonder rooted
Just as a scene is to his easel suited.—

75.

Give me the man who, for thy sake alone—
Not for his hortus siccus ; cabinet
Of fossil, spar, shell, coral, mineral, stone ;
Or for his pencil's sake, doth contemplate,
Thee, Nature ! Give the man who oft has known
Himself, when he saw thee, self to forget ;
And in a depth of ravishment transfused,
On thee, with silent meditation, mused !

76.

And let this meditation heightened be,
Religion ! by thy flame, to adoration !
And then for things of earth what careth he ?
For what distress hath he not consolation ?
He who in Solitude his God can see.
'Mid Nature's loftiest scenes, has found salvation
From all the petty miseries of life ;
A balm has gain'd for prejudice and strife.—

77.

Oh, cultivate this sense, and 'twill be found
Exceeding great reward, and manifold,
To bring its votaries! In the earth's vast round
No scene presents itself so poor and cold,
As not for him to be with blessings crown'd :
He has a curious eye, which can behold
Topic for admiration every where!
A charm in scenes fit to inspire despair!

78.

A tree, a cottage, or a child at play,
And where the earth is destitute, the sky,
Fantastic clouds, when on them the sun's ray
Confers e'en supernatural imagery!
The speechless lustre of the new-born day!
The solemn pageant when night broods on high!
In these, and thousand more such forms as these,
His moisten'd eye his Maker's goodness sees!

79.

Blessings be on my children! We have long
Wander'd in sever'd paths of life apart!
I rather think, this desultory song
Draws towards a close. I cannot please my heart
Better, than its last numbers to prolong,
By twining round them, with poetic art,
Your several recollections :—by divulging
Day-dreams in which 'bout you I'm oft indulging.

80.

May He who hears the ravens cry, and feeds
The stork and bittern in the wilderness,
May He your portion be! May He who leads
Your sire in labyrinthine tracklessness,
At last unite us all! And may the seeds
Sown early in your souls, from deepest stress
Of his affection, into blossoms shoot;
And may he yet survive to see their fruit.

81.

The ways of Heaven are mystery: and oft
Through means, to us, unfathomably dark,
And likely least, in their eyes, who aloft
Ne'er turn them, to obtain the wish'd-for *mark*,
Us He conducts to *it*. At once, in soft
And smiling harbour, steals life's shatter'd bark!
Heaven's bitterest visitings, in rugged ways,
Ending in bliss, oft claim our loudest praise.

82.

Some of you still, in that delightful land,
(Which in these lays has many a votive line
From me extorted) some still tarry! Wand
Of fairy could not raise a more divine
Assemblage of all charms than there expand!
May you from it, as from oracular shrine,

150 *A Parent's Address to his Children.*

A portion of the consecrated spirit,
So largely dealt to its own Bard,* inherit!

83.

May you come forth from thence, each baser thing,
Each worldly maxim, every selfish aim,
Despising! Be ye borne on Fancy's wing!
And may Imagination's holiest flame,
Like magic vestment, round your spirits cling!
Be like a wall of fire 'twixt you and shame!
May Nature fix you to her love for ever;
Nor change, your constant yearnings from her sever!

84.

I well remember days I've spent with you
In that delicious place. See ye me not
When the pil'd mountain's height attracts your view?
Recall ye ne'er how oft, upon that spot,
Hand grasp'd in hand, we've stray'd where violets
grew,
Or primrose pale? How oft ye've forward shot
If seen fine tuft, like diamonds in a casket?
How soon deposited within your basket?

* William Wordsworth, Esq.—To whose name, to add any tribute of praise to his poetical character, were not only superfluous; but the author feels that, as coming from himself, it were presumptuous.

85.

I feel a yearning towards you, not to be,
By aught, save breathings of the soul, imparted.
God bless you in Himself! And bless He me
In you! And may our hearts be never parted!
Then though, in course of things, we may not see
Each one the other, we can ne'er be thwarted
Of that communion dear, and interchange
Of spirits, which nor time nor place estrange!

86.

Oh, Children! when ye gaze upon those mountains,
Think *there* your father's spirit still might dwell!
Recall, when looking on its sky-born fountains,
The impassion'd and unutterable spell
That bound him to them, as Jove, with his frown, chains
Prometheus to the rock: He lov'd them well,
The forms which ye now see, and from them drew
Full many a dream of preternatural hue.

87.

Is it that there's a misery entail'd
On all impassion'd creatures? They may be
Compared to lyre Æolian, which—when fail'd
The breeze to woo it so invitingly—
Wax'd dumb and voiceless. Yes, those beings hail'd
Perpetual influences of harmony,
Keeping themselves in languid passiveness,
And thinking gales would evermore caress.

88.

They, like the flower dependent on the breeze,
Dependent on the sun, and culture's aid,
Shrink in their sensitiveness when all these—
To them appliances so needful—fade.
They have no self-pois'd power, when ministries
Of Love are gone, to make them not afraid.
They are as insects, basking in the sun;
Unpitied, soon their earthly course is run!

89.

The bower of pleasure is composed of *bloom*,
Shrinking from sun-beams fierce, and pattering rains,
Like to a fair maid, who though, to the tomb,
Her hard fate destine her, nathless retains
Her living beauty; soon with cheerless gloom
Must it be shrouded, while no trace remains
Of its once-glorious aspect. Death, grim chief,
Lowers o'er its tempest toss'd, sere, lonely leaf!

90.

And yet 'twas once engarlanded with flowers;—
And all that precious is in earth or heaven,
Seem'd there to fall in renovating showers,
As if the very elements had striven,
And all the essences of fragrant powers,
That in immortal bloom it should have thriven.
The rose blush'd there, the violet in its prime,
And amaranthine plants of Heaven's own clime.

90.

Rich was the dew that on its blossoms glisten'd!
Its exquisite perfumes seemed to draw thence
A more voluptuous softness; and who listen'd
Might think the very leaves had eloquence.
Such fairy music when the breezes kiss'd, and
Played with their tendrils, drew existence thence.
Armida or Alcina ne'er possessed,
For love's delight, more necromantic nest.

91.

There was a rill there, whose transparency
And gurgling freshness, well might make one dream
It was immortal. Gods might wish to hie,
And goddesses, from heaven, in its pure stream
To bathe! And Gods and Goddesses were nigh,
Indeed! For, to its inmates, life did seem,
And all its forms, a shadowing forth of those
Transcendant pageantries, which bards disclose.

92.

The Sylvans haunted, and benignant Pan,
Diana and her Nymphs, its precincts wild;
There, with her doves, Venus did often plan
Her snares, and held frank dalliance with her child.
E'en Jove might wish once more to be a swan,
And Leda once more to be unbeguil'd,
That he might float upon a little lake,
To which its stream a mirthful course did take.

93.

Who has not felt in youth, that youthful hopes
 Can realize all that the Bards e'er sung?
And here their dreams all liv'd in airy groupes,
 For ever joyful and for ever young,
(Or so they seem'd :) the real needs not tropes,
 Nor are there tropes for him, whose full heart, stung
With sense of being e'en to perfect bliss,
Feels that to be, includes all happiness!—

94.

Surely, the poets of the elder times—
 (I talk not now—my theme permits it not—
How much they lost of rapture that sublimes,
 Through *heavenly influence*, man's terrestrial lot ;))
Surely, these poets—to whom Gods sometimes,
 And Goddesses, across their vision shot
Like to familiar forms—must in earth see,
To us, an unconceiv'd festivity.—

95.

To them each fountain, and to them each grove,
 The weltering waters, and the mountains steep,
Teem'd with forms dire or bland, which sure must
 prove
 Of power t'impart a consecration deep
T' earth's haunts so tenanted! What dreams of love
 Must have invited Cyprian maids to sleep
Beneath their azure skies, whose glittering sheen
Was but an effluence of their mystic queen?—

96.

But earth is tenanted as heretofore,
While the young blood runs mantling through the
veins,
Howe'er austere the hereditary lore,
Thy fire, Imagination, that restrains.
Yet, in that bower of pleasure as of yore,
And yet to him expell'd not its domains,
Lives the same spirit that, in times of old,
Peopled the earth with beings manifold.—

97.

But, at the same time, howe'er much I prize,
And much I prize it, classical tradition,
I still must feel what difference there lies
'Twixt it, and gospel truth's sublimer mission.
From one for fancy many charms may rise;
To the sense grateful is its exhibition!
This its sole boast! how can the heart, most fond
To muse on it, find excellence beyond.—

98.

But, in the gospel page, Imagination,
Herself eclips'd e'en in her highest blaze,
May find! while there dejected Tribulation,
On solaces, for every woe, may gaze
Herself, to heights sublime, calm Meditation
Thence, from theme inexhaustible, may raise!
Intelligence may there have perfect scope,
Nurtur'd by Faith, by Charity, and Hope!

156 *Parallel between the Imagery of Heathenism.*

99.

I envy more the most unletter'd hind
Who, from the gospel's page, can see reflected
Truths, that in him responsive feelings find,
Than e'en the man on earth the most respected,
If only from wealth, rank, and sense combin'd
Rise that respect! Sooner had I selected
One *contrite feeling* as my dearest treasure,
Than all earth gives, though given in triple measure!—

100.

Wealth's but a corpse lying in state, if prized
Save from benevolent wish to spend its store
For other's good! Pride, a disease, disguised
In borrow'd trappings; rotten at the core!
And Intellect, by Truth not exercised,
Arms in a madman's hand t' increase the more
His power of evil! Save *Faith*, all produce
Good, only correspondent to their *use*!

101.

And be this *Faith* your dower, my children! may,
“The day spring from on High” on you descend!
Oh, may your hearts such feelings ever sway,
That you may have your Maker for your friend!
Then, whether I can help you on your way
Or not, *its goal* a blessing will attend!
Go on your road, and prosper then! Engage
The God of Jacob for your heritage!

Titus and Gisippus.

Magnanima menzogna ! or quando è il vero,
Si bello, che si possa a te preporre?—

Tasso. Canto 2 ; stanza 22.



ADVERTISEMENT.



A HINT for the following tale was borrowed from a story in the fourth volume, page 152, in the duodecimo edition of the Decamerone of Boccacio : but the author can scarcely allow that he is farther indebted to that celebrated store-house of matter for tales, novels, and plays, than for the trite incident of one friend surrendering his mistress to another. The character of Lesbia is not only wholly of the author's moulding, but also of his entire invention ; and all that there is of character in the heroine of the piece is superinduced on the story in the original, as are the few incidents which he has chosen to introduce. The author has adhered to the names allotted by Boccacio to the three principal characters ; and when he has coupled this confession with that already made, as respects the incident of the surrender of a mistress from one

friend to another, he believes, that he has stated the only points of resemblance between this little effort in verse, and the narrative of the celebrated Italian writer; to the perusal of which, however, as it certainly led him to try how far the vehicle of rhyme might be made subservient to the treatment of such a subject, he thinks it most natural to advert in this its little explanatory exposition. The author may add, that, in the manner of opening the narration, conducting the march of it, and in its denouement, he has wholly departed from the original.

TITUS AND GISIPPUS.

1.

“ Go to Sophronia,” Gisippus cried,
“ And tell her what I’ve said.” To Titus so,—
A youthful Roman, who profoundly sigh’d
From his inmost heart, and press’d with heaviest woe,
The *former* spake. Sophronia was *his* bride!—
To-morrow was their nuptial feast. But, lo!—
As chance would have it, claims of urgent need
From Athens drew him with reluctant speed.

2.

From Athens he must go this very eve,
And not before to-morrow’s dawn return,
No time had he to ask his fair one’s leave,
No time to say, farewell! A long sojourn
In the same dwelling, so did interweave
The hearts of these two youths, that each did yearn
With more than a friend’s love towards the other;
Each seem’d to each far dearer than a brother.

3.

A faint response did Titus make : his friend,
 To this, in thought much troubled, no heed paid.
 Gisippus, who his swift car did ascend,
 Beyond the city walls was soon convey'd.
 Titus, when he was out of sight, did bend
 His slow and tottering step—like one dismay'd---
 Towards his chamber : there, upon his bed,
 He threw his form, and passionately said,—

4.

“ Gisippus, what hast thou on me impos'd ?
 'Twere death ! 'twere madness ! worse,—it were a
 crime !
 To follow thy injunctions ! Thus disclos'd
 Would be that love which I, so long a time,
 Have smother'd in my breast. Thou hast repos'd
 For months in fullest confidence.—Sublime
 In thy own passion for the passive maid,
 Thou, by thy perfect trust, art self-betray'd.

5.

“ Hadst thou not been by thy own love possess'd,
 Did not each feeling towards Sophronia tend,
 Ere now the dreadful secret of my breast
 Had made thee see a traitor in thy friend.—
 Oh, Heaven, what agony hath been the guest
 Of this distracted heart ! Remorse can rend,
 No more than it rends me, those whom the gods
 To torment doom in nethermost abodes.

6.

“ What crime is there that I have not conceiv'd?
Seduction! Murder! Breach of every vow!
Are all familiar inmates! Not achiev'd,
Because not dared; not since I disallow
Their black suggestions: or, because bereav'd,
Have, in past moments, been the when and how!
I am a torment to myself! nay, more,
My heart is canker'd to the very core!

7.

“ If I am in her presence, certain 'tis
That my pent passion will be thus betray'd;
My trembling knees, my faltering voice, will this
Clearly make manifest; and by the shade
Of pale despondency alone, I wis,
Will all my inward conflicts be display'd.
Lovers are lynx-eyed: by too many a token,
Although unutter'd, will my love be spoken!

8.

“ Yet something must be done! Sophronia waits;—
This evening waits Gisippus' dear approach;
To-morrow;—and th' inexorable Fates
Cannot reclaim her from his nuptial couch!—
I burn!—I rave!—To-morrow's sun rebates
All farther expectation! Then I touch
My sorrow's crisis! If that morrow's sun
See her his bride, my thread of life is spun!

9

“ Could I another send ? This must not be !
 Secret his going is ;—nor must be told
 To mortal ear ! Nor, though unknown the plea
 For mystery, right, by any means, I hold
 To break the covenant of secrecy.—
 The task is left to me, to see the cold,
 Questionless, faint, and unexpressive lip,—
 Whose honey he this night was doom’d to sip,—

10.

“ Wax pale, relax, and quiver, while I say,
 My truant comrade disappoints thy hope.
 Can I bear this ? Can I see her the prey
 Of sorrow for another ? See her mope ;
 Now come, now go, restless, and in dismay ?—
 And must I be the chosen one to cope
 With baffled wishes, from her breast remove
 Doubt, and drink poison from that nest of love ?

11.

“ Have I not, with unheard-of fortitude,
 From her dear dwelling check’d my eager feet ?
 How oft have I seem’d like a thing endued
 With two-fold* faculties ; when in the street

* “ But Myrrha, sleepless with the unconquer’d fire,
 Broods o’er the furies of her wild desire.

Which thither led, whenever I pursued
That path, I seemed to stop; and when retreat
From thence I made, I seem'd to go: and so,
My life was worn in endless to and fro.—

12.

“ Have I not oft Gisippus' questions braved?
Hath he not oft upbraided me with wrong,
And slight done to his passion, if I craved
Excuse, when he, with importuning tongue,
Urged me to visit her? Oft have I waived
Such assignation, when so fierce and strong
Impulse did goad me to behold his bride,
That it perplex'd me much my pangs to hide!

Now she despair'd; to try she now decreed;
And shame forbade, and passion urg'd, the deed:
While incompatible temptations rend,
She feels the conflict, but foresees no end:
The racking whirl makes all her soul its prey;
She stay'd, and wish'd to go: she went, and wish'd to stay.”

*The passage thus rendered is from a free translation of Ovid's
Metamorphoses, by the Author.*

“ At virgo Cinyreia pervigil igni
Carpitur indomito: furiosaque vota retractat.
Et modò desperat, modò vult tentare; pudetque,
Et cupit; et, quod agat, non invenit.”

Ovidii Metamorphoseon, lib. 10, v. 369.

13.

“And shall I now, e’en when I thought almost
 The conflict conquer’d, when I thought to-morrow
 Would free me from so perilous a post,
 Plunge with deliberate rashness in such sorrow?
 Before,—as *now*, thou hast done, to my cost,—
 Thou ne’er from any exigence didst borrow
 A purpose so impatient of delay;
 Didst so imperiously thy will betray.”

14.

“What had ere now chanc’d I can scarcely tell,
 Had not that sickness laid me on my bed,
 From whence it seems as if by miracle,—
 And as by fever, by my passion fed,
 Giving false strength,—that I am so far well
 As to be rais’d! Ah, let it not be said
 ’Till love, *unhappy love*, have been endured,
 That any soul to suffering is inured.”

15.

“Then of that old man think! Of Chræmes think!
 Gisippus’ father, lately dead! Of him,
 Oh think! Doth not thy graceless bosom shrink,
 Oh Titus, would’st thou not that limb by limb
 Thou wert torn piecemeal, rather than so sink
 In abjectness, that, when e’en to the brim
 His son sees joy’s cup full, thy hands distraught
 Shall dash it from him, ere he quaff the draught?”

16.

“ Dost thou not owe to him far more than life ?
Or far, far more than that which life sustains ?
To whom dost thou owe that thy mind is rife,
Or *was*, with glorious thoughts, and loftiest strains
Of lofty Bards ? How often when the strife
Of a long sickness, fraught with dreariest pains,
Which brought him to his grave, press'd on him hard,
Would he his own pangs not seem to regard,

17.

“ While with one feeble hand my hand he press'd ;
And with the other that of his sole child,
His son ? And was it not his last behest,
Spoken with tearful cheeks and accents mild,
That in Gisippus' and in Titus' breast
A lasting love should burn ? And then he smil'd ;—
Yes, the old dying Chræmes smil'd, when we
Bow'd to his meek request assentingly !”

18.

“ Who bore with all the turbulence of my youth ?
And all my wayward moods and froward ways ?
Who was it praised me, ere he could *in truth*
Praise me, that I one day might *merit* praise ?
Who was it put off, my fierce heart to soothe,
The old man's character in life's last days ;
Smother'd his sufferings, that he so might be
Companion to my immaturity ?”

19.

“ And shall *this* be my recompense, for such
 Immensity of obligation ? This?—
 That I shall, when his only son doth touch
 Upon the very brink of earthly bliss,
 Plant thorns and daggers in the nuptial couch?—
 Tear *her* from him, from whose electric kiss
 He drinks in rapture ? Oh, forbid it, ye
 Powers, that preside o’er faith and amity !”

20.

“ Affection, Reverence, Gratitude, and Love,
 Friendship, and Truth, ah, whither are ye fled ?
 Passion, Desire, are all I now can prove ;
 And if by Virtue I am sometimes led,
 ’Tis but in *form* ! Because I can’t remove
 At once, the trammels round me she hath spread.
 Sophronia ! See Sophronia ? I’m undone !—
 Like life’s worst plague her presence should I shun !—

21.

“ But I have pledg’d myself to go :—and go
 I must !—But will, alas ! my tottering feet
 To her threshold bear me ? and if ’twere e’en so,
 Will my parch’d quivering lips his words repeat ? —
 Will not these throbbing nerves, these veins, whose flow
 Of madden’d blood makes audibly to beat
 My bursting heart,—which seems as if ’twere wrung
 With life’s last conflict,—paralyze my tongue ?”

22.

“But go I must! The motives, on the which
Gisippus tore himself from hence, require
The strictest secrecy: if known, a breach,
As he himself confess’d, they might inspire
Betwixt his bride and him. He could not reach
Then the high summit of his heart’s desire?—
Let me not think on that! My brain turns round!—
In that one thought all good resolve is drown’d!”

23.

That he might not have time to think how great
His danger was, that danger he defied!
His course he bent towards Sophronia’s gate.—
Or ere he saw Gisippus’ destin’d bride,
Ye gentles listen to me, while I state
Who the maid was whom him it terrified
So much to meet: while I to you display
The source of his love for Sophronia.—

24.

Sophronia was a maid of gentle birth,
*But little known, less seen, and never prais’d:
†Within the precincts of her lonely hearth
On her Gisippus only fondly gaz’d,

~~~~~  
\* Brama assai, poco spera, e nulla chiede.

*Tasso, Can. 2do. Stan. 16.*

† E’ il suo pregio maggior, che tra le mura

D’angusta casa asconda i suoi gran pregi.

*Tasso, Can. 2do. Stan. 14.*

Beyond that limit none! By lofty worth,  
 And regal sentiments, this maid was rais'd  
 To pitch of noblest feeling. In her cell,  
 Save an aged mother, none with her did dwell.—

## 25.

Besides that she was sprung from noble line,—  
 By chances, though fall'n hence, not here to be  
 Recounted,—none could rightfully confine  
 Gisippus' choice, since, of both parents, he  
 Was now bereft. This maid did he incline  
 To make his wife, and when betroth'd was she,  
 He, from the loom t' exempt her, whence she gain'd  
 A pittance small, her mother which sustain'd,

## 26.

With generous interference, ere he was  
 Their frequent inmate, had conjur'd the dame  
 Once, in Sophronia's absence, from his mass  
 Of wealth ancestral, stipend small to claim.—  
 'Twas told Sophronia, that this sum did pass  
 Into their hands, by death of one, by name  
 Known only to her, a far kinsman, who  
 Had left her this sum with preamble due.—

## 27.

One day to Titus he divulg'd his choice,  
 And ask'd his friend, (as one their hearts were, so  
 One was their dwelling,) kindly to rejoice,  
 Since in his path Fortune had chanc'd to throw

A maid, whose gentle mien, and soothing voice,  
Had caus'd his heart so fervently to glow,  
That, finding he could not her charms withstand,  
At last he'd challeng'd her t' accept his hand.—

28.

“Now all,” exclaimed Gisippus, “that I want  
Is your approval. Come with me, and see  
This modest paragon.” Titus did grant  
His prayer at once, and cried, “most willingly!”  
Ah, from that hour, poor youth, thy life was scant  
Of hope and joy: all pleasure fled from thee!—  
In one rash look thou gav'st thyself away;  
And shadow of thyself wert from that day!—

29.

Titus, of noble parents, noble son;—  
From Rome was sent to Chræmes by his sire,  
Who this youth, and Gisippus, plac'd with one  
Who, in their bosoms, did the love inspire  
Of virtuous lore, who both of them had won  
To all which worthily good men admire.  
The man who thus had nurtur'd these for fame,  
Was Aristippus!—A distinguish'd name!—

30.

In Titus, now, is all his labour lost.  
From that day forth he pines, and pines. At last,  
Once near Piræus while he was engross'd,  
Watching the ocean-billows as they pass'd,

He saw Sophronia in a small boat toss'd,  
 A bow-shot from the shore. She seem'd aghast.  
 The place was rocky, and the swelling wave,  
 Threaten'd her momentarily a watery grave.—

## 31.

From Salamis she came, where she had been  
 To see some kinsman of her buried sire;  
 The urgent peril, in which she was seen,  
 From Titus instant succour did require.  
 O'er the boat's side he saw her white arm lean;  
 Wave after wave, now higher, and now higher,  
 Broke o'er it, as the small skiff 'twould immerge;  
 And, worse than this, rocks lurk'd beneath the surge.

## 32.

His robe he flung on earth, and in the sea,  
 Thoughtless of danger, plung'd without delay;  
 Scarce had two waves roll'd o'er him, scarce was he  
 Beheld a second time to brave the spray  
 And surging swell, which threaten'd yawningly  
 His strenuous toil to terminate for aye,  
 When, just as she the name of Titus shriek'd,  
 Sophronia's boat against a rock was wreck'd.—

## 33.

He plung'd amain! She sank; and, as it seem'd,  
 Never to rise! The parting ocean clos'd  
 Over her gulphing form, you would have deem'd  
 That strength of ten men then did interpose

All knit in Titus, so to have redeem'd  
Her on whom secretly his heart repos'd.  
One moment was her gleamy robe beheld;  
The next 'twas lost! Her doom a faint groan knell'd!

## 34.

Madden'd by agony, by transport strung,  
With panting toss the boisterous sea he clave,  
And as his strenuous arms he backward flung,  
His black locks floated on the foamy wave.—  
Now must the deed be done! E'en now among  
Those rocks must he now snatch her from the grave,  
Or all is lost for ever, he too lost!  
For ne'er had he surviv'd whom he lov'd most!—

## 35.

Prone 'mid the rocks he dives! He's gone for aye!—  
Thus would have cried who saw him disappear:  
But, as it chanc'd, upon that stormy day  
Not one was gazing from Piræus' pier.—  
Two mariners who brought Sophronia  
From Salamis, so much were, by their fear  
And present danger, overcome, that they,  
Their own escape, for nothing would delay.—

## 36.

Prone 'mid the rocks he dives! Long time had he  
Been now invisible! At last he rose,  
Bearing in his right arm triumphantly  
The dearest burthen it did e'er enclose.



Just then the ocean-swell propitiously  
 Drove landward, so that ere again he throws  
 His other arm to dash away the billow,  
 He gain'd a footing on the ebbing shallow.—

## 37.

He is on land ; on safe land is he come :  
 Sophronia's head he pillows on a stone :  
 A death-like paleness hath usurp'd her bloom ;  
 Her head falls lapsing on his shoulder. None  
 Were there to give him aid ! He fears her doom  
 Is seal'd for evermore ! At last a groan  
 Burst from her livid lips, and then the word  
 " Titus " he heard, or fancied that he heard !—

## 38.

Where was he then ? From death to life restor'd !—  
 From hell to heaven ! To rapture from despair !  
 His hand he now lays on that breast ador'd ;  
 And now her pulse he feels ; and now—(beware,  
 Beware, rash youth ! ) his lips draw in a hoard  
 Of perfume from her lips, which though they were  
 Still clos'd, yet oft the inarticulate sigh,  
 Issuing from thence, he drank with ecstasy.

## 39.

Still were they cold ; her hands were also cold ;  
 Those hands he chaf'd, and perhaps to restore  
 To her chill paly lips their warmth, so bold  
 He grew, he kiss'd those pale lips o'er and o'er.

Nay, to revive in their most perfect mould  
Their wonted rubeous hue, he dared do more;—  
He glued his mouth to them, and breath'd his breath  
To die with her, or rescue her from death.—

40.

Thou art undone, mad youth! The fire of love  
Burn'd so intensely in his throbbing veins,  
That, had she been a statue, he might prove  
A new Pygmalion, and the icy chains  
Of death defy. Well then might he remove  
The torpor which her o'erwrought frame sustains.—  
If *sweet*, revival from such menac'd death;  
*More sweet*, revival by a lover's breath!

41.

She feels the delicate influence through her thrill,  
And with seal'd eye lay in a giddy trance,  
Scarce dare she open them, when had her will  
On this been bent, she felt the power to glance  
Their lights on him. No, with a lingering skill—  
Oh, blame her not!—she did awhile enhance  
The bliss of that revival, by a feign'd  
Or half-feign'd shew of conflict still sustain'd.

42.

At last, she look'd!—*They* look'd!—Eye met with eye!  
The whole was told! The lover, and the lov'd,  
The ador'd, and the adorer, ecstasy  
Never 'till then experienc'd—swiftly prov'd!—

Thanks for his aid were a *mean courtesy!*  
 They were forgotten! Transport unprov'd,  
 This was his guerdon; this his rich reward!  
 An hour's oblivion with Sophronia shar'd!

## 43.

Then all the world was lost to them, in one  
 Fulness of unimaginable bliss!—  
 Infinity was with them! and the zone  
 Unbound whence Venus sheds upon a kiss  
 Nectareous essences, and raptures known  
 Ne'er save to moments *unprepar'd* as this!  
 And in that earnest impulse did they find  
 Peace and intensity, alike combin'd!

## 44.

To frame such joy, these things are requisite;  
 A lofty nature; the exalting stress  
 Of stimulating trials; which requite,  
 And antecedent sorrows, doubly bless.  
 Consummate sympathies, which souls unite;  
 And a conjuncture, whence no longer press  
 Impulses—long as these delights we prove—  
 From one thing foreign to the world of love.

## 45.

This could not last! Not merely would a word;—  
 A gesture would, a look, dissolve the charm!—  
 Could *home* be mention'd, nor the thought restor'd,  
 To her remembrance, of Gisippus' warm

And manly love? Bless'd be ye with your hoard  
Of transient bliss, and be ye safe from harm,  
Ye fond, fond pair! But think not joys so high  
Can be inwoven with reality!

## 46.

At last a swift revulsion through her frame  
And o'er her countenance stole: a sudden pause!  
Her eyes, which had imbib'd a piercing flame,  
Fell at once rayless; and her bosom draws  
One in-pent sigh; one look imploring came  
O'er her fine face! Titus knew well the cause  
Of this so sudden change: he dar'd not speak;  
He dar'd not move; dar'd not its reason seek!

## 47.

Some minutes they were silent. Night advanc'd;  
Titus, towards himself, Sophronia press'd,  
But dumb he stood; upward she faintly glanc'd  
A look upbraiding, and upon his breast—  
Gently reclining—lay like one entranc'd!  
No longer now was happiness her guest.  
She starts! She cries "Gisippus!"—All is told!—  
Cold fell the word, on bosoms still more cold!

## 48.

They rose, and crept along in silentness.—  
Sophronia reach'd her home, but nothing said,  
E'en to her mother, of her past distress.  
Her threshold past not Titus.—Thence he fled,

Soon as in safety he the maid did guess,  
 Like to a madman madden'd more with dread !  
 Nor ever of this night, or of its spell  
 Of mighty love, did he breathe syllable !

## 49.

Not that between Sophronia and the youth  
 Agreement had been made to hide the thing ;  
 But, such a consciousness of the whole truth  
 Each felt, and such remorse did either wring,  
 That nothing, from each passion-sealed mouth,  
 Of what had chanc'd could e'en a whisper wring.  
 From that time they ne'er met, from that time ne'er  
 Did Titus see Sophronia any where.

## 50.

The youth\* himself divulg'd, in that strong fit  
 Of anguish which his spirit did sustain,  
 When to his care Gisippus did commit  
 The trust, by which he doom'd him to explain  
 His absence to Sophronia,—that love lit  
 Such malady in every fev'rous vein  
 That life with death long struggled. 'Twas e'en so !—  
 E'en now his health was but an empty shew.

## 51.

Yet love a hectic o'er his cheek did spread ;  
 Love lent a liquid lustre to his eyes,

-----  
 \* See stanza fourteenth.

And since none saw the worm that inly fed  
Upon his vitals, none did recognize  
That, from a gnawing restlessness—a dread  
Of stillness, and of solitude,—did rise  
All that fictitious strength, which they believ'd,  
From convalescence sprung, and health retriev'd!

52.

Such Titus was. Such had his intercourse  
Been with Sophronia! I will not detain  
My patient hearers with a long discourse  
Touching the *cause* Gisippus did sustain  
From his troth'd bride that night such strange divorce:  
If ye consent to listen to my strain,  
*That will*, like many other things, in time,  
Be in the record of this simple rhyme.

53.

But to return to Titus. On he went,  
Or rather totter'd, 'till he touch'd the latch  
Of poor Sophronia's dwelling. Well nigh spent  
With agitation, he essay'd to catch,  
Or ere he lifted it, some argument  
Of hopeful augury; and he did watch,  
Dumb and immoveable, that dreary night,  
To hear her dreaded voice, or footstep light.

54.

And if a glimpse of light chequer'd the ground,  
Fall'n from her window, how his pulses throb'd!

In tip-toe expectation, and profound,  
 He heard each far-off busy noise which robb'd  
 The dark night of its silence ! Not a sound  
 At last was heard, save when the pine-tree sobb'd  
 To the cold wintry wind. The city hum,  
 Heard for a time, portentously was dumb !

## 55.

“ I must ! ” at length he cried ; and 'twas despair  
 That help'd him to confront despair at last :  
 “ I must ! ” he cried, and when he least could bear  
 The thing he did, he smote the door in haste.  
 The latch was stirr'd, the door's hinge did he hear  
 Creaking, as if the hand, which held it fast,  
 Open'd it apprehensively. The well-  
 Known form he saw ; and on the earth he fell.

## 56.

How long that trance remain'd he might not know ;  
 Who can Sophronia's troubled state pourtray,  
 When on the threshold,—spectacle of woe,—  
 Helpless,—her unacknowledg'd lover lay  
 Stiff as in death ! She knew not if to go ;—  
 And to behold him perish could she stay ?  
 Her mother, as it chanc'd, from ailment slight,  
 Had to her couch repair'd at fall of night.

## 57

What could she do ? She drew his form supine,  
 Panting for breath, and faint, along the floor ;

She kiss'd his cheek, and made his head recline  
Upon her lap, when she had clos'd the door:  
With sedulous care, she brought some spicy wine,  
Which, she had heard, was potent to restore  
Life's lapsed functions, and bedew'd with this  
His livid lips, which often she did kiss.—

58.

Oft to his nostrils, did her hand apply  
Some subtle essences; his temples chill,  
Chafing them with her soft hand inwardly,  
She bath'd with juice which potent herbs distil.  
“ Titus, my Titus !” often would she cry :—  
And tax'd her memory for it's little skill  
In arts medicinal. But his strong trance  
Baffled awhile her earnest vigilance.

59.

It was a piteous sight to see the maid,  
Sustaining that fine form exanimate ;—  
Adown her cheek the big drops slowly stray'd,  
Then on her lover fell. A precious freight !—  
Could not these balmy tear-drops then pervade  
The seat of sense, and rouse him from that state  
Of death-like inanition ! If *they* fail'd,  
Could any mortal succour have avail'd ?—

60.

His bosom heaves, a struggling sigh escapes !  
His fix'd, glaz'd eyes their vacant orbs unseal ;



But yet he only sees chaotic shapes ;  
 Chaotic visions o'er his spirit steal !  
 He fancies that beneath him grimly gapes  
 A trackless gulph ; with fear he seems to reel.—  
 Upright he sat. My Titus ! murmur'd she :—  
 And he laugh'd loudly with a fearful glee !

## 61.

Down, down, upon her bended knees she slid,  
 And threw her arms around his neck, and press'd  
 His faint brows to her cheek, and then she hid  
 His clammy face in her enamour'd breast.—  
 Meanwhile, her tears,—as if they had been bid  
 To be the almoners of her behest,  
 As fraught with eloquence,—did trickle down  
 His cheek, and neck, and forehead, one by one.—

## 62.

He felt the piteous drops, and rais'd his eye ;  
 “ Sophronia,” breath'd he faintly : then oppress'd,  
 Sank down again, as if resolv'd to die,  
 And thus\* “ take up his everlasting rest.”  
 Murmur to murmur, now, and sigh to sigh,  
 Scarce audibly responded, and the breast  
 Both of the maiden, and the lover, heav'd  
 Groans, which seem'd as of life they them bereav'd.—

~~~~~  
 * Here

Will I take up my everlasting rest,
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh. *Romeo and Juliet.*

63.

First spake Sophronia. "Was this wisely done?"

"Not wisely, nor yet wilfully," replied
The wretched youth: "no, I am sent upon
Another's errand. He, of whom the bride
Thou art, from Athens is this evening gone;
On errand which he would to none confide;
Not e'en to me! Whom he to thee has sent,
To advertise thee of this strange event:—

64.

"For strange it well may seem that one should go
From thy dear presence, when to-morrow morn
Will bring so measureless an overflow
Of the best joys which can on earth be born.
'Tis well the cause for this I do not know,
For this parch'd tongue, and this sunk heart forlorn
Scarcely the power of utterance to me spare;
Grief such as mine cannot long parley bear."

65.

This said, he paus'd. "Gisippus gone from hence!"—
Exclaim'd Sophronia, "nor I know the cause;
That noble bosom never knew pretence;
Nor e'er evaded honour's sacred laws!"
"No, never, never!" Titus cried, "and thence
I am entrusted"—"Whence this sudden pause?"
Sophronia cried, "It is too hard a task!"
Titus rejoin'd, "Why did my friend this ask?"

66.

“ But I am sure he honours me too much,
 Me on unworthy errand to commend ;
 Though he told not his journey's cause, I vouch
 It had a good one, or his dearest friend
 He ne'er had its contaminating touch
 Suffer'd t' approach. Gisippus to defend
 Thus, is my duty. I almost forget
 That he's my rival when the mighty debt

67.

“ Of Love I owe him rushes on my heart !”—
 *Oh, the nobility of men of old !
 Rivals they were ; one did the other thwart ;
 Gisippus, Titus' dearest aims controul'd ;
 From him did he uncourteously depart ;
 Him had he bade a message to unfold
 Which clave his heart in twain ; yet, with prompt
 phrase,
That Rival, to his mistress, doth he praise!

* O gran bontà de' Cavalieri antiqui !—
 Eran rivali, eran di Fè diversi,
 E si sentian degli aspri colpi iniqui
 Per tutta la persona anco dolersi ;
 E pur per selve oscure, e calli iniqui
 Insieme van, senza sospetto aversi.

Ariosto, Canto primo, stanza. 22.

68.

“ Be strong, be strong !” exclaim’d Sophronia—
“ Moment of weakness has been ours, alas !
But thou hast made me think whom we betray ;
Hast made me blush at the surrender base” —
“ Stop !” Titus cries, “ never shall such a day
As this, upon the earth’s astonish’d face
Behold me more ! My life—for this alone
Can do it fitly—shall for this atone.”

69.

Who has e’er seen the weeping statue stand
Of childless Niobe, may perhaps guess
The pale despondency, which, as with band
Of desolation, did all hope suppress,
So that not one word could her tongue command !
How could she other than with tenderness
Upbraid her lover for such dire resolve ?—
Yet one *kind* word her virtue would dissolve !—

70.

It is a hard lot when we are so chain’d
By duty, and such fiery influence
Of passion o’er the madden’d breast hath reign’d,
That we—lest by a conflict too intense
We should be self-betray’d—become constrain’d
To wear the armour of indifference :
Which, the more feign’d, more needful the loath’d task
With it’s mail’d adamant the whole man to mask !

R 2

71.

At such a time, a gesture, look, or tear,
 Will mar the stoutest resolution ;
 That stern arbitrement which months did rear,
 A fond "farewel," a mandate to be gone,
 A dumb look, cause at once to disappear ;
 Two parting lovers make for ever one !—
 So felt Sophronia. One that so well lov'd,
 Could she then banish ? Could she see unmov'd ?

72.

She knew not where to look, nor what to say ;—
 She felt the claim of him who was not there ;
 She knew he lov'd her, and that as the day,
 Honest his words, honest his feelings, were.
 And though 'twas strange Titus might not convey
 What caus'd his absence, 'twas a deed so rare,
 A deed so much with all his deeds at strife,
 Exception seem'd it to his rule of life.—

73.

'Twere hard to suffer, of a life unblam'd,
 One deed to soil the uniformity ;
 And she who was for honour justly fam'd
 Was little prone t' equivocating plea.—
 E'en had he wrong'd her, she had never claim'd—
 E'en in most absolute emergency—
 Right to recriminate. Though she might falter,
 She knew an upright conscience ne'er could palter.

74.

What shall she do ! What not do ?—Titus stood
Before her the dumb statue of despair ;
His voiceless look more eloquently sued
Than most persuasive words : he did not dare,
Except at intervals, e'en to intrude
A stolen glance. The big drops here and there
On his brow trembled. From his labouring heart
Quick spasmy pulses o'er his face did dart.—

75.

Big was the hour with fate ! For utterance, far,
Far, too forlorn were they ! Yet could they fly ?—
To all beneath day's universal star
That each ador'd, "farewel, for ever !" cry ?—
For ever, in one moment, being bar
Of every hope ? For ever from the eye
Of each, the other banish ; and exclude
That, without which, earth were a solitude ?—

76.

To tell the pang the virtuous bosom knows
When ruthless passion hath usurp'd its seat,
Would ask for words of fire ! Can tongue disclose
The agony when bursting bosoms meet,
And yet strict rectitude doth interpose
Between their wish, and that fruition sweet
Of hearts entwin'd, when love—delirious elf !
Makes each in each obtain a second self ?—

77.

Only minds noble thus can nobly love;—
 And noble minds are to themselves a law;—
 None ever such an ecstasy could prove
 Who knew not virtue's consecrating awe.—
 He that could easily restraints remove,
 Soon from his being will those powers withdraw;—
 The powers of passion, as of rectitude:—
 And be exempted from such conflict rude.—

78.

At last, with reckless agony o'ercome,
 Titus his arms around Sophronia threw,
 His very soul seem'd as 'twould leave its home,
 And with his breath rush forth, as he did glue
 His lips on hers, "Now let what will come, come!"
 He cried,—“Existence ne'er till now, I knew!—
 “The present,—future,—I alike defy!—
 I feel victorious e'en o'er destiny!”

79.

“Thou shalt not leave me! Thou shalt never leave!—
 Nor ever, ever, from my arms be torn!—
 He that, of thy charms, could himself bereave
 One moment,—though all nature him did warn
 To such surrender,—I can ne'er forgive!—
 Object is he of everlasting scorn!
 I now retract all that erewhile I spoke;
 And from this moment throw off friendship's yoke.”

80.

“ Titus !” Sophronia plaintively exclaim’d,
Yet half rebukingly. She could no more !—
Though piteous tenderness her face inflam’d,
The impress of displeasure still it bore.—
As he beheld her, while he fain had fram’d
Excuse for that which—e’en to his heart’s core—
He felt repentant to have said, the rush
Of contrite tears o’er all his face did gush—

81.

He that erewhile had like a statue stood,
Smote with dumb anguish, reckless with despair ;
He whose glaz’d eyes, as they her form pursu’d,
Till now emitted an unnatural glare,
From him, that instant, burst a copious flood
Of tears : her ready tears the signal share.—
Fly,—fly,—rash youth ! Oh fly ! For thou art lost,
By thee, the threshold not this instant cross’d —

82.

Their souls did melt in mutual sympathy ;
In the delirious luxury of woe !
Oh, say that love can guerdon worthily,
If e’en *unhappy Love* such bliss can know.—
Yes, there is more of real ecstasy
In every trickling tear that then did flow,
Mingling in one sweet stream, than ever yet
The world gave, when it paid its mightiest debt.

83.

*Whisper'd expressions, inarticulate words,
 Sobs interrupted, mix'd with weeping sighs,
 These were the dainty almoners of hoards
 Of secret consolation love applies.
 Who can plead poverty, though fate affords,
 But once, such solace to life's destinies?
 The soul that once has lov'd, from thence enjoys
 A charter, begging all earthly toys!—

84.

It gains an insight in the human heart,
 And all its earthly mysteries thence can know ;—
 A Rubicon has past, which has the art
 A new baptismal essence to bestow !
 It wears a precious gem, whose rays can dart
 Into all labyrinths of human woe,
 And thence extracts, as if by chemic care,
 Sweetness from torment, transport from despair.—

85.

In brief, new sense it gains ! Nobility
 Of imprescriptible and holy birth !—
 Higher than that which waits on ancestry ;
 And still more high than that whose puny worth

* *Sommessi accenti, e tacite parole,
 Rotti singulti, e flebili sospiri.*

Tasso, lib. 3. stan. 6.

Hangs on some parchment's charter'd blazonry:—

Finally, of all feelings of this earth
Next to religion, it may well take place ;
With such high gifts man's spirit doth it grace.—

86.

Such was their love, a love in aim as pure
And lofty, as in passion 'twas intense ;
A love, which, being felt, must aye endure,
Long as the soul in flesh has residence.
A love which all can sacrifice :—though poor,
Which deems itself most wealthy, while the sense
Of *honour lasts* ; *this* is the perilous test
Which lost, 'tis curs'd, though with fruition bless'd.

87.

And, though in all oppos'd, yet this retain'd,
With which 'tis rich e'en in the midst of woe ;
I challenge any one t' have ascertain'd
That ever true love did a comfort know,
Where lawless bliss by lawless means was gain'd :—
Esteem may well be felt without love's glow,
But frail as tender bloom of fruit matur'd,
Love never forfeited esteem endur'd.—

88.

But to return. For I have long digress'd
From the two lovers, then in perilous plight ;
When each the other had awhile caress'd ;
And when love's paroxysm at such height

Was, that with it some feelings did molest
 Of threaten'd danger,—yes, when e'en most bright
 Love's lamp did burn,—that honourable pair
 Stood, once more sever'd from each other, there.

89.

“Farewel”—cried Titus, mournfully. “Farewel,”
 Exclaim'd Sophronia—they felt *all* had been
 That now could be! they dar'd not longer dwell
 In persevering in the past-gone scene.
 At first 'twas impulse. Now 'twere to rebel
 Against awaken'd honour, when the skreen
 By conscience was remov'd, which did preclude
 Thought of the issue of such passionate mood.

90.

“Farewel—farewel.” And now a silent grasp
 Of her cold hand, and one despairing look,—
 Or ere the night-air caught his shuddering gasp,
 Was all the further leave of her he took.
 How he that night the portal did unclasp
 Of his love's dwelling, how his heart could brook
 The last farewell,—soon as the door did close,
 Were thoughts that, in his breast, self-question'd, rose.

91.

Again he rush'd toward the door—'twas fast!
 In at the window peep'd—'twas darkness all!
 How long that spasm of the heart did last,
 Which held him, like a statue, in mute thrall,

I cannot tell ; but ere it from him pass'd,
What a keen agony from him did call
Each leaf that fell, the slightest breeze that stirr'd ;
The slightest glimpse, or glimmer that appear'd !

92.

He dar'd not cry " Sophronia !" far too much
He wish'd to see her, far too much he held
Her name in passionate reverence, to avouch—
E'en though by keenest agony compell'd—
Such wish e'en to the ear of night ; to touch
Once more e'en but her garment's hem, had thrill'd
His heart with ecstasy ; and how he could
Have left her, he a whit not understood.

93.

" A little moment since the power was mine,
To see, or not to see thee !" thus he cried ;
" And now how agonizingly I pine
Soe'er, thy further presence is denied.
What nameless gulph is that, which can't combine
The present with the past ! not Hell doth hide
A drearier curse, than *that curse* which doth dwell
In that one little word—impossible !

94.

" What would I now give to be where I was !
I seem to have fall'n from Heaven to the shade
Of death ! swift thought can in a moment pass
Over that gulph, which I can never tread.

I have play'd a losing game with Time ! alas,
 That bliss which Fate upon my being shed,
 Would I regain, it now must *effort* be !
 No ! ne'er returns a *once spurn'd destiny* !

95.

And well he knew, that, could he now retrieve
 In *form*, what he had lost, he never could
 Recover it *in spirit* ! We deceive
 Ourselves egregiously, when understood
 *The *same thing twice* to be the *same* ! Bereave
 Pleasure of charms, with which it is endued,
 By inexpectancy, and though the same
 In all besides, 'tis pleasure but in name !

96.

How could he feel, if he an effort made
 Once more to see Sophronia, that he was
 O'ercome by impulse ? ere aware, betray'd
 Into the depths of passion ? No, what has

* The author, perhaps, here may be pardoned in making an observation, which at first sight may appear more trifling than it really will be found to be on further reflection, since it is capable of such ample application, though the instance in which he exemplifies it may lay him open to animadversion. Let any one recollect when a particular party or excursion have been more than usually gratifying, and in consequence he has endeavoured a second time to promote such a party or excursion—though in externals every thing was the same the second time as the first—did he ever find the second answer ?

Been, ne'er can be again ! the retrograde
Which would the maze of ecstasy repass,
Beholds, with blazing sword, a spectre glare
Across its path, and cry " beware—beware !"

97.

Like to a shadow, which behind us lies,
Not seen, 'till we our onward path *retrace*,
This ghost is only met by those rash eyes
Which would look on the unveil'd elfish face
Of painted passion ; 'tis but her disguise
That charms us. Seek we once more to embrace
Her with premeditation, we shall find
That she seem'd only fair, since we were blind.

98.

*Thus when Rogero first Alcina lov'd,
She seem'd endow'd with superhuman charms,
And preternatural ecstasies he prov'd,
All centred in her fascinating arms ;
But when brief interval had him remov'd
From her enticements, and when reason arms
His new-brac'd soul, and he on her did gaze
A second time, a foul witch he surveys.

99.

It is th' *involuntary*, which doth give
All charm, to all that charms in passion's trance ;

* See Ariosto, canto 7, stanza 73.

It is a *downward path!* and we may strive,
As well, to make it the *same thing* t'advance
 Up a steep hill, or down that hill to drive
 In prone career, as to desire—with glance
 Of *retrospect*, to find identity
 In objects we prospectively did see!

100.

The wretch feels, who upon the very brink
 Doth stand of possibility of bliss,
 And yet that bliss is lost, as those who sink,
 Unfathomably gulph'd in some abyss:
 When the strain'd eye with agony doth shrink
 From needful succour, that so near them is,
 It seems as if, in mockery, sent by Fate,
 The moment's agony to aggravate.

101.

Breathless he lay, her lattice frame beneath;
 Breathless he watch'd a light move to and fro;
 The thin partition seem'd his frame to writhe,
 Which he between her and himself did know:
 And once, when he believ'd he heard her breathe
 Faintly his name, an interval his woe
 Was all forgotten; through his night-chill'd frame,
 There swiftly rush'd a warm suffusing flame.

102.

But this could not long last. Upon his soul
 Then fell the icy fingers of despair.

Foam'd his parch'd mouth ; and on the ground did roll
His form convuls'd : the bitter biting air
He heeded not ; nor, though that night the growl
Of thunder, and the lightning's lurid glare
Career'd above, and fell on him thick rains,
Was he aware that he their shock sustains.

103.

Shaken by recent malady was he ;
His seeming strength from weakness but arose :
To cope with such a strong hostility
Of adverse passions, and endure its throes,
So ill accords with such infirmity,
That his wild brain, impatient of such woes,
Became delirious, and fantastic forms
Danc'd o'er his vision in terrific swarms.

104.

Through Athens' streets now wildly did he fly,
Clenching his hands, and tearing his black hair ;
And oft from time to time he rais'd a cry—
“ Sophronia ! my Sophronia ! where, oh where
Hast thou conceal'd thyself ? yon lofty sky,
Or the profoundest deep, or earth, or air,
Or night, or day, or the remotest clime,
Or strength of men or gods, or length of time,

105.

“ Shall not secure thee from my potent grasp !
Thou shalt be mine !—I swear thou shalt be mine !

E'en though I tear thee from th' almighty clasp
 Of Jove himself!—though Neptune's watery brine
 Have merg'd thee thousand fathoms deep!"—with
 gasp
 Of sudden death, then seem'd he to resign
 His o'erwrought powers : headlong, he fell beside
 A crystal well, which near a path did glide.

106.

That path contiguous to a road did lie,
 Which from Piræus' Port towards Athens led ;
 As it did chance Gisippus came thereby,
 Having his unimperted errand sped.
 Scarce had the morning dawn'd ; the troubled sky,
 'Mid billowy clouds, was streak'd with lurid red ;
 And earth ; and heaven ; the trees which, ere that
 night,
 Thick foliag'd stood, all spake the past storm's might.

107.

Towards winter autumn then was verging :—then,
 For the first season, with unmuffled face,
 Had winter dar'd to stalk thro' ev'ry scene,
 And rob the pale earth of that lingering grace
 Of tints, of flowers, of leaves, which seem'd to lean,
 With a meek trust, in the prolong'd embrace
 Of nature : for the first time, then arose
 The distant mountains clad with morning snows.

108.

Upon the half-stripp'd branches, which did bend
To the wild blast, here droop'd a yellow leaf,
And there a brown one. With day's light did blend
A sombre shade which spoke of nature's grief.—
To the eager air the season seem'd to lend
A piercing shrewdness; and if still a sheaf
Broke the long furrows' level, soddening rains
Had smear'd its golden hue with dingy stains.

109.

The leaves whirl'd eddying towards the plashy ground;
Their lustre gone, the shrivell'd flow'rets droop'd;
And, from afar, on every side around,
Were heard deep bodings, as if tempests, coop'd
In viewless caves, thence issued with profound
And gusty menaces: the night-wolf whoop'd
A dismal requiem to the waning year:—
All sights look'd sorrow, and all sounds breath'd fear.

110.

Th' autumnal moon with pale and watery face
Westward was verging, and her shadowy rim
Thin, floating, mist-like clouds, seem'd to embrace;
Hovering about her, as if they would dim
Her silver light; so shorn her golden grace,
So like a spectre did her glances swim
On that cold morning's brow, that she might well
The demon seem that wove its blighting spell.

111.

Gisippus, as I said, prone in his car,
 With brandish'd whip along that road did steer ;
 On whose near pathway, he, while yet afar,
 Thought that a human body did appear.
 His chariot wheels now doubly rapid are ;
 Soon he approaches ; and, with what severe
 And stupid horror,—I need not declare—
 He saw his dearest Titus lying there !

112.

Titus his head did raise ; his eyes did glare ;
 And, with unnatural laugh, he cried “avaunt !”
 “Who art thou, who presumptuously would'st dare
 To speak to me ? Wherefore dost thou thus haunt
 My privacy ? Whoe'er thou art, beware !—
 I well know how t' avenge the cruel taunt
 Of heartless foes ! Friends I have none ! Not one !
 No ! With Sophronia every friend is gone !”

113.

“I am Gisippus. Dost thou not recall
 My mien, my voice ?” his weeping friend replied :—
 “Gisippus ? Art thou he ? That criminal
 That could forsake so an expecting bride ?—
 Thy voice is death to me ! Would I for all
 The earth contains, have any want supplied
 By thee ? I know thee not ! There is betwixt
 Thee, and myself, a bottomless gulph fix'd.”—

114.

“Thou art ill!” Gisippus said, “and can I quit
Thee, to the bitter biting of this blast?—
No, take my arm, and deign with me to sit
In yonder chariot. It will soon be past,
This dreadful agony! It is most fit
That a friend’s ear should hear what thus hath cast
This frenzy on thee: that a dear friend’s care
Should soothe thy sorrows, and those sorrows share.”

115.

“Leave me! Oh leave me! I am not thy friend!
Nor art thou mine!” with terrible voice exclaim’d
Titus: “and e’en one hour to condescend
To sit beside thee, I should be asham’d.
No, speedily from this place thy course bend!—
Visit thy”—here a deep-drawn groan proclaim’d
The speaker’s inward anguish, and a pulse
Of agony his countenance did convulse.—

116.

“What is it ails thee?” cried Gisippus. “Nought,”—
Titus replied, and on his feet he rose,
And swifter than the glance of swiftest thought,
A bow-shot distant from his friend he goes.—
He could no more. With fantasy distraught,
And faltering knees, again on earth he throws
His labouring form, and utter’d a deep cry,
Like to one pierc’d with speechless agony.—

117.

Gisippus follow'd him, and bade a slave,
 Who held his foaming coursers, thitherward
 With him to go : and he of one did crave
 Assistance, who along that path-way far'd.
 " Stranger, a little help I fain would have
 To lift a friend, who long with me has shar'd
 All life's enjoyments, and who, as you see,
 Is stretch'd on earth by strange infirmity."

118.

Quickly these three repair'd where he did lie
 Weltering in blood ; for such his pangs had been,
 That, by them sore convuls'd, an artery
 Had burst internally, from whose unseen
 And dangerous cicatrice, most copiously
 The blood gush'd forth. By this had Titus been,
 Ere now, so weaken'd, that 'twas all in vain
 For him, Gisippus' efforts to restrain.

119.

Into the chariot was he lifted ; next
 Gisippus also mounted, and with scourge,
 The mettled steeds, like one with care perplex'd,
 Swiftly along the smooth road did he urge.—
 His soul with inward wretchedness was vex'd,
 And though in care for Titus he did merge
 Other solitudes, still o'er him came
 Strange feelings from Sophronia's quoted name.—

120.

His dwelling now they reach'd, and on his bed
Was Titus laid; a servant was despatch'd
A skilful leech to find. Gisippus laid
His hand on Titus' hand, and fondly watch'd
His infirm friend, of every breath afraid
That for a little moment could have catch'd
His rous'd attention, and forgetting quite
Sophronia, and each matrimonial rite.

121.

Sophronia meantime tardily obey'd
The morn's returning call. Upon her bed
That night her dizzy head she had not laid:
Her thoughts not once that sad night had been led
To dream of her near nuptials. O'er the maid
A passion infinite had likewise shed
Thoughts of infinity: she was entranc'd;
Reality before her faintly glanc'd.—

122.

The past, the future, both to her were lost;
Or, if not lost, the real did but seem
An obscure terror, now and then which cross'd
Her soul, like lightning's instantaneous gleam.
She was with passion utterly engross'd:—
Those who have been so, know that its strong dream
Defies external things, their pressure spurns,
As th' alchemist to gold each metal turns.

123.

So doth the rapt soul modify the dull
 And obligatory concerns of life,
 Through mediation of one powerful,
 Imperative impression, that the strife
 From duty and desire sprung, which oft pull
 Contrarious ways, and this strange world,—so rife
 With disappointment,—are compell'd to teem
 With tributary rills, for one deep stream.

124.

Thus far'd it with Sophronia. She had felt
 That preternatural passion which doth change
 All things into itself; and love had dealt
 Its treasures out with such profusion strange,
 That fear nor froze her heart, nor hope did melt:
 No, through infinity her thoughts did range.
 Yes, love is infinite. Sophronia prov'd,
 Love from idolatry not far remov'd.

125.

Return we now to Titus. In his trance,
 Gisippus, whence his troubled heart was torn,
 Had gather'd. With an anxious countenance,
 Symptoms he watch'd of convalescence born.—
 He had a tale to tell too, whence that glance
 Of fiery frenzy, from that eye forlorn
 Might be dispell'd; and hope, his faded bloom,
 And death-like features, once more re-illumine.

126.

The son of Æsculapius much did urge
Quiet, and little converse, to the weak
And outworn patient. Though upon the verge
Of death he seem'd, still oft, with many a shriek,
His sleep was broken; th' unrelenting scourge
Of passion on his shaken frame did wreak
Its cruel torment. Yet while thus he seem'd
To death doom'd, of Sophronia's form he dream'd.

127.

"Sophronia;" still "Sophronia," from his lips
In smother'd accents now, and now in loud
And frantic exclamation, utter'd, keeps
His friend beside him haunted with a crowd
Of sad forebodings. Now his forehead drips
With the big sweat drops which profusely flow'd
From his sunk temples, and his hands, when press'd,
His fever's burning virulence attest.—

128.

Then to himself Gisippus said, "No more
Will I delay, but to Sophronia go,
And, in her ear, the story will I pour
Of this mysterious spectacle of woe."
Her presence deem'd he likeliest to restore
(From words that Titus, now in accents low,
And now, with loud shrieks, utter'd) his lost sense:
Such was his trust in love's mute eloquence.

T

129.

With this resolve Sophronia's door he gain'd :

He told his heavy tale, and begg'd the maid—
If any pity in her bosom reign'd,

Although *his* bride she were,—that by her aid
Titus' disease might somewhat be restrain'd :

He told her how he found him, and he said,
“ On thee he ever calls; thy name repeats;
And oft thy presence earnestly entreats.—

130.

“ Whate'er of this the cause is, it may be,
Since thus thy image hath his soul impress'd,
That thou may'st rouse him from his agony :—

Something, I doubt not, rankles in his breast,
Which, more or less, hath reference to thee.

Thou knowest, rather than be dispossess'd
Of his dear friendship and society,
In the most cruel torments would I die.”

131.

Sophronia, guessing well the cause of all

Gisippus told her; hating to deceive;
And careless then of what might her befall,

So much the agonies of yester eve
Had wrought upon her, and so much the thrall

Of love was she; did, in few words, unweave
The mystery to Gisippus, and made clear
That which so marvellous did erst appear.

132.

“ I blame you both,” Gisippus cried, “ was e'er
Any thing mine, in such a sense, till now
That Titus equally had not a share
In it? Although thou hast to me the vow
Sworn of fidelity, yet could the care
Of my own selfish happiness allow
Me to despise another's claim, e'en though
That other had been my most mortal foe ?”

133.

“ But when I find that those I love the most
Are bound in ties reciprocally fond,
And that each might not, at my private cost,
Build their own happiness,—that each has plann'd,
With love magnanimous towards me engross'd,
To sacrifice their all ; far, far beyond
All power of speech, I feel, at the same time,
Self-shame, and reverence for their love sublime !

134.

“ Oh, that I were omnipotent ! yet still
I will do all that in my power doth lie !
Haste with me ; try if thou, by thy fond skill,
By thy sweet tones of voice, and by that eye,—
(Whose dewy glance, since it hath power to kill,—
For surely Titus will, not succour'd, die,—
Must have the power life's functions to restore :)
Can'st make him what he was in days of yore !”

135.

Sophronia listen'd with a yielding heart ;
She thought she ne'er so well Gisippus lov'd ;
Nor had he ever to her, that the art
Of eloquence was his, so plainly prov'd.
In spite of every effort tears did start :
She could not answer him : but as she mov'd
Towards the door, made manifest, by signs,
That she to do his will not disinclines.

136.

She threw a veil over her virgin face ;
Her arm involuntarily became
Plac'd within his ; and with a pensive grace,
Betwixt alacrity and maiden shame,
As sister with a brother, did she pace
Tottering towards th' abode from whence he came.
But when he paus'd before that house which held
All she lov'd best, what fears her bosom thrill'd !

137.

And as she cross'd the vestibule, and clomb
Stair after stair, how beat her fluttering breast !
A deadly paleness had usurp'd her bloom ;
And scarce her faltering knees the power possess'd
To bear her weight. How awful was the gloom,
And how unutterably the silence press'd
Of the sick dwelling on her sinking heart !
How does her very foot-fall make her start !

138.

Ah yes, how powerful must those feelings be,
Which that same gloom and silence did excite,
Since they are by a lover's malady
Produc'd, and her upon whose heart they smite
Is object of his fond idolatry.
Moments in life there are which do unite
Feeling which incommunicable is,
And to Sophronia such a moment this!—

139.

'Tis but this instant that she knows him hers:
And the next instant she may find him dead,
Or in extremity which but defers
Death, and to unimaginable dread
Changes despair. Her thoughts are harbingers
Of joy, of grief, of hope, of fear! Thus led
Rather than going, trembling more and more,
Herself she now finds at his chamber door.—

140.

Can she proceed? A little moment she
Pauses, and leans upon Gisippus' breast;
Her agonizing heart beats audibly;
She pants for breath, and pale as one the guest
Of his last narrow house, such ecstasy
Of hope and fear her spirit now possess'd,
That e'en her very hope appears to wear
The mien of fear; and palsies like despair.—

141.

Sophronia now in Titus' presence stands,
 O'er his pale form with pious care she bends ;
 His brow she presses with her ivory hands ;
 And to his stricken soul her soft voice sends
 Music, which, by degrees, dissolves the bands
 Of frenzy : towards her face his look ascends ;
 He feels her tears drop on his burning cheek ;
 He sees her countenance, and hears her speak.—

142.

How fondly does she gaze upon his form !
 Her heart so full of hope is, since she knows
 He now is hers, so sanguine, and so warm
 Her feelings thence resulting, that they close—
 So potent is their visionary charm—
 Each avenue to thought which can suppose
 It even possible that he may die :—
 Love seems to promise immortality !—

143.

“She's thine!” exclaim'd Gisippus.—“Both of you
 Have, by the gods, unjustly dealt with me !”
 “No,” said Sophronia, “'twas because we knew
 The measure of your soul's nobility,
 That we resolv'd ne'er should to us accrue
 Joy, with your joy in contrariety.
 'Twas reverence for your worth more than the troth
 Plighted to you, which eterniz'd my oath.”

144.

“ Nor ever, ever, had that oath been broken,
Although in keeping it my heart had burst !
Had I lov'd Titus, had I not sure token
Of lofty sentiment in him seen first ?
Had he to me deliberately spoken
A word which had thy claim in me aspers'd,
That lofty feeling he had then disclaim'd ;
And him had I abjur'd, of him asham'd.”

145.

“ Soft : soft,” cried Titus in a faltering tone,
“ This is too much for feeble breast to bear ;
The stress of gratitude which weighs me down—
Contrast 'twixt present joy and past despair,
These are enough t' oppress a spirit grown
Feeble, and sensitive from recent care !
Spare me, oh spare ! Not let joys too intense
O'erwhelm my spirit with their influence.”

146.

“ Sit thou, Sophronia, here ; and sit thou there,
Gisippus !” Titus cried, while with a hand
Feeble, to both he beckon'd to repair
To each side of his couch. Thus in the band
Of cordial love these three united were.—
Not long did Titus' malady withstand,
Of these two friends, the fond solicitude.—
As love had shorn, so love his strength renew'd.

147.

It was a pleasant sight to see this maid
 And noble youth, each with the other vie,
 Who most could furnish necessary aid
 To mitigate their patient's malady.—
 Nor was there any that his pillow laid,—
 No other that his medicines did supply,—
 No one his slight meals serv'd at fitting time,—
 Save this fond maiden, and that youth sublime.—

148.

Gisippus never, by a jealous look,
 When perseveringly Sophronia serv'd
 His friend, betray'd that he not well could brook
 For Titus that her love should be reserv'd.
 Although their friend's infirmity forsook
 Him daily more and more, yet never swerv'd
 This faithful pair from their fond offices,
 'Till quite were fled all symptoms of disease.—

149.

Sometimes Gisippus hinted, that, when strong
 Titus should once more be, he would unfold
 A tale, which would prove that to him no wrong
 This pair did, by their love so uncontroul'd.—
 'Twas hard on this theme to unchain his tongue.—
 A *fear* lest they at greater price should hold,
 Than it deserv'd, his self-surrender'd love;—
 This, to *reveal* this mystery, him did move :

150.

On th' other hand, he had a tale to tell
Of a suppress'd and smother'd passion: how
Could he so manage this, how fully dwell
On all its incidents, and on the brow
Of the innocent Sophronia, not compel
A self-humiliating flush to glow?—
He spake of this, but so mysteriously,
That his defects the bard must need supply.—

151.

Thus somewhat still is left for me to say ;
But what I have to say will still augment
The miracle—not one of every day—
Of glorious feeling, which the glad event
Of this my little story will display.—
Into that mass of generous intent
Gisippus had contributed, though none
Of this had once conceiv'd suspicion.—

152.

As I have said, Gisippus much was press'd
By his father's friends, and his own friends, to wed ;
Long time, in vain, they often had address'd
To him this suit ; at last, by fortune led,
He with Sophronia met; and, though his breast
By impulses of passion was not fed,
Yet such approvance mild he entertain'd
For her, as soon his resolution chain'd.—

153.

It chanc'd some months after he had decreed
 T' espouse Sophronia, that a voyage he made
 To Salamis! Ah, little did he heed
 His own betrayal, 'till he was betray'd!
 Love, passionate, fervent love, he there indeed
 First felt, then meeting with an orphan maid,
 Whose wondrous charms, black eyes, and bosom fair,
 Made him her victim 'ere he was aware.—

154.

This love he saw too was reciprocal!
 What could he do? he had not power to say
 That he had pledg'd himself beyond recall!—
 Nor had he power to tear himself away!—
 Dallying 'twixt duty and desire; the thrall
 Of passion's potency, day after day,
 The hour he fix'd to go:—the hour past by;
 Till he lost *will*, as well as *power*, to fly!—

155.

So long did this continue, that, at last,
 He felt that he had, with himself, the maid
 Too much ensnar'd: long as his time was pass'd
 In her society, might be delay'd
 All explanation: but he saw so fast
 Her love was rivetted, that, unbetray'd
 In honour, from her side he could not steal,
 Nor his ties with another not reveal.

156.

This very thraldom finish'd his undoing.
His earlier love untold, how could he fly ?
How could he thus her path with thorns be strewing ?
Evading thus, he *fix'd* his destiny !—
When their near separation he was ruing,
He saw a tear gather in Lesbia's eye.
At last, perplex'd, or what to do, or what
To leave undone, he hurried from the spot.

157.

All his frank utterance now from him was fled ;
The ghost of what he was did he return ;
And though he was by honour so much led
As at each treach'rous subterfuge to spurn,
Still now those marriage ties he view'd with dread,
For which, or ere this voyage, he did yearn ;
Sleepless his nights, tedious his days, were now,
Yet not one jot does he retract his vow.

158.

Gisippus, ere from Athens he did roam,
Having betroth'd Sophronia, but unknown
To her, had means devis'd to make her home
More fraught with comfort by a well-tim'd boon.
In generous souls, nothing doth more illume
The light of love, than kindness it hath shewn.
If to *the debtor* this the donor bind,
Still more doth giving fix the noble mind.

159.

Love knows not obligation! It is more,
 Far, far more, than repaid by power to bless!
 Knows not humiliation!* Cræsus' store
 Could not augment that love, or make it less!
 True love so many times doth o'er and o'er
 Give to reciprocation mightier stress
 Than to the accidents of property;
 That never they commensurate can be!

160.

Gisippus lov'd Sophronia with a love
 More holy, and more lofty, since he knew
 That portion of the comfort she did prove
 As a creation from his bounty grew.
 And so, for this, he honour'd her above
 Those, o'er whose fate no influence could ensue
 From his decision, that the thought, with scorn
 He entertain'd, of leaving her forlorn.

161.

Could *he* now leave her? He, to her, who did
 Not only all her little stores impart.

~~~~~  
 \* I love too well,

I've lov'd too long, and too much for himself  
 I love him, in my breast to harbour pride.  
 True love ne'er *fears*, since it can never *feel*,  
 Humiliation.

*From an unpublished Tragedy.*

But who, as he believ'd, in his breast hid  
The secret treasures of her virgin heart ?  
“ Honour, such ignominious thought forbid !—  
No, let me henceforth try with ev'ry art,  
In blessing her, though I be leagu'd with sorrow,  
Some comfort from another's joy to borrow.”

162.

Such had his resolution been, in such  
Had he persisted, though his anxious friends  
Saw that somewhat internally did touch  
His wonted cheer : still ne'er Gisippus lends  
An ear to their inquiries ; but, as much  
As in him lies, to other topic bends  
Officious scrutinies about his fate :  
Diverting them from his own inward state.

163.

Thus had he now persisted many weeks :—  
The espousals with Sophronia were decreed,—  
The day was fix'd, and though in him all speaks  
Of *inward conflict*, still he seem'd indeed  
So bent to baffle fortune's future freaks,—  
In nuptial pomp to Hymen's fane to lead  
The meek Sophronia, that not one surmises  
From alienated love, *that conflict* rises.

164.

Not long had he to Athens been return'd,  
When tidings by a letter he receiv'd,

That Lesbia his departure so had mourn'd,—  
 Her, so his *seeming* perfidy had griev'd,—  
 That she had sicken'd ; and the fire that burn'd  
 Within her, so entirely had bereav'd  
 Her both of health and hope, that not a friend  
 Who knew, but deem'd her life was near its end.

## 165.

Farther he learn'd, that, for the needful aid  
 Of skill'd physicians, with which Athens teems,  
 Lesbia's associates did at length persuade  
 Her to leave Salamis : that love-lorn themes  
 Too potent o'er her infirm state forbade  
 Her to proceed to Athens, where she deems  
 She oft may see Gisippus, who still sways  
 Her bleeding heart, though life for such love pays.

## 166.

This Lesbia had not to himself divulg'd,  
 But one to whom she had confess'd the truth,  
 A faithful friend, who long had been indulg'd  
 With all the secret feelings of her youth,  
 Without her privity, had this promulg'd ;  
 Lesbia had charg'd this female friend, in sooth,  
 The message which succeeded this to send :  
 Thus her commission she did but extend.

## 167.

Lastly he reads, that, ere her form be laid  
 Low in the tomb, that, he would once bestow

A parting visit, earnestly she pray'd :  
Not to recriminate for a broken vow ;  
Not with a secret purpose to persuade  
Him to engarland her dejected brow  
With Hymen's wreath, but rather to receive  
Her last farewell, and, forgiv'n, to forgive.

168.

'Twas for this cause Gisippus did arrange  
His flight from Athens. He had not betray'd  
The cause to Titus, for a deed so strange.  
Nor, had he known it, had he of it made  
Advantage, 'till how fortunate such change  
Of love, he to his friend had first display'd.  
E'en force of love could not seduce his mind  
To tell a secret to his care consign'd.

169.

Gisippus only said that he must wend  
On business of such import, that he fear'd  
E'en to say he must go, save to a friend  
By whom with large allowance would be heard  
Of honourable surmise, whate'er did tend  
To cast suspicion on him. " Youth rever'd !"  
He farther cried, " Thou to my bride repair,  
And tidings of my going to her bear.

170.

" I will not tell thee wherefore I go hence ;—  
But thou may'st well think cause of import high

Me to so strange a step doth influence.

Say to Sophronia, that this mystery  
I will unfold to her, but that mere pretence  
She may not deem it, I on thee rely  
To be my messenger of this same theme :—  
Thou knowest well, so highly I esteem

171.

“ Thy noble qualities, I would not use  
E'en thy assistance, though thou art my friend,  
And dearest friend, in cause which would abuse  
Thy high integrity ; or condescend—  
E'en though no other being I could chuse—  
To make thee serve an ignominious end.  
From what in past times thou hast known of me  
Trust, that I'm thus reserv'd reluctantly.”

172.

Two causes to this mystery did urge  
Gisippus. Needlessly he did not chuse  
The secret of poor Lesbia to emerge  
From its concealment ; and as much he rues,  
With something that might slight be deem'd, to scourge  
The innocent Sophronia. Thus he views—  
Though 'tis abhorring from his manly will—  
Keeping to secrecy the lesser ill.

173.

He to Piræus went ; by any means,  
To see if he perchance could reconcile

Lesbia to his espousals. She refrains  
From all complaint ; a faint and patient smile  
Stole o'er her countenance, when first he gains  
To her access. He could not without guile  
Longer delay to tell her of his fate :  
To feign her love unknown were now too late.

## 174.

Not that, ere this, he had assum'd pretence  
Of ignorance for any purpose base :  
But he fear'd, since her love was so intense,  
That e'en frank converse would that love increase.  
E'en though he had but tried his eloquence  
To cause that passion in her heart to cease,  
He knew that, in such case, while we dissuade,  
A soft dissuasion lends persuasion aid.

## 175.

This, more than aught else, him did reconcile  
To quit her so abruptly, when he fled  
From Salamis. He knew she must revile  
The deed, but he had rather she were led  
To hate him, if, by hatred, she meanwhile  
Could gain some respite from her love, now fed  
By passionate thoughts. Could she regain peace lost  
His fame would he forego, whate'er the cost.

## 176.

Thus, as in all things he had ever done,  
A gen'rous nature did he manifest :



Had he in aught self-accusation won,  
 'Twas that, from want of strength, he had repress'd  
 Earlier departure. E'en as light o'th' sun  
 He Lesbia lov'd; and this love he prov'd best  
 By yielding that he held more dear—to her—  
 Than love itself!—his spotless character!—

177.

Not one remonstrance, or complaining word,  
 She spake. Gisippus now was sorely press'd.—  
 To her he own'd, that, so might be restor'd  
 Her self-respect, that also, in his breast,  
 Like passion glow'd; and farther he implor'd  
 Her to believe, that honour—which suppress'd  
 All declaration of his love;—and love—  
 Which from the ador'd object could not move;—

178.

And fear—that, if he left her, unexplain'd  
 The cause of his dehortment, she might think  
 That he the cruel scheme had entertain'd  
 To gain her heart, and then retreating shrink  
 From manly overtures;—these motives reign'd,—  
 And none but these;—when on distraction's brink  
 So many days he linger'd, broken hearted;  
 So often taken leave, yet ne'er departed!—

179.

She spake not;—nor complain'd;—nor answer'd him,—  
 But a soft hectic stole across her cheek;

And in her eye a dewy light did swim,  
And with a smile her lips made answer meek.  
Gisippus, when he saw each well-form'd limb  
So shrunk and feeble; when he saw her weak  
And trembling hand stretch'd forth in fond reserve,  
From duty's stern behest did almost swerve.—

180.

But though she thus was wan, she was too proud  
To let him his exculpatory plea  
Conclude; and oft upon his hand she bow'd,  
And told him, "foolish 'twas for her to be  
So thoughtful;" then, (as if with shame allow'd,)  
She somewhat hinted at a malady,  
Which with her family descent was blended:—  
\*A generous falsehood truth could not have mended.

181.

Gisippus left her, promising to come  
And see her oft; and, as he did return,  
He was devising how he might presume  
To make Sophronia this misfortune learn.—  
Not only his high heart could not find room  
T' admit the thought, but at it did he spurn,  
Of hiding from Sophronia what he knew;  
E'en though from her reproof on him it drew.

~~~~~  
* *Magnanima menzogna! or quando è il vera
Si bello, che si possa a te preporre?—*

Tasso, canto 2d. stanza 22d.

182.

And he exclaim'd oft, " Had she said one word ;
 One angry accent had poor Lesbia spoken ;
 How had she then reliev'd me ! But 'twas hard,
 'Twas very hard, to see that heart half broken,—
 Sustain'd with such an exquisite regard
 To self-complacency in me ! The yoke, then,
 That now I bear, had been half lessen'd ;—nay,—
 Had seem'd as nothing,—had she seem'd the prey

183.

Of petulant feelings ! But to see her, so—
 So very meek ! To see her head reclin'd
 Upon her bosom with such patient woe ;
 To see a smile perpetually design'd
 Feign'd satisfaction o'er her face to throw ;—
 To see her thus resolv'd the blame to find
 In herself wholly ;—this unmans me quite !—
 And makes my agony most exquisite !"—

184.

Such thought was he revolving when he found
 Titus upon the causeway. His joy guess,
 Ye who can do it, when he saw unbound—
 With happy prospect Lesbia to possess—
 His extricated honour : also crown'd
 Sophronia with full peace and happiness ;—
 And all this springing from th' unravelment
 Of that strange clue which Titus did torment.

185.

Joy, it is said, suits not the poet's theme
So well as grief; or here I might have scope
T' embody many a fantastic dream
Of present happiness, and future hope!—
The arch-physician, *Love*, so well did seem
With *Lesbia's*, *Titus's* maladies to cope,
That, ere a month, caressing and caress'd,
Gisippus, she; and him, *Sophronia* bless'd!

STANZAS,

Written 10th, 11th, and 12th November, 1819.

—
“ In truth, the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is —

Wordsworth, duodecimo edit. vol. 3, p. 129.
—

1.

MY God ! I once was young, and once was blest
With all the hopes that soaring youth attend :
I had romantic visions which possess'd
My spirit, and to all I seem'd a friend ;
And *in* all did a friend expect ; now send,
Thou roamer, through the earth thy looks forlorn,
Say, from what quarter dost thou apprehend
Thou could'st claim hopes, such as in life's blest morn,
If offer'd to thy choice, thou wouldst reject with scorn.

2.

No ! like a spirit with the universe
At war, a jarring spirit I appear :
Of man rejected ;—and of God—still worse—

Doom'd to perpetual sway of tyrant fear.
I ask but for a little refuge, where
I on the present, future, and the past,
May ruminatè. With many a wistful tear
I ask a place, where my poor heart, at last,
As miser o'er his hoard, my sum of woes may cast!—

3.

Children I've had, and I have known the gush
Of love, allotted to the parent's tie;
Oft on my cheek I've felt affection's flush,
And revell'd o'er my stores of sympathy.
As I have watch'd the sports of infancy,
The name of children seem'd to me a spell
To conjure up whate'er of ecstasy
In an imagin'd paradise could dwell.—
A childless sire now seems to me a sire in hell.

4.

Oh God! Thou must be merciful and kind!
Thou the Artificer of such rare bliss,
As waits on him whom human ties do bind!
Oh! to my sense, there is in childhood's kiss,
And in its trust that, in a world like this,
Each that surrounds it is its genuine friend!
Their little pranks, that which with emphasis
Speaks of the heavens! 'Tis to condescend,
From converse with a child, with aught on earth to
blend.

5.

In a child's voice—is there not melody ?
 In a child's eye—is there not rapture seen ?
 And rapture not of passion's revelry ?
 Calm, though impassion'd ! durable, though keen !
 It is all fresh like the young Spring's first green !
 Children seem spirits from above descended,
 To whom still cleaves Heaven's atmosphere serene ;
 Their very wildnesses with truth are blended :
 Fresh from their skiey mould, they cannot be amended !

6.

Warm, and uncalculating, they're more wise—
 More sense that ecstasy of theirs denotes—
 More of the stuff have they of Paradise—
 And more the music of the warbling throats
 Of choirs, whose anthem round th' Eternal floats—
 Than all that bards e'er feign'd ; or tuneful skill
 Has e'er struck forth from artificial notes :—
 Theirs is that language, ignorant of ill,
 Born from a perfect harmony of power and will.

7.

Some, some, have painted all the joys that wait
 On beings intelligential, from a source
 Within, prolific to originate
 Imaginatively, the mighty course
 Of passion : whence its energy and force

Our complex being draws. Rare spirits have writ :
 The bard of Avon such ! We must divorce
 Our very nature from intrinsic wit,
 If dubious in his scenes truth's impress to admit.

8.

But what have I done that I'm thus forsaken ?
 Whom have I injur'd that I'm thus neglected ?
 Oh ! would I not, the pulse of love to waken
 E'en in a being by the world rejected,
 Stoop to compliances the least connected
 With aught could flatter self ? Ah, was not this,
 What of himself, when he himself depicted,
 Frankly confess'd the paradox-loving Swiss,
 " To* meet a second self is the sublime of bliss ?"

9.

Ah ! was not this my wish ? My hope supreme.
 Cannot a being, or in earth, or heaven,
 Be met with—from the stigma of a dream—
 To rescue him who has with much toil striven
 For such communion ? Like a spirit driven
 From comprehension by connatural things,
 I, from the extremest ardour, ever given
 To man, for human sympathy, my wings
 Now flag, and glad would be to drink lethæan springs.

* See Rousseau's Confessions, in which this sentiment is fully dilated
 on.

10.

Yes ! I'm a mystery to myself ;—to all ;—
 Save to my God : thence is it that I feel
 Such a propensity on heaven to call :
 Since he who comprehends alone can heal.
 Oh, Saviour of the world ! Do not thou steel
 Thyself against my pleading ; call to mind
 When e'en *thy will* with agony did reel :—
 And though by hope supported, and resign'd
 From thought that on thyself the destinies of mankind

11.

Hung ;—Thou cried'st,—“ Father, let it pass away,
 This cup from me ! ”—Yet on thy bidding waited
 Legions of angels :—and eternal sway,
 And endless triumphs, and delights unsated,
 Claim'd thy acceptance when the pang abated.
 Oh, think on me ! I am friendless ! I am poor !
 I with importunate distress am mated !
 Nor have I hope, however I endure,
 That any chance awaits my agonies to cure.

12.

Oh being most compassionate ! for such,
 Crush me to atoms, I will think thou art !
 Do not, I pray thee, let it seem too much
 To mitigate the anguish of my heart.
 Life is of comfort such a copious mart ;
 So many sources there exist for man

Of satisfaction :—he who takes a part
 In the world's coil contentment find still can.
 'Tis no mean post to watch so marvellous a plan !

13.

This feel I with conviction so intense,
 That e'en the very meanest flower that blows
 Might to the mind, to meditate propense,
 Afford a scope to thoughts of deep repose.
 So much am I convinc'd that poorest shews
 Above, beneath, around us, all involve
 (To him, to trace their character, who knows)
 Infinity, that e'en forms which dissolve
 In nothingness, administer to high resolve.

14.

Yes, there's a mystery in the very air ;
 " Tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks,"
 " Sermons in stones," and blessings every where !
 So much am I convinc'd, that poorest nooks
 Have loop-holes, whence the *gifted* spirit looks,
 To an illimitable universe ;
 That, could I once dislodge the crabbed hooks
 Entangling me in matter's primal curse,
 No lot would me appal for better and for worse.

15.

Freedom, thou best of benefits, in what
 Dost thou essentially consist ? In this
 That sickness palsies, bars confine thee not ?

As air art uncontroul'd, and nought dost miss
 Of that which constitutes ideal bliss !
 No! Freedom this is not. 'Tis to be free,
 To have thy will in consentaneousness
 With the Almighty will: to seem, and be,
 That which, for bliss or bale, that will doth thee decree.

16.

'Tis not the bird, who, in the narrowest cage
 Is prison'd, that is most in bondage there ;
 But 'tis that bird who feels the most blind rage
 Against the bars his freedom that impair.
 Man never calls it thralldom, since the air
 He cannot cleave with wings. Thus could a bird
 Once be so happy in his wiry snare ;
 That still no feeling of restraint occur'd,
 To call that bondage were to mis-apply the word.

17.

Just as that very commoner of the sky
 That winged creature is at liberty ;
 Thus if by truth's criterion we try
 What constitutes man's worst captivity,
 It is to have more passions than can be
 Indulg'd consistent with the good of all ;—
 I say not, to be chain'd is to be free :
 But though we be releas'd from bodily thrall,
 The thralldom of the mind far deadlier I call.

18

It is not Freedom to be what thou willest,
 But 'tis to will that which thou ought'st to be,
 And that man, whose volition is the stillest,
 That man whose will moves in accordancy
 With His who " dwelleth in eternity,"
 He is the Freeman!* And well call'd the bard
 All " Slaves" but those who bend to this decree ;
 And with devoutly-passionate regard
 Witness this truth sublime to be its own reward.

19.

Therefore, no puling sentimentalist
 Am I : and when I mourn my agonies,
 'Tis not for this or that cause, I'm distress'd.
 In my creed there is to the man that's wise
 But one legitimate source of smiles and sighs :
 And that's involv'd in question, on his path
 Whether, " the Son of Righteousness arise
 With healing on his wings ;" or whether scath
 He feel, or think he feel, of the Everlasting's wrath.

20.

I have no sickly feeling of the heart ;
 No mawkish love-tale, vast wrongs to declare ;
 No pangs arthritic, spasm, or cancerous smart,

* He is the Freeman whom the truth makes free,
 And all are slaves besides." *Cowper's Task.*

My bodily functions one by one impair.
 These—'tis my trust—I could with patience bear :
 No loss of wealth ; no friend's departed face ;
 No tricks of fortune, whose romantic air
 Might give my well-wov'n tale bewitching grace :—
 My ills have nought to do with person, time, or place !

21.

“ Since God is ever present, ever felt,
 In the void waste as in the city full,
 And joy is where He vitally hath dwelt ;”
 So when he ceases to be merciful,
 And takes away his presence, then we pull,
 And tug in vain against our destiny.
 Life is a waste where we no more can cull
 A single flower of happiness, when He,
 The very soul of bliss, to us has ceas'd to be.

22.

Oh God ! So deeply the conviction's wrought
 In me, that thou to man art all in all ;
 And that the forms most exquisitely fraught
 With means of joy—e'en the gay festival ;
 The choral song ; the trophy-blazon'd hall ;
 The dance ; the appurtenants of courtesy ;
 Without the attraction of thy blessing, pall ;
 That the mind's state seems every thing to me !
 Without a thankful heart, vain were all social glee !

23.

If this be held as truth, with those yclept
 Joys *artificial*; how much more do those
 Call'd *natural*, ask a spirit that has kept
 The pow'rs that God has giv'n him, in repose,
 All unassailable by passion's throes?
 Say, can the green fields, can the azure sky,
 The waving forest, or the day's dim close,
 When to the night-dew each bud shuts its eye,
 Please him that not partakes his God's serenity?

24.

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,"—
 But 'tis to him whose moral path is clear:
 "There is a rapture in the roaring floods,"—
 But 'tis to him who *plays* with forms of fear.
 "There is society where no one's near,"
 But 'tis to him whose dreams ebullient rise:
 "There is a transport in the falling tear,"—
 But 'tis to him whose ever lifted eyes
 Shed sparkling drops which tell their source is of the
 skies!

25.

I cannot ever, ever feel again,
 That which, oh Nature! I have felt for thee.
 'Twas in God's presence ever to remain
 The marvels of thy boundless reign to see.
 No pressures then of cold propriety,

Scarce even animal appetites were mine ;
 Into the breeze transfus'd, I seem'd to flee
 Upon its wings, and all my being resign
 To influence of eye, ear, touch, and thought divine !

26.

Thy mountains!—They to me were types of pow'r,
 Of glory, vastness, and magnificence !—
 Thy clouds!—As on the “wings of winds” did lour
 Obscure imaginations, yet intense,
 On them ; and shapings of creative sense
 Rode as in triumph ! Thy far-gleaming lakes !
 Their shores of faery masque the residence !
 Thy breezes, murmuring through thy sedgy brakes ;
 It seem'd bless'd spirits might quit Heav'n's harmony
 for their sakes !

27.

Oh, could the dreams that nature gives but last,
 This being they would seem to immortalize :
 Think what it is to live in ages past ?
 And have all characters before you rise,
 All manners, and impressive ceremonies ;
 To see all pageants that have long gone by,
 In lone bower hear the captive lady's sighs,
 The long procession once more to espy,
 And, flouted by the winds, rich banners wave on high ?

28.

To hear the winding horn among the fells,
 To see the quarry thrid the forest's maze,

To track the falcon-chace by tinkling bells,
 Bring back all revelries of parted days ?
 Oh, Nature! this is but thy faintest praise ;
 In hallow'd haunts so much can'st thou procure !
 To those, who, in traditionary lays
 Well vers'd, and learn'd in chronicles obscure,
 Thy lore, to midnight lamp, oh chivalry, could allure !

29.

Thanks ! and much gratitude to him we owe,
 The Bard* of Yarrow ! From his living song
 How do our pulses beat, our bosoms glow,
 Forming acquaintance with the dazzling throng
 Of warriors, dames, and elves, that dance along,
 As in a gay procession, subtly wrought,
 The web of his romantic tales, among ;
 The sense aches with o'er-stimulated thought,
 As through its gorgeous crowd of images 'tis brought.

30.

So, perhaps more appropriately to thee,
 Thou† Bard of rocky Morven, to thy heath,
 Thy mists, thy mountain-torrents, much are we
 Indebted ; to thy thistles, with the breath
 Of night-winds, waving ; to thy spirits of death,
 Gibbering snow-white, 'mid " mists and moonlight
 drear !"
 Oh, 'tis a blest time when we hold beneath

* Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

† Ossian.

The heart such lavish hoards of joy sincere,
They e'en with sweetness pall, 'till pungent made by fear!

31.

Yes, I remember, when the dreariest waste ;
The heathery moorland with its mossy stones ;
Where, here and there, with gelid dew o'ercast,
The hart's-tongue, or the flagging grass, atones
For the wide barrenness : where plaintive moans
Of chilling breeze perpetually are heard :
Yes, I remember well, (e'en though with groans
Of wailing sprite that chilling breeze had stirr'd)
When I to brightest scenes, such prospect had preferr'd!

32.

I had a store of joy within me then ;—
An inexhaustible and salient spring ;
And e'en whate'er I felt of *bodily* pain,
Or of that *deeper* which the heart doth wring,
Seem'd, in profound subserviency, to bring
New zest to pleasure ; pampering its caprice :
'Twas like a man wilfully shuddering ;
Giving, by warlock tales, to wassail bliss
And Christmas blithe fire-side, a spect'ral emphasis !

33.

As in that divine, philosophic lore,
Suggesting that all objects of each sense
Are, on the human mind,—and nothing more,—
Modifications of God's influence :
So, in the boiling of the turbulence,

I felt, when all submitted to thy sway,
 Sound, hue, and form, at once, with such intense,
 And such capricious, shifting, seem'd to play :
 My soul was like a harp responsive to their sway.

34.

Immortal were my thoughts ! For where no fear
 Exists, there's virtual immortality :—
 Since, were the "be-all, end-all" this state here,
 Yet, if no thought arose that so 't might be ;
 To man, thus not *so being painfully*,
 In any reference 'twould not be so
 That he might wish it otherwise : to me
 Thus so predominating was the glow,
 Oh Nature, caught from thee, methought 'twould never
 go.

35.

Yet, is it not, oh God, in part to hold
 With Thee, communion thus thy works to feel ?
 And can those souls be of an earthly mould
 Thus, rapt above mortality, that steal,
 When Thou thy natural wonders dost reveal ?
 Is it not, in novitiate of learning
 To gain a 'vantage post in Fortune's wheel ?
 Is not there promise in this nature yearning,
 Which always doth imply from art a scornful turn-
 ing ?

36.

Then why should I be to all pleasure dead
To such an inexpressible degree?
I? Though I grant, as wiser men have said,
That 'tis a world in ruin which we see.—
Why should I, that have felt such ecstasy,
Be sunken now so low? Is it t' enforce
The doctrine that each project which can be
Content with aught save wisdom's primal source,
Is like a pile on sand, which storms will soon disperse?

37.

So seems it! What with all my dreams am I?
It was on real objects that I gaz'd;
Yet have they ended more in vanity,
Than the most doting visions of the craz'd;
Or all the structures by fanatics rais'd;
Now had I rather mope where Penury
In rags, filth, smoke, and sickness, is emblaz'd;
Screams in the ballad's rude discordancy,
The howl of curs, coarse oaths, and the scold's ribaldry,

38.

So that new feelings might at least be mine!
Than live in some contemplative recess,
Where mountains, forests, rocks, lakes, streams, com-
bine,
With human beings, deeply to impress.

Is this, oh God, to shew the nothingness
Of fairest hopes of man? How soon the stream
(Most copious and most promising to bless)
Exhausted, if from earth alone it teem?
Thus, when I thought to drink, I drank but in a dream!

THE SPELL UNRAVELLED.

Written the 6th May, 1820.

—
“ By each one
Of the dear dreams through which I have travell'd,
The cup of my enjoyment from none
Can I take, 'till the spells, one by one,
Which have wither'd ye all, be unravell'd.

Nugæ Canoræ, p. 126.

—
1.

MY God, with what words can I dare,
Without a presumptuous seeming, .
To say that, from Thee, who hear'st prayer,
Life's prospects with blessings are teeming?

2.

I talk'd of a “ spell ” that had bound
Each sense, and benumb'd every feeling ;
Though my joys in their *forms* might be found,
That had all their *fine essence* been stealing.

3

I was widow'd of love,—tho' possessing
One whom my sad heart fondly sigh'd,
With the tenderest, dearest caressing,
To own as its mistress and bride :—

4.

I was childless,—yet children were given,
Whose innocent charms might inspire
All that ever reminded of heaven
The heart of a fortunate sire :—

5.

And I said, of the manifold "spells"
Which withheld from my senses the taste,
Of the exquisite transport which dwells
With gifts which my lot in life grac'd ;—

6.

The demoniac "spells," "one by one,"
That lay on the path which I travell'd,
"The cup of enjoyment from none
Would I take, 'till they all were unravell'd."

7.

And surely I may, without fear,
Call my Maker to witness my truth,
That for many a tedious year
While receded the visions of youth,

8.

Never, never, from hue, shape, or sound,
From word never, smile, or caress,
This bosom, an instant, e'er found
A respite from cleaving distress,

9.

Till the "spell" which lay o'er my dear ones,—
By a mighty, invisible hand,—
Till the heart's pangs, the only severe ones,
Were snapp'd as a sorcerer's wand.

10.

I, now, in a *smile* that has greeted
My eyes both in sorrow and glee,—
In a *smile* that has never retreated,
Though it met with *no welcome* from me;

11.

Can experience the thrilling delight
Which it gave me in days that are gone!
Though 'twas ever the same to my *sight*,
Yet it fell on a *bosom of stone*!

12.

My children,—they now can impart
Not only the claims which, from duty,
They well may enforce on my heart;
But in all its most exquisite beauty,

13.

Like soft music, the fond gush is given
To my soul, from the rapturous tie
Reproducing those bless'd days when heaven
'Bout our bed, path, and table, doth lie !

14.

My wife!—and my children!—dear names,
Which awaken my heart's deepest love,
An earnest such treasure proclaims
Of "the day-spring" which comes from above !

15.

When the *throbs* that await on the pleasures
Which owe to yourselves their creation,
Are heighten'd by *spiritual treasures*,
They receive then their *last consecration* !

16.

And I feel it, that these, the sure pledges
Of heaven's love are thus heighten'd and blest ;
And whatever the sceptic alleges
A *pure joy*, a *pure source* must attest !

17.

As well might one doubt the report
Of the senses of sight, touch, and taste ;

As believe not the joys that resort
To the soul where God's* "secret" is plac'd.

18.

No! a *seal* there is set to *that feeling*
Which can be decypher'd by none,
Till a *new sense*, with *mystic revealing*,
Informs us that *seal* is *our own*.

* Psalm 25, verse 14.

"The *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear him: and he will shew them his covenant."

LINES
ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

Written August, 1820.

—
1.

AND shall such worth as thine from hence depart,
Nor thy friend shed one tributary tear ?
When first th' intelligence smote on my heart,
That thou wert gone, how many a parted year
Of early life, before me did appear
In long array, in whose events, kind friend,
As they conduc'd my heart to grieve or cheer,
Thou still didst sympathize ; most prompt to blend
Interest with aught that did my weal or woe portend.

2.

Thine was a heart of genuine sterling worth ;
Few have supported through life's varied scene
A soul, in which aught of terrestrial birth
Less dimm'd the light, aspiring, yet serene,

Which, with pervading influence, o'er thy mien
 Shed an attractive brightness! Tho' from blame
 Of all pollution, thou wert ever clean
 In a voluptuous age, in thee the flame
 Of charity still glow'd for faults known but in name.

3.

I well remember, when, in ardent youth,
 I strove for *that*, for which 'tis only given,
 'Stead of possessing, to obtain, in truth,
 Experience, that 'tis vain for it to have striven,
Anticipation on this earth of heaven!
 Except, indeed, that, so far, men may say
 A noble trust ne'er to despair was driven,
 As since when souls hopes of perfection sway,
 Though they be baffled all, those hopes themselves
 repay!

4.

I well remember, how, with mind less prone
 To visionary thought, with smile benign,
 When, with sincerity, thou could'st not own
 My warm heart's speech conviction wrought on thine,
 To hear me thou didst patiently incline:--
 Howe'er fallacious, if a lofty feeling,
 Tho' gendering weakest argument, did shrine
 Itself in my frank utterance, how, stealing
 From thee, I caught a smile, encouragement revealing!

5.

Many the hours that I have pass'd with thee
In pleasant converse, when, in youth's warm prime,
My soul, in ardent immaturity,
On the experience of a riper time
Too much presum'd: and when to the sublime
Of human feeling public measures tended;
When a * new æra on this world of crime
Seem'd to be dawning, my crude thoughts how mended,
Issued from thy calm lips with deeper reason blended.

6.

But though in goodness thou excelledst most,
And in thy sphere wert parallel'd by few
In intellect, thy path of life was cross'd
By untoward accidents of many a hue,
Many of these such as could ne'er accrue
To vulgar souls! Tho' both from natural gifts,
And acquir'd knowledge, thou might'st hope to view
Others to thee subordinate, yet shifts
Fortune from thy career, and those beneath thee lifts.

7.

Oft wert thou visited with pale disease,
Nor didst thou totally escape th' assault
Of mental agony! The pleasant breeze,
That, without leisure, or desire, to halt

~~~~~  
\* Alluding to the earlier stages of the Revolution in France.

Bears some along, as though they clave the vault  
 Of th' empyrean, rather than on earth  
 Did urge a cumbrous load, not for thy *fault*,  
 But for thy *sorrow*, friend ! ne'er call'd to birth,  
 From thy still wrestling heart, pæans of thankful mirth.

## 8.

Harder to bear than pomp of tragic wrong,  
 And all the woes whence the romantic page  
 Is swell'd with incident whence interests strong  
 The sympathies of other men engage  
 In our calamities, is it to wage  
 A never-ceasing, tho' a petty war,  
 With spirit-fretting troubles ! Heritage  
 Of greater potency, all hope to bar,  
 And withering more the soul, since more its powers  
 they mar,

## 9.

Than the sublime of evil ! conjuring oft  
 Antagonist sublimity of soul ;  
 As I had rather, from some rock aloft,  
 Look down where ocean's waves tumultuous roll,  
 Than in some squalid haunt feel the controul  
 Of jarring sounds, and sights undignified,  
 So had I rather feel, that with my whole  
 And entire being, I were justified  
 In warring with my lot, than pine o'er its dimm'd pride !

10.

Farewel! In strictest truth I may assert  
Thy loss has left a chasm within my heart!  
And when, in future, memory may revert  
To those familiar scenes which did impart  
Life's dearest impulses, since those of art  
The most devoid, thou still shalt be my guest,  
A spectral image, shrin'd in holiest part  
Of my imagination, and my breast,  
Heaving with sighs, shall oft thine unseen sway attest.

## SONNET.

*Written at Ryde, 24th August, 1820.*

### TO THE OCEAN.

OH Ocean! could I, as I have seen thee,  
See thee once more! Thy billows never roll'd  
More freely, nor the winds more uncontroul'd,  
Pass'd o'er thy surface, than did the wild glee  
With which I hail'd thy lonely majesty,  
Rise into shapings energetic, bold,  
To the sublime of thought, and manifold  
In rich imaginative imagery!

Thou art the same that ever thou hast been!  
But oh my soul has lost the salient power,  
Whence, with a light ineffably serene,  
Which eye ungifted never saw, I ween,  
It thee apparell'd! Oh, but for one hour  
That thou, as with youth's passion, could'st be seen!

THE END.







