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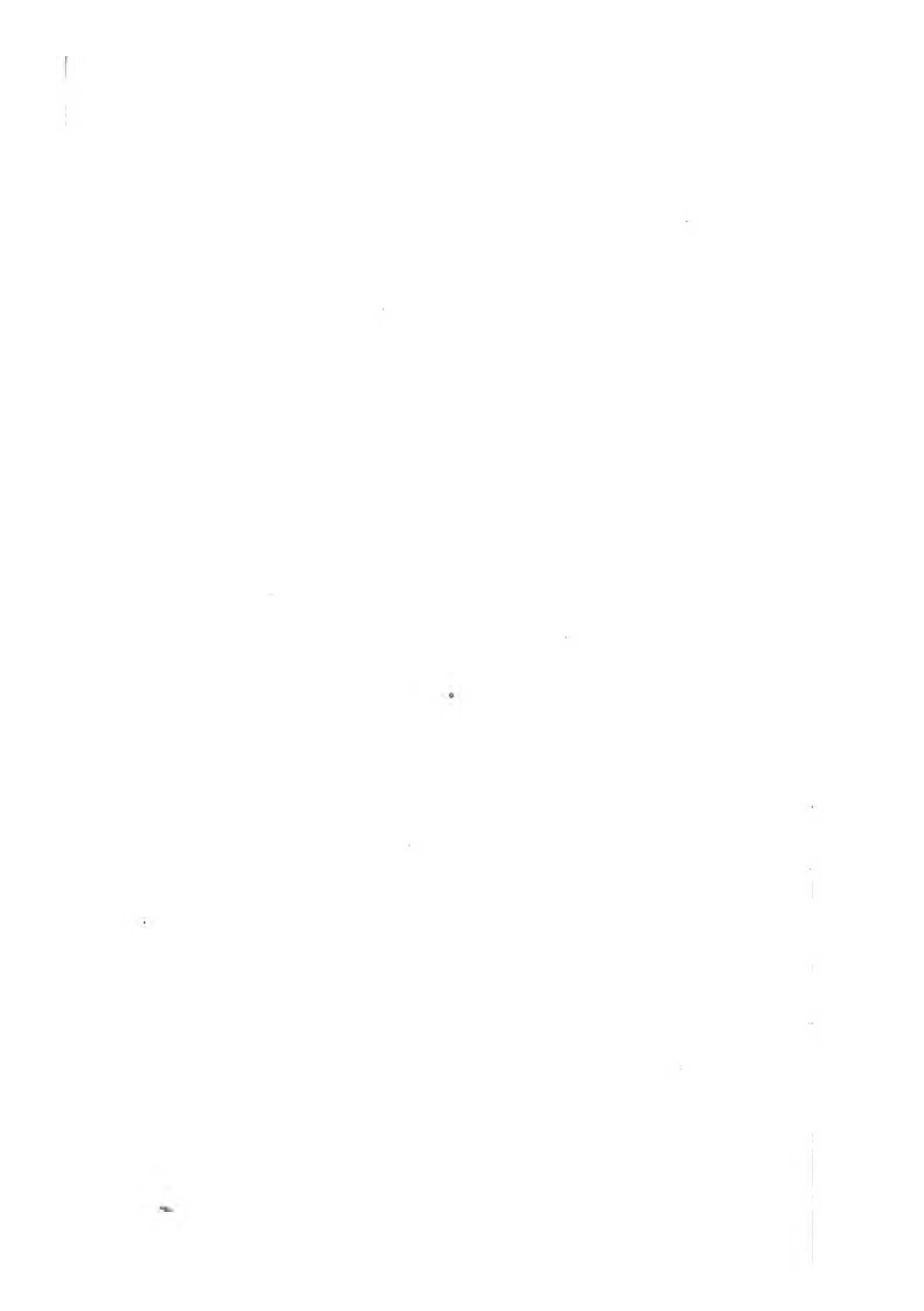
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BARNARD.

46.

1350.





BARNARD.

A MODERN ROMANCE.



“ — GRANT, AS TIMON GROWS, HIS HATE MAY GROW
TO THE WHOLE RACE OF MANKIND HIGH AND LOW.”

Timon of Athens; Act iv. Scene 1.

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.
1846.

1350.

T. FORREST, PRINTER, MANCHESTER.

TO

MISS EMMELINE MONTAGUE,

(OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER,)

WHO ON THE MIMIC STAGE

EMBODIES THE TRUE SPIRIT OF POETIC ROMANCE,

THIS ROMANCE OF THE STAGE OF LIFE

IS DEDICATED,

WITH EVERY FEELING OF RESPECT,

BY HER UNKNOWN ADMIRER,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Poem is the substance of a few midnight outpourings—the result of a few hours stolen from sleep. It has undergone no revision, but remains precisely as it was first imagined, crude and unpolished.

Whatever faults the critic may discover, and there are many, let him attribute to the true causes, the extreme youth of the Author, and the scarcity of leisure attendant on commercial pursuits.

He will doubtless be censured for the imprudence and presumption of the present step ; but let it be borne in mind, that seventeen summers generally leave us with a greater proportion of boldness and confidence, than wisdom and discrimination.

With this brief apology, the Author presents his Poem to the Public, and leaves them to judge of its merits.

Manchester, January 14, 1846

BARNARD.

CANTO I.

As that blest orb that shines by day,
 To glad us with his fervent light,
And lends the moon at eve his ray,
 To guide us through the cheerless night,
Where'er his glorious beams do shine
All, all is lovely—all divine :
But let him but withdraw his light,
 And ocean wakes his furious roar,
And whirlwinds hurl, with fearful might,
 The foaming billows to the shore.

E'en so is Beauty :—where she dwells,
 Pleasure progresses—crimes decrease—
 No fiery madness vainly swells,
 But man is tamed, and all is peace.
 Where she is not—there is a dearth,
 More dead than those that vex the earth ;
 A dearth of all that's pure and bright,
 As angels from the realms of light :
 There is a burning thirst for blood—
 Mankind is savage, fierce and rude.

Fairest of all that God has given,
 To light our solitude ;
 Sweetest of all the gifts of heaven,
 To calm our gloomy mood ;—
 Fairer than any modest flower,
 That blushes o'er the fragrant sod,
 Is Beauty, with her witching power,
 The great chef d'œuvre of our God.

* * * *

In ancient Hawford's wide domain,
The joyous shout of mirthful men
Is borne across the fertile plain,
And up the darkly frowning glen :
Upon the hills the bonfires blaze,
Casting afar their lurid rays ;
While in the hall the noisy shout
Holds converse with the din without.
All human beings seem to-day,
To cast their cares and woes away.

What is all this? It is the mirth
Of those base, servile sons of earth,
Who fawn so long as wealth can roll,
And wine may sparkle in the bowl ;
While power and wealth are both allied,
To back the haughty brow of pride.
But sneak like frightened hounds away,
In fortune's more malignant day.

Why is all this? It is, to-day,
Barnard hath gained his heart's desire—
A titled name,—and bursts the sway
Of those who tamed his soul of fire.

And where is he—that noble one,
Young Barnard, who his race can track
In history's page for ages back,
Who blot upon his line hath none :—
Sits he upon some massive chair,
Within his old, ancestral halls,
With nobles proud, and maidens fair,
With bright lamps flashing from the walls?
No,—seen but by few, and seeing none,
In a dark nook he sits alone :
No charm for him hath all the peals
Of laughter, for too well he feels,
The face that laughs the loudest now,
The one who wears the merriest brow,
With laugh as loud and smile as bland,
Would welcome to his house and land,

Some base-born plunderer in his room,
And even revel o'er his tomb.

As in some forest's verdant shade,
Begirt by trees of healthy green,
Untimely blighted and decayed,

A young, yet dying oak is seen :
So in the halls of festal glee,
Gloomy as mortal well can be ;
Looking with a scornful eye,
On all the noisy revelry ;
Sits the misanthropic Lord
Sternly brooding o'er his woes ;
Though young his years, they would afford
A mighty catalogue of throes,
Enough to rack the older mind,
Of e'en the best of human kind.

And yet—though fast into the ocean,
Of eternity, his years
Flow on, he looks with no devotion,
On hallowed things—he knows no fears ;

Though dark his coming fate may be
 He fears not certain misery ;
 With haughty brow and godless breath,
 He calmly scorns and looks on death.

* * * * *
 * * * * *

The vine, when from its lattice torn,
 Will hang fast withering, dry and lorn ;
 If no support, no shower come nigh,
 In a few hours the gourd will die.
 Not so the Lord. In early days,
 Ere yet the child his hand could raise,
 In youthful playfulness to clasp
 His mother's in his puny grasp,—
 Death had deprived him of his sire ;—
 And ere a few short years were flown,
 Torn from their spirit's fond desire,
 Mother and sisters—all were gone :
 Gone to the grave—and left him here,
 To mourn in silence o'er their bier :

Left him alone, without a friend
To soothe him, or his rights defend.

As on some dull and misty night,
 When earth and heaven are drear and dark,
Nor moon emits her silv'ry light,
 Nor planet lends its vivid spark :
If then perchance some timid star
 Peep from its darksome home on high,
And dimly shining from afar,
 Dart its weak lustre through the sky :
Dense rising mists and vapours damp,
Will overcloud its feeble lamp ;
And when by them 'tis covered o'er,
It sets, and sets to rise no more.
So with young Barnard, when at first
 The blossoms of his love shot forth,
By none were tender feelings nurst,
 No kindly voice would praise his worth.

None blamed the bad, or trained the good,
Or cheered him in his sorrowing mood.

O! 'twas a piteous sight to see

How sternness checked the glowing boy :

Did he but smile—then there would be,

A frowning scowl to chill his joy.

As shoots too early in the year

Burst forth—then die—and disappear,

So perished in his childish breast

All that could make his manhood blest

Nipt by those blighting hearts of stone,

All that was holy soon was gone.

His first step was—He ceased to love.

No longer would he eager move,

To seize th' unwilling hand :

Then slowly he began to shun

A few—then more—then every one,

Of all his menial band.

Then with a savage, though a new-born hate,
He cursed mankind—defying God and Fate !

How felt they then—that cursed horde

Of recreants—they who first began

To stem the spirits of their Lord,

To make him hate his fellow-man ?

How did they feel ? Did scalding tears

Flow ceaseless—or less open fears

Take the possession of their souls ?

No—as some boiling torrent's force,

Though devastation mark its course,

Still furiously rolls—

So did their tide of hatred flow,

So did they fill his cup with woe,

So persecuted,—till his heart,

From earth seemed yearning to depart,

Till hollow eyes and care-worn brow,

Proclaimed him—what they call him now.

Nor then, as sorrow fast grew worse,

Dare he for peace or pleasure hope :

They muttered o'er his head a curse,
 And styled him—a proud *Misanthrope*.

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O! Grantham's vales are rich and green,
 And sweetly there the fountains fall ;
 But sweeter, fairer far, is seen,
 Young Alice, heiress of them all.
 Though brightly glows the eastern sky,
 'Tis nothing to her sparkling eye :
 All nature's beauty—all her grace,
 All that is noble, bright and fair,
 Is written on her glowing face ;
 The soul of purity is there !
 O Alice ! I could view thy form
 With love, enraptured and amazed ;
 Aye—though the judgment's thundering storm
 Rolled wildly o'er me as I gazed :

Intensely watch thy beaming eye,
 And gazing on thy beauties—die.

O ! poets have sung of the beautiful dead,
 And they may be free from care and strife,
 But give me the lip that is blossoming red,
 There is something more exquisite far in life ;
 They *may* say the cold forehead is grand and high,
 They *may* loudly praise the marble form,
 But give me the wicked, the glittering eye,
 And the throbbing breast that with love is warm.
 From a living maiden a charm is shed
 More lovely than ever hath gemm'd the dead.

* * * * *

Sunshine and morning—on the hills
 No cloud is nigh to dim their brightness ;
 They gaily gild the flowing rills,
 That murmur on in crystal lightness.
 Morn in the valley—not a tear,
 To glitter in the flow'rets cup,

For if the night-dew left one there,
 The early sunbeam drank it up.
Buried in slumbers, long and deep,
Calmly the castle's inmates sleep;
Save one, young Alice, who (wandering now,
Down the heathery slope of the mountain's brow,)
Is hastening sadly to the grove,
Where cedars form a rich alcove;
Where flowerets sweet, and mosses green,
In nature's fairest garb are seen.
O! does she go to cull a flower,
 To deck her darkly flowing hair?
Or sitting in the fragrant bower,
 To contemplate her Maker there?
Goes she to list to the cascades
Of streams, that wash the forest shades?
O no her spirit hopes to hear,
 A music that is sweeter far,
Strains which to love-lorn maids appear
 Dear as their lyres to minstrels are :—

She does not go to muse on God,
 Her searching eye expects to scan
 One who, though made from clayey sod,
 In form's divine—yet called—a man.
 She goes to hear her lover tell,
 Tales that her heart loves but too well.

* * * * *

Whose is that form by Alice placed,
 Talking fond words of future bliss?
 Whose arm surrounds her slender waist?
 Whose lip has snatched a balmy kiss?
 Methinks, I've seen that burning brow,
 With sorrow dark, oppressed with gloom,
 Not in such company as now,
 But silent in a dreary room.
 Yes—by that mournful glance, I see,
 Gloomy Lord Barnard—it is thee!

Though in the centre of thine heart,
 The blight was fixed that marred thy mirth,

Though thou wert longing to depart
 From this rude, bliss-denying earth :—
 I knew 'twas vain,—though high thy soul,
 Though swift within thee wild thoughts roll,
 Though fierce the misanthropic storm,
 Thou canst not, darest not, hate a form,
 So bright, so beautiful, so blest,
 As she, thou foldedst to thy breast :
 They who behold a form like hers,
 Become firm, zealous worshippers.

* * * * *

What thrilling words of love were said,
 In that deep forest's frowning shade,
 I dare not, if I would, essay
 To bring before the common eye ;—
 What lovers to their maidens say,
 Is better kept in privacy ;
 For though unto each other's ear
 The am'rous sighs that then are given,

Are to their burning spirits dear,
 As love of life, or hope of heaven ;
 When told again to vulgar souls,
 Who never knew such witching dreams,
 The flame that through each sentence rolls
 But vain and idle nonsense seems.

* * * * *

They parted—not as worldlings part,
 When feigned emotions fill the heart :
 They used not the bombastic bow,
 Or chilling curtsies—bending low.
 No !—theirs was a more holy bliss,
 A soul-entrancing happiness.
 The honied kiss—the fond embrace ;
 Their parting, as their meeting grace—
 And yet a tear bedewed *her* face :
 A tear—which washed, as on it roved,
 The glowing cheek of him she loved.

And tell me not, ye prudish fools,
 Long bred in puritanic schools,

That there was sin in that embrace ,
 That all that rapture was disgrace :
 I scorn the lectures ye may read—
 This is my doctrine—this my creed :
 Heaven made all nature—so whate'er
 Is natural, must be just and fair :—
 And these the tastes that bounteous heaven,
 To birds, and beasts, and man has given,—
 The fox was made by night to prowl,
 And seize, and slay the sleeping fowl ;
 The wolf—through raging thirst for blood,
 To roam the terror of the wood ;
 The eagle through the expanded air,
 On feathery wings was made to rove ;
 The dog to rouse the sleeping hare ;
 And youths and maidens made—*to love.*

 * * * * *
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Within a stately room and tall,
 (Whose dark oak panels on the wall
 Reflect the bright, the crimson rays,

That on its polished surface fall,
 From the huge fire's extended blaze,)

There stood a young, a gloomy man,
 Conversing with an aged sire,
 And thus, in furious torrent ran
 His incoherent words of fire :—

“ I will not conceal, what my soul doth feel,
 Nor whatsoever I think deny ;
 My tongue shall tell, what I cannot quell,
 For though bad I be—I will not lie !
 In the stage of life—of care and strife,
 No holy blessing my spirit cheers ;
 No God have I—so when I fly
 To judgment's thunders in after years,
 From my sinful heart all hope is riven,
 Of tasting in Eden the joys of heaven :
 And yet have I come to claim thy child.
 Old man ! tho' my mien be fierce and wild,
 My heart within me with love is warm,
 And tho' for man I have no regard,
 But give me thy daughter and I will guard,
 As a gem from heaven, her hallowed form :

Refuse me, and we are both undone,
For though twain our bodies, our souls are one.”
He ceased—the old man raised his head,
 And bent on him his piercing eye
To see if to the words he said,
 His visage seemed to give the lie.
Then slightly coughed—and then he broke
The silence and this answer spoke :—
“ The daughter of Sir John Lilford,
Must never wed a spendthrift Lord :
Her loveliness would well command
The proudest noble in the land :
Her riches claim the purest gem
That glitters in his diadem ;
So I have chosen one for her,
And, though he’s not her worshipper,
She’ll always, from his noble hands,
Obtain just what her sex demands.
So though thy brow be fierce and wild,
It will not win for thee my child ;

Though long and pure thy lineage be,
 My daughter is no bride for thee !”

* * * * *
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O'er Grantham's hills the bells are ringing,
 And nature shines in conscious pride ;
 Through Grantham's vales the maids are bringing
 Their flowers, to cast before the bride.
 In Grantham's church the priest is ready,
 Now—there—as well sweet Alice waits,
 Pale as a lily—yet firm and steady,
 To give her hand to one she hates.
 Ah ! the palsied Duke has now come hither,
 Onward the holy accents move ;—
 Alas ! that such words should join together
 Two hands, whose hearts can never love.
 Listen—'tis done—the prayers are o'er,
 Both have proclaimed their solemn vow—
 Alice ! thy pleasures are no more,
 A tide of misery waits thee now.

No more thy sorrowing mind can know,
A soul that feels nor care, nor woe :
Thy spirit crushed—thy love is gone ;
Pleasure and hope—all—all are flown :—
Curse on thy father's heart of stone.

They pass along the aisle—and now
 Enwrap in garments black appears,
One on whose high and lofty brow,
 Seems firmly fixed the grief of years.
“ Alice ! I'd bless thee but once more ;”
 And at these words, a thrill was felt
Through each one's breast—and down before
 His face, both bride and bridegroom knelt.
“ May he be blest—who blesses thee,
 And damned for ever he who harms ;
Cursed who first caresses thee,
 And then neglects thy youthful charms.
I've loved thee, Alice, thou to me
 Wert all, that to this bleak world bound me,

In loving, I from grief was free,

But now again the curse hath found me :

Thou, thou art lost—my hopes are flown—

And I must fade and fall alone.

Farewell ! afar from love and thee,

My cheerless, lonely way I take ;

Blest, blest for ever, may'st thou be,

And all who love thee for thy sake.”

Through the sombre church there is a shriek,

The pictured altar-piece before,

Pallid, insensible and weak,

The maiden lies on the stony floor :—

And o'er her form in anguish burning,

Lord Barnard waits to catch the ray,

The first, blest beam of life returning,

And then to hasten far away.

He sees it now—she opes her eyes,

And gazes around with a wild surprise :

Now her sweet, yet bloodless lip he presses,

With a whole cataract of loves ;

Then her loved name he fondly blesses—
And slowly from the temple moves.
He mounts the steed, and like the wind
The echoing earth he gallops o'er,
Leaving in distance far behind,
Scenes which his eye may view no more.

END OF CANTO I.

BARNARD.

CANTO II.

YEARS—years have flown—beneath the sward,
Resting in peace, lies old Lilford :
The tottering Duke has long since fled,
To swell the numbers of the dead.
On the Ladye's head the frost is sprinkled,
With years of woe her brow is wrinkled ;
But yet, e'en in decay you trace,
The relics of her younger face :
As—when some plundering conqueror comes
With arm of might and brow of gloom ;

'Mid trumpets shrill, and noisy drums,

To turn a city to a tomb :

He may destroy the ancient shrine,

By the fond natives deem'd divine :

He may throw prostrate to the ground,

The beauties which may there abound :

Yet the proud glory of its name,

To all posterity shall live ;

Succeeding bards shall sing its fame,

And patriots o'er the ruin grieve :

Nor wholly to the latest hour

Of time, be swept from off the earth,

All relics of its ancient power,

All remnants of its former worth.

So age can ne'er entirely blight,

Her flashing eye's resplendent light.

In Hawford's hall no voice is heard,

Save the low twittering of the bird,

Who far from man's invading powers,

Hath built its nest in the crumbling towers.

The pale moon shines through the broken roof,
 And it soon will have no roof but heaven ;
 From the haunted pile man keeps aloof,
 For spirits of bad are there at even.

* * * * *
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It was a dark, a dreary day,
 The sun had never given a ray,
 But in its place the lightning,
 (With thunder's wild and hollow roar,)
 Had flashed and blazed the whole day o'er,
 The narrow valleys bright'ning.
 On a dark steed, a darker form
 Rode slowly through the raging storm :
 His track was o'er that lonely sod,
 By man or charger seldom trod,
 Where, racked by years, in ruin old,
 Stood tottering Hawford, grey and old :
 When first his searching glance he threw,
 As the old building came to view,

He seemed as though his soul was torn,
 To see it so by ruin worn ;
 But after he had gazed awhile,
 O'er his grey visage came a smile ;
 Yet, 'twas not one of joy, I ween,
 But dismal as e'er tear was seen ;
 Then mournfully he turned again,
 To hurry down the mountain's side :
 Soon, soon, he gained the cheerless plain,
 And hastened on his gloomy ride.

* * * * *

In Grantham's halls the servant sleeps,
 In closet close the mistress weeps,—
 Within his room, with pious care,
 The pastor says his evening prayer ;—
 Slowly, slowly unto heaven,
 The heart's sincere desire is given—
 When—lo !—he stays his prayer—a sound
 Re-echoes through the valleys round ;

It is a charger hurrying on—
And now, before the castle's gate,
With toil o'er-laden, pale and wan,
An old man for admittance waits :
His earnest prayer he now obtains ;
The entrance-steps the traveller gains.
Now stands he in the cheerless hall ;—
What is there in his hazel eye,
That doth the Father's soul appal,
And for a while his tongue doth tie?
He gives a long glance at the wrinkled brow ;
Then cries, as he stroked with his hand his head :
“ O God ! Lord Barnard—is it thou ?
I thought that thou wert surely dead ;
But now, I view thee once again :
Great heaven ! what peril, woe and pain,
Must thou,” but here his speech was broken,
For footsteps at the door betoken,
That Alice comes, to see once more,
The form she loves, as she did of yore,

Although the tide of frightful woes
Shall soon in death his eyelids close :
How does she act ? Do the tears dew her face ?
Does she fall in his arms in a long embrace ?
 No she has tasted misery's schooling,
And knows too well, how out of place,
 Would be such sentimental fooling.
A long, deep glance on him she casts ;
Sad, sad it is—and long it lasts :
And that long glance, so fondly cast,
Tells beyond utterance the past :
The spirit crushed—the sharp rebuke—
The pining wife—the tyrant Duke—
All—all are written in that look.
But now that fixed glance is broken,
No sound is heard—no words are spoken—
For lo ! the gloomy hand of death,
 Is bringing on its crisis now :
See—Barnard totters—he gasps for breath—
 The death-dew stands upon his brow :

With glazing eye, and swimming head,
 And tottering limbs, his form is led,
 And laid upon his dying bed.

* * * * *
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With pious zeal, yet cautious tread,
 The pastor sought his dying bed,
 And thus his words of comfort said :—
 “ My son ! now that thine hour is nigh,
 In sin and sorrow do not die !
 Look to the Lord.” “ Peace, Father, peace !
 From such vain admonition cease ;
 For years a sinful path I’ve trod,
 In proud defiance to my God :
 So now, in this my latest hour,
 I’ll praise him not, tho’ I own his power !
 For years in sadness have I grieved—
 So vain is all thy pious care ;
 I’ll die in sin as I have lived ;
 I’ll chant no chant, I’ll pray no prayer.

Alice ! to thee I would e'en essay
 To talk awhile ere I pass away :
 To thy listening ears, I would now disclose,
 Through what various climes and awful woes,
 My feet have gone since I saw thee last,
 But yet, I mislike to recal the past.

When I left the church, I fled to—where,
 In mighty numbers, grand and fair,
 Proud London's palaces arise :
 There saw I the rich man—ambition's prey—
 And the poor thrust aside for his proud array ;
 My soul was sick, and my heart would say,
 This spiritless race I do despise :—
 Deep thoughts of contempt in my mind were nurst,
 As I hastened to leave the rocky strand,
 And as I flew from the shore—I cursed
 The natives of my native land !

When I woke, as it were from a lengthened trance,
 My feet were pressing voluptuous France,

I saw all its pleasures, but tasted few ;
For O ! they are not so real, so true,
As those that are found in our own small isle,
And I left them all with a gloomy smile,
In which the beholder's eye might trace,
Contempt for the whole of that frivolous race.
In another voyage, I wandered free,
Through the glorious cities of Italy—
I still passed on. To Greece I went,
In searching its ruins, my time I spent ;
But in all its shrines, I could not espy,
One half so sombre, so gloomy as I :
O'er Egypt next was my wild course laid ;
Awhile o'er its parching plains I strayed :
Then I bent my course to the torrid Ind,
 But in all the realms through which I did rove—
In all the countries—I could not find
 A man to respect, or a maiden to love ;
And now have I left my wandering way,
My limbs are feeble—my head is grey ;

But it is not through time that my strength is gone,
 That my manhood is past, my vigour flown :
 That this wrinkled brow is dry and cold,
 Is true indeed—yet I am not old :—
 'Twas a wasting, a lasting, a lingering grief,
 For which joy hath no balsam, or pleasure relief.
 Long, long have I striven to cast it away,
 But I could not laugh, and I dare not pray :
 All men were my foes—and an injured God
 In vengeance blighted where'er I trod :
 But yet from my ways I would not turn,
 In my blasphemous breast did the wild thoughts burn.
 I denied him then—but now 'tis o'er,
 My end is at hand—I'll deny no more ;
 And yet though my fate be dark and drear,
 I will not shrink, for I cannot fear.
 I'll not adore"—“ My Son ! I pray
 From sin and sinners turn away.”
 “ Old Man ! to my successors say,
 From sin and sinners turn away.

Yes ! bid them, whatso'er their state,
Take warning by my awful fate.
And cease, I pray, that puling stave,
For O ! thou canst not, mayst not save,
With chanted psalm, or prayer divine,
A soul so stained, so black as mine :
Not all the saints that long have slept,
Not all the tears by angels wept
O'er erring man's misguided race,
Can from the heart its sin efface—
Repentance—in the dying hour—
E'en it is robb'd of half its power.
And I—in racking torments spent,
Will ne'er bemoan—will ne'er repent !”
He ceased—fell back, in a slumber deep,
 And yet might you tell by his heavy breath,
That it was only a common sleep,
 And not the last long sleep of death.

Awhile he lay, as in anguish tossed,
Then started and cried, “ Tho' my soul be lost !

Tempter ! 'tis vain—I know my fate,
 Better than thou or thine can say :
 I know that fiery monsters wait,
 To bear me to my doom away.
 Though weak my frame, and cold my brow,
 Away!—ye cannot harm me now !
 Away!—but O ! before I flee,
 Alice, a kind farewell to thee !
 I cannot be calm, for O ! on high
 A Spirit of Evil doth round me fly,
 It mocks me with singing—it bids me pray—
 It is there—it is there—O ! chase it away !
 Look, look, my burning eyes before,
 In distance glooms the hated shore :
 Where mortals, once sublime and high,
 Are wandering deep in misery.
 I am sinking—Great God! I can now descry,
 What a terrible thing it is to die.”—

'Tis o'er,—'tis o'er—the words are spoken,
 The cord is snapp'd—the bowl is broken :

The voice is gone—the eye is dim—
And cold in death each straightened limb :—
Vain, vain are all the tears ye shed,
No earthly tears can aid the dead.

* * * * *

“ Where is he gone ?” Nay ! do not ask,
In sooth it were a frightful task,
To tell in what infernal clime,
His soul must pass away the time ;
Time—said I—No—his doom must be,
Torments to all eternity !
Enough ! from earth his spirit’s gone,
Seek not to know where it be flown.

THE END.

