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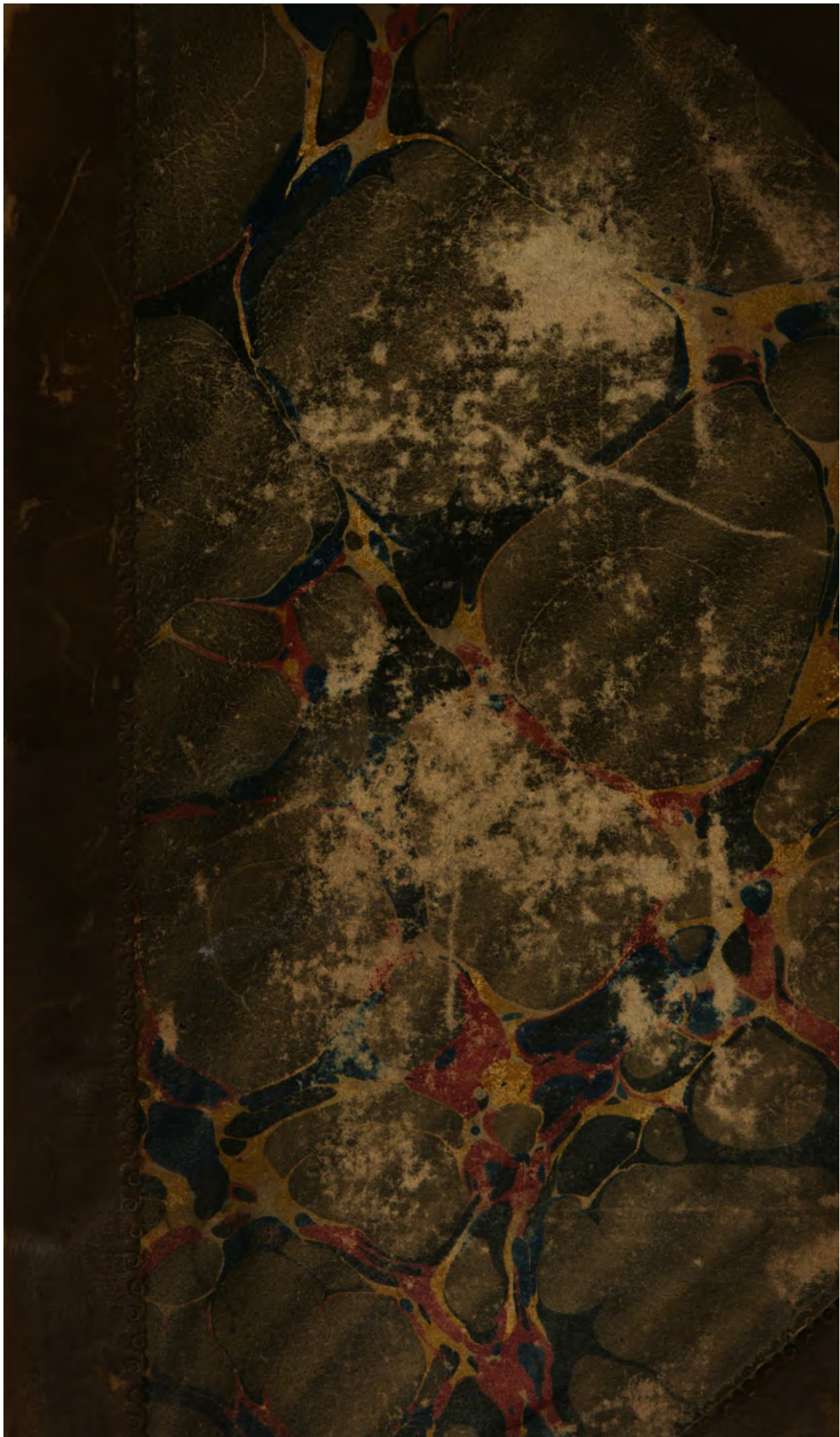
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JOSEPH BLACKETT, SHOEMAKER AND POET.

Seaham and Seaham Hall have been so much in the air lately it may be interesting to reprint the story of the poetic youth who was at one time closely connected with both.

Joseph Blackett was born in 1786, at Tunstill, a village not far from Richmond, in Yorkshire. He was the son of a day labourer, and the youngest but one of twelve children. He received such elementary education as was open to the poor a century ago; but in 1797 his schooldays were terminated, and he went to London ("in ten days on a waggon") as apprentice to



Joseph Blackett.

his brother, who was a ladies' shoemaker there. He gratified his taste for reading by the perusal of works like Eusebius's "Ecclesiastical History," and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs." The year 1804 was marked by two important events. He was led to the study of Shakspeare by seeing Kemble in "Richard III." and he also married a wife, who, however, died in 1807.

Blackett came under the notice of a merchant, who thought so well of him that he gratified the author by setting them up and did him an even more substantial

A Durham Poet

For Joseph Blackett, late poet & shoemaker who died at
Seaham in 1810. (by LORD BYRON)

“Strangers! behold, interred together
The souls of learning and of leathers
Poor Joe is gone, but left his all
You'll find his relics in a stall
His works nee neat, and, often found
Well stitched and with morocco bound
Tread lightly — where the bard is laid
He cannot mend the shoe he made.
Yet is he happy in his hole
With verse immortal as his sole
But still to business he held fast
And stuck to Phoebus, to the last
Then who shall say so good a fellow,
Has “only leather and prunella
For characts — he did not lack it.
And if he did — 'twere shame to Black — it

ducing him to the publisher Pratt. “The Mæcenas of shoemakers and preface-writer-general to distressed versemen; a kind of gratis accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring forth,”—this was Byron's characteristic description of Capel Lofft, who had introduced Robert Bloomfield to the public. Pratt thought Blackett deserving of a similar service, and brought his protege before the public in a detailed comparison of the relative merits of his own poet and Lofft's. This was in 1808, and Byron, who published his “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” in the early spring of the following year, belaboured both patrons and both proteges with all the characteristic vigour of a satire which is far more suitably typified by the bludgeon than the rapier. He attacks the glorification of poetasters as follows:—

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a stall,
Employs a pen more pointed than his awl,
Leaves his snug shop, forakes his store of shoes,
St. Crispin quits, and cobbles for the muse,
Heavens! how the vulgar stare! how crowds applaud,
How ladies read, and literati laud!

Poor Blackett's fame was only a November sun—he still felt the shivers while he stood in the shine. He does not appear to have unduly neglected his trade, but he never emerged from a poverty which was soon aggravated by chronic ill-health.

Pratt and other friends found him the means necessary for a sea voyage, which was recommended for the benefit of his health. He accordingly set sail in 1809 for Seaham, where his brother-in-law was then gamekeeper to Sir Ralph Milbanke. Here he found abundant encouragement, not only from Sir Ralph and Lady Milbanke and their daughter, the future Lady Byron, but also from the Duchess of Leeds, who exerted herself to procure support for his "Selections from the Poetry of Joseph Blackett." These kindly attentions may have soothed the end of poor Blackett, but they could not retard it, for he died on August 23rd, 1810. He was buried in Seaham Churchyard, and his tomb is inscribed with the concluding lines of his "Reflections at Midnight":—

Shut from the light, 'mid awful gloom,
Let clay-cold honour rest in state,
And from the decorated tomb
Receive the tribute of the great.
Let me, when bade with life to part,
And in my narrow mansion sleep,
Receive a tribute from the heart,
Not bribe the sordid eye to weep.

Byron, who was at Malta when he heard the news of the death of "Cobbler Joe," wrote the following satirical epitaph:—

Stranger! behold, interred together,
The souls of learning and of leather.
Poor Joe has gone, but left his all:
You'll find his relics in a stall.
His works were neat, and often found
Well stitched, and with morocco bound.
Tread lightly—where the bard is laid
He cannot mend the shoe he made;
Yet is he happy in his hole,
With verse immortal as his sole.
But still to business he held fast,
And stuck to Phœbus to the last.
Then who shall say so good a fellow
Was only "leather and prunella"?
For character—he did not lack it:
And if he did, 'twere shame to "Black-it."

The references to Blackett in Byron's letters are rather heartless; but they are worth quoting as excellent examples of his trenchant and vivacious epistolary style. In a letter written to Dallas on board the Volgate frigate at sea in June, 1811, he says: "I see that yours and Pratt's protege, Blackett the cobbler, is dead in spite of his rhymes, and is probably one of the instances where death has saved a man from damnation. You were the ruin of that poor fellow amongst you. Had it not been for his patrons, he might now have been in very good plight, shoe (not verse) making, but you have made him immortal with a vengeance. Who would think that anybody could be such a blockhead

as to sin against an express proverb—'Ne sutor ultra crepidam'?

But spare him, ye critics, his follies are past,
For the cobbler is come, as he ought, to his last."

Pratt, however, was still faithful to his protege, and made the deceased poet tell to the world the story of his life in two volumes of letters, which also included his poetical remains. The publication of these volumes in 1811 provoked from Byron another fierce and pungent diatribe:—"This well-meaning gentleman (Capel Lofft) has spoiled some excellent shoemakers and been accessory to the political undoing of many of the industrious poor. Nathaniel Bloomfield and his brother Bobby have set all Somersetshire singing; nor has the malady confined itself to one county. Pratt, too (who once was wiser), has caught the contagion of patronage, and decoyed a poor fellow named Blackett into poetry; but he died during the operation, leaving one child and two volumes of remains utterly destitute. The girl, if she don't take a poetical twist, and come forth as a shoe-making Sappho, may do well; but the tragedies are as rickety as if they had been the offspring of an earl or a Seatonian prize poet. . . . Certes, these rakers of 'Remains' come under the statute against 'resurrection men.' What does it signify whether a poor, dear, dead dunce is to be stuck up in Surgeons' or in Stationers' Hall? Is it not better to gibbet his body upon a heath than his soul in an octavo? 'We know what we are, but we know not what we may be,' and it is to be hoped we never shall know, if a man who has passed through life with a sort of eclat is to find himself a mountebank on the other side of Styx, and made, like poor Joe Blackett, the laughing stock of purgatory."

If we can imagine the gentle spirit of the unfortunate shoemaker poet meeting the grim shade of the Chelsea philosopher in those dim regions, poor Joe may be comforted, for Carlyle thought very little more of Byron than Byron did of Blackett.

J. L. GARVIN.

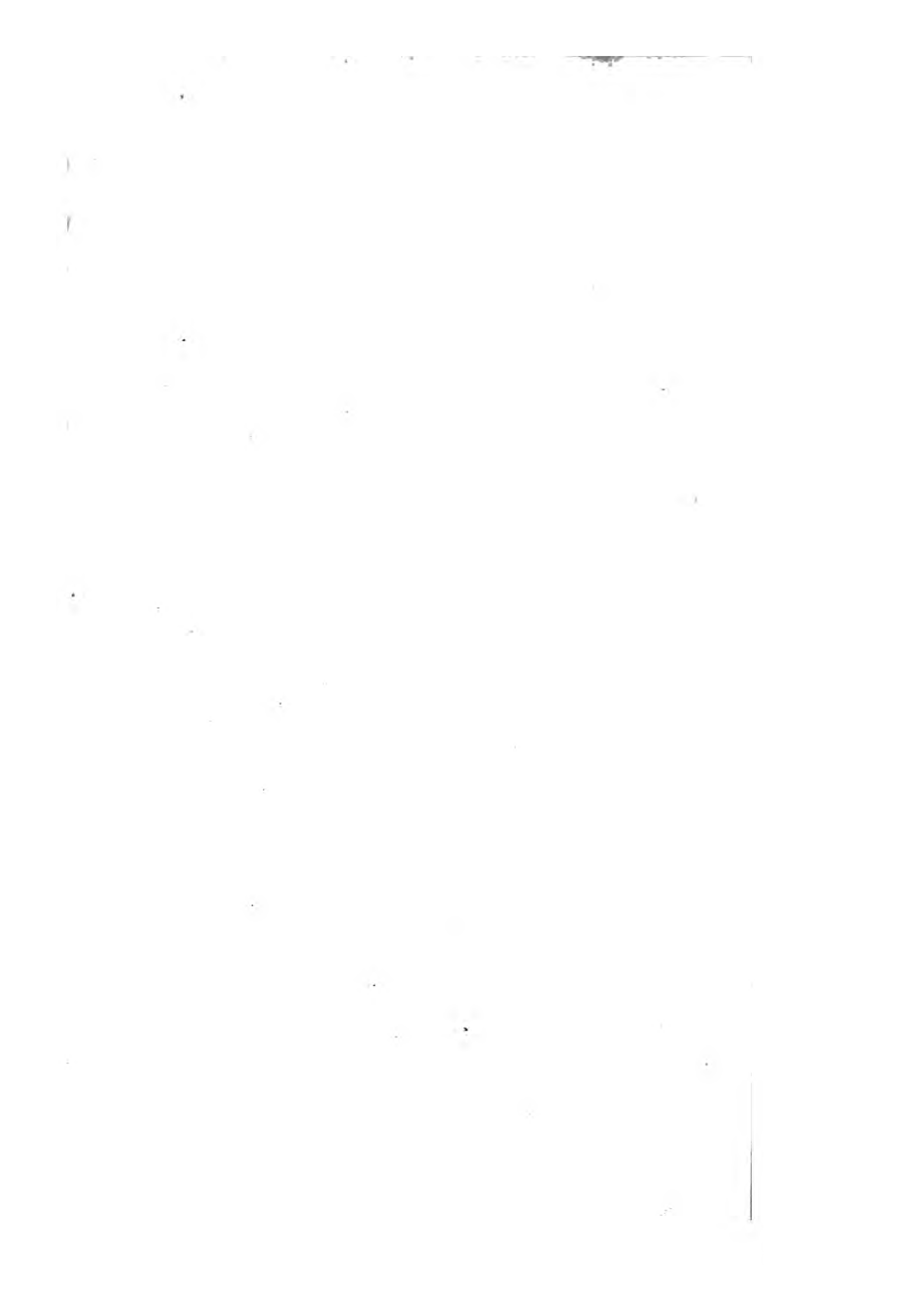
From The Newcastle
Weekly Chronicle
Sept 9' 1899

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J. J. Masquerier delin.

H. R. Cook sculp.

Joseph Blacket.

Published by Sherwood Neely & Jones June 20 1811.

THE
REMAINS
OF
JOSEPH BLACKET.

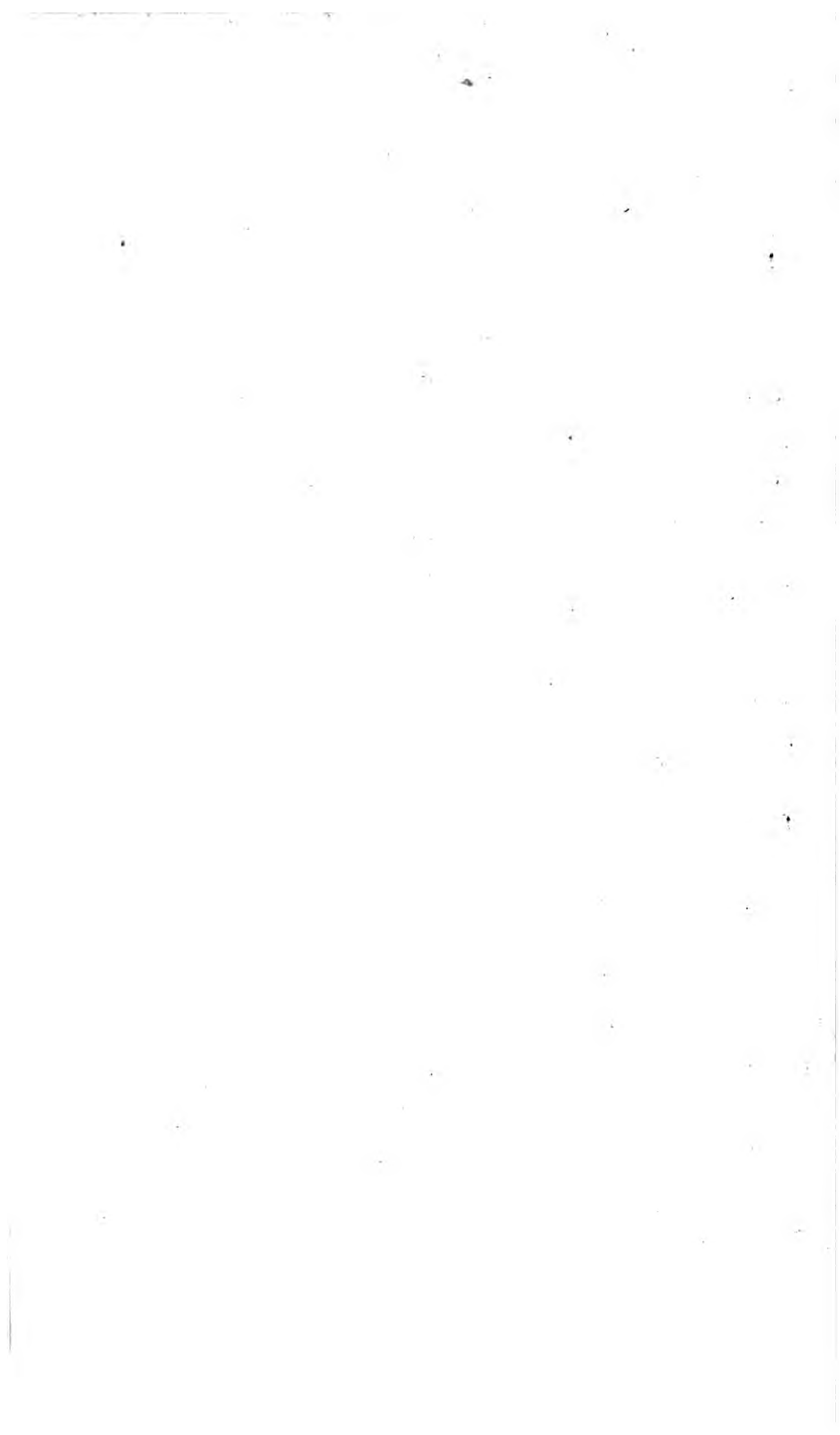


*"Beyond that mountains awful breast,
Which rears its russet front on high,
The moon appears in splendour dress'd,
And rolls along the eastern Sky —"*

Reflection at Midnight

Written at Abington 1802. — Author's Age 16.

Published by Sherwood, Neely, & Jones, June 10-1811.



THE
REMAINS
OF
JOSEPH BLACKET;

CONSISTING OF
POEMS,
DRAMATIC SKETCHES,
THE TIMES, AN ODE,
AND
A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

BY MR. PRATT.

—
IN TWO VOLUMES.
—

VOL. I.

Oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the MUSE's ray,
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun.

GRAY.

London:

PUBLISHED BY SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1811.

W.O.



Printed by A. J. Valpy, Took's Court, Chancery Lane;

TO
HER GRACE
THE DUCHESS OF LEEDS,
LADY MILBANKE, AND FAMILY,
BENEVOLENT PATRONS
OF
THE AUTHOR,
THESE VOLUMES
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE EDITOR.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE occasion of delaying the publication of these volumes has been chiefly the reiterated attention necessary to inspect, and not seldom to disentangle, from numberless interlineations, a mass of manuscripts which has been accumulating since the regretted death of the author.

The Editor cannot call this a difficulty, because he has ever found it a pleasure:

“The labor we delight in physics pain.”

He was zealous to discover what he thought would interest the reader, or assist the fame of the writer ; while he rejected what, to the best of his judgment, might deduct from the pleasure or advantage of either.

Always keeping in view the emolument of the persons for whose benefit the volumes were to be published, so far as that great object could be made compatible with what was due to the poet or the public, the Editor anxiously hopes it will be found, that more has been gained than lost by the delay.

It may perhaps be necessary to observe, that although the names of "Mentor and Telemachus" have, in numberless passages of Mr. B's Correspondence with the Editor, been omitted, yet, as they were adopted by his young friend in a very early period of their intercourse with each other, and retained with affectionate predilection to his latest power of

marking them on paper, as in his last letter, July 9th, 1810, a few weeks before his death, the Editor trusts he shall be indulged in allowing them occasionally to remain as marks of endearment.

PREFACE

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

“SPECIMENS” of Mr. Blacket’s poetical abilities were put forth in a private edition for limited circulation, in the early part of the year 1810, and each copy was accompanied with a printed address, explanatory of the Editor’s views. Those were, in the first place, to enable the author to defray the charges of paper, printing, &c. to pay off arrears for the maintenance of his infant child, and to smoothe the pillow of his aged mother. In the second instance, the Editor’s hope was to extricate Mr. Blacket,

himself, from embarrassments occasioned by the very long sickness, death, and burial of his wife. These burthens and misfortunes had, for a considerable time, pressed hard upon him, and had shaken his constitution; which, in the opinion of some medical gentlemen, as will be seen in the "Introductory Observations," demanded relaxation from all the sedentary employment in which he had been long occupied, and a temporary respite from mental exertion.

The paper of explanation further purported, that the unpublished edition furnished abundant proof of what the Editor was most earnest to establish, namely, that the author was a youth highly gifted by nature; that he had made the best use of every opportunity to improve the gift; and that, to remove the difficulties which stood betwixt his genius and the restoration of his health, till a fair trial of his talents, particularly his dramatic

ones, could be obtained, was an act of well-founded generosity and patronage.

The Editor expressed, at the same time, in those preliminary papers, his belief that in the present state of the stage, a dramatic moralist would prove a public good; and from the energies of youth, talents, and application, in such a dramatist as Mr. Blacket promised to be, much real service might be rendered to the community. It was with particular pleasure the Editor found his opinion of Mr. Blacket's genius sanctioned by so admirable a writer as Mr. Cumberland.¹

In a letter, dated July 6th, 1809, the distinguished author here alluded to expressed himself as follows :

¹ The lovers of elegant moral literature will join the Editor's regret on the subject of this gentleman's death.

DEAR SIR,

“ I think you are fully warranted to augur well of Joseph Blacket’s genius ; and from his “ Specimens,” I conjecture that it points towards *Dramatic Composition*. You can put him in the way to cultivate it, and if you find him faithful to *nature*, attached to none but the *best examples*, and profiting by instructions and correction, you will approve yourself a benefactor, not to *him* only, but to the age you live in.

“ That such may be the issue of your adoption of this child of nature, is the cordial wish of

“ Dear Sir, &c.

“ R. CUMBERLAND.

The Editor was the more gratified by this authority, on a well-founded maxim of one of the best poets and critics of his country,

“ Let those judge *others* who *themselves* excel.”

Upon these strong grounds, the Editor ventured to make his private appeal to some known lovers of literary genius and moral worth, in favor of Joseph Blacket, previously to his entrance into more public life.

The explanatory paper began to be circulated on or about the 10th of April, 1809, and in a subsequent notice, so early as the 15th of July following, scarcely more than three months, the Editor was happy enough to accomplish several of the interesting objects specified in his first address.

The contributions went on progressively, with the same generous spirit, proving not less the stimulus, than the reward of unquestionable genius.

It is now become among the duties of the Editor to specify the sources from whence that liberal reward was derived. In cases

of this kind, however **GENEROSITY** may wish to conceal its bounty, it is the paramount duty of **GRATITUDE**, while it benefits by the streams, to confess the fountain from whence they sprang. Abundant, nevertheless, as it flowed, like nourishing dews from Heaven on the heart—a most grateful soil—of the favored bard, the names of benefactors have not been sufficiently numerous to be given alphabetically; although the benefactions themselves were, in this instance, not less copious, upon that account. In truth, it was not so much a narrowed subscription, as an enlarged tribute.

But the Editor anxiously hopes the names of all the contributors will be found in the following list; placed in the order they were communicated to the Editor.

List of Contributors to Mr. Blacket's Specimens.



OBTAINED BY THE DUCHESS OF LEEDS.

Colonel Crow
Mrs. Crow
Captain Elsley
Mrs. Elsley
Mr. Wyvill
Mrs. Wyvill
Mr. Yorke
Mrs. Yorke
Mr. Gale
Mrs. Gale
Miss Brooke
Dr. Dodsworth
Mr. Arden
Mrs. Arden
Mr. Campbell
Mr. Robson
Dr. Kilvington
Mr. Danby
Mrs. Danby

Rev. C. J. Alderson
Lady Mary Foljambe
Mr. Foljambe
Mrs. Foljambe
Miss Foljambe
Sir ——— Sitwell
Lady Sitwell
Lady E. Lowther
Lady C. Wortley
Mr. Wortley
Lord Hartington
Dowager Lady Hunlocke
Lady W. Hunlocke
Lady Westmorland
Lord Eardley
Marchioness Townsend
Duke of Leeds
Duchess of Leeds
Colonel Leigh
Colonel Childers
Mrs. Childers
Mrs. Coke
Mrs. Branthwaite
Mrs. Beaumont
Mrs. Worgan

OBTAINED BY LADY MILBANKE.

The Honorable and Right Rev. Bishop of Lichfield
The Honorable and Right Rev. Bishop of Durham.

Viscount Wentworth

Rt. Hon. Lady Olivia Sparrow

Sir R. Milbanke

Lady Milbanke

Miss Milbanke

Mrs. Cornwallis

Miss Cornwallis

Mrs. Baker

Mr. H. J. Dickons

Mr. Barrett

Mr. Raine

Mr. Taylor

Mr. Plour

Mr. Shafts

Mrs. Shafts

Miss Colberg

Rev. G. Barington

Miss Cookson

Miss Montgomery

Mr. Hugh Montgomery

Dr. Fenwick

Mr. Charlton

Miss Wilkinson

Rev. Dr. Price

Rev. Dr. Grey
Rev. Mr. Bowyer
Mrs. Morse

RECEIVED MORE RECENTLY.

Sir Robert D'Arcy Hildyard
Dr. Whalley
Rev. Dr. Wynne
Mrs. Ross
Mrs. Prozzi

PROCURED BY THE REV. F. WRANGHAM.

Rev. F. Wrangham
Mrs. Wrangham
Mr. Fawkes
Mrs. Fawkes
Miss Creyke
Miss C. Creyke
Miss E. Creyke
Sir F. L. Wood, Bart.
Lady Wood
Mr. Barker
Mr. Gilby
Mr. Musgrave
Captain Sykes

Mr. Dayles
Miss Wrighton
Miss P. Cayley
Mrs. J. Sykes
Mrs. Wray
Lady Etherington
Mrs. Lee
Mr. J. K. Picard
Mrs. Coulson
Mrs. Lutwidge
Mrs. Frost
Rev. T. Broadley
Mrs. J. Wray
Mrs. Newbald
Professor Smyth
Dr. Davy
Mr. Caldwell
The Earl of Derby
Lord Stanley
Mr. W. Roscoe
Mr. W. S. Roscoe
Mr. E. Roscoe
Mr. J. Birch
Mrs. Birch
Mr. W. W. Currie
Mr. T. Earle
Mr. W. Earle, Jun.
Mr. W. Earle, Sen.
Mrs. Lawrence
Miss Colquitt

Mr. Dixon
Mr. J. A. Yates
Mr. W. Robinson
Mr. Ashton
Miss Ashton
Captain Ashton
Mr. E. Ashton
Miss Ingilby
Miss A. Ingilby
Mrs. Lucas
Anonymous
Miss Waddilove
Mr. W. Gray
Mrs. Gray
Mr. J. Gray
Mr. J. Brook
Mr. T. Brook
Mr. J. Fryer
Mr. Bibb
Mr. Crosby
Mr. Eaton
Mr. W. Spence
Mr. P. Watson
Mr. S. Tuke
Mr. A. Bouilly
Mr. W. Gimber
Mr. Russell
Mrs. Green
Mrs. Dodsworth
Miss Royds

Mr. Thorpe
Mr. G. Thorpe
Mrs. J. Broadly
Mrs. Grimston

PROCURED BY THE EDITOR.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent
Her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta
Her Royal Highness the Princess Elizabeth
Her Royal Highness the Princess Mary
Her Royal Highness the Princess Sophia
Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York
The Earl of Carlisle
Lady Audover
Lady Anson
Lord Binning
Countess of Besborough
The Earl of Coventry
Lady Carrington
Countess of Derby
The Earl of Egremont
Earl Moira
Lord Erskine
Lady Moslyn
Dowager Countess of Pembroke

The Earl of Shaftsbury
Countess of Sherborne
Dowager Lady Saye and Sele
Lady Talbot
Sir John Caldwell, Bart.
Sir John Lawson, Bart.
Sir W. Paxton
Sir R. Phillips
Sir G. O. Turner
Colonel Taylor
The Rev. Dr. Wernick
The Hon. Mrs. Wernick
Mr. Adams
Mr. J. Julius Angerstein
Mr. S. Atkinson
Mr. D. Aquillar
Dr. Bree
Mr. Balfour
Mrs. Brimgard
Mr. Brise
Mrs. De Castro
Mr. Alexander Davidson
Mr. Davies
Mr. Elliston
Dr. Fryer
Mrs. Fitzroy
Rev. Mr. Glasse
Miss Gardiner
Mr. Hope

Mr. Hossel
Mr. Heber
Mr. Hutchins
Miss Linwood
Miss M. Linwood
Literary Fund ¹
Mr. Miles
Rev. Dr. Mavor
Rev. John Mavor
Mr. Henry Mavor
Mr. George Mavor
Mr. Masquerier
Mrs. Mayo
Miss Majendie
Mr. J. Maddocks
Mr. Palmer
Colonel Palmer
Sir S. Romilly
Miss Routledge
Rev. P. Stockdale
Mr. Shee
Mr. Saville
Miss Smith
Mr. Stagg
Mrs. Sidney
Mr. Tighe

¹ 10l. 10s. in the hands of Miss Elizabeth Boscowen.

Mr. Turnbull
Mr. I. P. Tupper
Rev. Dr. Valpy
Mr. Wilberforce
Rev. P. Willis
Mr. Withy
Mr. Ward
Mr. Wright
Mrs. Bayfield
Mrs. Boswell
Mr. T. Warburton
Dr. Pinckard
Mr. Flaxman
Mr. Surr
Rev. J. Capper
Miss Midford
Mr. Moucher
Mr. Peale
Mr. Dodgson
Mr. Green
Mr. Bisshopp
Mrs. General Johnson
Miss Davies
Mrs. Holmes

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The following is a statement of the monies received from these different sources previous to the death of Mr. Blacket, and paid to him by

Her Grace the Duchess of Leeds	62	10	6
Lady Milbanke - - -	45	12	0
Rev. Mr. Wrangham - -	75	12	0
	<hr/>		
Total paid to Mr. Blacket -	£183	14	6

Received subsequent to the death of Mr. Blacket, and paid into the hands of the Editor, as follows :

Duchess of Leeds - - -	8	9	0
Lady Milbanke - - -	92	7	0
Miss M. and friends -	11	6	0
Collected by the Editor - -	216	4	6
	<hr/>		
Total paid into the hands of the Editor	£328	6	6
	<hr/>		
Grand total of monies received	£512	1	0

Account of monies paid for Mr. Blacket
by the Editor, from Jan. 12, 1809, to June,
1810, as per Mr. Blacket's own papers
and receipts, (including the expenses of
printing the Specimens,) examined by Mr.
Bellchambers, Jun. - £179 4 6

Account of expenditures, subsequent to
the above period, for Mr. Blacket's child,
as per receipts, examined by Mr. John
Blacket, Mr. W. Marchant, and Mr. J.
Bean - - - £30 0 0

Total amount of expenditures by the Editor - - - -	£209 4 6
Balance in the hands of the Editor	£119 2 0

As the general reader of these literary
“ Remains ” cannot be supposed to take any
strong interest in what relates merely to the
pecuniary concerns of the small volume of

1 The whole of the above statement has been examined and
approved by us this 13th of June, 1811.

W. MARCHANT.

Witness,

J. BLACKET.

J. BEAN.

Specimens privately dispersed, the Editor has to beg indulgence and excuse for inserting a page of figures, exclusively addressed to Mr. Blacket's patrons and subscribers, for their information on such particulars as they have an undoubted right to: but which could not be so satisfactorily stated, or find a place so appropriate as immediately under the list of contributors.

The Editor feels it right also to mention, that the *specific* sum of each subscription, as stated in the different original lists, as well those of the Duchess of Leeds, Lady Milbanke, and Mr. Wrangham, as that of the Editor, have been inspected by the parties whose signatures are given at the foot of the foregoing page.

On account of long and frequent absence from town, and more literary and other occupations than are consistent with the general

state of his health, the Editor has requested the before mentioned Mr. John Blacket, brother of the late Joseph, Mr. Marchant, and Messrs. Sherwood and Co. the publishers of the present volumes, to become receivers of all monies that may arise from the present or any future edition of these remains, in trust for Mary Blacket, the author's daughter; a trust which they have very willingly and kindly accepted.

This arrangement refers solely to pecuniary transactions. Nothing earthly can be farther from the mind of the Editor, than to withdraw himself from continuing to promote these; and he reserves to himself the right of being consulted, on the terms of publishing the said future editions. To the latest moment of existence, the fame and interests connecting with JOSEPH BLACKET will be dear and important to the Editor.

The respectable name of the late Wm. Boscowen, Esq. was to have been added. Among those who were sensible of the value of his life, and who will have to lament his death, must be enumerated, the Editor of these volumes, who in the last conversation he held with him on Mr. Blacket's subject, kindly promised to become one of the trustees and guardians of the orphan's fund.

To this gentleman the Editor applied, also as a medium for the assistance of the committee of the Literary Fund ; and obtained the sum of ten guineas towards the support of Mary Blacket, who has the good fortune to be god-child to one of Mr. Boscowen's daughters.

The young lady above mentioned, has interested herself particularly in the welfare of the child ; indeed Mr. Boscowen's whole family have watched over this now parentless girl with an eye of unwearied kindness from her

infancy, and have extended their good offices as well towards her moral as personal welfare. Nor will they now, the Editor is convinced, withdraw their worthy attention from their orphan charge, who has so long been the object of their care, and is in a manner bequeathed to their benevolence.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS

PREFIXED TO

THE PRIVATE EDITION.



IT has fallen to the lot of the Editor to notice three remarkable literary coincidences.

Mr. CAPEL LOFFT, the able and meritorious guardian of the muse of BLOOMFIELD, in his preface to the "Farmer's Boy," says, "Having the satisfaction of introducing to the public this very pleasing and characteristic poem, I think it will be agreeable to preface it with a short account of the manner in which it came into my hands; and, which will be much more interesting to every reader, a little history of the author, which has been communicated to me by his brother, and which I shall very nearly transcribe as it lies before me."

Except that the "literary part of the history," which the Editor will "have the satisfaction of introducing to the public," has been furnished by the author of the "Specimens" himself, instead of his brother, the same circumstances tell to both.

The next passages of young Bloomfield's editor, allowing for the variation of date, November, 1808, instead of November, 1799, carries on the similitude of circumstances; for, in the autumn of that year, "I received a MS." indeed a variety of MSS. "which I was requested to read and to give my opinion of." In running the parallel between these two youths, it is remarkable, that among the earliest performances of Bloomfield was "a little piece which he calls *The Sailor's Return*;" and, amongst the first effusions of Blacket, the Editor finds a drama, in three acts, called *The Chieftain's Return*, though the latter youth was unconscious of the resemblance of the titles until suggested to him. We are not told by Mr. Lofft the precise age of the author at the time of his writing *The Sailor's Return*, but *The Chieftain's Return* was produced when the author was not fifteen years of age. Among the most early productions of Bloomfield, with which his Editor has favored us, is the "Milk-Maid," written at the age of sixteen, which Mr. Lofft very properly calls a "beautiful and

simply-expressive song." Mr. Blacket will have the gratification to offer a little poem,¹ of great moral and descriptive beauty, produced exactly at the same age.

There are various other points of similarity in regard to BLOOMFIELD and BLACKET, personal and poetical. The brother of the former says, in a letter to Mr. Lofft, that having "spent five years with the author, from the time he was thirteen years and a half old till he was turned of eighteen, I think I am able to give a better account of him than any one can. I never knew his fellow for mildness of temper and goodness of disposition; and, since I left him, universally is he praised, by those who know him best, for the best of husbands."

Mr. William Marchant, the printer of Mr. Blacket's first, and indeed only, performance made public, gives the result of an inquiry I requested him to make, in the following words.

Ingram-court, Fenchurch-street.

Dear Sir,

It affords me extreme pleasure to be able to inform you, that, on inquiry of our young

¹ Reflections at Midnight, written at Abinger, vol. ii.

bard's brother, he gives him an excellent character for *sobriety, honesty, and every moral virtue*; he was a good husband, and is a good father. The brothers married two sisters, who both died of declines. Mr. Blacket has lived with his brother ever since he was eleven years of age, till Christmas twelvemonth (i. e.) till his wife died.

The Editor cannot proceed in this narrative without performing an act of common justice to the writer of the foregoing letter, by observing, that, he has not only been our young bard's first *Printer*, but his first PATRON, having dispensed to him the first encouragement which he thought due to his talents; making him, at the same time, a free-will-offering of the whole expense of printing, paper, &c. of his first publication.¹ He likewise, conferring on the Editor the pleasure of an introduction to Mr. B. from which he has derived a gratification rarely afforded those who are applied to for perusal and opinion of manuscript poems: a distinction, which, if intended as a compliment to the inspector's *experience* in literary concerns, is, certainly, one of the most painful, and, generally speaking, one of the greatest, trials of

¹ The TIMES, an ode, which will also be added to the pieces now collected.—EDITOR.

time, patience, and sincerity, upon which experience can be consulted.

Since the receipt of Mr. Marchant's letter, the Editor has had a conversation with Mr. John Blacket, "whose candour, good sense, and brotherly affection," were as conspicuous as could possibly have been that of Mr. G. Bloomfield in any of *his* conversations with Mr. Lofft; and it is remarkable, that the brothers of both the young poets are men of religious habits and worthy lives, though not, perhaps, precisely of the same persuasion.

Since Mr. Blacket's MSS. which are various, each bearing marks of genius appropriate to the nature of the composition, came into the Editor's possession, he has submitted them to many eminent literary characters, not only from a wish to be strengthened in his own sentiments, but, if necessary, to be checked in his own enthusiasm. Grounded on those sentiments, it is certainly a pleasure of no inconsiderable kind that there is but one opinion as to the extraordinary merit of what the author has already performed, or of the promise which that performance justifies. Such of the poems in this little collection as have been examined by persons of acknowledged taste and judgment, have been universally marked as possessing pre-eminent merit: the Editor trusts that

the few which are now added are worthy to be associated. The whole of them were written between the age of sixteen and the present time. Miscellaneous poetry, however, of any sort, will only be his pastime; the serious operation, in which will be called forth the full vigour and grace of Mr. Blacket's genius, is reserved for the DRAMA.

One more parallel passage in the personal circumstances of the two young poets, it may be interesting to mention. In a letter addressed to Mr. Capel Lofft, Mr. Swan, an encourager of talents, thus expresses himself, after he had sought and obtained an interview with Robert Bloomfield: "I found him the person you describe, wondering at the praise and admiration which his poem had received; inso-much that the whole of his good fortune appeared to him as a dream." This is precisely what Joseph Blacket has said to the Editor, in regard to his own productions, adding, "that it almost seemed to him as if he was born again." The person of Mr. Blacket is interesting, and his manners, like those of Mr. Lofft's friend, "simple and amiable;" and, though he has much of the diffidence of youth, and the timidity which connects with real genius, he has, also, all its spirit and energy. But his health has evidently suffered; and, in the opinion of medical friends, such inroads have been made in his constitution as

will require care to prevent a rapid decline. In conclusion, so far as relates personally to Mr. Bloomfield and this young votary of the muse, what Mr. Lofft has said concerning the introduction to the one, may be most truly said of the other. " I rejoice that I have been made personally acquainted with him ; that I have seen and discoursed with him frequently ; that I have heard him read, and have read myself, many more poems than will be found in his collection ; which, ¹ *when they shall be printed, will support the fame he has acquired.* Though I have spent occasionally much of my life among persons worthy of admiration and esteem, I can recollect few moments so interesting as those spent with him. It is much to be a POET, such as he will be found ; it is more to be such a MAN." In these points the parallel is exact.

With respect to the genius of these two writers, there are some striking dissimilitudes as well as similitudes.

¹ The Editor is warm in the belief, that the volumes he is now preparing to bring before the public, will fully certify this adopted opinion as to Mr. Blacket.

Bloomfield says :

“ No deeds of arms my humble lines rehearse ;
No Alpine wonders thunder through my verse.”

And again :

“ Nature’s sublimer scenes ne’er charm’d mine eyes.”

Blacket, on the contrary, delights to swell his verse with the notes of the trumpet, glories in the throb of freedom, and triumphs in the storm. Not from pressure of the gloomy and revengeful, but from inspiration of a more generous passion, he may exclaim with Zanga :—

“ I like this rocking of the battlements !
Rage on, ye winds ! burst clouds, and waters roar !”

Or, to compare him with a more congenial spirit, whom Beattie has so exquisitely depicted :

“ And oft the craggy steep he loves to climb,
When all in mist the world below is lost :
What dreadful pleasure ! there to stand, sublime,
Like shipwreck’d mariner on desert coast,
And view th’ enormous waste of vapour toss’d
In billows, length’ning to th’ horizon round,
Now scoop’d in gulfs, with mountains now emboss’d !”

Yet Blacket feels no less than Bloomfield, "the delight, approaching to ecstasy, resulting from the contemplation of rural scenery," and the happiness of rural life. In this trait, also, he resembles the tender Edwin:—

" Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene,
 In darkness and in storm he found delight ;
 Nor less than when, on Ocean's wave serene,
 The southern sun diffused his dazzling shene,
 Ev'n sad vicissitudes amus'd his soul ;
 And, if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
 And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
 A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control !"

It must, nevertheless, be admitted, that the specific features in the genius of Blacket are energy, magnificence, heroic ardour, and the glow of patriotism.

The Editor has been extremely interested to see him improve upon himself, in various images or ideas that have been offered him, giving strength or beauty. These he received with all the grace of modesty, chastening the daring spirit of his Muse, even in her most adventurous flights. Indeed, the rapidity with which he caught any hint thrown out to him, and the vigour with which he fastened upon and

filled the outline of a subject, the force of which he felt congenial to his purpose, is surprising. Nor less extraordinary the manner with which he rejected what he deemed unfit. This rejection is the honest independence of genius, but in his case has been ever accompanied with all the gentleness of explanation, and readily yielding to conviction. The character of his mind is manly, yet nothing rude: submissive, but never slavish.

The Editor now proceeds to the second coincidence; the third being illustrated by Joseph Blacket himself. Mr. Cumberland, in one of those articles to which he avows his name, in the first number of the "London Review,"¹ offers the *plan* of an epic poem, by Mr. George Townsend, to be entitled "ARMAGEDDON." He sets out with an apology for submitting to his readers what is "*not yet in circulation,*" on account of his having therein "*ventured to deviate from the usual practice of reviewers;*" expressing, at the same time, a hope that "*he shall meet a candid interpretation of his motives:*" and, in the close of this article, upon which he bestows a very generous care, he again entreats his readers to "*put a liberal and kind interpretation upon the*

¹ A work which is now discontinued, chiefly from the impracticability of its being carried on by avowed authors of each article.

whole; by which," says he, " my object is to avail myself of the present, and perhaps the only, opportunity, that is allotted to me, of recommending to their notice and protection a youth, whose talents are his only patrimony, and whose moral virtues, not always associated with genius, entitle him to be as much respected and esteemed by those who know him, as he is admired and praised."

These sentiments are so extremely apposite to the Editor's on the subject of the " Specimens" of young Blacket, that they come smoothly and unforced into all that relates to that youth of promise, that child of nature. Had Mr. Cumberland been writing of Mr. Blacket instead of Mr. Townsend, the subsequent passage, likewise, could not possibly apply more closely to one poetical adventurer than the other.

" Gleams of genius and fertility of fancy broke out with such auspicious promise, that I held myself, at all times, conscientiously accessible to him, and never suffered his interruption of my studies to be an excuse for not attending to the furtherance and improvement of his, so far as my experience and advice could serve him. His advances were rapid in the extreme: his style chastised and simplified, whilst his mind was pregnant with sublime ideas. I

put him by from petty undertakings,¹ and his genius instantly devised magnificent ones." The Editor must, at the same time, observe, that although the foregoing passage so perfectly assimilates with his feelings and conduct, that he has at once a pride and pleasure in quoting them, as, generally speaking, a case *in point*, they by no means serve as a *rule*, because the author of the "Specimens" was made known to the Editor, and a great variety of his written poems as well as dramas, and his printed Ode on the "Times," were put into his possession, by Mr. Marchant or himself, many weeks before the appearance of the periodical work conducted by Mr. Cumberland. And, as if there was to be a remarkable coincidence in all that relates to the three

¹ In a letter from Mr. Blacket, dated the 2d of March, 1809, he writes: "I have been attempting a few pastorals, in the manner of Cunningham, but I feel very much indisposed to prosecute any farther studies, as I fear, like Chatterton's, my budding hopes will never ripen into fruit." In reply to this, I requested that he would not throw away his time in writing pastorals; which, without any disparagement to the simple, natural, and engaging genius of Cunningham, would, in his case, be *like a giant dancing a jig*. I cannot but believe his verses on the "Dying Horse," and various scenes in his dramas, will justify this allusion.

young poets, "a few short memoirs" of Bloomfield, Townsend, and Blacket, were furnished to their respective Editors by *themselves*, before either that of Mr. Cumberland, or Mr. Blacket could possibly know they were mutually interested in the effusions of extraordinary genius.

It would certainly be premature, if not presumptuous, in the Editor of the following Specimens, to foretel, that, from the pen of Joseph Blacket will proceed a poem of the "arduous and awful character" undertaken by George Townsend; because both have hitherto been the favourites rather of nature than fortune. The local¹ situation of the latter,

¹ Mr. Townsend is now beginning to work *inter sylvas academi*, on the banks of Cam, having lately been admitted as a member of Trinity College, the *alma mater* of so many learned and illustrious men.—That Mr. Townsend has not relinquished all thoughts of the Epic Muse, since he became a resident on the banks of the Cam—more likely, indeed, to prove a stream of inspiration, like that of Helicon, than an oblivious one, like that of Lethe—the subsequent passages of a letter received from him will sufficiently attest; and we cannot but believe he will consider the death of his valuable friend, Mr. Cumberland, as a stimulus to further exertion, when it can be made compatible with Academic study.

"You ask if my Muse is sleeping in a cloister—she has

however, at one of our universities, where, doubtless, his genius has felt, or will feel, something of academic patronage, besides having the advantage of a father, who, by his profession, must have devoted part of his time to study and mental exertion, and, probably, in the possession of a small, though well-chosen, collection of books, are all favourable circumstances to Mr. Cumberland's *protégé*; yet the Editor has no hesitation in saying, because he is warranted by stronger opinions than

slumbered, but never slept; the necessary studies of the place demand, and shall receive, my attention; but Armageddon is never wholly neglected: all my reading eventually tends to the same point, that is, the *cynosure* by which my course is guided. I can overlook every prospect of advantage, every ambitious hope, to that single one of success in the developement of the sublimest subject that can employ the mind of man, the scenes of another world, embodied by the imagination, and narrated with every addition of fancy, assisted by the sublimity of truth and prophecy. The Scripture affords matter for the grandest description, the most pathetic and appropriate episodes; if I am disappointed in the completion of this overwhelming subject, I shall indeed be unhappy; all my expectations of fame are built on this work; if I succeed, I shall be abundantly satisfied; if not, my fall will be attended with every painful accompaniment:—but I hope better things.”

“ *March 1st, Trinity College.*”

his own, that the youth (of whose progress from a lowly station to the distinctions of honourable fame, he is made the humble, but gratified instrument,) will not be one of those flowers "born to blush unseen;" but, like young Townsend, "raise a trophy to his fame; being firmly persuaded that he will strike out something magnificent, so as ultimately to rank amongst our national poets." None of the "Specimens" here exhibited, indeed, have the grand outline of an "Armageddon," nor any such extracts as Mr. Cumberland has given, in promise of a happy execution of *his* poet's epic design. But, after perusal of the following pages, the Editor cannot but think that the mind, from which the contents of those pages proceeded, gives ample promise of "very sublime and daring speculations."

Without running the parallel as to the poetical characteristics of this poetic trio any farther, the Editor can only say, that, from his inmost heart, he wishes the labours and merits of each individual the richest rewards of genius and of virtue. He cannot, however, take leave of the article in Mr. Cumberland's Review, without appropriating part of one more sentence. "If," says he, "in my zeal to serve Mr. Townsend, I have done indiscreetly in the mode I have pursued, mine is the fault, and let me bear the blame." But Mr. Blacket's Editor must, at

the same time, remark, that, in one of his earliest interviews with him, the Editor apprised him of the "danger of writing verse." He even read, and requested him afterwards to transcribe, the following extracts from William Whitehead's justly-admired poem on the subject under that title :

" No casual flights the dang'rous trade admits ;
 " But wits, once authors, are for ever wits.
 " The fool in prose, like Earth's unwieldy son,
 " May oft rise vig'rous, though he's oft o'erthrown :
 " One dang'rous crisis marks our rise or fall ;
 " By all we're courted, or we're shunn'd by all.

" But, grant, for once, th' auspicious muse has shed
 " Her gentlest influence on his infant head ;
 " Let fears lie vanquish'd, and resounding fame
 " Give to the bellowing blast the poet's name.
 " And see! distinguish'd from the crowd, he moves ;
 " Each finger marks him, and each eye approves !
 " Secure, as halcyons brooding o'er the deep,
 " The waves roll gently, and the thunders sleep ;
 " Obsequious Nature binds the tempest's wings,
 " And pleas'd attention listens while he sings!

" Oh, blissful state! oh, more than human joy!
 " What shafts can reach him, or what cares annoy?
 " What cares, my friend? why all that man can know,
 " Oppress'd with real, or with fancied woe.

“ Now must he learn, misguided youth, to bear
 “ Each varying season of the poet’s year :
 “ Flatt’ry’s full beam ; detraction’s wintry store ;
 “ The frowns of fortune ; or the pride of pow’r.
 “ His acts, his words, his thoughts, no more his own,
 “ Each folly blazon’d, and each frailty known.
 “ Is he reserv’d,—his sense is so refin’d,
 “ It ne’er descends to trifle with mankind :
 “ Open and free,—they find the secret cause
 “ Is vanity ; he courts the world’s applause.”

Farther he was told that, from *miscellaneous* poetry, however excellent, or from any single work of extent and connection, except in very extraordinary cases, assisted by extraordinary circumstances, little more than an accession of simple praise was to be expected ; and that, however happily some of his smaller pieces gave promise of laying the foundation of the *poetical character*, the Editor could by no means counsel him “ to leave, unadvisedly, an useful calling for an idle trade.” Indeed it would scarcely have been prudent to indulge his propensity, even as a relaxation from labour, well knowing the seductive powers of *the nine syrens of the heart*, had not the Editor, upon an inspection of performances of greater “ pith and moment,” been convinced himself, and convinced better judgments, that he was

really able to strike the high-toned lyre of the
DRAMATIC muse,

“ As o'er the *stage* in tragic robe she sweeps.”

When the Editor found this, and there was every reason to believe, that, with some guidance from experience, somewhat of gentle direction, to separate the mean from the dignified, and a few of those aids, which long habits of study and composition can always give, he was likely to effect noble darings to great and good purposes—by means of which he might assist towards enlarging the sphere, and redeeming the degraded or neglected character, of one of the highest orders of intellectual delight, the Editor certainly cheered his ardent mind with hope¹. That hope was immediately converted into a muse, whose inspirations were productive of one of the most interesting of the various effusions in his *Specimens*, entitled “ The Voice of Hope ” and “ Call of Freedom ! ”

With respect, however, to this caution, not to indulge this hope *too far*, it must be owned he wanted not the “ warning voice ” to keep² “ the fiery coursers of his mind,” to use his own expressions, in check. Several stanzas in the address of

¹ See Hints and Remarks affixed to each of the dramas on returning them to the Author.

² Page 10. Vol. II. of the present collection.

“Reason to the Poet,”¹ sufficiently prove this, as well as a passage from one of his letters more recently written, and just quoted. Thus, guardedly, the Editor felt it to be a duty he owed to genuine talents, and to his country, to devote as much of *his* time, and to counsel his young friend to dedicate as *much* of *his*, in any degree consistent with what immediate situation demanded, to make *an experiment*.

This plan was pursued; and the Editor was strongly supported in the belief, that, while bringing it into execution, the comparatively brief selections, from the mass of early and more recent effusions, would exhibit what a highly gifted mind might be able to achieve with due encouragement and cultivation.

That this would have been the result of his longer life, the Editor trusts the reader will be clearly of opinion, after a perusal of what is now dedicated to public candour. The bud and blossom were fragrant, and full of promise; and it is fair to infer, that the fruitage would have been beautiful and abundant. Indeed, the reader, in his progress through these pages, will observe in many places a fulfilment of those promises.

¹ Vol. II.

Such was the well-founded expectation—such the animating hope at the time of writing the above remarks.

What remains will be a mournful duty, since it must record all these hopes destroyed, and the interesting object of them mouldering in an early grave. It ought not to be called an untimely one, for it may truly be said of Joseph Blacket, as of Kirke White, “that the Editor has nothing to record, but what is honourable to himself and the age in which he lived; nothing to be regretted, but that one so ripe for Heaven should be so soon removed from the world.”¹

The detail will be found interesting; and after taking the counsel of some friends, and thinking much on the mode in which it may be most acceptable, the Editor agrees in a general opinion, that the most satisfactory way of bringing the circumstances under the eye of the reader, will be by means of Mr. Blacket’s own sentiments, given in extract from his correspondence, so far as they describe his personal situation, illustrate his mental occupation, or note the progress of the malady that terminated in his death.

¹ Southey’s Kirke White.

This mode will bring both the writer and the man more vividly to public view ; and by thus connecting the materials he has in great measure furnished, he will himself become, in a manner, his own biographer.

From the voluminous mass of the Editor's own letters to that truly loved and profoundly lamented friend, he has admitted only one or two brief extracts which appeared necessary, the better to display the often beautiful and always good effusions, with which he was honoured and delighted ; suppressing, as much as possible, whatever concerned the Editor personally ; as, indeed, various friends, to whom the manuscripts of the memoir part of the work was submitted, can testify. One of those, however¹, whose solid judgment and generous zeal upon this and other occasions, the Editor feels himself called upon to acknowledge, suggested the following question. " Do you not think it would be well to retain more of Mr. Blacket's grateful acknowledgments of the favours shown him by his patrons ? They will tend to display his moral character in an amiable light, and when they are found in the pages of private correspondence, they show their

¹ Mr. Mudford, translator of De Bausset's life of the admirable Fénélon, and other valuable productions.

foundation to be in the heart, and not only on the tongue.”

The Editor has been induced, from a reflection on the liberal motive that prompted this observation, to restore some of the passages he had expunged ; and trusts that the worthy persons to whom they apply, will not on this occasion “blush to find *that* fame” which all who know the parties, are convinced was done from the very purity of goodness.

Although the Editor is perfectly aware, that true benevolence is ever accompanied by true delicacy, and delights in goodness for its own sake ; it would deprive the living of an example, were not each of these volumes to be respectively addressed to those distinguished persons, whose consideration, pity, and ever increasing kindness, were conferred on Mr. Blacket, during his life-time, and who continue to express their solicitude for the orphan child, now the father is no more.

The Editor can only discharge this duty, indispensable as it is, without the knowledge or consent of the parties here alluded to ; but he is perfectly convinced that he has selected the very persons whom the author would upon the same principles have chosen, had he been now alive, to have performed this duty for himself.

TRIBUTARY VERSES,

&c. &c.

THE shortness of Mr. Blacket's life, and still shorter term of his becoming known to the public, as "a youth of expectation," little more than eighteen months after his introduction to the Editor, allowed not time for his receiving those numerous testimonies of admiration and esteem from contemporary writers, which would otherwise have been constantly increasing. Considering, however, his very brief passage from a lowly station to eminent distinction, never, perhaps, has any young poet, so circumstanced, received more gratifying, or more truly deserved attentions. To the fame-giving sentiments already quoted, of Mr. Cumberland, may be subjoined those of various other persons, remarkable for public or private taste, talent, or judgment.

*Impromptu Lines*¹ *written with a pencil on the
blank leaf of Blacket's "Specimens."*

FAIR AVON'S bard! in thee combine
The bursting thought, the glowing line;
Who says, in deep desponding strain,
"We ne'er shall see thy like again!"
Blacket! your boundless, vig'rous scope
Of strong idea, bids us hope,
In future times to see anew
Another Shakespeare shine in you.

H. HARPER.

Fleet Street.

¹ On applying to the author of these extemporaneous verses for permission to insert them, he observed, with equal candour and modesty, that "of the opinion they convey of Mr. B's talents and capabilities, though perhaps too extravagantly expressed, I shall never be ashamed; had he lived, I trust he would have verified them: they were the result of instantaneous admiration. With this apology I ought, perhaps, rather to rejoice at, than to regret, any use you may think proper to make of my hasty rhymes; for I shall ever feel proud to have my name, however incidentally, connected with that of your deceased *protégé*; and to have it recorded, that I knew, how-

*Tributary Lines to Mr. Blacket, on leaving Town
much out of health.¹*

BARD of the pensive lyre! thy magic lay
Breathes o'er the chords of sympathy sincere;
Lures tender Pity to pursue thy way,
And draws from Friendship's eye her holiest tear.

Poor plaintive wanderer! dear to ev'ry heart,
Where genuine sentiment has fix'd her throne,
Think not, unmov'd, that we behold thee part,
Or that the sadden'd sigh was all thine own.

Ah, no! and could our wishes aught avail,
Reviving health in ev'ry gale should blow;
Swift through thy languid frame new life prevail,
And Hope's bright visions round thy bosom glow.

ever slightly, his worth and his talents. The peculiar character, and gradual progress, of his extraordinary genius, it is your particular lot to record; but, in lamenting that it was so untimely 'nipp'd i' th' bud' permit me, most fervently, to join with you."

¹ See p. 187. Series IV. Letter 1.

Thy native shades should waft a soft perfume,
 All nature's sweetness to the sense impart ;
 While fond affection should around thee bloom,
 And chase the languors from thy tender heart.

Haste then, and launch thee on the tepid tide,
 Inhale pure Æther from each sea-born breeze ;
 Bold o'er the untried waters gently glide,
 And whelm in deepest caves the fiend Disease.

Then seek again the flow'ry fields of fame,
 Where wreathing laurels wait to crown thy youth ;
 And in the " Cot of Friendship " fearless claim
 The tribute due to genius, worth, and truth.



MR. CAPEL LOFFT, in a letter, which the Editor had the honor of receiving from him, dated July 6th, 1809, observed, that " the freshness and vigour of original genius are strongly manifested, both in the first poem in the collection, and in the ' Dying Horse,' in thought, imagery, and numbers.

“Mr. Bloomfield,” remarked Mr. Lofft, in the same letter, “was the first person, who informed me of Mr. Blacket’s genius in poetry; and, most kindly and zealously offered to send me a copy of the unpublished Specimens; and expressed himself with a generous enthusiasm that did him the truest honour.”

* * * * *

In another place Mr. L. wrote as follows: “I am glad you brought two poets,¹ who have such striking coincidences, together. Mr. Bloomfield thinks your young bard strikingly resembles Kirke White’s profile, and his brother Neville’s.”

* * * * *

And Mr. Bloomfield himself confirms the above favourable sentiments in the following extract of a letter to Mr. Blacket, which is too honourable to both the poets to be suppressed by the Editor. “The instant I received your volume, I resolved to shake hands with you, by letter at least, and to thank you for a pleasure of no common sort. The ‘Conflagration’ is so truly full of fire, that it almost burns one’s fingers to read it. ‘Saragossa’ is a noble poem: choose your own themes, and let the

¹ Alluding to an interview at the Editor’s.

master tints of your mind have full play. I fear, from your own hints in the work, that you are not healthy ; this makes the last page the more afflicting. I have much to say, but will now only tender my hearty good wishes and congratulations.”

The following are extracts from Mr. Blacket’s reply to the above abridgment of Mr. Bloomfield.

To Mr. Bloomfield.

“ An earnest wish to be personally known to the Author of the ‘ Farmer’s Boy,’ induces me to convey to him this letter, and the inclosed volume ; from the introduction of which Mr. Bloomfield will perceive that we have laboured precisely under the same disadvantages, and now partake the blessing arising from laudable exertion.

“ I hope at some not very distant period to have the pleasure of a conversation, and shall certainly take the liberty of calling on you, for the gratification, not only to converse, but to take by the hand a man, whose history is so nearly allied to my own, and whose sentiments are so congenial.

“ Most truly, Your’s,

“ J. BLACKET.”

In addition to the above just tributes, the Editor is proud to add the marked feeling and consideration of various eminent persons. Among these must be distinguished the family at Homly Castle, and the Reverend Mr. Wrangham. Mr. Blacket was brought under the immediate notice of the Duchess of Leeds,¹ when he went down to his native village, to revisit his sole surviving parent, an aged mother, with something of a confidence, as Mr. Wrangham termed it, "that he should be able to spare her for the future the necessity of earning her subsistence, as she had hitherto been obliged to do by out of door labour in all weathers. His poems had now been more generally talked of in the circles to which they were privately made known; and such were the day-dreams which encouragement inspired in the mind of the young bard." Mr. Wrangham was one of the most active of his patrons in the North, with design, to use his own words, of "ena-

¹ This Lady was not only herself generous to the departed bard, "but the cause of generosity in others," not simply in carrying comfort into the cottage of Mr. B's mother, (as described in pages 135 and 136 of the Memoir) which her Grace thought due from one neighbour to another, but recommended him to the powerful patronage of the Dowager Lady Hunlocke, Mrs. Dixon, and various others of her friends, whom she knew to be the friends of genius, upon every proper occasion.

bling him to make a slender provision for his two nearest relatives, his mother and his child, tottering as they were at the opposite extremes of life. Mr. W. went on to observe, that “ these appeals have of late been frequent, and it may not be advisable to encourage undeliberately and indiscriminately every rustic rhimer, who fancies himself a Hesiod or a Theocritus. But here, is superadded a claim of a more unequivocal nature, and which will not be made to the benevolent in vain.”

A short time after, Mr. Wrangham had humanely set up this plea, and induced a number of his estimable friends in Yorkshire to admit its force, as has been seen in the subscription list, Mr. Blacket breathed his last; but his offspring and his parent remain, and their claim on the generosity of the public is strengthened by their sex and their age, as well as the genius of the son and father.

Every one of those who had opportunity to examine the copies of “ Specimens ”—sent with the Editor’s application, and whose names are inserted in the foregoing list—enriched their contributions by letters, no less honourable to the Author’s genius, than to their own judgment, taste, and liberality.

It may be fairly stated, as a criterion of the most engaging manners and impressive talents of Mr. B. that he was never made known to any person of whatever sex, situation, or character, that he did not create a certain interest, which not only continued to the close of his life, but followed him to his early grave, and the Editor doubts not will extend to his posthumous fame; and to the welfare of the innocent being, whom he has left behind.

Indeed, in this instance, genius and generosity may be truly said to have gone hand in hand; the one as a cause, the other as an effect. The liberal spirit, which Mr. B's amiable personal demeanour, and intellectual merits, excited, has been manifested on every occasion, both in his life-time, and since his death. Mr. MASQUERIER complimented the Editor with the sketch of the author's portrait, the engraving from which presents to the reader a most excellent likeness of the original. Mr. JAMES WARD favoured the Editor with the vignette, taken from a passage in the poems; as did Mr. JONES of Portland Street, with the very fine drawing, from which the engraving is made, in front of the second volume, illustrating a sublime exertion of Mr. Blacket's Muse. The liberal spirit here acknowledged has influenced Mr. FREEMAN and Mr. H. R. COOK, the engravers, both of whom, I am

informed by competent judges, have wrought for considerably less than their usual prices; and the last, assuredly not least, in that combination of kindness in a good cause—the protection of the fatherless child of a man of worth and genius, is unquestionably such—the Publishers have, on this occasion, voluntarily resigned a considerable share of their established profits, to augment the fund of the orphan, after disbursement of the inevitable expenses of publication, which they take upon themselves. In a word, there is not a person concerned in these volumes, of any description, who has not testified a very generous desire and endeavour to promote the aim and end for which they are brought before the public.

It is under the support of these various opinions, public and private, that the Editor has ventured to give his own on the compositions of his Author, in the progress of the memoir.

That opinion is offered to the best of his judgment, and in honest belief of the praise being borne out by the merit that called it forth; but, without presuming to prejudge, or with any design or wish to provoke, or to propitiate, criticism; indulging, however, the hope, that what he has said in favour of his friend's talents, may receive the suffrage of the public.

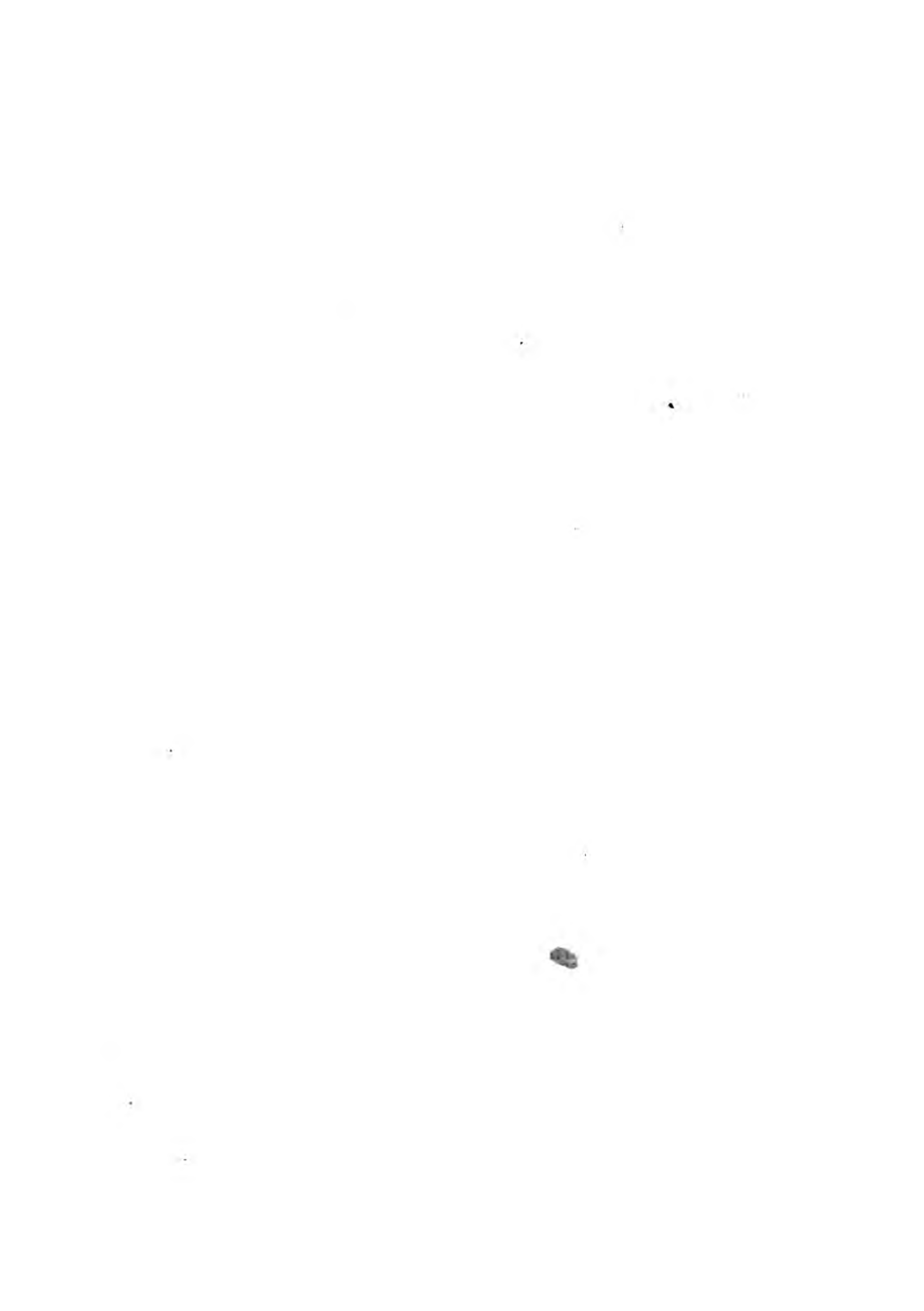
Looking retrospectively at the whole of the subject of this interesting young man, honoured in fame, nursed in sickness, lamented in death, and without stamina that promised any thing but painful existence, had he lived,—though affection may long sigh over his early grave, reason must pronounce it a blessing, “under such circumstances, to be placed beyond the echoes of renown: beyond the hopes and fears of a candidate:—those hopes that seldom cheer, those fears that too often bring terror to the heart of him who adopts literature as a profession.”¹

Alas!—with comparatively few exceptions, and those favoured by peculiar circumstances, the distinguished of every age and nation,—whose wisdom has illumined, whose inventions have improved, and whose genius has honoured their country,—have generally left the world, either sacrifices to their own exertions, or victims to the envy, the malice, or the misrepresentations of others.

“Hear Lydiat’s life, or Galileo’s end.”

But the perils of eminence are too numerous to require partial examples.—They are registered in every memory.

¹ Announce of Mr. Blacket’s death in the *Universal Magazine*.



' LETTER I.

Jan. 2. 1809.

THE subsequent short note from No. 4, Boswell Court, Queen's Square, Holborn, immediately preceded Mr. Blacket's acquaintance with the editor.

* * * * *

“ Joseph Blacket submits to Mr. Pratt's perusal, and the decision of his judgment, the inclosed Melo-Drama, as it will be found wanting in comic dialogue throughout;—which J. Blacket hopes he will pardon, when informed that it was written at a period when the Author experienced the

¹ This is one of the two Dramatic Pieces, which being in their progress to the stage, will not, of course, be anticipated in the present Volumes.

greatest difficulties in life, and merely to spare his mind the anguish of reflecting on the greatest of misfortunes, namely the loss of a much-loved wife, which happened in November last.”

‘ *LETTER II.*

Feb. 3. 1809.

“ I WAS born, 1786, at an obscure village, called Tunstill, in the north of Yorkshire, two miles from Catterick, and about five from Richmond, a respectable market-town. My father was a day-labourer, and had for many years been employed in the service of Sir John Lawson, Bart. whose goodness and humanity to the neighbouring poor render him universally beloved. I was the youngest, except one, of twelve children, eight of whom were living at the time that I was first sent to school, which was early in youth, owing to the village school-

‘ His literary talents and gentle manners increasing my interest for him, I solicited, and was favoured with the specific particulars of his history, contained in this letter. EDITOR.

mistress being very partial to me, and giving me a free education. With her I staid until the age of seven; when another school being opened by a man, whom my parents thought better able to instruct, I was placed by them under his tuition, and continued to write and learn arithmetic till the age of eleven; when my brother, a ladies' shoemaker, in London, expressed a desire of taking me as an apprentice, on the most liberal terms; namely, to provide me with every thing for the space of seven years, an opportunity which my parents lost not; so, leaving school and bidding adieu to the place of my nativity, playmates, &c. I set forward, in the waggon, for London, which place I reached in ten days, was bound by indenture, and commenced my trade. My brother, to whom I must give due praise, lest I should forget the little learning I had gathered in the country, (which was very trivial, never being farther in arithmetic than reduction, and being capable of reading, as the villagers thought, tolerably well,) frequently kept me at home to write on a Sunday, which, though painful to me at that time, was undoubtedly of essential service. He is a man who has read much, and has a good collection of books, chiefly on religious subjects: in perusing which I past my leisure hours, and, before I was fifteen, had read Josephus, Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, Fox's Martyrs, and a number of others, from which I never failed

to gather some knowledge. At that time the drama was totally unknown to me, a play I had neither seen nor read ; in fact, I had no desire, until a juvenile friend, who was in the habit of frequenting the theatres, solicited my ' company to see Kemble play Richard the third, at Drury-Lane. I went, and having seen, and soon after read, forgot the cruelties exercised in queen Mary's reign, and left the celebrated Jewish historians and others to be cherished by more permanent admirers. Thus, sir, did the muse of Shakespeare, with a single glance, banish the ideas of Jerusalem's wars, which memory had carefully collected, and awakened a desire in my breast to become acquainted with no other language than that of nature. To do which, I frequently robbed my pillow of its due, and, in the summer-season, would

' A little anecdote attaches to this circumstance. When his youthful friend called on him, he informs me, his brother refused him permission, in consequence of the wetness of the season, fearing he might catch cold. After supplicating in vain for a long time, he hit upon the following expedient, which had the desired effect. He addressed a few verses to him, now in my possession, which pleased his brother so highly, that he instantly gave him leave to go, together with a couple of shillings to defray his expenses : this happened when he was about twelve years of age, and, from this period, he dates his passion for the drama, and admiration of Shakespeare.—EDITOR.

read till the sun had far retired, then wait with anxious expectation for his earliest gleam, to discover to my enraptured fancy the sublime beauties of that great master. And thus did I continue to cultivate, with the muse, a friendship, for so I must call it, most dear and congenial to my heart, with that divine poet, at all borrowed or stolen hours, until the expiration of my apprenticeship, when I became a lodger of the brother I had served, but whose wife unfortunately died in a consumption about this period. Her sister, sometime after, I married, and lived happy for three years, during which time I assiduously courted the muse of tragedy, who continued to claim all the attention I could spare from my business, which I prosecuted with tolerable success, and made my family comfortable and happy; but, alas! I soon experienced a sad reverse. In 1807, after a long illness, I lost the wife I so much loved, who fell a victim to the same complaint as her sister. At that wretched period, to add to my misfortunes, her sister, who had previously been sent for from the country to attend her, was confined to her bed by a raging fever, which deprived her for a considerable time of reason, and nearly of life. Judge of my situation, sir; a dear wife stretched on the bed of death; a sister senseless, whose dissolution in that state I expected every hour; an infant piteously looking round for its mother; creditors clamorous; friends

cold or absent! I then found, like the melancholy Jaques, that, “when the deer was stricken the herd would shun him.” It will not appear strange to you, sir, when informed that I was under the necessity of disposing of every thing, which I actually did, and, with the sum, discharged a part of the debts I had unavoidably contracted. After the burial of my wife,¹ her sister, thank heaven, recovered; when, sending my little daughter to a kind friend at Dept-

¹ Mr. Blacket's wife, for a considerable length of time, was servant to Mr. Boscowen, out of whose family the young poet married her. She was good-nature and complacency personified; and, when any circumstance called peculiarly for exertion, she was all attention and diligence; this made her an excellent nurse. The disorder of which she died, a consumption, had been much in her family, and it began with her soon after her marriage, and before the birth of her child. She tried her native air (as her husband did afterwards) ineffectually; and a few months before her death, the Miss Boscowens took a lodging for her near their own residence at Little Chelsea, in hopes that *that* air might do her good. There, she could walk in the garden, and the most considerate care was taken she should be supplied with any little delicacy the family table afforded. As her health however continued to decline, she returned to town at her own desire, a short time before her decease. On her death-bed, she requested another old servant of Mr. B's family to take little Mary to nurse, which she did with great goodness, though encumbered with a young family of her own.

ford, where she still remains, I quitted the roof of departed happiness with anguish; and, to alleviate my sufferings, in tedious solitude, began to commit to paper some of those thoughts which my kind friend, Mr. Marchant, introduced to your perusal, and which you have had the goodness to examine."

"Thus, sir, I have given a brief sketch of my life, which, latterly, has been one continued scene of trouble; but I hope, through the medium of your kind friendship, to be enabled to taste once more of happiness among my fellow-countrymen, and publicly display those ideas and sentiments which, in secret, I have cherished with unabating ardour."

J. B.

"P. S. I have omitted one thing, Sir, in my memoir, of which you may probably wish to be informed, viz. the names of the several poets, to the perusal of whose works I had dedicated my leisure hours, and to whose exalted sentiments I owe the expansion of my ideas: for your information on this point, I will here enumerate them.—Shakespeare,

Milton, Pope, Young, Otway, Rowe, Beattie, Thompson, &c. together with one volume of Virgil's *Æneid*, with which I was much delighted, and read with particular attention : indeed, one or other of these authors was constantly in my pocket or under my pillow. I might add the *History of the Heathen Gods*, and every book that I could either borrow or buy, which I thought likely to improve me on any of my favourite subjects. I do not know, sir, whether you may not think it wandering from the objects of my scattered studies to observe, that I have visited most of the exhibitions of painting and sculpture; and from the subjects of the artist have collected many ideas, which, probably, otherwise I could never have attained."

* * * * *

Among his posthumous papers I find a letter to one of his confidential friends, which appears to have been written not more than two or three months preceding my acquaintance with him. Some passages in it exhibit the severest struggles of impulsive talent, and give another example of the sad fate of genius, when its propensity overwhelms all other consideration; loving the very wretchedness it produces,

rather than attempting to gain health and comfort by any means less arduous, though alas! abundantly more easy. Not that the subject of this memoir was inattentive to his manual occupation, in which he was assiduous, and as his brother, John Blacket, assures me, one of the most excellent in the trade; from which, that he might not steal the business hours, he robbed those, which, more particularly in a constitution like his, should have been devoted to regular and unbroken repose.

In the afflicting letter above mentioned, he states, that night after night, for weeks together, he pursued his darling studies with the most resolute determination, seldom taking or feeling to want, but at hasty snatches, either food or sleep. Till pursuing this double labour of mind and body by day and night, the pains and penalties incident to such excess seized upon his frame and spirits, and he was nearly becoming a sacrifice to a perseverance, which neither want, nor personal suffering could abate. His anxiety to produce something, that should be thought worthy of the public, in the form of a Drama, appears to have surpassed all his other cares. His eagerness on this occasion was pushed to such extremity, that something of the Dramatic kind pervades the whole mass of his papers. I have traced it on bills, receipts, backs of letters, shoe-patterns, slips of paper-hangings,

grocery-wrappers, magazine-covers, battalion-orders for the volunteer corps of St. Pancras in which he served, and on various other scraps, on which his ink could scarcely be made to retain the impression of his thoughts: yet most of them crowded on both sides, and much interlined. On one of these fugitive papers he had even numbered the lines of each scene of some of his Dramas.

* * * * *

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LETTER III.

March 12. 1809.

To chase away the spirit of despondency, to which the diffidence of true genius always subjects the possessor, the Editor animated him to HOPE; and, by way of giving that cheering power the most attracting form in a poet's eye, encouraged him to make it a subject¹ of his muse.

¹ See the Voice of Hope, and Call of Freedom, Vol. 2.

“ I have obeyed you in your request; but I fear the attempt is beneath notice. The verse is perhaps very uncouth, the manner and subject singular, but the principle is the offspring of a grateful heart; and I hope, among the rest of my trifles, will be accepted.

“ I have been attempting a few pastorals, in the manner of Cunningham; but I feel very much indisposed to prosecute any farther studies, as I fear, like Chatterton, my budding hopes will never ripen into fruit.”



LETTER IV.

THE circumstances that connect with the following letter and stanzas are extremely touching; and the Editor feels convinced, that the time, which the perusal of their developement may occupy will not be matter of regret. Avowals of gratitude are impe-

rious duties entailed on surviving friends, when the hand that received is severed by death from the hand that bestowed.

Soon, alas! too soon, it became necessary, notwithstanding every precaution, to consult several of the Editor's medical friends on the subject of Mr. Blacket's visibly declining health; their opinion was decided and uniform as to the ultimate event of his malady, though the Editor's heart still fixed its faith on the powers of youth. Yet all that could be done to ward off the impending blow, and soften immediate annoyance, was offered by these gentlemen¹ gratuitously, besides many marks of personal kindness. A frequent excursion into the country was a part, and a vital one, of their prescriptions and admonitions. Obedient to these, the Editor consulted with Mr. Blacket as to his choice of occasional retirement near town. He expressed a strong predilection for Hampstead, where many of his earliest poetical effusions, as will appear by the dates, had been poured forth; particularly his verses on the "*Dying Horse*,"² a poem, which has been thought replete with animated beauty of description, and admirable moral sentiment.

¹ Dr. Fryar, Dr. Bree, Mr. Fallofield, Mr. Royston, and numerous others eminent in their profession, volunteered their best services.

² Vol. 2.

While retiring to sleep at his favourite village, Hampstead, no sooner were the proofs of his talents and the state of his health made known to Sir R. Phillips, than the family of that gentleman, including Mr. and Mrs. Surr, contended which should show him most active service. And, upon the family party above-mentioned going for the remainder of the Summer into Wales, the house and gardens, then in the occupation of Sir Richard, were consigned to Mr. Blacket's and the Editor's sole disposal, while the air, or other accommodations of the place might be found salutary.

The Editor and his young friend had scarcely been a week in this retreat, when the latter went to town, intending to return in a few hours: the evening, the night, the succeeding morning, the following day, and so on to the fifth evening, passed away in silent, anxious, and, at length, terrifying expectation. All researches were fruitless. Had the editor, when he discovered the cause of this temporary truantism, found it originating in, or mixed with, the cruelty of unmerited neglect and desertion, it should not, being the *only* error, have met the eye of the reader; but in as much as it led to excellent feelings, that will presently be described, and was, in itself, a temporary inconsideration, induced by the unexpected charm of society among old friends, it opened as it were

upon the view a new vein in an estimable heart. The Editor more than forgave, he soon forgot, that the fugitive had filled him with any previous solicitude. He is, to this moment, soothed by the effects. They exhibited themselves in the subsequent interesting lines.

The whole of the last stanza, on account of its personality, should be erased; but it completes the beauty and tenderness of the appeal.

The bird that flies from fostering care,
 May truant-like awhile be gay;
 May warble through the yielding air,
 And revel in the blaze of day!

Till clouds, that speak approaching night,
 The vagrant's wanton eye surveys;
 When, trembling in its homeward flight,
 Forgiveness seeks—forgiveness prays.

Thus I, by glittering scenes estrang'd,
 When youthful fancy loves to roam;
 The blaze expir'd, the picture chang'd,
 Return with anguish to my home.

Oh! pardon * * * * *

Nor with that distant look reprove;
 The child of error earnest pleads;
 The child of error courts your love.

On the next meeting, it was easy to perceive some answer was expected: and, as peace was already restored, it seemed as if the treaty would be most pleasantly ratified, by replying in verse. The Editor thought it would be best to continue the allusion of the bird, and accordingly dispatched, with all the haste which the spirit of conciliation required, the subsequent letter and lines.

Dear Sir,

“ Although the critics have determined that the grand property of poetry is *fiction*, I have, on a great many occasions, found truth and poetry supporting each other; and, I most sincerely believe, the lines, with which you have favored me, is a fresh proof of this position. The union is most lovely even in the moment of inspiration, while it is limited to

impulse. It produces the highest charm of life, when it fixes as a principle.

“That it may possess this permanent attraction in your mind, my dear Sir, is the ardent wish of your faithful friend.”

* * * * *

The Editor trusts he shall not be deemed obtrusive after the above explanations, for his insertion of the subsequent lines just as he wrote, and as he since received them back; besides, as they are here appropriate to the occasion, it is hoped they convey a caution that may be salutary to the juvenile reader, particularly when hurried away by the fervor of fancy into the paths of danger.

ANSWER

*To some touching Lines from Mr. Blacket on a
late occasion.*



TILL custom has the spirit broke,
 And bow'd it to the galling yoke,
 Though like Apollo's lyre were strung
 Foul *Slav'ry's* cage, in palace hung,
 The *bird*, which from his prison breaks,
 On rapid wing the circuit takes
 Of earth, of ocean, and of air,
 Enraptur'd to have 'scap'd the snare ;
 And though on *Ætna's* burning height,
 He first suspends his dizzy flight,
 More blest fair Freedom's song to pour,
 From torrid rock, or desert shore ;
 And, though these scarcely life sustain,
 Foul slav'ry's cage ne'er seeks again.

But, when by *no* such ills alloy'd,
 The sweets of *Freedom* ALL enjoy'd ;
 On hill, or vale, in grot, or grove,
 Wherever Freedom loves to rove ;
 At ease he feeds, at ease he sings,
 Reposes, or expands, his wings ;
 Inhales the fragrance of the rose,
 Woos Zephir as from heav'n it blows ;
 Associates with the tuneful kind,
 Or muses bold and unconfin'd :
 Now forms the solitary song,
 Now mixes with the social throng.—
 If scenes like these the bird resigns,
 And for *fantastic* pleasures pines ;
 If lur'd from these too soon away,
 Through mazy *wilds* his footsteps stray ;
 If, with mad Frolic's vagrant brood,
 He leaves the shelter of the wood ;
 And 'mid the clam'rous chirping throng
 Suspends the sacred pow'r of song ;—
 If, from the paths of peace he flies,
 And to the fuming city hies ;
 Though Flora weaves her summer vest,
 And spreads it o'er the bow'rs of rest ;—

Soon must he know such pleasures bring
 The drooping head and flagging wing ;
 Feel all that makes the wand'rer mourn ;
 Yet—if these urge the safe return ;
 If, e'er the syren notes prevail
 From pleasure's sweet, but tainted gale,—
 If, e'er its rude breath bears along
 The conscious sense of purer song,
 He rests beneath some dusty shed,
 And to the shades from whence he fled,
 Where late he slept beside the rose,
 He pours in sweetest sound his woes ;
 Who but must share the songster's grief,
 And who that shares withhold relief ?
 The tuneful friend, that sigh'd to see him roam,
 Far from the health-wing'd breeze and bow'ry home,
 With list'ning ear attends the pensive strain,
 Which genuine sorrow ne'er should pour in vain.

June 24th.

The letter, which he immediately addressed to the Editor on perusing the above verses, will ever be considered as of the highest value ; and, as he feels assured the reader will not estimate it slightly, for its own sake, it shall not be kept from his view.

“ Dear Friend,

“ I have perused with attention your verses, and believe me, though I regret that I ever gave you cause to write them, the sentiments they contain make me almost cease to lament the folly which occasioned them; and, like a culprit, whom Mercy snatches from the yawning gulf of Death! in contemplating the scroll of pardon, I forget the crime.¹

“ Dear Sir! would to Heaven that the ‘ low-born youth of parentage obscure ’ could shape his actions to your wishes; and perform the duties, which he owes, without once causing regret, or stamping on the brow the gloom of anxiety!

“ But, whatever his errors,—whatever blame may be attached to his neglect of duty—believe me, he will never act unworthily, or brand himself with the infamy of ingratitude; when with you, he will earnestly strive to oblige; when absent,

¹ Indiscretion would have been the more appropriate word; but his impulsive feelings, touched with a generous consciousness, magnified both the sentiment and the expression. The most honourable and delicate emotions will be traced through every part of this letter.

he will sink into no worse company than himself. Should you, dear Sir, entertain a thought that his conduct, during his absence, or that his companions, were in the least profligate, your mind will be relieved instantly by applying to Mr. Marchant, or Mr. Clark, High Holborn; at whose house I slept, and with whose family I spent every moment of my absent time.

“ Dear Sir, hoping that for the future I shall preserve an undeviating course of rectitude, I subscribe myself, most devotedly,

“ Your obliged,

J. BLACKET.

P. S. “ Youthful minds dread to give offence.”¹

It was in the highest degree interesting to open a memorandum book, which was returned to the Editor from Seaham, with his box of posthumous papers, faithfully and carefully transmitted by his patron and

¹ If this could be called an offence, it was his first and last, during the Editor's intercourse with him; and the Editor feels convinced it would have remained so, had it pleased God to have spared his life.

patronesses at Castle-Eden. The contents of the little memorandum book above-mentioned, discovered, in various instances, a most grateful disposition and very tender nature. In one of its pockets was found a copy of the above stanzas with my reply, worn almost in pieces, apparently by frequent perusal; and a very affecting performance of the promise, which he made in my hearing at the time of first reading them; namely, “that they should never, while life or reason remained, be out of his reach.” And it must needs be a circumstance of the deepest interest to find among the most beautiful of his posthumous works, that he had kept his word.

The other preservations, which, by inspection of the articles, were found in the memorandum book, were no less emblematic of a worthy and a feeling heart; for instance, an impression of the arms of the Duke and Duchess of Leeds, of whose goodness it will be the bounden duty of the Editor to speak in its place; a general list of the contributors to his Poems, with short and generous remarks; an engraving of the Rev. Dr. Mavor, fastened to one of the satin leaves; as this gentleman had not only shown him many kindnesses, but was, also, his *first* subscriber; the favourable criticisms of his only published work, the ‘Times;’ the copy of a letter to his sister, in which was the following passage respecting his child :

“ You will be anxious to hear how my little darling, your niece is. I am happy to inform you she is well, and can walk very prettily. The last time I went, she came across the room to me, and gave me a kiss. I never recollect, in all my life, any thing that gave me more happiness. I asked her to give me another kiss, instead of her poor mother, and she lifted up her little head and gave me one immediately. I know you will feel much the same joy at hearing this, that I did in feeling it. She has got a nice little colour, and seems very happy.”



LETTER V.

WHILE yet at Hampstead, some literary friends, to whom he had been introduced, joined the Editor in recommending to him a poem on the THAMES, combining in his subject the beauty and utility, commerce and pleasure, connected with that magnificent river. Interesting views of this topic opened on the young bard, at various points, not only in his occasional rambles along its banks, but from different parts of the gardens and pleasure-grounds, of which he had the range.

His personal health improving by the aids of air, exercise, and the hospitality of the family he was visiting, his mind seemed to take in the whole compass of the extensive horizon, "and all that it inherited;" and he would often wander about with his pencil and note-book, making poetical minutes.

Convinced that this was a theme which would be every way worthy of him, and which the Editor believed he would not disgrace, when his bodily health should be more re-established—a hope which several of his poetical—but, alas, none of his medical—admirers now began fondly to cherish, the Editor readily joined in the general encouragement to pursue it; still holding it out among the exertions in reserve for his convalescence.

In the mean time, when genial weather favoured, he used to play with the subject, in the character of a Peripatetic, putting down, now and then, a hint for future consideration.

Conformably to this plan, while in company with the Editor, he was one day seated upon an eminence, which commanded numberless interesting objects, each in keeping with his intended theme. The Editor took occasion to propose a short ramble,

which, without fatigue, might bring some of those objects more distinctly within his view.

In this excursion, while the youthful bard was making his poetical memoranda, the Editor took out his own Book of Hints also, by way of increasing a gratification which, it was easy to perceive, did his young friend more good than harm.

On returning home, the two wanderers compared *notes*: Mr. Blacket's consisted of various short hints, broken sentences,—references to local scenery,—spirit of trade,—intended eulogy on Mr. Pope and his villa,—compliment to the Author of "Leonidas,"—and various other allusions, by way of idea and ground for the mind to work upon. The following detached lines, may suggest a few of the thoughts and proposed manner of expressing them.

These, however unconnected, so excited his desire to see and perform more, that as soon as his health,—which was still in flattering progress,—and the Spring also, was more confirmed,—he so earnestly requested that he might undertake an excursion of a few days by himself, that after many cautionary hints to beware of cold, fatigue, &c. "he wrung from the Editor his slow leave" and departed.

Previous to his going, the Editor put into his hands the hasty lines he had himself penciled; and as they tend to elucidate the subject, which was now growing on his imagination and feelings, and discover the reciprocal affection, and the associated thoughts, of the respective friends, the reader is solicited to accept them, after having read those which immediately follow :¹

* * * * *

“ Paul’s massy dome there rears its giant head,
 “ There Peter’s Abbey guards the mighty dead ;
 “ Imperial Thames here moves with graceful pride,
 “ Pleasure and trade obedient to his tide.

* * * * *

“ Objects on objects prompt the rising song,
 “ Full as the stream, and bear the Muse along.

* * * * *

“ There Kings and Queens in regal pomp we view,
 “ There nobler sages mould the world anew.

* * * * *

“ Temples unnumber’d to the God are rais’d,
 “ The God of Gods * * * *

¹ From Mr. Blacket.

* * * * *

“ Bards, heroes, patriots, swell the kindling strain.

* * * * *

“ Now stretch'd immense I see blest Nature's pow'rs,

“ Now Art's sublimest city crown'd with tow'rs;

“ Far as the eye can dart the visual ray,

“ Like rival monarchs, these extend their sway;

“ The sov'reign water here, and there the land

“ By turns assume the sceptre of command.

* * * * *

“ O could my pencil sketch what now I view,

“ What virtues should I paint, what vices too!

* * * * *

“ Could I pourtray all that I now behold,

“ And all the wonders of the scene unfold.

“ Here should I mark the sorrows of the Great,

“ In splendid rooms and pageantries of state.

* * * * *

“ Were I my course along its banks to wind,

“ Not all the bards with all the Muses join'd,—

“ How bright, (how dark,) what wonders should I see,

“ Vot'ries to Virtue, slaves to infamy;

“ And were the Nine to reckon tenfold more,

“ Still wonders would remain unsung” * * *

CONCLUDING PASSAGE

OF

SOME PENCILLED LINES,

TO

JOSEPH BLACKET,

Occasioned by his intended Poem on the Thames,

SUGGESTED BY A SPLENDID VIEW OF THE SCENERY.



* * * * *

Y^ET, ere th' excursive muse her pinion tries,
To take the mazy prospect as it lies;
Involv'd in mist along yon distant scene,
Or gives distinct the smiling vales between;
Ere yet she mark yon hill,¹ well known to song,
Ambition's summit of the city throng,
When up they labour, with their offspring dear,
Their verge of Sabbath-travel through the year;

¹ Primrose Hill.

TRUTH be thy goddess!—to her hand is giv'n
 The wand ethereal, and the harp of heav'n.
 Her inspiration woo, and her's alone,
 The earth her footstool, and the sky her throne.
 Her aid implore, and oh! if she inspire,
 On this proud Theme invoke not Fancy's fire.

Ere yet sublime the goddess wings her way,
 Where trade's proud mart obscures the summer ray,
 Loads her dark car, her deep-mouth'd warehouse
 stores,
 The gather'd treasure of a thousand shores :
 Borne on the bosom of that sceptred tide,
 The nation's envied wonder, wealth, and pride :
 Stupendous mass of joy and misery,
 Majestic London! spreads beneath your eye.

In that wide range, how would the muse of Truth
 Delight, confound, surprize, perplex, your youth!
 Could you the vast interior bring to proof,
 And, Asmodeüs like, each dome unroof;
 How would you chill with fear, with anger glow,
 Be rais'd to transport, and be sunk to woe!
 The stony hand, the pitying heart, is there,
 And all that Truth can know of foul and fair.

Yes, ere your muse invoke that monarch stream,
 To grace your triumph, and adorn your theme,
 A moment pause, with retrospective eye,
 To view the prospects as they nearer lie.
 Here may your Muse her off'ring first dispense,
 And twine her chaplet to benevolence ;
 For here pale Sorrow found a shelter'd home,
 And sickness smil'd, refresh'd in yonder dome.
 This rich, majestic spot, Health calls her own ;
 Proceed, and make it more—your MUSE's throne :
 To Truth, to Virtue, consecrate her lays,
 And Thames shall crown you with immortal bays.
 This laurel'd point, as distant ages view,
 Shall bring the mental vision full on you.
 Here, shall they say, with worth and genius fraught,
 Here, nobly-daring, Blacket " sat and thought."
 Here first to mighty Thames¹ the lyre he strung ;
 And Britain's guardian listen'd while he sung !

¹ The Editor is aware that this interesting theme has since found an able eulogist in the author of the "Genius of the Thames."

IN the course of his excursion, the Editor received the following little budget of prose and verse, dated from the banks of the Thames.

“ *Kingston, 4 o’Clock, Wednesday.*

“ After your departure yesterday, I strolled down to my brother’s; and, in my road to Piccadilly, called on another friend, with whom I spent some time; and, partly by the *shooting of his corns*, and the falling of the quicksilver, he fully persuaded me, that it was near the period, when a wet jacket was to be expected. This, in some measure, occasioned my delay; and, about half past six, I had the mortification to find this corn-shooter’s prophecy realized! The drops descended rapidly, and a universal gloom, clouding the whole hemisphere, induced me to return to my brother’s, and await the result of this morning. In consequence of which, I passed the night beneath his roof; and, after a hearty breakfast with him, proceeded to Chelsea.

“ No stage appearing, I determined to continue the course of a pedestrian, and, after a delightfully pleasant walk, found myself perched

upon Richmond Hill; and soon felt, on inquiry, that I was in want of a dinner. I inspected the several inns, looked at the signs, peeped through the windows, stared at the hosts, contemplated the company; then, turning myself round mechanically, said, with a smile of exultation, No! Never!—Never shall it be said that Blacket, like a common cockney, paid *through the nose* for a dinner.—Forbid it Reason!

“ Big with the thought, I sought out a miserable receptacle for inferior beings, where ‘souls made of fire, and children of the sun’ had no business! Here, said I, (snapping my fingers) here shall I partake a frugal repast, and pay a frugal price; and instantly ordered a humble chop!

“ The parlour, which I entered, ought to be consecrated!—from its window I had one of the most extensive and picturesque views imaginable! Here rolled in sluggish silence my majestic Thames! There stood the bulwarks of the land, waving in conscious pride—the venerable oaks!—Here the rustic, plying his hay-fork, exposed to the sun the bountiful production of prolific Nature; and there, the giddy sons and daughters of pleasure, following the course of playful fancy, were seen rolling in the luxuriant heaps!—‘Oh! how I love these rustic sights!’ Escaped from the smoke-drying metropolis,

my full eye, almost rivetted on the objects and surrounding scenery; yet, 'poor human nature' as you say, was soon drawn aside, when a dish and a couple of chops made their appearance. With exhilarated spirits, a good appetite, and, I hope, *not a bad heart*, I prepared for dinner. I laughed in my sleeve while eating; thinking, at least, I had saved eighteen pence by not showing myself in a more exalted situation!

“ During my humble repast, a personage of the 'very first world' passed by the door, on her way to Lady * * * * *, who this day gave a public breakfast, after the second, at least the third world had dined. Good Heaven! what a dust nobility kicks up! and what liberties it takes with time, who will one day repay the freedom with interest. The little dogs, Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, were all out immediately on the great personage's entrance. The houses were uninhabited; Affluence, for once was seen stilted up over the shoulders, and deriving altitude from Indigence; and every eye was bent on nobility! take the wind and dust of him who may. But the noble alluded to being rather *aged* and tough, and the *mutton chops* being *young* and tender, I could not find in my heart to leave the one for the other. At that moment, the

smoaking steak and the foaming tankard, annihilated, to a good appetite, all the grandeur upon earth.

* * * * *

“ *In the Fields, 7 o’Clock.* ”

“ MY dinner finished, and the fragments taken away, I thought proper to ask what I had to pay, when the entrance of a servant with a mouthful of—*three shillings*—put me so completely to the stare, that, like Hamlet, I was almost upon the point of uttering,

‘ Art thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn’d?’

but curbing my surprise, I desired the maid to send in the man. The disciple of Bacchus entered, as usual, round as a hogshead, and, as usual, impertinence personified. I expostulated—I exclaimed, three shillings for a chop!—He was exorbitant! He was shameless! He was *every thing!*—’Twas nothing to him; three shillings was the usual demand for a dinner, let a guest have what he might, *ergo* three shillings he would have. I asked him for a bill—no occasion for bills, *three shillings was the money.* I stormed—he coughed. I swore—he laughed—when, suddenly looking out of the window, I saw that the prospect was worth more than the extortion,

and therefore, forgetting my rage, I left the house as peaceably disposed as I entered it.

* * * * *

“ FROM Richmond I struck off into the foot-path for Kingston, at which place I am at present writing, close by the river, my destined majestic theme, for whose pellucid waves I have so great a veneration, that, were it not for the lightness of my pocket, and the orders of my dear Mentor, I would certainly, even now, wind my way to the fountain head.

“ From Richmond to Kingston, I completed the scene in ¹ Tarempo, and sincerely hope Mr. Elliston will be satisfied.—Ulthona was written in half the time!

* * * * *

“ *Nearly dark.*

“ I was particularly struck with the appearance of Putney church; and entered, with an inquiring mind, its yard. At what period it may have been built, I cannot conjecture, but the venerable walls seemed to whisper in my ears, ‘ Enter here, and converse with Alfred.’

¹ A sort of grand ballet.

“ The exterior is rudely Gothic ; and the whole appearance inspires awe ! Sorry was I to see several decayed cavities in the steeple filled up with mean, modern six-inch bricks ; yet it helped me to an allusion : I thought I saw the rude flinty manners of my brave forefathers, contrasted with the poor clayey accomplishments of the present age ! I left it with respect, and, heaving a sigh to the memory of the seventh century, proceeded on my journey.

“ In my way towards Kingston, I remarked a great alteration in the children of the cottages : near town, they are bold and polite ; but, the farther you advance, the more foolish they appear. I asked several of the boys questions on my road, but, like the birds, they fled from me, or were ashamed to answer.

“ Is it not amazing, so near the metropolis, that such rude ignorance should exist ? but I find the same stare of curiosity, the same gape of admiration here, as in the most unfrequented vales of my own county.

* * * * *

“ *The Griffin, Kingston.* ”

“ I HAVE strolled home (for you must know the Griffin is my home for this night); on my way I have sketched a few lines, which I will endeavour to copy for you.

How wondrous still the pulse of Nature beats!
 The Sun's retir'd, and Darkness glooms apace.
 Night lashes on her pall-black steeds, and spreads
 A solemn gloom around.—The sable clouds,
 Deserted by the orient beam of day,
 In quick succession float along the sky,
 And gently scatter dews.—His task perform'd,
 LABOUR enjoys a respite; and the cot
 Welcomes its owner, on the barren heath;
 There happy, if his guests be kindred Love.
 Hark! from the pathway, in the neighb'ring copse,
 Heavily sounds the peasant's homeward steps,
 Along the thirsty earth: his tann'd and reeking brow,
 Wet with exertion in the scorching toil,
 Bare to the chilling breeze!—unmindful he
 Of *Asthmas*, coughs, catarrhs, and the dark ills,
 Which vex the city throng. Homeward he wends,
 While his rough children at his little latch,

Crowd to salute him—and the careful dame
Spreads manna on the board!

* * * * *

A succession of severe colds, to which, on the smallest change of the weather, he became liable, rapidly increased his disorder; and it was thought advisable to try the experiment of a short sea voyage, and country residence.

In furtherance of this plan, he wrote to his brother-in-law John Dixon, game keeper, to Sir R. Milbanke, of Seaham, near Sunderland, stating a brief general account of his having printed a volume of poems, the subscriptions to which had already amounted, according to his own words, to “what his father would call a good fortune,” adding, that “although as he anticipated his brother-in-law and sister’s welcome, and should lose no time in making preparations, and inquiring after a Sunderland vessel, he would wish to hear whether his visit would be quite convenient.”

* * * * *

In the mean time,—the state of his disorder and the irritation it produced, will be perceived by an extract from his letter, dated Dice Tavern.

“I slept here last night, and was literally *boiled*.—close rooms, thick heavy beds, &c. &c. I

am determined this night, if the wind change not, to repose (if possible) at my brother's at Hackney, where I was so comfortably accommodated the evening I left you."

"My head is confused in this smoky atmosphere. I wish myself far distant, and feel rather low in spirits; the jingle and confusion in this Tavern, also perplexes me."

* * * * *

IN a letter from Seaham, August 2, 1809, he thus announced his arrival.

"All safe, my dear friend. I landed at Sunderland late yesterday evening, and after a comfortable night's rest, rise to give you the information. But alas! I hardly can hold my pen; the room rocks with me, and I am still feeling as if I were on board.

* * * * *

"During my voyage no sickness; although I know it is one of the great objects for which I encountered the billows. I hung my head over the stern of the ship, and was determined, if possible, to undergo that operation. All was in vain.

The seamen looked upon me as a seasoned old sailor; and while the other passengers who would have gladly been exempted from their miserable tribute of fresh water sailors, and were half dead in the cabin, or upon deck gasping for breath, I was seated on the fore-castle, reading aloud some passages from a favourite poet. The captain, strange to tell, sat attentive, and heard me with rapture. I love these Critics! on subjects where *nature* only is to be described they are the best judges: and to give a rough son of the raging seas, the least degree of intellectual pleasure, is to me a source of delight! It is Nature's genuine tribute. I find my head ache a little this morning, and write with an unsteady hand. In two or three days, I shall hope to sing in Mariner's language,—Steady boys steady.

“ Meantime, permit me to subscribe myself,

J. BLACKET.

LETTER VIII.

Seaham, August 9. 1809.

ON the back of this, the Editor could not but indorse his opinion, that it abounded with glowing thoughts, beautifully expressed in the midst of great personal suffering.

* * * * *

“Tis night, dark night, my dear Mentor; and sleep, balmy sleep, is banished from the burning eyeballs of your poor Telemachus; In vain I leave my little lamp, to inhale the cool breeze at my casement; the nightly fever, which still rages in my veins, is not to be allayed. The Vitriolic Acid prescribed me has no effect; I have run regularly up to 100 drops,—all useless. It is evident, my dear

parental friend, that *nature must have her course*; be it so. “Equally indifferent to sleep or die.”
 * * * * * I have again been taking a breath of air; all is uproar; the billows seem feverous, and dash their boiling foam against the eternal rocks with more than usual rage! in vain the EYE attempts to catch an object, all is darkness, and *its* piercing glance is lost in mist! But the SOUL, like the proud eye of day, visits, unchecked, the regions of existence, and, swiftly flying through the bounds of space, greets its parental friend, as *mine* does now. Yes, my loved Mentor, “my soul untravelled fondly flies to thee.”
 Balmy reflection! precious Memory! spirit of gratitude! WELCOME, possess my every sense, till morning dawn, and with it bring repose! I have this evening been reading Raymond’s ¹ Life of Dermody. Ill-fated viper! wretched Genius! who alternately was the demigod and the fiend! how dreadfully *his* eyelids must have closed! But, hold! I forget that the dust of Dermody is sacred; peace to his shade, and if the gates of Elysium are opened to *one* misguided wretch, may that wretch be DERMODY! I have been examining too, with “my mind’s eye” the pages of past days, and striving to calculate the debt owing to some of Blacket’s friends:

¹ A valuable piece of literary biography.

on casting up the first column, I found the sum amounted to—A LIFE of heartfelt gratitude!—I closed the volume, and hope, earnestly hope, to send you the account. My head is giddy, my dear Mentor, so, for the present, I must quit the pen; SLEEP beckons me, and I fly to his embrace.

August the 11th, Night.

“I arose this morning, refreshed by a *good sound sleep*, though I believe my looks did not give evidence of it, for a neighbour who met me at the threshold, notwithstanding my happy intelligence, shook his head! “Presumptuous Man!” he forgot, or he never knew, that “the gods take care of Cato.” I found my good spirits wounded, but recollecting that he was no flatterer, I forgave his infidelity, and walked, or rather danced, to the rocks.”

The Rocks.

“Hail ye rude precipices! Scenes awfully sublime, all hail! these were my exclamations, dear Mentor; and after drawing a little milk from the breast of nature, your Telemachus, like a young eaglet, perched upon a crag! Now, said I, the world is my own, here might the poet sit, and achieve

the noblest of things ¹; may receive inspiration from a rushlight in a dark room; but, he never can receive that strength of thought, nor meet that sublime of imagery in a farthing candle, which the son of Apollo, alike vigorous, would receive from the grand and majestic scenery of creation. Here the bard's imagination may soar to the greatest heights! Here the painter may lay down his brush, and confess himself outdone! and here the clod,

“ Whose soul proud science never taught to stray

“ Far as the solar walk, or milky way,

Wildly gazing on a part,, is taught to confess the POWER that formed the mighty whole. Ossian, said I, addressing myself to his shade, on such a romantic spot as this, thy giant genius formed the songs of old; while order yet was dead, and savage war engrossed the chieftain's mind. On such a crag as this, perhaps, thy form was dimly seen at lonely midnight, and striking the last chord to liberty and just revenge, while thy heroic sons pushed their light barks from land, and vowed to triumph o'er the sons of Erin. The sun gilding the rude scene, drew my attention from the white haired bard, and I, indeed with rapture beheld a lovely and a fertile country; at a

¹ See Introduction, VOL. 1.

short distance stood the venerable church, its flinty walls bleached with the winds of twice four hundred years¹; its moss grown battlements (being built in the castle form) smiling in age commanded deep respect; its receptacles for departed man, covered with the humble sod, gave solemnity to the scene, and I enjoyed it. At a short distance from it stood the parsonage, finely situated on a rock, which from the east looks wonderfully picturesque; around it blooms beauty and utility, within it blooms grace, modesty, and refinement. Here, said I, would Mentor wish to dwell with his friend. Yes, said I, with peculiar emphasis, by heaven! it would do. On these fragments, should the richly fraught mind of his loved relative * * * * * pour forth the treasures of literature in my listening ears; and teach me, truly, what it was to be a POET and a MAN. While beneath yon roof, the amiable * * * * * should curb the fiery coursers of my mind, and sweeten the dreary evening with the gentle sentiments of engaging friendship².

“ During my soliloquy of momentary happiness, the sun had severely affected my poor

¹ By an inscription on the Key Stone of the Portal Arch, it was built at the close of the 10th century.

² This is my wish, and would to heaven it were now fulfilled.

head; and in an instant, I found the gaily painted scene, a dreary waste. Oh health! how I miss thee! The caverns seemed to yawn, all was horror, the church yard graves seemed to beckon me, and my whole mind was overturned. We are the slaves of imagination, and the fools of thought, said I, rising, and man neither is, nor can be, a philosopher. Languid and spiritless I wandered on the sands for some time; at length a poor fisherman and his two boys drew near shore, on which they ran their boat. The Younkers were dispatched to the village for bread, &c. and I entered on conversation with the old son of the billows. Would you believe it? This aged hero, who for sixty years had plied the oar, and provided for a large family, by catching lobsters, eels, and crabs, was a greater philosopher than SENECA. Yes, all weathers alike contented him; when the sea's smooth, said he, here I sit with my pipe, happy. If it is rough, it is all the same. If bad luck to day, live in hopes of better to morrow; owe nothing, got a good wife, fine bairns¹, and as hardy and tough as my cobble (his boat): "never fraid of the lightning, sir, always got *in safe* yet, thank God! and hope never to do otherwise; never knew what it was to be ill all my life!" I wish my friend, said I, that your case had been mine, I have long been unwell; "ay,

¹ Children.

said he, because you do not smoke *Tobacky*." This ludicrous reason caused a laugh, and I shook hands, and left him in the full enjoyment of his preventive of illness.

"The above was written on the 11th of this month, since which all has not been well! (present date 18) I have been afflicted with dreadful fever during the past week, loss of spirits, lassitude, &c. The exterior of my head is painful in the extreme! my rapid pulse seems violent enough to burst the brain. It is a hard contest, my dear Sir; and the words are *Victory or Death*. I have obeyed the prescription of my generous friends: rising at half past six, and taking the gentlest exercise possible, on a very fine horse, which I generally ride, (when fair weather) for two hours on the sands; drinking near a pint of milk, hot from the cow, before I set off, and taking nearly the same quantity of churn milk on my return. Fish generally for dinner, and milk during the rest of the day. This is most assuredly, my dear Sir, what *they* and *yourself* wish: riding on the sands sometimes makes me sick. —I am determined to persevere! Time may do much—I am cherished warmly by my neighbours, who are all anxious to provide me with new-laid eggs, &c. The situation is delightful; but, oh! what weather! we have generally a fine morning till twelve

o'clock, when the rain falls rapidly. I am happy to inform you, that several of the inhabitants have had young people in declines, from the metropolis, and various parts; I believe there are four or five in the village; numbers worse than me have perfectly recovered, and gone to their friends happy—may such be my fate. On Sunday last I dined with the worthy rector, a gentleman, and a poet. I had two copies of my poems with me, and, as he had frequently behaved in the most generous manner to my friends, I got my brother to present one. He immediately paid me a visit, insisted on my dining with him, which I accordingly did; he prepared a light dinner on purpose for me. They are a sweet train, consisting of three fine daughters, one son, and the mother living. He read me some very good unpublished verses, and is an enquiring and conversant gentleman. After dinner, we had 'the King,' and 'Success to the Expedition.' He sends his servant with currants and other fruits frequently; he would, I believe, supply me with every thing, but my diet is simple, and at home. The charming girls play finely on the harpsichord; but, alas! they don't sing

' Friend of my soul, this goblet sip.'

But they sing sweetly, and were I well, I should be happy in their conversation. (Curse on these sea-gull quills.)

* * * * *

“ Would to heaven you were down here !
 I sometimes hold converse with you on the rocks,
 like the hermit, in ‘ Douglas.’ But to tell you the
 truth, I am sometimes rather *flighty*—a jump through
 the moon is common with me ; and I am frequently
 on the battlements of Grenada, personifying Gon-
 salvo the Great,¹ and thundering out invectives
 against the Moors ; but a single cough sets tragedy-
 madness aside ; when, returning my stick (alias
 Gonsalvo’s Toledo) into my scabbard, I wind my
 way down the rock, and enjoy a quiet walk.

* * * * *

The next account received, noted the alarming
 speed of his consuming malady ; unable, however, to
 repress the aspirations of his mind, or his muse.

* * * * *

“ Since my last, I have suffered much
 from accumulating pain ; and believe me, have been

¹ A subject, which I have long wished to tragedize or rather
 kill.

nearly driven to desperation! for the last three weeks I have principally suffered from a scorbutic eruption on my body, and severely swelled legs; the latter complaint has deprived me of sleep for many nights; though the continuing fierceness of my nightly fever probably assisted it. During the night, my ancles and knee-joints are so extremely painful, that I sometimes contemplate on crutches — which heaven avert! That kind family at the castle daily sends me the choicest fruit of the garden: grapes, peaches, nectarines, melons, and pears, in the highest perfection. The baronet visits me himself, and sits down by my side in the little cottage, like a common labourer, discoursing on my ill-health, politics, &c. I have received very polite invitations to dine, both from himself and family: a pleasure, which I have but *once* enjoyed, owing to my severe indisposition.

* * * * *

“ I have been presented with the ‘ Task ’ of Cowper, which I had never read, the gift of Miss * * * * *, who pointed out many of its beauties, and increased them by her manner of reading. When she came to the following passage, I was wrapt in one of my ecstacies :

‘ I venerate the man whose heart is warm!’

After the kind young lady had read several pages more I withdrew; and next morning received from

the castle a very superb edition of Cowper's works :
such kindness drew from my poor pen a few hasty
verses, which follow :

* * * * *

The bird of Jove, which wings the skies,
And fans the zephyrs, as they rise,
 May soar—unaw'd by fears,
Through sun-beams dart his upward way,
And in the blazing eye of day,
 Survey the vast surrounding spheres.

The Poet too, who dares command
The lyre's bold strings—with vig'rous hand
 May loose the magic lore.
His fancy wing'd, in daring flight,
May sweep around th' Aonian height,
 And Heliconia's banks explore.

But how shall he, whose humble strain,
As yet, scarce heard across the plain,
 The flow'ry chaplet weave :
Or how, in languid verse, impart
The feelings of a grateful heart,
 Which gen'rous kindness taught to heave.

In vain th' attempt!—but let me ask
 His aid, who wrote the beauteous 'TASK;
 His verse, with fire endued,
 Shall teach me, in a loftier lay,
 The homage of respect to pay,
 And hail the gift with gratitude.

* * * * *

“ From the window, near which I am writing, I have one of the wildest views, that ever American saw. Thus, my dear Sir, I have good friends around me, and hope shortly to be well. Dr. Eden, Lady M's own physician, has visited me, and seriously says, the eruption and poor swelled ancles are what he wanted: he has prescribed the warm bath daily, for a little while. Her Ladyship orders sea-water to be regularly brought; and about evening I am stewing in a great tub full, the thermometer being at ninety-six, and to proceed to one hundred and ten. This is warm work, my dear Sir; but, I think I am better, since I tried it; I respire freer, but it plays a terrible game with my legs, which the good doctor laughs at:—all may yet be well.

* * * * *

“ I left my box, brushes, paints, and pencils,¹ all in town, else I should like to take a sketch or two, when my ancles permit me to walk, as such must be my method of travelling, on such an occasion, most of the romantic scenes being out of the reach of horse shoes.

“ I have written to thank Miss * * * * * for her beautiful Apollo, and solicited from her copies of ‘ Friend of my Soul,’ and ‘ High Lang, de dillo :’ I cannot live without them. Forgive my nonsense, my dear Sir, and pray reply to me, when convenient. A letter from my friend is *balm* to his

“ Faithful and ever obliged,

“ J. BLACKET.

“ N. B. Since I have bathed, my night sweats have become *less*.”

¹ Mr. B. exhibited not only an inclination, but ability, to use the pencil; and several unfinished sketches of good design and execution have, in proof of this, come into the hands of the EDITOR.

* * * * *

More hopeful sentiments, and enlivened by better spirits, breathe through the letter, dated 4th of Oct.

* * * * *

“ A most heavenly sun gilds with peculiar lustre the skies of this fair morning ! I rise to hail its beams ; and, after a poet’s orisons (which, by the bye, are generally short, like soldiers’,) I fly with equal energy to hail the second beam, I mean my dear friend.—May the brightest rays of happiness surround him !

“ Your last, which pronounced you universally well, was perused with a rapture, which only grateful breasts can experience. For myself, thanks to the Almighty ! I hope ‘ the bitterness of death is passed.’ I feel myself renovating, dear Sir, and live in the most sanguine hopes of returning to you a *new-bodied man*. The doctor, who has been my physician since my arrival here, hopes I am doing well ! He entreats me to continue the hot bath, which I shall do ; though while I continue it I cannot expect to gain strength : this is what I principally feel a want of. A hundred degrees of heat pulls me hard ; my

ances are still painful and weak; my cough has ceased to trouble me. Since the receipt of yours, the good Doctor has opened a heavy fire of medicine upon my fortress, which, to tell you the truth, is rocked to its foundation. Pills, powders, and draughts, only six times a day! When I left you, I remember; I thought I had no constitution at all; I am now convinced I have the constitution of a horse.

* * * * *

“The Doctor is a generous man, with deep penetration stamped upon his brow. I rode down to him from this place, a few days since, merely to ‘report progress.’ We had a glass together; his house is like a palace.

“I wrote to the baronet a short note, requesting his permission to take a ride now and then. He sent his groom with his *own* charger, which I am to ride, whenever at liberty. I have surveyed some beautiful prospects from the back of this noble animal, and find Homer’s description of him copied from the life.

* * * * *

“ You cannot think what a flow of spirits I am gaining; and to heighten them, the whole village have contributed lately by a contest in sacks! This was at the suggestion of * * * * *, who gave a handsome gown, &c. to be run for by the lasses of the village; in consequence of which, for the past week, nothing but *sack-hopping* has been in rehearsal. I should not have mentioned this, had it not been for a trivial effort of my muse, who can now sport a little. I will inclose my verses, they may excite a smile; if so, I shall be repaid.

TO THE
GIRLS OF SEAHAM.¹

DAME Fortune, dear girls, has now open'd her shop,
And summon'd the lasses of Seaham *to hop* ;
And thus runs her promise, ' To all be it known,
Whoever *hops* fastest, *hops* into a gown.'

Yet, when you set out, dont be hopping too fast,
Though *best* at the *first*, 'twill prove *worst* at the *last*.
Hop gently, hop graceful, with freedom and ease,
And, in fact, my dear lasses, *hop just as you please*.

¹ A few stanzas of this hey-day of the holiday muse are admitted, to show the buoyant, and, alas! evanescent spirit ; in every sense of the word, a lucid interval.

Pray let not your stays be lac'd tight on your backs ;
 But let them hang loosely :—Oh ! just like the sacks !
 Stand firm, bolt upright, and hold your breath strong,
 That the wind on your stomachs may waft you along !

Ye wives, take advice, and *hop* out of the way ;
 Nor dare to contend on this wonderful day :
 For, be sure, the young girls will go hopping like
 frogs,
 When you will be rolling like so many logs.

May the fair one, who triumphs and bears off the
 prize,
 In happiness wear it—be merry and wise ;
 By sorrow or poverty ne'er be perplex'd ;
 One day win a gown, and a husband the next.

And may the young rustics, who look on your race,
 Be caught with the blushes of each pretty face :
 And may *they*, my dear girls—a joke I must crack,
 Bless the day that they came to the hop in the sack.

* * * * *

“ These verses were circulated in three copies through the village, and had the desired effect of raising a laugh—all they could hope. The contest was ludicrous in the extreme; fourteen started, and, I think, there was a *third* came in; the rest were rolling at pleasure, and certainly afforded a charming scene for the risible muscles.

* * * * *

“ If Elliston gains his point, I think we shall do. In the papers I have perused, his plan is recommended as excellent; and certainly there is a theatre wanting in the city. Our modern dramatic critics are crying out universally for language, yet the directors of dramatic taste seem to think language only a secondary object. How is it that the stage is degraded to a mere show-house? their eyes are not opened! Has the contagion spread and pervaded the very blood? Beats the pulse to nothing but mummery! Must pantomime, incident, and trap-snares, for ever be cherished?—Forbid it genius!—Surely there will arrive a time, when these trickeries, ‘ foreign to the soul,’ will be driven from the British stage and language.—Sentiment and character once more re-assert their rights. Where, my dear Sir, do we find the unnatural surprise, the childish punch-

like dialogue, the opening tomb, or any pantomime apparatus, in Douglas, one of the last of the old school of the legitimate drama! A fine sentiment must now be followed by buffoonery; nay, sentiment even of the noblest order is laughed to scorn. Yet the sticklers for incident talk as though nothing else would answer. * * * * *, a recent production, however, which has scarcely any thing else, has been damned in three nights, in spite of incident, and all the noise, bolstering up, and bribery of managers and first-night friends. I will not believe but what the British public are heartily sick of the trumpery, which has been thus foisted upon them, by dramatists who write plays by contract: neither do I think the taste of the town so vitiated, but that, at the recal of sense, they would yet sacrifice mere sight and dumb show to farces, their proper places; but let us have no Farce PLAYS of five acts. A cottage runs plaguily in my head! a cottage and the friend of a grateful heart would do; and, if you could smuggle the 'Friend of MY SOUL' into the party, it would do better! I know you will not be angry at my earnestness, and therefore hesitate not to throw out before you.

* * * * *

“ Believe me, my dear Sir, your faithful
and obliged,

“ J. BLACKET.


“ P. S. The groom waits with a horse for a ride,
so I will wrap this up and take it with me for a
frank.”

* * * * *

INCLOSED in the above was an effusion of plea-
santry in the mock-heroic, transmitted to the Editor
during the same excursion.

AN EXTRAVAGANZA,
OR
VILLAGE CHARACTERS,

*Sketched at Wandsworth in a Public House during a
Ramble.*



LET others strike the lyre with daring hand,
And, rapt in extacy, explore the strings
On Pindus' awful summit, where the Nine
Inspire the poet with immortal themes ;
There let them chant aloud the fire-eyed god,
And sing of slaughter, pillage, blood, and war !
Else charm the ear of Beauty's witching queen,
With songs of adoration. But be mine
The meaner task, to copy vulgar life,
And paint inferior beings as they are.

I sing of Man, of simple, humble Man;
Nor will I strain my subject, nor digress!

Ye Wilkies! Birds! and masters of the art,
Who love the rustic scene—where are ye now!
Alas! the Lord knows where! Oh! for a charm,
A talismanic charm, as strong as fate!
That I might car ye in the floating clouds,
And, with a whistle, place ye gently down
On those worm-eaten chairs! But 'tis in vain!
Ye hear me not; nor, if ye did, by heav'n!
Do I believe you'd come! Then, courage, pen!
And give the pencil, what it cannot take!

First, let me sketch that busy barber, there,
Who, while with daring hand, he draws his blade
Across the greasy landlord's unmow'd chin,
Fills the poor gaping carters with surprise,
Whose lumps of snowy bacon lie untouched;
Whose mouldy crusts have not yet felt the knife,
Nor been by grinders pounded. Who could eat,
When chattering information tells aloud
The feats of Austrian Charles, Great Bony's loss,
The Danube's banks, and all the Hungary *masse*,

Crouding like mad to join the glorious cause
Of precious liberty, and all that's good.

Next view that plasterer, his pipe forgot,
His ale—when drawn, so nearly dying—dead!
And his half hour of lunch three quarters made;
Yet still he lingers with intent to hear
The warning tale re-told; and, though his mate
Chide his delay, and blame his staring eyes,
Yet the sweet magic binds him to the spot.

But, hold!—why that dread row beneath the bar?
'It stinks, I tell you,' is repeated thrice!
What may it mean?—by all that's fresh!
It is the fat-paunch'd landlady enrag'd
Exclaiming 'gainst the butcher's loin of veal!
Unhappy man! see where he turns aside:
Is it to weep? No! 'tis to blow his nose,
And scratch the oily mop, that shades his brow;
But now he pauses—smells the joint himself,
And swears 'tis newly kill'd. Oh fatal oath!
For see, her eyes, like ferrets, now appear,
Each hair, supported by its pond'rous root,
Stands dreadfully erect! But, ha! look there,
Look, look, oh, look! at that white-apron'd youth,

With visage pale, and eye full fix'd on earth,
 The wretched carpenter! in thought profound.
 Ye merchants, you, whose *dealings* are in *deal*,
 From Milbank and the fam'd Adelphi come,
 His anguish to make known!—But, hark! methinks
 In that deep sigh, which issued from his breast,
 These fateful words burst forth:—‘That contract, oh!
 Two cottages to build by next July,
 And timber’s rais’d to such a cursed price;
 What ruin waits the purchase!’—But, forbear,
 My pen!—Ye gentle souls, restrain your tears;
 Forbear to weep, and lend a lip to laugh:
 For see where SNIP, the duck-tail’d tailor, sits,
 And calls for gin! heart-renovating sight!
 Which rouses, instant rouses, CRISPIN’S son,
 To act in godlike concert—see, ’tis brought!—
 Two full half quarterns handed at a time!
 ’Tis seiz’d—the toast is *Luck!*—they drink! huzza!

J. BLACKET.

Monday, October 23, 1809.

“ I am sorry that I cannot continue my correspondence with you, in the convalescent hopes of my last.

“ I have suffered by a relapse; and am at present, in the state I was a month ago. But let not the news alarm; I hope soon to be my *late self*; once more breathe to you the language of health, and happiness.

“ Permit me to inform you of the cause of my relapse. Naturally curious, and an impassioned lover of romantic scenery, I have explored the celebrated Dean or Glen of Castle Eden. The morning seemed to promise fair, the western sky was burnished; and at nine o'clock, I left Seaham, for a sight of that rural, yet magnificent prospect. In an hour and half's riding, I reached Castle Eden, put up my horse, (the Baronet's, and who seems now perfectly acquainted with me,) at an inn; and by half past eleven, found myself in the centre of one of the wildest glens mine eyes ever beheld. Judge of my

rapture, and share the transport which I then experienced.

“ From the shelvy sides of regularly sloping rocks, hung trees “of all hues:” the light green youthful ash, the sombre yew, the sun-burnt beech, and dark shaded holly, formed to the eye the finest contrast of colours imaginable. Mine eyes dwelt on this scene with delight ; and shortly after, witnessed another with astonishment and awe—for piercing through the bosom of the Dean in a western direction, and clambering over some precipices, I came to a horrid chasm, through which the waters rushed with a force that made the adjacent perforated rocks, “ re-bellow to their roar.” This is the true sublime of scenery, said I, here may the eye revel, here may the mind contemplate, on daring pinions soar beyond the little scenes of art, and glean the ears of wisdom from inspiring nature. The skies however poured torrents of water, during the whole afternoon and night ; and in spite of boots and great coat, I returned half drowned to Seaham : the consequence was, a return of the swelling in my ancles, cough, &c.”

* * * * *

“ I hate a given subject even if I love the theme itself ; but being requested by an amiable friend,

I run off momentarily a rough draught of the following

LINES,

“ Supposed to be found written on the tree, under which the celebrated Statesman, C. J. Fox, usually contemplated in retirement.

Stranger ! at distance adoration pay,
Nor dare intrude beneath this hallow'd shade ;
For he who grac'd thy country's brightest day,
Immortal Fox ! the spot has sacred made.

Here would he oft repair, from labour free,
And stretch his piercing eye to distant lands ;
Would sigh for Albion 'neath this favour'd tree,
And mourn o'er nations bound in slav'ry's bands.

A soul was his that scorn'd to be enslav'd,
That every public, private woe could feel ;
An eye that pitied, and a hand that sav'd,
A heart that panted discord's wounds to heal.

“ I am no politician, dearest friend, but in my opinion, such was the character of Fox.

“ You ask, whom I designate by the friend of my soul, which I rather wonder at ; had you inquired of my *Apollo's Head*, the gentle youth would have told you immediately.”

* * * * *

The impetuosity and native ardour of genius, were not to be repressed by any considerations or calculation of its aggravating effects upon a frame already the victim of an undermining disease.

It was in vain that the Editor urged the following arguments, as to mental, or bodily exertion, in reply to some passages in the above and other letters.

“ All I am at present anxious to know, is, as I said, the state of your pulse, of your cough, of your perspirations, and of the freezing shiverings, which were wont to send you down to our kitchen fire in the almost only hot weather we have had this Summer.

“ Your regimen, plan of exercise, and early up-rising, precisely realize the joint *pre*-scriptions of all those friends of the faculty, who are in the long list of your warm and disinterested well-wishers. But

as they all agree, in one voice, that your *nocturnal vigils*, and *midnight excursions*, whether *in bed or out of it*, in *prose or verse*, are wholly against their *pro-scriptions*, I press the point of your giving up Apollo, and all the muses, and all the gods and goddesses you so often swear by, except Morpheus by night, and Momus by day, till you have more strength to do them "suit and service." In very seriousness dear *dear* young friend, I am earnest that you should renounce all in the train of Phœbus, and every office of mind or imagination that requires more tension of thought, or more energy of action, than belongs, at the *utmost*, to a *quarter of an hour's sport* with your pen, or not more than *five minutes* of its SERIOUS occupation;—*at a time*,—I know I might as well take the spoon from your lips as *wholly* to wrench the pen from your hand, till, by gentle exercise, and temperance in *all* things, you are pronounced (by a jury of your friends, eight of which I wish to be learned in the laws of life) you are well enough I say, to work or to play, as

"The fits and moods o' the mind come on."

"Promise me this, and, as I have the *faith*, as well as the ardour of a friend, I shall feel assured, you will keep your word.

"Inhaling midnight air at your casement, "dancing" to the rocks, (when you remember you were warned against going too hastily even up stairs,) then

perching *heated* fancy upon a cold crag to make a portrait of those terrible graces of nature, amid the foam of billows, that lift your diction into an unmeasured kind of blank verse (poor prose being in danger of breaking his neck) are really among the things *forbidden*. At the same time, I give you credit for a suitable sketch of awful scenery, magnificent images, and a *character* of genius, which I should rather cherish than controul, were not the cultivation of your health of dearer concern than your talents, "under existing circumstances." I quite honour the "sneeze" (it was the sneeze of wisdom and warning) that made you wind your way down the "rocks" to "enjoy a quiet walk." Whenever therefore you are tempted to try the *steeps* again, remember the "sneeze!" Enjoy the quiet walk as often as you please, and the quiet ride likewise. ADIEU then, dear young friend, continue your plan of a journal letter, a *little* at a time, from five minutes to ten : and when your folio is thus gradually filled, in any hand writing most pleasant and easy to yourself, address it to,

T. O.

I *have* delivered your kind remembrances to Drs. Bree, and * * * * all of whom return you their kindest wishes.

"Persevere in your plan of diet, exercise, &c. yet be not cast down; but remember the wisest have

determined, that all the *signs* of consumption may be present without the presence of the disorder. Debility, emaciation, a fever and cough may be brought on independent of organic disease. The same remedies are good in *all* these disorders.

“ May heaven help you through all complaints !”

* * * * *

On the 13th of November, the hopes of the young bard, and consequently those of the Editor, began to revive ; as the following symptoms of returning health and spirits, as well as the journey formed upon them, will testify.

* * * * * has wished me to engage on *another* subject, and I received from her a note expressing the same on Saturday night last. The subject to be treated on, was, the person supposed to be buried alive, and awaking from a trance in a coffin. She told me, she believed it had never been treated on by any, and thought it highly dramatic. This note of her's I received on Saturday last ; so you may be sure yesterday was a busy day. I tried the matter, and sent her ¹ my poem on the following night (Sunday) but, would you believe it? she had been as deeply engaged on the same subject as

¹ The Editor has to regret, that neither of the pieces here mentioned, were found among Mr. Blacket's papers.

myself; and on the receipt of mine, copied her poem and sent it back. Thus we are writing against each other. Her's is a soliloquy, and possesses many sublime thoughts; the two poems are jointly too long to be inserted in a letter, or you should instantly peruse them; but I hope shortly to present them to your notice, where I shall be happy, O how happy! to be again directed by my friend. I have not seen Dr. Eden lately, the weather has not permitted; however I find myself nearly recovered from my relapse, a slight cough only remaining. The first fine morning I will ride down and speak to the Doctor concerning my DEPARTURE.

I should like to pass a fortnight with my mother on the road, as I have not yet seen her; she being lame and unable to visit Seaham; and I as little able to visit her. You will advise me.—I should be happy to hear concerning the generous Elliston, and the drama of which he speaks so warmly.

Catterick School.

THE following letter states his arrival at his native village, and writing from the very seminary, in which he passed many of his juvenile hours.

“ Your’s, forwarded from Seaham by the good Sir Ralph, has just reached me. I thank you a thousand times for it, as you have permitted my stay here. Dr. Eden did not, in the least, hesitate to forward my wishes in respect to a Yorkshire journey. I am now at my dear, dear old mother’s! but, oh! my friend, what a scene! alas! my heart aches—I never wished for wealth till now! you will imagine my feelings—a parent unable to toil for bread, and no bread to be obtained! Bless the goodness of God! I can now return to her some she has given to me.

“ I write, instantly, on the perusal of your’s. I am seated at a desk among fifty or sixty scholars, who all are gabbling their tasks aloud—the sounds remind me of the confusion of tongues—nothing but jabber. I am tolerably well again, except a trifling cough. Dr. Eden wishes me to return to town by sea, as he is afraid a journey of so many miles in a dragging and lumbering coach might bring on another relapse. A sea voyage will, I think, be of infinite service.

“ Do write to me again *here*: I should like to receive my portrait, as my mother would be happy to see it. I sleep at a farmer’s, who is very kind to me.

“ Forgive my haste, I shall be with you soon, and impart to you every thing you wish to know.

“ Your’s, my dear friend, ever and ever,

“ J. BLACKET.”

From Tunstill, his mother’s residence, Dec. 13th.

* * * * *

THIS shows, but too plainly, the evanescent hopes and fears that succeed each other in the disease of which he was the victim. After re-informing the Editor that he had replied from ‘the thatched academy of his old school-master,’ he continues thus :

“ The weather has nearly killed me ;— I cannot stir out for snow and rain ; the roads are almost impassable.—My cough yet remains, and does not seem to be inclined to leave me.—I gather but little strength, and am very apt to catch fresh colds ; but, I hope, on my return, to find considerable benefit from a southern sky. I shall leave Tunstill on Tuesday next, and proceed to Seaham, from which place I will write as soon as I have got a ship. On Sunday next I intend to climb the mountains, called Penhill in the Dales, about twelve miles distant. I

have procured for the purpose an excellent mule, a brother to guide me; and I only wish Mentor here to accompany me: not doubting in the least but that he would rather be where he now is. However, I hope soon to be near enough to press *his hand* to my bosom! Dear Sir, permit me to subscribe myself,

“ Your very faithful,

“ J. BLACKET.”

THE foregoing was followed so soon as the 27th of the same instant, by another from Seaham on his return to that place. The line which he has affixed as a motto to this letter anticipates its afflicting contents.

“ Hurl'd from the topmost height of expectation.”

“ I scarce know how to address you! disappointed in my dearest hopes, and labouring under severe distress of mind, occasioned by a *second* relapse, my pen by no means acts in unison with my wishes.

“ I reached Seaham on the 25th, considerably out of health, having been obliged to stay a few

days on the road, to enable me to reach home with more comfort. The rocking of a very heavy coach, on a very heavy road, occasioned a violent fever, which encreased with such rapidity, that, ere I reached Durham, I could feel my pulse beat in every part of my body. I put up at the Three Tuns, and was extremely well used: at night the fever became as violent as ever^{as} I had previously known it; and the bed I slept on, as in London, was literally drenched with night sweats. I was under the necessity of taking a chaise from Durham to this place, as it is cross-road, and, of all the roads ever travelled, so horrible, that, instead of paying to pass it, a man, or, at least, an invalid, ought to be well remunerated for his blows and bruises. Yesterday Dr. Eden called on me, and I expressed to him my desire of returning to the metropolis as speedily as possible. He answered, ‘you will but go to come back again;’ and, having had a conversation with Lady M. respecting me, ordered me again regularly to plunge in the hot bath—the thermometer at one hundred: thus am I the jest of fortune! He attributes my relapse to change of air, beds, and my inability to undertake a journey; although, when I left Seaham, he seemed to think, and every appearance justified his idea, that there was no danger of attempting so short a distance. He informed me, that the hot-bath was the only thing he could prescribe—did not

seem any way surprised at my relapse; and told a gentleman at Sir R.'s that he had still hopes of sending me up to London yet in full vigour. Write to me, dearest friend, as soon as convenient.—Let me know *your* mind. I would gladly return, being vexed to the soul! I can employ my pen to no purpose,—I am shackled completely, and unhappy! Yet I have met with every kindness from my good friends here, who have the perfect establishment of my health very much at heart; but, whether I shall finish my journey within the pale of Seaham's churchyard, or live to enjoy the converse of my bosom's most dear friend, is utterly unknown to me.—The Great Disposer of events will tell us!

* * * * *

“ My cough has never left me, since my departure from this place into Yorkshire. Adieu! my much loved friend. Should the bath fully restore me to ‘ a firm and pristine health,’ I will applaud Dr. Eden ‘ to the very echo,’ then hasten to my Mentor on the wings of friendship, and be myself again!

“ N. B. Lady M * * * * * told me, that the Bishop of Durham had contributed a second time to my poems, on perusing them.”

“ There is a destiny in this strange world,
“ Which oft decrees an undeserved doom.”

“ Give my kindest respects to all friends. I would write to *each*, but cannot.—Pray inform me how fares my poor dramatic maniac? Is there any probability of his recovering his madness?—I fear not.—Lunatics seldom recover; but, at any rate, I would wish him to hold up his head very shortly, or else *die* and be *d*——*d*, dramatically speaking, so there's an end.

“ My poor mother is now tolerably well. I made her as comfortable as I possibly could.”

* * * * *

† A melo-drama, which, it is confidently hoped, will make its first public appearance on the stage.

LETTER VIII.

“ Seaham, January 18th, 1810.

“ Very Dear Sir,

“ I RECEIVED a line from you on the back of a letter from the Duchess of Leeds, which by some means had reached London instead of Seaham. That generous lady still inclines to do me service. She has sent me the names of some friends, who wish to become subscribers to my Specimens. She enumerates many,¹ and generously adds, she shall be happy to procure the author further contributors.

¹ They are all enumerated in the list, which will be affixed.

“ I wish much to be in-town to pack up and address these copies; but doubt the period being near! What says the excellent Lady to you? What says the Doctor? * * * * *

* * * * *

“ Oh! my friend, I am fit to exclaim a hundred times a day, ‘ When, when, shall I be mad!’ Trust me, I feel the force of Burn’s reflections, and cannot but respect them: ‘ What is Man? to-day in the luxuriance of health, exulting in the enjoyment of existence; in a few days, perhaps in a few hours, loaded with conscious painful being, counting the tardy pace of the lingering moments by the repercussions of anguish, and refusing, or denied a comforter. Day follows night, and night comes after day, only to continue life, which gives him no pleasure.’—*Vide Letter to Mrs. Dunlop, vol. 2, p. 270.* This ill-starred genius and myself have shaken hands together frequently, while I have been perusing his interesting life; and I think, setting drinking aside, (which must have had the most baneful effect on his constitution) we have nearly laboured under the same bodily infirmities. On reading his last letter, I think I am perusing the history of my feelings and sufferings: dreadful fever, rapid pulse, sleepless nights; head-ache, chilliness, &c. all remind me of my state. Like him, perhaps,

I am destined to take a timeless sleep!—If I awake in a better world, no matter!

* * * * *

“ I have just received a letter from my brother John, in answer to one, sent. He informs me you have the letter I wrote him, which I am rather sorry for; not because I am conscious of any improprieties, but that it will seem a direct contradiction of mine to you. In your’s I mentioned my unhappy relapse—in his, I *scarcely* hinted it. To this I attribute your uncustomary short reply; and I feel dissatisfied in having given you cause to doubt my veracity: but that is the only unpleasant sensation. When in Yorkshire, I received a line from Dixon, informing me, he had heard from John, and that he was in ‘*extreme trouble and distress of mind.*’ I wrote a few particulars, that you will have read, during my journey, which, on returning to Seaham, (having perused his letter, and dreading his situation) I dispatched to his place of address; carefully concealing my fresh attack of illness, and my then unhappy situation: it would have been ungenerous to have added another heap to his troubles. Mentor will in this respect applaud me; as will my own conscience—the applause of which is most dear to my heart!

* * * * *

“ The Castle-Eden family are at Durham, yet continue their kindness to me, ordering me to be supplied with fowls, milk, eggs, fruit, &c. or whatever they think will be of the least service. I have not been out for near a fortnight; indeed, I have been confined to my bed. The good doctor kindly says, ‘hold up man, it is not a hopeless case! though I do not like you quite so well as I did.’ If this is the only comfort I am to have, and yet I am sure it is the utmost he can possibly bestow, perhaps more, I would gladly stow my shattered bark on board *one* more firm; and, having regulated my few affairs, kiss my little girl, press my Mentor by the hand, and bid good night to the rest of the world.

* * * * *

“ Perhaps you will find this confused; if you do not, it will be strange, for my poor brain is very much so! I am almost *chained* to my bed, yet cannot sleep; this, in some measure, makes me talk like Edgar! therefore pardon my faults. In my fevers, I have composed some horrific pieces.¹”

¹ These will be found in their proper places.

* * * * *

AGAIN the Editor and his friends were cheered by the tenor of what followed :

Seaham, February 2nd, 1810.

“ My dear, O how dear Friend,

“ Never was the sight of a richly laden West India fleet more pleasingly hailed by an anxious merchant, than your late pacquets by the poor drooping J. Blacket!—I received them with gratitude!—I read them with a glow of exultation, proud of the kindred friendship shown to me by all those so truly near to my heart!—Yes, my dear Sir; would to heaven that I had been a sharer in the rich felicity of the enviable cottagers, at * * * * *! my happiness, on such an occasion, would not have shone like the cloud-obscured moon, but like the joyful sun in all his lustre. I thank you *all* for your friendly wishes, and beg you all to receive my most profound respects. * * * * * scolds me, but it is in a syren manner! I promised her some views, which she has sued for, and, undoubtedly, *expects*. I tried to take copies from the most dignified of Nature’s scenes—scenes, which had cost Nature six

thousand years' labour to paint awfully sublime; and, as no other suited my romantic fancy, you may rest assured every trial was a failure! in short, my attempts were deservedly committed to the flames, and have 'left not a wreck behind.' When next you see her (for heaven only knows, when I shall summon courage enough to answer her's) mediate for me, and tell her my insufficiency in this respect has taught me a useful lesson, namely, not to form projects, before I am fully convinced I can carry them into effect:—the story of Icarus is in my 'mind's eye.'

* * * * *

“ Dr. Fearon (late physician to the army) has favoured me with a call, at the desire of Lady M. and has prescribed me Icelandic moss, which I take four times a day. He is a generous spirit, and, instead of *taking* a fee, begged my acceptance of a subscripive *guinea*; and, the next time he called, he brought me *another* from his wife; so that, between them, I got a *double* fee. Let two volumes, three I may say, (one for Dr. Eden) be packed up with Mr. Dixon's engraving of your poor Blacket, and sent down, that I may present this worthy gentleman *his two* books. I feel a little better—my diet is purely milk—eat I cannot. I take the

vitriolic acid in great quantities, and have had three blisters repeatedly on my stomach; they have not risen, (viz. the last two) which, I believe, is a bad sign. Lady Milbanke and her fair daughter with Miss Montgomery have called on me;—the latter lady has made me *stark mad* by reading some pages in my *Ossian*.

“ I am proud of the honour your classical relative has shown me, by giving my likeness a place in her study; likewise that of the fair * * * * *! Oh! dear friend, if there is any talismanic art in the world, do find it out, and practice it upon *her*: pack her up with her piano, and sending them both *bolt* through my *window*, you will very much oblige

“ Your’s faithfully,

“ J. BLACKET.”

“ *Wednesday, Feb. 13th.*

* * * * *

“ I have seen, by desire of my excellent patrons here, the celebrated Dr. H——, of New-

castle, a physician of the most approved talents. He is a gentleman and a scholar;—his conversation pleased me—he unites elegance with dignity, and truly seems an honour to his profession. He advises me ‘to take a six months’ voyage across the Atlantic,’ thinking it the surest means of re-establishing my constitution; but this is impracticable! therefore ’tis only folly to mention it to you, who, I know, would wish me to make trial of any thing within the bounds of probability, were there a gleam of success.

* * * * *

“ The family¹ leave in three days, and I am meantime employed in writing to you upon all subjects, therefore I hope you will excuse my saying any more at present, as the night is advanced, and my eyes very weak. I have not enjoyed the breeze of morning for five weeks; they tie me to my room ‘like a bear to the stake;’ but I must be contented: the fine weather, *I am convinced, will either destroy or restore me.* I continue to spit blood, and am rather sick towards the close of the day;—the

¹ Sir Ralph Milbanke’s

horrid perspirations continue, and my poor bones stare me in the face.

“ Your truly obliged and thankful servant,

“ J. BLACKET.”

* * * * *

MARCH the 11th, 1810, brought from Seaham a letter, from which is taken the subsequent report :

* * * * *

“ It is snowing so as to darken the atmosphere, seemingly in derision of my proud hopes and wishes ! yet all weathers are alike to me : rain, hail, snow, or sunshine, are equally the same, as I cannot, or rather must not, stir out. This is the tenth week I have been cooped up, like a monkey in a hogshead ! Well ! we may not murmur at the resolves of Providence. My cough is as usual, accompanied by spitting of blood, for which I am to have a remedy from the Duchess of Leeds, who has written me a most kind letter :—O how thankful I am for all these softenings of my destiny ! Her Grace wishes to know how she can send a parcel to me, having some

patent chocolate and soporific tincture, which she has ministered with great effect, in cases where the *lungs have been ulcerated*. I have returned an answer, and expect the parcel every day.—She writes like a parent!

* * * * *

“ The wet weather has kept all my doctors aloof. It is near a fortnight since I saw Dr. Fearon, who seemed to think me better!—I wish I could feel so!

* * * * *

“ Dearest of friends, I am tired to death, and must to bed, after I have subscribed myself,

“ Your own

“ J. BLACKET.”

THE handwriting, in which this letter was penned, Thursday, 19th April, 1810, from Seaham, described, but too truly, the situation of the writer.

* * * * *

“ You must not attribute my silence to neglect—no! believe me, Sir, I am, and ever have been, proud of holding the pen to address you.

“ I know you will first ask me, how I am? To which kind question I answer, most lamentably! Worn, worn, my dear friend, to a thread! My poor legs and arms mere drumsticks! My respiration thick—Sometimes shuddering in ice; sometimes burning with fever.—A fate worse than that of Tantalus!

“ Dr. Fearon has just dropt in—he staid not five minutes. ‘ Well, Dr. Fearon,’ said I, ‘ I suppose you will now allow that I am verging fast towards the grave?’ ‘ Why Sir,’ answered he with kind motives, ‘ we have an approaching summer, and on that we must at present rest our chief hopes: the fine warm months frequently produce in your case the most beneficial effects.’

“ Alas! when will this fine weather arrive? April, instead of the ‘ sweet breezes of the south, blusters on us like the Boreas of December,’ bellowing around like a disordered spirit; and I cannot so much as look out at my window to catch a sunbeam.

“ You must excuse me for not writing at large, my poor distracted head will not bear it; and Dixon’s hand is so difficult to read, that I doubt you would make little of him.

“ I suppose this will find you in the cottage circle?—May its inhabitants be happy! and may the sympathetic heart, which drops its generous tear for the sufferings of others, never, never experience the pang of shedding *one* for the sufferings of its own.

“ The good Duchess of L—— is still busily employed in procuring me subscribers; but, as you communicate, I need not say much on this subject.

“ I would have you send her Grace one dozen and a half of poems; she will soon send them adrift, good and gracious being that she is!

“ Remember me to Mr. Marchant most kindly.

“ Your letter first gave me the awful and important intelligence of the disturbance in your city:—’tis well that Fortune placed Blacket in an humble situation.

“ I glory in rational, (not riotous,) legitimate, not ‘ mob-led ’ liberty!—dear is the name of freedom to my heart!—weak and miserable as I am, I yet would cross the bayonet with Oppression, and give stab for stab with that wretch, who dared to infringe on the JUST privileges of my countrymen and my country.

“ I have said too much, my head is dizzy.

“ Very dear Sir, your faithful

“ J. BLACKET.”

* * * * *

AN extract from a report on the 9th of May, added to the Editor’s alarms.

* * * * *

“ A distracted head, and poor silly hand will only let me, I fear, bid God bless you, and restore your health.

“ For my own part, I am rather worse than when I wrote last; indeed, the weather has been such as to give severe colds to the very hardiest

of Seaham's inhabitants; they never remember the wind to have been more piercing in the depth of winter; snow has frequently descended in rapid showers for an hour together; and we have had the little pools covered with ice almost every morning. Heav'ns, what a May! the month too, when Blacket was to be restored to health!

“ I have unavoidably caught a fresh cold; and my cough does not forget me for it.

“ Pray strike out the 3d stanza of the soldier, there is no occasion for it.

“ Townsend has published a volume of poems. I long to catch hold of George in his dark room, with a farthing rush light! if you think he will forget to send me a copy, I should much wish to see one in the warmly-expected pacquet which you have promised me, and now, very dearest and most valued friend! excuse my dropping the pen, for, really it grows heavy to the hand of your own faithful

“ J. BLACKET.”

So late as the 2d of June, within a few weeks of his death, he demonstrated a solicitude for the

correctness of his writings, as will be found in the following passages.

* * * * *

“ I should have answered long ere this, but for a deplorable weakness which has caused me to continue in my bed for days ; not being able to sit up, even while it was made : I have this morning, however, risen with a *determination* to write a few lines to you : and to say, that in the ode to Ingratitude a proof, I observe some errors, which I hope will be set to rights before the fair sheets are thrown off.

“ I am sorry I cannot say more, being tired, but you will excuse me.

“ My doctors, I understand, have a poor opinion of me !”

* * * * *

HERE will be given the last lines received by the Editor, from this interesting being. The mind was firm, the body almost lifeless ; the heart warm,

though its motion was nearly stopped; while the soul resigned to the power, who formed it *in no common* mould.

Seaham, July 9.

Much-loved Friend,

“ I have risen, and after having thrown a blanket round me, proceed to inform you, that in the opinion of all here, your poor Telemachus is a dying man! I know how this will affect you; but God’s will be done; we must not repine, nor murmur at the decrees of heaven, but bend with resignation to that arm which strikes the final blow.

“ I hope you are well. I hope the good family at Woodstock are well too; you will not fail to give my profound respects to them; and when you write to all in London, tell my loved friends there, that I cannot write to them, as writing a few lines now, distresses me more than running down a dozen folio sheets, when I was well.

“ My fever is past enduring! my hands are so hot, that if I steep them in water, it shortly turns warm!

“ I have a poney, and when I am set on it, I can manage to ride; but it is seldom the weather will permit, we have such dreadful winds! I still can walk with a stick, and leaning on a person’s shoulder.

“ Oh write me back, my dear Sir, and believe me, your faithful

“ J. BLACKET.”

* * * * *

Till after the receipt of the foregoing letter, the Editor could not resign the fond though ill-founded hope of Mr. B’s recovery, That hope was paramount, till destroyed by death. Previously to which, the idea of convalescence had such force, the Editor could not but believe that his friend would again be seated at the very writing table, where the former is now placed, to perform a painful duty. Cherishing this expectation, the Editor had planned the most delightful day-dreams for a future social retirement, in which each friend, one in the morning, the other in the evening, of life, in the fullest sense of the words, might, in the progress of kindly offices, be “ at once indebted and discharged.”

It is, however, otherwise determined by the great Arbiter, and as Mr. Blacket himself feelingly says, in the preceding letter, "It is not for man to murmur at the hand that "strikes the final blow."

So far as Mr. Blacket's personal history is concerned, there remains little to be added but the mournfully interesting account of his last moments, which cannot possibly be so well expressed as by the gentleman who attended him as a clergyman and friend, in both of which characters he forms a prominent object among the patrons who distinguished the departed bard, during his long residence in the country.

From the Rev. Mr. WALLIS,

Seaham, September 11, 1810.

Sir,

"Ever since Mr. Blacket became a resident here, I have felt particularly interested in his welfare, as well on account of his uncommon talents, as his engaging manners. To Sir Ralph and Lady Milbanke, he was peculiarly indebted for kindly and liberally supplying him with every comfort and convenience in their power; and from their

amiable and accomplished daughter, who is a favourite of the muses as well as he was himself, he received the most marked and unremitting attention. It was, alas! but too soon perceived and announced by the faculty, notwithstanding the hopes occasionally indulged by his friends, that his malady was without remedy, which he communicated to me about two months ago, saying, at the same time, "that his wife went off in a similar manner."

"After that, I thought my visits as a friend, should bear a relation to those of a clergyman, and accordingly, when I next saw him, I introduced the painful subject of his declining state, and hinted the propriety of having recourse to prayer, which with uplifted hands he gladly assented to. In this manner, I continued to visit him till the 22d ult. when I was called at 5 o'clock in the morning to attend him. On entering his room, he accosted me with his usual kind, but too expressive, look, sitting up, supported by pillows, breathing quick, perfectly sensible, but hardly able to speak. After prayers, he signified with his hand that I should sit down on the bed near him, when he with difficulty said, "Miss Milbanke and you will fix upon a spot, a romantic one, for me to lie in, and the management of the rest, I leave to Lady Milbanke and you." This was all he said concerning his worldly affairs to

me, but in his last moments he expressed a wish to his sister, that Miss Milbanke would say something on a stone to his memory. An hour or two after taking leave, I returned and administered the holy sacrament to him, which he only survived till twelve o'clock next day, when he departed this life, like one falling asleep, in full reliance on his Redeemer, and with that calm resignation and fortitude, which a true faith can only inspire.

* * * * *

“ For further particulars, I beg leave to refer you to Lady Milbanke’s letter, which you will receive a day before this. I am, sir, with much respect, your obedient servant,

RICHARD WALLIS.

The funeral took place the 26th of August.

* * * * *

SUPPLEMENTARY to the above letter, it may be right to state some few particulars in the words of another of his Seaham protectors, and certainly one

of the most actively benevolent of the generous association, which his merits and misfortunes had gathered around him.

* * * * *

“ We could scarcely regret that he was released from his sufferings :—he was resigned and calm, and at last died without a pang. He will be interred tomorrow, according to his own directions, in a plain and decent manner.

* * * * *

“ We sincerely lament that society is deprived of a person, who, had he enjoyed health and longer life, would, in our opinion, have proved an ornament to it, both by the productions of his pen, and his conduct as a man.”

* * * * *

“ We have great satisfaction in reflecting, that, from our first knowledge of Mr. Blacket, nothing was omitted to preserve his life, if possible, and also to alleviate his sufferings. Mr. Wallis, who attended

him to the last, has asserted, that he died with the truest sentiments of piety and devotion; and supported a long and painful illness with resignation."

* * * * *

"After paying the little legacies which he directed, his funeral expenses, &c. ninety-two pounds seven shillings remained, for which amount we have remitted a draft."

* * * * *

"Mr. Blacket was buried in the churchyard of Seaham; the spot fixed on by one of our family, according to his last request. We have directed a plain monument to be placed over his grave, on which shall be inscribed the lines you have selected from his poems, and a simple inscription chosen also at his request."

* * * * *

"With this letter you will receive all the papers, which were found after the death of Mr. Blacket. His niece, some days since, sailed for London, to go to her uncle John. The object of her journey is to get a situation as housemaid, in which (from regard to her uncle's memory) you may wish

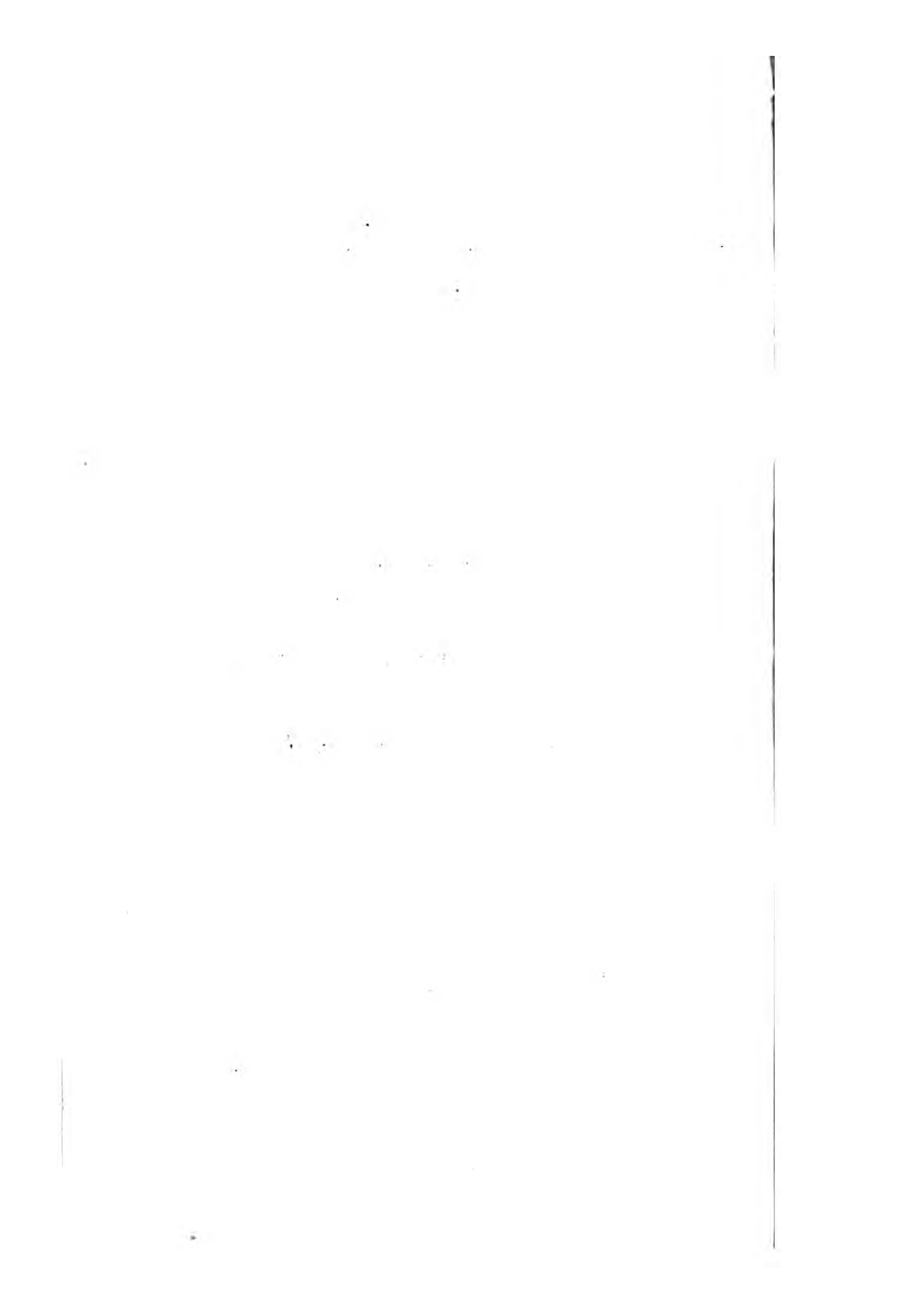
to assist her; and, perhaps, our testimony, that she is a very good young woman, may be of use."—
Extracts of letters from Castle Eden.

THE Editor ventures to admit the last passage from the respectable source of information; in the hope, that the young person here alluded to, is at present properly placed, who may hereafter benefit by such recommendation.

SERIES II.

LETTERS FROM JOSEPH BLACKET

TO HIS BROTHER JOHN.



SERIES II.



THE dearest of all the charities of life breathes warm and genuine in what may be not improperly called Joseph Blacket's *family* letters; in which, however, are mixed the most heartfelt effusions to those, who, on principles of the purest benevolence, were protecting and patronising him in the country; as well as enriched by the happiest touches of local scenery.

The worth and kindness of the brother, whom he addresses, also is naturally and touchingly displayed in some parts of the following correspondence.

LETTER I.

TO JOHN BLACKET,¹

Opens with some particulars of Joseph's passage, not given in his letter to the Editor; and therefore are admitted; otherwise repetitions, unless they better describe or illustrate, will be avoided.

“ Seaham, August 7th.

“ Dear Brother and Sister,

“ I HAD a fine passage, reaching Sunderland on Tuesday evening. We dropped down to

¹ John Blacket will be retained in the reader's recollection, for not only brotherly council, but fatherly kindness to Joseph, during the whole of the short life of the former.—There will be found some descriptive remarks and sentiments in these letters similar to those in Joseph B's correspondence with the Editor; but, as they often tend to expand an interesting idea, amplify an affectionate feeling, or give additional energy to the subject, they are admitted.

Woolwich on Saturday, lay at anchor there all night, weighed on Sunday morning, three o'clock, and sailed one hundred and forty miles by eight o'clock in the evening :—that was no boy's play.

* * * * *

“ All friends delighted to see me :—John Dixon just the same as ever,—sister Alice rather thin,—fine children,—Rebecca grown almost as tall as myself, and a fine promising girl, slender and straight as a poplar ; and, what is better, has a most delightful temper. We walk frequently on the sands together. You see I am in good spirits, which is a good sign.

“ I have my milk piping hot from the cow, and love brown bread, but still am troubled with those intolerable perspirations at night, which weaken me more and more :—in fact, I doubt whether any thing in this world will do me any service. I think I am going rapidly to another ; but the Governor of all things knows best, and what is right will be done. I will learn to submit. My pulse is dreadfully feverish ; sometimes I can feel it beat all over my body. I have taken the vitriolic acid, even to one hundred drops, though I was told only to take

fifteen ; but nothing will stop the perspirations. I believe a salt dip would be a *kill or cure experiment*. I fancy I shall take one.—Lingering on a bed of painful sickness is dreadful to a spirit like mine ; and it must be so to my friends. Would it not be therefore better to end it at once ! yet I would not be rash. To change the theme—

“ This is a beautiful wild country ; but, alas ! John, I cannot enjoy it. When I walk on the sands, the sea reminds me of the ocean of eternity ; and the *dark caves* in the rocks seem to indicate the *dark chambers of the grave* : one of which I may soon occupy.

‘ Yet humbly hope, on trembling pinions soar,
 ‘ Wait the great teacher, DEATH, and God adore !

“ All may be well!—John and Alice wish much to see you down. You possess an uncommon share of the family love. Dixon is raking out with his dogs,—Alice has been charitably chattering with her poor invalid brother ; and thus passes the time. Their eldest boy is a fine fellow—would make an excellent mechanic. The youngest is a little rogue as sly as Cupid. A fine old church stands in the village, though very much out of repair. There is nothing remarkable in the church-yard, except a huge stone coffin, which has been cut just to receive the corpse : neck, head, body and legs, all

chiselled out as though the body had been measured by a taylor, and the suit made by a statuary. I could not help laughing at human grandeur, when I surveyed it:—the ashy atoms of the proud one, who filled it, are scattered about in the winds;—the hardy case, that held it, remains, but no one knows to whom it belonged. And what matters it?—So much for the stone coffins of Seaham.

“ I understand my mother and sister are very well and in tolerable comfort: they do not yet know that I am here.

“ John and Alice enjoy every comfort:—’tis a snug little cottage; and they are happy! That you may be so, is the warm hope of

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ J. BLACKET.”

“ *Seaham, September 3d, 1809.*

“ Dearest John,

“ I have passed many pleasant hours in the midst of this delightfully domesticated family. The kind clergyman orders two horses to be saddled, and

we ride out; it his delight to humour my truant disposition, by taking me to the most romantic views; and some of them are romantic enough of all conscience. Last week we visited the ruins of an old monastery, now laid in time-heaps. The situation is beautiful—the scenery grand. We dismounted, entered, and inspected it, but no vestige remains of its former glory, save the huge flint-stones, which, perhaps, will remain till Time himself expire. Happy England! that can boast of such ruins!—Thanks to the heavenly light of the sacred Scriptures! Thanks to the glorious company of martyrs, who read them, and sealed the truths they contain with blood!—It is to them we are indebted for these vestiges of superstition, which, but for them, would now rise proud as ever in the vales, cherishing the huge monks, who sapped the labours of the hapless peasant, rioted in the bread of idleness, and laughed to think mankind were in their chains. Cromwell! thou wert a tyrant, yet I love thy memory:—thou wert the slave of ambition! in spite of all thy friends can say. But grant, kind heaven, if ever my country is darkened again in the same way, grant that another Cromwell may arise, great and terrible as thou wert, to burst the links that fetter those, whose minds were formed to contemplate the word of Truth! I love not thy thirst of dominion, but I love thee for thy bold attack upon the giant Superstition!

“ I have been received and treated like a king¹ wherever I have been, and it is ‘ a land flowing with milk and honey;’ still some few things are wanting: one is, the want of my brother. Oh! John, I wish thou could’st spare a few weeks, and come down into Egypt to see *thy* poor Joseph before he dies! It would be happiness, such as I have seldom tasted, to lean on thy arm, and visit the sandy beach, or the enlivening valley, where Nature smiles dressed in her freshest green. Yes, *indeed*, it would be happiness; but, I know well it will be inconvenient, therefore I shall not say much.

“ With respect to health, I know not what to say, for I know not whether the symptoms I feel are for the benefit of my body, or not.—My paternal friend will tell thee all.

* * * * *

¹ The family here alluded to is that of the Rector of Seaham, in whom, says Mr. B. “ the gentleman, the man of sense, and the warm friend are combined; from whom, as from every individual of the family, I have, during my stay here, received attentions and kindnesses, of force and weight enough to claim my most grateful respect.”

“ According to what I hear, my poor sister Mary’s case resembled mine. She died, you know, the most lingering death imaginable. My perspirations continue, but I cannot perspire much more, little or nothing being left. The fever rages as violently as when it first attacked me,—my cough is sometimes nearly well, then returns again; yet I am as cheerful as ever I was in my life sometimes; and must confess, I think now and then I am coming round again; and I have thought more so since the arrival of your last, which was a precious letter to me, since it contained these words: ‘ my prayer shall be in your calamity.’ If I had been wounded, John, and thou hadst dropped the healing balm upon the sore, it had not been so grateful as these words. Oh! John, I feel, even amongst a host of friends and well-wishers, that the prayers, warm from the heart of a brother, are, of more real value, than all the *God bless him*s of a nation!

“ Alice has long been wishing me to send a few lines to try to persuade you to come down. She entreats you to come for a few weeks. John Dixon says ‘ he fears, no such luck.’—Speak to my sister upon this,—speak to the boys,—speak to Alice: in short, speak to every body you meet about it, and hear what they all say. I think you *can* make shift to give the old village a *last* look, for,

most likely, if you come, you would never see it more, as our poor mother grows infirm. I have only *heard* from her yet, expecting that this sea-air will set me to rights :—such are human hopes ! we lean till the very last moment on Hope's anchor.— So little do we think of death, and so much are we entangled in the ensnaring arms of this world.— Write to me soon.

“ This will most probably reach you against Sunday next, and all you have to do is to pack up on Monday, give my sister and the children a kiss, and embark on Tuesday. A tight little Sunderland vessel will hurry you down, no body knows how soon. After you have passed Flamborough Head, look out for Seaham ; and, when opposite it, order the seamen to fire four guns and hoist a flag, when I should not wonder, if the Rector were to set the bells a ringing ; and our Elcy says, she will bray her pigs up and down the town to make joyful music.—Rebecca wants a kiss of her uncle John, and nothing can be done till you arrive.

“ N. B. Give the seamen ten shillings and sixpence, and I will go you halves.”

THE description of Castle Eden glen in this letter details many particulars of that interesting place, which was only generalized in Mr. Blacket's account, sent to the Editor in Letter VII. p. 66.

Seaham, Oct. 30th, 1809.

“ Dear John,

“ A moment of undisturbed leisure presenting itself, I readily embrace it to answer your last, which has now been in my possession some time. I was happy, truly happy, to hear of the welfare of yourself, wife, and family, and particularly so that of my little Mary, who, I hope, still continues in favourable health with you all. I have improved considerably in constitution since my last, and doubt not now, but through the blessing of heaven, I shall soon enjoy the greatest comfort of mortal existence—undisturbed health! The mind, however strong and vigorous, will certainly shrink beneath the burthen of disease; and man is undoubtedly indebted for the noblest exertions of intellect to the union of a sound mind in a sound body.

“ Our dear old mother has been over to see me, accompanied by my brother Thomas, a fine

young man, who, thank God! seems to be built for a life of honest industry; with a countenance unclouded by cares, and where Cheerfulness sits throned, never, I hope, to be shaken from her seat by the usurpations of sorrow and anxiety: would to heaven that poor emaciated Europe could boast such marks of sanity. Mother is, as might be expected, infirm, though evidently of a vigorous constitution. I need not tell you I was happy—you are yourself a son: I need not say she was happy also—you are yourself a parent. Suffice it, that we passed hours of never to be forgotten felicity: all were cheerful—all were thankful to that Providence, who brought us from various occupations and concerns to meet each other in the cottage of loving-kindness, which certainly I must denominate my brother-in-law's, John Dixon's.

“ I must confess I felt sometimes like a pang of regret, as well as other friends, to think that you and dear Jacob were so far distant; but we are avaricious, and the fools of fancy, to feel completely happy, we would have miracles wrought for us.

“ Were I to set about stating particulars of the kind reception I have experienced from Sir Ralph, Lady, and Miss, Milbanke, I should perhaps surprise you. Believe me, I never expected to have

found in any spot that genuine good old English hospitality, which I have often read in books, but have met realized here.

“ The Castle family and their guests frequently honour me with a call ; and Lady M. has taken beautiful lodgings for me, from the window of which I have the most enchanting prospects. At night, when on my pillow, I have a view of the sea up to Flamborough Head ; and, by the light of the moon, I can discover at midnight innumerable ships sailing to and from London ! The land prospect is alike charming ; and, believe me, I shall leave this place with regret. The baronet often honours me with a long visit, and sits by my fire-side.

* * * * *

I asked him sometime ago to lend me a horse ; he gave orders that his groom should take down his own charger to the cottage, whenever I wanted it : thus we sometimes ride the same steed in one day, and I frequently ride down to Sunderland, put him up at an inn, and stay for the day. This is indeed behaviour—it has won my heart, which overflows sometimes at my eyes.

* * * * *

“ My mother left Seaham about a fortnight since very comfortable, for I packed her off with a guinea and a new gown, promising to see her soon at natal Tunstill, which I suppose I shall do in the course of three weeks; what I sent her, with my ‘Specimens’ in gold leaf, arrived in time of need. I will not particularise; for she is now rich and happy. Thus, my dear John, does Providence watch over mankind, assisting them in their extremity, which they are too apt to think the work of chance.

“ On Sunday fortnight I visited the celebrated dean, or glen, of Castle Eden, a place so full of beauties, so replete with the handy work of God, and so adorned by Nature, that, not to mention it, would be injustice to the scene, as my dearest friend, Mr. P. may not perhaps notice it to you; and, when I wrote to him some days ago, I was too ill to say much on the subject. From an inn at Shotton, I walked in about half an hour to the *place of prospect!* judge of my astonishment, when, descending near a thousand yards, I found myself in the midst of a level ground-plot, from whence I had the finest view imaginable: regularly shelving rocks hung over my head, wherever I directed my view; and, what is more astonishing, from the midst of these rocks, yea, out of their very sides, grow trees and shrubs of all

colours, the appearance of which, gilded by the sun, is perhaps not to be surpassed. After ascending for some time up the left side of this picturesque and magnificent glen, chiefly through rough spiral nettles, almost as tall as myself, I reached some cavities in the rocks called the Twelve Chambers. These caverns have, no doubt, been cut by the hand of Art, for I even perceived myself traces of labour in the steps being cut from one place to another; but they are seldom visible, except by the close observation of an inquiring eye and mind. The rock in these places is chiefly of a hardish marl, calcareous and soft, which, in some measure, accounts for the trees growing through it. The Twelve Chambers are perforated in numberless places, and in all directions; but this has been the workmanship of Time, who seems almost to have eaten their very bowels:—to give you a just idea of them, they are exactly like honey-combs. I found the descent very dangerous in some places; and, in my opinion, the most curious are seldom visited, for the paths are overgrown with brushwood and nettles; and, where there are no paths, the rankest weeds of prolific nature offer their dark, but luxuriant verdure: this likewise accounts for the heights being so seldom frequented. People generally go in parties, in which are ladies; thus these uncouth spots are too rude to be generally seen and explored. However, for my own part, I was deter-

mined to investigate all I could, for which reason I hardly left a stone unturned in this immense wilderness; and, in going down towards the sea, perceived a place something like the mouth of a cavern, but filled up with rubbish: on inquiry, I have since found the place in question is a subterraneous passage, leading from the centre of the glen three miles across the country to a tremendous cavern in the rocks. This has doubtless been a work of the Romans, to convey their soldiers, nuns, monks, &c. in times of war to a place of safety. It has been opened and explored for near a mile by torches, but they will not burn further on account of foul air; however, if I can get a friend or two, I will try the truth of the story, before I leave this part of the country. After viewing all worth seeing towards the East, I returned to inspect the Western part, and saw several very fine cascades, and some awful rocky scenery; all truly sublime. At the Western extremity, after climbing over a great many loose precipices, I arrived at a little wild flat, the most romantic situation perhaps in this country. In a corner of this place stood a hermit's cottage; I entered it, and found every thing ready for the reception of a person of that order: a chair hewn out of a solid oak, a pallet of wood for a bed, a little fire-place, and every thing suitable. The cottage is built with oak rafters, apparently some hundreds of years old,—

the chair is crumbling into dust, and is near two yards in diameter, and every part conspires to show the traveller the works of other years, when Art was indeed a day-labourer. I was sorry to be driven from this charming retreat by a very severe shower, which descended in torrents; and, by the time I arrived at Shotton again (where was my horse) I was completely soaked through boots, great coat, &c. But I was soon made comfortable by the landlord, who sat me down to a fine piece of English roast beef, roast goose, &c. with two other travellers. After dinner, we had a bottle of wine or two, and warmed our feet over a roasting fire till seven o'clock, when I offered to pay my bill—but, would you believe it? the generous landlord would not charge me a halfpenny for dinner. It was feast-time, he said, and I was as welcome to a dinner as any of his friends; he persisted in refusing to take anything, so I was obliged to leave him (certainly in debt). It would not have been thus in London, John! During my return home, it continued to pour heavily, and I was again drenched on arriving at Seaham. This occasioned, as you must naturally suppose, a return of cold, &c. but never mind. I was in a manner well, and am braving the storm.— So here ends the subject. I still hope soon to become a new man.

P. S. I last Wednesday went to Sunderland, saw the grand procession of King CRISPIN, OUR old friend. The show was fine; two bands of music, and the King cut a most *majestic* appearance. The day was passed in harmony throughout the whole place.

Seaham, Dec. 21.

IN this following letter, he generously conceals from his brother who was in affliction, his own sufferings, lest he should aggravate the former. See *Letter 8 to the Editor, page 82.*

* * * * *

Dear John,

“ I will state a few particulars respecting my journey, to and from our native village.

“ I arrived at Tunstill, on the 24th of November, having taken the post-chaise from Darlington; my niece Rebecca accompanied me. We met with a very cordial reception from the villagers, who were extremely happy to see us; and

I found an aged infirm mother labouring at a threshing machine ; a sister married ; a town turned upside down ; a cold damp house, &c. However, amidst all disastrous changes, I experienced a ray of the richest satisfaction in reflecting, that it was now in my power to alleviate, in some measure, the sufferings of a fond parent, and brighten up her shrivelled countenance with a beam of happiness. I received the greatest attention from Mr. Barker and his truly generous wife, who kindly fitted me up the best bed ; provided me with an excellent supper and breakfast every day, and made me, during my stay, one of themselves. He is also a lover of literature, and a good reader. I provided myself with a safe horse from this friendly man ; I had thus an opportunity of visiting various places, which otherwise I could not have done, as the roads were knee-deep ; and the waters out to a prodigious swell. I found Richmond castle replete with ancient grandeur, and the view from the bridge on the Swale is certainly wonderful.

“ I saw the grand tower of Richmond castle, which is a hundred feet high ; it has four stories ; is built upon arches ; and the top commands a sweep of cannon for a circumference of several miles.

“ I left my mother very well ; Peggy is married to young Christopher Hodgson ; Old Bob

Hodgson's son. He is twenty-three; and seems a hard-working, honest young man. Many people think she might have done better. I think differently. Shakspeare says,

“ Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough.”

I am proud to be of Shakspeare's way of thinking.

“ I stopt on my return at Darlington, and spent two days in plumbing the HELL KETTLES. It is a vague idea of their being bottomless. I found the two smaller were 150 yards deep, and no more; for I plumbed them in every place. The large one I could not for want of line, but as I found bottom in the others, I am very certain it has one. Several gentlemen, seeing me from the road, came to me, and I fully satisfied them, that the common report was completely fabulous—most people are so credulous, that they will believe any lie told them sooner than take the trouble to ascertain its authenticity. At Durham, I found a cathedral built in the true style of Saxon magnificence. To enumerate its beauties, would fill a volume; it has often been described, though I never read any description of it,

“ I was admitted to the Bishop's castle, and was shown every apartment; (his lordship has

contributed most generously to my poems,) in this place are a numerous collection of the finest paintings I ever beheld, chiefly Scriptural. I would have given a guinea, you had seen them. I likewise visited the ruins of the old castle, which has been knocked down by artillery, and was very much delighted with its remains."

Seaham, December 24, 1809.

Dear Brother,

"The inclosed letter was written at Durham on the 21st, but dated from Seaham; I have returned to John's, and find their family very well; they are taking a comfortable cup of tea this Christmas Eve; but, alas, my cup has been tinged with a bitterness which I cannot exactly describe. The perusal of your letter to brother Dixon has caused the most considerable anxiety; I cannot possibly apprehend what the troubles you have endured could possibly arise from. A man whose course of life has been of such undeviating rectitude, ought never to experience difficulties nor misfortunes. I would wish to participate in your sorrows—Can I possibly, by any means, alleviate your sufferings? Has my sister been unwell? I cannot apprehend what you have endured to cause so much uneasiness.

in your well-ordered mind. Has it been in any manner on my account? How fares my little Mary? Surely she is well—do tell me what has afflicted you. I shall imagine a thousand strange and unaccountable things; but hope to see you very soon, and bear some little part in your afflictions. I am myself rather unwell, troubled with a slight fever and headache; but I consider my troubles trifles, when compared with those which you constantly must have felt. You are a *Christian!* and I know the rich satisfaction you daily experience in pouring out your bosom to the Christian's God—may he lighten your burthen, restore your dear little girl, and permit me, your brother, to hail you with the liveliest sensations of happiness and esteem.

“Your's truly,

“JOSEPH BLACKET.

“I shall, most probably, if please the Almighty to guide me on these stormy billows, when I return, order the coachman to drive to your house, as I shall now wish to see you first. The most cordial love to all your's—they are precious in my memory—Kiss little Bessey for me, and tell her I hope shortly to repeat it.”

January 24.

Dear John,

“ I write a line to you, though very much indisposed : I feel for your late sorrows, and sympathise in all your woes. Poor Sally and Bessey I hope are strong again; for myself I can say nothing, at present, to be of comfort to you, but still hope to be raised by a merciful God. If it is his will to snatch me hence, that *will be done*. I sometimes look with calmness beyond the grave, and smile at worldly scenes.—Yet to be spared to see my dear child situated in life would be happiness! If I die, he who feeds the Ravens will protect her.

* * * * *

“ I still hope to see you and my little darling too. When the weather looks like summer—pray of Heaven, my dear John, to spare me for the interview. May the balm that is in Gilead prove a strengthening balsam to us all.

“ Adieu.”

THE subsequent letter, inclosed in the foregoing one, to his brother John, is written in triumph over sickness and death ; written in a firm, careful, and deliberate hand, as if to make the greater impression on the mind of the relative addressed.—EDITOR.

Seaham, January 25.

Very Dear Nephew,

“ A cheerful and renovating sun gilds the whole face of Nature ; I feel the kind influence of its beams, and have risen from a bed where sleep very seldom comes, to congratulate you with my heart’s best wishes. May you be happy, and long continue to cheer the bosoms of your parental friends. May the present year prove advantageous to the improvement of your mind, the vigour of your body, and the happiness of your family, which, (I am sorry to hear from your father,) has suffered such severe calamity. Doubtless, the sudden indisposition of a much-loved sister has been the cause of making your breast feel the most poignant sensations ; her sufferings have been indeed dreadful ! Her patience wonderful ! Never could I have imagined that a weak and delicate frame, like her’s, should have borne such accumulated torture. Let the resignation she has shown under affliction, impress itself

deeply in your mind; make it a lesson never to be forgotten; and if, through life, that power which *breaks* and *binds up* the poor reed, should stretch forth a chastising hand, remember how she triumphed over the pangs of afflicted nature, and copy her example."

January 28.

"Thus far, my dear boy, had I written on the 24th, since which period I have been attacked with double vigour by the disease which I labour under—My fever is more dreadful than ever, my breath very short, and my cough so troublesome, that I spit a good deal of blood: it now begins to look like a rooted consumption. I believe the Tunstill beds have murdered me; I was nearly well when I set off, and could walk twelve miles before dinner without experiencing much fatigue; now I am confined to a room, and never feel the cheerful breeze! Lady M. is like a parent to me; my doctors skilful and kind, but can do no good. Alice seems to think it is precisely the case of my poor sister Mary; and I see every symptom of the disorder, under which, your mother and my dear wife fell victims. I am extremely happy to hear that your present mother has recovered from her late severe trials.

“ I would write to my dear Bessey, but cannot; my head distracts me; I intended also to write to your father, but must defer it till some other opportunity. You will receive this by the twopenny-post, as I shall direct it to Sir Ralph, who is in town. The family will probably stay here another month.—I perspire dreadfully, but do not fall very much away. Excuse my scrawl, I intended it longer and more compact. Give my heart’s dearest love to father, tell him, like Hezekiah, I sometimes turn my ‘ face to the wall,’ and wish him (*viz.* your father) to keep me in mind.

“ Believe me ever your most affectionate uncle,

“ J. BLACKET.”

JOHN BLACKET has marked this on the back as the last received by him of his brother’s own writing.

Seaham, Wednesday, 23.

Dear John,

“ We have this day received your letter, and it is with no little joy I hear of my little niece Bessey’s amended state; her words which were

uttered during a dreadfully painful operation, must have been balm to your parental heart! Yea, they are more precious than rubies, and, considering her youth, ought to be placed in lasting characters upon a pillar, where he that runs might read them. Her fortitude gives evident proof of a divine spirit, and may that spirit restore her to health and to her friends.

“ I am myself, thank God, a little better, and gain my breath with less pain. I have, unknown to the doctors, flown to my old friends the HERBS, and think I receive benefit from them; I likewise drink snail-milk every morning, and with the blessing of the Great Physician, hope still to press the hand of John Blacket.

“ My little Mary I hope continues well? tell me in thy next. How is little Will? thou never says a word about poor Will. All of ye have my heart's best wishes.

“ Dear John,

“ Thy affectionate

“ JOSEPH BLACKET.”

P. S. In your next, tell me what Cullpepper says upon the plant *Liverwort*.

To Rebecca Blacket, the Author's Mother, sent
with the Specimens of his Poetry, &c. &c.

“ Dear and honoured Mother,

“ Thank heaven, it is once more in my power to write to you upon happy and agreeable subjects. I am well convinced that my long neglect of writing has given you sufficient reason to tax me with the appearance of being undutiful: but believe me, I have at all times remembered you with the true feelings of a son; and in the lone hour of solitary midnight, when misfortune or family sufferings banished sleep from my eyes, have remembered the dear little home that I had so long left, and sighed over the mournful fate of its precious and tender inhabitant.—But alas! what would it have availed had I, smarting beneath the lash of keen adversity, drooping beneath the chastising hand of offended heaven, shut out from hope, thrust from society by misfortunes, and no one to commune with but my own sad thoughts, what would it have

availed, had I at that unhappy period added to your troubles by repeated and melancholy accounts of my own? I well knew, tidings of grief were unwelcome, and for that reason wrote so seldom. My brothers were always desired by me to inform you, whenever they wrote, that I was perfectly well, and that you were to be under no apprehensions on my account, and I am truly sorry, though it proceeded from kind feeling, they should inform you of my true circumstances, knowing that it must give you so much pain. But thank God, blessed mother, my misfortunes are now, I hope, at an end.

* * * * *

“The little book that comes with this was brought out privately, under the direction of a gentleman with whom I am now living, and I send a copy early to you, that you may no longer be apprehensive of my success in life.

* * * * *

“Inclosed you will find my first offering to an aged and much loved parent, who, I hope, for the future, will experience, and share better fortune.

* * * * *

“ You made mention to Mr. Wilson, that you should never again behold me—Think not so ; I doubt not but I shall find time to pass a few weeks with you at your little cottage on the hill. Believe me my dear mother, whenever Fortune smiles, you shall be a partaker of her bounty. Remember me with the most affectionate love to my brother and sister.

“ J. BLACKET.”

His Mother's answer, copied by the former, from the original, in possession of the Editor.

Tunstill, July 10, 1809.

“ My dear Son,

“ I received your's, and with what eagerness did I receive a letter from you that I had so long felt for, and my fears were redoubled by not hearing from you in your brother's letters, which made me to weary your brother in writing about you, and caused me to mourn in silent sorrow. Thinking sometimes that you had forgot those that had nursed, and dandled you on the knee. At other times I feared your distress, and thus amidst a thousand thoughts I have gone on. But on the other

hand, I knew it was not in my power to assist you. It was much better I was not made acquainted with your true circumstances, as it would have been the means of bringing my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. But what shall I say? the son of my old age was deserted by some friends, cast out into the world, where seas foamed and clashed around him, and I not know it! Left in Egypt, and after all taken into Pharoah's house, to eat at his table, and to drink in his cup—blessed thought!

“ I feel a longing desire to see you at Tunstill, and flatter myself with the idea—How would my joy abound, and oh with what affection should I receive you—the thought seems too big for my throbbing heart—but why do I flatter myself?—I feel this body to weaken fast. I have toiled in the world, till work is a burthen to me; and till the body is a trouble to the soul. Yet, will I trust in the strong for strength.

“ The book that you sent is much admired by all who have read it. Mr. Barker, and many more, wish to have one each. Mrs. Todd, your relative, has been for the book three times, and though I am deprived of what I should most like to see, that is yourself, I can view what your fingers have wrought.

“The present that you sent, has done me much good—I have had a hard winter, and many a storm ; so it came useful to me, and I trust God will repay you! Write to me soon, and give my blessing to your brothers—and God bless you, is the prayer of your affectionate mother,

“REBECCA BLACKET.”

* * * * *

In a note which the Editor had the honour to receive from Hornby castle, dated November 16th, 1810, Mr. Blacket's noble patroness, the Duchess of LEEDS, stated that she frequently sees Mrs. BLACKET, who had become more cheerful, and supported her loss better than she did. Observing farther, “that the bard's mother is a most interesting fine old lady, and her Grace trusted she should be able to gain her an annual subscription that might afford her some comparative ease ; adding, one of Mrs. Blacket's daughters, who is married, lives with her, and receives many of the children of the poor of the village to teach.”

In a subsequent note dated 1811, her Grace had the goodness to write as follows.

“With regard to the worthy and respectable Mrs. Blacket, about 14*l.* or somewhat above, has been presented her by various neighbours, and those who wish to render the latter part of her life easy to her; which sum will in chief part be annually presented to her.”

The heart of the reader will make its own comment on this intelligence, and on the source from whence it proceeds.

SERIES III.

LETTERS TO A YOUNG LADY.



SERIES III.



* * * * *

THIS is evidently a correspondence of the departed bard's affections, and distinct, perhaps, from every former emotion. Among the society to which his genius, set off by amiable manners, and an impressive person, recommended him, he distinguished the young lady to whom it was addressed, and who, in herself, discovered to his view, similar powers and acquirements. It was introduced to her under the *auspices*—if I may dare to use the word—of a malady which rendered him an object of generous attention, and deeper interest; and many things concurred about the same point of time to favour and nourish the form that

“ Wove in fancy’s loom,
“ Floated in vision round the poet’s head ;”

No wonder it soon reached his heart. Of this, every letter, and almost every line, bears tender testimony : though it does not appear, that he ever explained himself to the fair object, unless by allusion to the Apollo’s head, the Piano, and “ the friend of his soul,” which could not be well misunderstood. There is no trace in the young lady’s letters of affection returned, otherwise than by a generous interest in the sufferings of the man, and the admiration of the poet. A few extracts from those letters, illustrative of parts in his, are admitted.

* * * * *

THE Editor has little hesitation in placing this, where the reader will find it, as it obviously indicates a sentiment of affection, and seems to point at the object addressed in the following letters. It came into the Editor’s hands among the cherished contents of his private memoranda.

“ An unfortunate unknown, who, to avoid personal displeasure, (though he is well convinced few

* * * cherish displeasure, less than * * * *) is under the necessity of concealing his name, begs pardon for obtruding on the time and patience of that * * * * the faithful, though he is well aware, * * * * * * * *
 Whatever the reception these hurried verses may find, the author lives in hope, that they may sometimes draw from the breast, the genuine sigh of pity, mixed with compassion, for the hapless fate of one, who, alas! ought never to have seen her."

* * * * *

Verses to * * * * *

BEWITCHING * * * ! heav'n-grac'd fair!

Oh tell my bosom why,

It heaves thus deep the anguish'd sigh?

And why these hollow eyes declare

A form that's doom'd to love, and to despair!

Say, why has sleep my pillow fled,

And why within my breast,

No longer Peace remains a guest?

And why Content forbears to shed,

Her pure delights on my bewilder'd head?

Unconscious maid! *thou* know'st not why,—

 'Twas friendship fill'd *thy* heart;

Thou did'st not know what painful smart,

Shot from the glances of thy friendly eye,

Which murder'd my repose, and draw *this* heart-felt
sigh!

But let me pine, nor once reveal

My love, except at midnight's noon;

To yonder drooping, cheerless moon,

 Who listens now with visage pale,

To torments, which thy smiles, alone, can heal!

Adieu! yet, oh! if pity dwell,

As sure she does, within thy breast,

Oh! pity then, and I am bless'd!

 And waft one sigh, one sigh to tell,

Thou mourn'st the sorrows which this bosom swell!

LETTER I.

WITH VERSES INCLOSED.

*April 7th, 1809, No. 4, Boswell Court,
Queen Square, Holborn.*

“ THE inclosures are presented to * * * *
as an offering of gratitude for the pleasure the author
derived in her conversation, and walk with her, on
Wednesday last.

“ He begs her forgiveness for sending
songs without tunes, and hopes they will be no less
acceptable on that account. If he can afford her
the least amusement or pleasure by writing an *air*
to any tune she may select, he will be happy in the
attempt, provided she honour him with a note, speci-
fying the number of lines, and syllables in each line,
of any verse, the air of which she admires.

“ He laments that he cannot with propriety subscribe himself in a manner more congenial to his feelings, than

“ Her very obedient, humble servant,

“ J. BLACKET.”

* * * * *

Verses inclosed.

SONG I.

Talk not to me of rosy cheeks,
Of coral lips and dimpled smiles;
Such artful flatt'ry only speaks
The false deceitful traitor's wiles.

Remember, youth, the charms you prize
Are like the transient rainbow's shades;
For Beauty in a moment dies,
But heav'nly virtue never fades.

J. B.

SONG II.

FOR THE HARP.

WHEN the breast from anguish free,
 Hears the flow of harmony,
 How sweet the various numbers prove!
 But, ah! how vain,
 Resounds the strain,
 Though melody, with flutt'ring wings,
 Should sweep with magic skill the strings,
 To glad the heart oppress'd with love.

J. B.

SONG III.

HOPELESS LOVE.

ASK not why sorrow haunts my breast,
 Why languor steals upon mine eyes;
 Nor why my agitated rest
 Is broken with continued sighs?
 Too plain, alas! these symptoms prove
 My heart a prey to *Hopeless Love!*

A victim to its keenest woe!
 No charms, alas! can glad mine eyes;
 No joys can fix the roseate glow
 Upon my cheek, nor check my sighs!
 Yet, there lives one, would soon remove,
 The sigh which springs from *Hopeless Love!*

J. B.

LETTER II.

No. 4, Boswell Court, April 14th, 1809.

“ UNDERSTANDING from a letter, with the perusal of which my paternal friend this morning honoured me, that you had returned from a visit, I take the earliest opportunity to introduce to you my humble respects. I have called at * * * * * but had not the good fortune to find you at home.

“ I feel peculiar pleasure in thanking you for your kind letter. The lively interest you feel for my welfare and happiness, believe me, is a rich

solace for many a confused and painful hour of solitary thought! Like Yorick, with the poor monk's horn box, I value your letter. The sympathising bosom, where beats the pulse of sensibility, which, when surrounded by the cheerful delights of life, and the train of pleasure, condescends to cast a generous glance on an obscure individual, will ever be, to me, an object of adoration.

“ Since I had the honour of mixing in your society, what with preparing for the press, paying my muse's thanks to two generous gentlemen for literary presents, &c. I have had no time, at least none of the kind of time, particular thought requires, save at lonely midnight, when all the busy passions are at rest, and calm reflection finds a tranquil hour to contemplate. Dear reflection! balm of life! solace of the soul! what joys are centred in thee! Let the maddening world whirl round, and, in one continued sheet, reflect the blaze of *folly!* a single calm and genial moment spent in thy fascinating, though sequestered company, is dearer far, than days, than months, sacrificed at the shrine of dissipation and luxury!

“ Hold! methinks I hear *****
 exclaim, ‘ no more of your philosophy!’—Alas!
 what must I say?—‘ Sing me a song!’ I will endea-

vour.—You smile at my romantic fancy, but it is the smile of approbation; and the smile of approbation from * * * * * is sufficient to make even Apollo, though harassed out with study, rouse himself, and, in spite of Morpheus, string his lyre.

SONG.

BEHOLD the flow'ret in the vale,
 When tempest-beaten by the gale,
 And wet with driving show'rs:
 With drooping head their rage it meets,
 While all its variegated sweets,
 The ruthless blast devours!

But, hark, the storm is hush'd to rest,
 The sun comes forth in splendour drest,
 And cheers the delug'd dale:
 The flow'ret, from earth's chilling bed,
 Uprears again its drooping head,
 And ornaments the vale.

Then let not mortals e'er despair,
Though bow'd beneath the weight of care,
Or Cupid's galling chain;
But know, amidst their greatest grief,
Bright comfort's sun can bring relief,
And ease the heart of pain.

J. BLACKET.

P. S. More songs soon, if you smile on these.

SECOND PACQUET

OF

PROMISED SONGS.



Promised Songs.



SONG.

LOVE AND WAR.

FROM *love* to *war* the soldier flies,
For *war*, for *love*, alike he sighs ;
Now courting beauty's witching arms,
Humbly bowing,
Warmly vowing ;
And, *now* midst smoking war's alarms,
Fighting, flying,
Or pursuing.
Love and war his breast inspire :
Each by turns his bosom fire.

For *love*, for *war*, the soldier sighs ;
 For *love*, for *war*, alike he dies :
 The victim now of cruel charms,
 Lonely sighing,
 Drooping, dying ;
 And now midst smoky war's alarms,
 Revenge, and death,
 He yields his breath ;
 Love and war his breast inspire ;
 Each by turns his bosom fire !

THE SLAVE'S LOVE SONG.

To thee, who dwell'st within my breast,
 Whose image robs mine eyes of rest ;
 If sighs, in secret breath'd, can move,
 To thee I waft *the sigh of love* !

 And though unseen I must remain ;
 Though doom'd unnotic'd to complain ;
 Oh ! may my sigh thy bosom move
 To waft me back—*thy sigh of love* !

THE SLAVE'S SONG FOR FREEDOM.

DEAR, doubly dear, is free-drawn breath,
 The god-like mind's prerogative !
 But slav'ry's abject chain is death :
To live a slave is NOT to live !

Fair **FREEDOM**'s sun shines doubly bright,
 From whom we all our joys receive ;
 But Slav'ry glooms eternal night,
To live a slave is NOT to live !

Signed on the back, composed for Mr. Blackwell
 by J. Blacket.

EMMA AND HENRY.

THE storm rose fierce, the cottage shook,
 Beneath whose roof young Emma lay ;
 By fortune and by friends forsook,
 She sigh'd for Henry far away.

Long he the dang'rous seas had prov'd ;
 Long through the stormy billows steer'd,
 Far distant from the maid he lov'd,
 Whose breast no ray of comfort cheer'd.

Yet still their loves were mutual and sincere :
 He lov'd his Emma,—she her Henry dear.

Hard was her fate, and hard her bread,
 Begg'd from the surly lordlings door ;
 And wretched was her snow-clad shed,
 That rose upon the surf-beat shore.

Yet though a prey to keen distress,
 Though pinch'd by hunger and by cold,
 The gallant tar she lov'd no less,
 Than when she shar'd his plenteous gold.

And he alike was constant and sincere :
 He lov'd his Emma,—she her Henry dear.

A voice was heard !—with swift dispatch,
 (While beat her breast with wild alarms)
 She op'd with trembling hand the latch,
 When Henry caught her in his arms.—
 “ Cheer, cheer, my girl,” he gaily cried,
 “ The storm I've 'scap'd, and now, on shore,

“ With thee for ever I’ll reside,
 “ For now we meet, to part no more !
 “ Then dry thy tears, and ev’ry grief remove,
 “ We’ll live and die blest in each other’s love.”

* * * * *

“ By way of poetical postscript, accept

THE DYING SOLDIER

TO THE

SETTING SUN.

YET stay, yet stay, departing beam,
 Nor meet so soon the Western wave ;
 I would thy last expiring beam
 Should grace a Dying Soldier’s grave.

The helm, which us’d my brows to shade,
 Is rusted with the evening dew ;
 My shatter’d limb at distance laid
 The bitter pangs of death renew.

Yet pleas'd I view thy closing light,
Mine eyes thy distant glimm'rings hail,
Since in the fierce destructive fight,
My country's banners still prevail.

With thee at early morn I rose,
Resolv'd, the daring foe I met ;
Together let our glories close,
Fair Sun, together let us set !

But thou shalt set to rise again,
And move in splendour as before ;
Whilst I, amid these heaps of slain,
Must set, alas ! to rise no more.

LETTER III.

From Sunderland, and first sealed with the Apollo's head.

Seaham, Saturday, September 11th, 1809.

Dear Madam,

“ A fortnight has elapsed, since I received your kind letter and valuable present ¹ (doubly valuable, because presented by *yourself*,—valuable, because congenial to my heart,) since which period, I have scarcely been able to rise from my bed ; happily the weather has been unfavourable, else I think I should have gone mad ! for I heard no voice, during that time, sweetly accompanying the strings in the divine

¹ A seal, bearing the impression of an Apollo's head.

“friend of my soul.” No “long de Dilla” no, nothing; all blank! all chaotic. Yet I must confess I had my moments of “DEAR REFLECTION;” (and as you have been so good as to re-peruse my *last* unfortunate letter, you will know how much I prize that divine power) but, (“what could minister to a mind diseased,” reflection only held a mirror to mine eyes, through which I beheld the “cot of friendship.” Hail to the dear, the sacred Fane! Health to the loved inhabitants! may zephyrs still fan the scene; and peace embower herself within the shades! These, my dear madam, are the bursts of a heated, but faithful imagination. My head of late has been sadly confused. The horrid fever which still rages in my frame, renders me truly incapable of expressing myself! a moment’s deep thought, and the world whirls. Yet I remember how much I am indebted to your dear mother, whose *lines* are as sacred as *your seal*; and when Blacket sleeps in the dust, dear, dear, shall be the friend, to whom he confides them.

“We have had a few fine days, and I feel myself renovated. I have been riding out with the worthy Rector of this place: a gentleman and a poet. He led me through all the mazes of the fairies, showed me the caves, in which they held council at midnight; the grass plats on which they danced;

and the streams in which the little elfins laved. Ah what scenery! here awfully sublime! there simply beautiful! here terrific! there romantic in the extreme. I am a sad daub, and too much indisposed, else I should much like to send you some views, I know you would like them.

“ I must now beg a favour of you, which I am sure to a poor invalid, you will not fail to grant; which is a copy of “ Friend of my soul ¹,” and “ Hey Long de Dilla;” which you will be so obliging as to inclose to me under cover. One of the benign beings who befriend me, plays on the harpsichord in a manner that—would you could hear her! Mr. Pope says, “ self-love and social are the same.” I feel the assertion is true in the instance of this wish. Handel, the great musician, presented much of his original music to one of the family of my Seaham patron-friends; and it seems to be reckoned the *greatest and most cherished legacy* ² she could have received. I am lodged even elegantly at a respectable farmer’s; the prospect from my window is the finest in this part of the country, and all sweetly assure me, I shall be happy;—happy? no, I shall still want the dear “ friend of my soul.” I shall still sigh for———health and * * * * *.

¹ A beautiful song by T. Moore.

² Miss Milbanke.

“ Remember me kindly * * * * * to all the domestic groupe in friendship’s cot; and try if you can remember me to *yourself!*”

“ I have just received a letter from my dear friend Mr. P.

“ *Your—MY* Apollo’s head is, I think, the finest I ever saw! thank you a thousand times for it, and believe me it has acted as a talisman. I look on it, and breathe afresh. Permit me to subscribe myself, yours devotedly,

J. BLACKET.

P. S. I must write to your kind mother at a future period; I have not yet thanked her for her sweet verses; at present, I find myself incapable. Be so kind as to inform her, my cough is considerably better: but nothing can allay my fever, in consequence of which, I am become a shadow.”

“ Did my paternal friend ever show you my *Road side Mendicant, or Retrospect of Life?*”

This was marked in pencil, during one of his morning walks from his sleeping room at Hampstead, in his daily visit to the Editor ; it was written in haste, but displays unquestionable marks of genius.

WHILE yet yon blasted elm had life,
 Whose trunk hangs drooping 'cross the stream ;
 Unconscious of the tempest's strife,
 The ireful bolt, and vengeful gleam ;

While yet within yon crumbling towers,
 Through whose drear aisles loud whirlwinds
 sweep ;

Where spiral nettles shed their flowers,
 And speckled reptiles croaking creep ;

The martial burst was heard from far,
 While yonder cave prolong'd the strain ;
 Which from the brazen throat of war,
 Resounded hoarsely 'cross the plain.

My early infancy was pass'd
 Within that cot beside the thorn ;
 Unruffled by misfortune's blast,
 Unclouded as the summer's morn.

On yonder spot where floating waves
 The shadow of the mournful yew;
 And where the humble daisy laves,
 At early morn, in fragrant dew :

Would infant fancy oft delight
 To converse with the gilded toy;
 Ere yet the popped wand of night
 Had clos'd the sparkling eye of joy.

But infancy, alas! soon fled,
 Sweet sunshine in life's brightest day!
 When transient drops, no sooner shed,
 Than by a mother wip'd away.

Yet still the infant mind has woes,
 And sighs will heave within the breast;
 And keen unkindness wound repose,
 Repose, the bosom's dearest guest.

'Thus oft when in my cradle plac'd,
 Some urchin robb'd me of my toy;
 Or while my cake I gave to taste,
 With mischief fill'd, would all destroy.

And then the anguish'd tear would flow,
Extorted by injustice rude ;
And oft would heave the sigh of woe,
Occasion'd by ingratitude.

But soon life's morning disappear'd ;
And joy forsook my bosom, when,
The little hand, by duty rear'd,
Exchang'd its rattle for the pen.

The labour'd task, prescrib'd by schools,
Was irksome to my tender mind ;
It taught my tongue to speak by rules,
But left the understanding blind.

The paths of science I explor'd,
And o'er the antients eager ran ;
At length, with general knowledge stor'd,
I enter'd on the world, a man.

Soon beauty caught my wandering eye,
And soon the throb of passion rose ;
Insidiously, the archer sly
Discharg'd a shaft at my repose.

To heal the wound the urchin gave,
 And smooth the stormy sea of life;
To calm its wild tumultuous wave,
 The lovely maid became a wife.

Friends press'd around, and all was joy,
 A twelvemonth, like a sunbeam, pass'd,
When to my arms she gave a boy,
 Just view'd it, and then breath'd her last!

Misfortune frown'd beneath my roof,
 Distress, in every shape, appear'd;
The man I lov'd now stood aloof,
 And hope itself no longer cheer'd.

From scenes of envied pleasures hurl'd,
 I hurried to the ocean's brink;
"Take me" I cried, "thou watery world;
 A sailor has no time to think."

The naval pride of haughty Gaul,
 With daring prows thro' ocean steer'd;
And soon was sped the murdering ball,
 And soon the groan of death was heard.

The battle ceas'd, dark was the night,
Uncheer'd by moon, or friendly star ;
There came a flash which robb'd of sight,
His king's defender in the war !

Pray accept with this what follows, as it presents
you with another

MARINER.

YE who on your downy pillows,
Now reclining free from care,
Little think upon the billows,
How poor hapless seamen fare :

Where the tempest's dire commotion,
And the whirlwind's awful power
In the deep unfathom'd ocean,
Sinks the bark, to rise no more.

See what blue, what vivid flashes,
Dart athwart the dreadful gloom ;
With what rage the breaker dashes
O'er her deck its frothy foam.

See, her sails are torn asunder,
Overboard her masts are driv'n,
While loud peals of deaf'ning thunder,
Roar along the vault of heav'n.

Yet, amidst the threat'ning danger,
Where the winds with waves engage ;
They whose hearts to fear are strangers,
Laugh at their destructive rage.

'Midst the fierce Tornado's rattle,
Or the zephyr's gentle flame,
'Midst the heat of hostile battle,
British tars are still the same.

In the storm or in the contest,
Still determin'd, bold, and brave ;
The fire that emulates each breast,
Burns to conquer or to save.

Then, ye landsmen, fill your glasses,
Silence all your petty jars ;
Let us drink to all good lasses,
And to gallant British tars.

J. BLACKET.

Impromptu, on a burst of sudden sunshine after a storm.

WHEN sudden glooms obscure the day,
Or quite exclude the burnish'd ray;
Fell darkness broods upon the plain,
With murky vapours in its train.

Should the glad Sun, with ruddy streak,
Refulgent through those vapours break,
Creation wears a different face,
The flush of joy, the smile of peace.

'Tis thus by gathering woes oppress'd,
When anguish draws around the breast
The sable curtains of despair,
And all is darkness, grief, and care;

Should fancy's radiant beam appear,
And one bright hope the bosom cheer;
Glad in each feature should we trace
The flush of joy, the smile of peace.

This was written as the Author sat at the window of the Editor's apartment, while the circumstance, which he alludes to, took place.

* * * * *

SOME of the expressions in this letter are answered, in the following extracts, by his correspondent, September 19.

* * * * *

“I must gently chide my correspondent; I observe in your last, a certain degree of despondence, to which I fear you give way; indeed it is wrong. Doubtless, in bodily suffering, the mind must be more or less affected. But with talents and native energies like yours, despondence should be the last of its cherished guests. Nor will I permit you in future to call the “*Reflective*” power divine, if it serves but to aggravate evil, and render you dissatisfied with self and surrounding objects. “The divinity that stirs within” your friend, should whisper hope of every kind.

“Your anxious wish for the music I enclose, makes me fear you are resuming the flute; which

though the most dulcet of all instruments, I fear would be a very injurious one to you. I pray you therefore breathe through it gently, and not often.

“ I am most happy to hear you are so comfortably situated, and enjoying the society of the excellent family you mention.

“ I also rejoice, that the country about you is beautiful. Few things tend more to quiet and refresh the mind, than the charms of surrounding scenery. And to the admirer of nature, such as you, the place you now inhabit will lose none of its beauties. Indeed I almost *envy*, though I will tell you, that *hateful passion* will be much diminished, if, (as you have half promised,) you send me some of that scenery on paper. Next to the original pictures of nature, are happy drawings from them.”

LETTER IV.

Seaham, Dec. 30.

“ Friend of my Soul,”

“ How shall I apologize for my late unpardonable neglect? I know not. Indeed I have

been most culpable! but thanks to the little good fortune which still attends me, I plead to a merciful judge; one who, feeling for misfortune, will not hesitate to let the mandates of forgiveness supersede the harsh decrees of justice.

“ Yet were I to say I had never addressed myself to * * * * * since the receipt of her two last, it were untrue; but what to me avails the recollection of this? since the compositions did me so little credit, that the heart which dictated, and the hand that wrote, concurred in pronouncing doom on them so repeatedly. Ambitious projects richly merit annihilation! and thank heaven! I had the fortitude to blast mine myself. How refined and generous friendship will bear this, I know not: but this I hope, that the perusal may be succeeded by no frown of disapprobation, nor that a glance of an uncharitable aspect may escape that eye which must either pity or condemn.

“ I have lately returned from paying a visit to an aged mother in Yorkshire, a visit, which to each was a source of infinite happiness. She felt the richest gratification in dropping a tear of joy on the bosom of her son, and I felt what every son would have felt, on contemplating that tear; yet, notwithstanding, the enviable felicity I experienced during

my residence beneath her little thatched roof, I am led by experience to believe the journey has been highly prejudicial to my health ; for since my return to this place I have had a very severe return of fever, and in fact, things are altogether, with me, *as they were* ; buoyed up one moment to be sunk the next ! But it is cowardly to repine ! like the Duke of La Rochefoucault, let me endeavour to “ forget misfortune, and cease to remember I am still unhappy.”

“ In your kind letter (not the last) you express some fears of my giving way to despondency ; think not so ; I may perhaps, like Jaques, be tinged with a deep settled melancholy, and indeed, I have reason to be so ; yet still life holds forth so many interesting, nay, fascinating hopes, that I am not yet sufficiently callous to despair of partaking those blessings which for years I have but contemplated in idea.

“ That life is altogether a series of delusive and imaginary hopes, I am fully aware. *To day* gaily points out a precious something within our reach, which *tomorrow* scowling tells us we must never enjoy ! We all talk of happiness, but where is she to be found ; some say she dwells *here*, others *there* ; How this may be, I cannot tell ; this I know, she never dwelt long with me, in short, so little, that I

am led to doubt her existence. Were I asked to define happiness, I would say, it is only a chimera, which, like a gay dream, floats across the imagination, and exists—but in idea. Yet, let not my friend suppose, because I write in this manner, that I am a Sceptic, or that I possess a heart, so soured with the acid of indifference, as to forego the rich satisfaction of addressing those whom fate, or something else, has rendered most dear to me.”

* * * * *

The rest of this letter was written a fortnight after the last, in a hand that evidently proves increase of illness.

* * * * *

Wednesday, 10th of January.

“ A fortnight has elapsed, my dear friend, since the above was written, during which time I have been almost lost to myself! Since Sunday last I have been confined to my bed; and am afraid I shall be obliged to return to it after finishing your long delayed letter!—They have been blistering me for an inflammation on the lungs, and what with this hateful operation, and swallowing disgusting medi-

cines, I think they have nearly tired me—Though, I must confess I respire more freely since I underwent it. I am at present in a very reduced state, having previously taken the hot bath at 100 degrees of heat, which, probably, is the cause of my great languor and weakness. You will, I know, excuse my not saying much more at this period. You will most kindly remember me to your excellent mother, and all who sometimes think of me.

“ It is a sweet day, but the sun shines not on *me*; I am alone, and only able to heave a sad sigh for those who are far distant. Would that I had an Eolian Harp, or that I were within reach of the sounds of your piano.

“ God bless you and all those you love.

“ J. BLACKET.”

“ P. S. Perhaps *you* will answer me, though indeed it is what I have no right to expect, but I know you are charitable!

“ Alas! I have no *views*! Like many more fools, I began with what I could not accomplish—those I chose were too bold for my pencil.

“ I write with a bad pen, and poor palsied hand; therefore you must not attribute the scrawl to

indolence or indifference. Tell my Mentor, if you see him, I am very ill, and would be happy to hear from him.

“ Adieu.”

Inclosed will be found four more unpublished pieces—You know to whom those written in friendship’s cot, are appropriate.

FRIENDSHIP’S KISS,¹

A SONG,

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF A LADY.



SWEET, how sweet! the precious balm,
 Which drops from pity’s dewy eye;
 And oh! how sweet the tranquil calm,
 Which smoothes the winter’s stormy sky;
 But, ah! far sweeter is the bliss,
 That breathes in Friendship’s sacred Kiss!

¹ This song has been composed by Mr. Holmes, and is to be had of Lavinue, 26, New Bond Street.

Rich is the gem, which decks the crown,
 And rich the hope, which cheers the breast;
 Rich is the laurel of renown,
 And rich the tint that gilds the West.
 But, ah! far richer is the bliss,
 That breathes in Friendship's sacred Kiss.

Dear is the spot where Fancy dwells,
 And dear Contentment's rural bow'r;
 Dear is the cot, whose roof repels
 The angry blast and pelting show'r.
 But, ah! far dearer is the bliss,
 That breathes in Friendship's sacred Kiss.

STANZAS

Written in the Garden of FRIENDSHIP'S COT, while the Lady addressed was bewailing, in the silence of profound grief, a domestic calamity.

FORBEAR, ye warblers, oh! forbear!
 Nor trill thus pleas'd the joyous air;
 But let your panting bosoms swell,
 Some plaintive tale of woe to tell.

For, hark! where bursts affection's sigh,
 In anguish, from Matilda's breast;
 And see where glistens in her eye
 The scalding tear of banish'd rest.

Oh! then suspend the wanton note,
 And tune to grief each little throat;
 For precious are the drops which flow,
 To ease Matilda's breast of woe.

THE FAREWELL TRIBUTE,

ADDRESSED TO THE LADY IN THE FOREGOING
 POEM.

YE flow'rs, that scent the ambient breeze,
 And smiling grace these lowly beds;
 Ye sighing shrubs, ye murm'ring trees,
 That arch the path with pendent heads.

A wanderer, whom the frowning Fates
 Have shorn of health, comes here to tell
 The anguish, which the heart awaits,
 When sighing forth its last farewell!

Ye songsters of the bow'ry scene,
 Whose throats the hymn of gladness pour,
 While slowly steals each pause between
 * * * * * soft harmonious lore.

A wanderer, whom the frowning Fates,
 Have shorn of health, comes here to tell,
 The anguish which the heart awaits,
 When sighing forth its last farewell !

Thou sacred spot, where Friendship loves
 To smile with bright, benignant glow ;
 Where hospitality removes
 The cloud of grief, the gloom of wee.

A wanderer, whom the frowning Fates
 Have shorn of health, comes here to tell
 The anguish, which the heart awaits,
 When sighing forth his last farewell !

Enchanting softness, graceful fair,
 Of manners gentle as thy lays ;
 Whose strains can soothe the pangs of care,
 While fix'd attention homage pays.

A wanderer, whom the frowning Fates
Have shorn of health, comes here to tell
The anguish, which the heart awaits,
When sighing forth his last farewell!

Maternal sweetness! in whose mind,
Which all the godlike virtues share,
Dwells worth supreme, with sense refin'd;
But, ah! not more refin'd than fair.

A wanderer, whom the frowning Fates
Have shorn of health, comes here to tell
The anguish, which the heart awaits,
When sighing forth his last farewell!

J. BLACKET.

July 26th, 1809.

LETTER V.

Seaham, March 7th, 1810.

“ Friend of my Soul,”

“ THIS appellation, though borrowed, is most congenial with my feelings, and, as it has passed the ordeal *without censure*, I shall use it for the future *without ceremony*.—’Tis strange, yet true, that no correspondence on earth gives me more internal happiness than your’s; yet ’tis a labour almost beyond my pen to answer you! I can think volumes—I can write nothing; for, as my heart would fain interest itself in every sentence, I am under the necessity of continually checking this selfish advocate, whose pleadings merit, and therefore would beget, *contempt*. (Indeed, I do not understand you, will be your reply); and, indeed * * * * I have reason to thank fate that you do not! My feelings, my presumptuous wishes, must be

smothered with my memory in some lone chamber of the grave; where cares are crushed beneath the foot of Oblivion.

“ That part of your letter has thrilled to my heart more than once, where you say ‘ my piano you shall hear as often as you please.’ Grateful, truly grateful, as this passage is, I cannot but exclaim, Alas! I have heard it too often! My peace of mind seems centred, locked, in that piano; and the richest joy I experience is, that fancy touches the chords sometimes, when busy memory paints the cot of Friendship in all its happy colours.

“ Pardon me for not returning you my sincerest thanks for the music you sent me. You inquire if I could make it out? yes, I have made it out, so well, that I have drawled out nothing else since I received it. The reason why I troubled you for it was, that I recollected three parts of the words, and was anxious for the whole.

“ I have taught the songs to a few of the village brunettes, who are charmed with them; and, if you were down amongst us, you would hear both perhaps in the farm-yards, when the girls are milking.

“ Pray seal no more with ‘*pas pour moi* ;’ the device is good enough, but I plainly perceive the little fellow, like the Stygian giant, is labouring in vain. The heart may be tortured with captivity, but its chains cannot be broken. I have an equal aversion to the impression of the Balaam and wheelbarrow, the mottos of which I have forgot, if indeed I ever remembered them.

“ Views! views! views! Alas! poor Yorick, quite chap-fallen? No! not chap-fallen yet.—He can sing, if he cannot paint—but sings in *dying* notes, swan-like, if not so sweet. Subject—

One who loved, in view of the sea, which had very recently overwhelmed her lover.¹

* * * * *

BEND back thy course, thou rolling WAVE,
 And take this tear with thee;
 Convey it to *his* surf-lash'd grave,
 Who lives no more for me.

¹ This has been thought exquisite by all who have seen the MS.—The Editor trusts the opinion will be sanctioned by the Public.

Bend back thy course, thou ELAST, so dread!
 And take this sigh with thee;
 Waft it around *his* shroudless head,
 Who lives no more for me!

“ Ah! yes, my dear madam, I have vanity, in the first place, vanity enough to think this idea original; and, in the next, the far greater vanity, to think you will set it to music. Excuse me; the doctor has just paid me a visit, and insists on another blister.—I can write no more.

Farewell the tranquil mind; farewell content!
 Farewell the plumed pen, the jetty ink;
 Pride, pomp, and circumstance of prose and verse,
 Farewell!—Othello’s blister’s come.

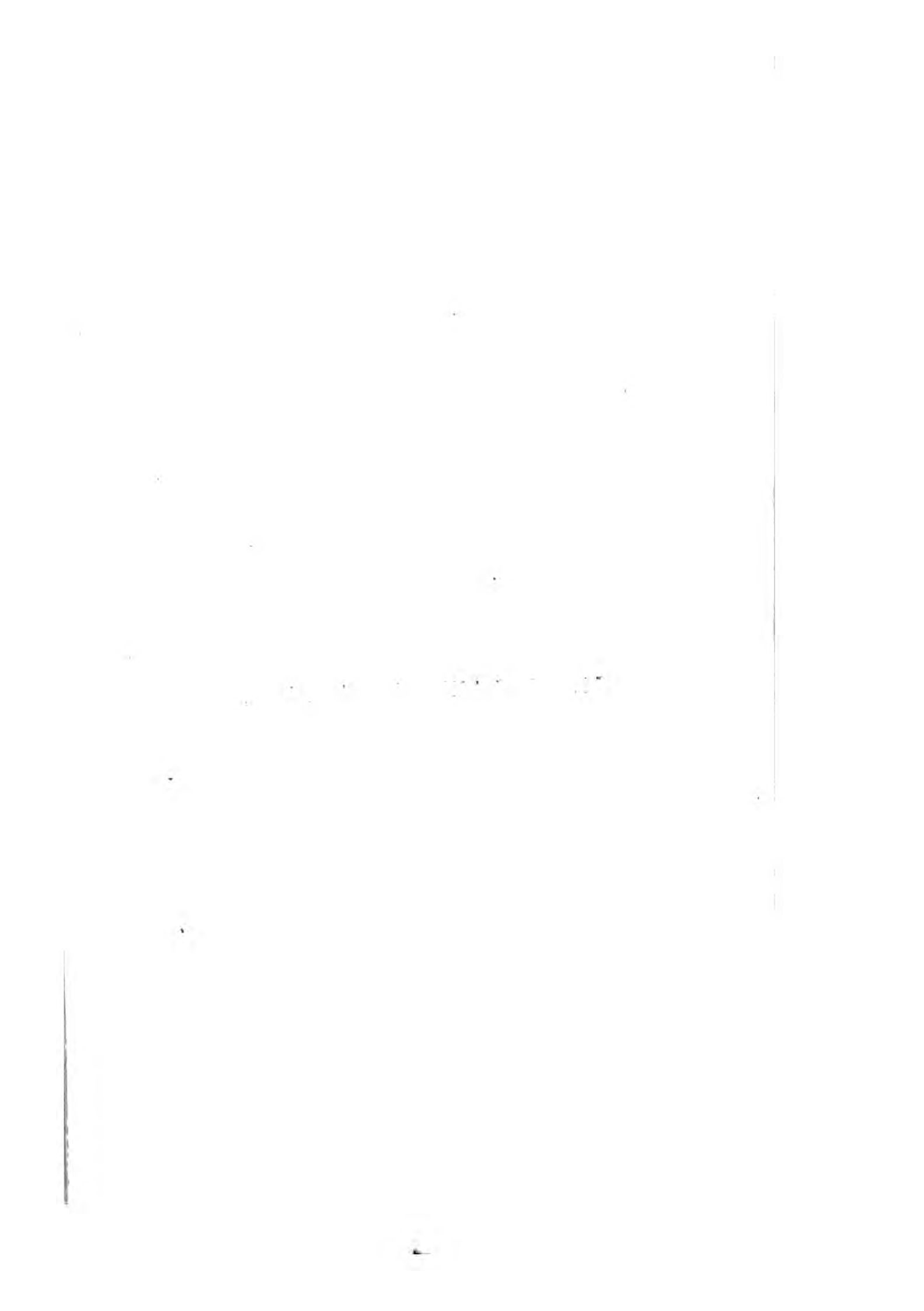
“ In consequence of which he subscribes himself in haste, *your’s ever*.—Kindest regards to all dear friends.

“ I am still in a very weak state, not having quitted my room these eight weeks.—My cough is troublesome, attended with sickness; but I hate to complain, except in case of blisters.

“ J. BLACKET.”

SERIES IV.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.



LETTER I.

TO MR. JOSEPH BLACKET.

BESIDES that this letter, from a distinguished friend¹ of the bard's, of high intellectual attainments, and benevolent feelings, is written with superior elegance, both of sentiment and expression, it cannot but prove of cordial use to all who may be visited by bodily or mental diseases.

February 28th, 1810.

“ IF the truest *solicitude*, the softest *sympathy*, had force over human malady, you would long since have lost the power of complaint. Your letters would breathe of renovated strength, of hope,

¹ To the pen of this correspondent the Editor is indebted for the feeling tributary lines, sent to Mr. Blacket previously to his quitting London.

of peace, and the bright visions of a thousand coming comforts; and the altars of *Hygeia* would be thickly strewn with votive offerings, so bright, so fair, that they should buy her everlasting smile. Among all the kind and great friends your talents and your virtues have acquired, since we parted, there is, there can be none, more sincerely interested, who follow your progress to convalescence with more anxiety, or more fervent aspirations, for its perfection, than the united habitants of 'Friendship's cot.' As *their organ*, I trust, that the assurances I send you of their constant remembrance, as well as my own, will be acceptable; for I know by experience that the earth offers no gem so precious, and no fruit so fair, as virtuous friendship; that it augments the pleasures of the happiest hour; and that it steals the point from sorrow's sharpest thorn: receive then into your tender and susceptible bosom this soothing balsam for sickness and calamity; let the knowledge how much you are estimated and approved, and that you are daily mentioned with that regard and affection, which, springing from the source of purity, must be immortal as its essence, be at once grateful and restorative. We have all mourned over your recent sufferings, and we all hail the genial change a few days has produced in the temperature of the air, from the hope that its influence will be potent in your favour; never have

I know a winter so calculated to distress an invalid by the most trying changes, which scarce the *robust* could bear ; for myself, I have suffered cruelly, and been the slave of nearly constant indisposition from cold, cough, inflammation on the lungs, and the train of evils induced by these pestilent varieties. No wonder then, that you, formed of less resisting materials, should have bent lower to the wintry storm ; but, thank God ! I trust its rage is nearly spent, and that we shall all shoot out with the coming Spring, in new and lasting vigour. Already the birds, you so sweetly chid, have begun their mingled harmony ; the buds are bursting round my little parlour-window, and a soft verdure is stealing over our small domain. I am not convinced but that this is the most enchanting season of the goodly year : when Nature, bursting from the fetters of contracting Winter, gives the first smile of verdant promise, exciting hope and joy, and Christian charity ; for it warms the human bosom, (where a heart inhabits) and raises the mind with gratitude, and with benevolence.

“ Your letter, which reached your Mentor on one of his visits to us, last night, gave me a pleasure I shall not attempt to describe. It incloses precious jewels, to enrich and adorn the muse ; but of them you will hear from such abler hands, that,

although I fancy I have taste to admire, I cannot attempt to praise them; but I am delighted to observe, that you had the power to copy them, and to write so much at *large*, and in a hand so fair and beautiful; this proves to me, that you are better; and I hope, and believe, that, with every day's return, you will find an increase of health and strength. I extremely approve of your intention of taking the snail's milk.* I have known them of the greatest service, and it is impossible they can do harm; if boiled in milk, they are too heavy for your stomach. It is a good way to take about a dozen snails fresh from the garden, crush them, and put them into a tea-pot, and pour boiling water over them—let them stand the usual time that *tea* is left to infuse, and then pour the liquid from them into a cup, and sweeten with sugar, adding the milk or cream, that may make it agreeable to your taste. The grand fault, my dear friend, in all these preparations is, that people use them as medicines, whereas they should be taken *as food*, and, with the addition of bread, will afford nearly as much nourishment, as, without exercise, the human frame requires. A most excellent food for you also,

* These remarks are inserted, because they may prove serviceable to other sufferers, though the malady of dear Mr. B. was too deeply seated to find them restorative.

would be the sago made from potatoe powder; it is greatly nourishing, and allays irritation most powerfully; a little lemon-peel put with it, and the *agreeable* portion of sugar, renders it pleasant to the palate without wine, which, I suppose, they do not allow you. You say, you still continue to spit blood; which I should suppose is occasioned by some strain upon the vessels when you cough. I long laboured under a similar inconvenience, from which I was almost miraculously relieved by the use of Ruspini's styptic, as I have been from every partial return; and I always have a bottle in the house. Most seriously I recommend it to your trial; it has no more taste than spring water. I have prescribed it in very dangerous cases, and ever found it *blessed*. But, as well as diet and medicine, I must speak to you of what is infinitely of more consequence than either, and this is the *frame of mind*; it is absolutely necessary to your *complete* recovery, that you preserve tranquillity of spirit; and even this, I assert from experience, may be gained, without *your talents*. I have felt an equal *enthusiasm*, and have let its frenzied intoxication feed on the springs of life; if it failed to destroy, it much enfeebled, and exhausted powers, that with more prudence had been more profitable. Reason at last whispered, that, to prolong the pleasures of imagination, they must be sometimes curbed. Still, I have a stomach for all your '*horrors*,' and

could adopt them, were I not convinced they are a nest of young assassins tearing and destroying the bosom that gave them birth ; as such, they must not have my love, or even my pardon, unless you undertake to expiate their guilt by devoting the next three months to ‘ softly sweet and Lydian measures ;’ ‘ such as may gently steal upon your soul, and never waken the *tumultuous passions*.’ When you can pour down Port wine, and make my little cottage shake about my ears, as the author of * * * * * did last summer, you may again call up your ‘ spirits from the vasty deep,’ plunge to the flaming centre of old Pluto’s court, and breathe the monstrous ‘ CURSE,’ that frightens nature : till then, I doom thee to the tender shade, where contemplation and philosophy alone reside. I would not have you idle, but your strains must be ‘ soft as the shepherd’s pipe upon the mountain, when all his little flock’s at feed before him.’ You must sing the sweets of pastoral life, domestic pleasures, of nature’s bounty, and of friendship’s joys ; from remembered sorrows, you must turn a steadfast gaze upon the blessings that have followed them : fame, friends, fortune, and affection, all stand with open arms to bid thee welcome back to health and to felicity. How fair a dawn is opening on thee ! and there is no point of mortal wishing, believe me, to which thou mayest not aspire, and be *sure to gain* by steady persevering

principle and prudent action. Few men in early life have acquired such friends, and what a prospect does their energies, united to your own, open before you! even, all that your heart can wish! I do not exactly say with our modern philosophers, that a man need NEVER die, if he exerted his energies to live; but I do firmly believe, that the spirit may force from the body much of the dust and ashes, that cling about it; that, by giving up the thoughts to agreeable and enlivening images, to a view of the guardian benevolence of the universal Protector, to admiration of the beauties he displays to our sight, as objects to employ and to amuse our senses, and steal them from our mortal suffering—by deep reflection on our own peculiar benefits and advantages;—from how many dangers we have been rescued,—from how many sorrows relieved,—and of how many blessings rendered possessors.—I do really believe, that we may surmount much of the weakness of human nature; that sickness will often fly before the conviction, that we have a physician, who can heal, even when human aid is vain; that, without his divine permission, not even a sparrow falls; and that, whatever he does, he does wisely, and for the sole purpose of *bestowing happiness!* Under the confidence this certitude inspires, pain becomes softened, the mind triumphs over matter, and a Phoenix rises to life, to health, and all the

blessings of prolonged existence. I fear you will say I have sent you a sermon; and yet, if in your countenance, and in your effusions, I have rightly read you, you will not throw it thanklessly away; if you do not admit my arguments, you cannot dislike their motive, and, if I do you only the good of making you for five minutes forget your pain, it will prove I am right, and gratify my heart still more than my judgment.

* * * * *

“ If, without discomfort, you can from time to time send me a few lines, I shall be most happy to receive them; but do not think either this letter, or my former address, requires a reply, that may be onerous to you: perhaps you already write more than is good for you; and to increase your evil in that way, would be contrary to my own principles. Adieu, accept my truest good wishes, and believe me, with regard and esteem,

Much your's,

MATILDA DE * * * * *

THE following fragment of a letter, which was found among the posthumous papers, within one of the folds of the preceding, was undoubtedly intended as the commencement of its answer, to which purpose indeed the sentiments are appropriate.

* * * * *

“ I have just crawled out of bed with a full determination to answer your letter, which I have perused and re-perused with the most interesting delight. It has been to me a source of happiness; and, though affliction’s iron hand has been laid on me with distracting torture, yet I have found moments when the keenest pangs have fled like visionary terrors, when directing my eager eye o’er its pages. It is a precious token of the most refined friendship; and I shall ever consider it an epistle of intrinsic and eternal value! I thank you for it a thousand times, and shall ever venerate the writer and the spot where it was written.

“ Yes, my dear Madam, you may justly censure me for applying myself to the most gloomy prospects of haggard imagery :¹ I feel my error,

¹ Alluding to some of his poems written at Seaham of a sublime character, but calculated rather to aggravate than

but cannot remedy it. Yet, notwithstanding my fixed opinion regarding the SULLEN FANCY, that loves to see the Furies, and hear the horrid agents of destruction scream in the blazing air, I still inherit a belief, that the grand causes of gloomy melancholy, and internal love of shade, frequently proceed from nature, who, maddened at the frivolity of her disobedient children, stamps on the infantine foreheads of some part of her offspring the deep-marked characters of despondency and care."

* * * * *

soothe his disorder. Such as the "Curse," the "Captive Demon," and other pieces, which will speedily be presented to the reader's startled, yet gratified fancy.

SERIES V.

SERIES V.

THE buoyancy of his spirit, however, was wonderful. At every respite from the overbearing powers of his disease, all the forces of his mind rallied almost, as it should seem, to the unconsciousness of body. And, if the allusion may be indulged, when the ambushed enemy was feeding upon his vitals, and drinking the very life-blood; when the foe of life rested but for a single hour upon his arms, the harassed sufferer took advantage of it to sally forth with renovated alacrity; and, when the day seemed lost for ever, flushed the hero with the hope of becoming a conqueror.—Such are the reliefs, which a benignant Providence allows, even in its most awful visitations.

The foregoing reflections have been suggested by the playful spirit shown in a letter, with which the correspondent, to whom it was addressed, has favoured the Editor.

LETTER I.

“ Dear Friend,

“ YOUR’S of the 18th afforded me much gratification in the perusal; and I have only to regret that my dull, inactive brain, so long sunk in lethargic stupor, is at present incapable of sending you ‘ a wholesome answer—my wit’s diseased,— Yet I most cordially thank you for your kind *wishes* for my peace and welfare.—May they be verified!

* * * * *

“ I know you will wish as soon as possible, to hear how it fares with your poor friend; therefore, without more ado, I shall turn egotist, and briefly a ‘ plain unvarnish’d tale deliver;’ in which, though I shall not dwell ‘ on moving accidents by flood and field;’ nor on the ‘ Anthropophagi and

men, whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders,' yet you may expect something to 'make your knotted and combined locks to part, and each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine.' So, giving you fair warning, and re-cutting my pen, I thus proceed.

“ *Head Quarters, Seaham, Feb. 2d, 1810.*

“ Madam,

“ Since the dispatch of my last, which was forwarded to General MENTOR by my AIDECAMP, Count Doublerapp, the whole BODY under my command has been in a state of the greatest *disorder!* and, though I have indefatigably exerted myself, both night and day, to quell the mutinies, and establish discipline, I am sorry to state, that every endeavour has proved ineffectual! However, rest most assured, that no glittering bauble of ambition, nor promise of unmerited greatness, shall make me swerve from my duty! While the HEAD exists, the *hand* shall act in its defence, however rebellious the *minor powers* may prove. You have already received information of my unhappy campaign in Yorkshire:—a campaign that terminated as fatally, as it commenced gloriously!

“ The *brave spirits*, who attended me in that hazardous enterprize, sunk under the accumulating extremes of pleasure and fatigue; and the marshes of *Tunstill*, like those of *Walcheren*, are the pestilential graves in which *my proudest hopes* lie buried!—On my retreat to this place, in order to take up my winter-quarters, I found the fort in excellent repair, abundance of provision, and forage carefully stowed in every little baggage waggon’s pockets.¹ In fact, I felt fully convinced, that the outer works were impregnable; and, strongly confiding in the heroic valour of my remaining few, mounted, in despite of caution, the battlements at midnight; and, firing a salute, in hopes to make the enemy tremble, fixed on their loftiest heights the banner of resolution, and descended, laughing at the doubts of Brigadier Wheezing-cough, who commands my artillery! But, alas!

Poor mortality!

Of what thin silken texture hast thou wove

Man’s proudest hopes.—*See landscapes in verse by Mentor.*

“ I had no sooner quitted the ramparts, and entered my tent, than Field-marshal Fever (whom, previous to my departure for Yorkshire, I

¹ I allude to the generous lasses, many of whom saved nuts and oranges for me on my return to the place of my nativity.

had cashiered) entered with a battalion of the Hectic Flushes, and imperiously made me a prisoner. I remained under a heavy guard till midnight, when Colonel Sweat entered with a party of 'Icelandic friends, and disencumbered me of my fetters. This feat performed, he withdrew me to the Western tower, and, for a month, I was hourly exposed to hot skirmishes of the most inveterate *nature!* but, at length, my friends failed me, and I was left one day to *march, countermarch, move in échelon, and charge bayonet,* all in three seconds! 'What man dare:—I dared!' but it meant nothing!—BLISTER, one of my antagonists, gave me three wounds on the breast, at the same time one of Prince EDEN's hussars gave me five pills to cool my courage! 'Twas madness to fight against such odds!—I yielded!—They forced me to strip;—I did so; when loss of strength in the unequal combat consigned me over to the centinel, SLEEP!

“ Thank fortune, I am now on my *parole,* a piece of service, for which I am indebted to Lady * * * * *. But the fort is still in possession of the enemy; and I am utterly at a loss to know whether it will be perfectly repaired this Spring or not; however, that rests with the GREAT GENERAL.—Forgive me, I mean not to be irreverent!

¹ Iceland Moss.

God forbid!—This is one of my best evanescent intervals, and I make the most of it.

“ Madam,

“ I subscribe myself your’s, faithfully,

“ J. BLACKET.”

THIS, to his friend, ¹ Mr. Morley, bears marks of a similar mental elasticity, as consolidating and compressing what went before on the subject of his health, &c:—It was written a few days after the preceding.

Seaham, near Sunderland, Jan. 14th, 1810.

“ Very dear Friend,

“ Half a century, as near as possible, has elapsed, since the receipt of your last; during which period, I have been *here, there*, and the Lord knows *where*, just shovelled about like a *pedlar’s pack*; and, although I have wished a hundred times to write to you, and have a hundred times had it in agitation, yet there was always some ungenerous circumstance thrust its busy head into my company, and, clapping me on the shoulder, called my immediate attention

¹ Young Morley is among the multitudes who justly admire Mrs. Siddons; and indeed Kemble. See Preface.

another way! But now, my dear fellow, have at you! how are you? where are you? what are you about?—alive and merry, I hope.

* * * * *

“ You took a devil’s-ditch leap when you ran your head into the matrimonial noose! *Any* money but matrimony! say the good old virtuous batchelors;—but, what am I prating about? like a poor snarling cynical philosopher, I am condemning the very essence of felicity and contentment. Like a viper, biting against a file, I am censuring that happy, *iron state*, which none of my teeth will make any impression on. But don’t you really think now, my dear West, that you played Melpomene a complete rover’s trick? She, whom you loved, whom you praised, whom you acknowledged to be more beautiful than the rest of her species; whose bosom you have so repeatedly reclined your distracted care-mad head on; whose smiles have consoled you; whose caresses have made your heart bolt up and down for joy! Nay, whose very tears were a source of the highest gratification! I say, don’t you think you used the poor lady ill?—By the gods! if she meets with such another ungrateful lover, who, like you, will desert her delightful company, for that of some *human daughter of Eve*, she will be driven to

that frantic desperation, so peculiarly her own; and, in the moment of bitter reflection, terminate her existence by burying that dagger, which you have so repeatedly applauded her for wielding, in her own distracted bosom!!—And now, my good friend, after thumping you with my *pen* more severely than ever I did with the *gloves*, suppose I fill myself a bumper of my noble, truly noble, patron's wine—Heaven bless him! and drink you and your *wife's* good health.—Come, here goes,—may you be as long happy, as the days are short! may you grow in wisdom, as you grow in years! may rectitude be your motto, and *independence of mind* your standard! May you both meet the frowns of the *world* with a smile; and, whenever it¹ feels inclined to vex and torment you, may you always possess the spirit to snap your fingers, and exclaim, I care not that for you.

“ And now for a short account of myself: What a miserable dog have I been since I left town? Illness, illness, my dear West, has been my almost constant bosom companion! I have been drenched in hot baths, till I am reduced to what anatomists very properly call a skeleton. I have had the good fortune, however, to meet with the best friends in

¹ I mean the world, *not your wife*.

the world,—friends, who have done every thing for me; who, though out of all measuring my superiors in rank, have made me as one of themselves. Beings too of a very high order of mind, as well as circumstances.

* * * * *

“ About two months ago I took a journey into Yorkshire with my niece, a most charming girl. I was determined to go in style, and therefore posted it. We spent four days at Durham, viewing the cathedral and the bishop’s castle; places of great antiquity, and Gothic, or rather Saxon architecture, but of which, as I have given my brother John, whom you often see, as well as Mr. Pratt, a description, I will not go over the particulars again here.—I will just observe generally of these grand productions of art, that they drew my mind from every worldly contemplation, and I seemed only to live in ages back, when nature was just emerging from her secret cells. These monuments, which, perhaps, are scarcely surpassed in Europe, have made a lasting impression on my memory; and, during the short stay I made there, I breathed many a secret wish for my dear paternal friend, and you and a few more whose company, on this occasion, I certainly should have enjoyed to the height of ecstasy! The

bishop of Durham condescends to be my patron; he sent me five guineas for my little volume the first time; and, after he had perused it, ten more! and I was permitted to take every survey of the castle, both old and new, as leisurely as I might desire. The success of my specimens has far exceeded my expectations. It has purchased for me respect and favor; it has put into my pocket, since its commencement, several hundreds of pounds; Princes, Princesses, Lords, and Ladies, have subscribed liberally. One distinguished person, * * * Lord¹ * * * * * sent me fifty pounds—a right noble man! and I receive the most flattering encouragement from all parties, who seem eager to add to, and increase, my felicity.

“ We left Durham, and proceeded to Darlington, where I staid two days to plumb those curious pits, called the Hell Kettles. John will give you particulars of these also. So I shall proceed to say, I ascertained the depth of two, and went instantly rattling off to my mother’s. You cannot apprehend, my dear West, what a dust we raised in the tiny village, by merely passing through in a post-chaise! little ragged brats with neither hat nor shirt, came running like as many pigs round a pea-stack.

¹ His Lordship’s positive, but generous injunctions, alone constrain the Editor to conceal his name.

Inquiry was on foot:—How was Mr. Blacket? how was the *young poet*? How was this? and how was that? I shook every old friend by the hand!—gave all the girls a kiss! and entered my dear old mother's cottage. Your poor destitute companion in Boswell Court, who had nothing but his and your 'good spirits to clothe and feed him,' was at this moment metamorphosed into a happy dashing young fellow! every person gazed, gaped, but respected him; and he respected every person. It was a felicity destined not long to last; for, alas! a fortnight's hard, but social exercise, in the sports of the season, brought on a cold, which yet hangs heavily on my lungs; and which, since my return to this place, has confined me to a bed of sickness! However, I hope shortly to be capable of travelling, and I am wished for dearly, and much wanted in London; therefore, as soon as possible, you may expect to have a squeeze of the hand from him, who has given you many a hearty one, though not quite so distant as now. What a pretty mistake you made in your letter, not to tell me where you lived, nor who you had married!—Oh! 'twas vile!—I insist upon an answer to this, and beg of you not to forget these particulars. Believe me, I feel a wish to know who is the partner my friend has chosen to sweeten the cup of life; for you know, in spite of all my ill-natured snarling, that I love the happy

state you have entered on. Blacket may become richer, and be possessed of more valuable friends than when he was married, but will he be more happy? No! no!—That state, which philosophers envy, and all strive to attain, is only to be found in the sweet converse of a bosom friend!

* * * * *

“ And now, my good friend, wishing you and your's a happy 1810, I subscribe myself, with pleasure, though in pain,

Your faithful friend, and once happy companion,

“ J. BLACKET.”

TROLLIBOB.

A

SKETCH OF BURLESQUE TRAGEDY.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TROLLIBOB,
PRINCE OF SCANDINAVIA.

THIS, and the following, were among the sports of his pen, in those intervals from lassitude and pain, which his insidious disorder allowed.

They will serve to prove the variety, as well as the richness, of his talents; which would certainly have accomplished whatsoever his genius prompted him to undertake, in the different styles of composition.

ACT I.—SCENE 1.

Trollibob discovered seated on his throne, with a number of attendants, soldiers, &c. in waiting.

TROLLIBOB.

UNEQUALL'D in the calendar of time
Stands this important, dark, half-worn-out hour!

An hour, which winds up all my ravell'd hopes,
 Or makes th'entangled clue still more perplex'd!
 An hour, which swan-neck'd Prophecy has mark'd
 The crisis of my fate!—In short, my friends,
 An hour, in which our goddess-smiling queen
 Thinks fit to give our spacious realm an heir;
 Or, by a nineteenth daughter's unwish'd birth,
 Make Scandinavia, and her monarch mad!
 Let silence reign then through our spacious dome;
 Nor cough, nor sneeze, be heard, on pain of death,
 Till this important brat be brought to light.

Enter GLUMBACH.

GLUMBACH.

Immortal Trollibob, than Lybian Jove
 More honour'd and renown'd! to thee I kneel,
 And kneeling, bow, ev'n till my sconce resound
 Against the sacred marble that sustains
 Thy still more sacred throne!—Oh! hear me, Sire!

TROLLIBOB.

Dost think I'm deaf;—or rather, dost thou think
 I have not cleans'd these spacious ears of mine,
 That thus thou bellowest?

GLUMBACH.

Forbid it gods!

My sovereign thick of hearing—impious thought!
Which cakes the loyal blood within these veins,
And makes one freeze, though standing in the rays
Of ten-fold majesty.

TROLLIBOB.

Come to my arms!

Thou less tremendous, than obsequious, man!
Forgive my harshness—well thou know'st, my friend,
I love to weigh thee in the scales of sternness.

GLUMBACH.

I hope I'm sterling?

TROLLIBOB.

Of such pond'rous weight,
That were the virtues of this crouded world,
Except mine own, plac'd in the other scale,
They would not balance thee!—But, Glumbach, say,
For much I wish—yet, when I come to think,
I dread to hear—what news from Peppercorn?

GLUMBACH.

Of dang'rous mention, and of import great !
 Young Bullybobble, flush'd with gay success,
 Comes cantering on, in spoliation rich !
 Your pigs and sheep feel his advance with pain,
 For thousands hourly kick, beneath the knives
 Of his rude myrmidons, who stalk unscar'd,
 And take a corn-field at a single stride !

TROLLIBOB.

Ditch-litter'd whelp ! that bites my courser's heels,
 And frights my ministers with hoarse *bow wows*,
 What project can he meditate ?

GLUMBACH.

None, my liege,
 That need alarm your pulse. Full well, you know,
 A force like your's, just nineteen million strong,
 Can ne'er be eat by rats !

TROLLIBOB.

Yet *there's* the damn !
 Was it not said by Balderpate, the witch,

That when the king of nineteen million men
Should hear a nineteenth daughter's infant squeak,
His crown should grace a beggar's cannister?

GLUMBACH.

Poh! she was drunk or mad :—unscowl that brow,
And dis-akimbo these self-fettering arms ;
Lest Bullybobble hear the wretched tale,
And triumph in your weakness.

TROLLIBOB.

Impious imp !
The dross of all my Scandinavian scum !
Has he to learn that Trollibob still wields
A king's sconce-cleaving blade?—What, though
'twas told
By all the babbling augurs of my realm,
That this my kingdom's un-heir'd crown should fall
On some illiterate and round-shoulder'd head !
Yet sure the stars could never point at him ?

GLUMBACH.

'Twere sacrilege to think so.

Enter KLOPIRA.

KLOPIRA.

Health to the king!

TROLLIBOB.

What means this smirk upon thy deep-roug'd cheeks?
Speak, say, how fares my queen?

KLOPIRA.

Just got her bed.—

TROLLIBOB.

A boy!

KLOPIRA.

Yes—a boy.

TROLLIBOB.

Then Bullybobble
To thee and all thy stridling slaves, good night!
The tale of wizards thus I stamp to hell
With kingly rage!——my name is Trollibob!

(To the Attendants.)

Smile all, you have our leave,—run, mount the walls,
 From whence make heaven with our artillery shake,
 And Bullybobble dance the reel of sweat!
 Ply well your matches till the touch-holes melt,
 And brazen streams in spouting extasy
 Pave all our streets; and, on each sandal fix
 A sole of lasting wear!—Provoke the drum,
 And sound your trumpets till they rouse the gods,
 To drink my babe's good health!—Go, tap your casks,
 And fuddle till the sun himself expire,
 And stagg'ring nature close her drunken eyes!
 Let pyramids be rais'd, whose heads may stretch
 Beyond the spheres, and catch the steps of Jove!
 But, tell me, is the boy of nervous limb?

KLOPIRA.

Athletic, as young Hercules, my liege,
 As soon as born he jump'd upon his legs,
 And cried with voice which speaks a trumpet's lungs,
 "Bring me some turtle soup!"—then turning round,
 With arms encompass'd thus, he sought the fire;

And, as he pac'd with firm-set step the floor,
I mark'd the stride of Trollibob!

Exit KLOPIRA.

TROLLIBOB.

Fate, thou stern goddess, who, in marble cas'd,
Thyself, invulnerable:—lookest down
On vulnerable man! receive, receive
The homage of my helmet!—bend, I sha'n't,
Depend upon't!—for Trollibob to kneel,
Would be a crime, beyond what demons practice!

Enter CLOUTILLA, in great perturbation.

Well, what would'st thou?

CLOUTILLA.

I-come,-great Majes-ty,
To utter-words-in your imp-imp-imp-erial ears,
Which should be told to brutes, and all such like!

TROLLIBOB,—*starting.*

Hah!

CLOUTILLA.

Our sovereign lady, good, my liege,

Sent forth Klopira ere the child was born,
With tidings void of truth:—the *boy's a girl!*

TROLLIBOB,—*greatly agitated.*

Close thy curs'd lips! and take thy person hence!
I've heard enough,—contagion's on thy tongue,
And I have suck'd the poison of thy words!

Exit CLOUTILLA.

Oh, agony!—Ha! hist! see! hark! look there!
Where sinks in earth my hope's poor bleeding ghost!
Cas'd in its shroud of snow!—Oh! 'tis a sight
Enough to make your eyes bolt down your throats,
And all your knees go *nick nock* just like mine.
Glumbach, where art thou?—where's my old arm-
chair?

My spirits leave me, drop by drop, like sweat.
I'm sick! I'm dizzy!—Oh! I'm wond'rous queer,
And must sit down, for Bullybobble triumphs!

(He is seated in a chair.)

Oh sad reverse! oh horrible extreme
Of blissful joy, and blissless misery!
Hang each your heads, my friends, and look as pale,
As though you had been white-wash'd! doff your hose,

And send them to the dyer's with my gloves!
 Heave heavy sighs, and let your groans burst forth,
 Till this my spacious hall resemble most
 The roar of Niagara!—wheel me off!
 I hear the death-watch tick :—farewell, my friends,
 I go to take my bed, perchance to die.

Exit, wheeled off by GLUMBACH.

The Attendants disperse, the Troops remain.

BULLYBOBBLE, *coming forward.*

Perchance to die!—Oh! by the rage-fann'd torch,
 Which drinks the oil from my loud thumping heart,
 There's no perchance shall save thy bacon now!
 Reviling braggart! un-heroic clod!
 Despair go with, and throat him on his couch!
 Aitches and cramps assail his every joint,
 And make his oh's drown my exulting shouts.

KRAK.

Illustrious front of brass! we all have smelt
 How rank this despot stinks.

BULLYBOBBLE.

What think ye then?

TINDER.

That he's too tall by the head!

BULLYBOBBLE.

Stand ye prepar'd
To second me in all my just resolves?

TINDER.

My blade is edg'd, and, like a bull-dog fierce,
Waits only for the "*Go it.*"

KRAK.

Mine's the same,—
Would you make crowdy of the tyrant's bones,
Speak but the word, they're pounded into dust,
And smoking on your trencher!

TINDER,—*retiring.*

I have done.

BULLYBOBBLE.

Thy ardent zeal to serve thy leader, Krak,
Sometimes sets fire to an ungovern'd tongue!
Think'st thou the hero, who so lately fought

And wallop'd Dundernoddle black and blue,
 Then gave him back his charger, and himself,
 With half a crown to pay the turnpike gates,
 Would stoop ingloriously to borrow nails,
 To scratch an itching pate?—believe it not!
 It were unjust to murder Trollibob;
 Like friends we came, and like friends he receiv'd us;
 Nor knows he that the troops, which guard his gates,
 Grasp fast the sabres of his mortal foe!
 But, let him in his drowsy ign'rance sleep
 Till this, *my* faulchion, on his head proclaim
 The vengeful gashes of insulted valour.

KRAK.

Belov'd of Mars! to thy skull-splitting brand
 I yield the scepter'd humbug; but, entreat,
 That when thy razor greets his un-mown chops,
 Mine may be drawn across the throat of Glumbach?

BULLYBOBBLE.

To answer this requires a pause of length:
 Therefore a pause of length may be expected.

(*A dead pause.*)

That Glumbach's vile demerits, merit death,

Is no less true, than that the world's an ass.
 That interest is the mine, in which all dig,
 Is no less certain. Although *guilty* then,
 It follows not that I should *execute*.—
 As SELF, the *lawyer*, whispers in mine ear
 The promise of a *fee* to let him live,
 I give to him existence. *Aside.*

To KRAK.

I have cast
 An eye of foresight o'er the page of lives,
 And find that Glumbach's lungs must still wheeze on.
 That there's a something pinn'd to this resolve,
 Will, to discover, need no vulture's eye;
 But, what—suffice it that you're free to guess;
 And now, to each your several charges haste:
 Set careful watch, be wary, and mark well
 The strength and texture of the fresh supplies;
 Cry Bullybobble down—up Trollibob,
 And show you're men of daring enterprise,
 With art enough to trace a leader's steps
 Through projects intricate and mazy wiles,
 O'er glory's five-barr'd gates, ambition's lofty styles.
Exeunt severally.

CARE AND THE BACCHANALIAN.

Scene, a tavern : the hero drunk.

BACCHANALIAN (*sings.*)

He, accustom'd to repine,
Never felt the warmth of wine ;
But the generous-hearted soul,
Loves to revel near a bowl.

(*Enter A WAITER.*)

Waiter, spring a bottle more,
Add it to my length'ning score ;
Love the cheerful breast inspires,
Quick, a bumper to its fires.
Beauty calls—another fill—
May Laura's eyes their thousands kill !

(*Drinks,—a knocking heard*)

Answer, who is he that knocks ?

(*Enter CARE.*)

CARE.

'Tis old Care with snowy locks.

BACCHANALIAN.

Vex me not, but disappear !
 What the devil dost thou here ?

CARE.

I am come, sir, from the farm ;
 The storm has done a deal of harm !

BACCHANALIAN.

Let it roar,
 Let it roar,
 Fill me up a bumper more !

CARE.

Sir, the flood so horrid deep,
 Has washed away one half your sheep !

BACCHANALIAN.

Such the water-bibber's fate,
 Lay the wethers out in state ;
 They were drown'd ; such death be mine ;
 They in water ; I in wine.

CARE.

But the lightning, people say,
 Has consum'd your ricks of hay.

BACCHANALIAN.

Care, I hate thee! hence, away!
 In the room no longer stay:
 Seest thou not my eyes are sunk,
 Seest thou not that I am drunk?
 Dost not hear my jovial roar,
 Heard so loud, and oft before?
 Hence and plague my soul no more.

CARE.

Stocks are low!—arise, my son,
 Strive to live, or be undone.

BACCHANALIAN.

Well thou know'st I scorn to think.

CARE.

Would that you would scorn to drink!

BACCHANALIAN.

Curses on thy ugly scowl!
 Look within my sparkling bowl!
 Is there aught that can impart
 Equal rapture to the heart?

CARE.

In your bowl *I scorn* to look,
Give me water from the brook.

BACCHANALIAN.

Gods alone get drunk with wine,
Clods can never be divine!
Waiter quick resume thy work,
Instant draw another cork!

CARE.

Bailiffs watching at the gate!

BACCHANALIAN.

Let 'em take the whole estate.

CARE.

Moses, Aaron, are at hand!

BACCHANALIAN.

Let 'em take the mortgag'd land.

CARE.

Oh! Sir, when you yield your breath,
How will you meet the stroke of death?

BACCHANALIAN.

With a bottle of Champaign ;
When he strikes, I'll strike again.
Like a toper without dread,
I'll fling the bottle at his head !
Hast thou aught beside to say ?

CARE.

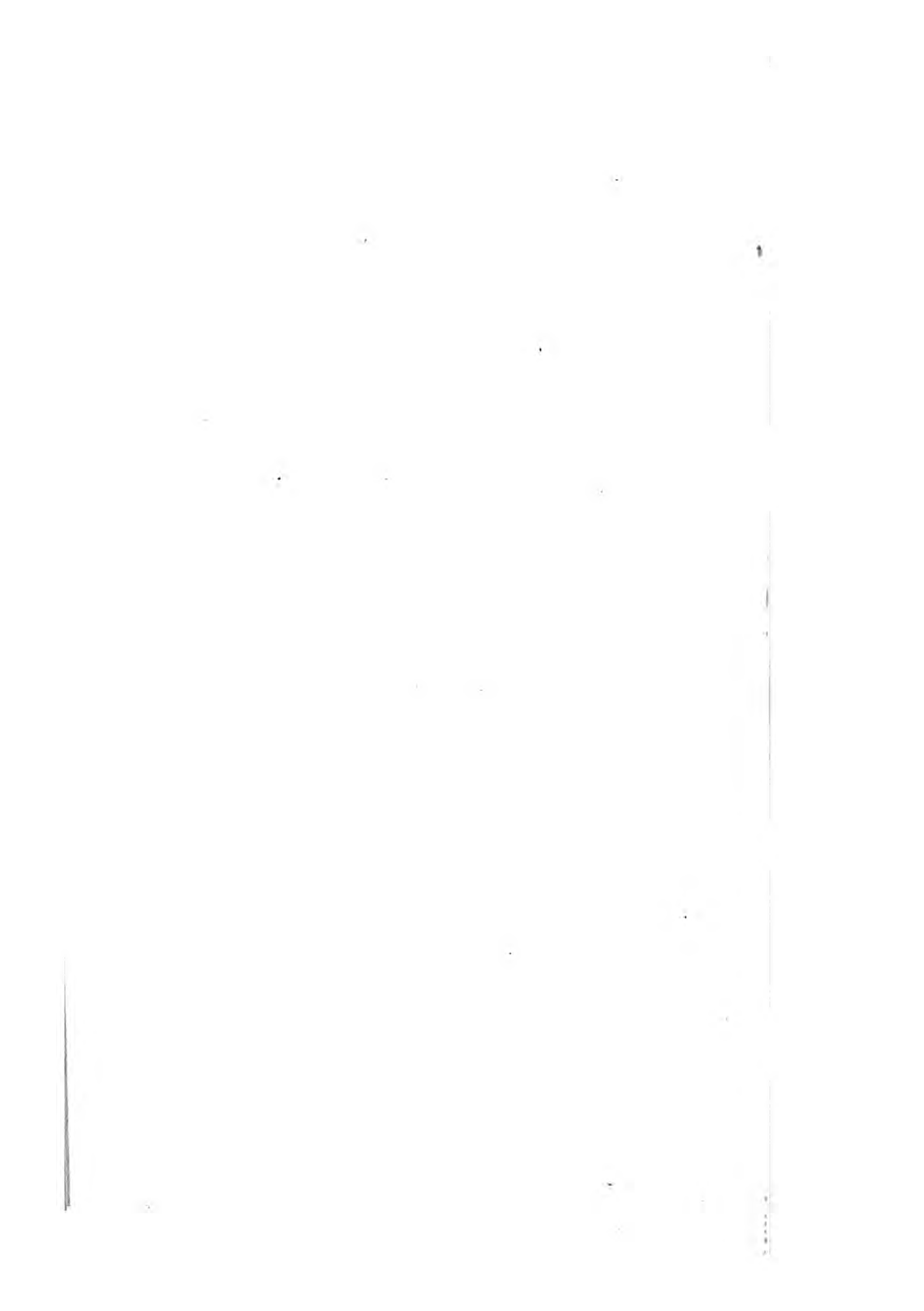
No, I wish you, sir, good day. (*Exit.*)

BACCHANALIAN.

Bravo ! let not man despair,
Generous wine can conquer Care.

SERIES VI.

LETTERS FROM * * * * *



SERIES VI.

THE following short letters and poetical pieces find a place here, not only because they are tributary to the genius of Mr. Blacket, but because they are specimens of *precocity* in talents rarely equalled. They were written by a young lady, now only in the *eleventh year of her age*, whose mental gifts and early attainments in exercising and enriching them, whether in compositions of verse or prose, as well as a skill in music and the languages, without losing any charm of childhood's simplicity, so far surpass anything the Editor has ever yet met, as an example of premature and diversified talents, that he can scarcely regret being denied the privilege of revealing the name of the authoress, or particularising her exertions, which, though witnessed, and confessed by Dr. Mavor, and a very numerous circle of

acquaintance, would almost justify disbelief in those who have had less opportunity of knowing the truth of the assertion. The Editor, therefore, will only add, that, unless another untimely fate should check the powers of this extraordinary child, those powers, which are of a progressive kind, will ratify the truth of the assertion.

EDITOR.



LETTER I.

TO MR. PRATT.

“ Sir,

“ MY sincerést thanks are due to you for your very obliging present, from which I promise myself much entertainment and instruction. Several parts of ‘Bedlam’ reminded me very much of the ‘Child of Fancy,’¹ who has so beautifully delineated

¹ Collins.

all the human *Passions*. The lighter effusions may be somewhat inferior in merit, but, like diamond sparks, they show the richness of the Mine to which they belong. The little piece entitled 'Lady Jane,' is admirably finished, in its style; and for simplicity, beauty, and elegance of thought, is, in my opinion, equalled by few. Pardon this tiresome letter, and believe me,

"Sir, your obliged humble servant.

"30th of June, 1809."

TO MR. BLACKET.

June 30th, 1809.

"Sir,

"I feel infinitely obliged to you for your kind present of the 'Specimens,' of which I am every way so unworthy, and which, if I may judge from what I have read, possess no ordinary merit. The thoughts are pious, the sentiments moral, the language pure and elegant. But, as my praises will neither tend to debase or exalt the Work, I shall cease, with entreating permission to subscribe myself, &c."

December 16, 1809.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I am extremely glad Mr. Blacket has recovered his health, and that his promising genius is no longer likely to be checked by illness. He is indeed a most interesting young man, and my memory still treasures, with delight, the happiness I received in his company some months ago.

* * * * *

“ I hope your health has profited by your little summer jaunt. Ours has been to the Isle of Wight. Is it not a charmingly romantic place? It may truly be called the Garden of England. I think I never beheld a spot, take it for all in all, so beautiful. The view from Ryde (as of Spithead and St. Helens) is sweetly picturesque, and that of West Cowes is a pretty scene in quiet life; but for grandeur, we must go to Shanklin-Chine and Steephill, which I take it for granted you have seen and admired.

* * * * *

TO MR. PRATT,

From a Relation of the young Lady.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I have, agreeably to your request, inclosed you a few other specimens of the little girl’s muse, from which you will make such selections as you may judge proper. I yesterday discovered a *corrected copy* (as she terms it) of the ‘Cot,’ which was made a few days previously to her going to school, and as I think it somewhat for the better, I have transcribed it, and sent it with the rest. You will notice that I have marked the several periods at which they were written, by which (keeping in mind that she was born in 1798) you will easily be enabled to calculate her age at the time of their production.

“ I remain, dear Sir, &c.

“ *Tuesday, 12th February, 1811.*”

THE GROTTO.

August, 1810.

MELINDA! when the noontide hour
Bursts in full radiance o'er the sky ;
Say—shall we seek the shady Grot,
Where founts their dewy cool supply ?

While o'er our heads the nat'ral arch
Is hung with woodbine, drap'ry sweet !
And coolness woos thee to repose,
On beds of moss beneath our feet.

Where genial breezes play around,
And Zephyr waves his silken plume ;
Or flits his wing of Gossamer,
Laden with Summer's best perfume.

THE CROCUS.

Spring, 1808.

SWEET little Flow'r, that dares defy
The northern blasts that Boreas sends,
Ah! wherefore tempt the dang'rous wind,
That thy weak stalk with fury bends;
 For gentle Spring is far away,
 And slowly comes reviving May.

Thy early bloom but ill can bear
The storm which Winter sends abroad;
Since Phœbus has not yet appeas'd
The Thund'rer, with his golden rod;
 For gentle Spring is far away,
 And slowly comes reviving May.

ANACREONTIC.

May, 1808.

GIVE me Nectar, give me Venus,
 Let me squander Life away ;
 Quaff whole Goblets with Silenus,
 And enjoy Life's transient day—
 Hebe comes but once—Her visit
 Short doth last—like Summer's morn ;
 Sweet and welcome let me hail it ;
 'Tis for joy that Man was born.

ANACREONTIC.

June, 1808.

Let the Ancients with Perseus and Hercules fight,
 While their Phædras and Hecubas pine ;
 There's one, only one true source of delight,
 And that, jolly boys, is in wine.

Tho' Homer sat nodding and puzzling his brain
 About Priams, and Hector's, and Arms ;
 Let us fill, my brave boys, our goblets again,
 In our dear little Isle—safe from harms.



SPRING.

December, 1809.

THE Moon beneath a silv'ry cloud
 Sends forth a softer ray ;
 The rolling planets round her crowd,
 And form a mimic day.

Now sleeps the Rill beneath her beam,
 No winds its surface curl ;
 And gently bending o'er the stream,
 The Violet sips a pearl.

The vernal charms—delight infuse,
 With songs the Woodlands ring,
 And ev'ry lovely flow'r renews
 The harmony of Spring.

MY COT.

November, 1810.

OH! around my sweet Cot, smile the blossoms of
Spring,
The ripe fruits of Summer and Autumn's rich sweets,
While as Zephyr, young Zephyr, drops plumes from
his wing,
The flow'rets with kisses he wantonly greets.

Transparently white, op'ning soft on the day,
The perfum'd May-lilies their sweet odors shed;
And the slight pendant Blue-Bells, as waving they
play,
Refresh with the dew, drops their own native bed.

While nourish'd and dipt in the tears of the morn,
Embalm'd with the fragrance that Maïa bestows;
The gay Honey-suckles my low thatch adorn
And twine with their tendrils my bow'r of repose.

THE SIGH.

WRITTEN AT TEN YEARS OF AGE.

AH! save that sigh, my Nancy dear,
And let this lovely damask Rose
Imbibe the fragrance thou canst spare,
And suck the sweets thy breath bestows.

And let it press thy crimson'd cheek,
Now heighten'd with a deeper dye;
Where brighter tints and colours break
Than ever met a Newton's eye.

Let it thy lips (like Rubies) touch—
Then let it boast (and boast in death)
It robb'd its hue from Nancy's blush,
And stole its sweets from Nancy's breath.

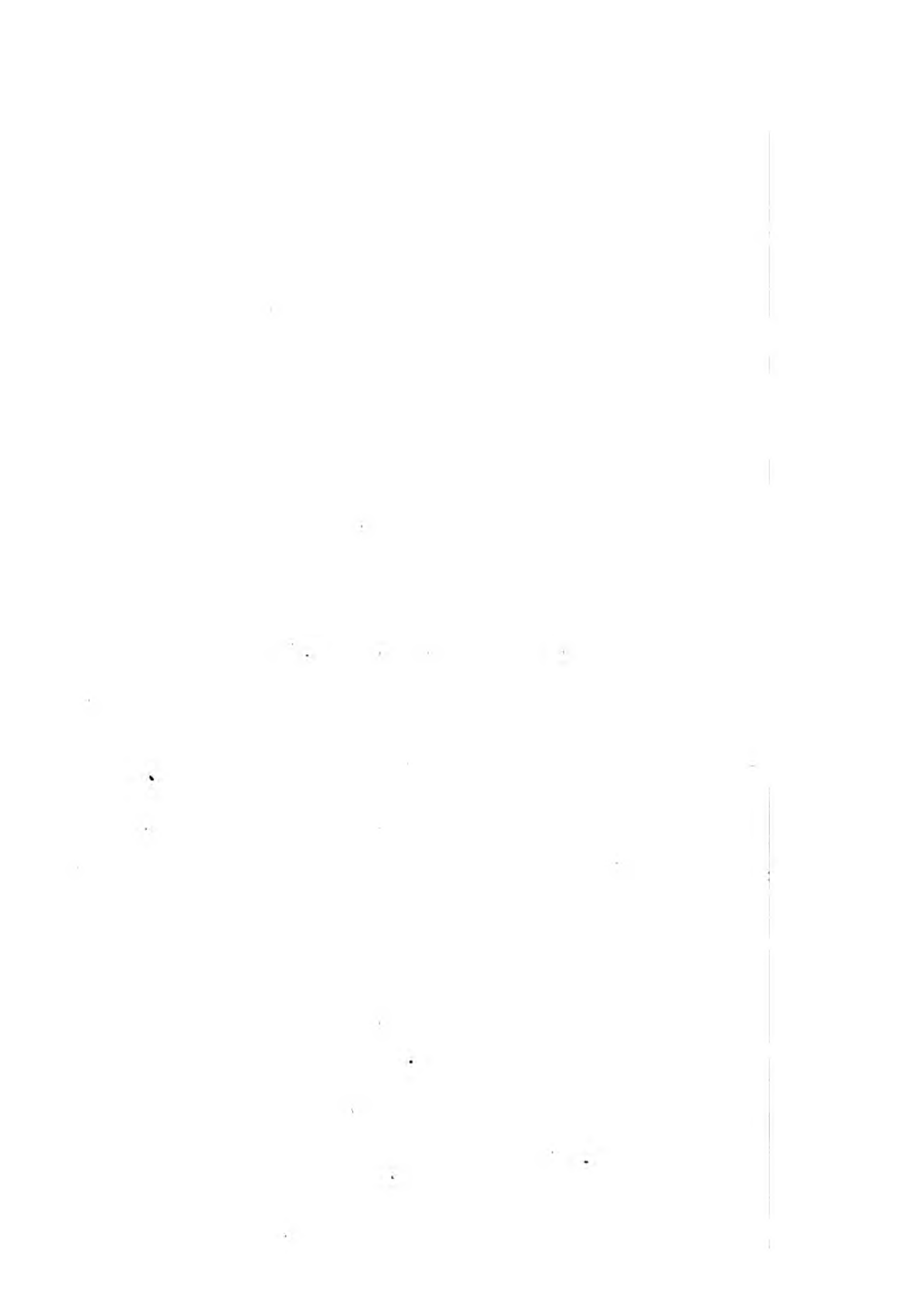
THE TEAR.

THE Tear of Affection dimm'd Eleanor's eye,
She had parted from Edwin the youth that she lov'd;
A Rose's pink bosom that flourish'd close by,
Receiv'd the pure dew-drop that down her cheek
 rov'd.

This orient pearl on the blossom did beam
When Flora return'd to her favourite flow'r;
She gave to her Zephyr the christalis'd gem,
And on Elinor's breast it dissolv'd in a show'r.

SERIES VII.

“FIRST MUSINGS.”



SERIES VII.

THIS is precisely the place to introduce what the Editor met with in a small packet of the posthumous papers, intitled " My first Musings."

In a corner of the first page were found the following words :

" The beginnings of my writing verse." So that they are without any date ; but, as it is known that he addressed some lines to his brother John for permission to see Kemble in Richard the Third, when he was twelve years old, it may fairly be presumed, these were the effusions of a yet more early period of life. Be that as it may, they certainly might have been produced without discredit to any poet, at a far more advanced point of time ; and, like the effusions, that immediately preceded them, and which were also produced in the first dawn of the mind, gave promise of a glorious intellectual day.

THE BATTLE.

WHEN horses' hoofs were steep'd in gore,
And fainting warriors bled ;
When slaughter cover'd all the shore
With heaps of valiant dead ;

When, 'midst the hoarsest cannon's roar,
The wounded and the slain ;
And crimson Fury waded o'er
Her own ensanguin'd plain ;

When the bright sun thrice rose to view,
The desolating fight ;
And, as in anger, thrice withdrew
His rays—refusing light :

'Twas then, fond maid, thy Donald fell,
And his last accents sigh'd,
O, dearest to my heart, farewell !
Then dropt his sword, and died.

SENTIMENTS
OF
THE DEAD TO THE LIVING.*

YE flutt'ring gay, ye thoughtless proud,
 Who tread this ball,
 A bloodless corpse now calls aloud;
 Then mark its call!
 Mark it all you, who careless run
 This life away;
 Who, basking in your rising sun,
 Consume the day:
 Know that your lives are but a sleep,
 By dreams oppress'd;
 And those, who stay behind to weep,
 Will soon find rest.
 My spirit's fled with airy flight
 Above the sky,

* As these impressive verses, and those which follow next, were found in the same small tattered book, superscribed as the rest, and signed J. B. the Editor cannot doubt their being Mr. Blacket's exclusive property.

The dreadful winds beat high ;
 Around the surges fly ;
 Whilst a slave,
 On the wave,
 Curs'd the chains, which held him fast.

“ Rock on,” he cried, “ ye billows,
 “ That dash us to and fro ;
 “ With consternation fill us,
 “ And sink us down below.
 “ Ye lightnings fiercer flash ;
 “ Ye thunders louder crash ;
 “ Whilst a slave,
 “ On the wave,
 “ Curses chains, which bind him fast !”

He said, when, lo! the ocean
 O'erwhelm'd them in the tide ;
 When, 'midst the dread commotion,
 Thus the poor negro cried :
 “ Now, now, my pains are o'er ;
 “ I'm free ! and now no more
 “ Shall a slave,
 “ On the wave,
 “ Curse the chains, which bind him fast !”

THE SECOND CAPTIVE'S TRIUMPH.

CHRISTIANS! where's the Christian soul?
 Where the British heart you boast?
 Hark! the Indian captives howl
 To Christian ears, from Afric's coast.

Ah! mournful sounds! ye Christians, see
 Yon jetty hero rack'd with pain;
 See noble Hassan,—yes, 'tis he,
 Who, groaning, wears the Christian's chain!

Christians have robb'd him of his life!
 For, what is life, but LIBERTY?
 No more to view his faithful wife!
 His children, nor his country, see!

Last night I saw him lock'd in sleep;
 I view'd his tortur'd limbs, and wept:
 He heav'd a sigh, in sorrow deep—
 He dreamt of SLAV'RY, while he slept!

Waking, he rais'd his hollow eye,
 And cried, " my angel, set me free!
 " Come, angel, come, from yonder sky,
 " And give me back my liberty! "

But now the beams of morn appear;
 And, as the clouds of slumber fly,
 He cried, " my angel will not hear;
 " Then will I seek her in the sky! "

This said, the fatal blade he drew,
 And, desp'rate, plung'd it in his breast;
 He groan'd—he fell—his spirit flew
 In search of liberty and rest!

MY CHOICE.

IF Heav'n, what mortals ask'd, would give,
 My pray'r should be content to live,
 With a contented friend:
 Enough, and just enough, my lot,
 In a sequester'd, quiet cot,
 My blameless life to spend.

My dwelling should be far from smoke,
Nor should my slumbers e'er be broke,
 By guilty dreams opprest ;
But, like the Sun, my daily course,
Steady I'd move without remorse,
 And sink like him to rest.

My bosom friend, a wife should be !
Love dearly, and love only me,
 Yet, to the world at large,
Be courteous, gentle, kind ;
Form, by her own, each DAUGHTER'S mind—
 SONS are a father's charge.

Thus in the tranquil paths of life,
Escaping all the thorns of strife,
 With Friendship and with Love,
We'd walk ; and when our days were past,
In the same hour we'd breathe our last ;
 Again to live above !

THE LUCID MOMENT.

Now calmly beats my late swoln heart,
That's doom'd, alas! to feel
Of Love's keen wounds the bleeding smart ;
Wounds, which can never heal !

Slowly within my dungeon drear
The ling'ring moments wear ;
Without one tender drop to cheer
A maniac in despair.

And, when my frenzied soul's inclin'd
To shrink from wild alarms ;
Those moments only bring to mind
My lost Matilda's charms.

And those dear scenes of happier youth,
Where I so oft have strove,
With vows of constant spotless truth,
To gain Matilda's love.

I gain'd her love, with love sincere,
But one unlook'd for morn,
'Twas whisper'd in her father's ear,
We both were left forlorn.

Nor ever could I learn her fate,
Till twice twelve months were o'er ;
When, passing through a church-yard gate,
I saw she was no more.

Her name, deep graven on a stone,
Soon show'd me where she lay ;
My spirits sunk, I heav'd a groan—
And madden'd from that day.

No more, alas ! my wit's return'd ;
Peace took her last farewell !
And, when my phrenzy fiercer burn'd,
They chain'd me in my cell.

INVOCATION TO A STORM,

AT MIDNIGHT, 1804.

GLEAM, gleam, ethereal fire,
 Rage on in vengeful ire ;
 Ye torrents cease to dash,
 Nor check the angry flash ;
 And you, ye thunders dread,
 Burst pealing o'er the bed,
 Where lies the guilty Atheist lock'd in sleep ;
 And wake the wretch to own a God, and weep.



THOUGHTS ON LIFE.¹

GLOWING taper, transient fire,
 Subject of my trembling lyre,

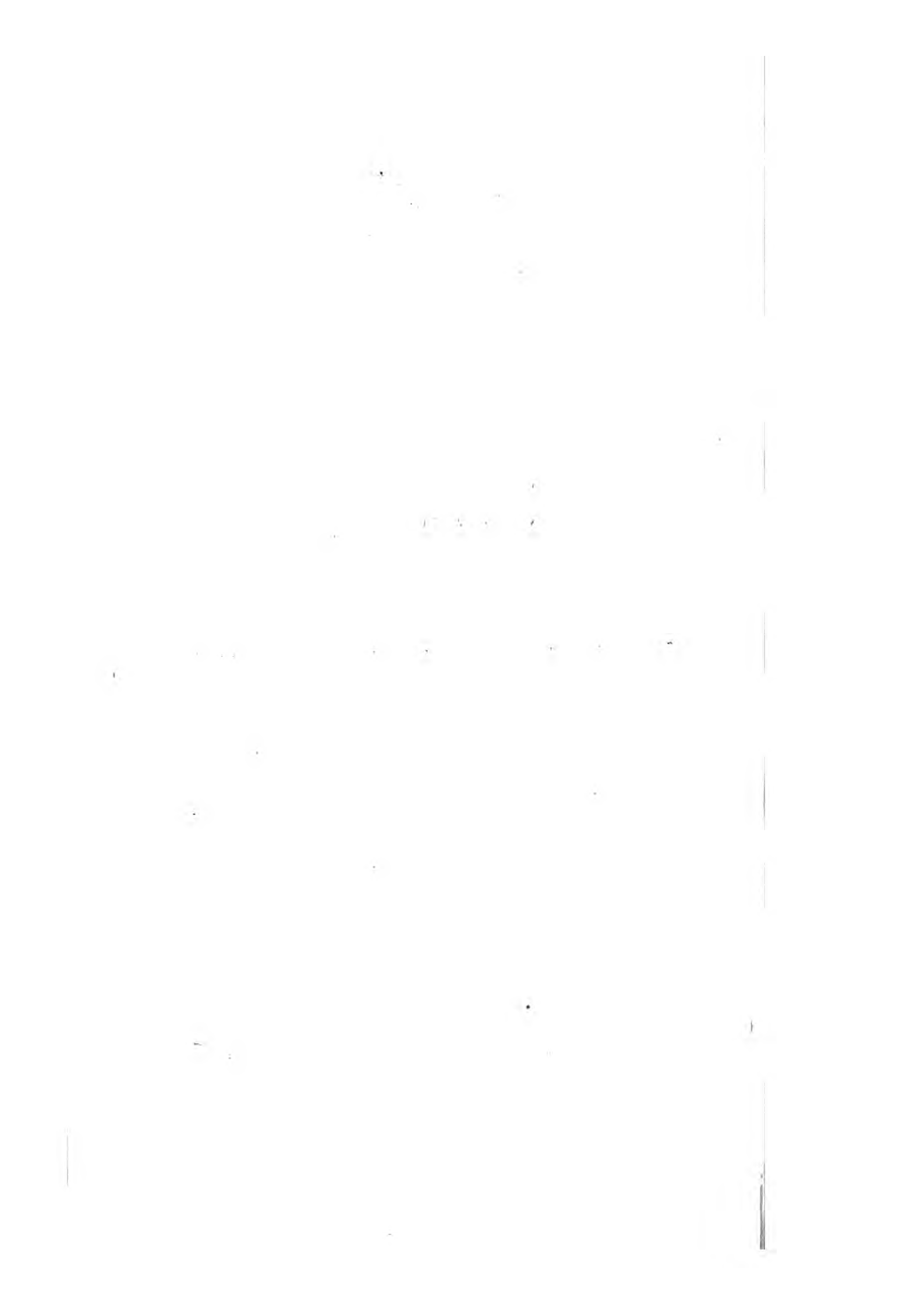
¹ As some doubt remains upon the Editor's mind in respect to the originality of these lines, he has distinguished them by an asterism ; although he has tasked his own memory, and that of

Let me trace thee as I roam
From the cradle to the tomb.
Lo! where usher'd to thy theme,
With a discontented scream ;
When the spectre casts his dart,
Discontented we depart.
Hark! the infant in the arms,
Safely guarded from all harms.
Wrapt in sleep, behold him lie,
Lull'd in sweet security.
Should some dream his quiet break,
Quick he clasps his parent's neck.

several well-read friends, who do not remember to have met with them before.—They have not as usual Mr. B's name or initials, but are in his hand-writing; and were among the "First Musings." It will be obvious to the reader, that the genius of Mr. B. had a tendency to the tremendous graces of poetry, from his first to his last productions.

SERIES VIII.

THE AUTHOR'S LATEST COMMUNICATIONS.



SERIES VIII.



THERE are few gratifications more unmixed with alloy, than that of tracing the progress of genius, especially from the rude poetic, yet often promising first effusions when “the young idea” of the muse “begins to shoot,” to its more finished exertion, when aided by that degree which assists nature, it has gained the point at which even our best talents and virtues must stop in this imperfect world.

Of poetic genius, however, there are two very distinct kinds ; the one appears like the goddess of wisdom, issuing in full beauty and maturity from the head of Jupiter, exciting no less wonder than admiration ; the other discovering at first, only feeble indications of future energy ; but at every fresh

effort making some advances, till we perceive "all that rises," has risen "by due degrees." A genius of this order, being never long in retrograde motion, presses on to as complete excellence, as can be attained by human intellect.

The poet under our immediate consideration was indubitably of the latter class, and though to the regret of literature, he seemed, humanly speaking, "just born to look about him and to die," yet his progress from indifferent to good, and from good to better, allowing for some happinesses, which perhaps neither time nor application could improve; as in the lines on the Dying Horse, Bedlam, and the ascending series of the three dramatic pieces, could not but be obvious to all readers, had they possessed equal opportunities with the Editor, of examining, and selecting from, a huge pile of juvenile manuscripts.¹ From a comparison of these, generally speaking, with what he produced in the last months of his life, this assertion would, by any such examiner, be found to gain still greater force.

¹ Many of these neither discovered, nor appeared to want, the labour of the author's correction; others were interlined and laboured into verse, with as patient and persevering a hand, as if the poet had determined to be a critic, and by no means a lenient one, on himself.

Several passages in the poems, called his "*Horror*s," written while at Seaham, unquestionably display an increased vigour of thought, and glow of poetic expression, while his body was hourly wasting for the grave.

They were generally written in a most beautiful and correct Italian hand, in the course of the first week in February, 1810, and were preceded by a letter dated February the 12th, written on the first page, from which the following passages are extracted.

EDITOR.

* * * * *

Seaham, Feb. 12, 1810.

Very Dear Friend,

"As this family of patrons intend to depart in a few days, and, as the amiable Miss M——y has promised to convey any letters I may wish to send to your city; I feel it an incumbent duty to address myself to Mentor at large, and at an early period, sincerely hoping, that this pacquet may meet with the favour which he has hitherto shown my former correspondence. Miss * * * * * and her fair friend,

have just paid me a visit of three hours, as, indeed has been their almost daily custom the past fortnight, having dropped in about two o'clock, and waited till the servant came, to announce dinner on the table. In fact, dearest Sir, they have been the chief visitants from whom I have received that pleasing satisfaction, which every child of nature must experience in listening to the benevolent sentiments of greatly superior beings. You will no doubt be surprised to hear that these virtuous sisters, (for their love is like that of two sisters,) have not yet reached seventeen. To Miss * * * * * I am indebted for having daily procured me any book I wished to peruse. She has likewise presented me with her favourite pocket edition of Shakspeare, handsomely bound in nine volumes, with her name in each, of which I am proud; how proud, you will know! also Lindley Murray's grammar, the exercises adapted to it; and, a key to the exercises, in 3 volumes. Yesterday she enriched me with a few copy books and quires of paper; and to-day has introduced to my hands, Walker's pronouncing dictionary; Miss M——y at the same time, has presented to me, Dryden's poems bound in morocco. I know not how to come forward, at their departure, and bid them farewell! if ever angels wear a human shape, surely these are of them. Miss * * * * * wishes me, *(if I ever arrive in*

London,) to be initiated in the classics; "for which" she says, "I shall have her own tutor to instruct me," who by her account is a professed master of languages. This is generous; and, if it is ever my happy lot to glean instructions from this eminent classic, I understand Miss * * * * * has insisted upon bearing half the expense of my lessons. Thus the contest is, *who* shall do me greater service!

"I have received a visit from an actor of Sunderland, whom curiosity led to shake hands with me; he wished to look at my book; I had not one; so he was satisfied with a few *Horrors*, and a burlesqued act of tragedy, which I wrote lately; he expressed his approbation of these trifles. Miss M——y told me the other day, that she should be happy in introducing me to the sublime Mrs. Siddons in London, "as she was fully convinced we should like each other."

A gentleman here has informed me, that if I wish to succeed in dramatic composition, I must change my soil, and cross the Atlantic. In America, he tells me, there is not one dramatist! "poetry being banished by industry." This is his manner of speech; and, since Franklin, he says, they (the Americans) have not had one tragedy written. He thinks a trial this way in Philadelphia, might prove lucrative.

“ Some cry, lo! *here*.——and, lo! *there*.”

I will leave them altogether, and fly to my miserable
Horrids.

* * * * *



LETTER I.

Friday night, 11 o'Clock.

Dear Sir,

“ I am sorry that I must conclude shortly, indeed my left eye is very ungenerously closing itself. This proceeds from cold ; caught nobody can imagine how. I continue to spit blood as usual every night, at sun-set and bed-time ; my stomach is sore, and will not bear pressure. The Spring will, I hope, set me on my feet again ; indeed when the fine weather comes, I shall principally drink snail milk. I know the doctors will turn up their noses at it, but there has been many well attested cures wrought by a constant use of it. I also intend to eat, or rather *swallow*, frogs, when in season ; my candle is out, and my fire, alas! in embers! I

cannot say more to night, nor can I rise early in the morning; for, between the hours of five and eight, only, I enjoy any thing like repose.

“ Dear and paternal Mentor,

“ Hoping earnestly that you are improving in health,

“ I subscribe myself, your’s, faithfully,

“ J. BLACKET.”



THE
BIRTH OF INGRATITUDE.

AN ODE.

ROUSE the lyre with horrid sweep,
 Strains of frenzied discord swell!
 Summon, from the “ vasty deep,”
 The furies of relentless hell!
 On me let their eye-balls glare;
 Let them lash me with their flaming hair,
 Fan my strings
 With raven wings,
 And join my song in cadence rude,
 For, ah! I sing the birth of black INGRATITUDE!

INGRATITUDE! the fiend accurst!
 By guilt, from hell's dark entrails torn,
 When, from its horrid womb, the fury burst,
 Exulting peals were heard around,
 And thund'ring vaults, with echoing roar,
 Reverberated hoarse the sound
 Along the molten shore;
 While demons loudly cheer'd:—" All hail! the
 Monster-Vice is born!"

High mounted on a blazing throne,
 Whose radiance, like a fiery meteor, shone,
 The prince of Stygian darkness sate
 In awful majesty sublime!
 At his right hand, relentless **FATE**
 Smil'd horrid at the conqu'ror **TIME**;
 And, at his hellish feet,
 Earth's hideous meagre foe,
 Stern **DEATH!** beheld the wretched angels meet
 To hail their king; and his behest to know.

Superior, 'bove his giant peers,
 The chief his piny truncheon rears;
 And, tow'r-like, high erects his burnish'd crest;

With hoarsely-bellowing voice he cries,
 While exultation revell'd in his eyes,
 And savage gladness flam'd within his breast :

“ Gods! of this nether world!

“ (From heav'n's proud turrets by the Thund'rer
 hurl'd)

“ Who thus attend my trumpet's sound;

“ Ye bold accomplices of guilt and shame,

“ Whose blazon'd helms reflect the livid flame,

“ Which streams sulphureous these dread realms
 around:

“ To each unshrinking mind,

“ With me, in hellish league combin'd,

“ I call;—and, with a warrior's arm,

“ Which gleam'd, unshrinking, 'midst the dire alarm,

“ And felt, unwither'd, the vindictive flash,

“ Stand here resolv'd (ne'er to relent)

“ To rouse to anger the Omnipotent,

“ Whose armies, on the embattled plain,

“ Thunder'd around us the confounding crash,

“ And drove us, howling with excruciate pain,

“ Amidst these gloomy depths, for ever to remain.

“ But, be it to the victor known,

“ While seated on his starry throne,

“ And, boasting of superior might,
 “ That no ignoble foe,
 “ In these dark realms below,
 “ By one revolt has sprung to light,
 “ **INGRATITUDE!** the hell-hound of the fall,
 “ A compound of the vice of all,
 “ Lives, to inflict my vengeance on mankind !

“ E’en now, I can, with piercing eye,
 “ The subtle monster’s future acts descry.

“ **INGRATITUDE!** see where he stands,
 “ In deep misfortune’s hour !
 “ With tearful eye, and supplicating hands,
 “ At heav’nly Pity’s door.
 “ His pale emaciated cheek,
 “ His hollow eyes, declare
 “ His breast the mansion of the fiend, **Despair!**
 “ While bursting sighs his pow’ful woes bespeak !

“ A tale of anguish faint he pours,
 “ When e’en relentless *Avarice* hears ;
 “ And, from each blood-shot eye, he show’rs
 “ A stream of fraudulent tears !

“ Benevolence bestows its aid—
 “ The **FIEND** is cherish'd, and the **FRIEND** betray'd!”

The hellish legions saw the picture true ;
 The frantic laugh began ;
 Loud screams of joy throughout the concave ran.
INGRATITUDE the more tremendous grew !
 Flapp'd quick his dragon-wings,
 Contracted all his stings,
 Then, soaring high aloof, to earth his voyage began!

THE CURSE.

FRENZY wrap thee in its fires!
RUIN blast thy soul's desires !
ANGUISH steep thee in its tears!
CURSES frightful fill thine ears!
HORROR sit upon thy soul!
TERROR in thine eye-balls roll!
BLINDNESS fold thee in its arms!
FEAR appal thee with alarms!

SPECTRES nightly haunt thy dreams,
 Rouse thee with terrific screams!
DEMONS on thy steps await!
MURDER hourly at thy gate
 Choak the entrance up with dead,
 'Till Destruction's *self* be fed!
SLAUGHTER drench thee in its gore!
 Pangs be thine unfelt before!
LIVE, LIVE, in universal hate!
SEEK, SEEK death **SOON,** but find it **LATE!**

THE CAPTIVE DEMON.

A CAPTIVE Demon, fir'd with rage,
 Chain'd fast by incantation strong,
 Within his adamantine cage,
 Pour'd forth, in howls, this horrid song.

" Tears, which faithless furies shed,
 " Groaning 'neath the magic spell;
 " Putrid hearts of wizards dead,
 " Steep'd in aconite of hell!

“ Worms, which on the vitals prey,
 “ Beldams’ scalps, and stagnate blood ;
 “ Snakes, whose poison spreads dismay,
 “ Be my fell tormentor’s food !

“ He, at whose unblest command,
 “ From the deep abyss, I sprung ;
 “ Bearing off the potent wand,
 “ Which, for ages, there had hung !

“ He, to whom a crown I gave,
 “ Studded with inhuman eyes !
 “ Which, from out the sorc’rer’s cave,
 “ I convey’d in artful guise.

“ Yet, because the mummy’s breast,
 “ Was not ransack’d of its charm ;
 “ And the coffin’d virgin’s vest
 “ Heav’d not at the dread alarm

“ He, accurst ! in furious mood,
 “ Chain’d me here !—with ceaseless hate,
 “ Seal’d me with the seal of blood,
 “ And left me to remorseless fate.”

THE ROSE.

A SONG.

A SWEET-SCENTED Rose I survey'd,
While rapture enliven'd mine eyes;
I enter'd its dwelling, the shade,
And made the sweet flow'ret my prize.

In my bosom I wore it a while,
But when I observ'd it to fade,
I withdrew from its beauty my smile,
And threw it again on its bed.

Let the Rose, then, a moral impart
To those who are thoughtless and gay;
Who, triumphing over a heart,
Caress it,—then cast it away!

THE SOLDIER.

A SONG.

HARK! the blast of battle dread,
 Roars along the frightened shore!
 Where the soldier, glory-led,
 Bathes his falchion deep in gore!

Mark the hero's tow'ring height!
 Mark the gleaming of his eye!
 See him, in the hottest fight,
 Teaching comrades how to die!

 LORENZO.¹

A TALE,

Founded on the fact of persons having been buried alive.

WRECK'D on the shore, where silence sleeps,
 Attended by the worm that creeps,
 Through rayless death-extinguish'd eyes,

¹ This Poem is one of those, which has been found since it was noticed in the correspondence.

Enshrouded in a coffin's gloom,
 Amidst the victims of the tomb,
 The young Lorenzo prematurely lies!

Lorenzo to the Grave was giv'n,
 Inhum'd, ere call'd from earth to Heav'n;
 In vision steep'd, trance-lock'd his breath,
 Respiring in the realms of death,
 He torpid laid:—yet life prevail'd,
 Though motion and the organs fail'd.

Wing'd with activity, the soul,
 Unconscious of control,
 Travers'd the regions of existence free;
 Explor'd the scenes which fancy wove;
 Chanted the strains of harmony,
 Or told, to beauty's ear, the witching tale of love.

Nine suns had shed their genial light,
 The tenth illum'd old ocean's bed,
 Lorenzo's eyes were clos'd in night,
 Kinfolk and Friends still mourn'd him dead.
 The black-plum'd hearse had disappear'd,
 The fun'ral knell, no longer heard,
 Had perish'd in the passing wind.

Three days beneath the wounded sod,
 Regardless of the drear abode,
 In awful silence he reclin'd!
 At length arriv'd the heavy hour,
 When nature's re-asserting arm
 Subdued, of trance, the fett'ring pow'r,
 And broke the sullen charm!
 The waking youth with joy exclaim'd,
 While his dim eyes with rapture flam'd :

" Triumph my soul! 'tis not a faithless dream,
 The fair Eliza waits with anxious arms,
 And Hebe's smile, to welcome HIM she loves!
 Seraphic raptures sparkle in her eyes!
 The Loves are playing in her radiant curls!
 She comes! I clasp her to my bosom—thus—
 Elysium's laurels are to me less dear,
 Than this ambrosial kiss! [*being awake*] Confusion!
 Am I awake?—Why this chaotic gloom?—
 Instant unbind the fillet from mine eyes,
 And let me clasp my love!—Ha! is it thus!—
 Horrid reflection!—Oh! my aching brain,
 Unrealize the thought—it cannot be!
 —*Distraction!*—*Death!*—*Alive yet in the grave!*
 No breath of air to ease my lab'ring chest!

No friendly voice to answer to the groans
 Of smoth'ring agony!—Eliza!—too
 —Oh, madness! lend me now thy giant strength
 To burst earth's horrid womb, and snatch from life
 A few short moments!—Nerves, unite yourselves!
 —Thou, heart, be firm!—Eyes, from your sockets
 start!—

Expiring nature calls ye to her aid—
 And thus she bids thee act!—Alas!—alas!—
 'Tis unavailing all!—All conqu'ring Death!—
 Thy dread, horrific and subduing Pow'r
 Sits on my visage!—Victor, I am thine!

[Dies!]¹

¹ At every possible opportunity, a dramatic genius, as in this Poem, bursts forth.

THE SOLDIER'S REPLY

TO

HIS CHIEF,

Who reproved him for shedding tears over a slaughtered enemy.

BLAME not, my chief, the tears which flow
 Down these scar-furrow'd cheeks ;
 A heart of pity in a foe,
 The gen'rous flood bespeaks.

And, ah ! when carnage stalks around ,
 With crimson-dripping vest !
 Why should fell revenge and hate be found
 Within the warrior's breast ?

This foe, who shook the threat'ning spear
 His country to defend,
 Deserves from me as warm a tear,
 As he who died my friend.

* * * The Reader will have observed that the due order of date has been violated in regard to the Letter that introduces the foregoing Pieces to give it a more appropriate place near the Poems that it covered.

IT may be proper to state that the **INSCRIPTION**, on the stone alluded to in p. 102. has been delayed from illness in the family of the patrons who raise it, but orders have been given to get it immediately engraved.

Though it has been a pleasing task to record the testimonies of the enlightened,—the Editor fondly hopes that the Poet, who is the deserving subject of them, has himself erected the most durable Monument of his Genius in the many interesting and beautiful though unfinished Performances he has left behind. But so far as regards his early dissolution there cannot be any tribute, which in point of pathos, more closely or feelingly applies to the genius, life, and death of **JOSEPH BLACKET**, than will be found in his own **Monody** to the memory of **KIRKE WHITE**. It tells in every line to his own fate and fortunes ; and may, alas ! be considered almost as the fulfilment of his own Prophecy. The Editor cannot doubt its proving acceptable to every reader in this place ; reprinted from the last Pages of his unpublished Specimens, most of which are preserved in the present volumes.

MONODY
TO
The Memory
OF
HENRY KIRKE WHITE.*

“ No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,
But LIVING STATUES there are seen to weep :
Affliction’s *semblance* bends not o’er thy tomb,
Affliction’s SELF deplores thy youthful doom ! ”

LORD BYRON.

To yon streamlet’s rippling flow,
Through the grove meand’ring slow,

* This extraordinary youth died in his twenty-first year, towards the close of 1806, a victim to intense application, in the cultivation of talents, which, assisted by the soundness of his judgment and the goodness of his heart, would not have failed to have reached the highest point of virtuous fame.

His Editor, Mr. Southey, has inserted this among the Tributary Verses, from, it is presumed, a borrowed Copy of the private Edition of Mr. Blacket’s Specimens.

The following letter, addressed to the Editor, covered this

Heart-heaving sighs of sorrow let me pour,
 And those "LIVING STATUES" join,
 For, no "marble" grief is mine,
 Mine is sympathy's true tear,

Monody, and will best explain the circumstances and feelings under which it was written. The lines contain some very pathetic, and alas! prophetic, touches.

"I hope, dearest sir, the hasty effusions herewith presented, which were produced more from a deeply-penetrated *heart* than an experienced *muse*, will meet your approbation. They were written at a late hour last night, after reading, with the deepest interest, the remains of HENRY KIRKE WHITE. If you approve them, I cannot but own it would give me a pleasure I know not how to express, to have them placed among the verses now printing under your direction; the near approach of which, to the awful eye of the public, divides my mind between hope and fear.

I offer my verses on this truly mournful subject, as a mite of my respect, regret, and *lamentation*, for the too early departure of the unfortunate author of these deeply-affecting volumes, which shall, most assuredly, * "lie on my table," as I am certain "they will interest my best feelings," and, I hope, "tend to improve my heart."

"JOSEPH BLACKET."

4, Boswell-court, Queen-square.

* See Anti-Jacobin Review of them for March, 1809.

Love and Pity's sigh sincere,
 And to "Affliction's *self*" I give the mournful
 hour!

What means you new-rai'd mould beneath
 the yew?
 And why scoop'd out the coffin's narrow cell,
 Fashion'd, alas! to human shape and size?
 Why crawls that earth-worm from the dazzling ray
 Of day's unwelcome orb? And why, at length,
 Ling'ring, advances, with grief-measur'd pace,
 The sable hearse, in raven plumes array'd?
 And, hark! oh, hark! the deep-ton'd fun'ral knell
 Breathes, audibly, a sad and sullen sound!

Alas, poor youth! for **THEE** this note of
 death!
 Ye Nine, that lave in the Castalian spring,
 Whose full-ton'd waves, responsive to the strain
 Of your Parnassian harps, with solemn flow,
 Peal the deep dirge around,—pluck each a wreath
 Of baneful yew and twine it round your lyres,
 For your own **HENRY** sleeps to wake no more!

Alas! alas! immortal youth!
 Thine the richly-varied song,
 Simple, clear, sublime, and strong;
 Thy sunny eye beam'd on the page of Truth
 Thy God ador'd, and, fraught with cherub fire,
 'Twas thine to strike, on earth, a heav'ly lyre

Ah! lost too soon! through tangled groves,
 'Midst the fresh dews no more
 He pensive roves
 The varied PASSIONS to explore.
 Silent, silent, is the tongue,
 Whose notes so pow'ful through the woodlands
 rung,
 When to explore the mysteries of TIME,¹
 With energy sublime,
 He soar'd, and left this less'ning world below:—
 Hark! hark! methinks, e'en now, I hear his numbers
 flow!

—Ah! no,—he sings no more.—

¹ One of Kirke White's most animated and beautiful poems, entitled "Time."

Oh ! thou greedy cormorant, fell
 Death ! insatiate monster ! tell,
 Why so soon was sped the dart
 Which pierc'd, alas ! his youthful heart ?
 Oh, despoiler ! tyrant ! know,
 When **THY** arm, that dealt the blow,
 Wither'd sinks, inactive, cold,
 By a stronger arm controll'd,
 Then shall this youth the song of triumph raise
 Throughout Eternity's immeasurable days !

Bard of Nature ! heav'n-grac'd child !
 Sweet, majestic, plaintive, wild ;
 Who, on rapid pinion borne,
 Swifter than the breeze of morn,
 Circled now th' **AONIAN** Mount,
 Now the **HELICONIAN** Fount,
 Teach me to string **THY** harp and wake its strain,
 To mourn thy early fate, 'till every chord complain !

No ! let **THY** harp remain,
 On yon dark cypress hung,
 By death unstrung ;
 To touch it were **PROFANE** !

But, now, oh! now, at this deep hour,
 While I feel thy thrilling pow'r ;
 While I steal from pillow'd sleep,
 O'er thy urn to bend and weep ;
 SPIRIT, rob'd in chrystal light,
 On the fleecy clouds of NIGHT,
 Descend ; and, oh! my breast inspire,
 With a portion of thy fire ;
 Teach my hand, at midnight's noon,
 When brightly shines the trembling moon,
 Hover o'er me while I sing,
 Oh! SPIRIT lov'd and bless'd, attune the string !

Yes, now, when all around are sunk in rest,
 And the NIGHT-VAPOUR sails along the west ;
 When Darkness, brooding o'er this nether ball,
 Encircles NATURE with her sable pall ;
 Still let me tarry, heedless of repose,
 To pour the bosom's,—not the muse's, woes !
 To thy lov'd mem'ry heave the sigh sincere,
 And drop a kindred,—a prophetic, tear !

Fast flow, ye genial drops——

Gush forth, ye tender sighs !——

And who, dear shade ! can tell—but——

While thus I, mournful, pause and weep for
 THEE,
 Shortly a sigh may heave,—a tear be shed, for *me* !

One might almost be led to think, a prophetic spirit dictated also the following Lines, applicable to the too frequent destiny of an orphan Child, and that child a female, written by Mr. Blacket many years before the birth of his Daughter.

“ How many are the hapless Orphan’s cares !
 Her state how wretched, lone, unfriended,
 Without a Guardian in a guilty World ! ”

EARL OF DEVON. VOL. II. p. 257.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Mr. B. Dias,
Miss Skeeles,
Mr. de Betaz,
Sir J. Carr,
Mr. W. Price,
Madame de Clairville Coffin,
Lady Mostyn,

Should any other Names have escaped the vigilance of the Editor, he will be exceedingly grateful for an intimation of it, specified in a line to the care of the Publishers.

ALTERATIONS.

Page xxxiii, line 6, *read* volumes. Mr. Boscowen kindly promised, &c.
1, 2, *for* Jan. 2, 1809, *read* Nov. 12, 1808.
2, 6, *for* Feb. 3, *read* Jan. 3.
71, 22, *dele* T. O.
passim, *ibid.*

ERRATA.

Page lxiii, line 4, *for* Homly, *read* Hornby.
77, 8, *read* as I had ever previously known it.

A. J. Valpy, Took's Court, Chancery Lane, London.

