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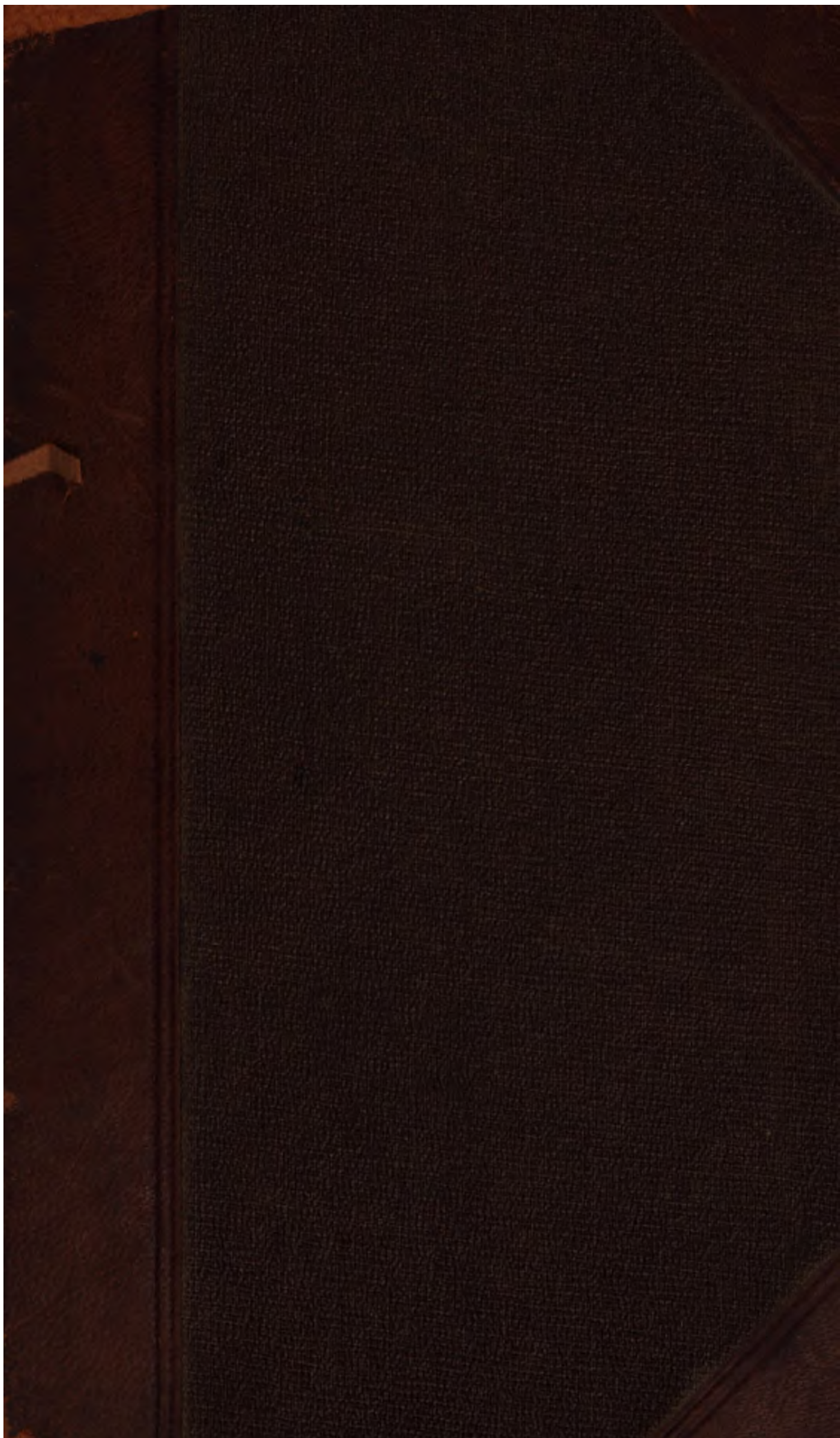
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POEMS,

BY

THOMAS SMITH.



Manchester,

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1797.



ADVERTISEMENT.

TO relieve the languor of a secluded situation, the AUTHOR and a few of his FRIENDS formed themselves into a LITTLE SOCIETY, for mutual entertainment and instruction. Each member was encouraged to submit some POETICAL PRODUCTION of his own to the free examination of the rest. This institution gave rise to the greater part of the PIECES which form this volume; and, should they meet with a favourable reception, it is probable that ANOTHER MEMBER may be induced to submit to the world, a volume, consisting chiefly of TRANSLATIONS from the LATIN and ITALIAN POETS.

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THE BRITISH OAK.

AN ELEGY.

TO soothe the vain, the gelid bosom fire,
Or glory's proud achievements to rehearse ;
Too oft the muse has swept the sounding lyre,
In all the meretricious pomp of verse.

I sing of Britain's Oak, the hapless fate,
Source of her grandeur, power and wealth immense ;
The firm, yet floating, bulwark of the state,
Pride of my country, and her fam'd defence.

And turn not, gentle reader, with disdain,
From aught which here portentous may be shown ;
For know, whate'er Time's ample rolls contain,
Sheer ruin marks exclusively her own.

Th' imperishable wreath of deathless fame,
Immortal Virtue's brow alone entwines ;
'Tis hers to light up glory's radiant flame,
When systems perish, or when Nature pines.

By Zephyr, shaken from the parent tree,
What time mild Autumn's mellowing tints appear,
In fancy's eye, its acorn form I see,
The sport capricious of the varying year.

Yet, though no parent's fostering hand uprear'd
Its shrinking head, or propt its feeble state ;
The genius of the sylvan scene appear'd,
Eyed its crude form, and watch'd its opening fate.

Protected thus by Pan's auspicious aid,
The gipsy, prowling for her casual prey,
The boar wide-ranging through the tangled shade,
Unconscious past, where heedless long it lay.

And long impassive to deserv'd applause,
Reckless of future ease, or future strife ;
Till Nature, true to her unerring laws,
Wak'd to new birth the latent seeds of life.

And first depress'd into its native mold,
Around it form'd the slow-collecting soil,
Impervious thus to Winter's chilling cold,
It fondly hail'd the Sun-beam's vivid smile.

The germ fermenting in the humid showers,
And by rich salts the tender juices fed ;
Develop'd to the eye its vital powers,
Struck the deep root, and rear'd its infant head.

Revolving Suns the genial process view'd,
The sap quick-mounting, and the foliage green ;
Till, stately rising o'er the incumbent wood,
Its graceful form adorn'd the sylvan scene.

No browsing herds its symmetry destroy'd,
Its shoots no school-boy seiz'd with ruthless hands;
Full many a scowling blast its trunk defy'd,
And now pre-eminent it proudly stands.

Still stand, and waving wide thy darkling shade,
Invite the weary wanderer to repose ;
Throw thy luxuriant arms across the glade,
Whilst the red apple blushes on thy boughs.

Unhurt by vulgar weeds, that rudely cling,
Unchoak'd by sullen ivy's noxious gloom ;
Around thy verdant foot blue violets spring,
And the wild hyacinth delights to bloom.

And here the stock-dove, when she inly pines,
Her plaintive sorrows to sweet echo tells ;
The sacred misletoe thy boughs entwines,
And, pleas'd with thee, her mystic virtue dwells.



The lurid bolt, whose eye with lightening glares,
Impetuous urging his tremendous course,
Thy form sublime, in generous pity spares,
And spends far distant his resistless force.

Alas ! to future danger wisely blind,
With glance prophetic, I thy fate survey ;
A more relentless foe thou yet shalt find,
In hostile man, who claims thee for his prey.

Mark'd for ambition's shrine a victim dear,
I see the labouring axe apply'd with pain ;
I hear the sounding strokes, thy groans I hear,
Till thy big trunk falls thundering on the plain.

Now prone on the low earth's extended space,
Of all thy blooming honors rudely shorn ;
Crush'd are those stately limbs, which once the grace
Of forests, cease the landscape to adorn.

Pan howling, seeks the impenetrable shade,
The Dryads shriek, their favorite's doom to see ;
The hoarse wind murmurs through the distant glade,
And trembles every leaf on every tree.

So have I seen the youthful hero fall,
High-plum'd for conquest, and with glory fir'd,
Devoted to his country's sacred call,
He rush'd on fate, and in her cause expir'd.

Now borne with triumph from thy native woods,
And tortur'd by the stern mechanic's art ;
To stem the boisterous rage of foaming floods,
Thou giv'st the aid thy buoyant limbs impart.

Nor mildly destin'd to the merchant's care,
Where peaceful commerce spreads her whitening
sail ;
The produce of exotic climes to bear,
Skim the green wave, or catch the springing gale.

But where Britannia's hardiest sons unite,
Thou hurl'st her thunders on the trembling foe ;
Bars't thy broad breast to meet the coming fight,
Dar'st the dread shock, or deal'st the vengeful blow.

Escap'd the cannons roar, the wreck, the fire,
Long shalt thou sweep secure the billowy seas ;
And laurell'd with the fame thy scars acquire,
Wave thy proud pendant to the buxom breeze.

Till envious Time—fo Nature has decreed—
Seals thy hard fate ; nor can thy merit save ;
Insidious worms shall on thy vitals feed,
And give thee slowly to the watery grave.

Nor at thy hapless destiny repine,
Subject alike to death's imperious sway,
The fate of mightiest realms resembles thine,
Like thee they flourish, and like thee decay.



TO THE VIOLET.

WOO'D by the gentle Sylph, that steals,
Enamour'd through thy flowery vales,
 At twilight's tranquil close ;
Far from the giddy wish to shine,
Sweetness and solitude be thine,
 And thine endear'd repose.

Storms, that uproot the lofty pine,
Or wildly tear the tender vine,
 Thy foliage ne'er depress ;
Nor surges, when with deafening roar,
They lash the far-resounding shore,
 Invade thy lone recess.

The mist that weaves her envious veil,
Thy simple graces to conceal,
 Thy peace in vain alarms ;
Pierc'd by the Sun's effulgent ray,
The fleeting vapour melts away,
 And gives thee added charms.

Thus Virtue, 'mid these scenes of strife,
Courts the still vale of humble life,
 Content her only aim ;
Too proud for mad ambition's schemes,
Too rich for wealth's illusive dreams,
 Too dignify'd for fame.

Yet, though serene her moments glide,
Nor whelm'd by passion's boisterous tide,
 Nor chill'd by harrowing fear ;
She gives a smile to others' joy,
To friendship's hallow'd urn a sigh,
 And to pale grief a tear.

The beam, which through the quivering shade
Plays trembling round thy low-bent head,
 And wakes thy genial powers ;
The breeze, to whose soft-breathing sigh,
Thou yield'st with half-averted eye,
 Cheer thy sequester'd hours.

Fed with the vernal dews of May,
That pendant from the bloomy spray,
 Exhale their honied sweets ;
The purple blush of orient morn,
Whose radiant smiles the vale adorn,
 Thy opening beauty greets.

By art's factitious aid supply'd,
How flaunts in tiny pomp of pride,
 The tulip's gaudy train !
No sweets their tawdry leaves diffuse,
Glare on the eye their gorgeous hues,
 But glare on mine in vain.

So have I seen a coxcomb sport
His spangled plumes, and fondly court
 The meed which fools acquire ;
In folly's popped garb array'd,
Pleas'd—he his idol-self survey'd,
 And bade the world admire.

The world his claims to scorn consign'd,
Grace and propriety combin'd
 To scout the vain pretence ;
Revolting taste her eye withdrew,
While the keen shafts of satire flew
 To shame him into sense.

Uncultur'd Nature's loveliest child,
Sweet mistress of the blooming wild,
 Thy odours still exhale ;
Still may thy modest charms elude
The ruthless hand whose efforts rude
 Would tear thee from the vale.

Unenvy'd, and unenvying, bloom,
And round me shed thy mild perfume,
 To charms so chaste alive ;
And when thy vivid tints decay,
I'll bear thy simple sweets away,
 And bid them long survive.

Embalm'd in fond affection's tear,
So lives the just, while friendship dear
 Points to his native skies ;
Virtue her moral fragrance sheds
On the blest path the good man treads,
 Nor leaves him when he dies.

Transplanted to a purer clime,
In Glory's beams he blooms sublime,
 Nor time nor chance destroy ;
Rais'd to high Heaven's august abode,
Coeval with the Throne of God,
 He drinks PERENNIAL JOY.



MAN.

FOE to whate'er resembles plan,
The creature of a cloud is man,
 The sport of every wind that blows ;
Give him a pure and cloudless sky,
An atmosphere serene and dry,
 And health on every feature glows.

High beats his pulse to pleasure's sway,
Light round his heart the spirits play,
 And brace his nerves to vigorous toil ;
But change the scene, and bid the hours
Revolve in wildly-weeping showers,
 And chearful Sun-beams cease to smile—

The wretch no more of rapture dreams,
Relax'd thro' every nerve he seems,
 And listless sighs the live-long day ;
In fancy feels a thousand woes,
Combine to banish soft repose,
 And chase fond hope itself away.

Is this the man for sway design'd,
And this th' "omnipotence of mind,"
 That spurns indignant all control ?
Better with dignity to yield,
And own, that patience is the shield
 That best supports the sinking soul.



THE COMPLAINT.

I HATE the brightest beam that gilds the morn,
Like the rude finger of unpitying scorn,
Its vivid glare in memory's startled eye,
Points to pale spectres of departed joy ;
When in the dazzling morn of young desire,
Gay fancy with the charm her dreams inspire,
Around my path her magic circle drew,
And deck'd the scene with many a brilliant hue ;
Till stern experience, with severe control,
Dissolv'd the spell that chain'd my captive soul ;
Scatter'd the pageant train in vacant air,
And threw me hopeless on the wilds of care.

Give me the beam that on the chasten'd sight,
Sheds the mild lustre of reflected light ;
The parting smile that setting Suns disclose,
The calm which evening o'er the landscape throws ;

The mist, slow rising from the tranquil lake,
The sheltering covert of the tangled brake ;
The bird that, darkling, warbles through the groves,
The shadowy veil that pensive twilight loves ;
These give my lacerated heart relief,
And steal me from the wildness of my grief.

When faintly touch'd by sorrow's passing shade,
The scene by reason's piercing glance survey'd,
It leaves the softer lights of life behind,
That soothe the sense, and tranquillize the mind ;
Fade on the eye the illusive joy of youth,
Subdued their glare, and mellow'd into truth ;
While calm reflection, with her orb serene,
Illumes the cloud that dims the changeful scene ;
While lives, immortal lives, the bland repose,
That, sprung from Truth, in Virtue mildly glows.

THE WORM.

THE worm, my simple garden's subtle foe,
I caught—it vainly struggled to be free,
And, shrinking from the fate-suspended blow,
Instinctive, seem'd to say, Oh ! pity me !

Poor worm, I pity and reverse thy doom,
Seize, while thou cans't, thy few, thy simple, joys,
* For both there is on earth's broad surface room,
And age—life's fleeting pleasures soon destroys.

And when of thee insidious man complains,
To Time thy sweet revenge securely trust ;
Soon shalt thou riot on his sad remains,
When death consigns the *proudest worm* to dust.

I sigh'd—and, shrinking from the threat'ning storm,
Give me, I cry'd—compassion for a worm.

* Sterne.



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

“**KNOWLEDGE,**” the great Verulam says, “ is
power,”

A truth confirm'd by each revolving hour ;
Could ponderous bulk alone its place supply,
Or the keen vision of the lynx's eye ;
Could motion, rapid as the rays of light,
Or the strain'd nerve of more than giant might ;
From man th' immortal plume of knowledge steal,
He sinks a pigmy in the boundless scale.

But what are motion, bulk, sight, strength, com-
bin'd,

Of knowledge void, and uninform'd by mind ?
Atoms, by mere extraneous force impell'd,
Or moveless masses in vile durance held,
Transient perceptions of the vacant gaze,
Or the blind might the unconseious brute displays.

Instinct with energy, when knowledge pours
On the parch'd mind her vivifying showers,
The buds of latent genius, slow to rise,
Beneath the torpor of ungenial skies,
Unfolding to the beams of radiant truth,
Bloom in the bosom of ingenuous youth ;
Glares not obscene, from error's noxious seeds,
A frightful waste of deleterious weeds ;
But wisdom's plant adorns the cultur'd soil,
And her rich fruitage crowns the mental toil.

Heaven sheds profusely her best gifts in vain,
If men the culture of those gifts restrain :
Glow not the diamond in her native mine,
Till fondly taught by polish'd art to shine :
Then far-diffus'd the living lustres fly,
And shed their trembling radiance on the eye.

See yonder pile immense, that proudly stands,
And mocks th' exertion of unequal hands ;

When idly vain each vigorous effort proves,
Apply the lever, and with ease it moves.

Knowledge the Syracusan Sage inspir'd,
Who, ravish'd with the fame his skill acquir'd,
Exclaim'd, as high in air the ships he hurl'd,
“ Give me firm footing, and I'll shake the world!”
Heaven aptest means affords to noblest ends,
But still the great result on man depends.

Say what is man, by knowledge unimbu'd ?
A chaos of materials, rich and rude ;
Self-doom'd to creep, whom science bids to soar,
A brute respectable, and nothing more ;—
Reverse the scene—with knowledge well apply'd,
And all the virtues smiling by his side ;—
Say what is man ?—a being more than blest,
Heaven's sacred image glowing in his breast.

Knowledge with telescopic glance pervades
The scenes that ignorance long involv'd in shades,

Explores the links of nature's chain, that lie
Unseen, and latent to the vulgar eye ;
Marks the first embryo movements that denote
A cause productive of effects remote ;
Nor stops to seize, in wisdom's perfect laws,
Detach'd effects—but grasps the final cause.

“ Knowledge is Power,” and who her steps attends,
Effects by simplest means, the greatest ends ;
The magnet, whose attractive powers had long
The eye eluded of the barbarous throng ;
By science call'd her virtues to produce,
Applies those virtues to the noblest use ;
Touch'd by her mystic charms, the needle due,
Points to the steady pole with aspect true :
Hence, when dark clouds the vivid pole-star hide,
Safe through the trackless waste the vessels glide ;
And hence, when treacherous waves impetuous roll,
Fair commerce wafts her freight from pole to pole.

Now train'd to hardest deeds, with effort proud,
She calls the thunder from the distant cloud ;
Sports with the mightiest agent Nature knows,
Or bids it slumber in profound repose ;
Weighs in the well-adjusted scale, with care,
The subtle ether—or the denser air ;
Mounts her gay car, and in her swift career,
Soars to the stars, and gives the winds her fear ;
Or with prismatic art, to the rapt sight,
Untwists the tissu'd robe of radiant light ;
Dissects each colour'd filament that plays
In splendid Iris, or the solar blaze.

“ Knowledge is Power : ”—from her experience

draws

The just analysis of Nature's laws ;
Resolved into pure elemental parts,
While Nature from the chymic process starts,

Shy to unveil her ever-varying face,
Each latent feature with delight we trace ;
Here forms in pleas'd affinities combine,
And there repulsive atoms, scorn to join ;
Yet these educ'd from Chaos' dread abodes,
Simple their essence, tho' complex'd their modes ;
And moulded by fair wisdom's plastic hand,
In worlds immensely varied proudly stand.

Prolific knowledge, from her ample store,
Gives to herself the means of knowing more ;
The mental forms, that wisdom pure dispense,
Her magic power embodies to the sense ;
Arrests bright genius, in his noblest rage,
And pours his glories on the living page ;
Gives to sweet poesy's enraptured view,
The local image which her fancy drew ;
Draws to a lucid point, the scatter'd rays
Of mental light, and bids them widely blaze :

And, like the Polypus, whose every part
Glow with young life, beyond the reach of art ;
Each point a fruitful germ, which genius warms,
Spreads, multiplies, and takes a thousand forms.
“ Knowledge is power,” wise statesmen never fail
To use her hand to poise the civil scale ;
Efficient of herself, though uncombin’d,
To move that vast machine, the public mind.
But, says the sophist, if this maxim’s true,
Revers’d—the fact must be admitted too—
Then “ Power is Knowledge,” and with blank
amaze,
Lo ! Catharine the revolting truth displays ;*
O’er savage hordes, extending wide her reign,
She pours her millions on the ensanguin’d plain ;
Just civiliz’d enough with murderous skill,
To make war’s dreadful scourge, more dreadful still.

* This poem was written prior to the death of the late
Empress of Russia.

But who such power, if power 'tis term'd, deny'd,
art Ignorance its base, and mad caprice its guide ;
arm Such power infers not mind, 'tis brutal force,
arms Nor claims sound knowledge for its sacred source.
ver Power which legitimate from knowledge springs,
A thousand varied blessings round her flings,
Mild from the turbid stream of acrid strife,
l She draws the cordial drops that sweeten life ;
Bids the mild blossoms of soft candour bloom,
On the red scourge, which ting'd the martyr's tomb ;
Lifts her broad shield o'er freedom's hallow'd shade,
And binds the despot in the chains he made ;
Gives equal laws to guide the public weal,
And bids firm justice hold the awful scale ;
Lest pride, and vile chicane, with subtle care,
For patriot frankness, weave the artful snare ;
Check the free stream of social intercourse,
And freeze Discussion in her genial source ;

From freedom's soul, the vital current draw,
And stamp oppression with the forms of law;
Till slowly organiz'd with proud display,
The legal monster scatters wild dismay.

Alike observant of the sad extremes,
Which mark the progress of ferocious schemes;
She strips false patriots of their deep disguise,
And holds the pageant up to blank surprise;
Lest the fierce demagogue, of blood-stain'd hue,
Prompt to deceive, and but to outrage true;
With speech imposing, and with aspect gay;
Smile but to soothe, and soothe but to betray;
While anarchy, with mad, infuriate spleen,
Confounds, destroys, and riots o'er the scene.

She calls meek merit from her lone retreat,
Gives her to Fame, and deems her only great;
Points to the trembling poor, a drooping train,
A refuge from pale want, and grinding pain;

Repels with scorn, the meretricious bribe,
Th' insidious science of the venal tribe ;
Sweeps with indignant hand from honor's shrine,
The varnish'd semblance of a trait divine ;
Bids the fine instinct glow with purer flame,
Nor tinge the cheek with aught but virtuous shame.

She strips false glory of her gorgeous plume,
To wreath fair virtue with unfading bloom ;
No proud distinctions in her orbit more,
But those stern truth, and moral worth approve ;
No insect favorites at her levees crawl,
With equal eye, she scans the claims of all ;
Leaves truth divinely free, with awful grace,
To found her simple, but immortal base ;
Whilst pure religion bids the fabric rise,
And lifts her hallow'd fane above the skies.
Her voice the tumult stills of folly's train,
Folly, the offspring of the dizzy brain ;

While the bland joys, which virtuous deeds impart,
Charm the fond sense, and meliorate the heart:
She bids the rage of murd'ring warfare cease,
And plants the olive of perennial peace;
Wide, and more wide, its shade luxuriant grows,
And soothes the nations to endear'd repose.

But should her genial influence be apply'd,
To feed the lust of lucre, or of pride;
Should man wide-wielding power's imperial mace,
Sport with his country's liberty and peace,
It only proves, what candour would define,
The sad perversion of a trait divine.

Force may exist unknown to science true,
But Knowledge is of Power the essence too;
Wish not for Power, which rears its hideous crest
On the brute head of ignorance unblest;
Each vicious semblance to the knave resign,
Get Knowledge, use it well, and Power is thine.

A MOONLIGHT WALK.

REFRESH'D by a social repast,
With bland conversation beguil'd,
Regretful, I parted at last,
And pursued my way over the wild;
Thus by friendship's mild effort detain'd,
I had linger'd, reluctant to go,
Till the moon the blue summit had gain'd,
And smil'd on the landscape below.

But the beam which obliquely she threw,
On the rough hollow path where I stray'd,
The deep shadows illusively drew,
That deceiv'd me each effort I made;
So severe and perverse was my lot,
Even caution itself was in vain,
I had scarce quit one horrible spot,
When I plung'd in another again.

Fickle orb ! I exclaimed, shall thy light,

* Thus on man so fallaciously shine ;

And must wisdom itself, to be right,

Trust a beam so insidious as thine ?

With confidence equally warm,

Had I trusted the bright orb of day,

I had 'scap'd from delusion and harm,

And with pleasure pursued my fond way.

Yet 'tis thus, that, by error misled,

We the rays of false science behold ;

Too faint to enlighten the head,

And to melt the chill bosom too cold :

In thy sun-beams, O ! Truth, let me find,

The pure bliss thou alone canst impart ;

While the rays which illumine the mind,

Warm to virtuous emotion the heart.

* Alluding to a passage in Young's Night Thoughts :—

“ The conscious Moon through every distant age,

“ Holds out a lamp to wisdom.”

THE
PROGRESS OF HABIT.

NOT from a solitary act of vice,
Imperious habits take their baneful rise ;
Slow seems the moral process, till, “ at length,”
They burst upon us with resistless strength ;
Each act, howe'er the effect we may deplore,
New vigour takes from that which went before ;
Like motion, whose accelerated force,
To a first impulse owes its rapid course ;
Habits their still-increasing force receive,
And the slow-purpos'd effort powerless leave.

The youth, whose mind to early virtue train'd,
Secluded from the world, its pomp disdain'd ;
When first bland vice assum'd a smooth disguise,
To soothe him with her soft-seducing lies ;

Like the fam'd plant, whose leaves with modest fear,
Shrink, trembling, from the hand approaching near;
Blind to her charms, with caution wisely nice,
He dreaded the polluting taint of vice.

Yet seen through every medium that deceives,
Which glozing fashion, or example gives;
The moral sense, which erst with ceaseless care,
Was "tremblingly alive" to every snare;
Now gradual loses her instinctive power,
While spreads the torpor faster every hour;
In some unguarded moment low he falls,
Tho' truth remonstrates, and tho' reason calls.

Remorse succeeds, but ah! succeeds in vain,
Too deep has virtue felt the moral stain;
Faint, and more faint, the shades of crime appear,
Which throb the pulse of salutary fear;
Vice to the alter'd eye familiar grown,
Assumes a form and colour not her own;

The soft enchantress, with insidious skill,
Blots the distinctive forms of good and ill ;
Veils with imposing smile, her vile intent,
And cheats the judgment into fond assent ;
The treacherous passions, aid the dark design,
And draw the will obsequious to her shrine ;
Weak, and more weak, each palsied effort shows,
Till the sooth'd conscience sinks to sad repose.

Thus to elude pale guilt's electric dart,
Or the yet recent stroke that wrings the heart ;
To brave the pointed finger of rude scorn,
Or dubious shame, of vice, or virtue born ;
He plunges deep into the dread abyss,
Till the chang'd horror looks a fancy'd bliss.

So truth's historic annals well describe,
The fatal spell which lure the plummy tribe ;

Caught by the Serpent's fascinating eye,
In vain the trembler prunes her wings to fly ;
In vain her puny shrieks, that pierce the air,
Secure her from the fell-attractive glare ;
The fluttering pinion, its prompt aid denies,
Till wildly rushing on her fate, she dies.

What time to future scenes with blank surprize,
The prophet turn'd his keen, enquiring eyes ;
Full on his aching sight, the fates disclose,
The long, sad, series, of his country's woes ;
He saw the friendless orphan's piteous tear,
While shrieks of deafening horror smote his ear ;
Her armies perish, her proud cities blaze,
And frantic discord swell the dread amaze ;
He saw, and heaving the big-patriot sigh,
On Hazael fix'd his sternly-stedfast eye ;
And cold as from his heart the life-blood crept,
He drew his mantle o'er his face and wept.

Blind to the latent cause, till freely told,
And in the pride of conscious virtue hold;
Hazael exclaim'd, with self-approving smile,
“ What is thy servant than a dog more vile ?
“ To do this dread, this greatly-monstrous thing,”
And thy lov'd country to destruction bring.

Ah! vain life's boast correctly to impart,
Th' impervious foldings of the human heart ;
How the first act, uncheck'd by firm controul,
Slides into habit, and enslaves the soul ;
The latent seeds of vast, and varied crime,
Unfold with circumstance, and grow with time ;
The embryo form, which first his pride awakes,
Swells to the Titan-bulk, ambition takes ;
Unaw'd by fear, by prudence unrepress'd,
And pity's semblance, rooted from his breast ;
With sateless carnage foaming by his side,
He spreads his blood-stain'd trophies, “ far, and
wide.”

—They who presume they can with untry'd
ease,

Pause at whatever point of vice they please ;
Speak to the frenzy of ambition—peace !
And bid th' impetuous tide of passion cease,
Have never yet the moral laws defin'd,
Which guide the movements of the changeful
mind.—

Perhaps—for sometimes so perverse is man—
The dread prediction in the moral plan,
Spoke by the prophet as a good design'd,
Gave the first casual impulse to his mind ;
Shock'd at the pictur'd scene of crime full-fraught,
His soul indignant spurn'd the frightful thought ;
Yet, if the imag'd horror from the mind,
Escape, nor leave the fainter trace behind ;
Fame to the eye of fancy, full portrays,
The dazzling meed ambition's plume displays ;

If cherish'd still, the wildest wishes fire,
And daring effort stamps the strong desire,
To frequent effort habit swift succeeds,
And gives completion to the vilest deeds.

Thus in the process of the moral plan,
Habit exalts or sinks the mind of man ;
And thus, with half-reluctance to begin,
He ventures trembling on the leading sin ;
If still repeated, vain the crime he mourns,
Reluctance soon to calm indifference turns ;
Indifference unsubdu'd, induces ease,
And this gives vice the fatal power to please :
What gives him pleasure is a good receiv'd,
—As what is wish'd is easily believ'd—
With prompt desire the pleasure to repeat,
He forms the habit which decides his fate :
A second nature now impels his choice,
And stamps the climax of detested vice.

The basis lost on which his virtue stood,
And lost the moral power of doing good,
The Furies on his path their horrors shed,
And Guilt her night-shade wreathes around his head;
The groans of Virtue wound his startled ear,
And Death consigns him to profound despair.

So virtuous habits equally apply,
Where the pleas'd contrast meets th' admiring eye,
The man who, form'd by care's corrosive hand,
Who long obey'd the demon's stern command;
On wealth's vile altar, mark'd with many a stain,
To immolate soft pity's weeping train,
Too long had mercy's sweetest sigh repress,
And all the kind emotions of the breast:
Scarce on his cheek the guilty blush portray'd
The conscious shame, when want implor'd his aid,
Mild, modest worth, unheeded pass'd his door,
And merit languish'd in the vale obscure.

Yet caught, perchance, in some half-melting
mood,
Ere the last vestige is effac'd of good ;
And while perception, with her lucid ray,
To virtue's shrine distinctly points the way ;
He gives, and, giving, feels the meek control
Of gentle pity o'er the yielding soul ;
Say, interest, shame, or fear, their force combin'd,
Meanest of motives that can sway the mind,
Yet if short liv'd, and faintly felt, the joy,
Which springs from sorrow's mitigated sigh,
If, lightened from the yet too guilty heart,
The pressure, which long-practis'd crimes impart ;
Th' effect produc'd, by slow gradation, leads
To purer motives, and sublimer deeds.

Man, born for virtue, yet to vice may cleave,
Himself the child of motive, not the slave,

Though self-efficient ne'er design'd to be,
Yet in the choice of motives proudly free ;
Hence to the eye of reason unreprest,
A scale of rising motives stand confest ;
Few act at once from views the most refin'd,
And leave the intermediate steps behind ;
Terror, with scorpion sting, and vengeful eye,
Compels the trembling wretch from vice to fly ;
Oft the wild fear, which nobler means precedes,
The tardy steps of lingering virtue speeds ;
Then hope, which future, high rewards inspire,
Blends with pale fear, the virtuous, fond desire ;
The mingled motive now assumes the sway,
Till fear, in hope's bright colours, melts away :
Now sober duty the calm choice decides,
And thro' life's wildering maze the conscience guides ;
Peace, the result of virtue's practis'd laws,
Chang'd from a pure effect, unfolds a cause ;

And thus, with holy gratitude combin'd,
Leave fear and shame, as motives, far behind ;
Ascending still in Virtue's perfect light,
He views her fitness with intense delight ;
Her latent beauties, her celestial mien,
And all the glories of the moral scene ;
Till in the general good, supremely blest,
The grossly-selfish passions learn to rest ;
And virtuous habit free from base controul,
Sways a mild sceptre o'er the yielding soul.

He, who the general good with zeal pursues,
And seems the sense of private good to lose,
Shall, in the great result, securely find,
His local interest with the whole combin'd.

This, if self-interest we perversely call,
Must, as dependant beings, cleave to all ;
He, who to motives more sublime would rise,
More proudly nice appears, than truly wise ;

Revolting nature feels each effort vain,
And reason shrinks the bold ascent to gain;
The sisyphæan stone again recoils,
And mocks the phrensy of convulsive toils.

To stem the tide of habit, as it flows,
Forms the severest task that reason knows ;
To bid the lawless pulse of riot cease,
And virtue vibrate in its hated place ;
Retrace, with cautious foot, and eye unmov'd,
The devious windings of a crime belov'd ;
To exile dear ideas from the brain,
A long, close-join'd, and deeply-rooted train ;
From the fond image of bland vice to part,
Twin'd with each fibre of the trembling heart ;
Demand the aid of motives well combin'd,
And all the strongest energies of mind.

Nor hopeless shall the task to those appear,
Who high resolve, chastise with temper'd fear ;
Who frequent-foil'd, yet tamely scorn to yield.
Till ceaseless effort wins the well-fought field ;
Till the turn'd stream of vicious habit shows,
The genial current that from virtue flows.

When polish'd marble the lone drop receives,
The feeble impulse no impression leaves ;
Repeat the drops, and, true to nature's laws,
The indented surface speaks the simple cause
Th' unconquerable mind to virtue true,
Shall vice, intrench'd in habit, thus subdue.

SONNET.

BY Hope upborne on rapture's swelling tide,
My light, inconstant bark, exulting flew ;
Rich was the varied scene, th' horizon wide,
Which glowing fancy's vivid pencil drew.

But passing was the beam, that pleasure shed,
And transient was the calm that smil'd around ;
Sorrow's big clouds hung heavy round my head,
And stormy passion drove my bark on ground.

So have I seen on April's fickle day,
Mix'd with her drenching showers, the driving
hail ;
Have seen it exile the Sun's sweetest ray,
And rudely the lorn traveller assail.

By sorrow taught, my fruitless toils I cease,
Nor trust the passions to procure me peace.

THE GARDEN.

WHAT time the rosy Sun, in orient state,
Flings his young rays on Skiddaw's proudest
height;
Drives with the glance that makes his glories known,
The demon darkness from his shadowy throne;
Purples the iris of the ruddy morn,
And drinks the dew-drop pendant from the thorn;
Gives to the playful bosom of the stream,
The mildest effluence of his blushing beam;
Wakes the pure spirit of the mountain gale,
To sport with Flora in the fragrant vale;
I wake, and, ere the ills which mortals share,
Rush on the soul, and give me back to care;
My eye the varied scene, exulting, greets,
I taste the cultur'd garden's varied sweets;

Swift soars the tuneful lark on rapture's wing,
To carol the prime hour of genial spring ;
Now seen as the light pinion's fluttering play,
On the rais'd eye reflects the softened ray ;
Now lost as mounting to the Sun's bright car,
Her wild wing vibrates to the viewless air ;
The liquid tones, her matin strains dispense,
In many a thrilling cadence charm the sense ;
Till proudly rushing on his dazzling blaze,
High Heaven responsive swells the note of praise.

Nor asks the sober eye averse from art,
The scenes which wealth, and sickening toil im-
part ;
The restless eye, that ranges unconfin'd,
Speaks the wild wanderings of a vacant mind ;
The strain'd eye, pacing o'er the dewy lawn,
When light's first blushes streak the dubious dawn ;

The grove, where pensive sadness loves to stray,
And darkling sigh the listless hours away ;
The fount, whose spangled curves exulting show,
The tissued glories of the lucid bow ;
The grot, secluded from the garish view,
Brilliant with spar, and gemm'd with pearly dew ;
The votive tablet, that with sculptur'd art,
Inscribes it silent moral on the heart ;
The tower antique, by Time's rude hand em-
brown'd,
By moss invested, and with ivy crown'd ;
The hill, whose distance, mocking the firm eye,
Lifts his blue forehead to the lofty sky ;
The winding glades, which speak the bold design,
Where sylvan beauty throws her waving line ;
The vistas, with the glittering spires between,
And distant Ocean, with his boundless scene ;
The foaming cascade, that with furious sweep,
Roars, and rolls headlong, from the craggy steep ;

Till the hoarse cadence, the wild torrents make,
Sleeps on the bosom of the tranquil lake;
The green-house, boasting her exotic spoils,
And rob'd with verdant Spring's perennial smiles ;
My garden knows not—in its scanty round,
No semblance of the pomp of art is found ;
The simple foliage, which the sea-pink shows,
The sweet suffusion of the blushing rose ;
The sun-set radiance of the yellow broom,
The bean's rich blossom, shedding mild perfume :
Give to fond vision many an image gay,
And all her fragrance to the breath of May.

The cherub plume, Dan. Milton well has told,
Irradiate shone, with vermil green and gold—
Claims the ripe berry, every varying hue—
The child of sun-shine, and ethereal dew ;
The acid which its cruder state combines,
The luscious flavour of its pulp refines ;

Sweetly salubrious to the ravish'd taste,
It gives to luxury an ambrosial feast;
On me each salutary herb that grows,
Its pure, and genial virtues, mild bestows:—
The root nutritious I profusely share,
Profusely pays me, for my constant care;
Each plant, each fruit, the raptur'd sense that
 greet,
Teems for my use with rich and varied sweets;
The vegetable tribes, whose spring-born race,
Lend to the table all its simple grace;
Their freshness freely to my wants resign,
And their sweet juices give to sweeten mine.

And who the harmless egotist shall deem
Fulsome, who culls the garden for his theme?
Who leaves to loftier bards the strain sublime,
Content if Nature prompt the artless rhyme?

Oh! dear to all that reasoning man pursues,
To virtue sacred, sacred to the muse ;
The nameless charms, a garden's sweets dispense,
Shed their bland influence o'er the moral sense ;
Silence, unknown to cities, wanders there,
Save when fond zephyr vibrates on her ear ;
And solitude, that soothes the lingering hours,
To calm reflection consecrates her powers ;
Health on the sun-burnt cheek of labour smiles,
Firms the lax nerve, and forms to manly toils ;
The eye reposing on the sober green,
Gives the mild feeling of a joy serene ;
The vivid tints the varied flowers display,
Light up the soul with hope's effulgent ray.

Oh! friendly to the proudest hopes of man,
First link of Nature, in the moral plan ;
If, unreveal'd by heaven to mortal view,
The blooming Eden our first parents knew ;

Yet the fond feelings of the human breast,
The unrecorded fact would still attest ;
While reason sanctions, with unerring voice,
The primal scene of man's instinctive choice.

And dear to all that ardent hope inflames,
Th' appropriate fitness, that a garden claims,
To all that gives to life its truest grace,
To health, to virtue, and to smiling peace.

When glory proudly vaults her crimson car,
And scatters wide the lurid bolts of war ;
Her eye infuriate, darting o'er the plain,
Exulting boasts of hapless myriads slain ;
Oh! God, to pity's eye her plume appears,
Steep'd in a mingled tide of blood and tears ;
Tears, the lone orphan weeps in bitter showers,
And blood, the reeking heart profusely pours.

When legal power, across the sea-green wave,
Binds in wild frenzy's chain the timid slave ;
Insidious kindness films the mental beam,
To draw, un murmuring, from the vital stream ;
The last, rich drops, that lingering life supply,
Warm the chill breast, or feed the tearful eye ;
While sateless luxury, 'mid his orgy hours,
The labour of a weeping life devours ;
Till bids kind death the throbbing pulses cease,
And, mild, the anguish'd bosom sinks to peace.

Ah ! me, what angel pity shall impart,
The lighten'd pressure of a grief-wrung heart ?
I blush the semblance of a man to meet,
I turn, indignant, to my lov'd retreat ;
Sigh o'er the slave, yet hail the glorious day,
When mercy's hand shall wipe his tears away.

When the fierce demon of wild party raves,
And proudly marshals his devoted slaves ;
With headlong riot stupidly combines,
And round the heart the snakes of fury twines ;
Blows to a flame the latent sparks of strife,
And mildews every charm of social life ;
Tortures with tongue perverse the pure intent,
And toils for " meanings that were never meant ;"
Who, who, the blighting ruin shall restrain,
When maniac frenzy drives with slacken'd rein ?
With tranquillizing tone, bid discord cease,
And change the firebrand to the palm of peace ?

Or should the moon-calf ignorance, fondly
blind,
And draw his deepening shadows o'er the mind ;
The lucid beams athwart the mental night,
That shed the glimmering dawn of dubious light ;

Struggling the blank horizon to illumine,
Too frequent perish in the dreadful gloom ;
Long must the Sun of Truth his beams display,
Ere shines the clear, broad, intellectual day.

So, when the fiends of prejudice controul,
And strike their deepest roots into the soul ;
If chance the weeding hand of science fair,
Pluck from the bosom many a noxious tare ;
Still lurking at the heart, the seeds remain,
Still clings the last-lov'd fibre to the brain ;
Yet while, " poor man," I mournfully exclaim,
Perhaps I cherish what I frankly blame.

When the fierce bigot at the despot's nod,
For Moloch fights, yet thinks he fights for God ;
Mistakes the imposing farce of sheer grimace,
For the meek spirit of the Prince of Peace ;

And reckless that to Christian zeal belongs,
The firm endurance of the greatest wrongs ;
Th' impervious shield that truth divine bestows,
And the resistance that from kindness flows ;
Contends for vapid forms, with zeal absurd,
And immolates a brother for a word !—

When thus the “ man of blood,” committed
stands,

A daring infidel to heaven's commands ;
Religion, outrag'd, feels the ruffian blow,
And truth disclaims him as her deadliest foe ;
Cold-shrinking from the scene my bosom grieves,
And seeks the peace my lov'd asylum gives.

By ceaseless care produc'd, and embryo strife,
Here the moschetto that embitter life ;
Suspend their teasing toils to give me pain,
Nor sting me till I join the world again ;

And here the labours which to rest invite,
Give me to study with increas'd delight.

E'en weeds their pointed moral to the heart,
With all the energy of truth impart;
Bloom not the virtues in th' uncultur'd mind,
By truth deserted, and to sloth consign'd;
But teem spontaneous to the frighted eye,
The hideous crimes of more than common die;
The *snail* of mental sloth with vacant mind,
Leaves but the slime of ignorance behind;
Deceit, that with a *worm's* insidious skill,
Corrodes unseen, and forms the pregnant ill;
Reptiles obscene, combine their noxious power,
To stamp instruction on the thoughtful hour.

But oh! when wretches, saturate of crime,
And lost to every sentiment sublime;

The sacred name of liberty assume,
To seal the patriot with the tyrant's doom ;
“ Proscribe with murderous scroll the wise and
 good,
While daggers write the characters in blood ;”
Bid sophists echo the sad tale around,
And man's abuse with principles confound ;
Strengthen the grasp of stern, coercive power,
And bid oppression grind a nation more ;
While freedom veils her blushing face, and weeps,
And lingering justice drops her scales and sleeps ;
Suspicion chills my soul with rapid stride,
In the still garden I my sorrow's hide ;
Mourn that the despot a smooth plea should find ;
To damp the glowing ardours of the mind ;
That men should dare assume the patriot's name,
When virtue outrag'd bars the impious claim ;

When varied vice, by heaven's supreme decree,
Proves him a slave, unworthy to be free.

Yet hope, with silvery ray, and eye serene,
Points to the glories of the future scene,
When pants the breast with dignify'd disdain,
The steep of moral excellence to gain ;
Virtue, and peace, the patriot's glorious prize,
Glow at his heart, and lighten at his eyes :—
Unlike the meed the glozing patriot claims,
Whom hard injustice to revenge inflames ;
Who, shrinking from it on its vaster scale,
Pursues its practice in minute detail ;
Whose public virtues blazon to the sky,
Whose private crimes insult the moral eye.

I see, when rising on the glooms of night,
The orb of freedom sheds a sea of light ;

Swift fly the clouds of ignorance away,
And leave the cloudless beam of living day ;
When ceaseless toil, that bends the vassal knee,
And luxury, parent of the fiend *ennui* ;
And pride, that deprecates the meek controul,
And vicious meanness, that degrades the soul ;
Shall court the meed truth's equal laws impart,
The mild and manly virtues of the heart,
From time's ameliorating touch shall fly,
The harshness that offends the purer eye ;
And the vast scene of social man present,
The smiling image of sublime content :
None less, none greater, than myself I see,
All wise, all good, all happy, and all free ;
Approving Heaven surveys the hallow'd train,
And renovatèd Eden blooms again.

TO A WORM.

THE worm I caught, my garden's subtle foe,
With puny effort struggling to be free ;
It shrunk, instinctive, from the lifted blow,
And, suppliant, seem'd to say, Ah ! pity me.

And I do pity thee—the cruel hand,
That, mindless of thy plea, would injure thee,
Must be a coward....Mercy's sweet command
Delights not him ; but I will set thee free.

Taste the few simple joys thy state bestows,
And taste them free from life-corroding care ;
Go, tell the proudest *worm* Creation knows,
That soon thy lowly dwelling man must share.

Go, spare my tender plant, and tell the brave,
That valour's sweetest lesson is—to SAVE.



THE TEAR OF PITY.

PERFUM'D by Zephyr's balmy wing,
Sweet is the rosy breath of Spring ;
Illusions sweet the soul beguile,
When beauty pours the witching smile ;
But sweetness more intensely dear,
Distils from Pity's melting tear.

Mild is the evening's parting beam,
Reflected from the silver stream ;
In softer beams of shadowy light,
Still milder shines the Queen of Night ;
But Virtue's mildest rays appear,
Enshrin'd in Pity's lucid tear.

By memory wak'd, the pensive eye,
Reviews past scenes of tender joy ;
Such sadly-pleasing scenes we love,
—So fondly moans the widow'd dove—
Yet plaints more tender far appear,
When Pity drops the soothing tear.

Dear to the incense-breathing flowers,
Are vernal suns, and genial showers ;
To lovers dear the magic name,
That vibrates through th' impassioned frame ;
But, ah ! more exquisitely dear
The bliss that flows from Pity's tear.

Ah ! ne'er may hollow art supply,
With mimic tears the streaming eye ;
Nor pleasure's soft alluring spells,
Seduce the heart where pity dwells ;
But Sensibility be near,
To prompt the chaste, voluptuous tear.

When dark Distrust, with look unkind,
Freezes the warm, ingenuous mind ;
And, dead to sorrow's varied groan,
Would weep but for itself alone ;
May generous Sympathy be there,
With Pity's meek-dissolving tear !

Take, conqueror take—the meed you seek,
The orphan's tear—the widow's shriek ;
Let Glory's blood-stain'd wreath be thine,
The sacred pulse of Pity mine ;
Mine, what to Heaven itself is dear,
The pathos of her simple tear.



TO LUCY.

SEDUC'D by Spring's illusive smile,
The cowslips their gay charms unfold ;
And, peeping from their natal soil,
Disclose the eye bedropp'd with gold.

Unweeting of the chilling blast,
That lurks beneath the playful breeze ;
The frost which hoars the gelid waste,
Shall soon their simple beauties seize.

Though lowly-bending to their bed,
Meekness in vain eludes the storm ;
No hand shall lift the drooping head,
Or raise the frail and shrinking form.

Yet, lenient time with vivid power,
The blighting ruin shall restrain ;
Shall every faded charm restore,
And give their brilliant hues again.

Thus, Lucy, have I seen thee bloom,
With a fond parent's partial eye ;
Those cheeks the roseate tints assume,
Those fragrant lips the vermeil dye.

And seen the varying smile which play'd,
On each soft feature's infant grace ;
The earliest dawn of MIND survey'd,
Mild-kindling in thy meaning face.

Yet scarcely had thy opening charms,
Spread their mild blossoms to the day ;
* When fierce Disease, with rude alarms,
Seiz'd thee, his unresisting prey.

* A contagious fever, combin'd with that which frequently accompanies dentition.

Say, coward! while contagion wafts,
Thy arrows through the tainted air;
Could not thy keen, thy burning shafts,
So innocent a bosom spare?

For, ah! the change—how sad to speak!
Appear'd in every alter'd grace—
The roses faded from thy cheek,
And the pale lillies mark'd their place.

Oh! stranger, hast thou ever seen,
A flower recline its mournful head,
Its foliage show a sickly green;
Its leaves their blushing sweetness shed?

Then hast thou seen the human flower,
By blighting sickness rudely torn;
And bending to the ruthless power,
In sad, and silent anguish mourn.

With pain that parents only feel,
I saw that tender form decline ;
Those artless smiles the demon steal,
And leave decaying languor thine.

I mark'd with grief the long-drawn sigh,
That piteous heav'd thy throbbing breas ;
And heard the deep-sob vainly try,
To soothe the beating heart to rest.

Till on the fickle verge of life,
Each fainter effort died away ;
And left thee, heedless of the strife,
A scarcely-breathing form of clay.

And vain impassion'd fondness strove,
The smile of rapture to restore ;
The pulse of anguish to remove,
Nor throb the fever'd bosom more.

Scarce from those eyes the lambent flame,
Effus'd a dim and trembling ray;
Or flash'd an evanescent gleam,
In gloomier shades to steal away.

Thus lingered long thy dubious date,
Fraught with a thousand keen alarms;
Till pitying Heaven, who watch'd thy fate,
Restor'd thee to a parent's arms.

And now the life-stream gently flows,
Meandering through each purple vein;
Health on each soften'd feature glows,
And gives to infant joy the rein.

I see the vital spark, which lay
Conceal'd—its lustre re-assume;
Fling from those eyes the vivid ray,
And give again each charm to bloom.

Still may the smiles, which sweetly gleam,
Warm the frank cheek of ripening youth—
Thine eye diffuse the purest beam,
Of mild intelligence and truth.

So when the scythe of envious Time,
Lays the frail form of beauty low ;
Rais'd to high Heaven's unfading clime,
The mental blossoms lovelier grow.



KNOWLEDGE IS VIRTUE.

THAT misery wide exists, no comment needs,
From vice the agonizing pang proceeds ;
This from mistake results, whose dubious light,
With false perception, mocks the mental sight ;
And fond mistake, with wild, unconscious gaze,
Attends blind error, through her devious maze ;
Error, prolific, as the teeming earth,
To idiot ignorance owes her hydra birth.

Thus in the pomp of metaphysic phrase,
The subtle sophist, all his skill displays ;
Refines the process, with assumption clear,
Till the full climax fascinates the ear ;
Affirms with confidence, that every vice
From ignorance alone must take its rise ;
And hence infers, in triumph's haughty tone,
“ Knowledge is Virtue.”

That vice, from ignorance born, her sire be-
trays,

And many a wild, and hideous form displays ;
Impartial truth, th' inglorious fact concedes,
While reason blushes, and while pity bleeds ;
Yet who asserts, that ignorance is the cause,
Of every vice, that man to misery draws,
That pour on mind the scientific ray,
Anddingy vice before it melts away ;
That Knowledge does to Virtue more than tend,
Itself comprizing motive, rule and end ;
Forms a conclusion, fatal in its course,
False when applied, and vicious in its source.

Free from the rage of versatile desires,
Or the fond mania novelty inspires ;
See through the medium of experience pure,
How Knowledge proves her claims to Virtue sure ;

The flimsy sciolist, whose partial view
Mistakes illusion for the moral clue ;
No point of lucid illustration gives,
The *thing* beneath contempt securely lives ;
But view the man, whose comprehensive mind,
Through various science ranges unconfin'd,
Whose eye intuitive, with ardent gaze,
The moral plan in all its parts surveys :
Marks the faint verge, where virtue mild appears,
And where imposing vice her semblance wears ;
Draws with the vivid pencil's glowing grace,
The simple splendors of her awful face ;
Yet to the vice, which ignorance only gives,
The wretch sublime, a slave obsequious lives.

Ask you, indignant, where the monsters dwell,
Who libel systems, they arrange so well ;
With cheek unblushing every vice pursue,
And outrage principle, and Nature too ;

KNOWLEDGE IS VIRTUE.

Look round, your man of theory meets the eye,
Deep stain'd with crimes of more than common die.

Thus though bright suns on noxious dunghills
shine,

In vain their genial beams the mass refine ;
In putrid streams the rank effluvia rise,
Dim the pure ray, and taint the ambient skies.

Where science ne'er distils her honey'd dew,
The pleas'd and unassuming contrast view ;
The man who, doom'd to labour's heaviest toils,
Yet blest with hope, and conscious virtue, smiles ;
Walks with mild firmness life's uneven road,
Nor sinks beneath the pressure of his load ;
Surveys the chequer'd scene with placid eye,
Nor murmuring lifts to heaven th' accusing sigh ;
The wisdom that prescribes life's dubious range,
Precludes the shadow of a wish to change.

Say then, and, frensy'd prejudice aside,
—The jargon of hypotheses, and pride ;—

Blest with distinct perceptions of the right,
Why man in vice can take supreme delight ?
Close—in the moment of deliberate choice—
The cold, deaf ear to wisdom's awful voice :
Or if admitting in the choice we make,
Vice the smooth semblance of a good to take,
Yet to the conscious evil freely blind,
Why give to vice the charm that lures the mind ?
The sickly verdure of the transient scene,
Proudly prefer to heaven's immortal green ;
Seize with untrembling hand, and volant skill,
The germ, full-fraught of every latent ill ;
With eye insensate, future good survey,
And cast unfading wreaths with scorn away ;
Commit the moral suicide we know,
Point the dread poniard, and direct the blow ?
Why ?—but that man, without the power to chuse,
The wrong, when hostile to his better views ;

To heaven responsible had never been,
His highest boast an exquisite machine ;
'Tis moral freedom forms, with sovereign claim,
The only basis of reward or blame ;
And he who well improves the gift divine,
Ray'd with the beams of excellence shall shine ;
Exalt the moral sense to truth alone,
And give fair virtue her sublimest tone ;
But who perverts the freedom goodness gave,
Gives vice her turpitude, and guilt a slave.

If vicious blame not then creative skill,
'Tis not the want of knowledge, but of will ;
Or self-deriv'd mistakes the bane impart,
Not of the head but of the wayward heart ;
Or deem it madness, yet, 'tis more than plain,
The moral madness of the lucid brain.

Yet man attach'd to theory would explore,
The latent sources of the moral power ;

Of free volitions scan th' efficient cause,
And mould them passive to mechanic laws ;
While every sacred energy of soul,
Material impulse, and fixt fate control.
That thus persuasive motives firmly bind,
In dread, coercive chains, the yielding mind ;
That these to foreign causes trace their source,
Nor owe to mental energies their force ;
That forming one vast chain, ' by nature ty'd,
Each thought a link no effort can divide,
They leave, illusive leave, the agent free,
But stamp his fate with destiny's decree.

Lost to the native feelings of the heart,
Or the stern truths obtrusive facts impart ;
From the light texture of the ductile brain,
Of specious paradox perversely vain ;
Cold-blooded sophists, with insidious care,
Weave the fine meshes of the subtle snare.

Thus man a mere automaton becomes,
Prompt, or inert, as sportive impulse dooms ;
Nurs'd in the beam, which on *distinction* plays,
Or toss'd on wild misfortune's swelling seas ;
Blest with the smile unwrinkled pleasure wears,
Or steep'd in faded sorrow's ceaseless tears ;
Surrounding scenes create the infant mind,
Illume with knowledge, or with error blind ;
No powers distinct the strong impressions sway,
Which outward objects to the sense convey ;
But form'd by images he thus receives,
Poor man the sport of varying impulse lives ;
While from unconscious matter's laws alone,
Virtue, and vice, receive their proper tone.

Here, curs'd with ignorance, the wretch must
 pine,
Nor pluck one blossom from the tree divine ;
There, with exalted step, the favourite treads,
Bright with the beams the orb of knowledge sheds ;

Nor say that simple worth, and purpose kind,
With truth meek-beaming from the humble mind;
Mark the pure path, where *error may* preside,
The bosom solace, and the conduct guide ;
These but to him a virtuous semblance show,
Not the high virtues which from knowledge flow ;
Nor say that sometimes knowledge too displays
Th' appropriate vice that ignorance betrays ;
This, which to common sense a vice may seem,
Knowledge a slight obliquity will deem ;
A mere excrescence of the generous mind,
Which scorns the antique rules that pedants bind ;
That, ripen'd by the mellowing hand of time,
Unfolds the germ of virtue's true sublime.

Stunn'd with the paradox, if still remain
Unsolv'd the doubts which cling around the brain,
Knowledge once more the talisman applies,
Which sweeps away the films from vulgar eyes,

Gives the fam'd axiom, with commanding voice,
“ Knowledge is Virtue.”

Prone to extremes the varied moral scene,
The sport of wild hypotheses has been ;
Virtue to * sentiment was fondly trac'd,
And pure devotion soften'd down to taste ; †
While each delirium of the whirling brain,
Proscrib'd sound knowledge as the moral bane ;
Whence rose indignant to the wondering view,
The wilder system which the sophist drew ;
With him no moral feelings idly play,
Howe'er attemper'd by the mental ray ;

* An indefinable feeling, that, unconnected with the operations of intellect, is supposed to lead instinctively to the practice of Virtue.

† Some years ago, an essay was published, the ostensible purpose of which was, to prove that devotion itself was rather an object of taste than of judgment.

And conscience, once the guide of erring youth,
Flies the keen glance of all-pervading truth ;
Affections bland, and passions well defined,
Are only artificial modes of mind ;
His virtue shrouded from obtrusive eyes,
Scorns the dull motives which from sense arise.
Self-love the spring of action, form'd to guide
Dependant man through life's inconstant tide ;
Faith's high creative power, whose vision keen,
Gives lov'd existence to the things unseen ;
And smiling hope, whose mildly-radiant eye,
Points to immense rewards beyond the sky ;
And fair example, sedulous to draw
The letter'd precept into living law,
Seducing soft, with virtue's charms divine,
Fond emulation to her holy shrine ;
Vapid, and vain, their genial influence lose,
In the wide circle of his grander views ;

This is the stern virtue, the abstracted good,
 Which scorns the base alloy of flesh and blood ;
 Th' " omnipotence of Knowledge," bears him
 hence,
 Far from the chilling atmosphere of sense ;
 All intellect he soars, and leaves behind,
 The *common place* of virtue and of mind ;
 On fame's proud column, stands superbly great,
 While reptile rivals crawl beneath his feet ;
 Or walks sublime, the path before untrod,
 And boasts the high perfections of a God.

Thus in the moral world, from each extreme,
 Which forms the visionary's fine-spun dream ;
 The same effects, with nice precision flow
 Sink to supineness, or to frensy glow ;
 Though hostile the proud aspect each assumes,
 And each his *seeming* foe to dulness dooms ;
 Though vary'd progress mark the steps they make,
 And head-long zeal confirm the fond mistake ;

Yet one their essence, and unvary'd aim,
Stern truth identifies and brands the same.

The passions wild, meek virtue's form degrade,
Eclipse her glories, and her beauties shade ;
And solitary science too, must fail,
To turn on virtue's side the moral scale ;
To keep the treacherous heart to virtue true,
Her lights too partial, and her means too few.

Proud on the wild wave see yon vessel ride,
No helm to steer her, and no chart to guide ;
Securely vain her devious track to keep,
Nor marks the storm which hovers o'er the deep ;
Scarce the pale Sun, his light a moment gave,
When loud the tempest howls along the wave ;
Blots from the fearful eye the beam of day,
Or bids the bolt in lurid splendors play ;
Till dash'd tremendous, on the faithless shore,
O'erwhelm'd, she sinks profound, to rise no more.

Thus shows the creature man, whose buoyant
mind,
Toss'd by discordant passion's shifting wind ;
Floats on wild anarchy's tumultuous wave,
A prey to every blast which impulse gave ;
Till the false lights, that caught the gazing eye,
In the deep shades of mental darkness die ;
Fade from the pictur'd forms, which fancy drew,
The bold proportions, and the vivid hue ;
The proud, the glittering pageants cease to play,
And hope's illusive visions melt away.

While yonder bark awaits the truant tide,
Serene on Ocean's smooth expanse to glide ;
Mild on his face, the trembling sun-beams play,
And lend a soften'd lustre to the day ;
No deepening clouds forbode the madding storm,
No billowy waves, the lucid scene deform ;
On the rapt eye, the rich perspective glows,
And soothes the wandering senses to repose.

Ah! what of scenes which yield intense sur-
prize,

Becalm'd the proud, the moveless vessel lies ;
No blustering Auster wakes the driving gale,
Stirs the calm surface, or impels the sail ;
The breeze, in vain, her utmost efforts court,
To waft her smiling to the destin'd port.

So moral systems, that reject with pride,
The humbler aids of passion well apply'd ;
Howe'er announc'd in pomp's decisive tone,
Dread issuing from the critic's censor-throne ;
To beauteous schemes of * sentiment confin'd,
Leave plain, unvarnish'd virtue, far behind ;
The finish'd forms to which the brain gives birth,
Of abstract excellence, and untried worth ;
Shrink from the firm gaze, and with rapid flight,
Melt into mist, and swim before the sight :

* Opinion.

Thus from the touch illusive phantoms fly,
Nor leave defin'd, their image on the eye ;
Or too sublime for vulgar minds to scan,
Or all too weak to realize the plan ;
This speculates on what he virtue deems,
In point of practice, still the same he seems ;
That the loose rein to dubious feeling gives,
And the fond victim of delusion lives ;
Untaught by knowledge, and too proud to fear,
Unchasten'd impulse, whirls her mad career ;
Alike in both, the consequence is seen,
Both lose the end, and substitute a mean.

Could we combine their force with caution wise,
Man to his moral stature soon would rise ;
Knowledge the chart, to virtue's port would guide,
While patient effort, by fond hope supplied ;
On life's capricious sea would smoothly sail,
Impell'd by passions sweetly-temper'd gale.

For grant that virtue warms a feeble mind,
Yet must her active sphere be still confin'd ;
Her grander traits must feel a chill controul,
Where narrow views pre-occupy the soul.

And still conceding to sound knowledge more,
Could we the boundless maze of vice explore ;
Nor pause, an insulated act to view,
But seize with steady hand the latent clue ;
Trace every combination from its source ;
And every winding in its devious course ;
Mark the incalculable ills which flow,
From every vice to deluge man with woe ;
Perhaps th' impressive scene would then suffice,
To shield a victim from the fangs of vice.

But here man's state imperfect veils the light,
And partial knowledge clouds the mental sight ;
External scenes illusive charms impart,
Croud on the sense and slide into the heart ;

Too oft in magic chains the passions bind,
Seduce, tho' force not, the elastic mind.

Some with the pains ingenious blockheads show,
The curious, rather than the useful know ;
Thus dissipate an intellect design'd,
In heaven's paternal love to bless mankind ;
Elate with showy parts the soaring tribes,
Scorn the dull bounds which common sense pre-
scribes ;
For truth's pure beams, which strike the obvious
view,
A dubious meteor, fondly they pursue ;
The subtle form, through many a dazzling maze,
Mocks the strain'd effort of the eager gaze ;
For where the subject, too profound, prevails,
The scanty line of human science fails ;
Or too immense the puny grasp to span,
Frowns stern defiance on the powers of man.

Thus foil'd in disquisition's ample field,
Too weak for conquest, and too proud to yield;
Unconscious of the cause that lurks behind,
The too unequal powers of finite mind ;
Sullen and sour, the theorist is found,
A mental paradox to all around ;
Doubts with the sceptic every axiom plain,
Yet boasts the dogmas of the tenuous brain ;
Such knowledge, if it boast the sacred name,
Of poignant sorrow forms a copious stream.

Some that to knowledge make a fair pretence,
Appear inflated with superior sense ;
To self complacent feelings idly prone,
Compare less acquisitions with their own ;
Say 'tis a proof that where such traits abide,
Some points of knowledge wanting are beside ;
Then gentle sophist pray the cause explore,
Why with less * sense, some practise virtue more.

* Knowledge.

Nor ask, with tone indignant, where I find,
The man, who, blest with knowledge, scorns his
kind?

I covet not, with proud, invidious claim,
To wound the living, nor the dead defame ;
In truth's recording page the monster lives,
Nor asks the aid ingenious malice gives.

True that sound knowledge unimpeach'd re-
mains,

But frail the vessel which the gift contains ;
Oft the soil'd casket, to neglect expos'd,
Dims the mild lustre of the gem inclos'd ;
To guard lest knowledge should involve a snare,
Demands the bosom's unremitting care ;
Let others in the rays of science shine,
Be ours the traits of * wisdom to combine ;

* By Wisdom, in a moral point of view, is here meant, the best end, secur'd by the practical adoption of the best means.

Mark the bright paths, to virtue's goal which tend,
And use the means that best secure the end ;
Transfuse to principle the truths we know,
And bid the heart with virtuous passion glow ;
Nor coldly gaze at distance, and admire,
Till every charm in * sentiment expire.

T' illume with knowledge, and exalt with hope,
Includes of varying life the moral scope ;
Knowledge, which points to Virtue's glorious meed,
And Hope, that stimulates the lofty deed ;
Undazzled by the beam of science bright,
But prompt to practise what we know is right ;
Till the pure stream, which virtuous joys dispense,
Rolls a rich tide of sweet benevolence ;
Thus proving to the unperverted mind,
Knowledge is Virtue, when to practice join'd.

TO CHARITY.

MEEKEST of all the gentle train,
Mercy's best gift to soften pain ;
See Charity, with mildest grace,
Diffuse the smile that soothes to peace.

The law of kindness guides her tongue,
She suffers, yet can think no wrong ;
Calms the tumultuous scenes of strife,
And gilds the gloom which darkens life.

The woes to which relief she gives,
Throb the fond pulse where pity lives ;
Each pang the grief-wrung heart reveals,
Her bosom more acutely feels.

Cold Caution, ne'er with chill controul,
Blights the firm purpose of her soul ;
Prompt to relieve—nor can she know,
The line which marks a friend or foe.

The softest tear compassion sheds,
She drops, when suffering virtue pleads ;
The purest bliss delight exhales,
Beams from her eye when Truth prevails.

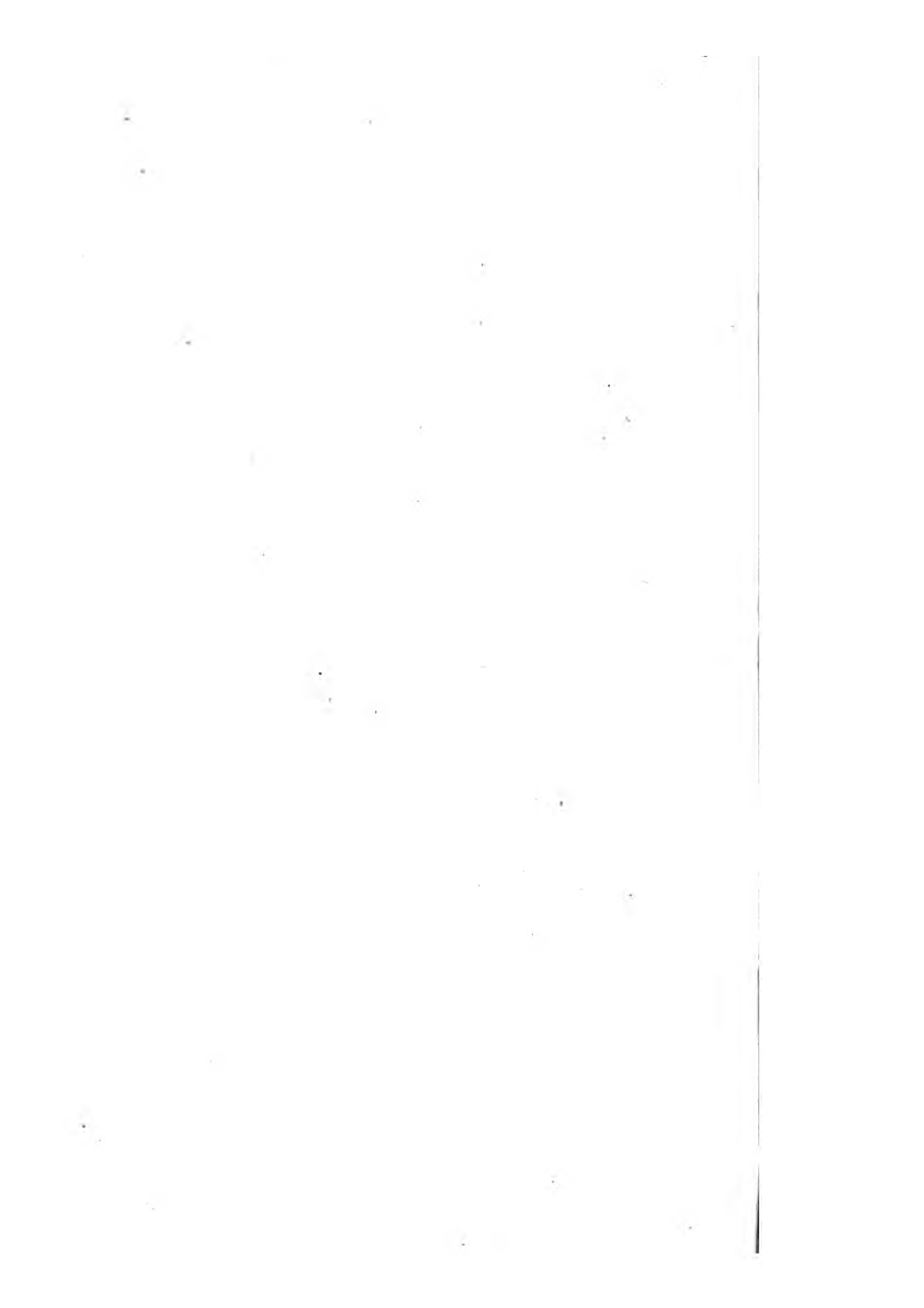
Bent o'er affliction's languid bed,
Her kind hand lifts the drooping head ;
The balm her soften'd smiles impart,
Heals and binds up the broken heart.

Mild as when dew-drops gem the flowers,
Soft Pity's milder dew she pours ;
Wipes the sad tear from Sorrow's eye,
Or heaves the sympathetic sigh.

When Faith and Hope, through endless day,
In raptur'd vision melt away ;
Meek Charity shall stand confest,
Still blessing—and for ever blest.

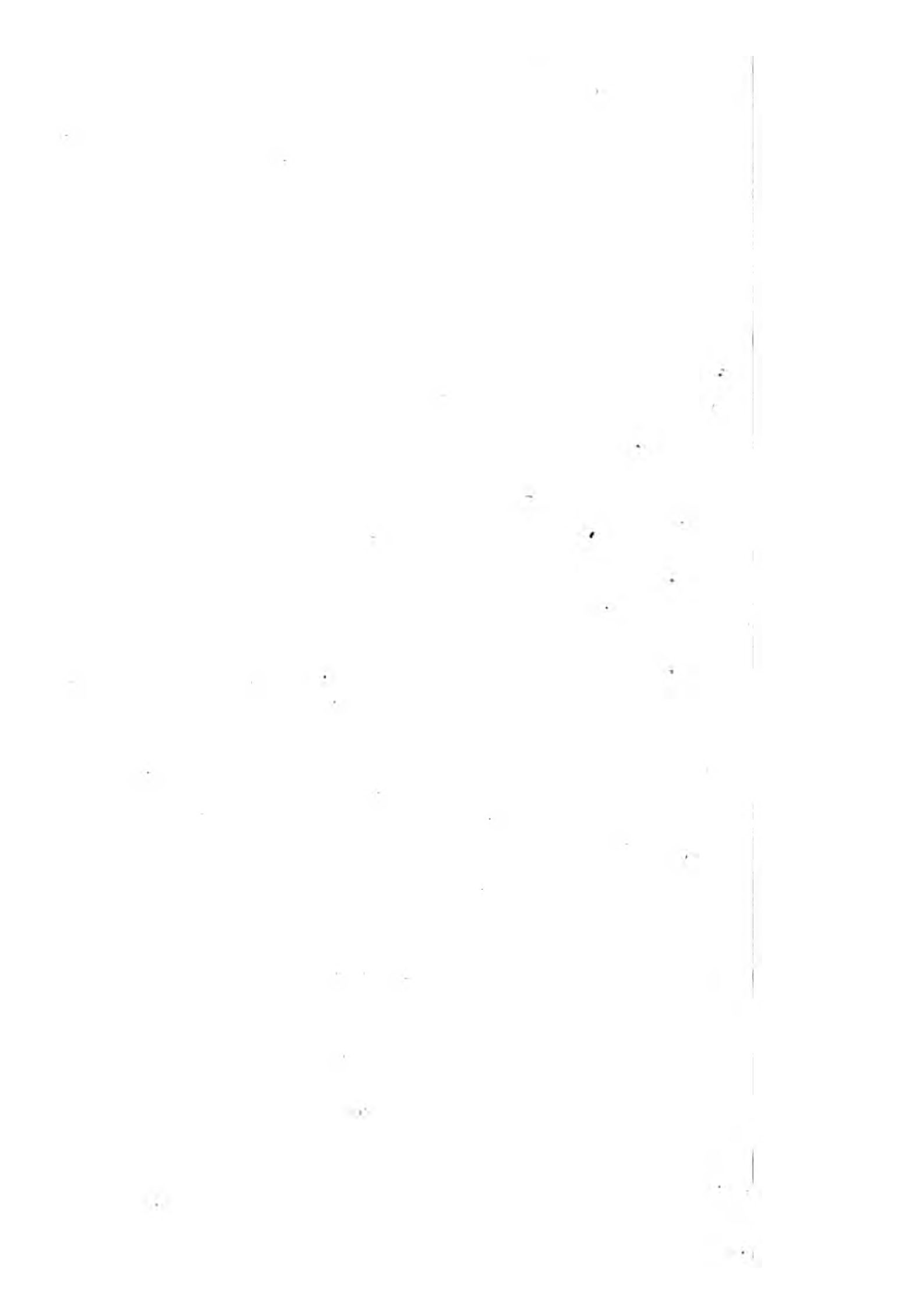
Great God ! indulge the fervid prayer,—
May Charity be still our care ;
Make every heart her sacred shrine,
And praise shall be for ever thine.





ERRATA.

- In page 22, line 11, for "joy," read "joys."
- - - 33, line 9, for "more," read "move."
- - - 38, line 12, for "reason," read "conscience."
- - - 39, line 16, for "lure," read "lures."
- - - 61, line 15, for "moschetto," read "mos-
chettos."
- - - 63, line 12, for "sorrow's, read "sorrows."
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