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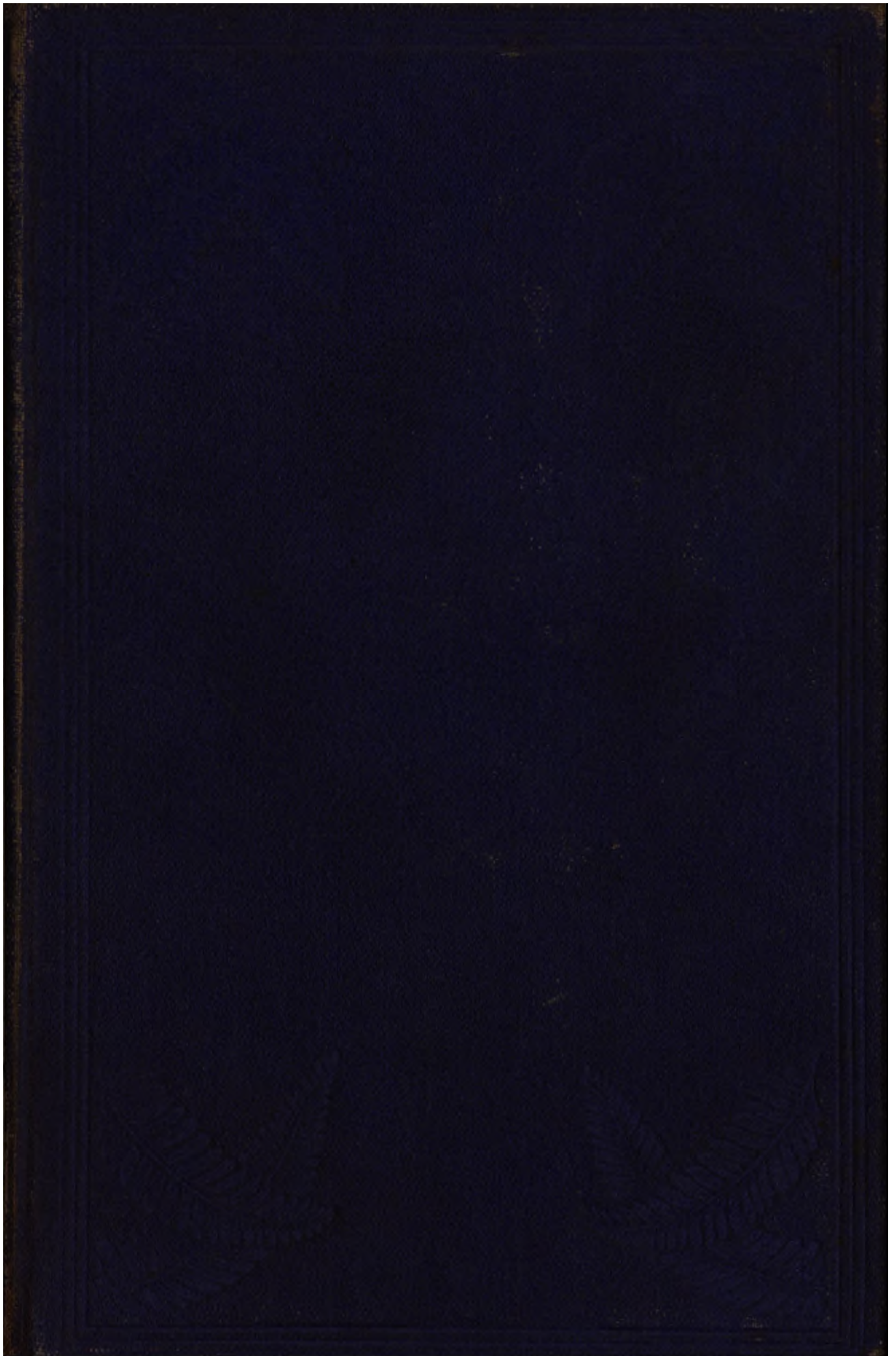
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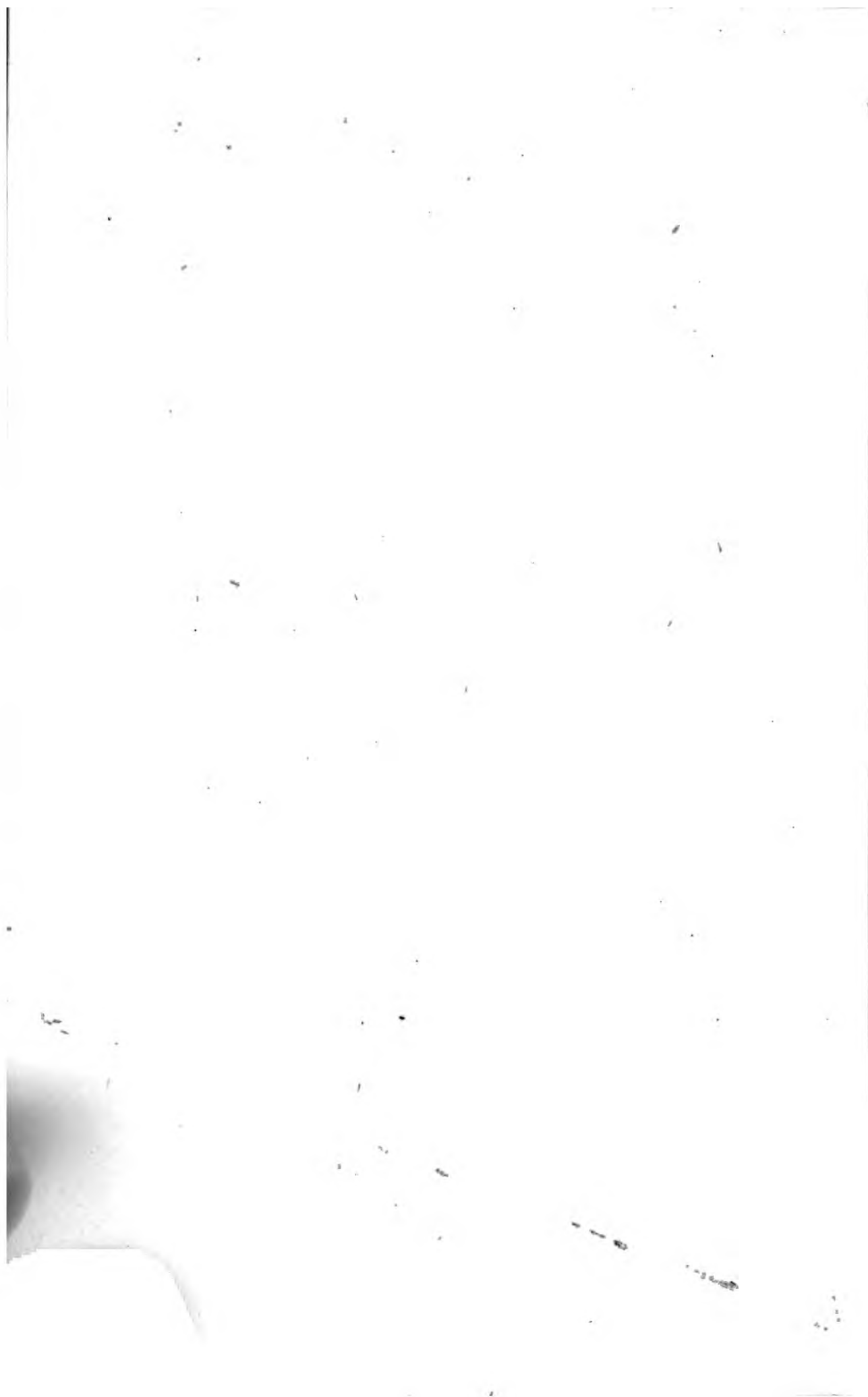
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PICTURES OF SOCIAL LIFE;

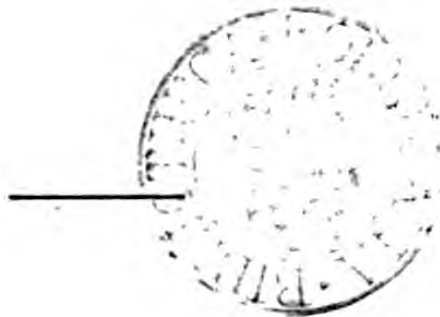
BEING .

SELECT POEMS

BY

“THE DROYLSDEN BARD,”

J. BURGESS.



MANCHESTER :

JOHN HEYWOOD, 141 AND 143, DEANSGATE.

LONDON : SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.

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P R E F A C E .

THE following Poems are of a somewhat unusual character: their range is confined within very narrow limits, and the subjects on which they treat may, perhaps, be considered commonplace. The critic, therefore, who delights only in lofty themes, in rich embellishments, and in purely-refined and imaginative poetry, will find little in them to admire; while the fastidious and captious may discover much to condemn. However this may be, the author has attempted to give faithful sketches of a few scenes which have come under his own observation, and to portray individual characters as impressed upon his mind; and it is hoped that these social pictures may possess some interest to the lovers of verse, who can still find enjoyment in contemplating the realities of life.

The Poems have been composed during leisure hours, ranging over a period of many years. They are productions emanating from circumstances, having been written principally for special occasions, to promote some worthy object, or aid some good design. Originally, there was not the slightest intention of publishing them in a collective form. They were, for

the most part, hastily written, read on the occasion for which they have been prepared, and were at the time highly appreciated. Having served the purpose for which they were composed, they were cast aside, and almost forgotten. Thus they have accumulated on the author's hands; and, though often urged to publish a volume, he has ever felt reluctant to make the venture. Some of the Poems, it is true, have been printed in a separate form, and have gone through several editions; while others have been thought worthy of a place in the local newspapers.

There is another point which requires some explanation here, and which the author cannot omit giving; because its omission might lay him open to grave and damaging criticism. The point is this—whenever the author felt inwardly prompted to produce a piece for any special purpose, he set to work, as opportunity served, without referring to what he had previously composed. As a consequence, perhaps there may be in the following Poems instances of the same idea being repeated in pretty nearly the same words. But if such should be the case, and the repetitions are considered faults, the critic is here reminded that, at the author's time of life—aged 62 years—it is too late to begin rectifying such faults.

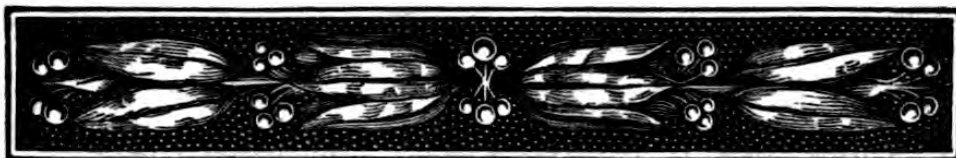
While it is admitted that the Poems may contain many blemishes, that they may be deficient in poetic beauty, and wanting in refinement, it is believed,

also, that they abound with commendable sentiments and sound principles. Being the voluntary effusions of a mind deeply impressed with a love of the beautiful and true, and thoroughly impregnated with the principles of liberty, justice, and progress—and moreover, this mind being infused into the verses,—it is felt that a careful perusal of some of the Poems, at least, will not be unprofitable; while those of a lighter class cannot fail to afford both pleasure and amusement to the reader. Under these convictions, the volume is now commended to the generous public, whose patronage is most earnestly and most respectfully solicited by

THE AUTHOR.

Edmund Street,

Droylsden, August, 1869.



THANKSGIVING.

Read at the Entertainment given for the Author's Benefit in the
Town Hall, Ashton, on Wednesday Evening, Jan. 31, 1866.

WHEN we survey the world's wide, vast expanse,
And view the myriads moving to and fro,
Man's life appears to be a game of chance,
And he but little of his fate may know.

Some cast the die for riches, and for power ;
But, in the throw, how few there are succeed !
Others ask knowledge as their only dower,
Yet pass away ere they are great indeed.

The few who at distinction do arrive,
Have gifts bestowed upon them which are rare :
Some kindly influence helps such men to thrive,
And makes them objects of especial care.

The mighty masses who are doomed to toil
Must struggle on, and live as best they may :
There's little chance for them in life's turmoil
While want and labour bar their onward way.

The world moves on, and daily changes come ;
The high ones fall, and othes take their place ;
Riches have wings, and talent seeks a home—
Such clash of interests mark the human race.

All this man's sympathies but little move,
To act a purer and a nobler part—
To stir his feelings and his worth to prove,
There must be something that will touch his heart.

And hence misfortune, suffering, and distress,
Affliction, misery, care, and want, and woe
Are laid upon us, and we must confess
'Tis meet to bring the haughty spirit low.

Besides, the world's progression must not stay,
And much benevolence is needed here :
Demands are made upon us day by day,
And progress should to every heart be dear.

Vice must be checked that virtue may prevail—
Knowledge diffused, and ignorance dispelled ;
The work of charity must never fail,
By Godlike motives all should be impelled.

Such are the objects I have ever sought—
Such are the worthy themes I ever loved ;
These are the principles that I have taught—
These are the motives now by which I'm moved.

To most of you a stranger I appear,
Unknown in aught, except perchance by name ;
And, therefore, some of you may wish to hear
How I've attained my little local fame.

That I have faults I candidly admit—
My virtues here I may not now parade ;
But of my labours you will, perhaps, permit
A few to-night to be before you laid.

Full forty years I toiled within the mill,
And as the nights came round, my labour done,
To study I applied with right good will,
And as I learned I helped my comrades on.

I gathered round me little knots of boys,
If rough I cared not, or if fond of play ;
My work was to improve them—quell their noise,
And gently lead them in a better way.

To aid their judgment, and their hearts improve,
Refine their nature, and their life amend—
To elevate, expand the mind I strove—
To purify their morals was my end.

To me it ever was a sweet delight
To train the youthful mind and truth impart—
To point the way to rectitude and right,
And gain ascendance o'er the wayward heart.

Where'er I lived, with whom my lot was cast,
I ever found a goodly work to do ;
Some moving slow, some living much too fast,
Others who would some worthless thing pursue.

In time a knowledge of my labour spread,
And men began to love me for its sake ;
I laboured on with tongue and pen—I read,
More progress in my work of love to make.

When I had means I gave what I could spare
To help a lowly brother in distress ;
I did my best to keep him from despair,
And kindly strove to make his suffering less.

Sweet Poesy became my chief delight,
And now, alas ! the poet's lot is mine !
A poor recipient here I stand to-night
Of bounty which on history's page will shine.

Ye band of good Samaritans, accept
My thanks, warm, gushing from a grateful heart ;
None present here in this would I except—
All have done well in this the Christian's part.

But more especially the friends I thank
Who this heart-soothing effort first began ;
You saw, and felt, and with a nature frank
Hastened to help a down-cast brother man.

And you, congenial, generous, faithful friends,
 How shall I tell to you what now I feel?
 My wordy rhyming will be poor amends
 For sacrifices made in this appeal.

God bless you all! and may he soon repay
 Your gifts a hundred, yea, a thousand fold!
 "The Old Bard's" love, which you now bear away,
 Shall glow within him till his heart is cold!

A VISION AND ITS FULFILMENT.

IN TWO PARTS.

Read at the Annual Meeting of the "Literary and Scientific
 Union," at the Beaver Inn, Audenshaw, Jan. 1, 1865.

PART I.

THE VISION.

I WAS weary and sad with the toil of the mill,
 And my mind and my body both asked to be still;
 So I took a light supper, a whiff of the weed,
 And I felt that repose would be welcome indeed.
 When I got to my chamber I banished all care,
 What a comfort, I thought, to one's bed to repair.
 I'd no qualms on my conscience, I felt no alarms,
 And I soon was encircled in Morpheus' arms.
 Deep and sound was my sleep for some three or four
 hours,

Then I woke, and I fancied my room full of flowers ;
This kept me awake for a short time, and then
I felt much disposed for sweet slumber again :
And most of my faculties bowed to my will,
But the poetic organ refused to be still ;
So fancy's wild vagaries soon formed a dream,
Of which I will try now to give you a gleam.

There appear'd full before me to-night's happy scene,
With its garlands of flowers and leaves ever green ;
I saw the kind welcome, and shake of the hand,
And heard you sit chatting in accents as bland—
I marked your bright faces all smiling around,
No discord in language amongst you was found.

Next, the feast on the table appeared in full view,
And brighter and clearer the vision now grew,
All smoking, and filling with odour the air,
The birds of the season, so tempting, were there ;
And the choicest of joints on the boards, too, were
placed,
Which the nicest of Epicures well might have faced.
Legs and wings were sent forward, and choice cuts were
served,
And all with new vigour now seemed to be nerved ;
For the joke and the laugh passed the table around,
And with pleasure and plenty the feasting was
crowned.

The scene was now changed, for the seats were replaced,
And the chairs soon by two worthy members were
graced ;

Then followed the speeches, the toasting, and song,
While the glee and recital the pleasure prolong ;
And my mind felt elated with thrilling delight,
At the vision before me of this happy night.

But I knew how deceptive were fancy's nice schemes,
And that baseless were often the brightest of dreams ;
I conceived the whole scene as surveyed through a glass,
Not of what had transpired, but should come to pass ;
And, I thought, should it prove this was really the case,
I would make a surprise when the meeting took place :
For, though so delighted with all things so fair,
I heartily wished other guests to be there.

Then my chamber was suddenly filled with a light
So intense, that its brilliancy dazzled my sight ;
And an angelic form, all attraction and grace,
Appeared by my side, gazing full in my face.
Her beauty transcended all beings on earth,
She seemed the true Goddess of pleasure and mirth ;
The smile of benevolence played on her face,
And I felt her to be of celestial race.
Her raiment was white, trimmed with purple and gold,
And with classical skill was arranged every fold ;
On her head was a coronet beaming with light,

From beneath which her tresses hung clustered, as
bright
And as black as the raven unsullied by mist,
Increasing in beauty the neck which they kissed ;
The whole of her figure was perfect and chaste,
And I felt in my vision a spell on me placed.
Then, in voice of sweet music, she said she could see
That the night was not all which I thought it might be.
I began to explain, but my meaning she knew,
And, staying my effort, more loving she grew ;
And, in accents of mildness, proceeded to say,—
“Well, now, my dear bard, you shall have your own
way.”

Then I wished that the Great Ones departed might
share
Our pleasures congenial—if they could be there.
The wish was but made, when there came a bright crowd
Of little winged Aërials round me, and bowed ;
One said—“ We await but your bidding, old Bard ;
We’ll obey your commands, be they easy or hard ;
We’ve celestial telegraphs, sir, you must know,
To the regions above and the regions below ;
They connect orb with orb, and extend to all lands—
We wait but your orders—please give your commands.”

Then I ran o’er a list of the Great Ones of old,
And the free little spirits my purpose I told :

Men of science and letters, of genius and skill,
Renowned for the triumphs achieved by the quill ;
Philosophers, poets, and artists I named,
Of ages long past, and of nations long famed ;
I sent to Egyptia, that fountain of light—
To Greece, with her galaxy evermore bright—
To Italia, the cradle of painting and song—
To the land of the Saxon, with intellect strong ;
I sent, too, to France, that long-honoured clime,
With its heroes and statesmen, and author's sublime—
To Scotia and Erin, and far o'er the sea,
Where brother with brother, in conflict we see ;
But the chief names I gave them, and those first at
 hand,
Were the names that have honoured my own native
 land.

Away went the messengers quicker than thought,
And, while the dream lasted, their answers they brought ;
Each one gave his message so briefly and plain,
That fresh in my memory still they remain.

But Great Ones departed I found were like some
Who are living—if wanted, they can't always come.
Some sent blank refusals, some made an excuse,
While the meaning of others appeared rather loose :
Old Homer, the king of Parnassus, said he
Would gladly have come, but it could not well be,—

He was glad, though, to find so much thought of his
name,
And to learn that his poems were held in such fame.
But he had not forgot that, when mortal below,
How neglected and poor they allowed him to go ;
Yet he hoped that, ere long, the good time would arrive
That the bard on his labours would live well, and thrive.

Then Euclid, of Egypt, and Ptolemy, too,
Said they'd more on their hands than they well could
get through,
And they thought that the works they had left us
behind,
If we'd study them fairly, would cool down the mind ;
They had seen Speke and Grant at the source of the
Nile,
And those matters of moment would last them awhile.

Bobby Burns sent his thanks, and he said he'd be there,
As when down, he could visit the sweet banks of Ayr :
Such a journey to him did not matter a peg,
As he always rode out on the tailless "Mare Meg,"
Which now they allowed him to mount at his ease,
And he oft had a gallop his fancy to please.
And he said he'd bring with him, if but for a lark,
That supple young jade, the renowned "Cutty Sark :"
He had met her, by chance, in the regions of air,
As she flourished in triumph "the tail of the mare,"

Which she'd borne as a trophy when out in the "mirk,"
Since that famed midnight revel in "Halloway Kirk."
He had won her good graces and favour so sweet,
And she'd "tak'" a ride with him at morning or
 "neeght ;"
For she still was a winning and frolicsome witch,
And she used "Meggy's tail" as a sort of a switch.

Dr. Franklin and Washington Irving said they
Must, out of necessity, both keep away ;
And they thought we should see their decision was
 right,
As with Lincoln they'd promised to meet the same night.

Tim Bobbin excuses, and thus he doth say,—
"Yo'll have just as good meetin' if au keep away ;
What wi' Brierley, Whitaker, Laycock, and Waugh,
Wi' Staton, and others, au seem nowt at aw."

But to give all the answers that night to me sent
Would be tedious, which is not my present intent ;
You may see, by those given, there's interest and love
Still felt towards the earth, by the Great Ones above.

When the Aërials had told me the answers received,
I informed them of duty they then were relieved ;
Then as vapour they vanished away from my sight,
And I saw no more of them the rest of the night.

But the first form I mentioned, again approached near,
 And again quite distinctly her voice I could hear ;
 She said she had heard all the answers run o'er,
 And she thought 'twould be foolish to wish they were
 more.

The Great Ones who'd promised, no doubt would be
 there,

To partake of our pleasure, and give, too, a share.

But I said, when they're waiting, " Pray, how shall I
 know ?"

" O, rap for them, rap for them,—that's all the go !"

My vision here ended, and then I awoke,

And I thought that it seemed like a practical joke ;

But the dream I concluded to jingle in rhyme,

So I penned it in scraps, as best suited my time.

PART II.

THE FULFILMENT.

AND now we are met in the " Beaver's " wide hall,

I will see if these spirits will come at my call ;

I will rap for them, gentlemen, if you'll allow,

For I fancy they're soaring above us just now.

Now, don't let your features assume a pale hue,

For I think that the gaslights will not be turned blue ;

Nor don't leave the room in a nervous affright,

Let us welcome the Great Ones amongst us to-night.

All ready? I rap, then. Be silent and still,
And give them a chance to appear if they will.
Hush! See how they come! What a glorious train!
Each a wreath round his head, that no malice can stain.
Don't you see them? I'm sorry for your sake to-night.
What a pity you do not possess second sight!
There's Demosthenes, Æschines, Zenophen, too,
And Solon, so dear to his country, and true;
There's Euripides, Plato, and Socrates come,
And Lycurgus, the famed of the world and of home.
I see, too, Diogenes out of his tub—
Alexander the Great ne'er again will he snub;
And more noble Grecians are standing around,
Who did well their duty, and now are renowned.
Horace, Virgil, and Tasso, I see, too, are come,
And Cicero, bringing more Great Ones from Rome.
There are Schiller and Goethe, from Germany, here,
Besides other Saxons, to memory dear:
Eugene Sue and Dumas, I see, too, from France,
And others behind them, in numbers advance.
And now there's a galaxy coming in sight,
Fills my heart with emotion, my mind with delight;
They're the stars that have shed such a light on our
Isle—
Oh! how proudly I witness the grave look and smile!
There's Chaucer and Spencer, and Savage and Wroe,
With Beaumont and Fletcher, and simple De Foe;
There's profound Dr. Johnson, and Goldsmith, and Swift,

Pope, Cowley, and Butler—all men of rare gift.
 And now come “The Lakists,” those five noted men,
 Who found so much work for the critical pen :
 These are Wordsworth and Coleridge, and Wilson pro-
 found,
 De Quincey and Southey, for learning renowned ;
 We’ve Tom Moore and Byron, Sir Walter and Burns,
 Aught below love and freedom their aspect still spurns.
 Behold, now, the chief and the pride of the band—
 Lock, Bacon, and Newton—how nobly they stand !
 With Milton, the lofty, and Addison, chaste,
 Ben Johnson and Dryden, of rare wit and taste ;
 And he, too, of Stratford, the prince of the stage,
 Whose wisdom transcendeth the wit of the sage—
 Our own beloved Shakespere, the Englishman’s pride,
 Whose name time shall ever bear on with its tide !
 But here I must pause, as all are come in,
 And a speech Dr. Johnson now signs to begin.

DR. JOHNSON’S SPEECH.

“Friends and mortals, I’m glad thus to meet you all
 here,
 Enjoying yourselves on such good Christmas cheer,
 And I wish you may see many happy returns
 Of the season, ere coming to join Bobby Burns.
 You have now formed a Union, I wish you success :
 It will polish your manners, improve your address ;
 It will make you more social, more learned, more wise,

And exalt you in all good and thinking men's eyes.
With spirits congenial 'twas always a rule,
Each other to favour, each other to school ;
This best could be done at a party or club,
Where wit against wit took a pleasure to rub :
And hence, men distinguished for learning or art,
Never scrupled to take at such meeting a part.
When I joined a union, I made it my pride,
Though my motives the thoughtless would sometimes
 deride ;
But I gained the approval of Great George, the king,
Which, for one of my standing, was no common thing.
The ascent of Parnassus is tedious and slow,
Greater hardships beset you the higher you go ;
But e'en in your struggles the summit to gain,
You will meet with much pleasure mixed up with the
 pain.
And as to position—why, that never mind,
To make it yourself is the best you will find :
Great numbers, you know, have attained to a name,
Whose means were but scant when they started for
 fame ;
There are few who had less a new fortune to try,
Than Franklin and Goldsmith, and Garrick and I ;
And yet while we lived, each could hold up his head,
And you won't let us rest, though so long ago dead.
Pursue the great object you now have in view,
And be to yourselves and your Union true ;

Get wisdom, get knowledge—both useful and sound—
And when you have got it, then spread it around ;
For there's no good of keeping it all to yourself,
And hoarding it up, as the miser does pelf.
You may not at all times get on as you choose,
Some will twit you, and taunt you, and some may abuse ;
But never you mind what the squeamish may say,
All obstacles rising, just push them away ;
Avoid wrong without, and keep all right within,
You the crown of distinction in triumph may win."

Attention ! Ben Johnson now wishes to speak,
When on earth he was noted for wit—and for Greek.

BEN'S SPEECH.

"Though a stranger in person to all of you here,
I heartily wish you a happy New Year !
As you've met for enjoyment, so snug here below,
The news from our quarter you'd, perhaps, like to know.
We come from a land full of beauty and peace,
Whose grandeur surpasseth old Egypt or Greece—
A climate excelling all climes of the East,
Where the mind at its leisure on beauty may feast.
There, too, we are blest with perpetual spring,
And birds of bright plumage unceasingly sing ;
We've delights yet unnoticed in fable or song,
And our bond of affection for ever is strong.
'Tis the land of the Sage, of the Wit, and the Bard,

Where each has full freedom—his well-won reward ;
'Tis the land of the Sculptor, the Painter, and Song,
The land of the Architect, daring and strong ;
And to see us employed in our bright world above,
Would fill you with wonder, with rapture, and love.
To some upland, or lowland, some bower, or space,
We are constantly adding new beauty and grace.
We have palaces, temples, sweet villas, and halls,
But no rifled cannon we need on the walls.
They are not like earthly ones, built in odd piles,
They rise up in grandeur for thousands of miles ;
Nor are they surrounded by dark, filthy towns,
Where man on his brother indignantly frowns,
Where wealth is exalted, and merit depressed,
And the bees of industry are often oppressed.
There are no dingy garrets shut out from the eye,
Where worth, in its anguish, unheeded, may die :
But 'tis useless comparing our bright land with this,
With us all is freedom, enjoyment, and bliss.
Our food is ambrosia, the food of the gods,
Which we pluck from the trees, in celestial pods :
It is free from corruption, exempt from all change,
And 'tis found in abundance wherever we range ;
What's better, 'tis got without turmoil or strife,
And a morsel's enough to give vigour and life ;
Nor is it mixed up with such rubbish, we know,
As is put in the food of you mortals below ;
We can relish it, too, for we never know care,

And we've no dread of bastiles among us up there.
We've no sheriff's officers neither, nor quod,
For no bills are brought in of a few pounds, and odd :
Our laws are true friendship, true concord, and love,
So we need no attorneys to practise above.
We drink from the springs of celestial birth,
A nectar, untasted by mortals of earth ;
It imparteth no stupour, it causeth no pain,
And the strong or the feeble may drink it again.
I thought once of bringing a four-gallon keg,
And throwing it over Burns' bonny mare Meg ;
But Bobby objected the carriage, because
He said 'twould be breaking your nation's good laws :
He has been an exciseman, you know, and he thought
That, as smugglers, we might by detectives be caught.
We've a union like yours, and we take in all creeds,
All sects and conditions, all races and breeds ;
For, if they've been noted for talent on earth,
We say not a word of their calling or birth ;
If they've written, or spoken, or worked with the hand,
To afford others pleasure—they enter our land.
And then, I may tell you, no critics are there,
Those pedants of earth, who are oft so severe ;
We have them amongst us, but, then, don't you see,
With a brother's past failings they may not make free ;
They laugh at the folly they used to display,
In wanting each writer to think in their way.
Reviewers and authors have all laid aside

Their conceits and their jealousies, nonsense and pride;
And they now live as brothers in harmony true,
As I hope, from this night, you henceforward may do.
The Great Spirit orders, that we may all know,
What of good there is passing 'mongst mortals below;
And we take a delight in attending to see,
What our influence has been, and is likely to be:
We convey inspiration to tongue and to pen,
And rejoice in the progress of truth amongst men.
Since I wrote—'tis more than two centuries past,
Then authors could not get along quite so fast;
They had not such helps as are now to be found,
We had to work hard upon stiff, barren ground;
The great Dr. Johnson had not then, you know,
Made words in such musical cadence to flow:
With a language unsettled, we did what we could,
And 'tis pleasing to think how our labour has stood.
Amongst much applause, I'd a good share of blame,
Still, I managed to work myself up into fame:
Though made Poet Laureate under Queen Bess,
I'd my ups and my downs, you may very well guess.
I mention these things but to show you, my friends,
How much of success on your labour depends:
When I joined "The Mermaid," while living below,
With Raleigh and Shakespere, and others, you know,
I remember what nights of enjoyment we had—
With wit and good humour we could not be sad;
And you, if you keep up your Union, will find,

That pleasure with learning may thus be combined.
 The narrow of mind may your object mistake,
 But with greatness, seek goodness, for virtue's own sake.
 Then the blessings of knowledge around you shall fling,
 From ev'ry bright thought a light-beam shall spring ;
 And for ev'ry kind look on your features shall play,
 There shall shoot forth a plant to make gladder the day ;
 Ev'ry word that you breathe, like the drops in a shower,
 If warm by affection, shall bring forth a flower."

They are signing to go—some have vanished from sight,
 Ye Great Ones, you've honoured us greatly to-night ;
 And we wish you to know it before you depart,
 We thank you, we thank you, with overcharged heart !

AN ADDRESS.

Read in the Ashton and Dukinfield Mechanics' Institution,
 at the Tea Meeting, on Good Friday, April 19, 1867.

[SPECIALLY COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION.]

WHEN thus we meet, I hold it right we try
 To make our meeting end in good ;
 And if this worthy object we attain,
 We can rejoice as brothers should.
 Please give me audience, then, while I proceed
 My humble counsel to impart—
 Your noble cause to plead.

We live, and move, and work—we think and speak,
Just on the eve of changes vast ;
When wrong against the right shall not prevail,
After a strife of ages past ;
When knowledge, truth, and freedom, all shall be
More highly prized—we then shall see,
Man—resolute and free !

Contrast the spirit of the present age,
With that displayed in days of old ;
Observe the difference in the course and tone—
That difference is as dross to gold—
The past obstructive, narrow-minded, low—
The present, onward, liberal, pure,
Resolved the truth to know.

Unroll the scroll of time, and on it read
How strongly knowledge has been chained—
How oft her sons in prison cells have pined—
How often virtue has been pained ;
See superstition, priests, despotic kings,
Closing each vent of knowledge up—
Polluting all its springs.

And so with truth and freedom has it been,
On both have tyrants placed their ban ;
That, too much light diffused within the mind—
This, too much boldness gave to man.
So, both for ages have been held in dread,

Their advocates deprived of peace,
Till numbered with the dead.

The masses, careless and uncared for, lived,
As far as learning was concerned ;
Of literature, they scarcely knew the name—
The sciences they never learned.
No people's press, no "Chambers' Works" were found,
No "Cassell's Lessons" then were seen,
Diffusing light around.

Read how the victims of oppression lived—
How persecution they withstood—
How they proclaimed the truth, unawed by power,
And sealed their doctrine with their blood.
Pursue the contest through each stage of time—
Mark *now* how stately truth appears—
How radiant and sublime !

These years of conflict have not been in vain,
The glorious end was never lost :
A steady progress, still, has knowledge made,
Though harrassed, checked, and tempest-tossed ;
And now the mind with potent thought is rife,
Is better armed for combat, too,
Though less the need of strife.

One generation scarce away has passed,
Since dawned the morn of brighter day,—

Since Brougham and Birbeck manfully came forth,
From mental gloom to lead the way :
By them Mechanics' Institutes were planned,
Nor rested they until their views
Were sanctioned through the land.

To train a people, who, for centuries past,
Have lived a life of mental gloom,
Requires exertion steady, great and long,
Ere every mind the light illumine :
The wonder is, how, in so short a space,
The people have advanced so far—
How gained so high a place.

The classes ranged as deadly foes before,
Now rank as learning's greatest friends,
Contributors to every worthy cause—
Progression much on them depends.
By them the people's institutes are raised—
These temples for neglected man,—
Be all such bounty praised !

So far these schools have not been duly prized,
For wisdom's treasures few have sought ;
The seed was cast on ground but ill prepared,
The fruit has disappointment brought.
What, then ! Must you forbear to sow the seed ?
No ! Sow it still in faith and hope,
The hungry mind to feed.

What, though low habits many still prefer,
Though careless youth at wisdom spurn,
Shall grieved philanthropy, despairing, say—
Let all to ignorance return !
“ Knowledge is power ! ”—a power, if well applied,
Will bring the change for which we pray—
Will stem the evil tide !

The time will come, your efforts shall not fail,
E'en now more earnestness appears ;
This is a token of the rich reward
Shall crown your work in coming years.
By condescension win the youth around,
Show them the benefits you share,
And fruit will more abound.

Leave all your class distinctions at the door—
Let each to each a brother be ;
By smiles and cheerful words encourage all,
And in your intercourse be free :
A sullen, cold reserve but frightens youth,
Makes learning irksome to the mind,
And dims the glorious truth.

Youth is the age of folly—so with care
Point out the path to wisdom's gate ;
Still strive by suasion and becoming grace,
The thoughtless mind to elevate.
A kindly influence o'er the careless cast,

Assured that they will grateful prove,
And yield to good at last.

Fathers and mothers, bring your force to bear
Upon your sons and daughters when at home,
Encourage them in learning all you can,
Permit them less at large to roam ;
Insist that they shall study while they may,
Both for *their* good, and for your *own*—
God will your work repay.

Young men, who here as members are enrolled,
Be to your Institution true ;
Be you not jealous when you see the rich
Attend—they come to honour you :
Without their aid you could not well succeed,
They feel an interest in your cause,
Then welcome them indeed.

Fill all your rooms with classes for both sex,
For greater effort make a way,—
This is the work the age demands of you—
This is your mission of to-day.
Attend to language first, then science, art ;
To moral conduct give good heed ;
Work on with all your heart !

A purer language then will soon prevail ;
Then man to man will be more kind ;

Before refinement rudeness will depart,
 And seek itself to be refined ;
 Our social bonds will daily stronger grow,
 While lofty thoughts, in polished speech,
 Unceasingly will flow.

A PEEP AT POLITICAL PARTIES.

A Scene at the Commercial Inn, Droylsden, during the late South Lancashire Election (1861), between Conservative Bill and Liberal Sam, two non-electors.

BILL—(*commencing to read a new poem*).

“England, my country!—

SAM—(*interrupting him*).

Stop! not quite so fast,
 And learn this precious truth, my *cove*, at last :
 Of all the land you *aint* a single rod—
 No, not a thistle on the blessed sod.

BILL.

Why, that seems strange!—how does it come to pass
 I *aint* a thistle for my patient ass?

SAM.

'Tis no more strange than true, and this I'll show—
 Your country has been sold, Bill, long ago.

BILL.

Been sold! Sam. Why, I ne'er heard this before.
 I won't believe it—'less you tell me more.

SAM.

So, then it seems, although you verses write
In history, Bill, you can't be recondite.

BILL.

Oh, never mind my hist'ry, but proceed,
And prove my country has been sold indeed.

SAM.

Well, then, you see our parliaments and kings,
Of England's purse have always had the strings;
And, while a *tanner* they could find within,
To take it out they never deemed a sin ;
And when 'twas empty, what, then, did they do?—
Why raise more taxes by another screw.
But all their taxing would not do at last :
They kept such state, and liv'd so very fast.
By gifts and pensions, meddling schemes and wars,
Building new ships, and stocking them with tars,
They squandered millions every year away—
Although the *coves* knew well they could not pay.
Well, then they borrowed at so much per cent,
To raise the wind for more aggrandizement ;
To spend less money they would ne'er agree,
As we should, Bill, after a night on spree.
Well, on this borrowing and this spending goes,
Paying new friends to fight pretended foes,
Until they formed—oh ! Bill, it makes one sweat—
That *Incubus, the Nation's Standing Debt.*

Nine Hundred Millions, Bill, this debt now stands,
 A sum beyond the price of all our lands.
 And now, I think, I've proved, if you can see,
 There is no country, Bill, for you or me.

BILL.

You've proved it mortgaged, Sam, that I agree,
 But that 'tis sold as yet I cannot see.

SAM.

Well, mortgaged; Bill, that word means pawned, I hold,
 And, what is worse, the tickets have been sold.
 But I can tell you more of this, my blade,
 This selling tickets has become a trade :
 Both Jews and Christians, Bill, now daily meet
 To deal in tickets—don't they do it sweet !
 They phrase it consols, stock, or three per cent—
 But selling tickets is my argument.
 And 'tis no wonder some have grown so rich,
 They buy when low and sell at highest pitch.
 This debt, then, Bill, though we the interest pay,
 Gives thousands wealth and power the funds to sway.
Aint this a moving theme o'er heavy wet—
 Nine Hundred Millions of a Standing Debt !
 Nine Hundred Millions, Bill, pray bear in mind,
 Is now the sum of all the human kind :
 Just One Pound each ! Oh ! would that each could pay !
 But, Bill, alas ! we ne'er must see that day.
 Upon the universe, of course, we have no claim,

On Britain rests the burden and the shame :
 Each of her sons and daughters, young and old,
 Owes of this debt some thirty pounds in gold.

BILL.

Sam, what's the use for us to fret or care :
 While we have work let's freely pay our share.
 The debt's too large I candidly confess,
 But our complaining ne'er can make it less.

SAM.

I grant complaints, from here and there a few,
 Made now and then, but little good can do ;
 But general murmurs, in the Senate's ears,
 Would check extravagance in future years.

BILL.

Well, now, my Poem, Sam, I'd have you hear,
 And then I think you will no longer jeer.

SAM.

I may not jeer, but I shall criticise,
 And show you, Bill, wherein the error lies.

BILL.

I grant you that, and so I will proceed,
 But no remarks, Sam, while my lines I read.

BILL'S POEM.

England, my country—sea-girt island home !
 My heart is thine, and ne'er from thee I'll roam ;
 Thou stand'st a model of enduring thrones,
 And ev'ry realm thy long-tried compact owns.

I love thy greatness and thy world-wide fame,
And thrill with pleasure at thy potent name ;
I love thy constitution and thy laws—
Thy institutions for each noble cause ;
But dearer still to me thy solemn fanes,
And sacred altars, where religion reigns.
With love unfeigned, I turn me to thy throne,
And bow to greatness, found with it alone ;
For ev'ry grace and virtue here combine,
And courtly sages round it ever shine.
These are the things have made thee rich and great,
Change will endanger both thy Church and State :
They shed an influence o'er the life and mind,
And make thy children loyal, just, and kind.
And he's a traitor who would interfere
To alter things thy patriot sons revere.
Thou hast no shackles to enslave the free ;
The cruel despot finds no friend in thee ;
Unbounded liberty thou giv'st to all ;
And to defend thee none refuse thy call.
With talents blest, thy humblest son may gain
The highest rank in glory's wide domain ;
Intrinsic worth enduring honour brings,
Sure as content from real virtue springs.
Thine is a glorious galaxy of stars,
Heroes eclipsing e'en the fabled Mars ;
And gifted ones have won themselves a name
As statesmen in thy peerless rolls of fame :

You'd rather see them cringe and lick the dust.
Your Leader cries, with full Patrician pride,
Be firm, and stem the democratic tide.
You hate Cheap Papers, by the people read,
Though making better both the heart and head ;
You feel annoyance at the spread of truth,
Politick knowledge you must keep forsooth.
You hate Dissenters as a buzzing hive,
And Catholics you'd stew them all alive.
You fret yourselves and show your bitter spleen
Are Liberal statesmen called about the Queen,
As though all wisdom were confined to you,
And ev'ry helmsman sailed among your crew ;
You cry out danger when no danger's near,
And wholesome changes still excite your fear :
The Constitution, Throne, the Church and State
Will find more friends when you confine your hate.
If you would prove the love you boast so loud,
Don't wait the impulse of the vulgar crowd ;
But boldly take the lead in wise Reform
Which must be granted howsoe'er you storm.
By what I've shown I mean not to offend,
I only hope your hatred soon may end.
I love Old England, Bill, as well as you,
And all her great ones I can give their due ;
Her ancient constitution I admire,
And all, with these, that for her good conspire.
In short, I love the most that you narrate,

Though scarcely suited to these changing times.
Another thing I don't so well enjoy—
Your verses sound rhapsodical, my boy :
They're mostly notions of a certain school,
Now taught, by rote, to each compliant tool.
And then you give but a one-sided view,
Which seems the side, no doubt, most dear to you ;
But *vice versâ* hold it to the sight,
The picture will not seem so very bright.
You think that England is completely free,
But mighty changes, Bill, she yet must see
Ere all her sons can say, with pride and joy,
No taint of thralldom does our life annoy.
Howe'er, I'm glad your love extends so wide,
Though many things you might have named beside ;
Love is a noble attribute of mind,
The more the better for the human kind ;
But there are things, Bill, which you Tories hate—
Things in your verses you omit to state—
Off hand, I'll just enumerate a few.
Excuse me if I do not run them through.
You hate the Liberals for their work of love ;
You hate Reforms all other things above ;
You've great aversion to the people's voice
Except 'tis raised for what has been your choice ;
You hate the masses when they agitate
For rights denied them by your boasted state,—
Their manly bearing fills you with disgust,

You'd rather see them cringe and lick the dust.
Your Leader cries, with full Patrician pride,
Be firm, and stem the democratic tide.
You hate Cheap Papers, by the people read,
Though making better both the heart and head ;
You feel annoyance at the spread of truth,
Politic knowledge you must keep forsooth.
You hate Dissenters as a buzzing hive,
And Catholics you'd stew them all alive.
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But boldly take the lead in wise Reform
Which must be granted howsoe'er you storm.
By what I've shown I mean not to offend,
I only hope your hatred soon may end.
I love Old England, Bill, as well as you,
And all her great ones I can give their due ;
Her ancient constitution I admire,
And all, with these, that for her good conspire.
In short, I love the most that you narrate,

And, what is more, I love the things you hate.
It follows, then, as one and one make two,
That I'm a better patriot, Bill, than you.
But I'm for change when change is for the best,
A nation's wrongs I think should be redressed ;
Still I'm no *traitor* for the course I take,
I stand for justice when there's right at stake :
It is by changes that we perfect law,
And round the throne the bonds of union draw :
New interests rise, and these require fair play
And all restrictions to be swept away :
If we must change not, but remain at ease,
We are but Persians or inert Chinese.
'Tis change of freedom makes you crow so loud,
And of your Nation feel so very proud.
Remember that a life-time has not past
Since slavery's yoke was from our Niggers cast :
It cost us twenty millions, Bill, of gold
To free the slaves our fathers held of old.
And 'tis not long since we were thought unfit
To talk of measures pass'd by Billy Pitt :
Commerce was fetter'd by restrictive laws,
Our food and drugs had each some fiscal clause.
The press was shackled and free speech suppressed,
And those who wrote were subject to arrest.
The Church rode rough-shod o'er each other sect,
Her chartered rights she never did neglect ;
~~When~~ pious men would preach the truth, i'feggs,

She pelted them with mud and rotten eggs.
And if we now enjoy a better fate,
We owe it to ourselves and not the State ;
For, doubtless, we have petty despots still,
If they could have their arbitrary will :
Yes, there are men, Bill, at this very hour
Would stand at nothing to get place and power.
Then, in your picture, Bill, you do not show
That any good can from the people flow.
Now, England's greatness don't so much depend
On Church or State, how'er they may befriend :
She owes it more to enterprising minds,
Whose thoughts rush onwards like the chainless winds :
Their resolution no reverse can stay,
Steadfast in purpose they pursue their way ;
They gather round them all the sons of toil,
And force out riches from the sea and soil ;
They sink the shaft, dig out the useful ore,
And multiply our comforts evermore ;
They build stupendous works on ev'ry hand,
And give new life throughout the busy land ;
They manufacture with untiring skill,
And with their produce ev'ry market fill ;
Their wealth increases, and they still extend
Their field of labour, and the State befriend ;
New cities now in stately grandeur rise
Where ev'ry want the cunning hand supplies ;
Peace-fostering commerce, with benignant smile,

Spreads her white sails around our happy Isle.
They call on science to afford her aid,
And now behold the progress that is made ;
Machines, more certain than the human hand,
Are moved by power a child may well command :
These spin the yarn, and weave the fabric, too,
Or plain or figured of each varied hue.
The wool, the flax, the silk, and cotton trade,
Millions of wealth have for us yearly made ;
While coal and iron, as they are applied,
Produce us riches in a constant tide.
Holders of land, machin'ry, too, apply,
And ev'ry method of improvement try ;
The barren waste soon waves with golden grain,
And richer produce beautifies the plain ;
Increasing stores reward their skill and toil,
And farmers walk more proudly o'er the soil ;
Their flocks and herds more numerous now appear,
And "quarter days" bring with them little fear ;
A greater value now the land maintains,
And landlords count with pride their certain gains.
The means of transit now were found too slow,
And soon again their enterprise they show ;
They pierce the mountain, arch the streams and vales,
And intersect the land with iron rails ;
A speedy traffic is securely gained,
And constant intercourse with towns maintained.
These things give splendour to the State and Throne—

These give our senators their boastful tone—
These make the nation famous, too, afar,
And *raise the sinews* when we go to war.
What danger, then, that they such wealth diffuse,
If they were trusted would their trust abuse :
The people now are more enlightened grown,
The rights they ask, in justice, are their own ;
But still a phalanx of determined foes,
Refuse those rights, and all reform oppose.
But patriotic, wise, far-seeing minds,
All fear and danger giving to the winds,
For public good now step into the van,
To train the people in some noble plan,
Adopted to reform some old abuse,
And put the taxes to their proper use ;
Leading the masses in a legal way,
While heartless nobles gaze in wild dismay.
Thus many an odious law has been repealed,
And many a public wrong has been revealed :
They battled first for liberty of speech,
For rights of conscience next they make a breach ;
Then a fierce struggle for the pen and press
Was crowned by triumph—won without excess.
The rotten boroughs next were toppled down,
Those noted strongholds of the State and Crown ;
And old monopolies could not withstand,
The resolution of this fearless band :
Reform succeeds reform in bright array,

Still Freedom's champions march upon their way.
 Success, I hope, will all their efforts crown
 Till ev'ry rampart has been battered down.

BILL.

Well, Sam, you've taxed my patience, I confess,
 But still I don't admire your truths the less ;
 So well you've shown to me the Two Great Schools,
 I half suspect the Tories have been fools.

SAM.

So thought that statesman, Bill, Sir Robert Peel,
 When he the odious Corn Law did repeal ;
 So thought the rest of his assistant band,
 Who snatched the laurel from the Liberals' hand.
 And so, ere long, will think a many more,
 For soon, I hope, our contest will be o'er.
 Then we can meet without this party strife,
 And feel more pleasure in our social life.

 SYMPATHY.

Composed to be read at the Mechanics' Institution, Staly-
 bridge, on Thursday Evening, November 30, 1865, for the
 benefit of Mr. T. Kenworthy, Poet, of Dukinfield, now in the
 76th year of his age.

Ye talented and gifted ones,
 Assembled here to-night,
 With hearts benevolent and warm,
 With motives pure and right :

You come to crown a worthy cause,
A truly Christian plan ;
You bring the soothing wine and oil,
To cheer a brother man.

An intellectual, thinking man,
Of understanding sound,
Whose wit and wisdom oft have spread
Good humour all around.
A man, who, like yourselves has strove,
To sweeten life with song ;
Who knows each chord of harmony,
The social group among.

And you, our patrons, one and all,
Whose hearts now sympathise,
Your presence here to-night is proof
You deem our effort wise.
You come to pay a tribute due
To one our aid demands,
And each one bears, with smiling face,
A blessing in his hands.

You see a man now feeble grown—
A man of hoary hairs—
Unable now to battle with
Life's turmoil and its cares ;
For he has passed the stated bound
Of "three score years and ten,"

And sorrow needs must track the steps
Of all such aged men.

But not his age alone demands
Our sympathy and care :
His many virtues we may plead—
His gifts and talents rare.
And, though for fame he has not sought,
His virtue still we prize,
For we are joined in heart and hand,
By true congenial ties.

Besides, he's been a toiling man,
Through weary years and long,
Of sinewy arm and willing heart,
And resolution strong :
A social man, too, he has been,
A generous friend and true,
And mingled kindness with the work
In life he's had to do.

Such virtues form the true cement
Of friendship and esteem ;
And hence emotions cloud the brow,
Or in the features beam ;
Heart clings to heart with pleasant force,
Where worth and talent dwell ;
Our social feelings are attuned,
So wisely and so well.

O ! Sympathy ! attractive power,
Subduing heart and mind,
Unnumbered blessings from thee flow,
To captivate mankind !
Without thee converse would be dull,
Our feelings would be dead,
The eye no lustre would impart,
The mind no beauty shed.

There's sympathy creation through,
From which attachment springs,
A potent and mysterious chain,
That binds all living things :
The brutes, by common instinct led,
Will take each other's part ;
And man, with nobler powers endowed,
Bears a more feeling heart.

A brother man, bowed down by years,
Or by some grief distressed,
By pain and sickness wasted long,
By care or wrong oppressed,
Finds near him still some watchful eye,
Some gentle voice to soothe,
Some hand that strives with anxious care
His rugged path to smooth.

Diminished suffering hence ensues,
And comfort is conveyed,

For kindly impulse carried out,
 Is charity displayed ;
 And warmer our affections glow,
 More tender grows the heart,
 While we extend the liberal hand,
 To act a brother's part.

Then let us, where we sorrow find,
 Our sympathy extend,
 And in the bivouac of life,
 Each other more befriend :
 So shall we ease the troubled mind,
 And give the weary rest ;
 And each and all will daily feel,
 More happy and more blest.

THE LAST DYING SPEECH AND DEFENCE
 OF THE OLD DOG, RATTLER BIRCH,

Of Droylsden, who was Shot, to appease the malicious spirit of
 a Persecuting Bobby, on Saturday, September 19th, 1863.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Ere you level the rifle, permit me to speak :

I will not waste much of your time ;

And the few plain remarks which I now wish to make,

I prefer you shall have them in rhyme ;

For my story thus told, perhaps your children may
 learn—

They learn of the good and the brave,—

And may talk of my fate as they pass by this spot,
When I've mouldered away in my grave.

Bred, born, and brought up in the neighbourhood, I'm
known,

To most of the friends that are here ;
And no one, unjustly, did I ever harm,
I can boldly assert without fear.

I admit, around home, when in search of a bone,
I have had some occasional fights ;

But this has occurred when some strange-looking cur
Has come to encroach on my rights.

When I went out of doors, to the fields or the lanes.
A few leisure hours to spend,

I made it a rule at no stranger to bark,
Or e'en wag my tail at a friend.

The days of my puphood were happy and free,

And my youth was passed o'er without strife ;
But when age came upon me, and vigour was gone,
The Peeler was "*death*" on my life :

So he got up a case, which he lost, as you know,
The proofs were so stale of his charge,

I was found to be innocent ; nevertheless,
No longer must I go at large.

So I was condemned to be shot, for my good,
That I no more trouble might cause ;

And I hope that the human dogs I leave behind,
May as strictly live up to the laws.

I've been rated *ferocious* because once or twice
I have proved I had fangs rather keen :
One night a big Doctor my master assailed,
And, in duty, I rushed in between.
Should I have sneaked off with my tail 'twixt my legs,
As many a Bobby has done ?
No! I chose to stand up in defence of the right,
And stay till the battle was won.
'Tis for this that my master the Dog-tax has paid,
And supplied me with good bed and board ;
And, rather than shrink from my duty e'en now,
With dogs of the forest I'd horde.

I am charged, too, with having once bitten a child,
And the charge, I confess, is too true ;
But 'twas done in a passion, the boy did intrude,
And the bite I had good cause to rue.
Now, where is the Peeler, who has not thus erred ?
And yet on their beat they can jog ;
And if dignified Bobbies such weakness can show,
No wonder a poor soulless dog.
But the cause of his hatred resteth not here—
He cares not for doctor nor child ;
'Tis because I gave mouth when he sneaked round the
house,
And I would not be friendly and mild.
I could twig a Bluebottle in day-light or dark,
Though skulking about in disguise,

And was not to be gammoned by fine oily words,
As my master was to his surprise.
I have seen them *incog.* sitting taking their glass,
At once the policeman and spy ;
And have thought as I watched them, though nothing
I said,
What a proof of a mean "*Living Lie!*"

There is no man just now but has trouble enough,
Without heaping more on his head ;
And master's five young ones, who bring nothing in,
Might this Bobby to mercy have led ;
But some Peelers seem dead to all feeling and shame,
Yet they boast of their charity, too ;
And the man that will dare of injustice complain,
For the most trivial thing they will sue.
If nothing transpire, at home or abroad,
To show they're on duty agog,
They will scruple at nothing to get up a case,
Against e'en a toothless old dog.
I allow that the Peelers are good in their place,
But I'd have them be open and square,
And not bring expense on a neighbour, because
He has slipped but the breadth of a hair.
'Gainst the Bobby who's urged on my death, I may say,
I have no disposition to rave,
But I hope he will let my old master alone,
And bury his spite in my grave.

I feel much obliged to the neighbours who went
To my trial to see me fair play ;
And I trust a more prosperous time may soon come
Than the sad one they're passing to-day.
And you, the old Bard, accept of my thanks,
For defending my conduct and name :
I know you were grieved that a friend of your own
Should an old faithful house-dog defame.
And thanks to another, I must not forget,
Mr. W. at the Lane Head :
He came manly up in the moment of need,
And was truthful in all that he said.
Thanks, too, to the judges who sat on the bench,
Too wise to let malice prevail :
Their decision was just in dismissing the case,
After weighing both sides of the tale.
The Press, too, I find boldly takes up my cause—
What a blessing the Press is so free !
It made Master's face brighten up with a smile—
Thank the Press for both Master and me.

And, now, just a word to the dear ones at home :
Excuse my emotion, I pray :
The bonds of affection, cemented by years,
It is painful to break in a day.
Mary Emma and Lizzy, I bid you farewell !
Arthur, Joedy, and Walter, adieu !
Whatever your grief at our parting may be,

Mine is deeper, my playmates, for you.
No more shall we sport on the warm kitchen-floor,
Where we've grouped on the dull, rainy day,
When you've pillowed your heads on my smooth yellow
coat,
Or pulled at my tail in your play.
And, then, in your walks, in the bright summer time,
How I've joined in your pleasure so free!
When you've shouted and romped in your fulness of
heart,
And I've leapt with delight at your glee.
And you, my kind master, and mistress dear,
I no more shall your mandates await ;
No more shall I feel the soft pat of your hands,
Nor be fed with the scraps from your plate.
I have long had the charge of your household at night,
And been faithful, I think you will say ;
But my duties here end !—Farewell to you both !
I shall die like the brave Marshal Ney !
And now, friends and neighbours, I bid you adieu,
It is grieving with all thus to part !
But my master so orders, and I must obey :
I have done—send the ball to my heart !

A DREAM OF DELIGHT.

PHILOSOPHERS, tell me one thing, if you can—
You, who metaphysical subjects may scan,—

How is it that often our visions reveal
Far greater delights than when waken we feel?
How scenes are presented in varied array,
When sleep comes upon us by night or by day?
How characters enter, exhibit, dissolve,
Independent of wish, or of will, or resolve;
When friends, and e'en strangers, will sometimes
 appear,
Affording us pleasure, or causing us fear—
The mind and sense active, and we can enjoy,
Conversation and pleasure, unmixed with alloy,—
Or else may be startled, with scenes full of dread,
Alone in our chamber, asleep in our bed;
When all things seem real, distinctive, and true,
As objects, while waken, appear to our view?
There seems to be more than imagining here,
So complete and ingenious do all things appear.
May not spirits in scenes such as these take a part,
Defying our wisdom, conception, or art,
And, impelled by some mystical sympathy, form
These masques of deep passion, of mildness, or storm?
But, perhaps, 'twill be better this theme to pursue,
If I turn from professors, dear Amy, to you.
Say, do you remember—but can you forget,
What to me is a source of delight even yet—
The night when you paid me a visit alone?
When your coming, to none but ourselves could be
 known;

When you came disembodied, yet lovely and fair,
My friendship, my study, my converse to share?
Nay, blush not, dear maiden, I mean not to chide,
For I feel for that visit unspeakable pride.
The moments of rapture, I passed, love, with thee,
I shall never forget, though a vision it be.

Reposing one night on my pillow, alone,
Queen Mab took the sceptre, and mounted her throne,
And soon a sweet vision was wrought in my brain,
Which oft, while awake, I have dreamed o'er again.
I thought I was sat in my parlour below,
My doors all secure, and my fire in a glow—
The midnight was past, still I'd no wish for sleep,
Longer vigil my study induced me to keep,—
When raising my head, love, I saw you were there,
In your sweet pristine loveliness, spotless, and fair;
I heard not your footsteps, so light was your tread,
You came but in spirit, yet caused me no dread;
Not a door had been opened admitting you through,
Still your form in perfection was plain to my view;
But why you had come I could not even guess,
Yet your presence gave pleasure no words can express.

I rose to receive you, I gave you my hand,
Which you took with a smile, all bewitching and bland,
The beams of your eyes centred full upon mine,
And the rays of my orbs were a reflex of thine.

I asked why this favour conferred upon me ?
When, craving my pardon for making so free,
You said, that you hoped I should well understand,
You came but your mind to refresh and expand—
That your young heart, with poesy deeply imbued,
Was yearning to feast on refined mental food ;

A seat on the sofa you took by my side,
And you hinted the honour afforded you pride ;
Your person in beautiful looseness was dressed,
Which to social enjoyment must always give zest :
And yet all your freedom seemed guileless and pure,
Your own native beauty alone was the lure.
A bright scarf of gauze o'er your shoulders was thrown,
And your dark, glossy tresses enriched but its tone ;
Your breast, slightly covered, hove gently, and fell
As your heart sent the current of life from its well :
Your azure veins adding a beauty and charm,
To your full and fair bosom, health-glowing and warm.

You began to converse—fascination was there,—
Such softness and sweetness to me was most rare ;
Your language, complacency, mildness, and grace,
Enhanced more than ever your beauty of face.
We spoke of the pleasure that poets impart—
Of their sensitive nature, their treasures of heart—
How the whole of their being with beauty was rife—
Of the flowers which they strew in the pathway of life.
We conversed of their wit, of the grasp of their mind,

And the power which alone with true genius we find—
Of the changes and progress they've aided and wrought,
And the lessons of truth, love, and freedom they've
taught.

Next we quoted, or read from our favourites, by turns,
From Shakespere and Milton—from Byron and Burns;
Now turning to Shelley, to Prince, or to Moore,
Till our minds with excess of their beauties ran o'er.
I told you, your reading I greatly admired—
That nothing more classical need be desired :
Your remarks, too, were just, and so well were expressed,
I was fully convinced of the gifts you possessed :
Such pathos, such force, and such feeling refined,
With youth and with beauty were rarely combined.

A pause now ensued, as when tourists are seen
Absorbed in the beauties of some rural scene ;
Still you lingered beside me, unwilling to go,
And I was as anxious my friendship to show.
I felt so contented, so happy, and free,
From the rich mental feast I had shared, love, with
thee ;

But, adjusting your scarf, now you rose to depart,
Oh ! I felt not till then the deep spell on my heart !
You gave me your hand, but with fervour it burned,
And my fingers' light pressure by yours was returned :
That touch of your hand sent a thrill through my frame,
And the mystical current worked in you the same :

No restraint was attempted, no coyness was shown,
Impassioned affection was ruling alone :
Impulsive, we joined in a parting embrace,
While the heart's inward transport welled up to the
face ;
And the kisses I gave you, and those you gave me,
Were proof of the bliss I was sharing with thee :
Not a word did we speak, all was silence around,
For, besides our deep breathing, we heard not a sound :
The sense and the soul overflowed with delight,—
O ! never was vision more pleasing and bright !
Overcome with enjoyment, I woke with surprise,
But not even thy shadow now gladdened mine eyes,—
'Twas a mental delusion—a fanciful dream,—
Still leaving impressions of pleasure supreme ;
Yes, those moments of rapture I passed, love, with thee,
I shall never forget, though a vision it be !

POETICAL ADDRESS.

Presented to Mr. Samuel Bamford, the Veteran Reformer and Poet, of Moston, on the occasion of a Visit paid to him by a number of his admirers, on Sunday, March 1, 1868.

DEAR SIR,

As pilgrims travel to a distant shrine,
To pay their homage to some dead divine,
So we have come, this holy Sabbath day,
To living worth, our deep respect to pay.

We come as worshipers of sacred truth—
Not as pretenders vain, but in good sooth—
Not as intruders, quick in jest and quip,
With hearts deceitful and with lying lip ;
But in sincerity, a friendly band,
We come to offer you our heart and hand.
As advocates of knowledge, freedom, right,
Foes to injustice in the arm of might—
As lovers of the beautiful and true,
With motives pure,—we come to honour you,
Assured that you will fully comprehend
The reason why we claim you as a friend.

You know what sympathies and feelings are,
When minds congenial for each other care ;
For freedom, friendship, love, and truth are found
Within the heart's core centred—there abound,
And issue from it like the vital stream ;
And as that stream makes every feature gleam,
So these impart to social life its charm,
And keep our feelings and affections warm.

We come as patriots, and in heart we feel
An earnest yearning for our country's weal ;
We love our Queen, our fatherland and homes,
Our solemn temples, and our Great Ones' tombs ;
We love our institutions, great and free ;
We love, O England ! all that's good in thee ;

We wish to see thee with unsullied hand,
Amongst the nations take the foremost stand ;
We would not see thee made the sport of fate
But always justly, truly, nobly great :
Not great in conquest, armies, iron fleets,
To fill with cripples all our crowded streets—
To spread destruction, desolation round,
Where widows' tears, and orphans' cries abound ;
Not eminent in courtly pomp and state,
While ragged wretches crowd the public gate ;
Not great in ignorance, in vice and crime,
While youth and age are steeped in social slime ;
Not great in party tricks for party ends
To make opponents think their foes are friends,
While statesmen seek to win their way by gold,
And votes and principles are bought and sold ;
Nor great in schemes to pauperise the poor,
And make their degradation more secure ;
But we would see thee great in well-won wealth,
Supreme in virtue, wisdom, public health,
Exalted in morality and love,
Learned in the mandates issued from above :
Great, too, in commerce, and the useful arts,
Rich in the blessings which true peace imparts,
Distinguished for intelligence of mind,
In manners courteous, and in action kind,
Remarkable for justice shown to all,
Of class distinction heedless, great or small.

We long to see the toiling millions brought
To share the honours they so long have sought—
Their rights by law conferred, that they may be
In mind unfettered, and in action free ;
In short, we wish to see all grades by honour bound,
That England's sons may be with glory crowned.

These are the principles that you have taught ;
These are the measures, Sir, for which you fought ;
For these you suffered in the prison-cell,
Where party hate could not your ardour quell.
For justice, still, you strove with tongue and pen,
That equal rights might raise your fellow men :
A monument of foul oppression's rage,
This day you stand revered by youth and age.

At freedom's altar you have worshiped long,
And your devotion, still, is warm and strong ;
From error's thralldom you have sought to draw
All who would listen to mild reason's law.
The beautiful in nature you admire,
For oft to beauty you have tuned your lyre ;
All that in man is noble you revere,
And liberty to you was ever dear.
Sincere in heart, in motive pure and true,
The path of rectitude you still pursue.
For these your virtues, and your labours done,
Sincere regard from us, Sir, you have won.

We've little now of hardship to endure,
A few more conflicts and success is sure :
Then we may boast, not of the sanguine fight,
But bloodless triumphs won by reason's might.

Like Moses on the mount, you smiling stand,
And view at distance all the goodly land.
Now, on the threshold of the grave, you see,
Your heart's desire will soon accomplished be.
May peace and love your future life attend,
And God's rich blessing on your age descend !

THE WORKING MEN OF THE WORLD.

THE working men of all the world,
Wherever they may be,
Engaged upon the solid land,
Or on the deep, wide sea ;
Success attend their skill and toil,
Supporting their degree,
And may they all, the world around,
Be dignified and free !

What though their cares are manifold,
Their perils not a few,
They feel a pleasure in their toil
When duty they pursue :

In every clime, in every land,
With active hand and brain,
They labour on with willing heart
Their living to obtain.

But while they toil to earn their bread,
And for their young provide,
All needful things the world requires
Their labour gives beside :
Hence men grow rich, and cities rise,
And luxuries abound ;
While commerce sends her treasure ships
The spacious globe around.

With them are genius, talent, worth,
As labour's annals tell,
And daily do the sons of toil
The ranks of science swell.
Let not their rulers, then, withhold
The rights that workmen claim ;
Each power, by granting these, will add
New lustre to its name.

Their civil and religious wrongs,
Their every wrong redress,
The toiler's claim to equal rights
With honesty confess :

Then harmony will soon prevail
 Where discord now is heard,
 And God's rich blessings, sent for all,
 By loving hearts be shared.

LETTER TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD BROUGHAM.

My Lord,

Although but a working man, I herewith send you the copy of a poem in which I have attempted to sketch your public career; and, if your lordship condescends to notice such trifles, the origin of the composition may perhaps be interesting to you. Permit me to state its origin:—A few nights ago a number of factory operatives of Droylsden held a social meeting, at which I was appointed chairman. After the usual loyal toasts had been given, one of the party proposed your lordship's health, which was received with much enthusiasm. By way of response, I, as chairman, glanced at your social, scientific, and political labours. I was supported in my remarks by several other working men, all of whom spoke of your character and labours in highly eulogistic terms. This to me, as an old admirer of your lordship, was extremely gratifying. I am fully aware, my lord, that such tributes of respect are frequently paid to you in the more elevated circles of society; and, taking into consideration your well-merited popularity, this does not excite my surprise; but the people of Droylsden are not much distinguished for their intelligence; consequently, to hear eulogiums passed upon your lordship by factory operatives, and on such an occasion, I considered very remarkable.

Deeply impressed with the opinions and sentiments which I had heard at this meeting, during the next day I composed the following poem; and, when completed, I read it over to a few friends who had been present at the meeting, and I subsequently submitted it to a number of my brother workmen, all of whom advised me to transmit a copy to your lordship. Not satisfied with their opinion, I asked the counsel of a few more critical and enlightened friends, on whose judgment I could more fully rely, and they, too, gave me encouragement. But, when I considered the gulf of disparity between your lordship and myself, I still

doubted as to the propriety of writing to you. I was fearful of annoying you, and exposing myself to ridicule. At length, however, I called to mind your candour, your magnanimity, and the deep interest you have always taken in the working class, and I at once determined to send the poem without further scruple.

Hoping you will excuse me for the liberty I have taken,

I am, my Lord,

Most respectfully yours,

J. BURGESS.

Victoria Street, Droylsden,
Oct. 21st, 1865.

TO LORD BROUGHAM,

With the preceding Letter.

MY lord, permit an unknown bard
To send a token of regard ;
I know presumption it may seem,
But 'tis the prompting of esteem.

The sympathy of heart with heart
Helps man to act his destined part :
It cheers him in the trying hour,
And in the conflict gives him power.

I never saw you face to face,
But still I love your course to trace—
A course more brilliant, wise, and long,
Ne'er formed the theme of poet's song.

Oh ! what a pleasure to review
A life consistent, good, and true !

Where every motive, effort, aim,
Adds some fresh lustre to a name !

And such, my lord, your life has been :
No stain nor blemish there is seen :
'Tis like a picture rich and bright,
Affording ever new delight.

'Tis not a transient effort made—
A meteor flash above the shade,—
But one enduring, steady light,
Revealing beauty to the sight,

The talents given you in trust,
You've not allowed to lie and rust,
But wisely, urged by reason's laws,
Have used them in the Donor's cause.

Your pleading for the injured queen,
'Gainst kingly power, and craft, and spleen,
Made you the nation's favourite then,
And ranked you first of liberal men.

In fancy I have seen you stand,
The listening senate at command,
Defending freedom, truth and right,
With voice of Demosthenic might.

How philanthropic and how brave
Your ceaseless efforts for the slave !
His freedom you at length obtain,
And from your country wipe the stain.

For conscience, too, you nobly strove
To break the network round it wove :
Yourself unfettered in your thought,
An equal right for all you sought.

Your labours to amend the laws,
Your zeal in education's cause,
Attest your power and grasp of mind,
And prove your learning unconfined.

Unswerving in your liberal course,
Impelled by right and reason's force,
In power or out, in calm or storm,
You stood the champion of reform.

On all of good for human kind
You've shed the lustre of your mind .
In letters, science, law, and art,
You have sustained a foremost part.

Oh ! how stupendous now appear
The works you've added year by year !
What rich and varied treasures shine
From your exhaustless mental mine !

The sons of toil in you confide,
 And tell your worth with looks of pride ;
 Nay, you have won the world's applause,
 By helping on progression's cause.

You need no monument of brass,
 For gazers' wonder as they pass ;
 You've placed yourself the base and crown
 Of one securing your renown.

And now, in your declining days,
 Your light emits a myriad rays,
 And ever on that light shall shine,
 Nor land nor sea its rays confine.

God bless your lordship ! and may He
 From every evil keep you free !
 And, when your earthly labours cease,
 Be yours eternal joy and peace !

Now, having thus your course reviewed,
 Although but briefly, I conclude
 With kindest wish and true regard,
 I'm yours, my lord, "The Droylsden Bard."

HIS LORDSHIP'S ANSWER TO THE
 FOREGOING LETTER.

Brougham, Penrith, 24th October, 1865.

Lord Brougham is much obliged to Mr. Burgess for his kind letter, and esteems highly the good feeling towards him of the workmen of whom Mr. Burgess writes.

BROUGHAM.

SOCIAL COMMUNION.

I LOVE to hold communion with men
Whose mental action merits my esteem.
I care not for their grade—it may be high,
Or what the world calls low,—if they have mind,
And give me proof that mind is bent on good—
That all their aims are noble, just, and pure,—
I rank them with my friends. They are the salt
That seasons social life ; they give a zest—
An appetite for mental food. Within
The crucible of thought they purify
The elements which, when united, serve
To guide, instruct, and civilise mankind.
A welcome greets them wheresoe'er they go,
And kindly wishes follow in their path.
How pleasant 'tis with such to interchange
Kind words and sentiments refined—to feel
Their genial influence in the social group,
And catch the spirit which pervades their words !
I take new heart when I have been refreshed
By intercourse with them, and give my aid
More freely to the cause of truth.

Thus we proceed, improving as we go—
Increasing in our intellectual strength,
Defeating error, fortifying truth,
And adding fresh dominion to the realm

Of thought : our vision takes a wider range,
 Revealing to us beauty, power, and laws
 Unknown to us before ; and as the mind,
 Expands, we comprehend with clearer view
 The rights and duties which to us belong :
 Those rights we now demand with more resolve,—
 Those duties we discharge with freer will.

Oh ! who can calculate the dangers shunned,
 The evils we escape, the lessons learned,
 The good we daily do through intercourse
 Like this ! And mind shall thus go on to act
 On mind, and man to influence man, till all
 Shall feel the power that knowledge gives, and
 yield
 To better feelings, purer, wiser thoughts,
 Till truth and justice shall triumphant reign
 Throughout the world,—till all shall see the bright,
 The happy day which then shall usher in
 The universal brotherhood of man.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL :
 AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC.

“ Feed my Lambs.”

IN virtue's cause once more I tune my lyre,
 Oh ! may the strain to generous acts inspire !

In every breast some chord of kindness move,
And melt the heart to sympathetic love !
The cause for which this sympathy I claim,
Is one which only needs that I should name :
It asks no grace of speech, no poet's rule,—
'Tis simply this —“ The Christian Sunday School.”
Assembled here, the children of the poor
Are taught their great Creator to adore—
To love Him, too, with strength, and soul, and mind,
And to their neighbour's good be still inclined.
Corrupt propensities are here suppressed,
And warm affections kindled in the breast ;
Deceit and envy, malice, anger, strife,
And all the sins with which the heart is rife,
Are here subdued ; and in their stead are placed
The moral beauties which the Saviour graced.
When manners rude, disorder would create,
Decorum, quick, tells what such faults await ;
While vicious habits due attention claim,
'Tis shown that disobedience leads to shame—
That truth and justice, piety and zeal,
Will surely bring to all enduring weal.

Their mental powers, till now untrained, are brought
To useful exercise and active thought,
Till full before them wisdom's ample page
Unfolded lies, and all their minds engage.
The rudiments of character thus traced,
They enter life more civilised and chaste ;

And to the world a telling influence bring,
 From which unnumbered benefits must spring ;—
 An influence mild which bears on each one's lot,
 In lordly dome, or in the humble cot.

Each Sabbath morn to duty calls anew,
 And zealous teachers still their work pursue ;
 Their minds with love imbued—their highest aim
 To guard their youthful charge from sin and shame—
 To point to Jesus and His precepts tell,
 And amplify the rules of living well.
 Patient in mind, and watchful unto prayer,
 They sow the seeds of truth with anxious care,
 Watering and tending every hopeful shoot,
 And hail, with tears of joy, the goodly fruit.
 Ye best reformers of the present time,
 God smiles upon you and your work divine :
 Go on and prosper, heaven hath willed it so :
 God is your friend, who, then, shall be your foe ?
 Oh ! what had been our state, if, to this hour,
 The poor man's child had never had this dower !
 Wild weeds and briars had grown where now are seen
 The myrtle, fir, the rose, and olive green ;
 A moral gloom pervaded all around
 Where light, and truth, and virtue now abound.

Immortal Raikes, in this the first inspired,
 Though thousands since have with thy zeal been fired ;
 Oh ! could thy sainted spirit now survey
 The millions taught to walk in wisdom's way,

Enraptured strains would swell thy harp anew,
While listening seraphs joined the chorus, too!

Is there a patriot wish, a social tie,
A manly feeling, or a Christian sigh,
That does not harmonise with this sweet plan—
This bliss-fraught boon of heaven bestowed on man?

Then come, dear friends, to you we now appeal,
Being well assured you all have hearts to feel.
Of Raikes's large benevolence you share,
You've often proved it by your fostering care.
Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Baptists, join,
With Independents, Primitives combine;
Whate'er your sect, though different be your creed,
You all may aid in sowing gospel seed.

Ye wealthy stewards of the living God—
Yours are the laden trees, the fruitful sod,—
A portion of your substance freely give,
And children's prayers shall bless you while ye live;
Nay more, that God from whom you had your dower,
Shall bless you, too, and shield you with His power.
Though sweet the luxuries of dress and food,
'Tis sweeter far to aid in doing good.

Ye parents, too, whose children are your pride,
Extend your hand their youthful steps to guide:
Though small your means and classed among the poor,
Your mite will help us, and we ask no more.

Young men and maidens hear, now rich in health,
Although not rich in what the world calls wealth,

The cause of virtue claims your sacrifice,
 To train immortals for the upper skies.
 Man's highest interest must be to attain
 To virtue here, and heavenly bliss to gain.

Dark vice and crime stalk through our favoured land,
 Oppose them friends of light—their wiles withstand.
 Here talent, labour, wealth, will be required :
 Come to the contest, then, with hearts inspired,
 With vigour fresh and resolution bold,
 And let the applauding world your deeds behold.
 Let each and all throw off indifference cool,
 And rally round the Christian Sabbath School.

CONFESS YOUR FAULTS.

SHOULD you offend a fellow-man,
 In word, or look, or deed,
 And you suspect your conduct may
 Some future mischief breed,
 Be not ashamed to own your faults,
 And heal the wound you've made,
 Your candour will beget respect—
 The mischief will be stayed.

And should you e'er through passion err,
 And angry words ensue,
 Be candid still, confess your fault,
 And evil thoughts subdue.

Be not too proud to own you're wrong,
Nor think you're always right ;
Discreetly judge, and coolly weigh,
And in the truth delight.

Should you, by misconception led,
Take up a cause that's wrong,
Persist not when the right appears,
Be manly, and be strong ;
Dispute not when you're ignorant,
Nor knowing airs assume ;
Be honest and be candid still,
Nor rashly dare presume.

Should you maliciously do wrong,
Or act a treacherous part,
Confession must be made before
Peace can possess the heart.
The more of candour you display
The less you'll have to fear,
'Twill show in wisdom you improve—
That truth to you is dear.

And should you in temptation's hour
Unguarded go astray,
And wander in forbidden paths,
No lamp to light your way,

Return ! return ! confess your sin,
And pray to be forgiven !
For no *impenitent* can find
A dwelling-place in Heaven.

THE POWER OF GOD DISPLAYED IN HIS WORKS.

A theme so vast as God's display of power,
As manifest in all His varied works,
Is one, I deem, no finite mind can press
Within the compass of a few brief lines.
Yet, still, a glance may perhaps awaken thought,
And exercise the intellect for good :
With this intent I now the task essay.

The frame of man is "wonderfully made,"
And "fearfully" his inward parts are joined ;
His well-set bones, and muscles strong, his nerves—
Which intersect and ramify the whole,—
The organs which digest his daily food,
The heart's pulsations which propel the blood
Through every avenue within the frame,
His lungs, inhaling still the vital air,
When viewed with every other member nice,
All prove the Great Creator's hand, which gave
To man his form erect and pliant limbs,
Holding one with sceptre in his hand.

But, though the frame of man such power displays,
 Yet still more wonderful his active mind ;
 His quick conception and his sense acute
 Evince with what amazing art and skill
 His mental organs have been formed and tuned ;
 Ideas on ideas crowd, as move
 The latent springs of abstract thought within ;
 In turn, concordant thoughts form reason's web
 Of mystic harmony, which gives to man
 His proud supremacy o'er all below.

Formed thus for greatness, some have well applied
 Their Maker's gifts, by musing on His works,
 And pointing out the beauties they contain :
 Their potent intellects have pierced the gloom
 Of by-gone centuries, and brought to light
 The mist-enveloped secrets of the past :
 Creation's vast arcana they explore,
 And mark the simples of the compound whole :
 Then show the laws by which the union's formed.
 To their research organic bodies now
 Their secrets yield, and what is baneful, or
 What healing in their essence they impart.
 With truth in view, whate'er to matter and
 To motion appertains they seek to know,
 That they may teach again the laws by which
 The universal harmony exists.
 Thus they proceed, their minds imbued with love,

Unfolding nature's volume to the world ;
They call on all to read the wonders there,
And wisely learn to prize their Maker's gifts.

Well would it be for mind and social peace
If all would thus reflect ; but 'tis not so.
The sceptic points his shafts to hurl at truth
And seeks to pierce her through her stainless veil :
He talks of chance, as though no order reigned
Amid the beauties of Creation's realm.
Ungrateful man, thus to repay thy God !
What motive can induce thee thus to act ?
Is truth so hateful grown, thou seek'st to wrong
Her thus ? Has she exhausted all her stores,
That thou prefer'st to enter falsehood's maze,
To show the greatness of thy mental power ?
Both pride and low conceit are foes to truth :
Divest thy mind of these, then turn thine eyes
Within, and thou wilt find thy talents have
Been misapplied. First learn thyself to know,
And then all other works of God survey.
In boundless space view the stupendous whole,
See world on world, system on system roll.
Contemplate these till thy unaided or
Thy aided intellect is lost amid
The vastness of the splendid scene. Again
Descend to earth and note the grandeur there—
“The everlasting hills,”—the outstretched plains,—

The rocks stupendous,—and the caverns deep,—
 Old Ocean sleeping on his rocky bed,
 Or wakeing in fury, over-awing all.
 Who dare oppose his rage,—“the crystal streams,”
 Which wind their course through deep ravines and
 vales—

Here gently gliding, headlong rushing there,—
 The light, elastic air, with ceaseless force,
 Pressing on every superficial inch,
 While it supplies the breath of life to all :
 When viewed in combination, or alone,
 As agents in terrestrial changes made,
 All, all give proof of skill and power divine.
 As seasons roll, in each congenial clime,
 Behold how gaily nature is arrayed :
 The verdant, tender herb and stately trees
 Are formed and fashioned with peculiar art,
 All firmly rooted in their native soil,
 They flourish in their beauty ever fair.
 But mark the progress of their chief support,—
 Through tubes unseen the sap prepared ascends
 To every branch projecting from the stem,
 Whence branch and leaf, and bloom and fruit are
 formed,
 According to its kind. And these, in all
 Their countless forms, show forth God's power supreme.
 Still turn to earth, and mark the tribes
 That walk its surface o'er, that plough the deep,

And skim the ambient air ; the lowest class
Of which proclaims aloud, the sceptic errs !
Who taught the busy bee its honeycomb
To frame ?—the subtle spider how to weave
Its web ?—the silkworm how its fibrous ball
To make ?—the slothful snail and scaleless fish
How to construct their neat, artistic shells ?
Who taught the feathered tribes their nests to build ?—
The beavers to erect, with crafty skill,
Their habitation in the stream ? Who taught
The toiling ants their commonwealth to form ?—
The crocodile, with cunning art, to lay
Her eggs in sand ? Who drew the changeless lines
Between each species living on the earth ?
Didst thou, conceited man, these beings teach ?
Shouldst thou attempt a model of their works ?
Thy skill is baffled, thy contrivance vain !
Thy wonder-working hand must here be staid.
Much as thou know'st, presumptuous, daring man,
Thou ne'er possessed the cunning known to these !
Unerring and unchanged in every mode
Of life, they all are now the same as when
The Great Omnipotent first called them forth.
Observe their motions well—their works survey,
In their minutiae, and their varied whole,—
Then say if mere blind chance these creatures guide.
It cannot be ! for He who gave to thee
Superior reason and the power of speech

Bestowed on them an instinct for their guide,
 And gave to them a language which, it seems,
 Each single class well understands. What grand
 And deep design! What artifice sublime!
 Yea, what unbounded power these works display!
 Amazing is the art each species seems
 To hold, by law, beyond their power to break.
 To form these creatures, and to teach them this,
 Was all among the six days' work of God,
 And which reveals to us His power and skill
 As truly as the more admired works
 Adorning earth, or radiant orbs that roll
 Their rapid course in yon empyrean arch.

The sceptic mind may question and reject
 The simple truths I state, forgetful that,
 Amid Creation's complicated works,
 The strongest intellect is soon confused.
 Misguided judgment gives a sense of right,
 And superficial views will oft deceive.
 If we could clearly comprehend the whole
 Of Nature's harmony, and see each change,
 From the first union of her elements,
 To where the matter takes a living form—
 And mark, again, how this is modified,—
 We ne'er should question, nor contend, but bow
 In reverential awe to Him who formed,
 Sustains, and governs all.

A VOLUNTARY TRIBUTE.

Read at a Public Meeting in the Town Hall, Ashton, on the Presentation of a Superb Time-Piece and Framed Address to Alderman Hugh Mason, Esq., of Ashton, on Wednesday Evening, April 12th, 1865.

How great the fame of England's chiefs,
Who fill our hearts with pride !
What glorious triumphs they have gained
On battle-field and tide !

How bright our mental stars appear,
That shine from age to age,
In science, literature, or art,
Or senator, or sage !

And proudly stand our ancient halls,
Where titled nobles dwell,
Whose rule and influence in the state
Have been maintained so well !

What glorious monuments, beside,
Now ornament our land,
In mould, or marble, bronze, or brass,
Wrought by the cunning hand !

Take chieftain, genius, noble, sage,
Or monument of brass,

But greater still than these—than *all*,
The mighty working class!

They are the source of wealth and power—
Of dignity and state;
For 'tis their rough and active hands
That wealth and power create.

And he who fearlessly stands forth,
Their interest to defend,
He—he alone must surely be
The working man's best friend.

Such is the man to whom this night
You pay the honour due;
For he has proved himself to be
A brother kind and true.

Through evil and through good report,
'Mid suffering and distress,
By aid and counsel he hath sought
To make that suffering less.

God bless the man! and bless our cause
The cause of truth and right;
And may Hugh Mason comprehend
Our love, our faith, our might!

We have been taught to cringe and bow
To men with wealth bedecked,
And led to think that they alone
Commanded our respect.

But we are waking now, and look
For actions good and pure—
For virtue, nobleness of heart,
And love which shall endure.

We seek our rights! Our wrongs we hate!
And this shall be our plan—
To work with hand, and heart, and soul,
With this enlightened man!

THE PATRIOT CHIEF.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE RICHARD COBDEN,
M.P. FOR ROCHDALE;

Who was born at the Farmhouse of Dunford, near Midhurst, Sussex, on the 3rd of June, 1804; and died at his London residence, Eaton Square, on Sunday Morning, April 2nd, 1865, in the 61st year of his age.

Alas! for England—Cobden is no more!
Mute is that tongue which could so well advise!
His patriotic efforts now are o'er!
His lucid reason will no more surprise!

Oh ! what a loss has freedom's cause sustained
In him thus prematurely called away !
Ere half was done for which he seemed ordained—
To lead the nations to a brighter day.

He came, an unassuming, earnest man,
Endowed with penetration all his own ;
In progress moving quickly to the van,
Advancing truths till then but little known.

He loved the people, for from them he rose,
Their good his measures ever did include ;
Nor good alone to them did he propose,
He loved his country, and its good pursued.

His policy was novel, broad, and bold,
Embracing mighty changes for the world :
Time-honoured wrongs and privileges old
Could not withstand the potent truths he hurled.

Free-Trade, Retrenchment, Equal Rights for all,
Non-intervention, Peace, and State Reform—
These were his themes in senate house and hall,
These things he urged in sunshine and in storm.

His first great effort was to feed the poor,
To loose the shackles of restricted trade—

For waiting commerce to unbar the door,
That land to land might tender mutual aid.

Backed by a noble band of earnest men,
Quick to perceive the novel truths he taught,
Ready in utterances of tongue and pen,
He sooner gained the glorious object sought.

In this he triumphed, though the fight was long,
For old Protection showed a stubborn will,
But though his castle ancient was and strong,
It fell at length by Cobden's matchless skill.

He sought by laws of kindness to unite
All nations in one great fraternal bond,
That all might feel an interest in the right,
And none that right should wish to go beyond.

Detesting war, his heart was fixed on peace—
On peace, the Queen of plenty, love and joy,
Who smiles on science—gives the world increase,
And finds for man his needful, sweet employ.

With this idea he was sent to France,
And in his mission he succeeded well :
Commerce and friendship he did there advance,
Securing blessings which no tongue can tell.

Old jealousies he wisely did uproot,
And sowed the seeds of amity and peace,
Which quickly grew and yielded goodly fruit,
Portending more as prosperous years increase.

Long were his labours met with cold neglect,
Because against him factions were combined ;
He rose, at last, to meet world-wide respect,
For he possessed a world-embracing mind.

Still, bent on duty, he did not suspect
The fatal summons had for him been signed ;
Though suffering, duty he would not neglect,
For duty gave a pleasure to his mind,

Brief was the warning sent, and brief his pain ;
But, like a good man, he was still resigned—
No heart more noble did the world contain—
No meeker spirit did he leave behind.

Amid the fulness of his fame cut off—
When all confess the laurels he has gained,
While praise succeedeth faction's heedless scoff,
We scarcely estimate the loss sustained.

Let factions gather strength and sit in power,
And disaffection stay the liberal fight,

Then will be found the people's trying hour—
Then shall we miss his rectitude and might.

Mankind were just beginning to perceive
His worth, and to appreciate the man ;
They saw how easily they could achieve
Great triumphs, and to others lead the van.

High hopes were centred in him, and men's eyes
Were turned towards him with an anxious look ;
All knew how dearly freedom he did prize,
And no injustice in the state would brook.

Not only as a patriot was he true,—
His private life and virtues were the same,
As husband, father, friend, surpassed by few,
All which add lustre to his spotless name.

And now the nation's head is bowed in grief,
The heart is sad, and gloom o'erspreads the face ;
And statesmen all lament the patriot chief,
Passing eulogiums with a solemn grace.

But not alone his native land must feel
Regret and sorrow at his sudden end ;
For foreign nations know he sought their weal,
And they will, too, bewail our common friend.

A nation's sorrow for departed worth
Adds to a nation's honour and its fame :
However high or low in rank or birth
The good man claims at death a hallowed name.

When gone his conduct we begin to scan—
To scrutinise his lessons and his deeds—
To test him by the standard of a man,
Heedless of party, prejudice and creeds.

We see him moving in his steady course,
Unswayed by selfishness, or party ends ;
Yet, still refuse his doctrines to enforce,
Though on our sanction his success depends.

There must be something hollow in the heart
That is so tardy to admit the right—
That will not take a noble patriot's part
Though robed in reason, candour, truth, and light.

Would all combine with earnestness and zeal
To aid the patriot in his noble strife,
How much more happy should we make him feel ?—
How much more useful make his public life ?

A living tribute to a worthy man
Is nobler far when all is done and said,

Than meanly strive to fix on him a ban,
Then laud him for his labours when he's dead.

May Richard Cobden's treatment ever be
A check to scoffers wheresoever found !
May his example cheer the good and free,
Till all he sought shall be with triumph crowned !

THE THIRD ANNUAL POEM ADDRESSED TO
THE ANGOLA WINDERS, OF DROYLSDEN,
FOR CHRISTMAS 1865.

Well, Old Father Christmas is with us again,
And again you request from the Old Bard a strain ;
To comply with your wish I again tune my lyre—
May glorious Apollo the strain now inspire !
That my song to each maiden may pleasure impart,
Awaken emotion and tell on the heart ;
For without such impression the Bard sings in vain—
However exalted or varied his strain.
At this season of gladness and social delight,
You will see, then, my wish is to do what is right.

Now, to me, there is no more delightful a theme
Than woman affords for a song or a dream :
She possesses such influence over the mind,
When she's cheerful and affable, loving and kind,
That the glance of her eye, or the tone of her voice

Can dispel clouds of sorrow and make us rejoice.
Then, her depth of affection few fully may know,
Which to offspring and husband she ever will show ;
And her counsel, if followed, would often prevent
Much trouble and folly, besides discontent.
By the bed of affliction an angel she stands
To soothe with her look, with her language and hands :
Both comfort and pleasure her footsteps attend,
And none like a woman a man can befriend.
When friendship encircles the fire warm and bright
Her smile and her converse impart most delight ;
And he must be callous and heartless indeed
Who would wish from dear woman's delights to be freed.

But not as a sister, a wife, or a friend
On woman alone have we men to depend :
We find her in market, in workshop and mill
Enriching the world with her efforts and skill :
On food and on clothing her care she bestows,
And joins in man's labour, his pleasures and woes.
In works of benevolence, too, she takes part,
And displays on each object her goodness of heart.
We see her again in the church and the school
Obeying and teaching by charity's rule.
From the Queen to the servant we find it but rare
When woman is wanted that she is not there :
She's the giver of comfort, the stayer of strife
And is active in all the conditions of life.

Now for you, gentle maidens, this strain I'll prolong,
As forming the theme of my new Christmas song.
For years I have known you, and ever have found
Your hearts in good-nature did fully abound :
Be you busy at work, or are out in the street
You have always a smile when the Old Bard you
meet ;

And a smile from the fair ones, believe me, I prize,
There's a fountain of bliss in the light of their eyes ;
And respect for all ladies his bosom will move
Whose life has been sweetened by one woman's love.
Politeness and prudence I know you possess,
And I think you indulge not in foolish excess :
You maintain self-respect and secure a good name
By dress and deportment which few may well blame.
You cheerfully toil your own living to get,
And because you're not wealthy, I think you don't
fret.

You are social, and when Father Christmas comes
round

You delight in his long, laughing train to be found ;
So you hang up your garlands, and kissing bush, too,
To show that his coming is welcome to you ;
Then you join in the dance, and the tale, and the
song,

And you mingle in friendship your neighbours among.
This eases the heart of its burden of care,
And enables you better life's hardships to bear ;

It strengthens true friendship, and gives to the mind
 A solace and pleasure, and makes you refined.
 Make virtue, dear maidens, the pride of your life
 As friend, or companion, or sister or wife.
 My song now must end—'tis my last, perhaps, for you—
 And so, with best wishes, I bid you Adieu!

 ODE TO LAUGHTER.

Read at "The Literary and Scientific Union," Audenshaw,
 Christmas, 1864.

Excuse me, friends, I cannot help but laugh,
 Because my ode is little else than chaff :
 I do not mean the chaff of grain,
 But chaff of thought, just beaten from the brain :
 The solid parts have all been put aside ;
 But what of that, since laughter is our pride ?

I'm light of heart,

And what is tart

I hate as mental tether ;

And if you feel as light and free

To-night we'll try to merry be

And have a laugh together.

Loving mirth and joke and chaff,

Let us have a chorus laugh.

CHORUS. (Laugh *ad lib.*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Man delighteth most in pleasure,
 And, to give a mental measure,
 To make our pleasant feelings visible,
 The face was formed with muscles risible.

Every pleasant thing we see,
 Every pleasant sound we hear,
 Sets our mirthful muscles free,
 Making social friends more dear.
 Pleasant touches, too, beguile,
 And will oft beget a smile ;
 But what most can mirth prolong
 Is the human voice and tongue.
 Pleasing tones and fluent speech,
 Ready wit, and parts to teach,
 Whoso'er can claim these graces
 Quickly maketh pleasant faces.
 Still admiring mirth and chaffing,
 Try another bout of laughing

CHORUS. (Laugh *ad lib.*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Banish laughter from the hall,
 Palace, and from cottage small,
 And you banish mirth and fun,
 Loved by all beneath the sun.

See the mother sat at tea,
 With her infant on her knee,

Using many a trick and wile,
All to make her darling smile :
There the father, too, you see,
With young hopeful on his knee :
Pretty things he tries to say,
Just to make him laugh and play.

Watch the children when at play,
How blithe they are—how light and gay !
See them frolic, romp and shout,
And send the merry laugh about ;
Their little hearts with mirth o'erflowing,
Joy and gladness round them throwing.

And children of a larger growth,
Or man or maid—we'll take them both,
Delight to join the joyous laugh—
Ha, ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !

Young men meet to joke and chaff,
And enjoy a hearty laugh :
Old men, too, their tales will tell,
Just to have a laugh as well.

While blushing young maidens will twitter and smile,
And e'en with loud laughter each other beguile :
So, too, will old ladies oft chatter away
Till nothing their tongues or their laughter can stay.

From the humble kitchen wench,
 To the judge upon the bench,
 Parson, layman, peasant, peer—
 All will laugh at what is queer ;
 And, when time and place allow,
 Will to harmless laughter bow.

Editors and authors vie
 How to please the laughing eye ;
 “Punch” and “Fun” their humour show,
 Mirth and smiles around to throw ;
 And the satire of each quill
 Seems a sugar-coated pill :
 While the Daily Papers send
 Little tit-bits to each friend ;
 And more humour still they covet,
 Just because the people love it.
 If you feel my words are true,
 I’ll have another laugh with you ;
 Think it more than mental draff,
 There’s wisdom in a merry laugh !
 Ha, ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !

Some people there are say ’tis vulgar to laugh,
 And assert that the habit belongs to the raff ;
 But let them be tickled, and, ’twixt me and you,
 They’ll show they can laugh, and that heartily, too.

The cheerful face comes from the merry heart ;
The heart is merry when it feels no care ;
Lit up with smiles, what joy the face imparts,
The heart true pleasure still delights to share.

Laughter breaks no moral law,
Nor of judgment stands in awe :
It causeth neither guilt nor fear,
Never having treason near.
Two strange philosophers of old,
And neither of their hearts were cold,
Were noted for the different view
They took of follies, old or new.
'Tis said that Heraclétus cried
At all the follies that he eyed ;
But then Demócritus but laughed,
And others for their folly chaffed.
Oh ! what a world this soon would be
Were men to weep at all they see !
Why, laughter is the cream or life,
And oft preventeth jars and strife !

But the laugh of derision,
The smile of contempt,
From mirth's real pleasures
Must still be exempt ;
For laughter's true object is not to annoy
But always lead on to good humour and joy.

What's the use of being sad,
When we might as well be glad?
'Tis pity care can not be hurled
From this laughter-loving world!
Man does his duty better after
He's refreshed with hearty laughter.
Genial humour, sterling wit,
Often cause a pleasing fit:
Then keep your happy faces bright,
We'll have another laugh to-night;
While the rosy wine we quaff,
There's music in a joyous laugh.
Ha, ha, ha ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mark the man with kill-joy look,
Stately seated in the nook:
None may crack a joke with him,
So forbidding, proud and prim:
All within the room are dumb,
Scarce a whisper or a hum.
'Tis no pleasure being where
There's no social mirth to share.
In concert-hall, or at the play,
Where folks wile their hours away,
If they have not food for laughter,
Will they often visit after?

See that bright facetious face,
Ever welcome to his place,

Full of wit, and turn, and jest,
To enjoyment giving zest ;
Intellectual sparks now fly,
Lighting up each beaming eye ;
Conversation freely flows,
Pleasure on each feature glows ;
Mirth and laughter now abound,
As the joke and tale go round—
Till the muscles of the chest
Move the wrinkles of the vest ;
And the bellows 'neath the coat
Send their roar from out the throat—
Till men wriggle on the chair
With the jocund laughter there—
Toss the head from side to side
In their full ecstatic pride,
Muscles spring and shoulders hop
As if ne'er again to stop.
Oh ! what sides has laughter split !—
Yet none ever saw a slit—
So quickly they're repaired by stitches,
Giving little painful twitches.
Oh ! the joy of ringing laughter—
Penetrating wall and rafter !
Once again, boys, then, to-night
Show that laughter's your delight !
Raise the cup—to Momus quaff !—
There's music in the festive laugh !
Ha, ha, ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !

MAY DAY.

COME, Clarinda, let's a-Maying,—
See, the sun is rising high !
All are through the meadows straying,
Where the Tame meanders by.

See the lark, above careering,
Blithely hails the happy morn ;
And the pearly-dew adhering,
Sol shall banish from the thorn.

Hark the little songsters sporting
Round the flower-enamelled plain,
Each with his companion vieing,
Warbles forth a joyous strain.

Life, though short, is worth enjoying—
While I urge it speeds away :
Numbers on the Green are toying,
Dressed in all the bloom of May.

Lo, the youths, alertly toiling,
Raise the pole bedecked so gay !
All around with joy are smiling—
Haste, and let us welcome May !

TO CLARINDA.

THY form was cast in Nature's choicest mould,
 And every Grace was summoned to behold :
 Each stamped her impress deep on every part,
 To please the eye, and captivate the heart.
 The Virtues then conspired to deck thy mind,
 With every feature noble, good, and kind,
 That thou mightst live admired, beloved, and blest,
 Befriend the good, and every vice detest.
 To perfect all, the Muses next combined
 To make thee skilful, learnéd, and refined ;
 Thus being placed beneath their mild control,
 They breathe their inspirations through thy soul :
 Contentment, health, and peace are in their train,
 Long may'st thou live beneath their genial reign !

 AN ADDRESS TO MY DAUGHTER SOPHIA,

On Attaining her 21st Year, Sunday, December 25th, 1864.

DEAR DAUGHTER, while thy youthful friends,
 Have come, respect to pay,
 Thy father would express his joy,
 On this thy natal day :
 I bear no rich nor costly thing,
 A father's love is all I bring.

How quickly do the rolling years
Seem to have come and gone,
Since first I kissed thy baby lips!—
Thou now art twenty-one.
Thy life till now has smoothly run,
Although it seems but just begun.

I'm glad to see thee now in health—
To see thy beaming eye,
Lit up with pleasure while thou look'st
On those now sitting by—
To see thee give the welcome smile,
Suspecting not, nor feeling guile.

I'm proud to hear congenial words,
Flow freely from thy tongue ;
I'm pleased to hear the merry laugh
This social group among :
O ! may'st thou ever feel as now,
No anxious care upon thy brow !

A dutiful and loving child,
Thou up to now hast been,
Obedient to thy father's will,
Though *self* has come between ;
And, now, to womanhood attained,
By love may'st thou be still constrained.

Thy name imports thou should'st be wise,
And wisdom thou hast sought ;
Thou hast not mixed in pleasure's throng,
Nor by her snares been caught,
Preferring virtue's pleasant way,
And doing duty day by day.

A mother's kind and gentle care,
Of late thou hast not known ;
But, still, a father's ample shield,
Has over thee been thrown :
Be grateful then for blessings past,
And God His shield will o'er thee cast.

Long may'st thou live esteemed and loved,
And still in virtue grow !
May health and peace attend thy steps,
Wherever thou may'st go !
And, having past life's thorny road,
May heaven at last be thy abode !

COMPLIMENTARY
TO MISS C., OF CRESSBROOK.

I've seen thee in thy Father's hall,
A fair and playful child ;
I've seen thee bound o'er hill and dale,
In spirit free and wild.

I've seen thee in thy garden bower,
The sweetest flower there,
When sunbeams kissed thy glossy neck,
And zephyrs fanned thy hair.

I've seen thee in the festive dance,
In fancy robes arrayed ;
When rosy health lit up thy smile,
And Graces round thee played.

I've seen thy velvet fingers wake
Rare strains of sweetest sound—
The while, thy rich, subduing voice
Threw melody around.

I've seen thee in thy little skiff
Glide o'er the placid lake,
And heard thee shout, and laugh, and sing,
Shy Echo but to wake.

There's beauty on thy damask cheek,
And in thy love-lit eye ;
There's sweetness in thy balmy breath,
And lips of coral dye.

The sympathies of thy young heart
I know are deep and strong ;

Thou lovest all that is for good,
And hatest all things wrong.

And thou art plighted now, fair maid,
To one thou deem'st sincere :
Oh ! may he evermore be true,
And thou to him be dear !

LABOUR AND CAPITAL.

Composed for the tea party given by Peter Joynson and Co., to the work-people employed at their Mill, Beswick Street, off Bradford Street, Manchester, on Saturday evening, December 16th, 1865.

ALTHOUGH a stranger I appear to-night,
I view this meeting with supreme delight :
Your smiling faces give me joy indeed ;
Still keep them smiling—sow affection's seed—
Extend the hand of friendship—kindly speak,
And let expression glow upon each cheek ;
Banish improper feelings far away,
That pure emotions may have room to play ;
So shall this night be, “as the moments roll,”
“A feast of reason,” and “a flow of soul.”

On this occasion you have cause for joy,
Which you may feel unmingled with alloy :

Here Capital and Labour rightly stand,
And meet each other in one friendly band :
Employers and employed we see to-night
In social bonds and cordial love unite.

Your generous masters with a liberal hand,
Share with you now the wealth at their command :
Receive their bounty with a grateful heart,
And towards them act a truly honest part ;
Be vigilant and careful when at work,
And let no mischief in your bosom lurk.
On you depends the spring of their success,
Their profits you increase, or make them less ;
If you are active, steady, earnest, true,
The more they gain—the more there is for you ;
If you are careless, wasteful, negligent,
The less there is amongst you to be spent :
So nearly, then, are toil and wealth allied,
Each in the other ought to take a pride.
When Capital in Labour seeks a friend
'Tis its legitimate, its proper end :
The two united are a mutual good,
Divided, each is easily withstood.

The source of wealth is labour unrestrained ;
By toil the nation's greatness is sustained ;
'Tis Labour searches out the golden ore,
That melts and coins it to increase our store—

Bores the deep shaft, and works the gloomy mine,
Where danger hovers, and no sun can shine—
Lights up the furnace with its midnight glare,
Whose molten stream demands incessant care ;
In forge, in foundry, in the workshop large,
Labour his thousand duties must discharge.
In the rough quarry, too, he splits the rocks,
And shapes the fragments to convenient blocks ;
He sings his song, and cracks his merry joke
While he hews down the wide-spread forest oak.
'Tis Labour tills the soil and sows the seed—
Reaps the rich harvest for our time of need—
Erects our cottages, and temples, too,
With stately halls so picturesque to view ;
He builds the ships that plough the mighty deep—
The rapid cars that o'er our railways sweep—
Constructs the wagons, now so firm and strong,
That bear our produce through the streets along ;
He forms our garments through the varying year,
And by his care makes life itself more dear ;
On every hand, turn where and when you will,
Labour displays his energy and skill ;
His hand constructs the myriad things around,
Or rough, or rich, with which our marts abound.
Labour conveys our produce to each zone,
And brings us back their surplus for our own.
Did he but know his power, and use it right,
None could resist his majesty and might ;

His brawny arms embrace all earthly things,
Supporting e'en the thrones of mighty kings.
Should giant Labour from his seat be hurl'd,
How soon would cease the commerce of the world.

Let none with pride on Labour then look down,
Nor meet the dusty jacket with a frown.
The rights of Labour fully recognised,
The toiling man will be more highly prized,
And he, more honoured, will more honour show,
And hence more firmly mutual interests grow.
This change effected, we may hope to see
Labour exalted—Capital more free :
Then social harmony, and social comfort, too,
Will be by all more closely kept in view ;
His rights and freedom Labour would defend,
And find in capital a real friend.

Now, here's success to all within this mill,
Contentment follow all their efforts still,
May every toiler meet his due reward,
And each secure his master's true regard.
Success to Joynson, too, and Co., to-night,
Long may they live, and keep their honour bright :
May each succeeding year their wealth increase,
And all be crowned with rosy health and peace !

THE BRIDEGROOM'S SONG.

TUNE—"Old English Gentleman."

I SHALL go no more a-wooing, boys,
My courting days are past :
I've ticked and toyed for many years,
But now I'm caught at last.
Farewell to all my flirting tricks,
With girls I thought were free,
I never more must walk them out,
Nor join them at their tea ;
For I have just got married, boys,
I've tied the noose to-day.

Wedlock, I hope, will prove as sweet
As courtship used to be ;
That to my bride I may be true,
And she be true to me—
That she'll be frugal and discreet,
And careful of the pence,
And manage the affairs of home
With neatness and good sense,
Then I shall not regret, my boys,
I tied the noose to-day.

But should some little cross in life
Our daily pleasures mar,

I will not keep the mischief up
 Nor raise it to a jar;
 For that would only make things worse,
 And turn the temper sour,
 So I'll be candid and forbear,
 And still improve each hour:
 Thus I shall make more easy, boys,
 The noose I've tied to-day.

My cares, I know, must needs increase,
 For 'tis the marriage plan;
 But if they do not weigh me down
 I'll bear it like a man.
 And when the first affection's pledge
 Is given unto me,
 I'll rock its cradle when I'm bid,
 Or trot it on my knee:
 Then I shall feel quite proud, my boys,
 I tied the noose to-day.

A REMINDER.

To my highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Joseph Hibbert, of
 Audenshaw.

FRIEND JOSEPH, I've heard people say in a joke,
 That "pie-crusts and promises were to be broke;"
 This proverb to *crusts* may apply very well,
 But *promises* should not be classed with a shell.

When a promise is made, then, to keep it we're bound,
Or honour and confidence fall to the ground ;
And this, as a rule, you will see must be true,
Though 'tis one we're obliged, now and then, to break
through ;

For 'twixt the performance and promise, you know,
A great many shoots of annoyance may grow :
Our memory may fail us, and grief intervene ;
Disease may attack us, and so may the spleen ;
And trouble compels us our promise to break ;
While the spirit is willing the flesh may be weak ;
Or matters of greater importance may claim
Our attention and render us subject to blame ;
Yea, even the weather sometimes may prove rough,
And keep us at home discontented enough.

When such is the case there's apology due,
Which will not be refused where the friendship is true.
But, next Sunday, from these things I hope you'll be free,
As with me, you remember, you're pledged to take tea :
I have jingled these rhymes to remind you of this,
And I trust that my freedom you'll not take amiss.

Now, after your party contention and strife,
With dodging and plotting, and subterfuge rife,
I think you will feel it a happy release
To be free from intrusion, and know you're at peace.
I shall deem it an honour to have you my guest,
For reasons not hitherto fully expressed ;

But if you'll permit me, I'll just state a few,
For I love to be candid when writing to you.

Our term of acquaintance has not been so long,
But yet my attachment towards you is strong.
I have found you a man of congenial mind,
With a heart that is feeling, benevolent, kind,
With principles based upon justice and truth,
Exalted, expanded—unshackled, in sooth.
The signs of good-nature are stamped on your face,
On your well-moulded forehead reflection I trace ;
Intelligence beams in your full-orbed eye,
And care, in your presence, we safely defy.

My cot, though but humble, my means though but
scant,

I never knew poverty, never knew want ;
I seldom find luxuries placed on my board,
Yet I gratefully take what my means can afford ;
And I'm glad when a friend condescendeth to share
With me the provisions that make up my fare.

Now, you'll see 'tis no wonder that I feel a pride
In your converse to join at "My ain fire-side."
So I trust you will come—about *three* is the time—
To refresh me with wit, and amuse me with rhyme.
I ask for no favour, nor other reward
Than your promise fulfilled to the Old Droylsden Bard.

MY TASTE AND DESIRE.

A MAN of toil, my leisure hours are few,
And these oft soured by worldly care and strife ;
But, still, I love whate'er is good and true,
And seek to cheer my chequered path of life,
By talking much with men whose minds are rife
With learning's pleasant lore, and oft with these,
My books, my flute, my sportive child and wife
I pass my sweetest hours. For health and ease,
I woo the balmy sweets borne on the soothing breeze.

I ever loathed the haunts of guilty men,
Where vice, in varied garb, offends the eyes :
I'd rather pace some calm, sequestered glen,
Or track the streamlet's verge, where, free from noise,
My mind can taste those pure ethereal joys
Which nature's beauties yield, than join the crowd
Where folly reigns supreme—where man destroys
The bonds of social peace, and deep and loud,
He peals his foolish mirth, yet of his folly proud.

The more I see of life the more I find
That social duties evermore increase :
Some daily claim is made upon my mind,
Which, if I shun, affects my inward peace :
I would not wish these social claims should cease,

But manfully in life would take my part,
And freely labour through my mortal lease—
Not wronging any by deceitful art,
Nor by one careless act distress a brother's heart.

Above all things I would be wise,
For wisdom teacheth virtue here below ;
And virtue every noble mind must prize,
Ere he a passport through the world can show.
In knowledge, then, I fain would daily grow,
Although 'tis hard with truth to store the mind—
A *Toiler's* progress must indeed be slow ;
Yet, will I not, a sluggard, lag behind,
But onward go, and search, that wisdom I may find.

THE MOTHERS OF OXFORD.

Read by young Master MYERS, to the Mothers' Class, taught by
R. E. S. Oram, Esq., at their Tea Party, in the Oxford Mills
Lecture Room, Ashton.

How blessed the day our favoured eyes behold,
When sacred truth her lovely face unveils,
When virtue's blossoms evermore unfold,
And malice less the pious mind assails !
When youth and age alike are freely taught
The good and gain that come from pure expanded
thought.

Within these walls our mothers now may learn
How they the path of duty should pursue :
The household virtues which their peace concern
Are kindly pointed out with righteous view :
Thus making lighter woman's daily cares,
And guarding her against temptation's subtle snares.

The mother's mission, rightly understood,
Secures the progress of our social life ;
Hers is the task to train the child for good—
To cherish virtue and subdue all strife—
To prove that peace with gentleness will dwell,
And with enchanting grace throw round her home a
spell.

In sweet conjugal love her heart is bound,
Her husband's honour she with prudence guards :
Refined affections in her soul abound,
While Heaven's smile with inward peace rewards !
The helpmate, friend, companion, loving wife,
She soothes our sorrow, and makes glad domestic life.

What nobler object can engage the heart
Than that of cultivating woman's mind ?
That she a sweeter influence may impart
To tender branches round her heart entwined,
While her maternal love protects each shoot,
In prayer and patient watching, hoping for the fruit.

All honour, then, to Oram's worthy name,
 For his sincere devotion, love, and care !
 He labours not to catch the breath of fame,
 Content the good man's lasting peace to share ;
 With zealous heart and cultivated mind,
 He seeks to make our mothers gentle, good, and kind.

TO MISS WITHAM,

On hearing her sing in the Mechanics' Institution, Stalybridge,
 for the Benefit of T. Kenworthy, Poet, of Dukinfield,
 November 30, 1865.

AN old man's blessing on you, lady !
 The old Bard's blessing on you !
 For gifts and graces you possess—
 For charms that soothe, delight, and bless,
 And joy you spread around—
 For thrilling rapture you impart—
 For power to captivate the heart
 By witchery of sound.

When first and last I heard you, lady,
 You all my soul possessed ;
 You woke such melody of song,
 Such brilliant strains did you prolong,
 I thought you were inspired ;
 You held each soul and sense in thrall,

That night within the spacious hall,
We nothing else desired.

The poesy of grace and tone
You fully comprehend ;
You make them harmonise so well
That you increase their potent spell
As through your soul they flow ;
The force and feeling you display,
Set music's charms in bright array,
And all its beauties show.

You feel the potency of words
Come from the poet's heart ;
And music's power with these combined,
The work of some great master-mind,
Enchant your inmost soul ;
And feeling this in your own heart,
Assisted by your pleasing art,
All others you control.

TO MISS M. J. C., OF GORTON,

ON ATTAINING HER 21ST YEAR.

So thou hast reached thy womanhood
On this thy natal day ;
And but to look at thee, sweet maid,
Makes even age feel gay.

Chasteness surrounds thy graceful form,
Complete in every part ;
Designed alike to please the eye,
And captivate the heart.

For there is beauty on thy cheek,
And in thine eye of blue—
There's sweetness in thy mellow voice,
And lips of rosy hue.

The tresses hanging on thy neck,
So polished, warm, and fair,
Seem to possess a magic power
In every silken hair.

And, then, thy look—thy pleasant look—
And soul-subduing smile,
Bespeak a loving, tender heart,
Free from deceit or guile.

And oh ! may care ne'er come and leave
A wrinkle on thy brow ;
But may'st thou ever be as pure,
As thou appearest now !

May happiness attend thy steps,
And as thy years increase
May they be crowned with rosy health,
In wedlock, and in peace !

The above lines were written, and handed to Miss C., in a few hours after she had told me it was her birthday.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

To a number of friends, after partaking of supper together, met at the house of Mr. John Holland, Wheat Sheaf, Droylsden, on Saturday evening, March 10th, 1866.

ONCE again we've met together—
Once again the feast enjoyed,
Now in song and recitation,
Let our leisure be employed.

Mingle, mingle, in true friendship,
Let no discord here be sown ;
Mingle smiles and joyous laughter,
Give the voice a pleasing tone.

Met together for enjoyment,
What restraint have we to fear,
Seeing that we love each other,
And our motive is sincere ?

Thus to meet in social union—
Thus to lay our cares aside,
If but for a few brief moments,
Is a pleasure, is a pride.

'Tis a pleasure that in England
We this freedom can enjoy ;
'Tis a pride that while together,
None our meeting may annoy.

Order reigning, peace prevailing,
All determined to be free,
Each resolved he will contribute
To the evening's harmony.

Other lands have other pleasures,
And may boast of fairer scenes ;
But have they more happy meetings,
Costing less of time and means ?

No ! we challenge ev'ry nation
More of social mirth to show—
More of true and sweet enjoyment,
Than from English hearts can flow !

Rough and rude may seem our manners,
And unpolished be our speech,
Still we all on these occasions
Something learn or something teach.

If our hearts be right and manly,
Our affections pure and true,
Though we lack more gifts and graces,
We our duty still may do.

Polished speech is ever pleasing
When the words from kindness spring ;
But, alas ! some often use it
To convey a deadly sting !

Oft we see refined cunning,
Men of high attainments bad ;
And when we such conduct witness,
'Tis enough to make us sad.

Give to me the honest workman,
Blunt and witty in his speech,
Nursing in his thoughts no malice,
Keeping out of evil's reach.

Such to-night I see around me,
And I glory to be here ;
What the proud may say about us,
Need we care or need we fear ?

Having laid my thoughts before you,
I my rhyming here will end :
Now in concord, mirth, and music,
Let your hearts and voices blend.

SONNETS ON LIFE.

Read at the Addison Club, Ashton, and published by request
of its members.

I.

LIFE is the essence of this lower world,
As sure it must be of the world above ;

For, without life, what could anybody love ?
Or how could earth's rich vesture be unfurled ?
Of what avail would be the sun's bright rays—
The circling waters or the ambient air ?
Of what must summer form her gorgeous robe
If Spring presented not her vital phase ?
Devoid of life there could be nothing fair—
All would be bare and fruitless on the globe ;
But life, contained in elemental seed,
According to its multifarious kind,
Adorns the earth as flowers and fruit succeed :
Hence beauty is with verdure gracefully combined.

II.

Ascend the scale of being, and behold
The myriad creatures of each varied form,
Existing everywhere in calm and storm,
Endowed with sense and passion uncontrolled ;
Observe their instinct as their powers unfold—
See how they revel in their mode of life—
What animation they display in strife—
And for existence how resolved and bold !
Life feeds on life, or chooses that for food
In which the germ of life has sometime been :
The strong devour the weak in reckless mood—
Life's stream flows on 'mid woods and pastures green :
In vain not one was made—all are for good—
Each helps to form life's ever-changing scene.

III.

The life of man ranks far above the rest,
For he is gifted with superior power,
With intellect above the rest to tower,
And with subduing skill he, too, is blest ;
His is the gift of speech, transcendent dower,
By which to win, to captivate, and sway ;
Within his God-like temple there resides
A monitor that ever rightly guides—
Alas ! that he should ever go astray !
With soul and grasp of mind in which he prides,
All nature's beauties must impress his heart,
Prompting reflection in the hour serene :
Thus man on earth enjoys the noblest part,
Then soars to realms where death has never been.

IV.

Tell us what sage life's mystery can reveal—
Can show the vital part each plant contains—
And how that part each separate seed retains—
Transmitting life and form we see and feel ;
Or, who can prove how spirit is combined
With matter, so that matter breathes and moves—
Receives sensation, instinct, thought refined,
And proves its feeling as it hates or loves ?
And this, too, in each countless form of life,
Down from the bulky elephant and whale
To insect beings through creation rife,

All still, all active, as their wants prevail.
 Oh ! what a world of beauty, yet of strife,
 Life brings before us in this transient vale !

V.

Strange that, from elements so simple, few,
 Such forms of beauty, skill, and power should rise—
 Forth darting spirit through their radiant eyes—
 As life's appointed course they each pursue !
 Then, what is life ? 'Tis something more than earth ;
 For earthy matter in itself is dead—
 The primal state, ere creatures had their birth,
 When Death, life's negative, lay on his bed,
 No inorganic matter e'er can think ;
 Infused with life, it *seems* to think and feel ;
 It cannot forge the locomotive link,
 Nor of itself vitality reveal.
 Is spirit, then, this matter-moving power ?
 Omniscience only comprehends the dower !

VI.

'Tis well life's secret is concealed from man,
 For he the knowledge surely would abuse ;
 Could he the principle of life infuse
 The skill at his command would prove a ban ;
 Soon strange and monstrous creatures would abound,
 All made to suit each crude, fantastic plan—
 The author thinking still his theory sound :
 'Tis would be wrong, that with some limb supplied ;

All order, harmony would soon be lost,
Each genius altered, and each breed be crossed,
Till he who showed most skill was deified !
The dying, then, would claim to shun their fate ;
Death's right on earth would boldly be denied ;
Man would destroy, and man alone create !

VII.

How every sentient being clings to life !
Man loves to be where most of life is found ;
For this he struggles in his daily round ;
His friend, his brother, sister, children, wife,
He loves, because they give to life a charm ;
With them are beauty, pleasure, solace, joy ;
They keep his heart—his noble feelings warm,
While deeds unholy oft his peace destroy.
Yes, life is sweet, though mixed with care and pain ;
But 'twould be sweeter, purer, far indeed,
Were "Justice, Love, and Truth" the ruling creed—
Did not despotic laws the right restrain :
Then would religion less contention breed,
And proud ambition fewer triumphs gain.

WELCOME GREETING TO THE BARDS.

Read at the Literary Meeting held at the Beaver Inn,
Audenshaw, June 27th, 1863.

WELCOME here, ye band of brothers !
Welcome all, with heart and hand !

Freely join this social gathering,
For ye are a worthy band !
'Tis a pleasure thus to meet you
Heralded by trump of Fame :
May this meeting, in your honour,
Shed fresh lustre on your name !

Ye are spreading blessings round you,
Scattering truth-seed by the way,
Giving pleasure and enjoyment,
Hastening on a brighter day,
Raising those who else might grovel,
Purifying taste and mind,
Drawing on, by gentle suasion,
Those who else might lag behind.

Ever thus the gifted labour—
Thus they toiled in ages past,
Making gladder, making lighter,
Hearts and homes while time shall last.
What were England without Shakespere,
Milton, Scott, and Spencer, too ?
What without her Young and Thomson,
Campbell, Pope, and Cowper true ?
What without her living great ones,
Deeply thinking everywhere,
Giving grand conceptions utterance,
Making truth more bright and fair ?

We ask, too, would she be as glorious,
Would she be as great and free,
Had she not less-gifted thinkers
Such as those around I see?
Though more humble, not less earnest
Workers in the social plan,
Not less ardent in their yearning
For the weal of brother man;
Nor less anxious their endeavour
To keep that sacred flag unfurled,
With the motto blazoned on it—
Truth and Freedom through the World!

Oh! it is a glorious mission
Right, and truth, and love to teach;
Aiding in the work of progress,
By the power of pen and speech;
Holding up the polished mirror
Where the world may see its face,
Showing vice his hideous aspect,
Virtue her subduing grace.
Free in heart, with mind unfettered,
Boldly siding with the right,
Bravely daring, nobly striving
'Gainst injustice, wrong and might!
Then, on fancy's pinions soaring
Where no mortal foot hath trod,

Now, 'mongst radiant orbs careering—
Now, before the throne of God.

And what pleasure 'tis to revel
'Mid the charms of nature fair,
Holding converse with the flowers,
Seeing beauty everywhere !
Beauty in the vale and upland,
Beauty by the river side,
In the golden corn-fields waving,
In the meads and woodlands wide !
Scenes like these the Bard enrapture,
Yield his harp a joyous theme,
Ever with them he would linger,
O'er them he would ever dream.
But more pleasure 'tis to paint them,
Point them out to every eye,
Lead the masses to admire them,
Who might thoughtless pass them by.

Organised with finer senses,
That all beauty you may trace ;
Gifted with imagination,
All is yours in boundless space.
Through you, as a pleasant medium,
Truths eternal are conveyed,
Helping onward mighty changes,
States and empires giving aid.

Inspiration worketh in you,
 Outward let its light-beams roll,
Stirring feeling and affection,
 Moving sense, and heart, and soul !

Such the mission, pleasure, power,
 Of the gifted ones now here :
Brothers, take the welcome greeting,
 Gushing from a heart sincere !
Mirth and joy shall crown our gathering,
 And our festive wreath shall be
Gems of wit, and pearls of wisdom,
 Set in flowers of poesy !

SPARROWS IN THE SNOW.

COLD was the air, the frost was keen,
 The snow had covered all the ground,
And near my cot the boys were seen
 With snowballs pelting all around.
While warm and cosy by the fire,
 I sat alone in thoughtful mood,
I, through my window-screen of wire,
 Espied some birds in search of food.
Upon the wall and kitchen roof
 They hopped and peeped among the snow,

And seemed to say with mild reproof,
 Kind friends, some crumbs among us throw.
I took the hint with willing heart,
 And, as I rose to quit my chair,
I felt it pleasant to impart,
 If but to birds, some needful fare.

By varied agencies, we see
 Our God His goodness always shows,
And, with a bounty large and free,
 His gifts and favours He bestows.
All creatures, through the changing year,
 His liberal hand with food supplies ;
He sees them, for He's ever near,
 Not one without His knowledge dies.
And I, an agent in His hands,
 These sparrows, for His sake, will feed ;
I'll aid the weak, as he commands,
 And trust for help in time of need.

I took a dish from off the shelf,
 Containing bits of broken meat,
Such as I could not eat myself,
 But yet to them would be a treat.
With gentle hand I raised the latch,
 Lest I the timid things should fright ;
But they so slyly kept the watch,
 With hasty wings they took to flight.

I swept the fleecy snow aside,
That lay upon the wall and roof :
My act the craving creatures spied,
Still, out of fear, they kept aloof.
Upon the places thus made bare,
The contents of my dish I threw,
The feast I spread, called them to share,
But still away they further flew.
Come back, I said, ye welcome birds,
You'll find these scraps are wholesome food ;
Fill well your crops with crumbs and curds,
Such nourishment will do you good.
I keep no gun for murd'rous use,
Nor have I set for you a snare ;
I tempt you not with foul refuse,
I freely give—come freely share.

Within my cot I then retired,
But anxious still the birds to see ;
I knew a meal they much desired,
And so, from instinct, would not flee.
I had not waited long before
They came again, and hopped about,
Approaching cautiously the store
I had, to feed them, just spread out.
At length they one by one began
Their craving appetites to stay ;

But I was grieved to see their plan—
The strong ones drove the weak away.
They showed their jealousy and spleen,
Contending for a very crumb ;
Their selfishness was plainly seen,
Although the little things were dumb.
With greedy crop some pecked away,
Regardless of the others round,
As if exulting to display
What pride and power in them were found.
Their feast being o'er, they took to flight,
Some bearing crumbs with them away ;
But still I felt I had done right,
In feeding them that frosty day.

So 'tis with men, I inward thought,
They, too, contend o'er trifling things :
They will not practise what they ought,
Such conduct half our misery brings.
Some will monopolise and wrong—
Abuse their gifts—display their might ;
The weak are injured by the strong—
Oh ! brother—man, this is not right !

HURRAH FOR THE LIGHT.

ONE autumn eve, as through the street
I slowly passed along,

I heard a group of boys and girls
Hurrahing loud and long.
I wondered what their cheering meant ;
But as I came more near
I paused a moment, then at once
The cause to me was clear.

A man was lighting up the lamps,
So pleasant in the street,
And every time that one he lit,
Fresh shouts his efforts greet.
“ Yes, you are right, my boys and girls,”
I said as I passed on,
“ To cheer for light amid the gloom,
And shout for darkness gone.”

’Tis thus men hail the light of truth
Amid their mental gloom,
Which cheers their path from youth to age.
And shines beyond the tomb.
Light gives its lustre to the eye—
Its gladness to the heart ;
And they must surely not be wise
Who from its beams depart.

The truly gifted, wise and good,
Like brilliant stars have shed

Their lustre on the mental world,
 Illuming heart and head ;
While Knowledge spreads her treasured store,
 A rich and goodly show,
And Science with her torch illumes
 Each path we choose to go.

What floods of light the press has poured
 Since Caxton's gloomy day !
What shouts of gladness have been heard
 For each increasing ray !
What holy peans have been raised
 To hail the light Divine !
Though night-throned Superstition still
 Forbids that light to shine.

But not more welcome is the sun
 To men on stormy sea,
Than is the light of truth that comes
 To set the spirit free—
Free from the gloom of ignorance,
 Of folly, shame, and sin,
Renewing thought, and word, and deed,
 And giving peace within.

See in the firmament of mind
 What galaxies appear !

They shine for all who wish to have
Their pathway bright and clear.
There is no plea for ignorance,
Amid such radiance bright ;
And he who goes astray must own
That he prefers the night.

And yet the rich effulgence which
Imparts to us such glee,
Is twilight when compared with that
The coming age shall see.
Then still hurrah for light and truth,
And for the brightening day ;
And welcome still the hand that bears
But one increasing ray !

A VALENTINE.

DEAR SARAH, as this is Saint Valentine's Day,
I thought of a note you'd be glad,
If it touched on no topic might shock your fine nerves,
Or cause your light heart to be sad.

As a friend I esteem you for kindness received,
For you ever were cordial and kind :
Your manners and converse I always admire,
And respect, too, your virtues of mind.

Now, I'll tell you a love-tale—one founded on facts
(Excuse me for giving no name),
Concerning two lovers, whose hearts had for years
Been glowing with Cupid's bright flame.

The maid was light-hearted, oft merry and free,
And would laugh at a joke though in rhymes :
The man (once a soldier) was close and precise,
And had served long in Indian climes.

They lived in one house, and therefore could keep
The fire of their love in full glow :
All thought it a match which no one could break off,
So smoothly their courtship did flow.

Well, this season for letters, the maiden received
A Valentine—not very grand—
And (would you believe it ?) her lover was vexed !
And his soldierly heart was unmanned !

He thought that no other the maid should admire
(If they did, was the maiden to blame ?) ;
But some one, for fun, had a billet now sent,
And a damper it put on his flame.

He could not, nor would not, now make her his bride ;
To her charms he at once became blind ;

And, although up to now he was loving and true,
He became in his manners unkind.

Before, he would do little jobs in the house,
And his help she would never refuse ;
But now, *to please her*, not a hand would he lift,
Not so much as to reach her kid shoes.

The maiden now pines, and is sometimes in tears :
Poor creature ! I pity her case !
While the hard-hearted man will sit smoking his pipe,
With a frown of dislike on his face.

Now was it not cruel, for so slight a thing,
To cast one so fond from his heart—
To sever all ties of affection and love,
And set old connections apart ?

But lovers have quarrels as well as the wed,
And courtship is not always smooth :
All meet with their ups and their downs in the world,
And this the sad spirit should soothe.

Let us hope that, ere long, his hard heart will relent,
And the maiden his fault will forgive,
And that honey and treacle, or something as sweet,
May nourish them both while they live.

But I hear, Miss Sarah, that you've got a beau—
A respectable, good-looking spark,
Who can find you a home, and can keep you genteel,
And in all things is up to the mark.

I hope, for your sake, the report may be true,
And his promises never may fail ;
And I trust in your courtship no drawback you'll meet,
Like the couple contained in my tale.

Having told you my story, I now will conclude
With a wish that you happy may be ;
And with love to Maria and Sam, I remain
Your rhyming old Uncle, J. B.

EARLY COURTSHIP.

I SAW her glide along the mead,
My first, my early charmer,
Her form angelic seemed to me,
I thought no one could harm her :
As yet we had not spoke a word,
In silence I'd been pining ;
But now I thought my suit I'd urge,
She seemed to look inclining.

But courtship when 'tis first began,
 Whatever the occasion,
In bashful youth, or robust man,
 Will cause some agitation.

With timid step I then approached,
 The ground seemed all enchanted,
My pulse was quick, my head felt light,
 My heart—Oh! how it panted!
“Fine evening, Miss,” I first observed,
 And made a bow politely:
She never spoke, but moved along,
 And tossed her head up lightly.

Mute at her heels I followed up,
 All in a trepidation,
By burning blushes overspread,
 And wet with perspiration.
We reached the gate—she then turned round,
 And firmly stood at bay:
I fondly hoped she now would hear
 All I had got to say.

“I'm glad you've stopped, dear Jane,” I said,
 Though feeling almost breathless:
“Now you must hear me speak my mind,
 I won't detain you long, Miss.

I wish to say I love you, Jane,
 Which you may see quite clearly ;
 And if you'll trust me you will find
 I love you most sincerely."

I paused, expecting that she would
 Have been with this delighted ;
 But she was silent, and her look
 Showed plainly I was slighted.
 I stood and gazed. At length she spoke—
 Her rage she could not smother,—
 "Be off, theaw great, soft turmit yed,
 Or else aw'll sheawt my mother !"

Slam went the gate, and off she flew,
 I turned away dejected :
 The rude repulse struck to my heart—
 My suit had been rejected.
 I thought it would be useless now
 To speak to her hereafter ;
 And when I told a friend I met
 He turned it into laughter.

"Theaw should have held her fast bi th' hont,
 And never hed her slighten :
 Some wenches think when chaps propose
 It's reet t' begin a-flightin'.

Neaw, if theaw really wants this wench,
Theaw'll have to mak some bother ;
And when theaw's bin a time or two
Hoo'll not want t' sheawt her mother."

AN AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS TO A NEW-BORN
BABE.

Composed during the Russian War.

POOR BABE ! thou hast entered a troublesome world,
When provisions are high, and the war-flag's unfurled ;
When people have scarcely enough for themselves,
And have nothing to spare for unfortunate elves ;
When pride and ambition new levies demand,
And commerce goes limping about through the land ;
When the nations are gazing for freedom's bright star,
And the peace to maintain madly rush on to war ;
When the poor man for labour goes wandering about,
And the middle-man's income is all going out ;
When the state-paid officials allow no delay,
But will take the last penny, require it who may.

Yet of these things thou know'st not, nor car'st for
to-night,
As thy new mode of life may seem pleasing and bright

Thou'rt surrounded by friends who supply every want,
'Tis little thou needest, so nothing seems scant :
There's the gruel and toast, and the rum, and the tea
For thy mother and friends, and the sweet sops for
 thee ;
There's the nutmeg and ginger, lump-sugar and spice,
With the grater and sieve, and everything nice ;
There's the line full of linen, and robes white and
 neat,
To swaddle thee up from the head to the feet.
Thy mother seems happy, thy father's in glee,
And grandmamma cradles thee snug on her knee ;
While the laugh and the joke pass the circle around,
And gladness and pleasure in each heart abound.

 But don't think, my duckling, these things will not
 end,
For e'en before morning thou may'st need a friend.
Thou'lt be sickly and hot when thou'rt tucked in thy
 bed,
For the blanket and sheet they will pull o'er thy head—
And thy dada and ma, left alone by each friend,
Will feel much too drowsy on thee to attend ;
Thou wilt cry, and half waken, they'll give thee thy
 pap,
And again they will try just to get a short nap ;
Thou wilt still feel uneasy, but cannot tell why,
And, as no one relieves thee, again thou wilt cry :

They will wonder what ails thee, and father would
 frown,
 But he'll have to jump up, for the candle's burnt
 down.

Little matters adjusted, and things made more snug,
 They will put thee again at thy *titty* to tug :
 When fatigued with the process thou may'st go to sleep,
 While thy pain-tortured mother in silence may weep ;
 But, perhaps, ere an hour, a jolt from thy da
 Will awake up thy pipe with its *ya-hugh-aya*.

Thus in comfortless mood thy first night will be
 passed,
 And well would it be should it turn out the last ;
 But thy troubles will multiply every day,
 For the sceptre o'er suffering no mortal can sway.
 Thou'lt have gripes in thy belly, and pain in thy gums,
 And, for want of thy pap, suck thy fingers and thumbs ;
 Thou may'st hickup and posset, scream loudly and kick,
 While wet clothes annoy thee, and baby pins prick ;
 Thou may'st show by wild gesture thy pitiful case,
 And even may'st chink till thou'rt black in the face ;
 Thou may'st throw back thy head, knock heel against
 heel,
 Yet thy nurse will but laugh at thy moving appeal ;
 Nay, even thy mother, so loving and kind,
 Will shake thee, and smack thee thy little *behind*.

When thy sops and thy *titty* with thee don't agree,
They will give to thee doses of strong cinder tea—
They will feed thee with porridge warmed up in a jug,
And with "*Infant's Preservative*" thee will they drug.
Thy stomach with dainties they'll thoughtlessly cram,
And fright thee with stories about "*Old Black Sam.*"
Ere thy centre of gravity thou can'st maintain,
Thy life will be made up of suffering and pain ;
And e'en when thou'st strength to remain on thy feet
Fresh disasters and troubles untold thou will meet.
They will train thee in tricks most decidedly wrong,
And to say witty words with thy sweet little tongue ;
And if, when thou show'st it, a neighbour should frown,
For the very same thing they will perhaps knock thee
down.

Thou'lt have bruises and scratches, cuts, scalds, burns,
and falls,
With abundance of bleeding from fights and street
brawls.
Besides, there'll be measels, and chicken-pox, too,
Scarlet-fever, and hooping-cough, all to go through.

And when from a child thou hast grown to a boy,
Thou'lt resemble, I'll warrant, each *hobbledehoy*,—
Thou'lt be stiff-necked and hasty, rash, thoughtless,
and blind,—
A scorner of counsel—to mischief inclined ;

And thus thou wilt often be brought into scrapes,
And oft be at war, too, with other young apes.

When to manhood attained, and thy sails are
unfurled,

Thou wilt know of a truth 'tis a troublesome world.
Thy bark may ride well, but 'tis sure to be tossed
On the great sea of life which still must be crossed :
The waves will dash o'er thee, the billows will roar,
And the white, foaming breakers will meet thee from
shore.

When pursuing a craft, or in business employed,
Thou often wilt find thyself sorely annoyed ;
Thou must elbow and jostle, push, struggle and squeeze,
But seldom wilt find thou canst stand at thy ease ;
Thou'lt have trouble of body and trouble of mind,
And things made unpleasantly hard thou wilt find ;
Thou'lt have trials from friends, and annoyance from
foes,

And vexation from sources that nobody knows ;
Thou'lt have crosses from love, and losses from hate,
And trouble from subjects perplexing thy pate :
The sages have said—*why, he squints on one eye!*—
“Man is subject to trouble as sparks upward fly.”

But 'tis useless my talking, I'm wasting my breath,
Thou art just like the rest from the days of young Seth :

Inattentive and careless you will not be taught,
Nor persuaded to practise the things that ye ought :
I have tried to forewarn thee, it all seems in vain,
For thou neither exhibitest pleasure nor pain.
But no doubt, for thy judgment, these things are too
 deep,
For I see while I'm speaking thou'rt falling asleep.
To tell thee of pleasure more pleasing might be,
But I leave this for angels to whisper to thee.





