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THE  
**LAKE OF GENEVA,**

A  
Poem, Moral and Descriptive.

*In seven Books.*

WITH  
NOTES HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

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BY  
*Sir Egerton Brydges,*

BART., B. C. de S.

VOL. I.

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GENEVA:

PRINTED BY A. L. VIGNIER, FOR BOSSANGE AND CO.,  
MARLBOROUGH-STREET, LONDON, AND  
A. CHERBULIEZ, GENEVA.

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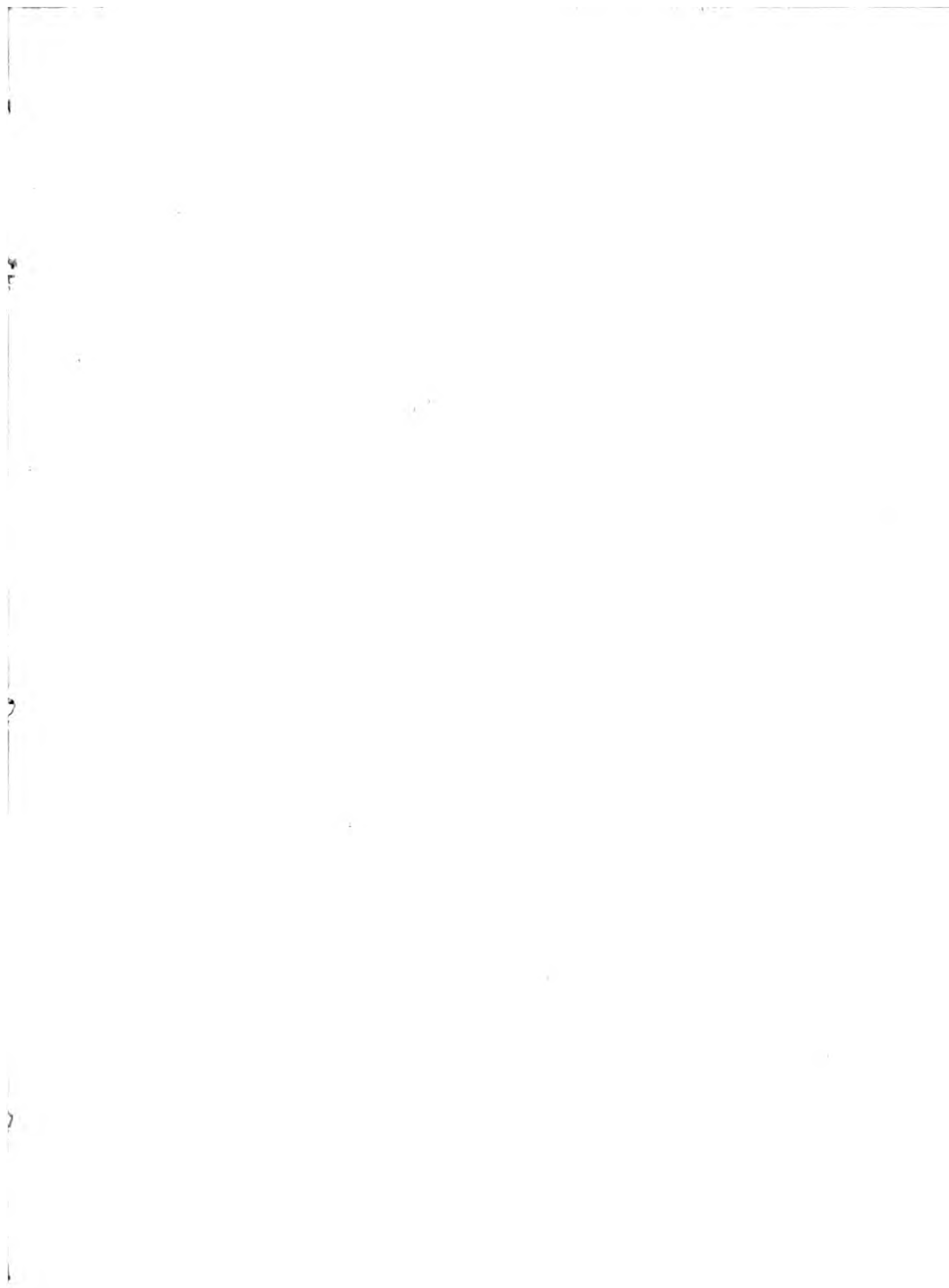
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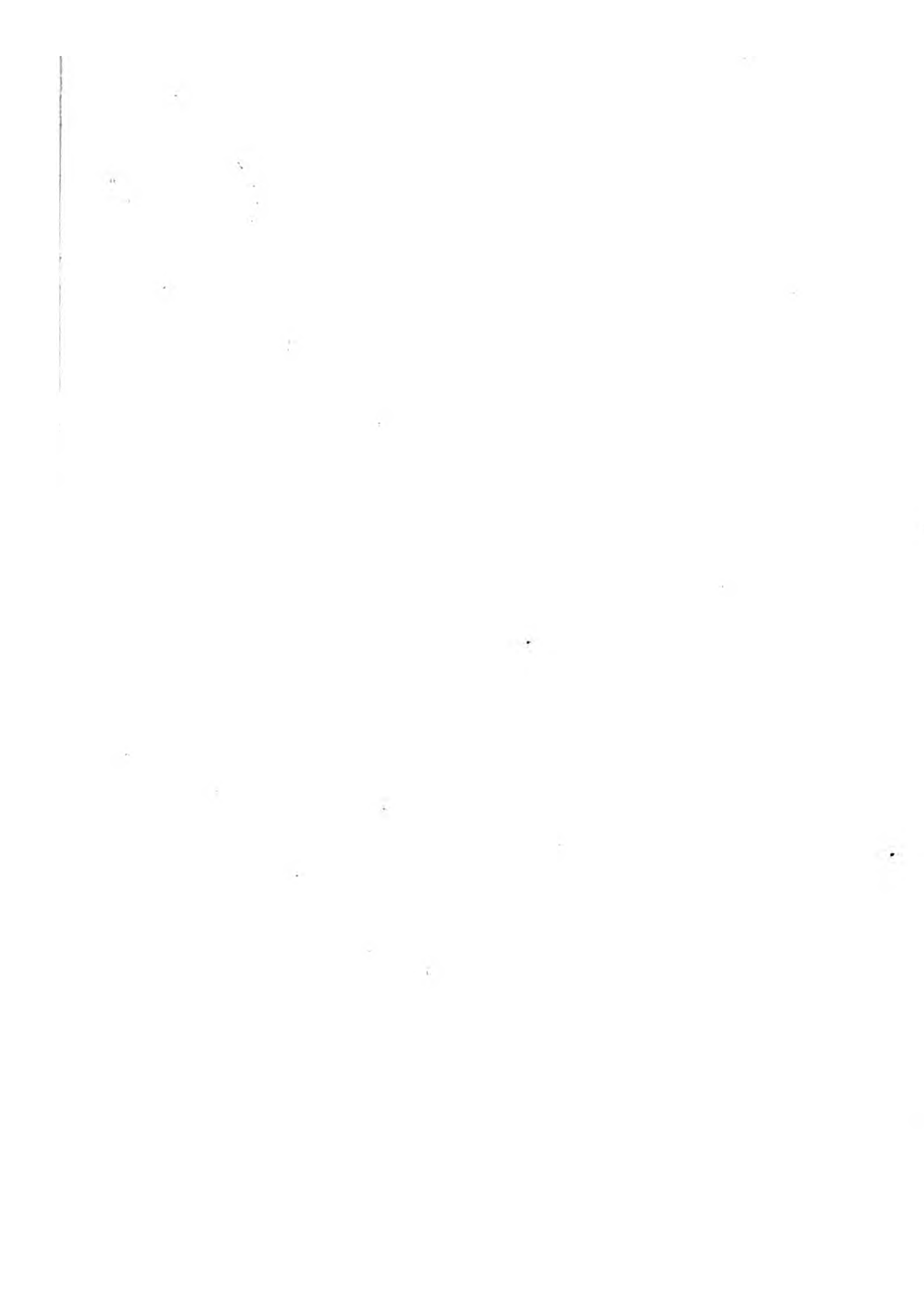
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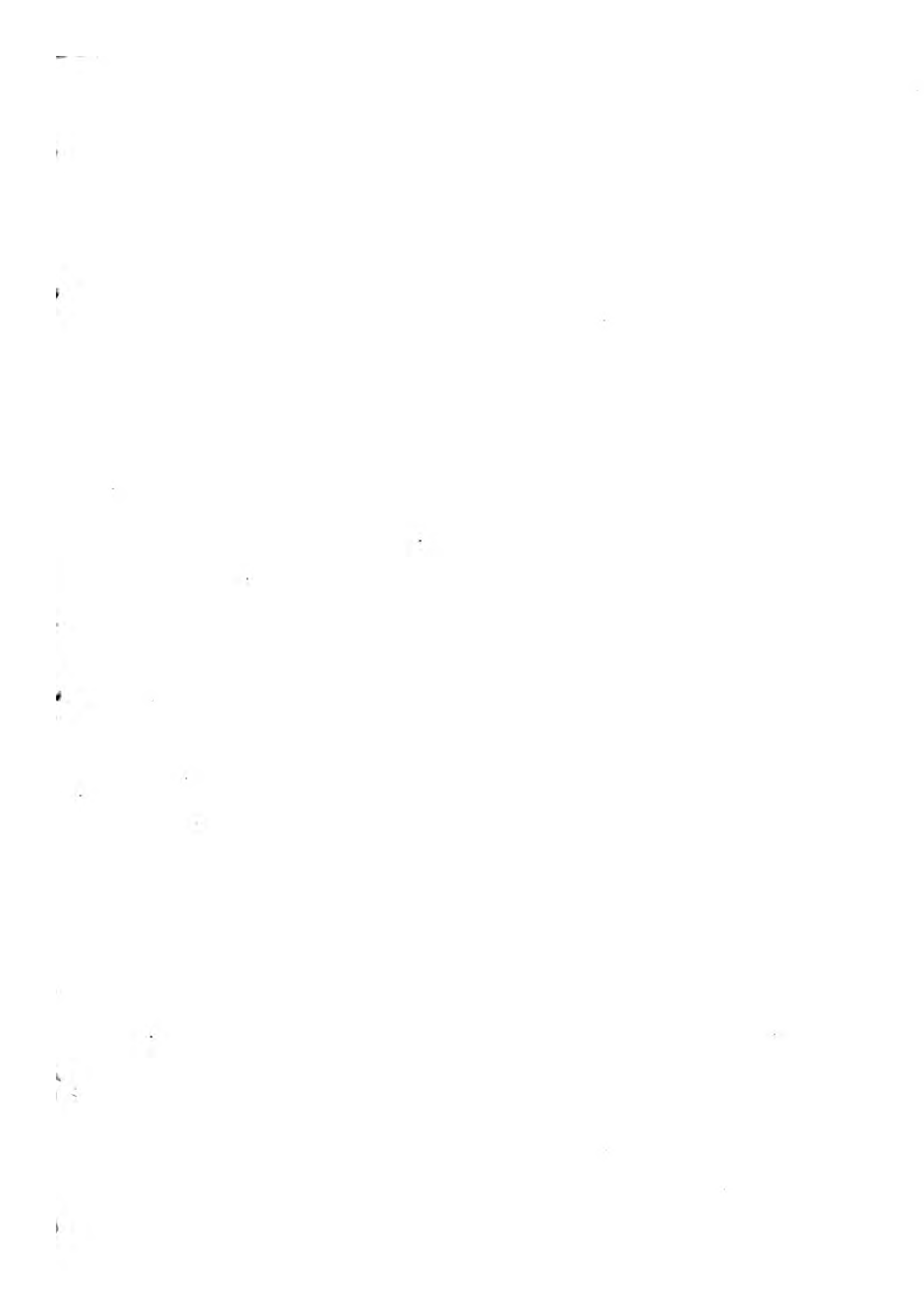
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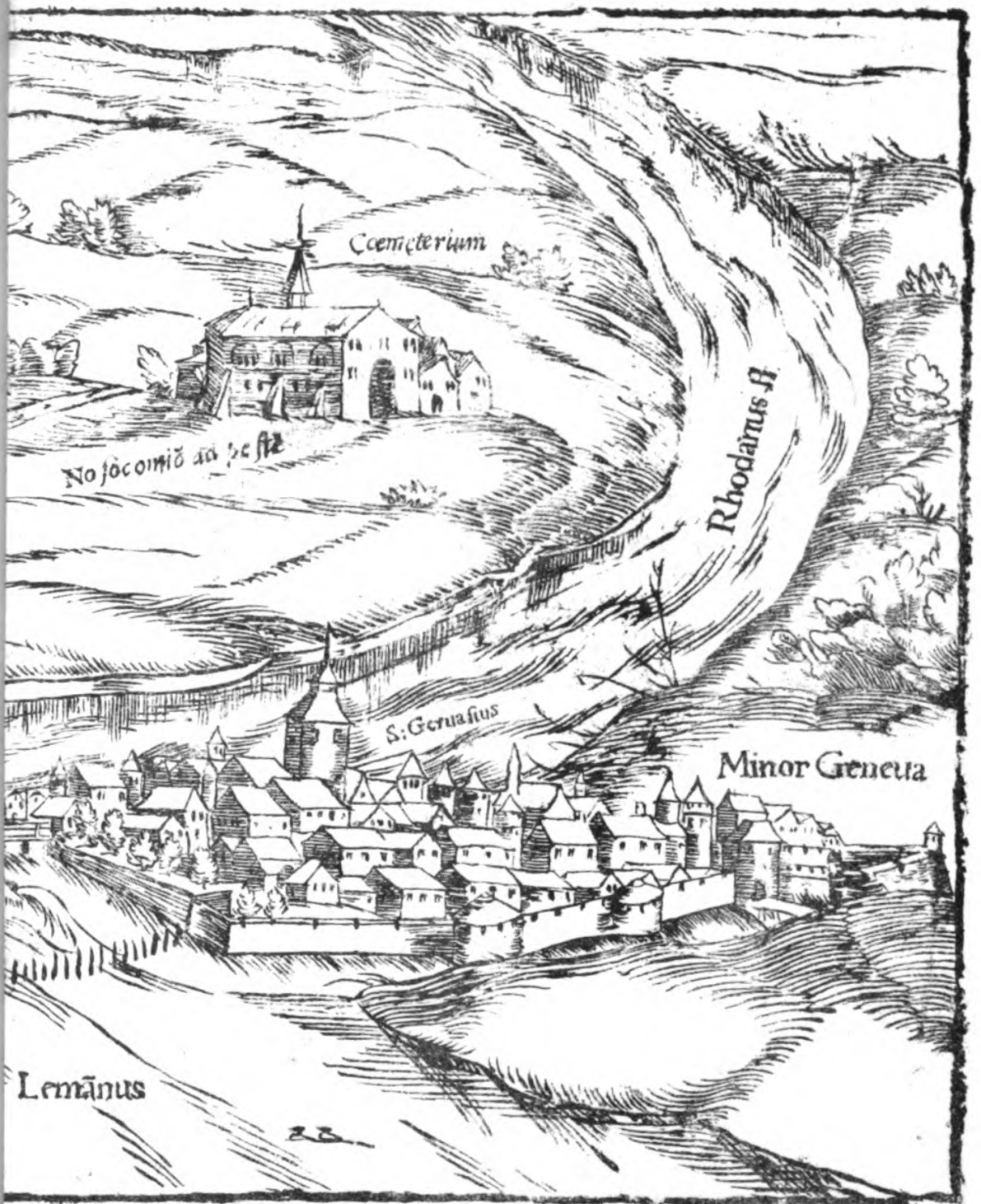


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1832





## DEDICATION.

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TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, ESQ<sup>AR</sup>.

AND

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

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*Bards of immortal fame, in virtue high  
As in bright genius! In a noble heart  
Is worth, above all genius, and all power.  
All that by labour can be done, is naught,—  
And all by skill and artifice! The spell  
Lies in the sentiment; the steam of truth,  
That issues from the fountain of the soul  
Involuntary!—it is intellect  
By the heart warm'd, elated, soften'd, mellow'd!  
Be curses on the flowers of poetry!*

*They are but idle, childish ornaments,—  
Or rather meretricious! The great soul  
Disdains them. By an inward light impell'd,  
It echoes forth the voice of spiritual truth;  
Nor in material beauty seeks its praise.*

*To live amid the troubles of the world,  
And learn no wisdom, is a life of scorn :  
And not to glow amid the scenery  
Of its stupendous beauty ; and not to burn  
With indignation at the crimes and follies  
Of its half-earthborn, half-celestial habitants,  
Beneath our better nature is to sink!*

*The majesty of high and daring thought,  
The charm of a refin'd and melting bosom,  
The force of piercing faculties of mind,  
Call forth the admiration of the enlighten'd,  
The just, and sound.—To think and meditate,  
And rightly and unselfishly to judge,  
And sympathise with human misery,  
And mercy shew to man's unwilling frailties ;  
But tear the veil from curs'd hypocrisy ;—  
And meditated breach of faith, and robbery,  
To Hell's enduring torments to consign,—  
This, this, becomes the Muse.—She then her strain  
Lifts, as a lesson to direct the paths*

*Of straying mortals! With the daily tasks,  
And daily passions, of mankind she deals!  
And not a dreamy, mystic, sickly note  
She pours, which girls in a factitious humour  
May wonder at, and weep upon, in vain!*

*It is the Sage's lore, that the ambition  
Of manly genius only will aspire to;—  
What teaches us to muse with rectitude  
Upon th' events of ages gone away;  
And by the aid of bright imagination  
Revive the past, and bring the dead to life!  
Once more before the judgment-seat array'd,  
The SPIRITS of antiquity come forth,  
And to the censure of succeeding times,  
From transient passions free, their acts submit!*

*All wealth is in the mind;—without the mind  
This scene of things is barren. 'Tis the sentiment,  
And thought annex'd, that only give it worth;  
And thought without emotion is but empty,  
Uncertain, and more subtle oft than wise!*

*Defend me from an idle play of words,  
And glittering images, that tell no truth!  
From metaphor, and simile, and dress  
Illustrative of what is stale and hollow!  
We want the substance; not a worthless figure,*

*By gaudy and false ornaments disguis'd!  
 And thus I close my dedicative lay;  
 For too prolix the following strains have been.—  
 —So fate ordains it!—I have drank the cup  
 Of bitterness and wrong, e'en to the dregs!*

*And now let Calumny', and hell-scaping Scorn  
 Fall foul on me again, and fix their fangs  
 Upon my wounded heart!—it still will beat  
 Mid purer air, and with untam'd emotions  
 Glow, and ascend on fancy's wings, to bask  
 On banks of waterfalls Elysian,  
 Beneath the fire of empyrean air!*

*Then hail, ye glorious Pair, in sympathy  
 Of virtue, as of genius, ever fam'd!  
 And as, in candour, ye have breath'd of old  
 Your cheers to me, which charm'd away despair,  
 Bless me once more with your life-waking voices!*

*Thus on the verge sixty-nine sad years  
 I yet may fearlessly the lyre resound,  
 And On the Tombs of mighty Bards of yore  
 Sing hymns, that shall their airy Spirits soothe!*

S. E. B.

Friday morning, 30 Sept. 1831.

## PREFACE.

I CANNOT be unaware of certain violent objections, which will be made to this Poem. The first will be its laxity of numbers, and what will be called, its prosaic expression. I can only say that these have been adopted upon principle,—right or wrong. Formal, technical metre, and a stilted, buckram style, are my aversion :—they fatigue and disgust me.

I am inclined to think that the Public would judge right, if not misguided by fashionable leaders and false critics. We have seen a

succession of absurd rules of judgment, and objects of praise, in the last half-century. Each has its little day; and then is forgotten; and when it is recollected, excites wonder that any thing, so palpably wrong and foolish, could ever have obtained favour. Nothing seems to me to conduce more to erroneous views of poetry, than to consider it as an *art*: for this implies labour, arbitrary forms, and almost always meretricious beauties.

Imagination ought always to be allowed to follow its own native impulses:—when not forced, it never forms ridiculous combinations: it is never praise-worthy, but when it keeps itself within the limits of verisimilitude. Shakespeare does not exceed them in his highest or wildest flights: even all his fairy scenes are grounded on popular superstitions. *Incredulus odi*, is always applicable to poetry: but fools and false critics think, “the more of truth, the less of imagination.”

The grand task of imagination is to personify and realise abstract and general truths; to create in the mind representations of the world, and all its contents. Surely this agrees

with Aristotle's definition. What is fiction in the vulgar sense, is not genuine poetry. It may be said that poets represent female beauty, for instance, more brilliant and perfect than reality;—but not more so than the involuntary visions which visit the fancy!

Good poetry is not solely an appeal to the imagination : it is almost a barren pleasure, if it does not at the same time instruct the understanding : opinion and sentiment are necessary, as well as imagery. By the “poet's phrensy,” of which Shakespeare speaks, is meant high excitement ; not absence of truth or correctness : or rather rapid transitions, and infinite combinations,—not monstrous ones. All those senseless ravings, of which a great part of modern poetry consists, are the worst and most offensive sort of nonsense.

To constitute poetry, I admit that it is not sufficient that what is said should be just and true :—it must also have elevation, pathos, beauty, force, or something of novelty : and this can only be effected by the light derived from the lamp of imagination. The mere reasoning powers will not produce it.



One grand source of poetry lies in the association of ideas material and intellectual;— in connecting images with sentiments and opinions. Without the mental presence of the images, these sentiments and opinions will be in the author the faint result of memory. The generality of compositions put forth as poetry, are the laborious fictions of a mechanical memory, thus set to work. If they are glittering, they are cold and sickly, and soon satiate, or repel; and, if they do not hurry the reader on, they are deficient in an essential charm. If the ideas do not all light up in a train, they are not genuine poetry:—there are natural links in the human mind, which must be pursued.

Formality, and factitious combinations, are the curse of all secondary poetry. It is a building of baby-houses, fantastic figures, and tawdry ornaments:—a production to make the ignorant and the stupid wonder!

All language should be transparent, so that the thought may shine predominant through it: nothing is so bad, as to overload and obscure the thought by the dress. If the thought

will not support itself, the illustrative language is a poor and ineffectual deceit.

It is not easy to account for the sway, which false canons of criticism have obtained. If readers had consulted their own native feelings and tastes, they would have rejected them at once. But the mob are too apt to think that what they do not understand, must be good; and to admire wonders, like the tricks of Katerfelto!—If all the books of criticism were swept into the fire, it would be a mighty purification for true genius! They only palsy the genuine flow, and raise into empty and mischievous conceit the false and disgusting pretenders. No other kind of literary production is so utterly dull and revolting, as a poem written by rule.

He who cannot throw out his ideas at once, must fail:—with every re-touch the spirit evaporates. No one, while correcting, can resume the same train of ideas; and he will therefore unconsciously break the natural associations. The right word is always that which rises with the idea.

A phraseology, which sometimes approach—

es to the colloquial, is strenuously objected to by many critics; but if it be not vulgar, this seems to me an excellence: it gives variety, and adds to the force of the lofty parts by contrast. Example is nothing but as a test of what has been found to please. It surely will be admitted, that this colloquiality is one of the charms of Cowper's *Task*: and that Thomson, and several other writers of blank verse, have fallen into an opposite fault. Cowley is often a beautiful specimen of idiomatic phraseology in his rhymed Poems; especially in those moral verses, which are interspersed in his exquisite prose-essays.

Mankind must lose their intellectual perceptions, and the natural emotions of their hearts, before moral truths of any importance, and not absolutely stale, told in perspicuous and not inelegant language, cease to interest. For I cannot help thinking that we are happy in proportion as we are enlightened; and certain it must be, that we are enlightened in proportion to the degree of our approach to truth. Whatever opens to us the workings

of the bosoms of our fellow-beings, is the communication of primary knowledge. Dull, narrow, and bigoted critics may deny it to be poetry, if they will : it matters not by what name it is called :—it is at any rate wisdom. All the factitious stuff, which vulgar judgments pronounce to be splendid poetry, is not only useless, but mischievous. Mystical representations of affected feelings, gross exaggerations, unnatural and monstrous inventions, at which not only belief but common sense revolts, are an insult upon the sound heads of the Public. They cannot really enjoy them : they must merely echo the cry of some one, unduly raised into the judgment-seat.

Pope was undoubtedly an artist,—but all his truly good poetry was written under the influence of high and intense emotions of the heart. Let us take only two short instances!

“ What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,  
The morning bower, the evening colonnade,  
But soft recesses of uneasy minds,  
To sigh unheard in to the passing winds?

So the struck deer, in some sequester'd part,  
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart ;  
He, stretch'd unseen in coverts hid from day,  
'Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away."

Again, of his filial tenderness for his aged  
mother.

" O friend ! may each domestic bliss be thine ;  
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine !  
Me let the tender office long engage,  
To rock the cradle of reposing age ;  
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,  
Make languor smile, and smoothe the bed of death ;  
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,  
And keep awhile one parent from the sky !"

Compare this with the character and tone  
of the greater part of poetry of the modern  
schools ! Why,—the monster-lover, and in-  
sane dreamer, will, no doubt, call it tame and  
insipid, and deficient in invention ! But what  
is there in the finest poetry inconsistent with  
sober sense ? The truth may be " dressed in  
fairy fiction !!—but it must be truth ! Every  
unsound sentiment, or opinion, is a deviation

from genuine poetry. There is nothing in Spenser, Milton, or Shakespeare, which is not true, in a poetical and comprehensive sense.

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A narrative or epic Poem is generally considered, as of an higher class, than one which is descriptive, or didactic. In the last of these two subordinate classes the thoughts are certainly less embodied, and therefore, in the ordinary sense, less imaginative. But poetry is of so excursive and indefinable a nature, that it can scarcely be limited to classes. So far Lord Byron was right, when he said that the merit depended more upon the execution than the class. The charm of poetry evades the discriminative powers of precise language. It lies rather in the force and brilliance of the image or sentiment than in its genus : but still it must never be of a nature unpleasing in itself. Objects and ideas may be disgusting, in proportion as they are strong and glaring.

That is best, from which the mind retires

most enlightened, and the heart most awakened and mended. All other tests are illusory : all barren pleasure ends in ennui and dissatisfaction. The mind is only happy, in proportion as it finds advancement in knowledge, and improvement in the feelings. Those vain imaginations, which flash and pass away, are idle dreams. False colours, affected passions, extravagant conceptions, are odious. What is not just and true, misleads and poisons the intellect. Verisimilitude is the indispensable essence of good poetry.

The fine-tinted veil is not praise-worthy, but censurable, which covers no beauty, gem, or worth. The light, which pierces it, serves but to discover its deceit. Such are the artifices of expression, where no sound thought is within. The *vox et præterea nihil* is a wind, that passes away without impression. We look for sterling thought in all the eminent of our old writers, and find it. Read Sir John Davies, Lord Brook, and Daniel, Hooker, and Hall, and Jeremy Taylor! They are the very concentration of thought.

The elements speak to us : the muttering of the wind at night is music, and whispers oracularly :—the poet ought to interpret it! All the invisible and intellectual part of the creation requires more interpreters, than the world has ever yet produced. The endless diversities of evanescent ideas and sentiments can never be exhausted. They are like the shapes and tints of the clouds, which change at every instant.

When opinions and sentiments are happily associated with images of material objects, a lesson of great value is conveyed to others. It is almost of more moral utility to feel rightly, than to think rightly : both are necessary for our happiness and our virtue. Feeble intellects may attain both by the aid of discipline and memory. But bad poetry seduces and inebriates the weak mind, and is poison to it. It represents every thing in untrue, and generally meretricious colours. It is revolting to good taste by its affected sensibilities ; and it is constantly guilty of the detestable sin of hypocrisy. Beauty of form, and splendor of colours, are not incon-



sistent with verity : but they cannot be reached by technical and pretended genius, which always substitutes exaggeration for them. Dulness and coarseness require mischievous, stimulants, and delight in exaggeration.

I have especially dwelt on the characters of Rousseau, M<sup>me</sup> de Staël, Lord Byron, and Gibbon the historian, as connected with the Genevan Lake. If I have overcoloured them, or mistaken or magnified their features, my pictures will be of little value, and deservedly thrown aside. If the discriminations are nice and just, and the circumstances with which the characters are associated, are happy;—then some good may have been effected; and the following pages may not contain idle words. In that case some difference of opinion about particular expressions, or general phraseology, is of little import. The grand purpose is, to strike out ideas, not to dwell upon words. They are puny readers, or censors, who think that poetry is a trick of expression. A bright imagination generally produces involuntarily elevated language;—but not always.

Far-fetched thoughts, and a laboured style, awaken no sympathy : the Muse impels forward her inspirations in a stream. Whatever lingers, and creeps, and picks its way, and has no natural current, can have no strength, or fire, or abundance, in its fountain. The genuine stream rolls along, and takes its course in defiance of obstacles;—bearing on with it those who sail on it,—cry out as much as they will.

He, whom the composition stops to examine passages, and criticise parts, is insensible to the powers of the poetry. It is the poet's business "*to glance, and to dart:*"—so Shakespeare says; and no one will dispute his authority.

Do great misfortunes, sorrows, and persecutions, overwhelm and silence the Muse? Gray says,

“ The hues of bliss more brightly glow,  
Chastis'd by sabler tints of woe.”

Grief, which softens and melts the heart, often gives eloquence; and casts aside all ar-

tifice, in scorn : but there is a degree of excess, which produces stupefaction :

*Curæ leves loquuntur; ingentes stupent.*

My own wrongs, and the malice and hard-heartedness of the world, defy the force of language : they can only be conceived in the silence of imagination. I struggle to write, and to court the balm and oblivion of literature : but even this meets with reproach; and innumerable arts are practised to wrest it from me; or make me abandon it. “If our wish can be had,” cry the wretches, “you shall be indulged with nothing to palliate your torments!”—

But I stop :—I am told that that, which goes under the name of querulousness, is hateful to the public! The words, that are gone forth, cannot be recalled.

Geneva, 15 Sept. 1831.

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BOOK VI, *p.* 159.

1. THE cathedral of Lausanne, and tomb of Otto Grandson.—2. The jealousy of him entertained by a young neighbouring chieftain.—3. Who challenges him to a duel.—4. He protests his innocence; and refuses to be controuled by unjust suspicions.—5. The lady, the object of his alledged notice, subjected to an uneasy life.—6. The whole province became involved in this quarrel.—7. Grandson banished.—8. Returns, and is challenged to single combat by the husband.—9. Accepts the challenge, though aged; and is slain.—10. His monument with his arms, and chivalrous insignia.—11. From the same house descended Margaret, the mother of Hen. VII, King of England.—12. Grandson castle—Charles the Rash of Burgundy,—and the Pitt Diamond.—13. The English Branch of Grandson settled on the borders of Wales.—14. The author descended from it.—15. Egotism defended.—16. Autobiography, amusing and instructive.—17. Ripaille.—18. Felix V, Pope, and Prince of Savoy.—19. Doubtful origin of the House of Savoy.—20. Their encroaching ambition.—21. Leading traits in this description of the Lake of Geneva.—22. More intellectual, than material.—23. Conformable to Milton's model.—24. Poets must possess every power of mind.—25. Poetry not fable.—26. Thought and language ought to rise together.—27. Subjects for genius cannot be exhausted.—28. Memory, a dangerous faculty.—29. Originality, extremely rare.—30. Better to follow guides, than not to think right.—31. We hate what we cannot believe.—32. No modern poets can compare with the ancient.—33. Censure unavoidable.—34. Necessity of trusting to our own feelings.—35. Not to be ambitious of popular favour.—36. Genius is morbid.—37. We should resist the world.—38. Milton's courage.—39. Egotisms.—40. Pity not allied to scorn.—41. Confession of

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## BOOK VII.

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19. The fortitude necessary to endure death on the scaffold.—20. Heroism of Lady Jane Grey.—21. Candour for man's frailties necessary.—22. His power to bear misfortune, or resistance, beyond calculation.—23. Caprice of popular opinion.—24. Compunction for a mercenary spread of error.—25. Genius is morbid, and too sensitive.—26. The dull think there is no wisdom in poetry.—27. We must look to future praise, rather than present.—28. Mechanical critics will only value mechanism.—29. Rarity of genius arises rather from blights, than want of original powers.—30. Trifling knowledge mischievous.—31. Intuitive talent never speaks in vain.—32. Pruriency of law-making an evil.—33. The English Poor Laws encourage litigation.—34. A clog upon industry.—35. Means to pay the poor-rates stifled.—36. Wisdom and personal success in life, not connected.—37. Hence national distress.—38. Ministers waste their time in intrigues.—39. To make statesmen, requires the highest faculties.—40. Author's discursiveness.—41. Return to the Lake.—42. Beauties of the dawn.—43. Grand scenery does not affect common minds.—44. Solitude and society.—45. The full mind only gives material scenery its due effect.—46. The scenery of the Lake ought to create poets.—47. What is not new may, if frankly and eloquently told, be interesting.—48. The sun-rise again.—49. The author's approach to the close of life.—50. His insane project of another long poem.—51. Are we to pass our days in silence?—52. Cheers to the author, rare.—53. Egotisms censured by the public.—54. Some persons deny all genius.—55. No excellence attainable except by genius.—56. Genuine strength survives the grave.—57. Books multiply; but originality not increased.—58. No evil greater than a stupor.—59. The author, therefore, keeps his faculties in incessant motion.—60. Detraction and affected scorn, prevailing vices.—61. Farewell.

## SUMMARY COMMENT ON THESE CONTENTS.

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I KNOW not how far it is wise to anticipate objections to these Contents. The Public requires no aid in finding faults. Censurers will immediately remark a want of plan. But does the natural association of ideas in poetry admit of a plan? The purpose of poetry is to be a mirror of the free wanderings of imagination. Cowper did not restrain himself in his *Task*: he gave the full reins to his Pegasus. Then again tautology will be made a charge against the matter of these pages. I will not venture to say, that the charge may not be plausible;—and perhaps true. There is sometimes a recurrence of the same ideas, sentiments, or opinions; and an approximation even to the same expressions. A rigid pruner would have struck them out. Fault or no fault, it is my system to bring things forth as I have originally written them.

Often as I have said it, I repeat here, that the *artifices* of poetry to me have not only no merit, but cause disgust. Imagination has no method:—it is as excursive as the birds in the air.

There is an axiomatic sort of wisdom, which long ago Oldys remarked in the poetry of the great sir Walter Raleigh. It is a sort of concrete and essential knowledge, which is of the nature of intuition. It arises from the blaze of light, in which the imaginative powers exhibit things. Nothing literary is of deep and permanent interest, which does not teach rectitude of thought and sentiment: and no other

knowledge can be so extensively and profoundly useful, as moral knowledge. Its efficient teachers must be beings illumined by genius, and rendered eloquent by sensibility.

In every age moral genius speaks in the same tone; and has a sympathy with the past and the future. From whom does Shakespeare differ, except in superior force of conception and expression? His conclusions and feelings are the same as those of all authors, to which time has given the stamp as emanations of sagacity and truth.

The diversities, the tints and shadows, of moral science are too nice and evanescent to be reached by art and labour. Chasteness of colouring is almost as necessary a test of genius, as truth of invention. Glare of hues is the resort of *false* and weak pretence to power: what the heart does not recognise, is the fabrication of an impotent head. Reason is cold and uncertain;—the heart, when it is moved, is always true.

There have been local poems in our language,—such as Denham's *Cooper's Hill*:—but till the late very interesting Poem *On Italy*, by Rogers, they have been short. Pye wrote a Poem on *Faringdon Hill*, his native spot; but he was a feeble unoriginal writer; and it is little known. Rogers's poem pursues the course of his route; and therefore may be said to have a method which mine has not.

If any reader is desirous of a conspectus of such a maze as the present Poem contains, the present Table of Contents may in some degree assist him: an alphabetical Index might also perhaps may have been desirable; but I have not had the courage to undertake the labour! This Table is sufficient to enable the fault-finder to discover my tautologies;—if tautologies they are! The same scenes will sometimes, in spite of one, cause a repetition of the same sentiments.

There are few English, who have not visited the Lake of Geneva: but there are many, in whom the sleeping fire of ideas and emotions requires to be awakened. With some there are no sparks to be kindled; and nothing to receive the light. There is no mirror; the receptacle of the brain



is barren and lifeless. There are others which catch the glow in a moment, like the clouds of a fine evening, that reflect the setting sun.

A mind in a state of incessant motion throws forth inexhaustible streams production multiplies, and generates its own funds of supply. We associate with the dead as familiarly as with the living; and our existence is more spiritual than material. The topics of this Poem are an attempt to add to its intellectuality. They may not succeed:—the chances are, that they *will not* succeed:—nothing of mine ever succeeds! Meantime I go on calmly and firmly;—undaunted in spirit; unbroken in hope. I know that my intentions are virtuous, and my love of fame is pure. I rise above the foul obloquy of low, mercenary, day-labours-critics, and their wretched, ignorant, selfish, and malignant employers. Since literature has become a mechanical trade, how has public taste been corrupted?

Geneva, 16 Oct. 1831.

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THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK I.

O LAKE most beautiful, thou art become  
Now as a home to me! Time has united  
The sight of thee with many a feeling fond,  
And many a bright idea past; and thou  
The mellow mirror art that throws them back  
Fairer than when they first within me sprung!  
But not to me alone;—to all the world  
These years have of tremendous import been.  
How many a noble heart, which once I knew,  
Sleeps in the dust, since first upon mine eyes  
The grandeur of thy glassy waters broke.  
It is not wonderful that thou wert chosen,  
Nearly two thousand years ago, the seat  
Of those Burgundian Kings, who made their inroad

On Rome tyrannic. Ever since in story  
Thy name has shone, and thy rich tale is full  
Of mighty incidents, beyond my strength,  
Or few remaining years, with clearness due  
To narrate. I would rather tell how grand  
Thy mountains, clad in snow, upon thee hang :  
But I have nothing of the Sage's lore,  
In natural science learned. My delight  
Has been to trace the movements of the mind  
And heart of man : and much of this shall I  
Ere half my task is finish'd, have to say  
On this deep-searching topic ; for with thee,  
Yes, on the tumbling issue of thy torrent,  
Was born ROUSSEAU, of man's immingled being  
One of the magic wonders;—of the soul  
And moral conscience the enigma strange!  
But not to him alone shall be my song  
Confin'd : a beadroll of full many a name  
Of worthies, that will dignify the verse,  
Shall be recall'd to memory, and with due  
And clear appropriate praise be fondly sung.  
For I have travel'd in the tale of Man,  
And from my very earliest boyhood sought  
Th'events, the feelings, and the tracts of brain,  
That mark'd all those who in the roll of fame  
Have been well register'd : and in that roll  
A few of lustre high have on thy banks,  
O Lake most lovely, most sublime, been nurs'd,  
Or spent their lives of virtuous mental labour.  
From Jura's heights, just as the setting sun

Upon Mont-Blanc his rosy beams reflected,  
I first beheld thee, O most beautiful  
Expanse of waters! My worn heart was then  
Bursting, and the confusion of my head  
As if its light was in the gloomy grave  
About to close: for I had many a year  
In mingled tempests been conflicting wild  
With public duties, and with private wrongs;  
And disappointment, insult, most audacious  
Fraud, was th' heart-breaking consequence of all.  
But when the most sublime of Nature's views  
Burst all at once upon my wearied soul,\*  
A being new shone in me, and I wish'd  
Again to live, and to enjoy this breath  
Of mortal tenement I would put off.  
Dark was the night ere we could reach the walls  
Of thy fair City—and the gates were clos'd,  
To ope no more till morn. Then, Secheron,  
Thy over-crowded mansion, after long  
Intreaties, under its protecting roof  
Received us, and the feversish night, of heat  
Intense, counting the hours, we linger'd through.  
The streets of London seem'd as they had poured  
Their wellknown habitants upon the spot!  
But not so far had travel'd I to see  
The common faces of my last sad years!  
Peace, solitude, and mild forgetfulness  
I sought, or if oblivion were not mine,

\* 7 Sept. 1818.

Then the materials of my loaded brain  
To turn upon the future, and by new  
Associations a new form to give!  
Now close upon thy banks I chose my haunt,  
Dear Leman, and from the turmoil of Man's  
Society, sick at heart, shut myself out.  
But then the past would deep intrude again;  
And deep I meditated; yet more deep  
Upon the future; and I call'd in fiction  
To while the hours away; and every morn  
I scribbled the inventions, that the calm  
Of night had work'd upon my busy mind;  
And thus an hundred fables in my tablets'  
Recorded stand; and sometimes to their length  
I drew them out; and strove to move the hearts  
Of sympathetic readers with the images  
That haunted my own fancy. My weak frame  
Could scarce sustain the conflict in the cauldron,  
Where all the elements of head and heart  
In tumult work'd together. My mov'd blood  
Diseases nurs'd, that on the springs of life  
Prey'd, and extinction nearly had effected.  
Then rose those complex causes of the ill,  
Which never since has left my afflicted body.  
And not thy salutary Baths, St.-Gervais,  
Could purge away the poison! It was fix'd  
Deep in the purple veins of my earth's being—  
And will away no more! But in that haunt  
Of loneliness, where every morn I saw  
The sun rise o'er the Lake, and distant barge

Offer its white sails to the misty gleam,  
Of wisdom much I learn'd, as much I thought;  
With bent intense upon the wealth of nations  
I ponder'd day and night; and something drew  
From this unbroke abstraction of pure mind,  
Which will not soon forgotten be, although  
Noticed by few; and still but little known.  
But long, long, years, after the seed had fallen  
Dead in the soil, as I conceiv'd, surpris'd,  
And with delight my wondring eyes have found  
That it had taken root, and had expanded  
Into an healthful produce, and was spreading  
From day to day. Then came the sweet reward;  
And the heart soften'd and grew calm and good;  
And self-complacence, in which mood are nurs'd  
Our kindest virtues, smiling sat within.  
We cannot feel benevolence, while none,  
We think, are kind to us. I well remember  
How unabated was the toil I gave,  
And how in cold and dark December's depths,  
Three hours before the light I rose, and by  
The cheering flame of wood my studies plied,  
And drove the current of my worn-out plume.  
Then I had done a good day's work, ere others  
Had left their beds; and to my morning walk  
Betook me with a conscience pleas'd, and sought  
The city for its books and for its news.  
Of living beings I convers'd with few;  
For few were my acquaintance; and with eye  
Askance the busy worldlings look'd on me.

I had no manners for the world; reserv'd  
And cold was my address; and freezing thoughts  
Seem'd to come slowly from my'embarrass'd lips.  
But there was fire within; tho frost without :—  
By that which was without the world had judg'd,  
And ever will judge so. And thus it was,  
That while by irritability extreme,  
And the incessant boilings of my head,  
The chiefest evils of my life had come,  
My seeming coldness bred vindictive hate.  
But many a year have I a citizen  
Of the wide world been since, and many a clime  
And nation have I seen; and many a change  
Of life and manners, and full many a scene  
Of nature's beauties; and my head and hand  
Have oped themselves to many a head and hand  
Of other countries; and in my old age  
A cheer is come at last, which has unbent  
My gloomy brow, and breath'd on my chill voice  
A lively tone, and op'd my frozen lips,  
As the sun melts the icy bonds that chain  
The winter waters; and at last my tongue  
Babbles as rapid as those torrents run  
Beneath the blaze of the sun's burning rays!  
Perchance it is a flow of wild and wearying,  
Rude, unconsider'd matter—caught from lights  
That for the moment dart, then fly away,  
And never more upon those objects rest;—  
Perchance it is the colouring of passion,  
Unjust and hurtful there where good should be

Intended and bestow'd, and with sharp dart  
Pierces, or with a barbed arrow wounds.  
Slow, and considerate, and weighing deep  
All consequences, and all chance of ill,  
The cautious talker tells us what is naught.  
It is a selfish baseness, that conceals  
Opinion. Give it not the name of Candour!  
It is a habit, that grows, and still grows,  
Till the poor barren mind becomes a blank,  
And sand, and sand, is put upon it, till  
It has no surface but white worthless atoms.  
If ebullition of quick thoughts produce  
Injustice, then restraint becomes a duty :  
But the reserve, which has its origin  
In calculation of self-injury,  
Is a most odious baseness, which would damp  
The energies of the most noble heart.  
The free communion of enlighten'd mind,  
Sagacious, penetrating thought, confession  
Of unsophisticated moves of heart,  
Conviction, the result of complex powers  
Of all the faculties when most abundant,  
Most strain'd together,—of that inspiration  
Which only genius knows;—which is not borrow'd,  
And therefore may not elsewhere be obtain'd;  
The bright thought suddenly by strong collision  
Struck at an accidental dart; the fire  
Communicative, from another caught;—  
These form the charm intense of social life.  
Solitude has its charms, and its great uses;



But so has social life, when well selected :  
It quickens our best intellectual powers;  
And mends our hearts, and teaches matter rich,  
And of discernment nice, which not from books  
Or solitary musing can be learn'd.  
There are full curious inexhaustible  
Stores of instructive knowlege floating ever  
Upon men's lips, which not the pen or type  
Has ever register'd, or ever can!  
Loose and inaccurate full oft the babble  
Of ignorance or vanity; but judgment  
Selects, arranges, sifts; or gets a clue  
By which the workings of his proper mind  
Arrive at truth. Thus men who have convers'd  
Much with the world, are ready, sharp, exact,  
And by comparison with thoughts of others,  
Are less expos'd to strange hallucinations,  
Which find no test or compass in themselves.  
There is a partial blindness,—some weak spot,—  
I' th' individual sight of half mankind :  
But then there is a range in solitude  
For the mind's grandest visions, and the view  
O' th' human countenance in its arch smile;  
Its love of the ridiculous; its actual  
Encumberment of matter; and the call  
Of prompt attention to all visible things,  
Reins in imagination, and weighs down  
By earthly particles the mounting scale.  
Thus solitary genius is the most  
Sublime,—and social most acute and witty,

Sagacious, and exact, and in the daily  
Conduct of life, the surest guide to wisdom.  
It is the intermingled course, which leads  
To the mind's highest efforts, and best fruits.

But I have wander'd from my subject far ;  
And must to thee, O Lake'belov'd, return !  
When the spring came, along the little garden  
I pac'd, that by thy fickle waves was wash'd,  
And view'd the budding flower, and felt the beam  
Of renovating suns, and still beheld  
With wistful eye the beamy sail descend  
From where Lausanne's bright turrets in the rays  
Of golden Phœbus glitter'd; on the bank  
Oppos'd, by Jura's frowning Mountains back'd,  
Smil'd many a beautiful and varied villa,  
Hanging their green shrubs o'er the azure waves.  
There the light boat is dancing on the Lake,  
And dashes many an oar, and throws the spray  
Panting, and many a petty sail is spread  
To court the expiring breeze; and here and there  
The tones of music, and the gentle voice  
Sound sweetly on the bosom of the wave.

Then came the midday dream; and Poesy  
Awak'd in all her exquisite emotions;  
And then the Tragic Tale went on,—and tears  
Profusely on the blotted paper flow'd;  
And the swell'd heart with virtues most refined,  
Most melancholy and most tender sighs,  
Work'd itself into temperaments unearthly.  
Oft to thy waters sparkling in the sun,

Then dark again with clouds,—now smooth as plains,  
Then suddenly to mountain heights uprear'd,  
In frailest boats, with weak hands to the oar  
Quite inexperienced, did I entrust  
My worn-out frame, by mingled fever torn,  
Yet calm'd by courses new of meditation.  
Then oft across the burning heat uprose  
A sudden piercing blast, that in the mountain  
Gorges in secret bred, came like a thief  
I' th' night, and with its petrification chill'd  
The boiling blood. And now twelve years have pass'd,  
And yet the dire disorder reigns within,  
Now agitating, and now palsyng  
This frame of eight and sixty years of pain.  
Oft on the waves beneath the blazing rays  
Upon my oars I rested : then the sun  
Shot vertical, and my dry brain was parch'd  
Beneath its fire. Disorder took its seat  
Within my veins, and I was sound no more.

Now came the clime of Italy to soothe,  
But yet perchance my fever'd circulation  
With momentary calmness to deceive;  
For I once more was to the bed of sickness  
For three long months confin'd; and then again  
I labour'd hard in intellect, and search'd  
Thro regions dull and dry, yet intermix'd  
With bright imagination's moral range.  
Here the full blazon of the Arts to me  
Open'd in rapture, and delirium pass'd  
From my eyes to my melted heart, at view

Of Painting and of Sculpture's magic powers.  
O Florence—nurse of Genius—birth-place lov'd  
Of modern poesy! Where Dante first  
Saw Heaven's sublimity upon his cradle  
Reflected; and where Milton, and where Gray  
Lighted the flames, that, sown in northern climes,  
Wanted the heat of more congenial suns!—  
With thee I linger'd many a month, tho' death  
Over me with his threatening arrow hung.  
But I escap'd then, as full thrice at least  
Since; and to thee, dear Lemman, safe return'd  
Ere twenty months completely had elaps'd.  
Now broad upon thy blue expanse again  
I look'd; and right against the glittering villa  
Mounted on Coligny's vine-cover'd hills,  
Beneath the Alpine heights and proud Mont-Blanc,  
By Deodati's fond Miltonic name  
Hallow'd, and yet again on modern rolls  
With beams more brilliant blazing, by the memory  
Of mighty Byron's sojourn long, where all  
The Muse's charms were oped to his embrace.

Thence on this Lake he frolick'd; thence in storms  
His rous'd soul, most delighted with thy waves  
To battle, and to hear the thunder roll,  
And his rent sails all shivering, and his mast  
Dire cracking in the roars and blasts of wind;  
Then cross the conflict of thy billows he  
To Coppet pass'd; and there a strife far other  
It was his lot to battle sharply with;  
—The conflicts of the mind; the strong collision

Of mental wit, and readiness, and point,  
And art, and flow of words, and confidence,  
And vanity, and self-conceit inbred  
From childhood, and supremacy of thought  
Intense, historic, and political.

But in that contest the unrival'd Bard,  
Whom every Muse enrich'd, yet paled his star,  
And moody at the consciousness of light  
Eclips'd, threw forth his fever'd frame aboard  
Into the boat, and as the breezes blew  
Growing into a storm, and the dark came,  
And billows dash'd, he plied his beaten oars  
Half in delight, and rose upon the wave,  
Then sunk again into the water's depths,  
In alternation, that half in delight,  
Half in defiance, sometimes with a gloom  
Of black despair, and sometimes with a laugh  
Of scorn at fate, that buffeted his body  
Thus, as his tempest-beaten heart,—arriv'd  
Safe at his haunt once more, where Milton's spirit  
Receiv'd him at the entrance; then fatigued,  
Lap'd in deep slumbers long he lay, the Muse  
Upon his bosom sitting, and with fondness  
Pouring her balm on his tempestuous heart.

O sacred be those haunts, O beautiful  
Be every tint that on them soft and coolly  
Hovers! and be the air forever blest,  
And gardens, walks, and banks beheld with awe  
Mingled with love and fancy, and the swell  
Of bosom, that assures to higher being!

For six long months daily as I awoke,  
And over the blue rippling waters saw  
The white walls glittering on the morning sun,  
My fond eyes with a sort of idol gaze  
Dwelt on them, and my' uncalm imagination  
Peopled them with a crew that ne'er on earth  
In truth were habitants :—but so it is;  
And in these wild delusions we are doom'd  
To live : and well it is, that we so live;  
For life without it would be barren, dull,  
And of a grossness unendurable.

It was not yet the time of ill,—foreboding  
An early destiny to Byron's race :  
He yet was in the most abundant bloom  
Of his gigantic course, and pour'd along  
The torrent of his strains with endless strength;  
But four times had the sun his annual round  
Perform'd, since he had left that fam'd abode;  
And underneath Italian suns brought forth  
New splendors, the amaz'd and awe-struck world  
To dazzle, and half rapture, half dismay.

O vile Venetian luxury ! O poison  
Of cups Circæan ! O the fall of mind,  
That in the body's selfish pleasures fades !  
But yet, O effluence indepressible  
Of pure and spiritual imagination !  
While wallowing in earthly vice, thy brain  
Was the seat of all noble sentiment,  
And visionary beauty and sublimity !  
And thy heart with ideal love was touch'd,

Pure, and intense, and heavenly; and the while  
Could mingle pictures of a sensual world  
Plung'd in dark earthly sins, and seem to gloat  
With glee satanic on them, and to laugh  
With scorn triumphant on a fallen race!  
Nor, less initiated in the practice,  
Wast thou familiar with the foul ambition  
In vicious luxury to be a leader!  
Asham'd not, thy companions boon amid,  
To be the first of worldlings! Ill it sorted  
Thy most exalted genius to be thus  
Rival of coarse and brutal ignorance;  
Hardness of heart; of manners base; of birth  
Ignoble, only by corrupt, depraving  
Foul-got, and e'en perchance blood-colour'd wealth,  
Gilded! But we may reason as we will,  
Such was the union! The degrading vice  
None can deny, and *there* existed also  
The mind of heavenly breathing! To combine them  
May be a swerve from nature's rules; but *there*  
They were together found! How oft in that  
Seat of departed commerce, where the tides  
That all the streets transpierc'd, once wafted gold  
In countless heaps, and arts and arms and glory  
Together flourish'd, all by human toil,  
And human ingenuity,—didst thou  
Look back on Jura and the Alpine heights  
Of rosy-tinted proud Mont-Blanc; and sigh  
At nature's wonders, and the trembling Lake,  
And its night-closing tempests; and the ride

Upon the tips of the white-foaming waves,  
And Coppet's lights, and Coppet's blaze of mind!

Can thy waves once again, O Lemman lov'd;  
Strength to my body give—for I am weak,—  
And my eyes fail me, and the opiate weight  
Comes over me of deep forgetfulness,  
And the rich page, which ought my mind to fill  
With keenest interest, falls from my hand.

Thus in the day! but in the shades of night  
Still by the lamp I watch, and ply my task  
Week after week unwearied, and e'en month  
Succeeding month. Then Midnight's silence calm  
Befits the meditations of my brain;  
For much the turmoil of society,  
And much the talk of man, distracts my spirits:  
And much it agitates my morbid breast.

There is a sharpness in thine air, that sometimes  
Pierces, and sometimes curdles up the blood,  
And stops the pores; and great the maladies  
Such interruptions cause; for on the free  
And even transit thro the tranquil veins  
Of the blest stream of life depends all health.  
Therefore the race that on thy banks has dwelt,  
Has ever somewhat irritable been,  
And somewhat moody; and was that not ill  
Suited to the capricious humours of  
The chief of all thy mental luminaries?  
But yet he stood alone; nor ever yet  
Did country more unlike its other habitants  
Produce a human Being!—O ROUSSEAU!



Thou wast the strangest, most intense, most beautiful,  
Most eloquent, most passionate, acute,  
Most fond, most selfish, most capricious, vain,  
Most wilful, most vindictive, and most cross'd  
With sudden unresisting yield to foul  
Base wickedness, as thou thyself confessest,  
That e'er combin'd in man's mysterious mould.  
E'en at the very crise, when Satan sat  
Triumphant on thy heart, the beams of Heaven  
Were shining in it :—clouds, and sun, and thunder,  
And lightning; and the intermingled rays  
Of love, of beauty, raptures, and the charms  
Of most celestial philanthropy!—

It was not art which aided thee; thou wast  
The child of nature; not in Learning's tracks,  
By method, toil, instruction, didst thou gain  
Thy strength, or clearness, or concision, or  
Order of words, or springs of nascent thought!  
All was the gift of some inspiring Spirit,  
Which visited thine infant eyes, and breath'd  
Fire, strength, and tenderness, and th' fairest forms  
Of most unearthly beauty, to thy heart!  
E'en ere thy tottering steps could reach the banks  
Of the deep-purpled waves, thou must have had  
This wild delirium in thy wandering sight,  
And fluttering, dancing, boiling on thy breast.  
If thy weak fingers could have used the pen,  
And language had been thine, to paint and fix,  
Then in what brightness inconceivable  
Thy visions had been set! The forms around thee,

—Material forms—had not in truth the colours—  
Nor essences thou wouldst have cloath'd them with;—  
But ne'ertheless they would not have been fram'd  
By fiction false; but did in truth exist  
To thy creative eye and flowing heart.

The sun shone o'er the waves with brighter beams  
Than on the mingled mass of land : and more  
Of freshness as they beat and spray'd and sparkled,  
And worked themselves to purity by collision,  
Won on the senses, and evok'd the tribes  
Of Fairy habitants within the cells  
Of brain and bosom. O who had sagacity  
In this thy childhood, looking on thy face  
And delicate features, and thy slender frame,  
To presage ought above the common gifts  
Of vulgar children? On the rocky stone,  
The fickle billows dash'd, thy limbs were laid :  
And then with ear intent thou didst drink in  
The sounds, that on the wave came whispering down,  
Or sometimes shrieking. Airy spirits danc'd,  
Or slid along the surface of the blue,  
And green and white all mingled, of the waves ;  
Or rose amid the glittering spray, and laugh'd  
And mock'd, and breath'd out magic syllables,  
And half display'd their limbs of exquisite  
And most ethereal beauty, when thy boyhood,  
O'er dazzled, veil'd thine eyes, and in thyself  
Absorb'd and lost, sunk utterly regardless  
Of all without. Sometimes in search of thee,  
They, from whose care thine errant feet escap'd,

Found thee still sleeping as th'advancing flood  
Gain'd on thy stony bed; and thou wouldst cry  
And fret and storm to be thus rudely wak'd  
Midst of thy golden slumbers! And thy nurse  
Would rate thee as a moody, cross-grain'd child,  
Of whom no good would come! and in disdain  
Thy little eye would fire, and thou wouldst stamp,  
And deal about thy puny blows, and rave  
With thy impetuous and half-stifled voice!  
And even then thou felt'dst the day would come  
When thou, the infant treated with despite  
And scorn for thy defaults, wouldst craze the world  
With beams of splendor, that the sober sense  
Of all, deem'd happier-gifted, would in vain  
Strive to repell or to endure!—'Tis thus  
That Genius ever feels : and thus it swells  
Against the vain and blind oppressor : thus  
It knows how folly, dulness, ignorance,  
Ever miscalculate; and dim presumption  
Thinks in the infant of stale common-place  
A prize to be well-hugg'd, and prais'd and flatter'd.

How much hadst thou, Enchanter, in thy days  
Of boyhood, to oppress, disturb, and cross  
The opening of thy mind, to interrupt  
The laying-in of wisdom, and to mix  
Foulness and poison in the issuing streams  
Of tender, pure, and magic-mellow'd sentiment!  
But there was in its essence a bright spell,  
That threw off all th'impurities with scorn  
And might, and indignation, and untouch'd

Stood in surrounding pools of dirt and vapour !

A seer perchance might clearly have discern'd  
The rays that play'd around thee; but the veil  
Hung thick before the vulgar earthly sight:  
A trade mechanic could not dark the lamp  
That blaz'd within thee, and thy hands consign'd  
To labour for thy head; and fear of want,  
And despot brutal orders of a despot  
Master, unjust, capricious, ignorant,  
And unillum'd by casual gleams of mind.

When the tir'd body has its organs press'd  
By the deranged current of the blood,  
How ill the mental faculties can work,  
Unless some blest supremacy of power  
O'ercomes the direful load! But the all-mounting  
Fire of true genius will pierce through, and rise,  
Spite of clouds, storms, and vapours, up to Heaven!  
It was not in society that thou  
Caught'st the refinement of thy bosom's motions;  
For much of coarse was there: nor in the ranks  
Where wealth and education smoothe the manners,  
And elevate the thoughts, and purify  
The views, wert thou accustomed to have  
Thine infant ear delighted, or thy bosom  
Touch'd with the sweetness of habitual rule  
Of intellectual dominion!  
The eye of female beauty, elevated  
By birth, and in the school of Riches, form'd  
By wisdom's lessons, and the softening stores  
Of delicate and high imagination,

Ne'er beam'd on thee the melting magic of  
Its irresistible irradiation:  
But all the glory, and the golden tints,  
Sky-borrow'd, came from thee, and on the object  
Of its deep idol-worship threw the blaze,  
Kneeling to deities of its own creation.  
But such is ever bright Imagination's  
Delusion dangerous! Shall we attribute  
Aught to thy clime, thy mountains, the expanse  
Of this thine azure mirror, by whose loveliness  
The splendor, and the beauty, and the rays  
Of beamy lustre, breaking but by fits  
Thro mountainous vapours, and sometimes a chill  
Of snow-clad summits, bosom'd in thick clouds  
Of Heaven, may have been on that breast of sun  
And tempests, then again in massy darkness  
Impress'd! O no! 'tis not to earthly causes  
That we must look: but 'tis the gift of heaven,—  
This high creative splendor, that within  
Works, and its forms and colours outward throws:  
But yet, though lakes and mountains and the sway  
Of nature's scenery in its most sublime  
And awe-engendering shapes and tints, cannot  
Originate th'internal faculty,  
Still it may nurse and fan and bring it forth;  
For in the heavy vapour of dull skies,  
And flat and fen-like countries, much I doubt,  
If genius ever can mount high, or duly  
Expand her wings.

Along th'overhanging skies

Comes sweeping o'er the Lake the loud career  
Of tempests, bred the gorges deep among  
Of those enormous Alpine masses, clad  
In snow eternal, down whose craggy sides  
The roaring torrents fall, and intermix  
Their spray, that into ice-bound atoms turn'd,  
Add arrows to the loud careering stream,  
And sweep the gather'd pestilences bred  
I' th'air, and thro those clouds which o'er thy walls,  
Geneva, as o'er all th'abodes of man  
In congregated heaps, brood harmfully  
Passing—an healthful, airy, free, and sharp  
Atmosphere give it! O, how in the roar  
Of winter nights 'tis terrible;—but grand;—  
And braces up the spirits to delight.

O then the' inhabitants of the vex'd sky  
In battle seem; and what a shrill loud shriek  
Does ever and anon the blast bring on  
To the astonish'd ear! Not three fleet months  
Have pass'd away, since thro the long black night  
I listen'd to this music of the spheres!  
For right against the torrent was th'abode  
Where on my bed of sickness I, awake,  
Told the long hours, and watching by the blaze  
Of cheerful lamp, my magic leaves unfolded,  
And wove my tales, and urg'd my weary pen!

How oft I gan imagine that I could  
The language of the Winds interpret well:  
And tell the gusts of Anger from the shrieks  
Of sorrow;—and the murmur soft, between,

Of Peace and Love with comment true intend!  
Then sometimes for a moment I believ'd  
The spirit of Rousseau himself was there,  
Or Milton, or of Gray : but morning light  
Drove them away : and down my bosom sank,  
And much of philosophic fortitude  
It call'd, to reconcile me to the flat  
Realities, that press'd upon my senses!

But ere due manhood thou hadst reach'd, thy fate  
Led thee away from these thy native airs,  
O eloquent but dangerous Moralist ;  
And little didst thou ever hear again  
The voices of the tempests, as they drove  
Their gathering torrents of soul-moving sounds  
Over old Leman's billows! the lov'd Muse,  
Whom I from babyhood have worship'd, frowns  
Upon my prayers, when I intreat his voice,  
The strange tale of thy wandring life to paint.  
She will not touch me with the hallow'd sweetness  
That duly can relate it; nor impart  
The piercing eye that to the mysteries  
Of thy yet undevelop'd breast can look!  
And she the movements magical and strange  
Has not the force to construe! I would tell  
The story of thy chequer'd days in order  
Successive, but my head, and pen, and voice  
Are all too weak!—And I must catch by fits  
Such lights and shadows, as irregular  
Will dart upon me! O thou fabulist  
Inspir'd of the new passionate Heloise!

La Meillerai and Clarens from thy pencil  
Become th' abodes of dangerous magicians.  
But I must leave thee now, and I again  
Will at a future hour return to thee!

How wert thou, Lemane, in the days of old?  
The greatest of the Cæsars had thee once:  
JULIUS made thee sometimes his seat of rest,  
As northward he advanc'd to victory.  
The Church and civil viceroys of the Emperors  
Possess'd thee long, and with divided sway  
Govern'd thy harass'd people.—

Counts of the Genevois, and despot Bishops,  
With iron rod in rivalry conflicting,  
Their subjects each tormented for the purpose  
Of paining each the other. Then the wretched  
Was punish'd twice—firstly for not obeying,  
And then again because he had obey'd!

How deep into the night of Time these Counts,  
Imperial Viceroys, drew their origin,  
To poring antiquary is not yet  
Precisely known!—They were among the chief  
Nobles and Peers of Carlovingian days!  
And many a grand alliance with the Princes  
Of France, Helvetia, Italy, they made;  
And with puissant grandeur liv'd, and spread  
Widely their fame! nor were they wanting in  
Mildness of character and arts of peace,  
If sometimes to fierce actions thirst of rule,  
And irritation of the crosier's sway,  
Impell'd them! while a neighbouring encroacher,



Savoy's ambitious Count, was ever pressing  
Upon their limits, sometimes by the sword,  
Sometimes by plot, sometimes by vile intrigue!  
And much more dreaded were they by the people,  
Than those they would displace; but after ages,  
At length their inextinguishable ambition  
Succeeded; and above a nobler House,  
More ancient, more benignant, they uprose;  
And o'er the shoulders of a tribe oppress'd  
Put their tyrannic paws, and bore them down!

Then too the Church's feudal sceptre yielded  
To the same thirst of power and politic  
Adroitness, and proud Savoy's children grasp'd  
The mitre with the sword, and thus united  
Sat for three ages on the necks of those  
The habitants of thy magnificent banks,  
O Lake, of which the Alpine side they yet  
Tyrannise over! But its chiefest line  
At length expires, e'en scarce a few brief weeks  
Before the feeble pen these lines records!

But, CARIGNAN, in a more liberal school  
We trust that thou wast cradled, and if power  
Superior does not crush the seeds of liberty,  
An happier policy may yet be thine!  
Harsh the dominion here of the long race  
Of thy historic grandsires! Many a deed  
Of savage, wanton, power disgrac'd their reigns  
Here, and in CHABLAIS! Byron's Muse has told  
The horror-striking tale of *Chillon's* walls;  
And sufferings of heroic *Bonnivard*!

Of the mix'd tissue of whose character,  
Curious the records *Grenus* has preserv'd.  
O false professors of an holy Faith!  
O ye in purple clad, with crosiers arm'd,  
Deeming religion but a cloak for power,  
And luxury and vice, how quick at last  
You push'd the downfall of your own dominion;  
And play'd the part of Luther and Melancthon,  
And all the fierce Reformers! Ye were blind,  
And in the sad delirium of your sensual  
Enjoyments to plain reason utterly  
Lost! and O thou the last of falling Rome's  
Deluded Bishops, who o'er these free walls  
Stretchedst thy rod, where were thine eyes and ears,  
And common judgment, when in sight of foes  
Advancing with so fierce and keen an onset  
Thou play'dst thy pranks, and with impunity  
Thoughtedst, (thy pleasures and thy wickedness  
Minging with insults unindurable,)  
By force to gratify. The daughter fair  
Of Lullin's ancient House thou dar'dst to seize,  
And kept'st in tears and prayers and pale affright,  
At mercy of thy rude licentious love,  
Spite of the swords of heroes, and the cries  
Of parents, and the threats and bold assaults  
Of madden'd lovers! But not long the day,  
Ere came the ruin, so by crime enormous  
Provok'd! Then enter'd in the gaunt assailants,  
And fire and sword began to purify  
The haunts of idol crime and foul debauch,

And blasphemous hypocrisy, and thirst  
Of the deluded wretch's wealth, and passion  
For worldly power by guile and falsehood won!

But all was not unmingled good; abuse  
Of pious rites had gone its utmost length;  
And licence new, and open wickedness,  
Under the broad eye of the garish day,  
Revel'd in all the streets, and on thy banks,  
Breeze-breathing Leman! Not the searching air,  
That on thy rolling, whitening, waters came,  
Could waft it off! Thy sounds were in the breeze,  
That, speaking nature's voice, would sometimes awe  
The tender spirit. Beauty in the skiff,  
That danc'd upon thy glassy surface, borne,  
Felt all the mountain winds to brace her frame,  
And purify the veins that luxury  
In delicate mansions poisons :—but in vain!  
The eye licentious gaz'd; and she th'infection  
Caught!—And a quarter of an age was thus  
Approaching to its end, when CALVIN came,  
Fierce, bigoted, uncandid, unrelenting,  
Demanding liberty of conscience, and  
Freedom of thought from Rome's usurp'd dominion  
Over the mind of Man, yet granting naught  
To others in return; for alledged errors  
In speculative doctrines blood demanding,  
And binding to the stake and burning flame!  
O horrid inconsistency! with goodness  
Impossible, as seems, to be combin'd!

But still his name is venerated here;

And much the good, 'tis urg'd, that heperform'd  
By harsh correction of corrupted manners,  
Which ne'er had yielded to a gentle rod!  
Yet why this persecution for opinions—  
For matters of mere faith? The moral rule  
Admits, perchance, no difference of thought,  
Of argument, or of authority:—  
Not so the nice perplexing points of faith!—  
Virtue and vice are still the same. But thou,  
O gloomy, fretful, gall-o'erloaded heart,  
Not so didst judge, or feel! Thou hadst no mercy  
For any course the subtle spirits took  
Of the mysterious brain, except for that  
To which thy mental travels led thyself:  
The whip, the prison, e'en the torture, were  
Too little for the punishment of him  
Who differ'd from thee! Surely it is strange,  
Beyond the comprehension of a mind  
Candid and consciencious, that the heart  
Nurs'd virtue in it which could thus decide!

But empire o'er the intellect of man,  
Wide-spread, hast thou, O Calvin, since enjoy'd!  
There was a tribe puissant, of thy doctrines  
Sprung, that all Europe's politics have since  
Infected, shaking civil institutions,  
And making monarchs tremble on their thrones;  
Vexing old England in a glorious reign  
Most, and a firm heroic, able Princess,  
Trying, entangling, damping, and o'erclouding.  
Incessant were the complots of the cold

And subtle poison that they spread, and deep  
And copious were the seeds of future war  
Internal, and dissension, spreading hate  
Thro social ties. The name of *Puritan*  
To all is known; yet only to a few  
The purposes, and means, and tricks, and weapons,  
And guile, and concert in each seeming act  
Of pure simplicity! O daring Knox,  
O Whittingham and Coverdale, who, here  
Finding asylum from the sanguine sceptre  
Of bigot Mary, were this master's pupils,  
Drinking the essences of mind and heart  
From Calvin as your God, and bore in triumph  
Those fruits to Albion's and to Scotia's shores.

Then through the Court that Tudor's Princess rul'd,  
Faction among the nobles spread, and Discord  
Threw out her snakes, that hiss'd and scatter'd venom!  
Now through the Church th'insinuating drug  
Bred a false zeal, and war polemic wak'd,  
That wheresoe'er its head was bruis'd, but rose  
Twofold, in places new!—Then government  
Became a dangerous and a weary thing;  
And *Burleigh's* brain and heart grew sick, and bent  
Beneath the feebleness of age, and sunk  
In sorrow to the grave; and *Egerton*  
The Seals of Equity and Conscience held,  
In vigorous manhood, by the aid of talents  
Strong, clear, and active, but with difficulty.

And now the march of years, and sorrow's draught,  
Heavily on the bosom hanging, brought





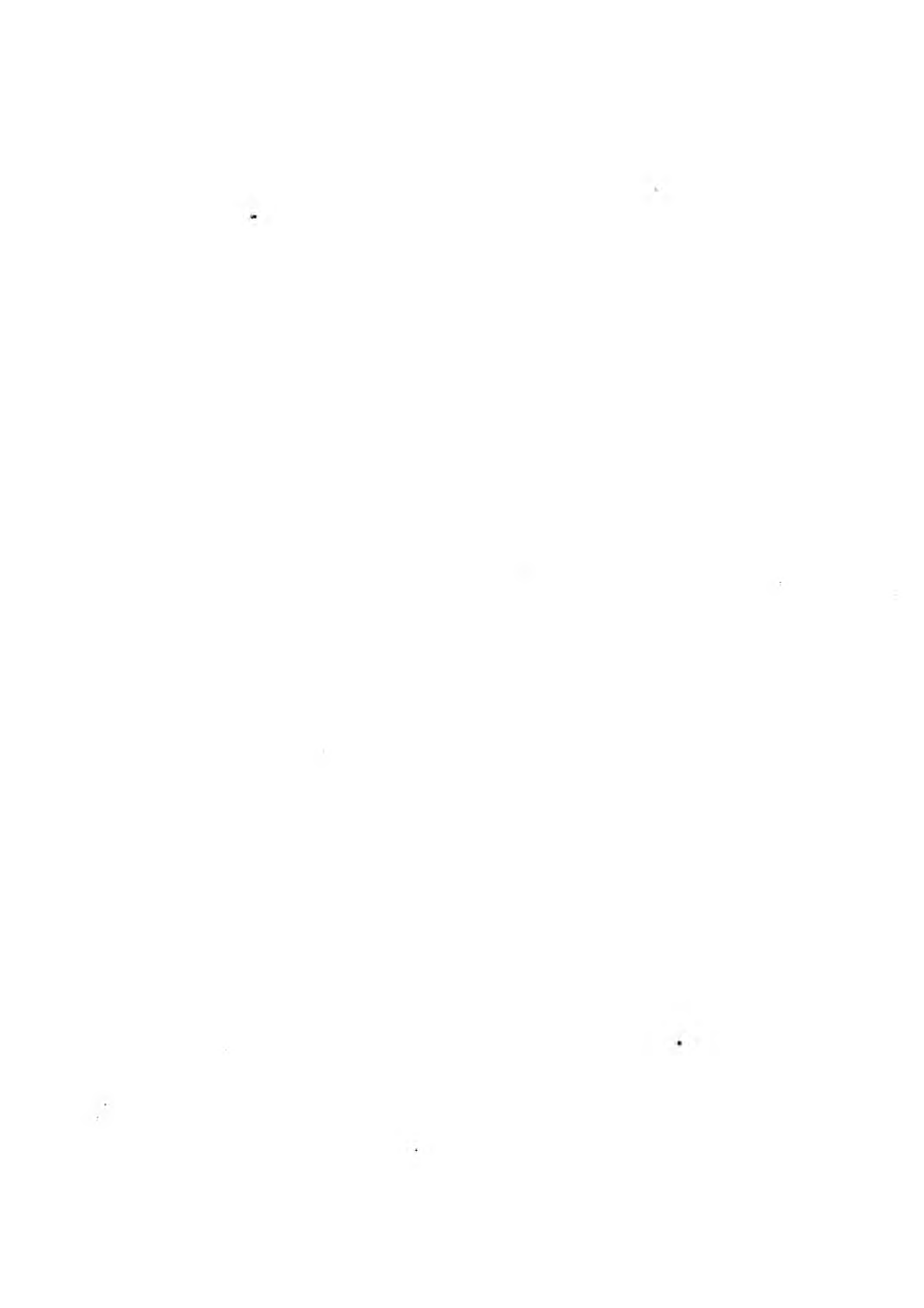


THOMAS EGERTON

*Baron of Ellesmere, Viscount of Brackley  
Lord High Chancellor of England. ob. 1617.*

*Master of Jennima Egerton, mother of Sir Egerton Rydges Bart.*





The gallant Princess to the grave, and JAMES  
 Ascended in triumphant vanity,—  
 All hope without a cloud—and confident  
 In the full prowess of his learned head,  
 To put down Faction's voice, and spell the pen  
 From the charm'd hand of controversialist!  
 But, ah! how little did he know his force!  
 He was the very instrument for those  
 He was so rife to battle with; and well  
 Were they prepar'd to daunt him to the fight,  
 To draw him to the snare, as does the spider  
 The fly on which she darts! for cobwebs thick,  
 And strong, they spun in every corner, and  
 On every tree! the Monarch struggling seen,—  
 Sport for his courtiers—for the subtler spinners  
 Triumph conceal'd and inexpressible!—

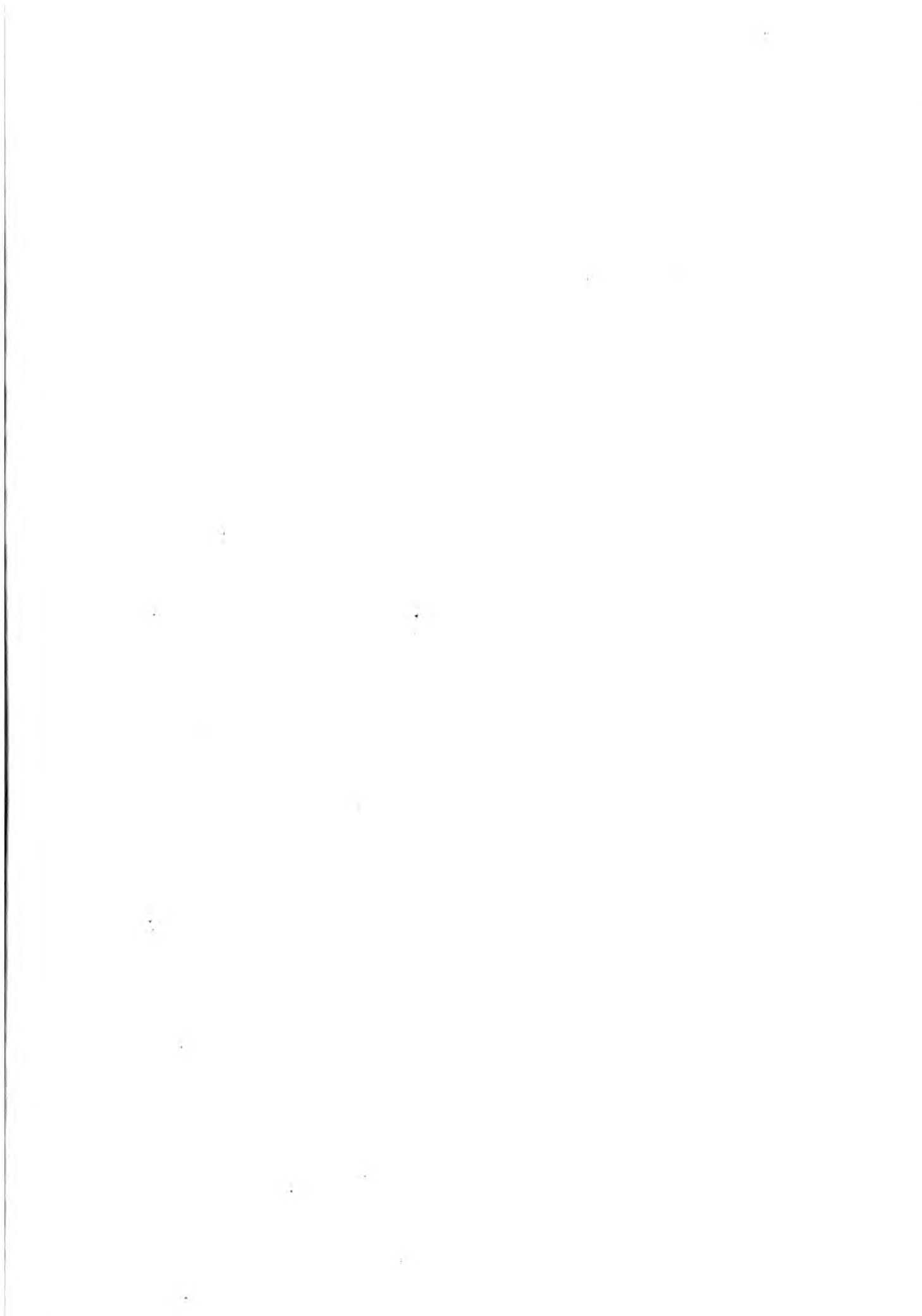
Thus pass'd his days, that soon began with clouds  
 And plots to darken that deep loaded sky,  
 Which he had at his entrance fondly thought,  
 Could only sunshine be beneath his wisdom!  
 O Monarch all of petitesse supreme,  
 Great in small things, and then whenever greatness  
 Was call'd for, truly least of all the little,  
 Thou didst by each day's folly thick prepare  
 The storms and bloodshed for thy fated son,  
 Who on the scaffold clos'd his wretched days!

Now, Puritans, the practical effect  
 Of all the theoretic looms of blood  
 Ye had been working into action, came,  
 And now it was a war of words no longer :

Out leap'd the sword; and armies met; and brother  
Oppos'd himself to brother's instrument  
Of death! and fields with civil blood were cover'd,  
And fortunes fell, and gallant heroes died;  
And law was overturn'd, and blessed Arts  
Cover'd their heads and hands, and clos'd their voices.

And thou, divinest Poesy, e'en thou  
Fledst the domains, where Heaven had begun  
To breathe her accents from the lyre, and He,  
The Bard of Paradise, in Ludlow's Castle,  
Or Harefield's Halls, had just begun to open  
Strains of a tone ne'er yet in Albion sounded.  
Then the all-virtuous, and all-eloquent,  
All-learned Falkland fell at Newbury,  
Already sunk in sorrow for the times,  
And daring death in midst of hostile swords!  
Then thou from whom the stream of blood I draw,  
That circuits thro my veins, O beautiful  
And gallant Mainwaring, didst nobly die  
On Chester walls, and to an ancient name  
Didst leave no scion male! and still I hold  
The Garter, signal of thy loyalty,  
Cut from the monarch's shoulder, and in need  
Giv'n to thy widow as a future pledge!

But many a battle still was to be fought,—  
And still, when Newbury's disastrous doom  
Could not be chang'd, rested the conflict's issue  
Between a gallant monarch and a people,  
Who, when awaken'd to the war, would never  
Leave liberty's broad banner in the dust!





Engr. de J. Freylich & Goussier

WILLIAM CAVENDISH  
*Duke of Newcastle ob 1676*  
*whose daughter Elis.<sup>th</sup> m<sup>d</sup>. John Egerton 2<sup>d</sup>*  
*Earl of Bridgewater*





The following table shows the results of the experiment. The data is presented in a table format with columns for 'Time (min)', 'Distance (m)', and 'Speed (m/s)'. The values are as follows:

Time (min)	Distance (m)	Speed (m/s)
0	0	0
10	100	1.67
20	200	3.33
30	300	5.00
40	400	6.67
50	500	8.33
60	600	10.00
70	700	11.67
80	800	13.33
90	900	15.00
100	1000	16.67

Then thou, Newcastle, in thy youth uprear'd  
To all that wealth, and rank, and courts, and arts,  
And all that peace, by its most splendid rays  
Of chivalrous adornment, and the glories  
Of all the Muses, could create,—didst buckle  
Thy armour on for rude spear-cover'd camps,  
And fields of desperate onset; and didst bear  
The labour and the peril with the roughest!

Last came the fated fight of Marston Moor,  
Where thy bold troops thou to the battle ledst,  
And gallantly and desperately struggledst!  
But all was vain; and when the day beheld  
All lost, and thou wert with most base neglect,  
Or ignorance, or envy foul, betray'd,—  
In foreign realms an exile many a year  
Of pressing dark adversity and straits  
Of want, and perils, and heart-breaking crosses,  
Didst thou in patience and with cheerfulness  
Endure, and saw'dst at last thy Prince restor'd;  
And still had many a year of peace to come  
Within thy native land, and midst of rank,  
Wealth, honours, arts, tranquillity of mind,  
Beheldst thy sun go down, and sink at last  
A mild octogenarian to the grave!

But, O my flighty Muse, how far hast thou  
Wander'd from thy elected theme! Resume  
Thy purpose; backward dart thy wings again;  
For Muses ever have ubiquity;  
Perch for a moment on proud Dover's heights,  
Then from the white cliffs take thine airy way



Across old Ocean's mighty billows, dashing  
Their thundring noises thro the straits, that separate  
Albion from its defying rival Gaul!  
Leagues after leagues, (the grand metropolis  
Of France, the boast of near two thousand years,  
Escaping on thy right,) to Jura's summits,—  
Cities and towns and hamlets left unnotic'd,  
Beyond the counter's skill to numerate,  
Thou reachest,—and then down again once more  
Alightest on thy purple Lake, all spangling  
With young Aurora's beams! and thus once more  
Within Geneva's beauteous circuit retest!

END OF BOOK I.

THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK II.

THERE are who think that under all the forms  
Of nature's scenery the mind of man  
Is still the same; that mountain, lake, and hill,  
And valley, and deep woods, and ocean broad,  
No more affect it; and give force no more  
And happiness, than the dull vapoury plain,  
Ever the same, on which the beams of Heaven  
Throw no variety of shapes and colours.  
Not so wise theory, not so experience  
Instructs us : we are children of the lights  
Of the blue sky, and as the spirits move,  
And the veins play, the intellect its hues,  
And motions takes! Thus poets on thy lake,  
O Lemman, ought to live :—but yet 'tis rare!  
Rousseau, though not in metre, was a poet  
In all the essences of his high genius!—

Not so precisely eloquent De Stael!  
Tho sometimes in Corinne the Muse's hand  
And voice, and imagery, and emotion,  
Were hers! But round her cradle forms of life,  
And voices, and o'er-labour'd trains of thought,  
Too artificial, and the false results  
Of a luxurious capital, were ever  
Bending her quick and plastic intellect  
To wit, miscall'd the proof of force supreme  
Of the brain's operations, too much stirr'd  
By the collision of base rivalry;—  
Where the strife is for conquest,—not for wisdom;  
And where acuteness more than grandeur marks  
The struggle and the fruit. On Coppet's banks  
The Priestess liv'd impatient: her keen eyes  
Look'd on the tumbling waters, and the giant  
Heights that across them tower'd into the clouds,  
Clad with eternal snow; but yet whose tops  
Morning and evening shone with rosy beams  
O'th' blessed sun! She look'd; but sigh'd for mirrors  
Of artificial splendor, and the forms  
That social fashion ever dresses up  
In whimsical costume, and not the whispers  
Or louder noises of the wave-stirr'd breeze;  
But the pain'd murmurs of the soft coquette,  
Or studied mimickries of tone pretended  
Of beau, or statesman, or cramp'd orator,  
Where knowledge of an accidental state  
Of manners, and of feelings, and ambition,  
Was sillily mistaken for sagacity

And wisdom.—Nature with her grandest voices  
And most magnificent shapes, and mightiest airs  
Of frame-invigorating elements,  
Was not to Coppet's Baroness so moving,  
As a saloon of Paris fill'd with wits,  
Beauties, coquettes, and nobles, and budge authors,  
Whose passion in the journals of the day  
To figure, prompted to a restless life,  
Full of ennui, and labour charlatanic,  
And feebleness of body, and regrets  
Of conscience for mis-spent abilities!

O strangely various is the human fate,  
And human occupation! How wast thou  
Employ'd, O learned Beza, on the banks  
Of this lov'd lake for a long glorious life  
Of intellectual energies, of taste,  
Thought, poetry, and forceful sentiment,  
And warm, heart-mellowing, and chaste Religion!  
Far different from thy master, Calvin's, was  
Thine heart : not dry, and hard, and in scholastic  
And controversial divinity  
Pent up, but with the captivating graces  
Of ornamental letters deep imbued,  
And joying to the last in the sweet studies  
Of thy gay days of youthful efflorescence.—  
Poet, and moralist, as elegant  
As erudite! when more than eighty years  
Had shook thy trembling hand, till scarce a stroke  
Distinctly it could make, thou didst again  
Freshen with dews these flowers, that in the garden

Of thy young fancy were rear'd up to bloom,  
And flourish, and put forth their shining hues,  
Spotted with all rich colours, and with scents  
Vernal delighting. There they stand in pale  
And venerable spells, in those fond haunts,  
Where all thy worthies by the painter's skill,  
Geneva, live—and all the labour'd fruits  
Of their enlighten'd minds survive to teach  
Posterity:—and my enthusiast eyes  
Have dwelt upon them, and my feeble skill  
Has striven to decypher them, and mark,  
Compare, and contrast the slow-changing hues  
From over-flowing youth to waning age!

As thou wert champion of the Church Reform'd—  
So keen were Rome's foul myrmidons against thee;  
Then with incessant scandal did they stain  
Thy venerable age, and all the levities  
Brought of thy boyhood to reproach's aid.—  
But thou in conscious rectitude revivedst  
Those early blossoms; and they stand recorded  
In the best types of thy most learned printers;  
And now the misty dawn of light begins  
To break upon me! But not yet the hour  
Of three has sounded from St. Peter's tower:  
Yet short the space that after midnight's calm  
Mantle had veil'd the skies, when all but I  
Were wrapt in slumbrous rest, the Muse awoke me,  
And I to my accustom'd toil applied,  
My promis'd task to execute; and now  
While I these lines am writing, quick the rays

Of sweet Aurora pierce the vapoury gray  
That hastens off, as if affrighted, swifter  
Than birds, that in the heavens dart away  
From their strong-plum'd destroyers!

O how intense the brilliance and the beauty  
Of morning's golden dawn, that over Alpine  
Summits I daily see arise, since thirteen  
Months have near pass'd, and not e'en once have I  
Fail'd from my bed to gaze upon the picture!  
But thus our faculties their vigour gain,  
And I my daily, nightly, efforts ply  
T'approach to spirit! Thought, and words, and images  
Thus multiply, and more distinctly come!  
And on the verge of that extent of life,  
Which is man's common lot, and after sickness  
Of more than four much-troubled years, my brain,  
If I do not delude myself, has grown  
To strength and copiousness, before it knew not.  
But 'tis perchance the cheer!—The cheer has come  
At last, whose want I languish'd for, and now  
Its motions are all energy and hope!  
For nature made me timid: and timidity  
Sits like a vampire over the mind's efforts.

COPPET, when the Genevan Banker, risen  
From counting his dry figures, to the state  
Of Minister of mighty France, in times  
Which all a politician's wisest powers  
And most consummate arts call'd into play,—  
Possess'd thee,—little were thy master's habits,  
And trains of mind congenial to the fierce

And chivalrous ambitions, that in days  
Of feudal splendor did for many ages  
Rule thee, as thy proud lords! O gallant *Grandson*,  
Burgundian chief, whose name is yet familiar  
Throughout old Jura's heights, and echoes yet  
Along Helvetian mountains, whose mail'd warrior  
Amid the Gothic wonders of Lausanne's  
Rich shrines in proud recumbent figure lies  
Sculptur'd in stone, full many a tale have I  
To tell of you; but the capricious Muse  
Must wait her time.—Wide and remote the current  
Of thy impetuous blood impelled thee on  
To distant regions, and among the Barons  
Of haughty England was thy stock establish'd;  
And from thy veins the proud ambitious Beauforts  
Sprung, and the saintly Margaret, the mother  
Of the seventh Harry, monarch of the Isles  
Whose swords, wealth, gallanties, and genius strong,  
Have ever held their sway puissant over  
The destinies of Europe:—monarch, sage and wily,  
And prudent, and to whom, albeit stern  
And avaricious, England much of vigour,  
And much advance in commerce and the arts  
Owes,—of the Tudor dynasty the chief—  
A dynasty whose reign was short, but mighty,  
And glorious—e'en though thou capricious king,—  
A tyrant in tyrannic times; a lover  
Of numerous wives, whom soon as sated with,  
Of blood regardless, thou didst to the scaffold  
With hatred merciless and savage humour

Consign—e'en thou, detested despot, were  
Chief of the Line!—For from thee came a princess  
Splendid, as most that on the' historic page  
Have their reigns blazon'd! Yes, from Coppet's lords  
Part of thy blood came in a gallant stream!

O alter'd times! O good and evil mix'd,  
That changes have effected! O how different  
Was the wild splendor of thy board, De Stael,  
When in October's moody evenings, as  
The sobbing breeze drove the leaves on the Lake,  
And stripp'd the groves of their umbrageous honours,  
The gorgeous blaze of lamps the guests attracted,  
Of wit and genius, to thy table, spread  
With modern luxuries! Then converse bright  
Eclips'd the show of the Financier's wealth.—

And here again to thy fond name, O Byron,  
I must return! I see thee listening now  
To the conflict where at every dart flash forth  
Splendors thou canst not reach; and then half angry,  
Or envious, half delighted, thou dost shrink  
Moody into thyself, and as the blast  
By fits comes shrieking, or in deep hoarse roar  
Over the beating waters, of thy boat  
Think'st, and half risest to enjoy the battle  
Of more congenial elements without;—  
But then again to thy luxurious seat  
Thyself thou reconcilest, and wouldst yet  
Hope not eclips'd and vanquish'd to depart!  
O pride intolerable, yet with flashes  
Of generous submission and humility,



And admiration of corival powers,  
 When not insulted, and the victory  
 Borne with meek placidness, devoid of vain  
 Arrogant triumph. But thy mind remains  
 E'en now but half develop'd, firey Bard!

Perchance a poet only well can write  
 A poet's life, and such the fate which thee,  
 O Bard of Newsted, has awaited : Moore,  
 England's Anacreon, has fulfill'd the task;  
 But now and then it may be thought the strain  
 Was not congenial;—the profundity  
 Of the great poet's gloom was of the heart;  
 His frolic levities were but assum'd!  
 And sometimes his companions seem'd th'effect  
 Of chance more than of choice. Thus he who perish'd  
 Upon the shores of Lirici so fatally,  
 Whelm'd in the waves of the tempesturous Ocean—  
 Himself also a bard,—but yet a bard  
 Of mingled stars and clouds!—he touch'd the lyre  
 Sometimes in happier hour with a light hand,  
 That drew forth tones most exquisitely sweet;  
 But then again he labour'd in confusion  
 Dark, enigmatic, falsely gorgeous, struggling  
 To grasp at monstrous unmatur'd conceptions,  
 Unmanag'd, and unmanagable, mystic,  
 Dangerous, sceptical, and fanciful.

Beneath the roof that Diodati's name  
 Has consecrated to the Muses, he,  
 The victim of the stormy billows, pass'd  
 The autumn, to the noble poet big

With such heart-swelling sorrows!—He whose tales  
Of Monks profane, and of hobhoblins dire,  
Won a false sensual taste, and a foul fame  
Of spurious wit,—a guest was also there;  
And she the genius deep of Frankenstein,  
And others known perchance, or thirstily  
Aspiring to be known,—a motley crew;—  
Not one congenial with his noble host!

Above thy banks, O Lemane, to a point  
Where thy waves gather, at its western bound,  
And, issuing in a purple torrent, force  
Their passage thro the strait, on whose steep banks  
Stands thy fam'd city once the capital  
Of the Burgundian realm—now numerous  
On thy o'ershadowing heights the fair campaigns  
Glitter. Here d'Aubigné the fair abode  
Of his last days, the wreck of a long life  
Of busy conflicts and adventures bold,  
Fix'd;—while his plume as ready as his sword  
Told the long tale of many a feat of gallantry,  
And many a court intrigue, and many a danger,  
In the fierce wars of bigot zeal, which stain'd  
The bloody struggles for a pure religion.

O Bourbon, in whose generous character,  
The wit, the hero, the sagacious wordling,  
The chivalrous adventurer, the lover,  
The friend, th'abandon'd to luxurious pleasure,  
A many-colour'd web of brilliant hues  
Is woven, and whose threads of gloomier tint  
Were cut at last too short by the dire dagger

Of an insane assassin, well has d'Aubigné  
Recorded the memorials, that still prove  
The truth of thy well-merited renown!

Here in his old age were the nuptials gaily  
A second time perform'd, and proud Geneva  
Received him to the bosom of a House,  
It cherished much—from Lucca's warmer skies  
Transplanted,—Burlamachi's race, long flourishing—  
Extinct at last. But from his veins descended  
Of his first issue one, who to the heir  
Of his great kingly friend, and to the court  
Of brilliant and ambitious France, nor less  
To Europe's wide-spread nations, was a star  
Of female brilliance, that eclips'd the lights  
Of other deep intriguers! MAINTENON,  
Whodoes not know thy name; while yet thy character  
Remains an half enigma, which Saint-Simon's  
Piercing, acute, sincere, but somewhat tedious  
Pen, has not yet entirely clear'd from doubt?

Here ROHAN's Duke, who fought so long with bravery  
The Protestant cause against the force of France,  
The remnant of his days, to seek for calm,  
And nature's tranquil but majestic scenes,  
Appointed, and in thy cathedral walls  
His relics, and the funeral memorial,  
Defil'd in latter years by hands profane  
Of revolutionary rabbles, still  
Beneath thy Gothic roofs, displays its broken  
Sculpture : but better were the history  
Of his field-active days, for prose than verse ;

And well has he himself the story given.

Here BONNET on low Genthod's jutting point  
In philosophic studies, natural science,  
And expositions of the Power Divine,  
His long life of incessant study pass'd.  
If reader thou art curious, thou mayst read  
In the rich pages of historic Müller  
The record of his calm yet busy days,  
And virtuous simple life. Here MALLET vers'd  
In antiquarian lore, and philosophic  
Annals of Europe's politics, his labours  
Oft gather'd from the sources far remote  
Of other realms, beneath more northern skies  
Sometimes applied; tho from his native soil  
Distant, too much of his researchful life  
Was spent : but not on frozen themes, or rude;  
For curious are the sources he evolv'd  
Of the bold *Runic* Muse; and much our Gray,  
And much our Percy, of old poetry,  
The elegant and learned chronicler,  
Drew cups of inspiration from the fount!  
But richly-stor'd, and eloquently-gifted,  
Sismondi has a brief memorial given  
Of the learn'd annalist; and now his fame  
Rests undisturb'd. Here STANHOPE from the councils  
Of Albion's ermin'd robes retir'd to nurse  
His scientific passions : here MAHON  
In his sire's dry philosophy imbued,  
Yet with the passion of an ardent mind,  
Drank in republican notions from his cradle,

And in his manhood to his native land  
Returning, spent a life of usefulness  
In his laborious youth's profound pursuits  
Of science practical, and in the plain  
Habits by puritanic Calvin nurs'd.  
But he was wise and virtuous,—and, exempt  
From pride aristocratic, wide secur'd  
Love and respect, though sometimes intermingled  
With scorn dealt out by brother-peers, who thought  
Their ermine soil'd by puritanic manners.

So PITT, his near alliance, though himself  
Of manners plain and simple, and absorb'd  
In intellect, yet deem'd : nor would allow  
The politics of a minute republic  
Well suited to a mighty kingdom's state :  
And surely wise and undeniable  
Was the great Minister's judgment : for the rule  
Of human beings lies upon the heart ;  
And not in dry deductions from the mechanism  
Of reason plied to abstract sciences :—  
And the mere reasoner is a man who sees  
A distance short—nay shortest, while the lamp  
Of bright imagination, that has insight  
Of the dark passions working in man's bosom,  
And has sagacity and judicious choice,  
Alone can lay profound designs, adapted  
For government of man's mysterious character.  
Thus BURKE,—of politicians of his age  
The nearest inspiration,—thought : and thus  
Immortal BACON, the bright luminary

Of science!—Thus endow'd have ever been  
 The mighty statesmen of the world: thus Buckhurst,  
 Clarendon, Somers, St. John, Pulteney, Carteret,  
 And Chatham, high and bright above the highest.  
 Thus Canning, latest dead, and most deplor'd  
 In days of utmost need;—since which the glory  
 Of Britain's radiant countenance has paled  
 Her beams in darkness to the rival eye  
 Of Europe,—envious then,—triumphant now,  
 And most insulting! But a little while,  
 And proudly shall she raise her head again,  
 And bid defiance to her enemies!

But I am once more wandring,—ever flying  
 Back to those native soils, which scarcely man  
 Could ever from his bosom's depths eradicate;  
 However like a stepmother she acted!

Geneva, cherish'd, lov'd, admir'd Geneva,  
 I will resume thy tales gain, and bring  
 Thy worthies back to view! Here the learn'd stock  
 Of STEPHENS half a century pursued  
 Their most enlightened toils, and hence sent forth  
 The stores of ancient literature, to teach  
 Reviving taste, and those enlighten'd strains,  
 Whether in verse or prose, which Greece and Rome  
 Had once instructed, and adorn'd the world with;  
 And which for long long centuries inhum'd  
 In monkish cells unnotic'd, now came forth  
 By late-discover'd printing's aid, (decipher'd  
 By erudition never rival'd since,)  
 To the film-clear'd, and sharp enraptured eye

Of Learning's sons, in types correctly plac'd,  
Text clear, and notes and comments, keen, profound,  
The fruits of talent, sedulously bent,  
And ardent deep research, incessantly  
Pursued, and never weary.—Son to son  
The erudite and happy zeal descended,  
In generations more than I can count :  
But in thy pages, classical Maittaire,  
The story may be found ; and he who reads  
And feels no interest, is but a clown  
With a clod heart and head of barren wood.

Here Henry thou, of this Stephensian race  
The third,—but not the last,—didst carry on  
Thy erudite and most wreath-worthy works  
In moody humour, thou thyself a wit  
Of most capricious hues, sometimes in joy,  
But oftner in dark clouds and heart-consuming  
Adversity : and sometimes with thy brain  
Disorder'd by the troubles, and the restless  
Emotions of thine ever-busy spirit!

Then Casaubon, perchance by thine alliance  
Prompted, his days of unrelenting study  
Gave to pursuits congenial ; and his name,  
And the ripe fruits of his assiduous culture,  
Live as of yesterday. Again my theme  
Leads me to native regions : England's Monarch  
Attracted by his learned reputation,  
Hence drew him, in the splendor of the throne  
Of Britain, recompence and patronage  
To seek ; and thus the son, part-heritor

Of his paternal arts, was plac'd a canon  
In Dorovernium's magnificent  
Structure, where Becket's archiepiscopal  
Blood purples yet the church's sacred stone,  
And, neighbouring Ickham, thou, whence last mysickly  
Frame I transported hither, didst receive  
The learned critic for thy church's pastor!

Hence, Stanley, thou of Greek celebrity,  
Perchance thine Æschylusian notes and comments  
In part mightst draw, for Casaubon in ties  
Of social vicinage might oft enjoy  
Thy conversation, where in bonds of union  
The travel'd and poetic Sandys, and Digges,  
Of fame historic in the civil broils  
Of those unhappy days, and many a name,  
In registers of learning yet preserv'd,  
Liv'd in alliance and kind neighbourhood:  
And thy descendants, Meric, yet remain  
In Durovernium's walls, and in its province!

Thus ever have thy sympathies and ties  
Of blood and friendship, O Geneva, been  
With England's children! Nor is Ickham's hamlet,  
Its ivied towers, and its rude antique rectory,  
And thy rich pastures, Lee, now first connected  
With the broad Lake, where mountainous Mont-Blanc  
Daily in majesty among the clouds  
Smiles, or frowns over the assembled torrents  
By Alpine fountains fed, and sends its waters  
By the circuitous Arve's impetuous channels  
To join the Rhone, that through the narrow gorge



Of Alps and Jura met, in purple stain'd,  
 Bursts with a fearful roar!—Yet distant countries  
 Not then, as now, communication held  
 By beaten tracks, and all the luxuries  
 Of easy transit, while the missive charge  
 Of the pen's register'd mirror of the mind  
 Was slow and interrupted. Nations now  
 Mingle almost as brothers of the same  
 Stock, education, habits, morals, feelings!

Voltaire! I hear thy spirit vain reproach me,  
 That I so long have thy proud name delay'd!  
 Close to my window lies thine ancient haunt  
 O'erlooking the blue waters, and the towers  
 And cluster'd roofs of old Geneva's town,  
 Once princely and imperial, now to other  
 Glory political aspiring!—Here  
 By appellation known, that well befits  
 The purposes it sought, (for *les Delices*  
 'Twas call'd, and still is call'd,) the accomplish'd Bard  
 His captivating lures to the sour temper  
 Of puritanic strictness dar'd display.  
 Here the world by the drama's mirror he  
 And all th' attractions of Parisian gaiety  
 Shew'd! till th'insulted government assuming  
 Its proper force, to Ferney's French domains  
 Expell'd him! 'Tis a perilous adventure  
 To draw the portrait of a genius, whom  
 The world has for a century endeavour'd  
 With all the force of critical acumen  
 To paint in his true colours; who e'en now

In popularity thro all the letter'd  
Society of nations still augments!  
For me against a sense so universal  
To lift my voice seems madness.—I have task'd  
My taste and judgment o'er and o'er again;—  
And yet I think the same!—I am not able  
This charm to pierce: in it there is to me  
But little merit, and still less attraction.  
It is a clear transparent stream of elegance,  
With a light bottom. Never does it rise  
To eloquence, or energy!—It has  
The art of throwing all vain accessaries  
Away, and seeming to extract the essence  
Of every subject:—it is in sooth a trick,  
If I may so express myself, of saying  
Trite things, adapted to the apprehension  
Of common minds, as if they were discoveries  
Of deep and philosophic genius; and  
A shrewd appeal to what the populace  
Calls common sense;—forever mingled with  
That jest and ridicule and irony  
And taunt, which are the unresisted masters  
Of vulgar intellects. But for the heart,—  
The generous feeling,—the emotion grand,—  
Nerer by chance is there a single spark!  
His proper motto is—« *The world's a jest,*  
« *And all things shew it!* »—But the world is not  
A jest! and therefore he's no sage or bard!  
Yet even in the apprehensions of  
The people will a witticism be

The most consummate and resistless argument ;  
 And he who laughs;—and has th' ungenerous talent  
 To see th' absurd, or make it, holds a rod,  
 A spear—whose touch is instant victory.  
 But I would never trust the bosom, which  
 First sees th' incongruent in presented objects,  
 Material or ideal!—It betrays  
 A littleness of mind ; a microscopic  
 Habit of searching with ungenerous labour,  
 Not for the good, but bad :—for combinations  
 Invented ill ; for failures, which may prove  
 Man's being, and the Universe, a folly!—  
 It soothes frail human envy to believe  
 There is no greatness;—that pretended wisdom,  
 Virtue, and magnanimity, cannot  
 The sharp dissecting eye of wit withstand ;  
 And that the greatest sage is he, whose insight  
 Can shew them all to be unsound delusions.

Thou wast, Voltaire, as I conceive, in midst  
 Of all thy worldly elevation, ill  
 At ease in thine own heart;—thy spirit working  
 To carry thine own points by artifice,  
 Mistrustful of intrinsic strength or greatness ;  
 Thinking that genius was, in truth, a farce ;  
 And in thine own art drowning all thy comfort ;  
 Seeking the plausible, and not the true;—  
 Witty, not wise ; and deeming grandeur, beauty,  
 To lie i' the pictur'd image only;—not  
 In the reality ! the passions ever  
 At work to crush thy rivals by deep artifice

And living only in the vain applause  
Of loud capricious multitudes! In thee  
There was no genuine love of nature's charms;  
Of beauty no idolatry; —no fictions  
Of fairy lands; no heavenly visitings  
Involuntary of imagination.

But ever the long studied combination  
Of forc'd, not forceful, art!—Then daily watchfulness  
Of rival power no peace within the bosom  
Left, and the rising genius of Rousseau  
Was poison thus to thy frail veteran breast.  
And thus in secret were the enmities

Of the all-morbid dreamer's fellow-citizens  
Nurs'd, and incessant by the insidious darts  
Of wit perverted the sad wanderer's step  
Prevented from return to the dear spot  
Of his inspir'd nativity! But ye,  
Who in these two dispute the palm of genius,  
First fix precisely that which constitutes  
True genius! If, as said, it be th'invention  
Of what is grand, or beautiful, or tender,  
And sympathises with the native movements  
That Heaven into the human breast instils,  
Then who will most abide this test? the rhymers  
In verse prosaic of dull Ferney's lord,  
Or he, the eloquent and passionate  
Dreamer of Heloise's melting bosom,  
The painter of the storm on Leman's Lake,  
The muse-enchanted wood-crown'd rocks that hang  
Over the bright waves at La Meilleirai :

If it were true, that Ferney's Lord has drawn  
 Man as he is with more fidelity,  
 'Tis man alone in his material essence,  
 Mingled with earth's contaminating grossness.

Genius is better conversant with man's  
 Feelings and thoughts than with his coarsest actions.  
 O call not this delusion! Virtue lives  
 More in the mind and heart than in the body,  
 And all of grandeur we enjoy, and beauty,  
 And love, and admiration, not the less  
 Is genuine, if it only be ideal!—  
 Without th'associations, which the mind  
 To matter brings, it is a barren essence.

It may be said that Ferney's Bard is ever  
 All intellect:—but then it is an intellect  
 Applied to Man in his most artificial  
 Condition in society; with manners,  
 Passions, ambitions, toils, pursuits of pleasure,  
 Of judgment rules, and estimates of merit,  
 Conventional,—far more the close result  
 Of nice observance, than of pure invention:  
 Not the embodiment of abstract thoughts  
 In living imagery, but itself abstraction,  
 Subtle, unsympathising with the heart,  
 Calling forth only the keen faculties  
 Of apprehension, judgment, memory!—

These are miscall'd delusions, which removed,  
 Then all the charms of life dissolve away!  
 It is not reason, which the callous give  
 That sacred name! They stupidly call reason

That which their hands can touch, and eyes can see,  
And ears can hear; and they are sceptical  
On all which is unseen, unheard, unknown,  
Save in the regions of imagination!  
So, when the heart at the sublime and fair  
In Man's conceptions to high rapture swells,  
They call it an irrational delusion!  
Thus reason is the damper and extinguisher,  
Which not produces fruit, but only blights it.

Far up among the mountain gorges lies  
The rude domain of craggy Faucigny.  
Its ancient feudal lords were sovereign princes;  
And high were their alliances, and rivals  
Of the Genevan Counts, and those of Savoy!  
Oft on the summits of its crags are perch'd  
The fragments of their castellated towers  
Among the clouds in most magnificent form;  
And in its narrow vallies green is view'd  
The loveliness of nature in her softest  
And sweetest hues and features. There, St.-Gervais,  
I pass'd an autumn month in thy abode,  
Since which twelve busy years have pass'd away,  
Bringing in their career full many a change  
To Europe, and to half the world besides!

Imagination cannot figure scenes  
More beautiful, more grand, of rural shapes  
And hues more full of ravishment,  
Than thine, St.-Gervais, in an autumn day  
Of splendor; nor a peasantry in childhood  
Of face more lovely, and seemingly more happy!

Beneath th'incessant sound of the cascade,  
In foamy torrents of white spray descending  
From its precipitous heights, was plac'd th'abode,  
For congregated crews of strangers built,  
Who come the medical powers to seek of waters  
Sulphureous, bursting from its iron rocks!  
It is a strange concurrence, from all nations  
Deep in this mountainous solitude to meet  
The creatures of the busy social world,  
Soldiers, and politicians, lawyers, authors,  
Churchmen, and men of commerce, fluttering insects  
Of buzzing fashion;—most in morning rambles  
Seeking by air and exercise, and impulse  
Of viewing nature's wonders to beguile  
The loneliness and savage imagery,  
Which overcomes the feebleness of spirits  
Of artificial creatures bred in cities;  
A vain enervating and languid course  
Of days to seek a false enjoyment in!

Roving along the river's banks, or clambering  
The rocky summits by the brushwood twigs,  
Or by the circling or meandering paths  
Cut thro dwarf woods, hard labouring up the steeps  
To hamlets perch'd like eagle eyries high  
Among the snowy clouds, where yet the haunts  
Of mountain-peasantry at crowded marts  
Are found with human commerce babbling loud,  
And striking by the sight of wild costume,  
Of Alpine loneliness, where half the winter  
In snow immur'd they sleep their hours away!

Yet here the busy passions, here the cunning  
Of bargain-makers, the pert vanity  
Of ogle-eyed coquets, in restless search  
Of admiration, the devices subtle  
Of craving avarice, and the dull obstinacy  
Of boors, from ignorant demand ne'er driven!

But, O how active in these mighty frolics  
Of nature is imagination's power!  
Here where the ruin'd turret, hanging still  
On heights of seeming inaccessibility,  
Impels the mind to work upon the hardihood  
Of feudal gallantry, yet richly dight  
With chivalrous adornments of grand feasts,  
The music and the dance, and beauty's eyes  
Reigning their influence,"—the heart-rousing tale  
Of damsels in distress, by giants held  
Imprison'd, and by fell enchanter's wands  
Kept in delusion's sense-distracting wiles,  
In danger to the pure fidelity,  
Sworn to some favour'd lover,—with a store  
Of fictions raising up the hair on end,—  
Visit thy poet's dreams, and daily musings:—  
And here with half-shut eyes he sits, absorb'd  
In visions, while the torrents roar, and sparkles  
Of upthrown spray awake him now and then;  
And from his seat he starts, and recollects  
He yet is mingled with the damping intercourse  
Of daily life, and groveling characters,  
Who lick the dust alone, and crawl the earth;  
And soon the bell will sound to summon him



To crowded table of world-judging strangers.

Beneath the scorching sun too oft I rambled  
Over thy burning rocks; when fierce disease  
Rag'd in my veins, and made my painful footsteps  
Trembling and insecure; and thus when winter  
Came sharp at Florence over Arno's waves,  
Curdled my blood again, and I once more  
On the sad couch of sickness doom'd to linger,  
Pass'd many a month, while o'er me death his dart  
Held. Still I strove the mental flame to nurse,  
And with the visions of the moral fable,  
And curious rolls of antiquarian lore,  
Alternately my agonies I sooth'd :  
Nor yet are all the fruits of those fair studies  
Utterly faded and forgotten. Willoughby,  
Thy fiction, seemingly historic, draws  
Sometimes the thoughtful reader's eye, where shines  
Raleigh's adventurous spirit, mingled with  
Thy softer sufferings, sweet Arabella,  
Punish'd for too much royalty of blood!

And thus the genealogic lore work'd out  
From many a dry and uninviting source,  
Stands in fair types of thy illustrious city,  
O Florence, ancient seat of mighty genius,  
Of splendid arts and learning from the dust  
Of black oblivion to full life recall'd !  
Sometimes 'tis good that we should quit the world,  
And in earth's most magnificent solitudes  
New-plume our wings for contemplation.  
But th'intermixture of the odious puppets

Of that world's most delusive stage, our steps  
Following, defeats the working of the spell.  
Strange mixtures in my mind did that month's residence  
Produce;—and not less strange, perchance, upon  
The morbid current of my heated veins,  
By force of the sulphureous waters, that  
The vapoury rocks threw forth. There, Coningsby,  
I clos'd thy tragic Tale : a tale neglected  
By the hard-hearted reading multitude ;  
Yet, confident am I, not undeserving  
Of sensibility's abundant tears.

These Baths did for a time appease the tumults  
Raging within my being's purple streams :  
But much I doubt, if they did not repel,  
Rather than cure. For never from that year  
Has my blood rightly flow'd. And then the troubles  
Of mind and heart, without the added pangs  
Of a disorder'd body, were sufficient  
To overwhelm gigantic strength of spirit!

But Italy, O Italy, in charms  
Of Nature most profuse, would I could live  
With thee! The Alpine passage to thy realms  
Gave me new life by its stupendous grandeur.

And thou, O Florence, smiling then in warmth,  
Like spring, though dark November's clouds in other  
Climes were collecting o'er the misty sky!

But Winter came at last,—and with a vengeance,  
As sharp as in the dreaded North! And now  
I sunk once more, and bow'd to kiss the feet  
Of Death. In that forever-fam'd abode,

My hours were doom'd to the sick chamber's bounds,  
And where adored poetry, and rich painting,  
And magic sculpture, reign'd o'er every scene,  
And shone on every wall; where history,  
And all the mellowest eloquence of learning,  
Haunted all sites; and Medicean splendor  
Was intertwined with every hallow'd object,  
All was a blank to me! For in the tortures  
Of my convulsed frame, and use of limbs  
Lost, my position was scarce more auspicious,  
Than in some dull unconsecrated haunt.

Then once more with the spring the fever'd blood  
Seem'd it's sad venomous bitterness to calm,  
And now where Virgil's holy relics lie,  
And o'er the Neapolitan Bay the summit  
Of proud Vesuvius vomits fluid flames,  
My destiny convey'd me. Pisa fam'd  
In all Italian annals, and of late  
To Britons dear for its most noble poet's  
Abode, in the hurried tempest-shaken days  
Preceding his heroic Grecian death,  
I pass'd, and at Livornia's busy port  
First cast my eyes on Mediterranean waves.

Thence round Italia's shores, and sea-gem'd isles,  
Elba, and Sarde, and many a name in story  
Familiar, for eleven long sunburnt days,  
We voyag'd—not without full many a peril  
Of tempest and of pirates; and with joy  
Laugh'd, and were near convuls'd, when that bright Bay  
Of glorious beauty and sublimity

Mix'd, to whose shores our frail and crowded bark  
Was destin'd, open'd on our dazzled view.

'Twas noon, the end of May:—the radiant sun  
Was on the bosom of the mighty waters,  
And on the tops of the unnumbered promontories,  
Towns, hamlets, castles, villas; and St.-Elmo  
Shew'd her magnificent summit. To the harbour,  
Crowded with ships of many a distant nation,  
Our prow in joy exulting cut its way.

The solar beams now with a flame intolerable  
Shot right upon our heads: and still we had  
T'endure the torments long of quarantine,  
Mid crowded vessels, filth, and stench, and noise,  
Lock'd closely side to side,—the suffering  
Was scarce endurable;—and then, to crown it,  
My passport was irregular,—and I  
Was threaten'd with a prison, and had nearly  
Incurr'd that order of a despot power.

Now in that beautiful and unrival'd city  
Hotels were crowded, and around the beds,  
And on the floors where we repos'd, were seen  
Scorpions disporting in dire multitudes.  
But soon, Chiaia, thy enchanting spot  
Receiv'd us, with Vesuvius on our left,  
The Bay before us—and upon the rock  
Of laurel to the right where Sannazaro  
Dwelt, the still worship'd tomb where Virgil sleeps!  
There six sweet months of nature's highest brilliance  
We whil'd away, though Carbonari troubles  
For a short moment clouded our fair joys

With fear and peril, and at last the storm  
 Blackening, and seemingly about to burst,  
 Drove us away to Rome. It was an earthly  
 Paradise, inasmuch as nature's charms  
 Could make it one—and ill departed from!  
 For Rome—the heavy air to me o'ercame  
 All its attractions. Not a day of health  
 There could I find, and gladly did I seek,  
 After four months another change of climate.

Then thee, Ferrara, fam'd for Estè's house,  
 And Tasso's amorous madness, and ye hills  
 Of Euganean lustre, that the beams  
 Of eve on Petrarch's holy age reflected;  
 And Padua, thee; and most of all immortal  
 Gem of the Adriatic, wave-clad Venice!

And then a roll of names which but to mention  
 Awakens all the treasures of the mind  
 Verona, Bergamo, Vicenza, Milan,  
 Turin and Chambery, and steep Mont Genis.

And then again we to thy Lake return'd,  
 O subject of my song, and where an empress  
 Had late resided, took up our abode.  
 Intensely here my literary labours  
 I plied, and clos'd the haunted Tale of Huntley  
 And Alice Berkeley, and Sir Ambrose Grey,  
 And shriek-fill'd Hellingsley's spoil-cover'd hall:  
 And here the Tale of Odo's Count went on,  
 Where innocent and most angelic Bertha  
 Bore on the scaffold an heroic death.

And now upon the dry and most perplex'd

Question of *Wealth of nations*, and the means  
Of wise and economic circulation,  
I meditated deeply, and thus clear'd  
To my own mind's conviction the enigma.

And then the Bibliomania, which had long  
Infected my researches, came again  
To occupy too many of my hours.  
And all the while the torments of affairs  
Of wretched business, and the wiles of cunning  
Extortion, wickedness, ingratitude,  
Audacious insult, inconceivable  
Perversion of the laws, meant for protection,  
To instruments of wrong and ravenous rapine!  
And during all, a heart by nature timid,  
Morbid, and rous'd with dangerous emotion  
At slightest cause for care, grief, or regret:  
And when they touch'd, losing the happy train  
Of those ideas to the Muses suited.  
But ever in my utmost agonies  
I struggled still the trembling pen to guide,  
And call'd the frighten'd Muse to calm my breast.

Yet what will not malignity pervert?  
This energy of stout resistance, which  
May fairly arrogate the name of virtue,  
Has oft-times by the cruelty of censure  
Been deem'd a reckless disregard of duties!  
As if the virtue were in brooding over  
Evils we cannot change! as if to smile,  
And live in regions of imagination,  
When coarse reality is unendurable

Misery, were a crime to be reproach'd!  
 "But when" it may be said, "your enchanted ears  
 "Are listening to *Elysian waterfalls*,  
 "You will not hearken to the trumpet's call,  
 "When summon'd back to duty!" It may be,  
 The Muse's votary is sometimes lost  
 In this delirium: will he be the less  
 In the wild depths of unresisted grief?

But now incessant were th'insulting calls  
 On my most outrag'd spirit! Morns and nights  
 Scarcely suffic'd for the exhausting tasks,  
 Necessity and just defence impos'd  
 On my worn pen. But my afflicted heart,  
 Ah, far more than my pen, was work'd and worn.

It was an iron winter, most severe  
 In its extremities of snow and storm.  
 Right up against the roaring Lake the windows  
 Of my abode, now far within the city,  
 Lay. One dark morning in December's depth,  
 As by the blazing fire on that romance  
 Most magical above all others of  
 The great Magician of the North, the Pirate,  
 My eyes, imagination, heart, intent  
 I sat, a shriek came down the Lake, the House  
 Trembled and rock'd, and twice from my shook chair  
 Was I near tumbled on the floor: the bells  
 Through all the house rang, and St. Peter's sounded,  
 And all the church bells thro the town were shaken,  
 And also gave the signal. 'Twas an earthquake!—  
 Slight—but appalling! Ah! how often since

Have I on the portentous moment dwelt!  
In the same room, and by the self-same fire,  
After an interval of an hundred months,  
When I had dwelt in many a far abode,  
And once for eight and twenty months again  
My native soil inhabited, some sudden  
Convulsion struck upon my vital strings;\*  
And eight and forty hours I gasp'd for breath.  
Then came the sleepless bed again; the appetite  
Gone; and the loss of limbs; and eighteen nights  
Of dangerous agony, and strange excitement  
Of intellect, beyond its natural power;  
Bursts of wild brilliance hitherto unknown  
To my weak faculties; unintermitted  
Toil of the intellect e'en for nineteen  
Successive hours; and still the body torn;  
Limbs paralis'd, and all the mortal part  
Of earthly mould, sick even to death's door!

Thus it appears, as if the soul can work,  
In bold defiance of the body's will:—  
And sometimes blazes most, when it is nearest  
To its departure. Much I've travel'd since  
In mind and heart; and in my own conceit  
Have far advanc'd. I cannot count the pages  
Of various matter I have written and printed  
Since that most perilous crisis,—poetry,  
And prose-romance, and politics, and memoirs;

\* March 1830: see the note at the end of the Poem on Modern Aristocracy. Geneva, 1831.



And dry antiquities, and moral essays,  
On which my busy pen is ever running.  
“Accursed scribbler!” cries the wretch, whose false  
Concoctions, like th’ enchanter’s forceful spear,  
My plume goes forth to pierce, and open lay  
His snares of dread destruction to the sun!  
“*Scribendi cacoethes!* odious passion!  
“Be fire to its relentless energies,  
“And light upon it quickly, and consume it!”  
Not yet thou grand destroyer! O not yet  
Will be thy wish accomplish’d! I have slept  
At times, ’tis true, amid ’this morning’s task,  
As if my strength was failing, and that weakness  
And age, not fire and violence, would consume me!  
There are, on whose enormous wickedness  
When I am call’d to meditate, the’ emotion  
Exhausts my spirits more than other labour  
By day and night continued! My torn nerves  
Long tremble and distort, ere they subside  
Again, the calm idea to permit!  
I am the being but of impulses,  
And when my heart cannot direct, and light,  
My head is barren, and my hand is weak.  
I have no abstract intellect, and cannot  
Act by what cold dry reason calls a duty;—  
The worse for me! for I am told ’tis this  
Which only virtue constitutes! and feeling  
And grand emotion, though ’tis on the side  
Of virtuous sympathies, and love of beauty,  
And admiration of heroic conduct,

Is but an impulse of involuntary  
Unconscience-sprung, and therefore valueless, passion!  
As for myself, I cannot comment thus  
In my severest and most self-condemning  
Moments! For impulses, if they are good,  
Must spring from virtue's fountains: a bad heart  
Can never pour forth pure and blessed waters!  
It may produce them mingled: but the taste,  
The scent, the penetrating eye, th'effect,  
After a moment's pause upon the bosom,  
Will the infusion of the ill discover:—  
The false bursts, murmurs, flashes, sparkles, dies!  
If such are these effusions, if the vapour  
Of false emotion swells them, if the thoughts  
Come not direct and unsophisticate  
From the undrug'd and uninfected bosom,  
If the heart's fiat be not on their utterance,  
Then sweep them to the pit where they may perish,  
And never bubble, murmur, sparkle more!  
And may I be obedient to the doom  
That I shall then deserve, and hide my head  
In just obscurity, and linger out  
The little remnant of my days in silence,  
And sink into the grave, unwept, unknown!

END OF BOOK II.

THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK III.

OVER thine Eastern head, O Lake, how grand  
Lausanne her ancient holy spires erects!  
I need not trace her history : but Britons  
Ever associate it with GIBBON'S name!  
—A name now universal !—I can trace it  
With selfish fondness from its private source  
On the white cliffs, where Dover's frowning towers  
O'erlook the ocean of the straits, that separate us  
From rival Gaul. There, having climb'd the heights,  
That from the town wash'd by the waves ascend,  
With panting labour;—leaving on our right  
The tower, the draw-bridge, and gigantic walls  
Of the stupendous Castle, ever noted  
In all the pages of old England's annals,  
On a light chalky soil we journey northward,  
A little inward from the fearful edge  
Of those tremendous cliffs, which Shakespeare's pen  
Forever has immortalised ;—a scatter'd

Hamlet and humble church,—where from the rim  
That overlooks the dashing billows, slopes,  
From the cliff westerly, the sheepwalk,—stands :  
And close adjoining the obscure remains  
Of the old manor-house. How little now  
Are these to outward sight ! But the creative  
Mind beholds in them a most noble spot ;  
The source, the cradle of a mighty genius ;  
Nor will it doubt, that when the rural lords  
Were wandering o'er these ocean-misted fields,  
In days of the Tudorian Princess, or  
Under the feeble but tyrannic rod  
Of Scottish Stuart's race, to vulgar eyes  
Only like rival squires of plough-tail memory,  
That in their brains the fruitful seeds were working  
Of future European eminence !

How have I trac'd them in the parish records  
With a fond microscopic industry,  
Which fools and half-philosophers call dull !  
There the great grandsire of the younger stock  
Whence sprung th' Historian, planted his young offset  
From an old root, as antiquaries tell us,  
Of credit in cotemporary days,  
(For thus, old Philipot, hast thou recorded !)—  
It was a fief bought from th'impoverish'd fortune  
Of a most gallant Peer, whom wise Elizabeth  
Plac'd on green Erin's barbarous habitants  
To rule rebellion by a fearless sword !  
The tasteless recklessness of times gone by  
May unacquainted be with *Borough's* name !

But 'twas of primal ancientry, and sprung  
From Cantium's Earl in the heroic times  
Of the first royalty of proud Plantagenet :  
And in its source e'en higher than that name  
Of glorious feudal splendor ! For the searcher  
Of genealogical sagacity  
Will trace it as a lineal male descendant  
Of the first race of Merovingian kings !  
And hence Jerusalem in the first Crusades  
Drew its third Monarch.—O thou beautiful,  
Illumin'd Spirit—who with piercing eyes  
And rapturous gaze the misty veil withdrawest,  
With which Time covers Truth ! is it then possible  
That thou the stigma shouldst incur of dryness,—  
Of barren curiosity—of trifling  
Research and labour ? O most odious envy !  
O most mean, vulgar, ignorant conceit !  
O most accurs'd mistaker of dull darkness  
For light ! Thou hast no pleasure but to blast  
The seeds of glory, and nip in the bud  
The blossoms and the fruit of all that's grand !  
So thus with thee, old Lord of these high lands,  
Wash'd by the Ocean's spray ! thy sword was all,  
Or nearly all th'inheritance thou hadst  
In worldly goods ; and therefore was the glory  
Of thy most princely origin forgotten !  
And now Necessity, that ever gripes  
Magnanimous merit, forc'd from thy possession  
This humble but belov'd manorial heritage ;  
And the small purchase fell to GIBBON'S lot !

Now two and forty years have pass'd away,  
Since with fond eye I visited the relics  
Of this decaying mansion, and its church,  
A structure mean, neglected, unadorn'd,  
On whose cold pavement were the stones inscribed  
With a few names and dates;—all that remain'd  
Within these sacred walls of the memorials  
Of a once-numerous race. And then again  
Thro the old manor-house with searching eye,  
And heart that almost beat with curiosity,  
I forward forc'd my steps: the little hall,  
Earth-floor'd, was now a filthy magazine  
For wood and lumber: here and there initials  
And dates remain'd in carve-work: and my eye  
Glow'd, when the heraldic ensigns round the cornice  
Of one apartment, blazon'd in their colours,  
Still shone—*a lion and three scallop-shells.*  
A coat not unbecoming nobler stocks!  
And underneath the date—*One thousand and  
Six hundred twenty seven!*—'Twas the grandfather  
Of him, whose son, a too well known Director  
Of the mad *South-sea* Bubble, made his fortune,  
Lost it again by punishment deserv'd,  
And then again remade it. But the old man,  
His father, from a younger brother's share,—  
One of a numerous bed—had carv'd himself  
A plentiful endowment in the City,  
Whither the younger shoots of gentilitia  
Trees were accustom'd to resort for nutriment,—  
*Matthew*, his name baptismal: still it stands

Recorded in the old parochial Register.  
 The date—let **sceptics** note it well, and search—  
 Was, *sixteen hundred forty two*—precise.  
 The Historian, of his son, the bubble-monger,  
 A brief but spirited portraiture has given.  
 A year or two before the Historian's birth  
 He died, respected, rich, and of a fame  
 For talents, and intelligence political,  
 As well as mercantile. His long removal  
 From native soils had drop'd his Kentish ties,  
 And little to his children and his grandson  
 He left of the remembrance.

But the Muse

Must wander back again to more remote  
 Æras, when in a narrower sphere the race  
 Busied themselves. When Puritanic rage  
 Troubled the land with civil broils, they took,  
 If I have not mis-spelt, the people's part.  
 And yet I a tradition have, obscure  
 And half-forgotten, of the contrary:  
 Rich they then were assuredly, and bought  
 Many fair lands: and sons and daughters flourish'd  
 Spous'd to the worthiest of the neighbouring houses.  
 There Digges, and Cowper, lyric Sandys, and Hammond,  
 And Marsham, and Anacreon Stanley, and Wyatt,  
 Fair Aucher of remote antiquity,  
 And St.-Leger of Norman lustre,—Finet  
 And Mennis, courtly wits—and learned Boys,  
 And travel'd Bargrave, scientific Rooke,  
 And Harflete, and the truly eminent Twysdens,

Judge and Historian, and the accomplish'd Dering,  
 Though by wise Clarendon too well remember'd  
 For an unlucky vanity.

Enough

Perchance of barren catalogue I've given :  
 But who will wonder if here wit and learning  
 Shone in a province, where for centuries  
 Sackville and Sydney; names for ever dear,  
 Presided. Mute, and with shorn beams, and lost,  
 Are now those growing lamps ! and a dull cloud  
 Of heavy and impenetrable vapour  
 Sits o'er the province! Not a name but thine,  
 O Tenterden ; and thine, accomplish'd Prelate  
 Of Peterborough's mitre, now adorns it!

Then, GIBBON, was thy wife by close alliance  
 From the same mother sprung with her, the wife  
 Of one who, fam'd in law and politics  
 From the first Charles's reign to despot-driving  
 William, was ever on the side of freedom !  
 MAYNARD, to whom the patriot monarch gave  
 The seals of equity in his old age!—  
 And thus the city draper, in alliance  
 Nephew to him who held the royal seals,  
 Kept his head high among the sons of commerce.

Meantime *Westcliffe's* old Hall receiv'd at intervals  
 The congregated branches : to the cliffs  
 They wander'd, and in half-regretful memory  
 Heard the waves beat beneath them, and beheld  
 The white cliffs and the glittering towers of Calais  
 Across the tumbling tides in beautiful



And heart-arousing colours lift themselves!  
 Then oft they stroll'd to gaze upon the Castle,  
 Or to the busy town beneath, whose harbour  
 Crowded with entrances and exits, ever  
 Supplied a moving, rich variety.  
 And much they talk'd of their ascending hopes;  
 And of their rival children; and the fire  
 That shone already in their eyes, when fame  
 And wealth and honours, and the distant grandeur,  
 That far beyond the bounds of provinces  
 Of petty circuit, stretch'd to grasp the world,  
 And in dim vision they beheld the glories  
 That after on their proud posterity  
 Should fall!

And here the fortune-teller came,  
 And taking an unmarried damsel's hand,  
 And archly looking in her timid eye,  
 Said "Fair one, there is gloom upon thy countenance  
 " Mix'd with those streaks of glowing light, which laugh  
 " Rosily through the clouds!  
 " I do not say these streaks of light shall conquer,  
 " And keep off evil from thy future fate:—  
 " Much shalt thou have to suffer! Yet infus'd  
 " Into thy cup shall also be much joy!  
 " E'en here upon thy natal spot shalt thou  
 " Know some few years of pleasure in a love  
 " Not unbecoming thee! But yet it shall  
 " Be mix'd with cares, and terrors, and distractions,  
 " And much thy thoughtless, but good-nature'd husband  
 " Shall waste; and shall at last exhaust the patience

“ Of friends as well as foes; and then shall Ruin  
“ Come irrecoverable; and sweep all!  
“ And then again with weeping and convuls'd  
“ Embraces shalt thou be withdrawn away,  
“ With all thy little ones, across th'Atlantic,  
“ And in American woods among barbarians  
“ End thy last days!—O weep not, sigh not, tremble not!  
“ Thou art a young enthusiast, and thou lovest  
“ Glory; and dost delight to make the future  
“ Over the present rule! Then let the flame  
“ Of hope upon that swelling bosom play!  
“ For of those little ones, who by thy side  
“ Will weeping haug, and, when the stormy howl  
“ Of billows o'er thy rolling vessel breaks,  
“ Will shriek, and clasp thee, and for help from thee  
“ Uselessly call, shall come a future race,  
“ Whose sway shall o'er the northern Continent,  
“ Thy destiny, be mighty! and whose name,  
“ When future empires, threatning the old world,  
“ Shall rise among the most renown'd, shall shine;  
“ And RANDOLPH'S race,—and of their female blood  
“ Intrepid patriot JEFFERSON,—shall trace  
“ Their blood to thee!” Thus ended, the proud maid  
A golden tribute to the palm applied.

Then smiling came a comrade, on the arm  
Of the fair damsel leaning; from the stock,  
And of the name, who from the town below  
The castle, came that day upon a visit.  
“ And thou too, pretty one, went on the Gypsy,  
“ Wilt hear thy fortune!—well; it shall be told;

“ And thou wilt not repent it! Look not sceptical!  
“ Seest thou not at a distance, on the edge  
“ Of the cliff sporting there, a manly form  
“ Double thy girlish age! Not for a lover  
“ Thou canst behold him now! He has already  
“ A faithful wife! and see that little infant  
“ Hanging in fearful gaiety on his skirts!  
“ It is his only child! and not thro her  
“ The name can be preserv’d! But let me whisper  
“ Soft in thine ear; lest he should hear the secret  
“ Of fate;—the mother of that little one  
“ Will but a little while survive : and then—  
“ Start not! yes, thou shalt be his wedded wife!  
“ Now pause!—and think upon thy fate!—I have not  
“ Yet told, what still more deeply may, perchance,  
“ Affect thee! thou shalt have a son; but he  
“ Shall die in youth; yet not before his father.  
“ That father in the bloom of manhood shall  
“ Sink to the grave; and in a little space  
“ Thou shalt in other nuptials comfort seek!  
“ Then of thee shall be born a child of lustre,  
“ Who shall on Britain’s woolsack sit with fame  
“ Unrival’d, almost through a glorious reign;  
“ And wealth and honours shall acquire, and found  
“ A noble race of potent chiefs, and hold  
“ Proud *Hardwick’s* Earldom many a generation!  
“ But dost thou ask what fate the little one,  
“ To which thou shall be stepmother, may have?  
“ I cannot tell thee all! I see before me  
“ The spirit of a future trembling Being,

“ Who shall be a devoted morbid creature  
 “ Of all the Muses; and to him will fall  
 “ The lot, to tell the story of this little one :  
 “ For he from her will his corporeal blood  
 “ Draw ; and full much of those from whom he springs  
 “ It will be his delight to tell,—defying  
 “ Envy’s and folly’s ever-ready censures ;  
 “ And feeding his wild fancy with the thought,  
 “ That in the group of common blood, of those  
 “ Now met within my sight, there is a spirit  
 “ Of rarer intellect, not oft bestow’d  
 “ Through a whole race; and which shall long endure,  
 “ And not be in successive generations  
 “ Spent! But the world will still believe him wild,  
 “ And give but little credit to his visions!”

And now the Gypsy vanish’d, and the mind  
 Of each who heard her, with the mysteries  
 Was touch’d; and thought by day, and dreamt at night,  
 Of all the glimmering future. Of that future  
 My task goes on th’unfoldings to relate.  
 I have the birth related of the draper,  
 Born in the ancient manor-house, abutting  
 Upon the lofty cliffs oppos’d to Calais.  
 Edward, the son, enlarg’d his father’s dealings ;  
 And was a London merchant, of his class  
 Among the first. At length ambition led him,  
 Or most rapacious love of gain, to join  
 Those windy projects, call’d *the Southsea Bubble*,  
 Such as, though reason laughs at, were again  
 Re-acted in this isle scarce six years past.

Remote at length from natal spots, which went  
 To strangers, he the evening of his days  
 Clos'd near \* that city, where the scene was plac'd  
 Of his most busy, money-getting life.  
 Then to another province his rich son  
 Transplanted, spent his days with country squires.  
 But for inheritance the paternal temper  
 Knew not, diminishing the heap his sire  
 Delighted to accumulate : a man  
 Of moody humour—speculative, silent,  
 Keeping lock'd up within his working brain  
 His unsubstantial projects,—melancholy  
 When what he hop'd had not succeeded, yet  
 Not telling why!—and when death came, his fortune  
 Found to be more than half dissolv'd away.

And now we reach the child, to whom this song  
 Is rigidly appropriate,—the immortal  
 Historian of Declining Rome.—Lausanne,  
 How much of that stupendous task didst thou  
 Each morning shine upon! though not with thee  
 The mighty project first arose. In Rome  
 Itself the light of that gigantic scheme  
 First broke upon the young and fervid author.  
 Early emancipated from the trammels  
 Of roofs paternal, he commenc'd to be,  
 When yet a child, a winged citizen  
 Of the wide world's exhaustless climes and people.  
 In that ill-form'd and feeble frame of body

\* At Putney.

A rich, a vigorous, and plastic soul  
Resided, and in infancy began  
To seek for food out of the common reach.

But all was bent upon the tale of man  
Acting beneath the chains of social ties,  
And form'd by artificial policy.  
First the false glare of oriental fable  
Attracted him: but by degrees the sober  
Investigation of that history,  
Now philosophic call'd, absorb'd the keen  
Yet patient faculties of his dissecting  
And critic mind. The wild imaginations  
Of range poetic were to him unknown.  
The reigning literature of the French school,  
And above others plausible Voltaire,  
Too much delighted and misled his taste,  
And made him sceptical, ironical,  
Piquant, and pointed, far beyond the bounds  
A pure and classic taste approves. In truth  
A genius of the highest tone and reach  
Did not belong to him! Even and formal,  
His style and thoughts in one unvarying mould  
Were cast. A constant balancing of periods,  
An artful application of one mode  
Of keen dissection and comparison,  
A calm resolve to measure, weigh, adjust;  
A stream clear, unperturb'd, and imperturbable,  
A patient industry, which, as 'twas calm,  
Was ne'er exhausted, erudition varied  
Of ancient and of modern lore,—combin'd

To constitute a work unrival'd yet,  
And never likely to be fairly rival'd.

In that most admirable edifice  
Of symmetry and grace, and rich materials  
Drawn from all learning's granaries measureless,  
The very Notes, brief, pointed, big with meaning  
And critical discussion, are alone  
Sufficient to secure immortal fame.  
The mind that such a subject could compress  
Into so small a space, in luminous  
Narration, had a faculty to pierce,  
Arrange, and recompose, which minds sagacious  
Must contemplate with wonder, and with ceaseless  
Praise.

When upon th'Historian's windows shone  
The morning sun by Alpine heights reflected,  
With what a consciousness of tranquil pleasure  
He rose, his daily web to weave in threads  
Of golden light, that still engag'd the eye,  
Though of one endless pattern. Dear retreat,  
Where all the little passions of ambition,  
And restless vanity, and odious rivalry,  
Of that small world so ignorantly call'd  
The great, and fashion's ideotic judgments,  
The vile ennui of vile activity  
In most debasing trifles,—were forgot!

Here the mind free to follow its own native  
Excursions, its own native pure emotions  
To suffer and to nurse; its own opinions  
To rest upon; by no rude blind resistance

To be assaulted and confus'd, could give  
Full scope to its own energies. The turmoil  
Of agitated, agitating life,  
In the curs'd workings of the restless passions,  
In crowded walks of the stirr'd social world,  
Will not permit the gathering creations  
Of plastic minds to work themselves to form,  
And visible embodiment. In solitude  
Of natural unalloy'd sublimities,  
The spirits of th'invisible regions  
Come forth, and play the gambols on man's brain.  
In solitude a man may yet be wicked :  
In the world's crowded bustle, and loud stir  
Of imitation, he cannot be good!  
But are the fruits of mental genius goodness,  
If they be not true likewise, as they're able ?  
They must as least have partial truth to give them  
The character of genuine genius!  
It is but feeble and affected talent,  
Which cannot truth elicit. If it can,  
And does not, then it is pure wickedness !  
Chang'd are the times : of yore the petit maître  
Of fashion was a very frivolous creature :  
And if the mighty and o'erwhelming flame,  
That overset the ancient dynasty  
Of France, was pregnant of predominant evil,  
It had some cleansing purgatives, and pour'd  
A vigour where naught reign'd but feebleness.  
All European manners had decayed  
Into effeminate artifice, and vice



Of imitative luxuries, where refinement  
 Of faint o'erpolish'd pleasures damp'd the soul.  
 Then affectation run thro' all the tastes  
 And occupations of society,  
 And literature, corrupted and unnerv'd,  
 Languish'd in vapid and inane productions.

But O ye breezes of the mountains, freshen'd  
 By exhalations of the spreading waters,  
 How bracing ye came o'er the frame relax'd  
 Of Rome's Historian, when from London's smoke,  
 Its feverish streets, its government corrupt,  
 Its petty passions, its revolting forms,  
 He threw himself in your sublime embrace!

With what emotion I have visited,  
 (As every traveller) the plain abode,  
 The refuge where his daily task he plied :  
 The little garden arbour, where he wrote,  
 And the broad glorious prospect, which his pen  
 With rapture celebrates.

But he return'd!

Affection call'd him to his native land;  
 Fatigue of body to a frame diseas'd  
 Gave aggravated injury : he linger'd  
 But a few months in torture, and then died,  
 Full short of the allotted age of man.

Then did I lose the honour and delight,  
 But just begun, of a reviv'd alliance!  
 How little did I think, when I delay'd  
 His offered visit from the petty fear  
 A house unroof'd and full of noisy workmen

Would incommode his delicate nerves, th'excuse  
Would close the opportunity for ever,  
And that in three short months he would be sleeping  
In the unhearing grave! He was a guest  
Once at thy table, Wootton, when his fate  
Plac'd him on Dover's heights, a soldier's duty  
To execute with his provincial corps!  
It does not seem as if, when in that castle,  
Which for a thousand years has bid defiance  
To haughty Gallia, he was well aware  
How near he was the sacred spot, whence sprung  
The long succession of his ancestors!

Lively and clear was his imagination,  
Though somewhat quaint; and he, it seems, delighted  
With ancestral fondness to look back  
On days long past. "And," here when sitting calm  
Under the crowded and magnificent oaks  
Of wood-crown'd Wootton, "here" he might have said  
"The little one, of which the Gypsy spoke,  
"To her fond father clinging, on the edge  
"Of those stupendous native cliffs, that hang  
"Over the Ocean frowning on the towers  
"Of Calais,—O yes, here the little one  
"In future days nurs'd up her manly brood  
"Sprung from my grandsires; and this gloomy boy,  
"Whose lightest auburn locks profusely flow  
"Upon his shoulders, and in whose dark eye  
"I can discern bright beams of casual flash  
"Piercing through darkness, has no vulgar hopes,  
"Or aptitudes: that shyness is the nurse

“ Of brooding thoughts and high imaginations;  
“ And he, whate’er be his success, or fame,  
“ Will give his soul to study and to fiction.  
“ From him at last the line shall I recover,  
“ By which the series of my ancestors  
“ Deep into the ingulphing night of Time  
“ I may with an unerring clue retrace!  
“ And he shall honour me and mine, and boast  
“ With reverential regard my name;  
“ And when of princely blood, that in his veins  
“ Flows by a thousand channels, he may talk,  
“ Still uneclipsed me and mine shall he  
“ Deem for th’ intrinsic qualities of mind,  
“ Which blaze, as he will argue, far above  
“ Rank, riches, titles, kingdoms, worldly power!”  
    And then he might cry, “Gypsy, come again,  
“ And tell another tale, so full of pleasure,  
“ As that which to my grandsires, and their fathers  
“ And mothers, thou didst tell, ere we departed  
“ From our paternal heritage, by guess  
“ (And I would not miscalculate it), nearly  
“ An hundred years ago! For as thou wert  
“ A prophetess, I must believe thee spirit,  
“ And thou perchance mayst still those woodlands haunt!  
    “ And oft perhaps from Dover’s cliffs, when storms  
“ Rage, and the billows dash against the clouds,  
“ And now aloft the groaning vessel rides,  
“ And now sinks down again into the gulph  
“ Of whelming waters, inland tak’st thy way,  
“ And o’er the hills and vallies intervening,

“ A little southward to the left inclin'd,  
“ Frequentest halls of squires, and hearths of cottagers.  
“ O tell the chronicle of what has past  
“ In those wild regions, since the name of GIBBON  
“ Departed from its ancestral lands!  
“ But tell me most the future fate of him,  
“ Who now addresses thee! Who burns with fire  
“ Of fame, which yet he scarce can firmly dare  
“ To hope will be fulfill'd to his ambition!”  
Thus to the Gypsy he perchance had spoken,  
And if he spoke it, were this lively Gypsy.  
A very prophetess, she would have said  
“ Thy hopes shall be fulfill'd, and thou shalt ride  
“ Upon the wings of fame full mightily;  
“ For many a year thy gorgeous web shall grow  
“ Upon the Lemman Lake; and when 'tis finish'd,  
“ And to the world unroll'd, all eyes shall gaze  
“ With admiration on it; but for thee  
“ It shall thy doom be, to thy native land  
“ In haste to come, the triumph to enjoy;—  
“ But then alas! thine earthly days shall close!”

And now, ye waters, and ye varied banks,  
Cloath'd with towns, castles, hamlets, and fair villas,  
What object next shall my Muse bring to notice?  
I see thy walls upraising from the waves  
Their massy towers, O Chillon! but on thee  
I hesitate to touch, for he, the Bard  
From Diodati's chateau, has already  
Blaz'd thee with modern notice: yet the song  
Is not amongst his happiest efforts there!

If I may freely speak, the mystic strain  
Of modern affectation rules too much ;—  
A catchy, forc'd, irregular, obscure,  
Distorted manner; a false air of swell  
And inspiration! The plain truth suffices  
To fill an uncorrupted reader's mind.

The tale of BONNIVARD the chroniclers  
Have told with more precision. It is full  
In modern books: the antiquarian searches  
Of Grenus and of Galiffe have again  
Brought it to light:—the hero of the story,  
A man of ardent spirit, and a lover  
Of liberty, a bold and firm reformer,  
Against the bigoted and tyrannic House  
Of Savoy a declar'd and open enemy.  
But he was rash, impetuous, and wild,  
Irregular in manners and opinions.  
He knew that Savoy's sovereign sought revenge  
For his resistances; and on his way  
Careless he ventur'd forth, trusting to faith  
Of those who ne'er had kept their word, when interest  
Or passion prompted them to disregard it!

And thus his passport scorn'd, into the hands  
Disguis'd of that perfidious Prince he fell,  
Under the character of highway robbers,  
Who gave him up to the arch enemy.  
And then to Chillon's water-circled walls  
Was he transported: but at first not deep  
Into its dungeons: when at last, for cause  
Now unrecorded, he was low consign'd

To those dark, damp, and deathlike prison vaults!  
 Five years he linger'd there; nor is it easy  
 To give belief that he could life and mind  
 So long preserve in that terrific depth  
 Of misery, since free again in limbs  
 And buoyant spirits he came forth, and liv'd  
 Yet a few years. But fitter for the Chronicler  
 Than for the Muse is this minute discussion:  
 Nor dare I dwell upon a tale, which Byron  
 With firey and o'erwhelming pen has touch'd.  
 What the great mind, with native powers endow'd,  
 By resolution and by industry,  
 Can do, no sage perchance has yet expounded.  
 It cannot utterly o'ercome the pangs  
 And faults of body; but it nearly can  
 Effect this mighty conquest, and to spirit  
 Raise the clay-mould. Perchance the firey mind  
 In damp and cold may make the current flow  
 Of earthly blood; and may o'erpower the darkness  
 Of death itself: but 'tis the loss of hope  
 And self-reliance that destroys the spell.  
 Then the blood chills, and at the mercy falls  
 Of all external and material things.  
 "*What we believe that we can do, we can do;*"\*  
 And want of confidence destroys all power.  
 Thus genial beams of fame, and the gay cheers  
 Of others, can alone bring forth the fruits  
 Of many a rich but timid spirit, which

\* Possunt, quia posse videntur.

Knows not its own puissance, till the warmth  
Of praise acts on it : without sun what fruit  
Can ripen? and then who will toil, and toil,  
Hopeless of recompence, and unassur'd  
That these fatiguing toils give use or pleasure?  
We cease to sing to those who will not hear;  
We waste not voices on the passing breeze;  
We frame not long creations that may lie  
Folded and hid within our own scrutoires.  
The love of fame, if it but be a love  
That follows worthy labours, is a passion  
Virtuous, in degree as it is warm.

He who is dull to it, is selfish, sensual,  
And impotent of aught sublime or fair.

What traveller thro Europe's bounds has left  
The sight of thee, Geneva, unregarded?  
Where mighty bards have trod, I ever look,  
And see their visions hang upon the spot!  
And you, ye idols of my childhood, manhood,  
And latest age, O Milton, and O Gray,  
Hither, when bending to sublime Italia  
Your breathless footsteps, with delight ye came,  
And tarried on the noble heights of Jura,  
To gaze upon the bursting lake before you,  
And snow-clad, craggy, numberless, in height  
And shape forever varied, Alpine summits,  
Crown'd by Mont Blanc, his head among the clouds,  
Gainst which the sun's resisted beams of gold  
In vain their flames impell'd! a fate congenial  
Guided your purposes! Your taste, your feelings,

Your erudition, your commanding strength  
Of reason, your deep love of meditation  
And solitude, your eye to nature's charms  
Open, enraptur'd, curious; glowing words,  
Exalted, picturesque; the holy flame  
Of most profound devotion, simple fare,  
And simple garb, and hate of worldly races,  
And worldly tracks of base ambition, and  
Of craving appetite of worldly lucre!

There are perchance who will condemn this union  
Of men unequal in the quantity  
Of fruits which they behind them left, if not  
In quality and essence! 'Twill be said,  
The latter Bard has no creative powers  
Display'd; and that without creation none  
Dare to the fame aspire of mighty poets.  
The grand invention of the Epic, Gray  
Never, 'tis true, attempted: but his lyrics  
Are with invention rich of ornament  
At least, if not design. It was the fault  
Of morbidness, that wither'd in the bud  
All the magnificent fruits, that in the fountains  
Of his resplendent genius glanc'd, and died!  
Ample and bright creation lay within  
The compass of those vigorous burning powers;  
But sorrow from his cradle, the keen sufferings  
Of a fond mother, the base moodiness  
Of a sour, selfish, rash, and spenthrift father,  
Fix'd an incurable gloom upon his heart.

Not so heroic-minded Milton: he,



Tho not th'advancement worthy of his merit  
He found, and tho his Muse found few  
If audience fit, yet bated not a jot  
Of hope; nay, rather gave full effluence  
To a mind overflowing with grand thoughts  
And gorgeous imagery. But the times of trouble,  
When civil discord stain'd the fields with blood,  
Came, and the Bard to liberty's defence  
Gave all the studies of his days and nights.  
And when his eyes, "in this sublime defence  
O'erplied," their vision lost, his spirit sunk not,  
But rising in gigantic energy  
Of inward light, as outward objects, shut  
From his perception, were as if they were not,  
His faculties miraculous, of high  
Creation, glow'd with more abundant brightness.

Ah! with what exquisite intensity  
Of mental pleasure did his moments pass,  
Thus occupied, while Gray in sad ennui  
Linger'd away a life, where in the bosom  
The fire pent up, smoulder'd in smoke away.  
Then came the sickness of the heart; the blood  
Poison'd with vapours; and the limbs convuls'd ;  
And death, a kind releaser. Ere the course  
Of nature, duly exercised, had brought  
This earthly being to an end, had seeds  
Of glowing genius, congregated in  
The narrow limits of a feeble frame,  
Consum'd the boundaries of their abode.

Short was the sojourn that the lyric Bard

Made on the beautiful expanse, Geneva,  
 Of thy sweet rainbow-painted waves, embosom'd  
 In mountains of a thousand shapes and colours,  
 Nor yet had met his heart, or caught his ear  
 The music of thy magic words, Rousseau!  
 O with what rapture, when they reach'd him, did  
 His bosom and his fancy drink them in!

In vain we search the processes of mind,  
 And causes of the different characters  
 Of human genius. Rocks, and mountains, lakes,  
 And all the wonders of sublimity  
 In nature's forms, had seem'd to be the proper  
 Food of poetic and creative faculties.  
 Not so experience of the happier spirits  
 Born on the borders of the Lemman waters:  
 Studies of graver cast are theirs; to sciences  
 Exact are bent their labours; and of fancy  
 They deem the lights are but delusive vapour.  
 Strange thought! but judging from the common cup  
 Of drink, produc'd as nectar, which assumes  
 The name of poetry, less far removed  
 From truth, than critics may at first suppose.  
 The draught, which the corrupted multitude  
 Joys in, with every nauseous stimulant  
 Is mingled in predominant excess.  
 It is a false exhilaration, pregnant  
 With every poison.

But what is real poetry? Not folly;—  
 But highest truths told in the highest manner!  
 To them all sciences are merely naught;—

They teach the movements of the soul;—the actions  
Of the most susceptible heart; the thoughts,  
Which not cold reason, but the holy fire  
Of inspiration, dictates. Not to dress  
In childish ornaments most common objects,  
And make them pass for wonderful with vulgar  
And ideotic minds : not with vain toil  
The fillagree of costly gold and silver  
Into fantastic forms to work, that eyes,  
Of curious trifles passionate, may gaze on;  
But to throw lights into those depths, where only  
Imagination's flame can pierce;—the secrets,  
Which most it man behoves to know : for what  
Comparatively is the boasted science  
Of vegetation, animal, material  
Life, and its laws? But that which represents  
The spirit in fantastic and untrue  
Manner discharging its fine operations,  
Is not the lesson of the genuine Muse.

Truth is a beauty, which rejects in scorn  
All empty ornament ; and most rejects it,  
When it would cover faults : the tricky glare  
O' the painter, who essays to draw attention  
By tints unchaste, graceless, extravagant,  
The universal scorn incurs. Not so  
The labouring, turgid, falsely-swelling poet.  
Oft for a time he captivates the multitude,  
And e'en the critic, who aspires to know  
A lesson far above the multitude's  
Pretensions. He who takes a composition,

Which aims at praise poetic, and when read,  
Has learn'd no lesson of sound wisdom from it,  
Has spent his moments on a fruit not genuine.  
In our old poets who enjoy'd a name,  
There is not ought but wisdom : there we seek  
For lore profound of moral science, vers'd  
In all the nice perplexities, which fate  
Ordains that man by study should evolve!  
Thus Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Cowley, Davenant;  
Thus Davies, Waller, Butler, Denham, Dryden,  
And Pope and Prior, and neglected Harte :  
Thus old George Sandys, and even Wither's Muse,  
Once vulgar deem'd.—To fountains such as these  
Of living waters, he who seeks for knowledge  
Of life must go ; and day and night must linger  
Over their springs ; and in their memories,  
And in their hearts, retain the bright impression  
Of their exhilaration and their incense.

But from the Muse I see a frown, and hear  
Her angry voice ! “Hast thou forgot,” she cries  
“One of my favorite and most gifted votaries?”  
Oblivion not to be forgiv'n! O thou,  
Of whom though not in metre, every word  
Was poetry, O mellow, wise, enchanting,  
O moralist, with fiction's magic rich,  
O graceful, eloquent, affecting Addison ;  
O glory of most chaste and beautiful language,  
Of pure, illumin'd, accurate, and deep  
Thought, and in all the nicer shades of ethics  
An oracle of never-erring judgment!

How could I for a moment thee forget?  
 But darkness soon came on;—and darkness long  
 Has been with light profusely intermingled.  
 Genius has flash'd; but lightning false, and thunder,  
 By th'artificial workmen of the stage,  
 Have caught the public eye and ear, and fascinated  
 With most corrupt and foolish admiration!  
 Hobgoblins as deform'd and forc'd, as play  
 Their part upon a country stage to ignorant,  
 Open-mouth'd, hair-upstanding, rustic gazers,  
 Have won the laurel for most empty heads!  
 And thus the mob will hug th'absurd, before  
 The graceful and the just. But far away  
 Have I again departed from my theme!

COPPET, of thee my Muse has early spoken:  
 And something of the brilliant emanations  
 Of deeply-meditating, somewhat dark,  
 And labour'd priestess of wise oracles,  
 The passionate De Staël, has she essay'd!  
 But Coppet's chateau other sages knew,  
 A century before. There critic BAYLE  
 A portion of his controversial life  
 Pass'd. The incessant labours of a mind  
 Acute, investigating, fervid, sceptical,  
 Delighting in dissection, yet preserve  
 An undiminish'd interest. But ill  
 Conflicts with good in measuring the value  
 Of those sharp mental fruits. A mind that seeks  
 For faults and for objections, is too apt  
 To contemplate but parts,—and not the whole.

Thus Bayle : for grand and general views he never  
With comprehensive pencil could dash out.  
With microscopic eye he search'd and found  
The petty contradiction and defect.  
To take for granted nothing ; to doubt ever,  
Is not the part of wisdom ! But another,—  
A minister of State, on whose ability  
And wisdom, not full half a century  
Gone by, the destiny of mighty France,  
And thence of civil rule and kingly power  
Throughout the world, depended, was the lord  
Of this domain, and here in age and grief,  
And disappointment, anxious cares, and danger,  
Spent his last clouded days. Insane conceit,  
Self-estimate delusive, vanity,  
And unchastised ambition, led astray  
A mind and heart for an inferior station  
Well fitted, and in humbler labours wise  
And virtuous ! NECKER was a charlatan  
In politics, and did not see how little  
The hocus-pocus of the desk can change  
The wealth of nations, and financial trick,  
And gamblings on th'exchange, can operate  
Upon a nation's want of means to meet  
The exigences of its actual costs.

O strange delusion in a numerous people,  
Ingenious, fertile in resources, clear,  
To lore both moral and political  
Happily fram'd, but turbulent, and changeable,  
And light, and vain. It was a fatal blindness

Which made the rich financier trust his powers  
For such a function in such frightful times,  
When all the waves were roaring, and o'erleaping  
Their bounds. Full little of the history  
Of th'human heart knew he; or of the wheels  
By which the politics of states are mov'd;—  
A man of abstract notions, full of saws,  
And figures to direct the counting house  
By rule and measure, and methodical  
Arrangement. O 'twas always "*the account—  
Th'account deliver'd!*" and the task was done  
In his conception, and the storm must cease,  
And waters must subside, and the fond dove  
Come forth in safety, and the olive pluck!  
That such a simple creature should suppose  
He held the wand of wisdom, would be strange,  
Did we not see that folly rules the world!

But O how bitter must have been the workings  
Of disappointed hope and foil'd ambition,  
When in this solitude, which lonely breezes  
Moaning along the lake made lonelier,  
Or where the tempest, nurs'd among the gorges  
Of the gigantic snow-clad ridgy mountains,  
Made to the heart diseas'd and vex'd more gloomy,  
The vain proud ostentatious fallen man  
Reflected on the issues of his toils,  
His speculations, his miscarriages!  
"O do not hold" as on the banks he roam'd,  
Or from his window saw the morning dawn  
Glance on Mont-Blanc's cloud-cover'd top, "O do not

“ Hold such a melancholy tone! I am not  
“ Nerv’d for the voices of the elements!—  
“ The voice of man in social life, the music  
“ Of streets, saloons, conclaves, and palaces,  
“ Befits my sicken’d soul, to give it comfort;  
“ Poets may talk of mountains, lakes, and torrents,  
“ And woods and hills and vallies! I believe,  
“ It is but affectation! Man for man  
“ In social life was form’d:—there is no other  
“ Delight in our existence. Nature torn  
“ By storms, or billows, or the threatening burst  
“ Of fire destructive darting thro the skies,  
“ Why should it be delightful to refinement  
“ In human habits? Rather let the savage  
“ Rejoice in that which not the polish’d arts  
“ Of social man have into being brought!  
“ If my ambition’s projects had succeeded,  
“ The music of saloons, the bending knee,  
“ The reverential tone of deep applause,  
“ Had met me morn and night; and had shut out  
“ The roar of elements, and the depressing  
“ Shadows of savage nature! I am now  
“ A poor deserted store-diminish’d man,  
“ Whom none regard; on whom a tribe ferocious  
“ Full often thirst to dip their hands in blood:  
“ But still I doubt not, ’tis a foolish world,  
“ Not I, have been in error!—I will write!  
“ My pen is still my pleasure—and will shew  
“ By figures, and by mathematical  
“ Proof, that I ever was myself in the right,



“ And all the world was wrong! For who is ignorant,  
“ There is no certainty except in figures!  
“ All else is vague conjecture, and vile, shadowy  
“ Fancy, of vapours and inanity  
“ Bred, and in useless smoke mounts and expires.”

END OF BOOK III.

THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK IV.

WHEN the world sleeps, then best my task I ply;—  
Then from the world's obtrusions I repose  
Secure; and as a breath, a frown, a word,  
Can discompose me, the security  
Nurses the workings of my morbid spirit!  
There are who censure such infirmities,  
As but the fancies of vile whim and humour:  
But they are men, who draw their judgments from  
The hardness of their own froze hearts and heads.  
He, to whom fate the labour has assign'd  
The mental loom to work, must necessarily  
Have nerves and feelings finer than the vulgar;  
And be more quickly sensible to wrong,  
Insult, and taunt, or e'en the laugh of eye,  
The scorn disguis'd, the hidden disapproval,  
The treachery that lurks within the heart  
Of rivalry or envy. But the outward  
Evils of life, that by the glare of day

Assault us, when contending man is busy  
Upon the stage, in mischief ever rife,  
These interrupt incessantly our progress  
Under the broad sun's beams : then thee, O Night,  
I hail, and in thy silence and repose  
My web goes on in regular advance.  
To see the task grow under us, and, night  
By night, its palpable increase exhibit,  
Sustains our energies, and nurses hope.

It is gradation, which in life supports  
The waste of labour. He, who finds the days  
Of his strait-bound existence waste away,  
Yet nothing done, and no progression made,  
Sickens, and loses all the moving force  
That carries on the fruitful labourer.  
With nothing done, and nothing we can do,  
Ennui consumes us; and when of to-morrow  
Our prospect only is the self-same thing,  
Th'internal organs almost cease to work;  
There is no breath of hope to drive them on!

The idle are of men the most unhappy :  
Peril, and toil extreme, and injury,  
And ceaseless crosses; insult, treachery,  
Disease, and all the agonies of mind  
And body, more enjoyment know by fitful  
Contrasts, than vapoury stagnant idleness :  
And he, who has not tried his powers, can never  
Guess the extent of their capacity.  
Step after step, year after year, they often  
Expand, and see the thickest clouds before them

Dissolve, and distant objects, which it seem'd  
Impossible to reach, come nearer, nearer,  
Till they are touch'd. Short lives have numerous days  
And nights, of which if not e'en one is lost,  
Much may be done by them : but when the thread  
Is far spun out, to what a wonderful  
Amount may human labour raise the heap!

By constant exercise the powers, within  
The little circle of the human skull,  
Contain a world of more sublimity,  
And beauty, and of brilliance, than the outward  
Globe, and the fair creations on its surface,  
Shew even to the clearest, most intelligent,  
And most enquiring and most sensitive eye.  
But yet sometimes the fury of the flame,  
And dazzle of the blaze, is too consuming  
For man's weak body, and he dies, or falls  
Into irrevocable disarrangement.

The faculties may flame till they burn up!  
It is the conscience, that perchance may calm  
And methodise them; an o'erruling care  
To give a due direction to their energies!  
There are around us spirits, who will aid  
Our virtuous efforts; but who yet will leave us  
To our own wickedness, if vice prevails  
In our first thoughts, and we make no endeavour  
T'aspire to good. It is a mystery,  
Whence come our earliest aspirations!  
If they come from external interference,  
Then wherefore are we made responsible?

If they spring up within us, ere our reason  
Can operate, then also does it seem  
Hard to condemn us! Yet it may be said,  
When reason comes, it ought to moderate,  
Repress, and new-direct.—Alas, in vain  
Into these mystic works of mind we dive!  
We cannot tell why faculties of mind,  
Of heart, of temper, so extremely variant,  
Are given at our birth;—and why the chance  
Of happiness, both earthly and hereafter,  
Is so diversified, and different,  
In quality and in degree! We know not,  
If in a preexistent state our conduct  
May not have brought this seeming distribution  
Of inequality upon our doom!  
But we must ever keep our faith in darkness,  
That Providence is just! The noblest beings  
Humanity produces, are yet frail;  
And close, familiar, nice inspection will  
Shew a few spots;—a few sad weaknesses  
Of heart; a few defaults of mind unsound;  
Of temper a few strange perversities!  
And all may be forgiven but disguise;  
But curst hypocrisy, of sins the worst,  
The mother of all other sins; of falsehood  
The dire and inextinguishable brooder!  
Where once it enters, there the energies  
Are turn'd to poison, and the streams of life  
Corrupted; and the voice is from a blessing  
Turn'd into ill; and bears the breath of wrong,

Delusion, treachery, extortion, ruin!  
 The hypocrite no single quality,  
 Good, generous, or e'en neutral, can possess;  
 And in hell flames for ever he will burn!  
 The devil there has hold of him entire,  
 And he will treat him for his lawful prey.

My flight is as the disobedient hawk's,  
 Who, by the falconer let loose to chase  
 His prey, darts off beyond his destined objects,  
 And takes his airy circuits out of sight,  
 And tarries ere he hears his master's call.  
 But close again, O Lake, upon thy banks,  
 Burgundian and Alpine, I will fix  
 My meditations.—Lofty-mounted villa,  
*La Boissière!* thou dost turn thy noble front  
 Upon a glorious prospect! *Genthod*, thou  
 More humble in thy site, and somewhat dank  
 The vapours of the Lake appear around thee;  
 But by a curious Sage, of mind aspiring,  
 And ardent industry, once consecrated!  
 All Europe rings of *Bonnet's* name! *La Boissière*,  
 By *Tronchin* honour'd, name in the Republic  
 Held dear for ages, yet to him who venerates  
 Rousseau's unrival'd genius and hard fate,  
 Somewhat obscur'd by a dark stain of bigotry,  
 And persecution sharp and little merited!

But ye, dear villas, both of you the haunts  
 Of genius, which my song has hitherto  
 Left unregarded! if I love the lore  
 Of eloquent and most enlighten'd history,—

As in my heart I do,—why have I thee,  
Illustrious Müller, with neglect so long  
Treated? Thou art a shining star, to chase  
The gather'd clouds from tales of ancient days!  
In erudition rich, in genius strong,  
By ardent passions borne upon thy way,  
Copious in sentiment, in moral wisdom  
Flowing and ever varied; seeing deep  
Into the heart of man, in language vigorous  
And clear; laborious and exact as those  
Who have no fountains of their own; concise  
And comprehensive, although overflowing!

It may be doubtful if the Muse should ever  
Mix with the world. In actual life is always  
A coarseness, which deranges her creations.  
Is it then ask'd, how she should know mankind,  
Their manner, and their passions? By the light  
Of her imagination, which will give  
A true view; ever deep,—not on the surface!

O sad reality! There is in Man  
Of base and selfish passions a predominance!  
And he who mingles with society  
In daily conflict, comes at last to bend  
His mind to all its tricks and artifices;  
For in the world by manners delicate,  
And course of action pure, we cannot long  
Proceed! without a spot and stain incurable  
There is no wordling! Fair at first full many  
May seem; but there is poison in the heart!

Then I will close my doors again, and live

Only within myself. O books! O study!  
 Ye never can fatigue, or be exhausted!  
 As the mind labours, it still stronger grows,  
 And every day the mist recedes, and opens  
 New prospects, and perplexities untie  
 Themselves, and clues sharpen and multiply.

The clock strikes *Five*; and yet my morning task  
 Is scarce begun! Of stupifying sleep  
 I have too much enjoy'd! But I must farther  
 Into broad day extend my' allotted toils!  
 What though with many a cold look, many a sneer,  
 The web goes on, it has not yet relax'd,  
 Nor shall relax,—though every intermixture  
 With the world's bustle much endangers it.

On Solitude and on Society  
 Philosophers have written and disputed.  
 Thus eloquent and most pure-hearted Cowley;—  
 Thus learned Evelyn;—but as poets ever  
 Write the best prose, so did the bard excell  
 The natural philosopher, though he  
 Had written of woods and trees with love and science.  
 He, to whom nature has not given the boon,  
 Labours in vain, and learning is but weight  
 Injurious to the head, which has not springs  
 To bear it, and throw off the groaning pressure.  
 Let e'en the most ingenious well beware,  
 How far they give an idle trust to memory's  
 Obtruded stores;—for what is ready made,  
 Is tempting, but still valueless. The borrow'd  
 Is empty in the utterance of the borrower.



That which a man repeats, unless he thinks it,  
Is vapoury wind. The head is all delusions  
Without the testimony of the heart!  
“O what prosaic common-place!” exclaims  
The would-be critic: “not a flower of poetry!  
“No image;—no invention: not an art,  
“Or spell, we call for in the Muse! but truth,  
“Plain truth, or that which so affects to be!  
“Why, I had always held that poetry  
“Consists in fiction! We can have plain truth  
“In prose abundantly: and from the bard  
“A world unlike ourselves we hope to see,  
“Dress’d up with all the ornaments, the finery  
“Of labouring art can give it:—golden words,  
“And sounding metre by harmonious rule!  
“Of our old poets this is not the fashion,  
“We know too well: but if we speak with frankness,  
“We must admit, that praise of these old strains  
“Is but a prejudice; and from boasted Milton,  
“Left to ourselves, we nothing draw but slumbers!  
“It is a task to read him;—not a pleasure,  
“As pedants strive with most affected praise  
“To make us think! In our own days the Muse  
“The notes of genuine merit first has reach’d!  
“Look at the splendor of her imagery!  
“Look at the rich creation of her scenes,  
“And characters and language! at the magic,  
“In which she deals! the mystic passionateness;  
“The wonders;—the inhabitants of air;  
“Goblins and ghosts, and monsters of the fancy,

“Which seize the soul with wonder; bear it off,  
“*And lap it in Elysium!* Here the Muse  
“Shines in her proper sphere; and should be worship’d.”

Thus he, who in the school of art has learn’d  
His lessons cold and technical. Not I  
In that misleading school was taught! And now  
Fearless my own opinions I pronounce;  
And fearless act upon them! In my age  
My literary destiny is fix’d;  
And I no longer tremble at the will  
Of the capricious multitude. To speak  
With frankness is a high delight, that satisfies  
The conscience, and is never persecuted  
By cloud-chasing ennui, or the keen dart  
Of irresistible regret! The heart;  
When unoppos’d, unforc’d, is ever right.

’Tis Sunday! The church bells all ring around,  
And float upon the Lake; and on the breeze  
Mount to my windows! yet not far they reach,  
By Jura and by Alps to be reechoed:  
But in the lightsome atmosphere, which streams  
Of current airs do purify, the sounds  
Are to the ear and bosom stirring music.  
To live among the grandeurs, and the beauties  
Of nature, varied in their forms and tints,  
Awakens, deepens, fortifies, and fires  
The energies of mind. The changing hues  
Of the blue vault of Heaven create delight:  
But where the surface of the earth is flat,  
Those changes are less frequent and more faint.

Not joys material these : upon the brain  
And bosom they depend ; and only move,  
As they associate with the shadowy tribes  
Of mental essence. Yet it must be own'd,  
Imagination does not here prevail ;  
But logic cold ; and hard experiment :  
And what are call'd the natural sciences,  
Though somewhat strangely call'd ! The mind is nature,  
And of the highest order : mind to study,  
Is man's most elevated toil and duty !  
What science so essential ? what requires  
Faculties so refin'd, and so sagacious ?  
If brother-men alone by their external  
Semblance we know, how trivial is that knowledge ;  
How by false surfaces it is misleading !

Into the heart Imagination only  
Can look ; and have access unto the shrine,  
Where all the passions play ! Who does not view  
Daily these operations, is unknowing  
Of the great science of humanity.  
O search not what is strange ! O do not think,  
Because it no one's head or heart before  
Enter'd, 'tis therefore excellent ! It is  
When others give responses, and acknowledge  
The thought and feelings are exactly such,  
As are familiar to the secret movements  
Of their own minds, that the due test is reach'd  
Of genuine genius. And whoever leads  
His listeners into error on the character  
Of man ; his modes of thought ; his sensibilities ;

His estimates of life; and of the objects  
Of nature; is an oracle of falsehood;  
A wicked conjurer! Eternal truth  
Is the sole object man should have in search.  
It is of these false oracles the most  
Of censurers speak, when they condemn the Muses,  
As filling minds with mischievous delusions,  
And irritating them to evil passions!  
Extravagance, exaggeration, monstrous  
Union of incompatible elements,  
Is but the joinery of a vile artist!

Trite are these protests; said a thousand times:—  
But they cannot too often be repeated!  
It is upon extravagance the candidates  
For th' laurel now their chief pretensions place!  
It is extravagance the public calls for,  
And deems it proof of most decisive merit!  
Thus æras new of poetry have risen;  
Thus Milton, Dryden, Pope, are tame; thus readers,  
As writers, swell like the balloon inflated  
With gas! Into the heavens they travel high;  
But there learn nought; and down they fall again,  
Oft by a perilous descent; and sometimes  
To death itself. It is but the insanity  
Of inspiration false,—of false contortions,  
And Phaetonic flights! and the cure lies  
In studying Milton's most severe and plain  
Passages;—his most unadorned lore  
Of moral and divine philosophy.

Beautiful is description of the scenes

Of Nature as she is : but beautiful,  
And sublime also, is the exhibition  
Of mystic mind ; its workings ; and th'opinions  
Thence drawn ; the axioms, rules, directions  
Of life's most intricate and thorny ways !  
Then when the heart, and not the intellect,  
Ought to decide, comes elevation, majesty,  
And fortitude, to make the right resolve !

Why do we call for imagery ? forever  
Imagery !—as if all were materialists ;  
And nothing better ?—If the mind distinguishes  
Man above other creatures, 'tis the nature  
Of the mind is the most exalted subject  
Poets can deal with.—Nothing in the strain  
Of poets reaches excellence, that is not  
Mingled of all the faculties of mind,  
Fancy, imagination, passion, reason,  
Judgment, and memory ;—and above all  
Sagacity—a power of mind distinct,  
Yet little notic'd separately : it is  
A gift intuitive ; a light, that comes  
From heaven ; and flashes its intelligence  
Unlabour'd and unsought :—thus comes the strain  
The voice of wisdom's self ; and not a tale  
Of th' nursery, which ignorance, and dulness  
Affecting gravity, dare to pronounce it !

But least of all the play of words, the tinsel  
Of gorgeous and unmeaning emptiness,  
Is pardonable, though it gain the cheer  
Of foolish fashion ! It is a gold leaf,

As valueless as that which makes a glitter  
On the child's gingerbread :—a group of wonders,  
As silly as the rude magician's  
At country fairs : no real secret taught;  
No solid knowledge given! The true Muse  
Speaks, what in gravest questions we may cite,  
The judgment of the most intelligent,  
And most profound;—the conscientious edict  
Of holy and inspir'd determination!

O glittering expanse of waves cærulean,  
What have I learn'd from thee? Full many a year  
I've dwelt upon thy banks, and much I've thought,  
And read, and learn'd, and dream'd, and seen in vision  
By day, and have by mental toil created :  
And I have suffer'd much in mind and body;  
But yet I trust I have advanc'd in wisdom,  
And also in both elevation,  
And purity of heart. There is a rectitude,  
To which the whole ambition of our minds  
Ought to be bent : the plausible, the cunning,  
The selfish,—ah, how base it is! The world  
It may advance us in; but not one moment  
Can it give satisfaction to the conscience :  
It is in solitude, and in our own  
Internal feelings, we must truly live.  
There is a monitor within, which always  
Tells us when we have struck upon the right.

Long in a mist we travel;—all around,  
Is seen by glimpses; and e'en as our eyes  
Are eager, and our apprehension pants

To grasp at all, confusion multiplies,  
And long we see less clearly than the dull.  
But the clouds move away with time, and labour,  
And patience; while the added mist of passion  
Subsides; and strength, and brightness, and tranquillity,  
And fortitude, and sentiment exalted,  
Combine, and give that self-dependence, which  
Constitutes power, and strict ascendancy  
Of character! But in the scornful estimate  
Of the mole-eyed practitioner in cavils,  
Much have I trifled;—wanting method, unity  
Of purpose and of labour; pleas'd with fictions,  
And baubles; searching curiosities  
Not worth the cost of time, or waste of intellect;  
And scribbling in profusion what the pruning knife,  
Or polish of the file, has ne'er receiv'd.  
O, how uncandid, and how ignorant,  
And dull, to call on all to rule themselves  
By one unvaried method! Let the candidates  
For fame, pursue a thousand different paths;  
Yet equally at the same end arrive!

The pruning knife, the file, may be to some  
Instruments necessary; but to others  
They may be death; they may let out the sap,  
And wither up the pores; and clear away  
The tints and features, strength, and character!  
With some all is in the first burst of thought,  
And language that comes with it; and cold labour  
Not mends, but at each anxious touch destroys it.  
All that is grand or tender, is the dart

Of inspiration. Who will doubt that Shakespeare,  
Without premeditation or correction,  
Pour'd forth the torrents of his magic strains?  
Fast as the swift uninterrupted stream,  
Hasten'd his mind his lips and pen, and stop'd not  
To mend what was sufficient for his purpose.  
From labour comes obscurity, confusion  
Of metaphors, abruptness, and the break  
Of natural associations  
Of thought, and imagery, and sentiment.  
There may be sound; and outwardly a fair  
Array of rich poetical ideas;  
But it is only to the ear and eye,—  
Not to the head or heart. They are but sounds  
Tinkling, and shadows of factitious spirits!  
The bard cannot rehearse but what he sees,  
Hears, and believes, the moment of his utterance.  
The genuine poet cannot be affected;  
The ferment of his bosom would at once  
Throw off all veil, all labour'd artifice;  
And render the whole process of disguise,  
And shape unnatural, impossible!

Who ever reads the mighty bard of Avon,  
And for a moment has to seek his meaning?  
Who ever in his airiest, loftiest flights,  
Of visions even most imaginative,  
Did not in his own fancy find a mirror  
And echo? Wherefore this, but that he wrote  
Only what Nature prompted and believed?

O do not give the name of art to poetry!



It is not art! It is a true infusion  
Of portions of the great Creator's power!  
The poet is not gifted with the faculty  
Creative over matter : but the spiritual  
He *can* create, and with a living force,  
Which is reality, and operates  
On matter like the tribes of mind, sent forth  
E'en by the omnipotent Deity himself!

Upon thy banks, O Lake, much have I mused,  
And sometimes in new tracks pursued my searches.  
In lands far distant from our natives homes  
Our minds expatiate with more liberty :  
All local prejudices, which 'tis difficult  
To clear by th' root, there by degrees give way,  
Nor leave a trace behind. Then we become  
True citizens of a capacious world.  
Around our infancy too oft have grown  
Some early fears, affections, hatreds, envies,  
Which cloud the mind and heart; and are rank spots  
To be wip'd cleanly out. Man cannot judge  
Of man, till those impressions deep, we took  
In childhood, are effac'd; where accident  
Works upon weakness. Thro' the globe the same  
Minds, passions, virtues act; and we may seek  
Genius and learning spread in every clime;  
And best perchance, we seek it far from home,  
Because we there judge with more equal candour,  
And are not sensible of petty vapours,  
Bred in the morbid sensibility  
Of some diseased part, in youth contracted.

Fresh airs, moreover, give a novelty  
Of strength to parts, where the mind has been worn,  
And its due figures somewhat clouded over,  
Or twisted and deform'd. New objects give  
An impulse to the current of the blood,  
And chasing the invigorated stream  
Thro the sick bosom, rise in brilliancy  
Of their gold-tinted sprays up to the brain,  
And fortify the frame and soul together!

Such aid, O Mountain Lake, I owe to thee!  
To keep the mind in vigour there perchance  
Something of time and place and opportunity  
Requires. To live to future ages, asks  
A spirit and a mellowness of fruit  
Of intellectual faculties, not fashion'd  
Merely to the caprices of the moment.  
Fashions with every generation change :  
But the attraction which depends on fashion,  
Becomes disgusting to its successor :  
And he, who has no other, dies forever,  
And is forgotten. Truth, and style, and genius  
Are the same always. Passion, as she's frank,  
And unaffected, speaks with little difference  
After the lapse of centuries : the characters  
Of Shakespeare in their moments of excitement  
Vary not from the modern day, while authors  
Of note inferior speak another language,  
Which even in their own time was most quaint,  
Most artificial, and affected. Thus  
Would want of inspiration ever try

To fill the place of genius. E'en in Chaucer  
 After four centuries, the style, and colour,  
 Accent, and collocation of the words,  
 Is still the same, wherever there is freedom,  
 And fire and vigour rising above art  
 And labour. Mere affected scholars write  
 The language of the day; but genuine bards,  
 And busy statesmen of original  
 And powerful minds, in one enduring tone  
 Pour forth the workings of their mighty bosoms,  
 And intellectual effervescences.

Thus when the language is found obsolete,  
 Labour'd, distorted, overdress'd, the thought  
 Is not worth seeking: either 'tis not genuine,  
 Or it is triteness hid in ornament.

Discoverers in science may be useful;  
 But all their merits are transmissible:  
 They are, like money, things of circulation,  
 And equally available to all.

But the fine essence of imaginative  
 Genius eludes transmission, and thus lives  
 And breathes alone in the identical words  
 Of its creator. Therefore poets live  
 Forever in the presence of posterity.

ROUSSEAU, most eloquent, and most seducing  
 Creator, who thy magic language can  
 Transfer to his own pages? It escapes  
 In the vain trial, and expires in air!  
 Intensity was thine of most ideal  
 Happiness:—in the world thou wert not good!

The world excited all thy evil passions;  
And solitude thy virtuous! Foolish censurer,  
Who deems thee not sincere, because thine actions  
Do not to th'effusions of thy mind accord!  
Thou couldst not write that, which thou didst not feel!  
Thy lakes, and rocks, and mountains;—of thy childhood  
The haunted scenes! how couldst thou fly from them,  
And seek for shelter among unknown strangers?  
Thou foundst it in a kind but wanton dame,  
To whom perchance much of corrupt in thee  
Was owing! O how strange and mingled was  
The tissue of thy life! The mixed threads  
Of wild insanity were ever there:  
And thy predominant fancy ever rul'd thee,  
As if th'ideal objects were material!  
Perhaps thou couldst not overcome the visits,  
Unsought by thee, of spiritual presences!  
And if they would inebriate thy soul  
With hopes delusive, and mislead thy faith  
In beauties, which existed not on earth,  
Not to thy conscience would the crime belong!

How different from Voltaire! to him each fault  
Of envy, hatred, artifice, was deep  
Premeditation, laid to bring about  
Some wicked end! When in that habitation,  
Which now I see before me, he survey'd  
The rolling lake, and saw the evening sun  
Reflected from Mont-Blanc, and heard in nights  
Of wintry darkness cross his windows come  
The howling storm, that rode upon the waters,

By mountain torrents fed, he no sublimity  
Of soul experienc'd; but alone he mus'd  
Upon the world, its wit, its fashions, follies;  
On artificial man;—on imagery,  
Merely as secondary instruments  
To dress his studied and factitious thoughts!  
Better were he mix'd in the levity  
Of gay Parisian streets, than circled by  
Cragg'd rocks of everlasting snow, and lonely  
Expanses of cloud-tinted waters, sounding  
Only with nature's echoes from the torrents  
Of ice-bound wintry rains, dissolv'd by spring;—  
Or the scarce audible halloo of bargemen  
Descending with their loaded freights. To him,  
Whose converse is with human wit and cunning,  
All nature's grandeur is but ennui!

In wit abundant, in mere spriteliness  
Of intellect ingenious, clear, judicious,  
Where is the sentiment, th'imaginary,  
The fair, the tender, the sublime, in him  
The Lord of Ferney, still gay France's idol!  
Why should we wonder, that a nation cherishes  
A bard, the very mirror of itself?  
It will be argued that to know mankind,  
Not as they ought to be, but as they are,  
Is the most useful knowledge. The position  
Is plausible;—but yet it is delusive.  
By lonely study we may also know  
Man as he is; but not as he amid  
The conflict of the crowded city is,

But in the purity of solitude,  
Nurs'd in the loftiness of nature's charms,  
And only conversant with nature's voice.

There is a baseness in the constant force,  
With which men's faults and weaknesses are spied,  
Where all excites a jest, or witticism,  
Or sharp rebuke. More specious than profound,  
The multifarious writer thus proceeds :  
All follow him, and all delight in him ;  
For all most easily can apprehend him.

Rousseau demands a passionate heart, and visionary  
Fancy. Of him the lyric Gray has spoken,  
With adoration of his eloquence  
And beauties. But there is another Sage,  
Of name imposing, and whose luminous judgment  
Most rarely errs ; and he with bitterness  
Of critical aspersion has condemn'd  
This fam'd Genevan citizen to ignominy.  
Of revolutionary anarchy  
The advocate of ancient institutions  
Deem'd him the fire-brand : for the supposition  
Of this black crime th'enthusiastic Burke  
Could find no mercy. It is true the mobs  
Of radical destruction on their lips  
Had ever Rousseau's name : but he perchance  
Was far too subtle and too tender for them :  
And much it may be doubted, if he added  
To the long-laid and wide spread elements  
Of blood-thirsty explosion. His own native  
City shut also its barr'd gates to him :

And burnt his eloquent disquisitions  
 On man's political rights with too much bigotry,  
 And harsh injustice;—not to say servility  
 To other states,—unheard, unsummon'd, and  
 Absent in distant lands,—and though the crime,—  
 If crime it was,—was not with them committed.

Look at the candour, and the charity,  
 And simple grief, with which on that occasion  
 Th'eloquent citizen bemoan'd his fate.  
 His country was a stepmother to him,  
 And yet the high of its inhabitants  
 Cherish'd the ceaseless hatreds of their sires  
 Against him, still insensible to all  
 The glory, on their ancient walls he brought!  
 Hatred political but rarely wars  
 With the illustrious dead! And who, like Rousseau,  
 In splendid genius 'mong Genevan annals  
 Shines! That the native of a small republic  
 Should war with kings, and courts, and luxuries,—  
 Is this surprising? Liberty he lov'd:  
 It was of th'very essence of his mind  
 And heart: and yet he found that liberty  
 Not always in republics flourishes.

There oligarchies rule too frequently;  
 And factions rage, and acts of cruel tyranny  
 Are practis'd by the wantonness of powers  
 New-got. In France the charg'd conspiracy  
 Of philosophic politicians  
 May be suspected to have credit for  
 More active mischief than it did: the seeds

Were laid far more remotely; the destruction  
Of the last remnant of the constitution  
By Medicean tyranny and intrigue,  
After the death of the heroic Henry,  
And the Grand Louis' despot power, and wasteful  
Ambition, form'd a mine, whose sure explosion,  
In its due hour all statesmen wise foresaw.  
Thus the sagacious, veil-withdrawing chief  
Of French memorialists, the wise Saint-Simon,  
Foretold, long ere the club'd Encyclopedists  
Their poison hid in flowers, thro' every page  
Spread : for the unendurable corruption  
Of the grand monarch's court must have at last  
Rous'd the most servile and neck-broken people !

And thou, magician, exil'd from thy country,  
Wide o'er the earth in care and sorrow wandred'st ;  
Then didst thou pass the ocean straits 'twixt Calais  
And Dover ; and beneath the white cliffs landed,  
Didst see the fields of liberty, so call'd,  
And Cantium's meadows green, and gentle hills,  
And winding vallies ; and its peasantry,  
Ruddy and neatly clad ; and its bluff manners,  
And scorn of strangers, and provincial pride ;  
The haughty castle frowning o'er the waves,  
The Conqueror took from Harold, slain at Hastings ;  
And yet a few leagues inland o'er the downs,  
Where Cæsar once encamp'd, the rising tower  
Lofty, and beautiful in gothic symmetry,  
Of that far-fam'd Cathedral, where St.-Austin  
Preach'd, and where Becket of his blood incurr'd



The forfeit for his pride prelatical!  
But thy capricious humour could not brook  
The coldness of a melancholy people,  
And thy Theresa, to whose wicked temper,  
And devilish arts, thou didst commit thy happiness,  
Hourly gave all her poison to afflict thee  
With discontent, and foul suspicion  
Of thy best friends. Then Hume, the calm historian,  
Somewhat, perhaps, ironical and heartless,  
Rous'd thy mad jealousy and deep revenge;  
Then Walpole's poignant wit thy vanity  
And self-esteem too cruelly assaulted.

In the delightful solitude of Stafford's  
Peace-breathing woodlands, with thy flowers and garden,  
A guest, with all thy wants provided for,  
Thou might'st have been serenely happy, had  
The friend attendant on thee pour'd the balm  
Of comfort on thy troubled nerves and heart!  
But ever did she fan thy brooding cares,  
And jaundic'd disbelief; and thou return'dst  
Insanely tortur'd from a kind asylum.  
But never on thy natal spot, belov'd  
With intermingled passions of resentment  
And indignation, to take up thy residence!  
For as we love, we hate; and as no other  
Scenes the same keen delight can give us, none  
Can the same pains and agonies inflict!

Few were the years that after thy return  
Thou linger'd'st out thy melancholy life;  
And, as 'tis said, at last by thine own hand

Clos'd it.—It is a strange mysterious tale;  
 But horror at the base and faithless conduct  
 Of her, who was the scourge of thy existence,  
 Rumour assigns the cause : and I have heard  
 From those who've seen the model of thy skull,  
 The bullet mark is there. Thy fame was high,  
 But never could it satisfy the craving  
 Of thy vain appetite : or morbid humour  
 Made thee insensible to its extent.

'Tis strange, that Nature should endow a few  
 With such superiority of genius,  
 That they should overcome the rivalry  
 Of ages; and contending still against  
 Novelty, fashion, labour, art, and aid  
 Of the light of high minds preceding them,  
 Should still hold onward their eclipsing course.  
 How can it be that those high-gifted beings  
 Can so much life upon their pages throw?  
 Well has De Staël, in her most early effort  
 At literary fame, evolv'd thy character!

High-mounted, in Lausanne's vicinity,  
 Stands AUBONNE! There *Tavernier* from his travels  
 Rested,—a chosen spot, adapted well  
 T' his Oriental taste, where fortune's favour  
 Crown'd him with wealth : but Riches, it is said,  
 Have wings and fly away; and so with him!  
 And after all his luxuries, necessity  
 Drove him to his old occupations.

Hast thou not heard of Vevay? Every Briton  
 Has heard of Vevay, where in the dust the relics

Slumber of England's stern republican,  
*Ludlow!* In this delightful spot he spent  
 His latter lonely days, when Charles return'd!  
 Not idle, but still weaving well his daily  
 Task, the yet valued tale of history!  
 There the Lake winds, and cross its waves are seen  
 At distance the precipitous heights wood-crown'd  
 Of fam'd La Meillerai! of which when lovers  
 Read, they all tremble, as at Rimini  
 Dante the tale of the unhappy Pair  
 Relates, where fatal was the book to both!

At the Lake's head we cross'd the marshy grounds  
 By Villeneuve : and then enter'd on the route  
 From Italy by Vallais! where we fell  
 On Savoy's ancient territories,—Savoy  
 Ever from its first origin despotic,  
 Ambitious, self-aggrandising, and reckless  
 Of right; ferocious to Genevan freedom;  
 And still its ancient claims by ruse and arms  
 Not utterly abandoning; but worn  
 At last with age, and sinking into feebleness,  
 And now its chiefs expir'd; but its crown fallen  
 Into the hands of a more vigorous scion.

Then come we to RIPAILLE, in history noted  
 For the *Count-Pope* and his retirement thither,  
 When Rome's proud mitre was surrender'd by him:  
 But on the tale my Muse refrains to enter,  
 Touch'd by *Voltaire*, the world's great favourite.

Here agriculture flourishes in Chablais;  
 But hardly live the peasantry, and hard

Their wrinkled visages, and spare tall figures;  
And by the iron rod of bigot power,  
Priest-ridden, are they cruelly oppress'd!  
And now thro COLOGNY we pass again,  
And once more BYRON'S residence salute.  
Was he more happy in these scenes of grandeur,  
With lakes and mountains, such as in his childhood  
Fed his romantic fancy, than in scenes  
Of Italy; Venice, Ravenna, Pisa  
Perchance less stirring to imagination?  
O no! the struggles of a firey heart,  
Yet tender;—of high hopes of love, ambition,  
Friendship, respect, esteem, at once destroy'd.  
Were here in their first agonies: the tempest  
Allow'd but briefest intervals of peace.  
But as the sorrow and the indignation  
Were strong, so was the brilliance of the mind:  
The Bard perhaps did never more intensely  
Feel, and more powerfully describe, than now.  
Here *Manfred* he conceiv'd amid the rocks  
And crags of Chamouni; and sure than Manfred  
His Muse a nobler poem ne'er produc'd!  
New images, new sentiments, a tone  
Of sad mysterious rhythmical melody,  
Softness, sublimity, and altogether  
A magic inspiration; to himself  
Peculiar;—which in every word is Byron,—  
Byron;—and no one else—to every one's  
Perception, only Byron! when from the height,  
The giddy height seductive of destruction

Manfred descends, we shudder at each step,  
 And follow him with breathless agitation.  
 There are who call the mighty bard a borrower!  
 Let the dull censurer ponder on those strains!  
 But not for ever on a favourite poet  
 Must I prolong my verse monotonous!

EAUX-VIVES! I now return to you! To see  
 The white sail of the barge in glimmering distance  
 O'er the blue waters gaining on the eye!  
 And watch the tide dashing against thy walls,  
 And listen to its melancholy murmurs.  
 But now my boiling blood, by solar heats  
 Reflected from the glassy surface, when  
 At the oar labouring;—while the treacherous blast  
 Bred in the mountains, like a thief in th' night,  
 Cross the luxurious moment of suspense,—  
 Arrests my intellectual purposes.  
 But still Romance, and theories abstruse  
 Of dry hard arithmetical researches  
 Into the causes by which nations flourish  
 In wealth material, by alternate mixture  
 Relieve each other, and by resolution  
 Two tasks I close;—thus, Coningsby, to thee  
 I give th'approaching crisis; and thus end  
 A weightier labour, on the Population  
 Of Kingdoms, and how far increase contributes  
 To happiness, and strength! Now twelve long years  
 Want but a month or two to be completed,  
 Since thus I felt, and spoke, and acted. Time  
 Has since gone fertile in events and thoughts;

But ever on myself I must not dwell.

Geneva! though thine idol has been liberty,  
Too often hast thou felt the hand of Power,  
And long and various have thy troubles been  
Between obedience and command. Thy people  
Have ever rife and stirring at resistance  
Been; discontented, giving little faith  
To those who ruled them, and suspicious ever  
Of usurpation of unnecessary  
Force, and a wanton exercise of proud  
Authority! and many a harrowing tale  
Of punishment and death in the resistance  
Fills your impressive annals! does there live  
The heart that will not weep at FATIO's death?  
There was a fierce relentless cruelty  
In it, which never yet distain'd the power  
Of monarchs! He, condemn'd to death for acts  
Of politic resistance, doubtfully  
Construed as crimes of treason to the state,  
Remanded back to prison, the next morning  
Was call'd into the court, and coolly shot  
In presence of the Syndics. At the notice  
He stood undaunted, calmly from his cell  
Came forth, and with heroic firmness met  
His cruel fate! Thus faction was repress'd,  
If it was faction : but a small Republic,  
With powers that from their origin were never  
Defin'd precisely, might admit in candour  
The difference of opinion in strong minds,  
Well educated, and of probity

Unquestion'd; and if punishment was necessary  
To keep the bonds over a restless people;  
Not death! But death the despot bigot Calvin  
Had taught, a century and half before,  
Was due to those who differ'd from their rulers  
E'en in the theory of points abstruse.

O Servet! thy recording spirit tells  
A bosom-rending story, which the fame  
Of Calvin never can wipe out! Thyself,  
Didst thou not, as a leader of the Church  
Reform'd, claim freedom from Rome's dogmatism?  
And why was difference from thee to draw  
The forfeiture of life? Burnt at the stake!  
O horrible beyond all other cruelties!  
"Blood only may be spilt for blood!" says Burke:  
And I would willingly thou shouldst have died,  
As thou hadst made thine enemy to die!  
Thou wast a bigoted enthusiast,  
And if a stern corrector of foul manners  
Thou wast, I much suspect it was a mode  
To feed thy love of power and vanity;—  
Not from pure virtue! How could virtue prompt,  
Nay how could it consent to such a deed,  
As Servet's death? Was it to be found  
In dictates of that Gospel, which thou boastedst  
Thine only guide to be? What charity,  
If in the heart it is not, can in essence  
Belong to him who most pretends to piety?  
And without charity what true religion?

O Calvin, in the strange dominion given

Thro' Europe to thy doctrines, mingled evil  
 Disturb'd all ancient policies and powers.  
 Thence came the surly hypocritic Puritan,  
 Fierce as Rome's faction, and not less intriguing.  
 Thus Tudor's wise and most magnanimous princess  
 Spent her last days 'tween two devouring fires!  
 Then vulgar insolence and most nonsensical  
 Rejection of all ornament,—the spoiler  
 Of all that wak'd devotion thro' the fancy,  
 Of imagery grand, or fair, or passionate,  
 Went forth, and with the texts of scripture ever  
 Distorted, misapplied, and ignorantly  
 Construed, upon his lips, but to his heart  
 Never in due streams reaching, overturn'd  
 Sincerity, and natural impulses,  
 And probity of conscience, and good faith  
 In conduct, labouring like moles  
 At mischief under ground; and sowing seeds,  
 That in explosion of all civil policy  
 Might one day end.

But, eloquent Hooker, thou  
 Wert the firm prop to the true church : thy labours  
 In wisdom, argument, and powerful language,  
 Yet flourish green! From very childhood I  
 With reverence pass'd thy simple parsonage  
 In the sweet vale where Barham's Roman way  
 Ever attracts th'historic traveller.  
 And thy remaining monument inscrib'd  
 By the time-honour'd name of Cowper's sires!

But I have reach'd the close of the division,  
 That order to my tedious song prescribes.



THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK V.

It is the nineteenth morning since I first  
Begun the strain on thee, beloved Lake!  
And yet my daily task has been unbroken!  
Thus perseverance has its own reward!  
We know not what we *can* do till we try!  
Much of the dead my strains have dwelt upon;  
Naught of the living! First of thee, the friend  
Of the great lyric bard whom first I lov'd,  
And who still holds unchang'd my adoration,  
Of moral *Gray*;—*BONSTETTEN*,—in thine age  
Who the vivacity of youth retainest!  
Scholar, philosopher, “of imagination  
Compact” of multifarious knowledge pregnant;—  
And thou, in deep political knowledge wise,  
And statist admirable, *D'IVERNOS*,  
Whose friendship and attention in my days  
Of long long sickness ne'er have been relax'd;  
And classical *PREVOST*, in philosophic

Lore not less fam'd; and thou, profound SISMONDI,  
Of European fame; historian, critic,  
Liberty's great defender; philosophic  
And eloquent narrator of the days  
Of Italy's free and resplendent glories,  
Who now the tale of France in copious volumes  
Unfoldest; and thou, traveller, whose pages  
Piquant, sagacious, brief, original,  
Just, ever win attention, caustic SIMOND!  
And thou last annalist of thy native land  
Of lakes and mountains, PICOT! and thou, FAZY,  
Fam'd for thy eloquence in senate, wise  
In that profound economy, on which  
Depends the people's happiness, with heart  
Devoted to their good!—and COINDET, thou,  
To whose rich stores and generous openness,  
Whate'er of curious note I have recorded,  
Is due; and MAUNOIR, thou of mark'd vivacity,  
And spiritual genius! and ye, learned jurists,  
ROSSI and BELLOT! and thou last, not least,  
In friendship and in hospitality  
Warmest,—renown'd upon the private stage,—  
The oracle, thro whose lips miraculous Shakespeare  
Speaks;—LULLIN, whose most ancient name is trac'd  
Thro all the annals of Genevan story,  
From its first Counts, before the House of Savoy  
Oppress'd them, and extinguish'd! Of thy fame,  
DE CANDOLLE, I am little qualified  
To speak, for, I alas! am ignorant  
Of that sweet science, of which thou dost shine

Preeminent thro Europe! but thy pen,  
 Eloquent, searching, and profound in tracing  
 Resemblances and variations in  
 The forms and features of humanity,  
 In various climes and nations, I can follow  
 With admiration and delight! Ah, some,  
 Of name renown'd, whom I have known, are gone,  
 But ripe in honours, to their quiet graves!  
 PICTET, in philosophic searches vers'd,  
 And his more various-minded BROTHER; critic,  
 Political economist, in agriculture  
 Practical, and as theorist, renown'd!  
 And thou too, latest lost, by all lamented,  
 Piercing and clear DUMONT: though I protest  
 Against thy doctrines of political  
 Impossibility, more plausible  
 Than with man's passionate nature practical.

But here I must repeat the wonder, that  
 No poets in this ample list are found!  
 A cause there must be in the history  
 Of mind for this, although unknown to me!  
 What scenery more suited to a poet?  
 Then is it in the climate? It cannot  
 Rise from hereditary disposition,  
 Because Genevan families are sprung  
 From mingled nations! As the poet's power  
 Lies in the mind, not matter, it would seem  
 Of climates and of countries independent:  
 But with the organs of the brain depress'd,  
 Derang'd, diseas'd, perchance imagination

Can only act imperfectly! alas,  
We search in vain in these mysterious shrines;  
We have no eye can penetrate them clearly:  
There may be sensibility extreme  
In th'heart: and yet the fancy, and still more  
Th'inventive faculty, may be deficient.  
Beings constructed thus can be affected  
By strains pathetic; but to the creation  
Of imagery, and visions of ideal  
Magnificence, be quite unapprehensive,  
And moved still less! To them the voice of poetry  
Is but an idle sound! Let them pass by  
The lyre, and shut their ears, and close their hearts!  
I cannot envy them! They may be pitied:  
But would do well to moderate their scorn!  
It is the scorn of dulness, which affects  
Contempt for what it cannot understand!

We hear there is no wisdom but in logic:  
Then Providence has given us no intuitive  
Knowledge, and nothing sound we can arrive at,  
Except by chains of single steps;—thus slow  
Our wisdom must advance; but in a blaze  
Imagination her intelligence  
Gives; and we see not single points, but all  
At once, living and dead, matter and mind,  
Coalescing, or conflicting, or in labour  
By separate paths and instruments to reach  
One end. And thus she sees what passion prompts,  
What conscience dictates: the two springs of action;  
Which reason vainly struggles to presage.

And thus it is we from the Muse must learn  
Our most sagacious lessons of mankind.

O blind and foolish, who affect to scorn  
The Muse! Without her what were all, that gladdens  
The higher qualities of our existence?  
All that delights in nature's scenery comes  
From her! All sentiment, all elevation  
Of thought; all that enchants in female beauty;  
All that inspires the ear in harmony  
Of voices, and of instruments, and sounds  
Breath'd by the elements; or from the woods;  
From herds and flocks in meadows or on plains,  
From ocean's billows; or from mountain torrents,  
Or gentle murmuring streams. In the first dawn  
Awaking, 'tis imagination's light  
That beams the hopes of coming day before us.  
When we return at eve, fatigued with labour,  
Imagination paints the joys of rest!  
And when we would look back in meditation  
To see life in its brilliant tints reviv'd,  
It is alone upon the Muse's volume  
We turn to find it duly animated!  
There goes the touch of magic to the heart,  
And secret springs are mov'd; and to the fancy  
Blaze all at once the past, the present, future,  
Uniting in one picture to the eye,  
With life more brilliant than reality!  
Then we forget our mortal ligaments,  
And for a moment are all spiritualiz'd.

Who will not find in SHAKESPEARE wiser axioms,

Lore more adapted to men's hearts and business,  
Than in all volumes of philosophers  
Collected into one? Who will not find,  
In MILTON more reveal'd divinity,  
Than in the pages of the theologians?  
There holy inspiration: there the moral  
Severe, profound, and pure, and comprehensive  
In the elucidation of Man's nature!

There DAVENANT, of the Epic laurel wreath  
Most worthy, ill rewarded, most unjustly  
Neglected and forgotten, tells his tale,  
Enrich'd at every incident with lore  
Moral and intellectual in abundance,  
Express'd with nervous brevity and clearness,  
Pure, elegant, harmonious, pointed, noble!  
There SPENSER pours his endless imagery  
Of moral allegory, where the chivalrous  
Figures, and gorgeous fictions of enchantment,  
Almost o'ercome the senses! but beneath  
Those veils is couch'd the whole philosophy  
Of moral truths; and never can the study  
Exhausted be! Thus Bards of ancient date  
Most dealt in ethic doctrines. O lov'd COWLEY,  
Whose bosom was a limpid spring of purity,  
Of flowers from woods and meadows, violets  
And primroses, of sentiment as virtuous  
As the sweet sylvan solitude thou lov'dst!  
In thy enchanting language is reflected  
The image of an heart by genius warm'd,  
By learning strengthen'd, by a virtuous conscience

Directed, beaming with benevolence,  
 And cheerful rays of natural simplicity!  
 Then comes the comic HUDIBRAS, of wit  
 And learning mingled into essences;—  
 Whose golden ore, where'er we search, is found,  
 And forms a coin to pass throughout the world,  
 Among the wise:—still the collision sparkles  
 And strikes a light, wherever it conflicts:  
 NOR DENHAM is in thee the moral lore  
 Wanting: the couplet strong, concise, with thought  
 Weighty, in strain harmonious pours along!  
 Thy heart, perchance, was sensitive and morbid,  
 And thou couldst not the wandring levities  
 Bear of thy young fair wife amid a court  
 Luxurious, profligate; of others reckless,  
 And harden'd to th'effects of the worst injury,  
 Man to break up the social ties indulges.  
 Then did that genius, which light minds believ'd  
 To be a dreamer lost in reveries,  
 Begin to wander from its bounds, and grief  
 And jealousy with strange chaotic visitings  
 Disturb'd thy brain, and thou didst wildly wander  
 A maniac! And yet did no compunction  
 Touch the fair bosom of that fallen Beauty,  
 Whose noble blood, the relic of an House  
 Of ancient Barons, then by James's tyranny,  
 And basest thirst of lucre, sunk in ruin,  
 Had in her more exalted feelings planted!  
 Alas! for beauty in a sensual Court  
 Poison'd, there is no herb to cleanse the stain!

After long interval came PRIOR'S Muse,  
Whose Song of Solomon, now little read,  
Will be immortal; while on the sweet tale  
Of Henry and of Emma every lover  
Will hang with ears enraptur'd, in despite  
Of JOHNSON'S cold and tasteless criticism.

Of DRYDEN I have sung before, and here  
Will not repeat a judgment trite and stale.  
Nor aught of thee, of harmony the chief,  
Sage POPE! Then came a fashion new, and imagery  
Alone was deem'd worthy the Muse's praise.  
Thus THOMSON won his laurels, well-deserv'd!  
But that which teaches how our intellectual  
Being to manage, is the wisdom prime!  
All imagery is only from material  
Existence drawn.

Enough of poets here!  
There is a subject, which at the perilous crisis  
We live in, rages more. It is the fate  
Political of nations: but I'll away with't:  
It is too grave for pleasure; and too big  
Perchance in its results for human wisdom!  
Great poets have in perilous crises liv'd,  
Yet have not sung the less. Thus BUCKHURST, MILTON!  
But I, the humblest of the humble, have not  
The magnanimity to persevere,  
If that dread topic is not kept aloof!

Does fame add to our happiness?—The preacher  
Tells us that all is vanity. Cool thought  
Agrees not with him;—but it is a fame



Stedfast which is not empty : when it fluctuates,  
The ebb gives more of pain, than the flow, pleasure.

Thus MASON felt, when he grew out of fashion :  
Humour and spleen o'erwhelm'd him. HAYLEY, by fate  
Not less depressive follow'd, kept his cheerfulness,  
And warm benevolence of heart. To him  
Not of the poet's faculties inventive  
Nature had been profuse; but of a mind  
Gentle, and elegant, of taste chastised,  
Rich in accomplishments in literature,  
And full of tender moral sentiment :  
Yet not profound; and too inclin'd to trust  
To borrow'd stores : a fault less oft occurring  
Perchance to Britain, than to other nations.

The searching air of Leman's lake should well  
Stir the original spirits of the mind ;  
But yet it is not *here*;—it is not *here*,—  
That the fresh fountains of unaided thought,  
And powers divine of bright imagination  
Have been bestow'd, or have themselves unfolded,  
With that one grand exception, eloquent  
Intense ROUSSEAU! for not to thee, DE STAEL  
The fate was given to be born or bred  
Upon the Lake : nor hadst thou powers inventive  
In high degree; but rather force, acuteness,  
Sagacity, and fine discrimination.

To theologic lore Geneva once  
Her mental toils applied, voluminous  
And cumbersome :—tomes now upon the shelf  
Sleeping in dust : the Diodatis, Pictets,

Turretini's, Lullin's, thus! But GODEFROY, jurist,  
 Lives to this day in memory of the learned!  
 Philosophy and Science, O Geneva,  
 Were ever thy prime favourites! DE SAUSSURE,  
 Geologist thro' Europe known, and BONNET,  
 And thou still living ornament, DE CANDOLLE!  
 Then CASAUBON, in classic lore profound;—  
 Greek, above all! Nor ought I thee to pass,  
 In natural history vers'd, biographer  
 Of thy fam'd city's literary toils,  
 And critic most industrious, SENEBIER!

Withdraw the veil from Time; trace back the ways  
 That he has pass'd; and read upon these tracks  
 The marks, the cyphers, and the mysteries  
 Inscribed in a thousand characters!  
 It is an edifying lesson,—mix'd  
 Too oft with crimes, and causes of regret,  
 And seeds of future evil.—On, the world,  
 With all the faults of governments, has gone  
 Hitherto! But it seems as if a crisis  
 Approaches near, when it will go no longer!  
 Then anarchy will come; and dogs of Ruin  
 Will be let loose to prey upon the world!  
 Where'er assembled mobs will rule, there can be  
 Nothing but devastation, famine, death!  
 All civil policy may be abus'd;  
 But without government men are wild beasts.  
 I would have power and authority  
 Forever watch'd with lynx-ey'd force and courage!  
 But not destroy'd!—Reform; but not destruction;—

Is the wise freeman's object! Laws abus'd  
Are a most terrible pestilence : but lawless  
Savages are yet worse! Let Ruin come,  
As on the fall of the great Roman Empire,  
And those dark ages which ensued, as nothing  
Compar'd with those which now the world will cover,  
Hereafter will appear! a poison bitterer,  
And far more virulent, has been infus'd!  
O! one false step of one weak man sometimes  
Leads to the world's deep woe for generations!  
Who caus'd America's rebellion, nearly  
Seventy conflicting years of anger past?  
Who by a word scarce thirty months ago  
Stirr'd up the tempest brooding now o'er England?  
Who by mad ordinances madly plann'd,  
And weakly executed, at a blow  
Level'd a dynasty of a thousand years;  
And made a flourishing nation, with new being  
Just mounting to unheard prosperity,  
To tremble on a mine of utter ruin?  
Herds of barbarians from the north will come;  
And utter devastation prostrate all!  
Where codes of law are fighting for, there soon  
Will be no law at all! tho law itself,  
When it is bad, is worse perchance than none!  
If Providence permits this globe of habitants,  
Condemn'd to sin from Adam, to go on,  
From the tremendous downfall, which the threat,  
Of civil policy o'erthrown must bring.  
Brute force will lord it o'er the world again,

And tyrants new will power despotic win  
By the blood-thirsty sword! then by degrees  
Arts, learning, laws, and wisdom's institutions,  
Will recommence! but centuries will pass,  
Ere they will reach again the happy point,  
From which they will have fallen! There is a time,  
When rage, and something like insanity,  
Infects mankind! and such, perhaps, the day  
We live in! while th'aspiring men, who love  
Power with a bigoted idolatry,  
Outrage the true defenders of the bonds,  
Of absolute necessity to hold  
Society together. Let not monarchs,  
If they do not promote the general happiness,  
Rule for a day!—But, *under due restraint*,  
I do believe a monarchy the best  
For the general welfare! power will be corrupt  
Always,—whatever be its form—or kingly,  
Or oligarcic, or republican!  
And ever ought by counterbalancing  
Poises to be controul'd! th'elite among  
The people, rais'd by education, wealth,  
Talent, and character, should have a strong  
Opposing weight on every government,  
Sufficient to restrain it in its course,  
But not to check and paralyse its motions!  
A prurience of change; a wilful crossing  
Of mild authority; a constant cavil  
At laws by custom render'd venerable,  
And easily and contentedly coercive,

Is folly and vain shallow self-sufficiency,  
Not to be pardon'd! Subtle theory  
Against experience is the Paradise  
Of fools! When practice shews itself by facts  
Of ill productive, then to theory  
We must resort, new measures to devise;—  
And he who reasons best, and can propose  
With most sagacity, deserves the wreath!  
But custom is a bond less easily broken  
Than legislative chains, and far less galling!  
The old irregular mansion of our infancy  
Is more delightful than a new-built palace!  
Security, bought at the cost of guards  
Still greater than the worth of what's secur'd,  
Is a strange insult upon human intellect:  
And legislation, which will interfere  
To thwart, not forward, the productive labours  
Of man's devises, arts, must be cur'd by force,  
If reason will not be attended to!—

Foolish, base-hearted, most contemptible,  
And odious optimists,—who think that power  
Ever must be i'th' right! when power in truth  
Forever tends to wrong, if 't be not bound  
In chains of iron! Wisdom is the child  
Of Genius, and of Virtue, nurs'd by Toil!  
And statesmen are not always wise, nor have  
Talent, or conscience! They are mainly men  
Uplifted by intrigue, or accident,  
Or hard, dull, unimpressible audacity!  
Unswerving, positive, direct, because

No other light except their own they see!  
Palpable truths they miss; and dwell upon  
Mysterious errors, since the artifice  
Excites what the simplicity of wisdom  
Cannot affect! Thus if there be a falsehood  
As gross, as it is mischievous, their bigotry  
In their heart holds it never to be mov'd,  
While all which ought to be for granted taken,  
They name it prejudice to save from doubt!

Thus on they go;—and thus the part they play,  
For anarchists their projects to pursue!  
In Britain's empire thus the fatal quarter  
Of an whole century has pass'd away;  
Yet almost all has error been, and blindness,  
And feebleness of intellect, and worst,  
Most mischievous of all, sad, pusillanimous,  
And selfish vacillation! Even wrong,  
Firmly pursued, may by bold accident  
Attain its ends! but vacillation never!—  
It is the chasing of a feeble light,  
That glimmers now on this side, now on that,  
Now in the centre;—and invites annoyance!

It will be ask'd, where then was CANNING's splendor  
Of intellect, and magnanimity  
Of resolution? But his course of rule  
Was short, ere Death o'ertook him, and his plans  
Not yet develop'd for a proper judgment  
Of their effects, or their prospective wisdom;  
And when he clos'd his eyes, a mighty darkness  
Came o'er the nation! What has since occur'd,

Has, much of it, fall'n on strange governors,  
Full of alternate rashness and concession,  
Whence evils are yet in their cradle, which  
Shall soon convulse the world, and shake, perhaps,  
The constitution of six hundred years  
To atoms.—Much it wanted of repair :  
But those repairs were far too long defer'd,  
And crowds of speculative jobbers force  
Their services to pull the building down,  
And utterly rebuild it to their own  
Wild fancies : and it is most probable,  
Rebuilt it *will* be, to appease the craving  
Appetites of their measureless ambition.  
Then down will come the ancient towers and spires,  
To the clouds reaching; and th'irregular  
But not incongruous diversities,  
Plann'd by a long succession of wise ages,  
As time and fit occasion dictated,  
And as experience gave the certain lesson  
Of the necessity; but now, if built  
After the fashion of the crotchet-mongers,  
'Twill be, perhaps, but as a citizen's box,—  
Dwarfs, lions, monsters, serpents, wolves, and bears!

Thus in opinion, not in imagery,  
For many a page have I my stores pour'd out;  
And there are critics, who with obstinacy  
Swear that in imagery alone is poetry  
Of the true fountain to be found. Such narrow  
Notions, which little of poetic vein  
Would leave in greatest poets, merit not

Response. All of high wisdom is for poetry  
Matter the most profound and valuable.  
We cannot think with power and force and clearness,  
Unless imagination the materials  
Presents : and thus from lofty, burning, views  
Results sublimity of thought and feeling :  
Poetry is no gewgaw, or mere plaything!  
Let them who read not for the intellect,  
To gingling rhymes, or monstrous visions go !  
To teach us how to think is the prime lesson,  
And how to feel! For whence draw we our honey,  
When like the bee we would extract the sweets  
From flowers of poetry? The moral axiom,  
The sentiment we sieze upon; not images  
Glaring, and gorgeous; monsters, mysteries!  
Of Shakespeare's strains divine whence do we take  
The passages for ever on our lips?  
All that relates to simple daily movements  
Of human bosoms! of opinion's stores  
And of the colours of our common life!

Who lives among the mountains and the lakes,  
Has his heart warm'd, and intellect exalted,  
E'en tho' his lips are silent, and in outward  
Shape he may rude and barbarous appear.  
The eye cannot survey grandeur of matter,  
And be unmov'd! And strong variety  
Of shadowing tints, changing and beautiful,  
Affects the labourer at his daily work,  
And fills his breast with cheerful energy!  
A flat dull atmosphere, impending over



A flat dull country, undiversified,  
 Depresses deep the spirit, and of hope  
 Clouds all the rays : and hope alone can lead us  
 Along beneath life's ever-pressing burden !  
 It is variety that freshens us ;  
 And there is no variety but in hope !  
 All is in mind : we have no real joy  
 But in the mind ! and matter pleases only,  
 As it is clad and tinted by the mind.  
 And thus it is, that poets give the energy,  
 And sole attraction to all human things !  
 For they with thought and sentiment array them,  
 And this is the association, which  
 Makes the creative essence of true poetry.

There is, perhaps, a discipline of brain,  
 Which tends not to unite but separate,  
 These thoughts and feelings, miscall'd adventitious ;  
 And this they may deem science ;—sound philosophy  
 Worthy their toils ; and forasmuch as fashion  
 Governs mankind too much ; and this the fashion  
 That has upon the banks of Lemman's Lake  
 Prevail'd for ages ; it may be the cause  
 That poetry has never flourish'd here ;  
 Where nature gave the scenes most fit to nurse it !

Old stern ascetic CALVIN, to the Muses  
 Odious, and hating them as wicked Syrens,  
 His distillations of sour antidotes  
 Spread far and wide and deep ;—from which the blood  
 May ne'er be purified. Enthusiasm ;—  
 Yet no imagination, and no sentiment :—

Strange contradiction!—Narrowness, and bigotry,  
 And puritanism in its odious sense!  
 Delusions! Are the joys of life delusions?—  
 They are realities :—and innocent,  
 And virtuous realities : to fright them,  
 And hue and cry them off is flagrant crime!  
 Why not deal with them in the scenes, where nature  
 Has been profuse of her magnificence?  
 Are they nip'd in the bud? Is every nascent  
 Idea, and emotion, crush'd at once;—  
 And then the channels of the heart and brain  
 Clos'd; and a formal artificial character  
 Of intellect forc'd rudely in its place?

A poet is a gardener, who sows flowers,  
 Balm, and herbs medicinal, and lays out  
 The ground in lawns, and woods, and lakes, and forests,  
 And murmuring rills, and tumbling roaring torrents!  
 And is his art, and labour, valueless,  
 And trifling, and insipid? 'Tis the spell  
 That makes the blood to flow in kindling tides,  
 And turns the drink of life into pure nectar!  
 We are whate'er we think ourselves; and all  
 Of our existence is imagination :  
 Tear but the veil; and all beneath is hideous.  
 There's no such thing as *metaphysical* :  
 Matter and mind must always go together,  
 In the mysterious lot of this strange life!—  
 But Mind will turn the matter into spiritual,  
 If duly nurs'd! and all will take the colours  
 And essences of intellectual

Existence.—By due force of mind, and will,  
We can controul and new direct our passions,  
And almost overcome their human grossness;  
And the mean, selfish passions, which most rule us  
At first, may be most perfectly subdued.  
First in the infant, jealousy appears  
Raging beyond controul : then anger fierce,  
And vengeance hot or sullen, wearing off  
Quick, or in moody meditation nurs'd :  
Then cunning, falsehood, fraud, and selfish arts,  
And sensual appetites, and craving avarice,  
And mingled most with virtue, love of fame,  
Generous often, sometimes noble,—sometimes  
Mean, criminal, or childish and absurd.  
For some will win distinction at the cost  
Of vice outrageous ; or by wearing caps  
Of bells from folly borrow'd.—Only Genius,  
To Virtue wedded, can be great on earth!  
And where no wisdom is, there is no genius;  
And where no virtue, neither is there wisdom!  
What is not virtuous, never can be wise ;  
For without virtue is no happiness :  
And what is wisdom, but to know the way  
Happiness to attain? Regret pursues  
All evil ; and thus counteracts enjoyment,  
Which for a moment may from Vice be drawn.  
All high exertion of the mental powers,  
Not in the cause of Vice, is in itself  
Pleasure intense. Thus Dante, Petrarch, Milton,  
Tasso, and Spenser, and unrival'd Shakespeare,

Must have enjoy'd at times excess of rapture,  
Inferior mortals cannot e'en conceive!

The powers of mind, by nature's boon profusely  
Bestow'd, expand by exercise and nurture,  
To an excess no thought anticipates;  
And with the impulse of true inspiration  
Out of themselves into another being  
Are borne! With them we may converse with awe;  
And listen, as to oracles : their lore  
Is breath'd from higher regions : in the night  
Spirits descend upon their eyelids, or  
Come whispering on the breeze; or in the rays  
Of the sweet silvery moonlight dance and sing.  
Thus are the streams of their own knowledge fed;  
And when they ope the fountains of their hearts,  
A radiance bursts, as when the sun at once  
Darts from some massy cloud; and fragrance rises,  
And notes of tender music issue forth.  
Then comes a wild delirium o'er the faculties,  
And bosom of high-chorded sensibility.

But with the earth, as with the floating music  
That travels in the air, they have choice converse.  
Into the secret temple of men's hearts  
They enter; and draw thence upon the glass  
Of their own fancies all the tender movements,  
Of which the pictures can instruct or please.  
Thousands there are of noble bosoms, which  
Are agitated by sublime emotions,  
Or tenderness most exquisite and pure :  
Yet are not gifted with the art to paint them,

And others' sympathy to exercise.  
These call the magic accents of the bard,  
The glories of their bosoms to communicate.

O literature! to thee alone we owe,  
That by th'accumulated stores of wisdom,  
Time and experience gather, we can profit!  
Except for thee, each age for self alone  
Had lived! and each successive generation  
Had to renew its same experiments.  
Now what our grandsires thought and felt in æras,  
And manners widely different from our own,  
We have before us, for comparison,  
In animated colours! Thus we see,  
That genius ever thinks and feels the same.

Hither, the Reformation's capital,  
Came many a fugitive from the fire and stake,  
When MARY TUDOR, the ferocious child  
Of the eighth Harry, mounted England's throne,  
And the angelic JANE, the victim daughter  
Of ducal Suffolk, on the scaffold paid  
The forfeit of her life, to feed th'ambition  
Of those from whom she drew her hapless being.  
O lively, learned, innocent, and pious,  
Simple, and wise! the tears forever flow  
Of all posterity upon thy fate!  
But thy heart-breaking tale is too well known;  
And yet too long to be repeated here!  
Here daring KNOX, intemperate and brutal,  
Ferocious foe of Caledonia's beauty,  
MARY, of Stuart's race, his anti-popery

Cherish'd and spread; and puritanic hatred  
To power monarchic loudly bellow'd out.  
Here WHITTINGHAM, whom after his return  
Rich Durham for its northern deanery own'd,  
And whom the Psalms acknowledge for a versifier,  
Rested four years from persecution's fangs.  
Here lies the book! the archives of the State  
Retain it still, which they deliver'd up,  
When they took leave in native soils to seek  
Their residence: the annals of their birth  
Their marriages, and deaths! The future dean  
His nuptials here with his French wife contracted.

O silent Night, beneath thy mantle lives  
Calm Contemplation in her happiest mood!—  
Then busy Interruption sleeps; and all  
The restless passions of mankind are still.  
In the turmoil of human converse never  
The Muse her stream with force and frankness gives:  
We cannot mingle with the world, and have  
Our tempers and our feelings undisturb'd.  
And under irritation the weak hand  
Can from the lyre no sounds of harmony draw.

There are who think, the products of the mind,  
Being unembodied, are but useless shadows:  
“Act; do not talk or write,” they cry,—“for words  
Are but the hollow whistling of the wind!”  
To brutal exhortations, such as these,  
There is no answer but indignant scorn:  
And when the mind is high, the human station  
May be—among the lowest,—not debased.

The mind is acting on the face of things,  
And still directs their movements, and their colours;  
Tho' unperceiv'd : and wide Opinion spreads  
Her influence, when the current glides along  
Viewless. It is opinion, sentiment,  
Not reason, guides the world. The head alone,  
Without the heart's assent, will do but little :  
Dry arguments fall dead upon the hearer,  
And are forgotten. Bulky folios  
Of artificial, temporary, inferences,  
In every age are printed, reign a little while,  
And then are cast away as worthless waste :  
The natural effusions of pure genius  
Live, and are green for ever. The mind wanders,  
Rich in the blessing of ubiquity;  
And casts her piercing gleams throughout all space.

But in strange days we live, and it may be  
Permitted for a time that mere brute force  
Should rule;—if mind her just dominion yield  
By false assent. In all past ages, mind,  
In every nation, civilised or barbarous,  
Has heretofore been governor, and will  
Again, tho' for a moment bodily  
Strength should o'ercome! Mankind cannot be made  
Anew, after the lapse of many thousands  
Of years : the principle innate of power,  
And of obedience, will be still the same :  
And the same course will be again to run  
From savageness to polish, and the arts.  
First will the sword, and cruel tyranny,

Prevail; then civil government, and laws,  
And sway, by wisdom and refinement soften'd;  
Mingled, perchance, with humour and corruption :  
And often needing the opposing hand  
Of those submitted to the harsh misrule.  
But not to call the people for a lasting  
Instrument of controul, if it be true  
That man by reason and by conscience cannot  
Govern himself, but wants the force of laws,  
And power, his passions and desires to bind,  
And hold his hands from injuring another.

No power not strictly necessary is  
Endurable in monarchs, oligarchs;—  
And surely least of all in strict republics.  
Who ever but an idiot dream'd, that monarchs  
Had power bestow'd for their own gratification?  
Where will the silly optimist be found,  
Who gives his faith, that power will not abuse  
Its franchises and functions, when it dares?  
It is the duty of a citizen,  
All necessary puissance to uphold;—  
But all beyond, with arm magnanimous,  
And voice untrembling firmly to resist;  
To put to scorn the insolence of office,  
Nor fear the field of battle, nor the scaffold.  
Wisdom in council is a quality  
Not to be spar'd in those, who would aspire  
Duties of state to execute; and weakness  
Is a crime worthy of a mighty vengeance,  
To those who undertake the perilous labours



They are unfitted to perform with talent.  
And is then legislation a light duty?  
If it be light, why have such grievous errors  
Disgrac'd our statute-books, and brought destruction,  
Fire, famine, blood, on a misgovern'd people?  
Is it enough to vote, and not to judge,  
To think, discriminate, suggest, invent,  
With moral principles be well imbued,  
To know the heart of man, and all his passions,  
And modulate provisions to his nature?

In the last stage of a declining State,  
When luxury, and rank corruption, spread  
Their poisons o'er the land, and to the heart-strings,  
When all is deep and complex artifice,  
And evil is immix'd indissolubly  
With every institution, not a step,  
But by profound sagacity, can be taken  
Safely. Then minds unexercis'd, unaided  
By wisdom's stores, and how much more if weak  
In native faculties, must fail to do  
The work of difficulty put upon them!  
'Tis said, they can but go with leading heads,  
And rule by numbers!—but where is the judgment  
To fix upon the leader? and is all  
To rest upon the shoulders, and the talents,  
And probity of one or two alone?  
'Tis by the conflict of commanding intellects,  
Affairs of state are managed with due wisdom:  
And intellect is now almost extinct  
In legislators, and in politicians:

In Britain almost of the last was CANNING!—  
 A man of florid rhetoric,—of heart  
 Bold and decisive;—not of primal genius,  
 Or most profound and most sagacious judgment;  
 Versatile, proud, ambitious, vain! “Who bore  
 No rival brother near the throne!”—but cross’d  
 By politics perverse, and taunting bigotry;  
 And when his light was out, no other lamp  
 To guide us thro the darkness of the world,  
 Where tempests were in every quarter brooding.

Then sunk we all at once a thousand fathom  
 Deep in all Europe’s eyes! The warrior bold  
 Lost in the cabinet his irresistible  
 Decision; and in wavering feebleness,  
 Now arbitrary recklessly, now yielding  
 When all the policy was in resistance,  
 The country to the brink of ruin brought,  
 From which, perchance, it cannot now be sav’d.  
 It was, when Freedom, e’en to licence, was  
 A crying rage, most grievously ill-tim’d  
 By military tactics to endeavour  
 A liberal people to be ruler over!  
 And by his *fiat* to expect to carry  
 Each measure,—scorning ever to give reasons!  
 Instructing all his myrmidons to laugh  
 At eloquence and argument, as wind!  
 “*To act, and not to talk*” was the fool’s taunt:  
 And weak, forsooth, and blindfold, was each act!  
 Yet not the less insulting!—If we now  
 Are in a dangerous experiment

Engag'd, to him we owe it!—Naught remain'd  
But the essay to make: there was no choice,  
And the least evil only could be taken!  
Peril is clamour'd by the Tory bigot!  
In what state-crisis is not peril ever?  
But we must balance perils!—Reason here  
Had a resistless force:—not mob-like passion;  
And senseless cry of discontented labour!  
Time generates corruptions, which calm reason  
Must not be hard and idle to correct!  
Lightly to change an ancient institution,  
Is a vile treason against sense and rights.  
But 'tis the bigotry of fools to hold  
To their abuses: and to never bend  
To circumstances, and to change of seasons!  
A poise between the people and the crown  
Is the best project of a government:  
But much that poise is weaken'd, if it holds  
Means for monopoly in Honour's market,  
And thus the state's high functions can extort.  
Then, to the crown and people equally faithless,  
A fungus of corruption it becomes;  
And irritates revenge, and nurses up  
Thoughts of destruction in its adversaries:  
And mingles with the body, which should be  
Of pure aristocratic elements  
Compos'd, the fruits of base dishonest lucre,  
And new nobility by riches purchas'd:  
And against new nobility the people  
By natural impulse turn!

Stern Johnson ask'd if ever politics  
Disturb'd one's rest? He liv'd in days far other  
Than these, in which we ever tread on mines!  
Then Governments had only once in centuries  
Been to the bottom ras'd! Now all is trembling,—  
Shook to its basis! But too long it suits not  
To linger on one note! Helvetia's mountains  
Avoided not the shock of civil discord:  
Nor ever can they safe and tranquil be,  
If the flame shall be put in blaze again;  
And much the sparks we see, as of Vesuvius,  
Before some grand irruption: horrific rumbles  
Groan from within; and the dread crater opens!

Nature alone is beautiful, and grand,  
And good. Man ever is disturb'd by evil  
And death-pursuing passions.—Governments  
Too often have been held as individual  
Property. Thus too many ages felt  
The Pays de Vaud the iron rod of Savoy:  
And beautiful Lausanne her fate submitted  
To the congenial spirit of the Mitre:  
While Chablais never yet has shaken off  
The ancient yoke of Savoy and of Maurienne:  
A race that by its gradual accretions,  
In eight long ever restless centuries,  
From a small rill swell'd to a mighty river;  
And enter'd deep upon Helvetia's borders,  
And France confronted, thus a slice from Burgundy  
Dividing, while the walls of the diminutive,  
But most magnanimous Geneva, kept

At bold defiance their assaults delusive.

Then Austria in Helvetia's northern districts

Its origin Hapsburgian ne'er forgot,

And ever had its eye, and its ambitions,

Upon its cradle; or at least the cradle

Of 'its extinguish'd dynasty of males;

For tis not true, Lorraine's more ancient house

Sprung from the same male stock: its origin,

Of the imperial line of old Franconia,

Ascends to loftier honours in the night

Of time,—tho hitherto untrac'd by all

Its proper genealogists; and least

By *Calmet*, whose most erudite and toilsome

Fame was ill merited in this due task.

But still the force puissant of the house

Rules o'er the Tyrol, and, with black outspread

Wings, on the skirts of the free Cantons hangs!

Once this great empire, the asserted heritage

Of mighty Charlemagne, or rather of

Old Rome's imperial purple, bow'd e'en low

To th'ground beneath Napoleon's conquering sword,

And irresistible ambition:

But it has risen again, and, like a giant,

With strength refresh'd!—and now no symptom gives

Of age, or of decay: while other empires

And kingdoms all are trembling. Is it wisdom,

Or policy, or courage, or heroic

Usage of arms? Or better, readier, skill

In statesmanlike financial economy,

Or in commercial enterprise and wealth?

Or in the laws to make a people happy,  
And strong in body and in mental courage?  
Ah! surely not the latter! and for artifice,  
If it succeeds a little while, it never  
Lasts when the habit of deceit is known.  
It will be still the rallying point of Europe :  
But, like the rest, at length perchance will crumble  
To dust. Ere half a century is gone,  
The world again may into massy darkness  
And utter ruin fall; and institutions  
Civil, the growth of countless ages, blow  
Into the air at once, and all the arts  
Be prostrate, and mankind roam savages,  
And howl among the woods, thirsting for blood;  
And seeking food amid the beasts of prey!  
It must be so, if merely brutal force  
Permitted be to level all the laws!

They, whom it is the object of the laws  
To govern, cannot be the governors :  
Nor is it possible, that there can be  
The liberty, that may with laws dispense!  
From the creation there has always been  
Among mankind a government and power  
Supreme, tho' very rarely unabus'd.  
Yet it must be, with all its bad concomitants,  
Which ever the most watchful checks demand.

There cannot be hereditary right  
To injure, or to tyrannise over others :  
But an hereditary right to govern  
With justice, wisdom, lenity, in modes

Prescrib'd by law, may be, and ever has been!  
And nothing but this right can keep a nation  
Free from the dangers of the restless stirrings  
Of craving and ne'er-satisfied ambition!

Thus monarchs may be seated in their power  
Legally, wisely, of necessity :  
But constitutions form the chains to keep them  
Within their limits, which they otherwise  
Would overflow, producing devastation  
In the domains they ought to fertilise.

END OF BOOK V

THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK VI.

DIDST thou ne'er visit the magnificent  
Cathedral of Lausanne? There thou hast seen  
A noble altar-tomb of OTTO GRANDSON!  
He was a hero true of chivalry,  
And in his age fell in a noble duel,  
Fighting with all the gallantry of youth.  
He was, I think, if memory does not fail me,  
Last of the males of his illustrious race :  
In courts and camps his gallant life had pass'd ;  
And gloried most, where ladies' eyes reign influence.  
In *Vaud's* dominions, where his ancient name  
And spreading lands, impos'd a sway superb,  
There was a lady fair, the idol wife  
Of a young neighbouring chieftain, whom this Lord  
Of Coppet and of Grandson ever view'd  
With admiration; and perchance with glances  
Unholy; and it may be, that the dame,  
Thro' vanity and coquetry, return'd



Those ogles : then the flame of jealousy  
Waked in the husband's bosom to a fire  
Consuming : but the dame and lord of Coppet,  
Each swore their innocence : yet ah ! the tears,  
And protestations, of a female heart  
Were but as wind to an enraged husband.  
Gallant and fearless, tho' to years declining,  
Great Orro held his head, and went his way.  
He had his word and oath put forth ;—and who  
Would dare to disbelieve him ? He, not he,  
Would be controul'd by false suspicions ; nor  
Avoid the innocent courtesies due to beauty !  
Thus often when he met, in social concourse  
Of arms, and fair ones, and the moving tones  
Of music, and the awakening minstrel's song,  
The persecuted lady,—he refrain'd not  
The glance of pleasure, and the gentle word :  
And between gratitude and fear, the dame  
Could not controul her deep emotions,  
Which the mad husband deem'd the proof of guilt.  
The discord rais'd between the chiefs became  
Contagious : and surrounding chieftains, with  
Their clans, took each their several part ; and wore  
The colours and the badges of their party.

O, what a life of anxious turbulent passion  
The lady led ! yet not unmix'd with raptures  
To be the cynosure of wondring eyes,  
And to behold the hero, who for her  
In gallant daring spent his vigorous age.  
Then she the heroine of the poet's lyre

Became; and the idolatry of warm,  
Mysterious, spell-breathing imagination  
Invested her with charms, not hers; nor ever  
To human beauty lotted: but delirium  
Of hope and vanity inebriated her;  
And she was willing to believe them hers.

Love, hope, revenge, and moments of idolatry  
Shook her griev'd husband's mind and frame to madness;  
And he at times beheld her as an angel,  
That never must be wrested from his arms.  
Then she grew scornful, and herself deluded  
That she for earthly love was too celestial.  
And still the factions grew, and the whole province  
In a fierce civil war became involv'd.  
Now Savoy's Prince, in whose domains it lay,  
Banish'd the hero of the tale; the torch  
That lighted these disturbances to flame!  
In England and in France the gallant lover  
Long tarried, the companion bright of heroes,  
Of ladies' eyes the wonder and delight:  
And when at last the irrepressible  
Love of his native lands recall'd him home,  
The jealousies and the vindictive passions  
Of the relentless husband still pursued him!

Perhaps it was the indiscretion rash  
Of female vanity or female love,  
That rous'd the lion to his prey again!  
The jealous watchfulness beheld the bosom  
Heave at the sound of Ottos' name; or saw  
Her footsteps bending to old haunts; or heard

Her whispers in a dream; or caught the tear,  
 That trembled in her eye! then raged again  
 Fiercer than ever the desire for vengeance:  
 And thus he challeng'd Otto to the single  
 Combat: and the firm but worn-out hero gladly  
 Took up the gauntlet, tho his hoary age  
 Freed him from answering the requisition:  
 For now his hair was white, and he had pass'd  
 His sixtieth year: but he had skill, and native  
 Strength far beyond his younger combatant.

Now every eye and bosom was engag'd  
 Upon the fearful contest: heroically  
 The old man fought; and long the war was doubtful:  
 But either by the feebleness of years,  
 Or chance, or destiny, the blow at last  
 Came; and his eyes in death at once were clos'd.  
 And there he lies, clad in his coat of mail,  
 Upon that altar-tomb! Behold the *pales*  
 And *scallops on the bend*;—a noble shield  
 Well-known in England, when to *Margaret*,  
 The *kingly Tudor's* mother, we our eyes  
 Heraldic turn; for of the blood was she;  
 And drew a noble patrimony from them.

But we have much of Grandson's castle heard,  
 When Charles, the Rash, of Burgundy, assail'd it:  
 And the rich diamond was the prize besought,  
 Long buried, found at last, as *Montolieu*  
 Has in her *Châteaux Suisses* with eloquence  
 And fancy well related: a strange tale  
 She has confounded with it,—from what source

I know not,—thus pretending to connect  
 This precious gem as that which ages after  
 The name of the *Pitt Diamond* got, from him  
 Who bought it of an Indian chief, thus founding  
 The fortunes of Britannia's greatest ministers;  
 And thus perhaps the destiny of all Europe.  
 Strange history of one single mine-drawn product  
 Passing to France, the greatest ornament  
 Of all that gorgeous court; and then at last  
 Like a sun glaring on Napoleon's sword.

And thus the tale of GRANDSON ends :—at least  
 Upon its ancient patrimonial lands  
 In England long a scion of the stock  
 In rich baronial power and splendor shone;  
 And much I boast that thence I draw my blood  
 Thro' various channels; and amid the store  
 Of my armorial ensigns ever paint  
 Th'heraldric figures of their feudal shield.  
 Early was the paternal line of sires  
 I spring from, by direct espousal join'd  
 To this great house Burgundian, when transported  
 To that Welsh border, where the conqueror's chieftain  
 Made inroads on the wild and obstinate Britons;  
 As he, the great magician of the North,  
 Has well recounted in his spell-like tales.

And thus I venture, in a calm defiance  
 Of sneers, and taunts, and smiles, and sharp remonstrances,  
 Still of myself to speak; for who can tell  
 So surely of another's thoughts and feelings,  
 As of his own? And what the passages

In other poets—Milton, Cowley, Cowper,  
 And yet an hundred more, to which we turn  
 With most delight? By one congenial taste  
 All hang on those fond undisguised effusions,  
 Where all the secret moves of their own hearts  
 They open lay; confess their weaknesses;  
 Put forth their hopes; let out the hidden springs  
 Of their ambitions, toils, and vanities;  
 And justify, or wail with tears of sorrow,  
 The paths that they have trodden. If they speak  
 The truth, they find an echo in the bosoms  
 Of all their readers: but if false, the tone  
 Betrays them; then the listener has his triumph  
 In the ascendant o'er a vain pretender.  
 Truth is for ever simple; affectation  
 And labour are the proofs of base disguise.  
 There is no eloquence, where there is labour;  
 And rarely truth: and what with toil is written,  
 But slowly catches others' apprehension.  
 It has abruptness, and the natural  
 Alliance of ideas is destroyed:  
 For in the mind Nature implants her links;  
 And these we follow as by intuition.  
 Among the innumerable charms of Shakespeare  
 This, this is not the least.

#### Historic Tales

Form an essential portion of my song.  
 Therefore I must not pass in silence thee,  
 RIPAILLE!—down close upon the rippling waters  
 The ruins of thine ancient palace stand,—

Adjoining *Thonon* in the *Chablais*! Savoy  
 Still o'er that ancient heritage holds her sceptre.  
 There the first Duke of that now royal House  
 Twice in retirement from ambition's thorns  
 Sought the tranquillity of solitude.  
 Strange was his fate,—from princely sovereign  
 To privacy,—and then to sovereign power  
 Ecclesiastic, as Rome's Pontiff, rais'd;—  
 And then the proud tiara's power again  
 Resign'd, once more to privacy with thee  
 Retir'd, Ripaille!—But not as hermit strict,  
 Cell-like, and self-denying, as, tis said:  
 But with his choice companions, gay, luxurious,  
 And pleasure-seeking! Luxury and peace  
 Could not keep off the dart of death.—He died  
 Within these walls, ere long! To him LAUSANNE,  
 And old GENEVA's beautiful abode,  
 Familiar were. But witty Voltaire's Muse  
 Has moralis'd upon his fate; and I  
 Fly from a theme touch'd by a popular author.

From what old root the princely race of Savoy  
 Derived their primal growth, historians differ.—  
 Of Saxon, some;—from the old stock of kings  
 Burgundian, others:—in the ninth or tenth  
 Century, they began their wings expand,  
 And never lost the active principle  
 Of gradual aggrandisement, by arms,  
 By marriages, by policy, by ruse!  
 In Italy, in Burgundy, in France  
 Th'extension ever equally was sought:

Never at rest, their schemes they still were planning:  
But all this turbulence of spirit ended  
In feebleness at last, and abdication.

And thus the circuit of thy Lake, Geneva,  
Has my Muse made, descriptive sometimes,— oftner  
Dealing in sentiment, and observation,  
Thought, argument, and intellectual matter.  
If we can cull the images of Nature  
With more of brilliance than reality,  
Then it is good:—but surely 'tis an higher  
Task to associate them with intellect;  
And teach the duller minds to comment on them;  
And how to feel; and with what other images  
To join them. Of all Milton's poetry  
Three parts are intellectual; not material.  
Thus I agree with Pope, not to approve,  
“*Where pure description holds the place of sense!*”  
Where nothing but the fancy is amused,  
It is a somewhat barren entertainment.  
Ever we wish in noblest poetry,  
To have a stretch of all the faculties;  
And not alone the bosom, and the fancy,  
And bright imagination's powers creative,  
To exercise; but to improve the judgment;  
And by a clearer, broader view of things,  
To draw conclusions more enlarg'd, and just.  
Without imagination is no poetry;  
And without judgment also the production  
Cannot the glory of the higher class  
Attain. Among the Muse's favourites,

Of right admitted, who will dare to name  
One, not possess'd of *all* the powers of mind,  
In strong predominance? True bards are never  
Idle and empty dreamers: they are moral  
Philosophers, of th' classes most enlighten'd.  
There is no genuine poetry, but in truth;—  
Truth in the principle, and similitude!—

The thoughtless may raise up their eyes, and stare,  
Since they have heard that poetry is fable!  
But they forget that fiction still may be  
The vehicle of Truth! It is the fabled  
And allegorical embodiment  
Of abstract Truth! If it embodies Falsehood,  
'Tis but a vile and base delusion!  
Nor will the charms of Falsehood be enduring.  
We may be caught a moment by delusive  
Colours; but soon they fade before our eyes:  
And never does the loveliness of Truth  
Require factitious ornaments: in her nakedness  
She is most lovely! Thus the majesty  
Of thought in Milton's strains is most sublime,  
When plainest! Thus all floridness is empty;—  
The mark of a weak artificial mind!—  
But when the ornament is of the essence  
Of the high thought, not then can it be empty!  
For sometimes do the thought, and its accompanying  
Language of illustration, rise together!  
Trite thoughts in flowery language are like harlots  
In gaudy millenery: fine without;—  
Faded, deform'd, and spiritless within.



When a thought wants the setting off of dress,  
It is a proof 'tis worthless in itself.

Never the movements of the subtle mind,  
Rich in its treasur'd stores, will be exhausted.  
Genius may ever ply her toils upon them,  
And still develop something new and useful.  
The shades of difference, the nice distinctions,  
Of which the course of time and of occasion  
Calls for th'observance; th'inexhaustible  
Varieties of application,  
Demand original faculties of judgment.  
The power of combination, and comparison,  
And keen discrimination, and command  
Of words, to others to communicate them  
Clearly and forcibly. It is a talent  
Of enviable puissance to seize  
New features, strong and undeniable,  
Not hitherto observ'd, and bring them forth  
To meet th'assent of every future gazer.  
For how innumerable are the minds,  
That can assent and follow;—yet not lead!  
The few, that on their own resources live,  
Will not disturb themselves by others' dictates,  
But still with their own faculties examine,  
And form their judgments on their own convictions.  
Then there is always freshness in the manner;  
And to old truths an added testimony.  
But repetition of old borrow'd tunes  
Is like the music of the organ grinder,  
Filling the streets and air with heedless noises.

The memory is a treacherous quality,  
If too much faith be put upon its stores;  
For it the higher faculties seduces  
Into a sleeping idleness, while all  
Is ready, free from labour of creation,  
For the demand which each occasion raises.  
But there's a stirring and inquisitive spirit,  
Which will not rest on pledge of others' word :  
But still must set its own impatient instruments  
To work; and sift and balance, and essay  
All by strict tests and measures of its own.  
Then Memory, the storekeeper, is useful  
To furnish the materials,—not alone  
From other sources drawn, but by the powers  
Of th'architect's own mind already form'd  
In simpler combinations, or as elements  
For future buildings. Yet go thro the authors  
In many languages with critical  
Acumen;—you will find originality  
Most rare!—It chiefly is the borrow'd store,  
Somewhat disguis'd by foreign ornament.  
Yet they who have the faculties ever working,  
Fermenting, new-composing, are too apt  
To have th'impressions of the memory  
Disturb'd, derang'd, and many times defac'd.  
When the same subject they again renew,  
They re-create; and do not bring again  
The old creation; often cast, indeed,  
In the same mould; and of identical likeness.

But they, who venture for themselves to think,

And yet cannot think right, would do far better  
To tread in others' paths, and follow guides.  
Originality in being wrong  
Is not a merit worthy of the laurel ;  
But only fit to raise a stare, like conjurers  
At country wakes! The forms of Nature never  
Must outrag'd or exaggerated be.  
"Truth" as the critic Johnson nobly says,  
"Always sufficient is to fill the mind!"—  
One tint too much; one over-strained feature;  
One combination false; one evil junction  
Of heterogeneous elements, destroys  
The spell, and utterly dissolves the merit.  
The strong exaggeration is not genius;  
It is the artifice of the sterile bungler:  
And ever in the richest minds the thought,  
That lies beneath, is stronger and more glowing  
Than the free, frank, involuntary language,  
Which, hurried forward, follows it in vain.  
For rapid thought did never yet permit  
The stay for studied words: and he, who labours  
Upon the scent, will ne'er arrest his prey.  
We cannot on the blazes of the sky  
Steadily look for a continuance;  
But must avert our eyes on other objects:  
And while we look, the blaze is gone; and other,  
And other shapes and hues, burst from the clouds,  
And call us to pursue them; and the charm  
Is vanish'd, if we seize not at the moment.  
We read, or only ought to read, for wisdom ;

And what deludes, is the reverse of wisdom.  
False hues, false facts, and false associations,  
If for a moment they assent and faith  
Impose, with folly's poisons misdirect:  
And if no faith they waken, then no pleasure  
Can they arouse: for where belief there is not,  
There is no charm. Thus fairy superstitions,  
Which the mind is not nurtur'd to give ear to,  
Are but a child's amusements; and all mysteries,  
Which judgment and which reason will admit not,  
Ill suit the taste of a sound intellect.

*"I hate what I cannot believe!"* said Horace.  
Then fools of some most babyish invention  
Cry, "'tis a pretty fancy!"—Fancy thus,  
When she in artificial fiction deals,  
Wastes all her toil in gewgaws; and her breath  
Exhausts in blowing bubbles. 'Tis not harmless;  
For the true strain it to discredit brings;  
And in one censure critics, and the world,  
Of bosoms hard and stupid heads, involve  
All who in metre write, and strike the strings  
Of the lyre, false or genuine. All, which they,  
Who sounder minds and sterner tastes affect,  
Have said in cold disparagement of poetry,  
Only to these false fablings will apply.

What other human being, in the strength  
And soundness equally, as in the lustre  
Of intellect, could e'er compare with Dante,  
Petrarch, and Spenser, and divinest Milton?  
All highest human wisdom; all opinion

Most lofty and enlighten'd ; all exalted  
 Sentiment, in the Muse's strains is found.  
 And if it be an idle empty note,  
 Bearing no solid and instructive matter,  
 It is not of the Muse :—the Muse will never  
 Own it, as from the fount of Helicon.

And why should not the Muses be the deities,  
 Who of the soundest lore their lessons give?  
 Are not the faculties, which separately  
 In other intellectual beings live,  
 United all in them? 'Twould then be strange,  
 Did they not clearer see, and deeper pierce  
 Than others? Above all, intuitive knowledge  
 Is theirs, and half-inspir'd sagacity,  
 Which sees the complex workings of the soul,  
 And from its causes draws the line of action,  
 Which time, and the strong tide of human things,  
 Will gradually unfold in man's existence.

He, who believes that he can stir a step  
 From censure safe, and from sinister comments,  
 Is a most inconvenient self-deceiver.  
 Passions of Envy and of Jealousy  
 Over the world predominate ; and Dulness  
 Mistakes, or will not even notice take.  
 Th'objector—and the world is ever full  
 Of keen objectors,—will with plausibility  
 Exclaim, that if my theory were true  
 Of th' poet's art ;—its uses and abuses—  
 Then the true bard would ever find the fame  
 He merits, and pretenders be proscib'd :—

But that it is not so; and they who, judging  
By tests here urg'd, are empty charlatans,  
Are oft the idols of the multitude,  
While genius pines neglected, and e'en starves.

All this, no doubt, is strange, and contradictory;  
But 'tis, perhaps, the fearfulness of judging  
By one's own feelings, and the evil custom  
Of following the leader, when some critic,  
Who learn'd his art by measure and by rule,  
Has got possession of the public ear.  
The false dominion is by lapse of time  
Broken; and the true flame bursts forth at last  
Thro clouds and darkness; and forever after  
Shines unobstructed. Milton thus, and Collins,  
And many another bard, who struggled long  
With his unkind cotemporaries, lives.  
The mob of readers read not what they like;  
But what it is the fashion to admire:  
They read that they may talk, and be prepar'd  
With knowledge of the topics others talk of:—  
And what is artificial, is more easily  
Learn'd than the natural; for native merit  
Requires a mirror bright by nature's force.  
Those mirrors are not rare; but rarely trust  
To their own strength and action. Popular taste  
Is, as sage Horace, in past ages, sung,  
As fleeting and capricious as the winds.

If the sole spur of fame be popular clamour,  
Then will the track of fame be false and vulgar.  
The bard must be prepar'd t'encounter coldness,

Unblighted, and uncheck'd; and onward go  
Firm and undaunted; while around him fools  
Are cheer'd, and on men's shoulders mounted high.

But oft is Genius morbid,—and neglect  
Withers her heart, or turns the brain to madness.  
Thus most unhappy Collins!—when his notes  
Divine, fell dead upon the public ear,  
With deep resentment to the flames he gave  
Those precious monuments of inspiration;  
Then wild disorder his benighted fancy  
Afflicted, and his bodily vigour fail'd,  
And a few years he pin'd in gloom, or shrieked  
His sorrows thro his native city's cloisters;  
And found tranquillity but in an early grave!

But this submission to the world's unkindness  
Was but a weakness, which detracted from  
The grandeur of his genius. Not, with swords  
Of public vengeance hanging over him,  
Did Milton's spirit quail. In poverty  
And blindness he went on to weave the web  
Of his immortal Epic:—and he died  
Tranquil and happy in maturity  
Of years. His calm self-estimate, and confidence  
In his own glorious powers, was never shaken  
By all the deadly frost of biting breaths,  
Or dark aversion of a vicious court,  
And flinty-hearted people. “If they hear not,”  
He said, “posterity will hear, and glorify  
“My spirit! and while floating in the skies,  
“My ghost will listen to the swelling notes,

“ That on the wings of winds shall bear my name  
“ Throughout all countries, and all distant ages!”

To ponder on the growing web was rapture,  
E'en though no other knew it but himself:  
'Tis true he could not with his outward eyes  
See it; but in his mental vision brightly  
It shone;—and he, above all earthly power  
Of kings and rulers, flourish'd; and in scorn,  
With stern republican virtue sat and mus'd!—

And now I to myself return!—“ What, egotisms?  
“ Eternal egotisms!”—Yes, egotisms!

Johnson has said, that the obscurest person,  
If frankly he the movements will relate  
Of his own heart and mind, can be amusing,  
And e'en instructive! and the cavilling public  
With lively interest has ever read  
The auto-biographic page, if vanity  
And falsehood do not their disgusting poison  
Infuse too copiously. The writer may  
Deceive himself, but if he wilfully  
Will others misinform, then scorn will justly  
His portion be! And there is no deception,  
Which will avail to mingle the ungenue  
With the sincere! The marked difference strikes  
A common reader; and the artifice  
At once explodes, and wakes contempt and hatred.

'Tis said that pity nearly is allied  
To scorn; but surely this has been incautiously  
And incorrectly hazarded by sages.  
Pity is more allied to love and friendship.



It is superiority, which wakens  
Distrust, and jealousy, fear, and avoidance.  
With common weaknesses, and common frailties  
We sympathise: but him, who is above us  
In strength of heart, and freedom from the follies  
And imperfections of humanity,  
We may admire and fear, but rarely love.  
When the illustrious and exalted bosom  
Is soften'd by adversity, we then  
With all its sorrows take companionship.  
Reserve is but the trait of a false pride,  
And heart of cowardly dread of strict observance:  
'Tis by the nice inspecting of himself  
And undisguised disclosure, that we learn  
Man's inward nature: if we know not that,  
Our knowledge is but barren, and of naught.

Then, if I have forever made confession  
Of all my feelings; of the injuries,  
And troubles, and misfortunes, that my lot  
Has destin'd me in a tempestuous life  
Incessantly to strive with,—am I wrong?  
And if I tell the common ills of life,  
The hopes destroy'd, the light mortifications,  
The scorn of "boobies mounting o'er one's head."  
The sting of calumny, the dart of envy,  
They are the conflicts all have to encounter;—  
Whence sympathy' or instruction all may draw;  
And thus when in a glass we see the workings  
Reflected, we can better study them:  
The shades are often nice, and tints are flying;

And when the pen or pencil does not fix them,  
They are too airy for comparison,  
Too subtle, and of too much evanescence,  
Shadowy, and changeable as is the rainbow.

But it is crime, it seems, to talk of self,  
E'en in th' endeavour to detect these movements  
Of intellectual and invisible spirit;  
And all those impulses, by which the blood  
In hidden tracks circulates round the heart!

There is likewise in literature a secret  
History, wisdom well may wish to learn :  
The hopes, the fears, mischances, and defeats  
Of the Bard's life, are not a trifling theme.  
But then the question comes, "who *is* a Bard?"—  
And not to me the multitude allow  
The boon is given. Surely to write in metre,  
Cannot alone a poet constitute!  
It is a spirit indefinable;  
A flame of intellect, and glowing heart,  
Which rules and measures at defiance sets;  
Which comes with exhalations from the fountain  
Of sweetness and of purity; which wakes  
In the air music, and involuntarily  
The human bosom on its floating stream  
Bears away with it; which analysis  
Defies, and laughs at all the critic's laws;  
And by its own internal force, where all  
Of outward look is simple, shadowy, empty,  
With a resistless power of magic works.

It is a partial dispensation of

The breathings of some higher class of beings.  
'Tis not the language, but the thought and feeling,  
Which makes the spell; and in the humblest prose,  
And words least ornamented, it may shine!  
And thus it shines in *Bunyan's* vulgar phrase.—  
Perchance it rises from the living presence  
Imagination to all objects gives;  
And from that presence there is warmth and vigour,  
Which memory has not the power t' impart:  
Memory gives alone a faint, and partial,  
And technical resemblance,—not the living  
Object; and with no actual passions burns.  
Oft 'tis a memory of words and signs,  
Not of the very images: then 'tis cold  
E'en as the sculptor's stone, or painter's canvass.  
But from the elements, which Nature's scenery  
Plants on the fancy's mirror, and the intuitive  
Impressions of some celestial objects,  
And aspirations, and emotions loftier,  
Inventive genius joins, and thus creates,  
The presence of a million rapturing visions.  
This is the genuine theory of poetry;  
Not the dogmatic dulness of cramp pedants,  
Whose knowledge is mechanical and barren.  
Not all the labour, learning, art, that mind  
Can most apply, will aught avail to wake  
From the lyre's strings the Muse's genuine tones.  
'Tis not the subject, nor the elements  
Of which the theme is woven,—'tis the warmth,  
The life, the tints, the atmosphere; the halo

Of brightness, and of glory that surrounds it;  
Which in the fountains of Imagination  
Springs, and is fann'd, and flames. There is no fruit  
Of poetry, in other climes that ripens.  
When in the hot-bed of mechanical heat  
'Tis rais'd, it has no flavour; and it dies!

Thus I approach my task's allotted bound!  
In six and twenty nights successively  
No interruption has disturb'd its progress.  
Much it has babbled, reckless of due order;  
And much, it will be said, of no connection  
With its pretended subject. Let it be:  
Let the mean cavil, as it can, prevail!  
'Tis vain to make responses to objections,  
Which from the temper, not the reason, come!  
My Muse, I trust, has made no great omissions  
In noticing the worthies that belong,  
O Lake sublime, to thy enchanting circuit!  
In scientific lore she has no ventures;  
And in describing natural scenery,  
Best by the pencil touch'd, she has been thrifty.  
The thought, the sentiment, the character  
Of human intellect—the heart of man,—  
She has attempted most with daring hand  
Frankly to draw the veil from. If the touches  
Be neither true, nor plausible; nor worthy  
Regard, the cypher'd leaves will be a waste,  
That the winds soon will scatter in the air.  
But if of men, life, manners, their pursuits,  
And their opinions, there be justice, force,

Or honourable feeling, in his judgments,  
Then will his mental toils have not been vain!

It is not from the stores of memory,  
But from th'internal fountain we must speak:  
All that the memory gives, is stale and faint;  
And adds no knowledge to the minds of others.  
The repetition of the self-same things;  
The mimickry of notes; the mocking bird,—  
Is not alone inane;—it is disgusting!  
Nothing more rare than the original songster;  
Nothing so common as the mocking-bird!—

So, when the great Magician of the North  
Bursts forth with a new note, a thousand echoers  
Start up at once, and indiscriminate  
Believes them genuine rivals, or perchance  
Superior, if there be defects, or negligences,  
Which trick and effort can exaggerate!

And so again, when by a spell the eloquent  
Creator of *Otranto's Castle* told  
His witch-like, horror-breathing, tale, competitors  
Rose numerous, and their stories wild of ghosts,  
And gothic halls, and battlements, and helmets,  
Giants, and dwarfs, and pigmies, multiplied:  
But never one in spirit, or the genuine  
Essence of that, which made the charm, succeeded.

There is no place for mediocrity;  
No hope, no saving point. So Horace sung:—  
And who has since his judgments countervail'd?  
All the mechanical produce of the press,  
For vulgar readers manufactur'd, is

A curse, a poison! It dissolves the force  
Of mind, and all its elements; misleads,  
Where there is interest in error; damps  
Th'originator in his wasting toils;  
Destroys the fire of genius; and the laurel  
Blights with the counterfeit of rays eclipsing.  
Then comes ennui, and cold neglect, and scorn,  
And mean confusion of the high and worthy  
With charlatanic dealers in the trade  
Of words, and borrow'd thoughts, and stolen facts,  
And pourings of quick poison in the cauldron.

Two centuries, and perchance another half,  
Have pass'd, since England, and perhaps all Europe,  
The trade began of manufacturing  
A mental food to please the public appetite.  
Then ROBERT GREENE and THOMAS NASH, and others,  
Their boon associates, gain'd their daily bread  
By furnishing the press with tales and fancies,  
In prose and verse, fitted to gratify  
The undiscerning taste of common minds.  
The lore was mingled much with conversational  
Phrases and topics;—full of vulgar saws,  
And trite opinions, and the modes of judging  
Of life familiar to the popular talk:  
But they were men of genius, and debas'd  
Their faculties, for want, and gain of lucre.  
They liv'd in misery; they died in poverty;  
And in the ages, that succeeded them  
Their writings were waste paper, held in scorn  
Their very names, and even of their authors,

Forgotten; though, again, the present day  
 Seeks them to gratify the rich collectors  
 Of ancient rarities; and curious critics  
 Are willing an imaginary merit  
 To find in them; and truly they sometimes  
 Manners and language usefully illustrate:  
 And here and there a burst of fire, and eloquence,  
 Breaks forth, that has the seeds of life in it.

In this strange world 'tis vain to seek to separate  
 The good and evil:—they together grow!  
 But yet th'abuses of the press are frightful;—  
 A pestilence which daily wretchedness,  
 Prostration of the mind, affliction, ruin,  
 And death itself, works out! the chymical drug  
 The particles of governments dissolving,  
 And letting loose the chains that tie the dogs  
 Of anarchy! Then, on the contrary,  
 Where were th'englight'nment of the world without it?  
 What should we do at the deprivation of  
 The eloquence of genius, and of wisdom?

Authors are now so multitudinous,  
 That awe and reverence for the occupation  
 Is gone; and general readers have no talent  
 The genuine from the mechanical  
 To separate;—nay, rather would prefer  
 The false;—which has more method, and more polish.  
 But then they meet the men, and find them common  
 In all their notions and their feelings; and  
 In apprehension dull, in fancy lifeless:  
 And thus they cry, "it wants no qualities

Of eminence to have success in letters."

So genius and so learning lose the power  
Of doing good by awe and reverence :  
And thus the spur is blunted, that would urge us  
" *To scorn delights and live laborious days.*"

It was the love of glory, that led on  
Mortals upon their spiritual wings to keep  
Their course, in spite of earth's impediments.  
But when the cheer is ceas'd, and all is dead  
Of human voices, then the force of man  
Lasts not, in an exhausting track to bear  
His onward way! Thus Genius pines in silence,  
While false pretenders wrest away the chaplet.

O thirst of money! 'Tis the universal  
Passion of human kind:—not thirst of fame!  
When I have said that I have work'd for fame  
Thro my woe-follow'd life, few have believ'd me!  
And work'd not only without gain of money,  
But at its mighty cost; and knowing too,  
Beforehand, it would be a cost,—not gain!  
And if there be a few, who have giv'n faith  
To the assertion, of those few still fewer  
But blame it as a folly, if not crime!  
Then others, if I neither yet have gain'd,  
Nor could gain if I would, assume 'tis proof  
Complete, I have not genius, nor e'en talent!  
They say, the judgment of the multitude  
Alone, is testimony due of merit:—  
And that to please a few, is the result  
Of whim, and partiality, and prejudice.



But yet not always has the popular writer  
The highest worth, or force, or taste, or knowledge.  
Sometimes there is a base necessity,  
*Down* to the popular taste to write,—not *up*!

Then, as it is my folly to be frank,  
And many a mighty ill has risen from it,  
Let me confess, (for frank confessions always  
Relieve my loaded heart,) that I could never  
The public please, or gain a kind reception!—  
'Tis natural, that they, who have the fortune  
To suit the people, should insist upon it  
To be the only true criterion  
Of real merit.—Yet does reason justify  
The rule? And are the many loftier-minded  
And wiser, than the few, whom nature's gifts  
Endow, and toils of learning still improve?  
Judgment and taste in part are the results  
Of nice and wide comparison. The multitude  
Cannot have leisure for this painful culture.

Sometimes, as in the mighty northern bard,  
The magical creator of high tales,  
The gifted few and general public voice  
Concur! It is where Nature's touches strike,  
With art unmingled, on the human bosom!—

But they who struggle in the common bustle  
Of life, and by its common passions move,  
To a sympathy with those sublimer notions,  
Which actuate the few, are too insensible.  
Those impulses disturb their daily courses,  
And render the rough path, they have to tread,

Too painful to a temperament refin'd,  
And blood rais'd to a sensitive excess.

Why should I fear my thoughts and sentiments  
To lay before the world, if I believe them  
True? Scorn, or ridicule, cannot affect  
Wisdom, or truth, or virtue:—generous feelings  
May be the mockery of brutal vice;  
Or shameless hardness of an icy heart:  
But soon the scorn will turn upon the scorner,  
And he be cover'd by his earthly foulness.

'Tis affectation, and base artifice,  
Which ought to tremble at the piercing eye  
Of rival candidates for fame and favour.  
When art is in her odious colours shewn,  
When false pretension is expos'd to view  
Bare, then for fame comes killing ignominy:—  
But not for what is said in perfect faith,  
And with intention virtuous. If indeed  
It be faint, trite, and foolish,—in the scorn,  
Or dead neglect, which covers it, there is  
A sting, or breath-stopping oppression, hard  
To bear, and carefully to be avoided.  
But ere the self-delusion prompts the utterer  
His voice to lift upon the public stage,  
There must be in the foolish, and the stupid,  
Some wilful error in the estimate  
Of force and of acquirement. Man is reckless  
Of brother man's self-love, and lets him know,  
In terms which cannot be misunderstood,  
Where nature has been sparing of her gifts.

It is, perhaps, th'effect, of evil habit,  
That of themselves men make erroneous estimates:  
Nature points out to them where they are weak;  
And trial, and comparison, a lesson  
Of certainty they cannot fly from, gives.

For public censure, and for public praise,  
In all the minor literary journals,  
It now is prov'd, and known to all the world,  
That they are bought and sold, and hireling scriblers  
Are kept in pay by grasping publishers,  
To recommend their goods by fulsome flatteries,  
And odious falsehoods. But pursued too far,  
Fraud, trick, and gross mendacity, will explode  
At last; and some new artifice must soon  
Be plann'd, and enter'd on, to *vend bad wine!*  
'Tis true, the mean deception is discover'd  
Ere long, but not until the bad commodity  
Is sold; and thus the vendor gains his purpose;  
And for a time supports a thriving trade.

Then all intruders on the lucrative  
Profession they are driving, these apt penmen  
Pursue with vengeance to extermination,  
To brethren of the quill,—of the same factions—  
Alone will they mercy and peace extend;—  
Or liberty to enter in the regions  
Of authorship, as members of the elect!  
By rules precisely the reverse of those,  
On which true criticism must be built,  
They ply the instruments of their base trade,—  
Their rules and measures. More of loathsome art,

And toil mechanical, the more with them  
 The merit;—and the more of natural gift  
 And inspiration, less to be distinguish'd,  
 Or pass'd without some scoff, or taunt, or bitterness,  
 Or wicked and malign misrepresentation.  
 With them,—who works for fame, is or a fool,  
 Or a most dangerous miscreant, who must be  
 Crush'd for the common benefit of the trade!  
 Does chance or hard necessity e'er press  
 The genuine son of Genius to the faction?  
 But in those cells of mean intrigue, amid  
 Foul lucre's birds of prey he draws his breath;  
 Clouds, vapours, pestilence, absorb his faculties,  
 And turn his powers to poison and corruption.

Yet there's an outward and most plausible semblance  
 Oft in this hot-bed produce, which has poignancy  
 For vicious tastes: but soon it rots, and dies;  
 Has no revival; and is heard no more:  
 For it has naught of native life in it;  
 And only breathes by fashion, and caprice.

But the true strain will live for ever;—frost  
 And snow and blight and tempest cannot injure it,  
 Or paralyse the force and glow of spirit,  
 That circuit thro its arteries and elements.  
 After the lapse of ages still it lives  
 And breathes, e'en as at first it liv'd and breath'd.

No artificial poet;—none whose flame  
 Was secondary and derivative,  
 Has ever liv'd in fame for half a century  
 Beyond his mortal life, though many an one

Of this inferior merit has obtain'd  
A temporary reputation.

The days and hours are drawing to an end,  
When I approach the close of my farewell.  
My Muse has freely flow'd without or effort,  
Or artifice, or polish, or disguise.  
It has no claim upon the ground of ornament,  
Or illustration, or concinnity  
And happiness of phrase, or harmony  
Of metre: nor can place its hope of favour  
But in the force and rectitude of thought,  
And purity of native sentiment.  
If, though these thoughts and sentiments be true,  
They yet be stale and trite, they claim no mercy;—  
And I well know they will not, cannot, have it!  
The matter may be found conformable  
To much of many an author, who precedes me.  
Not therefore is it borrow'd: if it has  
The stamp of truth, but little can it differ;  
For truth is constant and immutable.

Yet not the less, e'en though already said,  
May be the use of saying it again,  
Grounded upon concurrence of observance,  
And sympathy of bosom, if there be  
The charm of novel language, and fresh life.—  
The borrower is ever known by technical  
Marks of his theft; and artificial phrases  
Identical; and trains of thought the same,  
When not allied by nature but by whim.  
But in the paths of lonely meditation

For sixty years have I explor'd my way;  
Nor sought a guide, nor trod upon the steps  
Of others;—oft in darkness; oft in storms;  
Oft by the fairy lights of silver moonbeams;  
And sometimes in the garish glow of day,  
Beneath meridian suns. The stores we gather,  
We are not willing should exhaust themselves,  
Pent up within the bosom's dark abode:  
That which is sought in solitude, is sought  
Full oft for social purposes;—alone  
We do the task, which is for fellow-man;  
And but retire to think with more intensesness  
Upon humanity;—its griefs and joys!  
'Tis only by incessant pondering,  
That we can know the mysteries of man's nature:  
And by the unrelaxing exercise  
Of all the mental faculties, can gain  
Precision of ideas, and command  
Of language, to express them properly.  
Much it imports us all, the lights and shades  
Of moral science, deeply and precisely  
To be familiar with; the human character  
In all its passions and varieties  
To see reflected, as upon a mirror,  
And all the tribes of just association  
To clear and strengthen in our feeble minds.  
We do not love to think exclusively,  
And have no sympathy with fellow-beings.  
But few are they, who in their riper years  
Care for the tricks or gems of poetry.

'Tis only in the essence of the matter,  
The spirit of the Muse, an audience sound  
Can take delight, and in the simplest words,  
And plainest dress, and rudest numbers, may  
That spirit live, and be communicated!—

If the strain be too long; of dull reflection  
Too copious,—in sentiment affected,  
Or false, unvirtuous, and inanimate;  
If imagery in portion due be wanting,  
And if too intellectual, immaterial,  
In incident deficient, and in pathos;  
Beyond the requisite limits of a poem  
Didactic,—which pretends not to the charms  
Of vulgar fable,—let it have the fate  
It shall in candour merit! Not on one  
Task of the mind do I rely for favour!  
Much have I labour'd, and in various walks,  
E'en though but rarely cheer'd by human praise.  
And now, when at the age of man arriving,  
I do not find my humble faculties clouded,  
But can from midnight to the seventh hour  
Prolong the task unwearied, then be ready  
For the day's ordinary occupations;  
It is a load thrown off my bosom;—lighter  
I feel at the discharge; and if no day  
Passes without some innocent toil perform'd,  
I feel a joy that I can shew the progress  
Of my existence by some visible sign,  
That marks the course of one day from another.

There was a time when the disorder'd current

Of my blood, like a weight upon my brain  
Sat, and oppress'd it;—thus for two sad years  
And more, my faculties were dull and stagnant:  
But all at once the vapour broke away;  
And in an instant my o'er-mantled brain  
Burst to a flame, that ever since has blaz'd!

And still, O Lemman Lake, on thy beloved  
Waters I daily look; and see the sun  
Rise over Alpine mountains; nor has once  
Sleep overpower'd me at its earliest dawn,  
For thirteen months successively. And now,  
For nine and forty nights uninterrupted,  
Have I the strain continued;—and I close.



THE  
LAKE OF GENEVA.

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BOOK VII.

It is a charge against me, that I cherish  
The love of praise too much : they mean the love  
Of flattery. Now I deny the charge :  
I love to gain th'attention of the wise  
And good :—for who would labour day and night,  
Yet gain no notice ? who does so, must have  
A most egregious confidence in self!—  
Who has a powerful apprehensiveness,  
Knows his own faults, and weaknesses, and failures ;  
And ever to the test of others' judgments  
Is driven with a just anxiety !  
He hails approval therefore with delight ;  
But this is not a love flattery !  
'Tis ever thus, where to a vase two handles  
Exist to hold it by, they take the wrong :  
And where there is a candid and uncandid  
Comment, to which a quality is subject,  
The harsh censorious world th'uncandid take,

A rectitude of thought and sentiment  
 Is the grand praise, to which the noble-minded  
 Aspire : but of that rectitude what proof  
 Other than commendation can be had ?  
 And who is he who can presume to say ;  
 " I to myself am all ; and 'tis sufficient  
 " Of my own mighty mind to have th'approval ! " —  
 Each one may have perverse associations,  
 And some delusive sentiments, which meet not  
 The sympathy of others. Then to learn  
 By praise, one's writings from these ills are free,  
 Is a just satisfaction. A mind enlighten'd  
 By clear, pure, accurate, and kindly views ;—  
 A bosom of benevolent, and generous,  
 And glowing feelings ; a fine faculty  
 Of lucid language, easily educ'd,  
 Are worthy of "*the fostering dew of praise !*"

But it is true, that we must guard our passion  
 For this approval, and for lofty fame !  
 It may too fiercely grow upon our hearts,  
 And burn us up, or lead us wide astray :  
 It must not breed conceit, or insolence,  
 Scornful neglect, or puff'd up vanity.—  
 Without the spur of this sublime aspiring,  
 How could the checks and fogs of life be conquer'd ?  
 The melancholy Young has in his satires  
 Shewn that *the love of fame is universal !*  
 Distinction, good or bad !—for to be notic'd ;  
 And 'tis sufficient—e'en for folly' or crime.  
 But if the passion be for virtuous fame—

Of intellectual loftiness, 'tis judg'd  
With all severity and mean distortion !  
Fame is capricious; often she is long  
In coming, but with labour due, and prayer,  
And perseverance, she will come at last;  
Yet not perchance until the grave has clos'd  
The human ear, and back again to earth  
Consign'd the mortal part. The Spirit in the air  
No doubt will hear the tributes consecrated  
To the cold tomb! O what delight it is  
To think our memories will still survive,  
After the spark of mortal life is out!  
It will be pleasant to have left a record  
Of our opinions and imaginations;  
Of that which rais'd the tremblings of the heart,  
And fill'd the eye with rapture, and awaken'd  
The hand to strike the lyre's resounding strings.

To let life glide away in barren silence,  
Nothing done, plann'd, or hop'd, or even dream'd,  
Is an existence of true wretchedness!  
I would have every day throughout the year  
By some increase to wisdom's treasures mark'd:  
The page of learning, and intelligence,  
And reason high, must not be slumber'd over;  
Attention deep, and ever exercis'd,  
And recollection most severely task'd,  
And nice discrimination; and the movements  
Of bosom, always in strong excitation,  
Watch'd with an hand that shadows can embrace,  
Are necessary to supply the appetite

Of virtuous and long-enduring glory.  
No certain bliss is in a sensual being :  
The pleasures pall; and then become disgusting :  
The meanest being has a conscience, which  
Reproaches him for falling from the state  
Of intellectual desires and hopes.  
Each day steals from him some material part  
Of an existence, which is wearisome;  
Yet for the hope of better gives the fear  
Of something worse :—a dark perplexing road,  
All clouds, and cares, and heaviness to tread!

Ever to intellect there is a novelty,  
Which each successive day brings forth; the eye  
Grows stronger, and sees further, and more clearly;  
And every day the old materials, turning  
To some new use, gain some new interest.  
The faculties by practice grow more vigorous,  
Subtle, and sharp.

In a false path, surrounded by false lights,  
And in the heat of a factitious air,  
Sometimes the mind adds toil intense to toil,  
By necromancer's wand to raise delusions.  
Thus Calvin, in the fervor of his zeal  
Religious, strangely blind and harsh became;  
And what he claim'd himself from bigot Rome,—  
The liberty of thought,—gave not to others;  
But persecuted it, when contrary  
To his own dogmas, not alone with punishment;  
But death, e'en at the stake in burning flames!  
Had he his doctrines preach'd, where Rome's religion

Prevail'd, he would assuredly have deem'd it  
Impious and merciless, the same infliction  
Of mortal vengeance to have given to him!  
Yet did Rome deem his doctrines as repugnant  
To the true faith! Let us then take the worst  
Of SERVET that his enemies pronounce;  
'Tis said that he was restless, turbulent,  
Free-thinking, of an evil genius,  
Dealing in dangerous speculations,  
And blasphemously upon holy secrets  
Prying, a sceptic in the mysteries  
Of necessary faith! 'Tis thus that Rome  
Deem'd of the liberal Protestant! But then,  
O Calvin, boasting that thou fledst away  
From impious and idolatrous persecution,  
And that thou wast thyself the blest apostle  
Of freedom and pure worship,—didst become  
Relentless persecutor of whoever  
With thee agreed not; and 'tis said that treachery  
Thy vengeance aggravated! From thy secret  
Intrigues and accusations in a foreign  
State he was sued, and driven by fear to exile;  
And when to the abodes, where thou preach'dst liberty,  
As to a land of refuge and protection,  
He came, a prison met him at thy urgency,  
And thou becam'st his most blood-thirsty accuser!  
Then nothing but the stake would satisfy  
Thy craving appetite of cruel death!  
And thus he was condemn'd for free opinion  
Upon a point of subtle speculation;

Last to the stake was brought;—the faggots round him  
 Pil'd,—and the fire applied to burn his body,  
 And loose his soul from mortal frame in torment!  
 But the wind blew the flames away, and slowly  
 His body was consum'd to death; as if  
 The elements combin'd his pain to lengthen;  
 And he in his excruciating dolour  
 Cried out: “O quicker burn, thou fire! O quicker!  
 “And end my agonies, and Calvin's triumph!  
 “See with what gloating joy he turns upon me  
 “His furious eyes! and blesses the rude blasts,  
 “That draw aside the fire, that it may slower  
 “Perform its work, and thus augment my sufferings!  
 “Is this the man of mercy;—the apostle  
 “Of mild religion? the fam'd instrument,  
 “The mind of man from slavery to deliver?  
 “Peace, and benevolence, and charity,  
 “To preach to all? More vehemently Rome  
 “In her ferocious despotism never  
 “Raged! ah me! from wolf to still more ravenous,  
 “Blood-sucking, and heart-tearing tyger, I  
 “Have fall'n a victim! Rome, resume your prey;  
 “And, as he deals with me, so deal with him!”

Then the wind blew the smoke away; the flames  
 Ascended bright; and then a mighty cloud  
 Came o'er the sky, and thunder roll'd, and lightning  
 Darted; and Servet then gave up the ghost;—  
 And Calvin trembled, and went home to gloom,  
 Half sullenly delighted, half afraid.  
 Now worn with cares, ambition, pride, revenge,

Mingled with holy zeal, he pin'd away,  
And died exhausted at a middle age.

It would not be unmeet, if the bold Muse  
Should enter into this Man's mystic heart;  
This stiff-neck'd puritan; this bold corrector  
Of moral sinfulness; this harsh usurper  
Of freedom for himself, of tyranny  
Over the minds and hearts and acts of others!  
I am not willing to dethrone a name  
From exaltation by long ages sanction'd:  
But who can reconcile the death of Servet  
With a good heart, or holy principles?  
It was th'undoubted principle of Calvin  
To pull down all above him;—all below,  
Under his feet to tread. The subtle poison  
Of his insidious doctrines shot contagion  
Thro all old governments, and like some chymical  
Element, could dissolve and separate  
Ties and alliances of time and reason.

If there be mysteries in papal doctrines,  
Not less are those of Calvin! They're pretences,  
Under a spiritual cloak to gratify  
A temporal ambition; and to cover  
Sensual indulgence of all wordly vices  
By odious, cunning, mean hypocrisy.  
Treachery, breach of faith, and robbery,  
And reckless selfishness, are thus encourag'd;  
And yet not thus exactly did the Founder  
Of this puissant sect conduct himself.  
Many of the sterner virtues he himself

Rigidly practis'd ; toilsome, abstinent,  
 Direct, unhypocritical, forbearing  
 In self indulgence, but in pride and anger  
 And bitter vengeance,—those three most imposing  
 And irreligious passions;—a believer  
 In his own doctrines; zealous and devout  
 In the Creator's service,—day and night,  
 Working to the great end he undertook !

And such is man's immingled being ; such  
 His imperfections and his woeful frailties!  
 High virtues and high vices ;—pride satanic,  
 With adoration of the Deity ;  
 And with a daily prayer that love and kindness  
 Might in the heart grow up, relentless cruelty,  
 Chains, rods, the sword, the stake, the flames, the halter,  
 With reason sound and most severe, delusion  
 And blindness where a favourite doctrine rose ;  
 A love of freedom, yet a bigot faith ;  
 Irrational belief on Heaven's Election,  
 And favouritism, which would be impeachment  
 Of the Divinity's unbending justice;—  
 Faith separated from action, the most dangerous  
 Doctrine for human virtue.

In days of old the punishment of death  
 Distains the pages of all history :—  
 As if for slight offences man might take  
 Away the existence of a brother being!  
 And above all, for wrongs against the State,  
 Where doubtful policy may justify  
 Various opinion. Governments, that boasted



Of liberty, were scarce more merciful,  
Or sparing of the sword of final punishment.  
Alas, all power is wanton, if not cruel!  
It matters not its form—or king, or oligarchy,  
Or constitution, or e'en pure republic!  
A war against authority, 'tis said,  
Must be suppress'd, or that authority  
Can for a moment only hold its sway!

Check, and a retribution may be necessary;  
But not by death,—except for such rebellion  
As aims at life of others! Thus we read  
With pity, or with horror, the strange tale  
Of SPIFFAME's execution in the *Molard*!  
He was a man of high accomplishments,  
Of learning, intellect, and genius,  
A statesman, and a courtier, hospitable,  
Splendid, and witty, and of blindest manners:  
And for religion's sake had refuge taken  
Within this Reformation's capital!  
But he was call'd capricious and inconstant,  
And sigh'd again for wider scenes of action;  
And sought within the bosom of Rome's church  
To be receiv'd once more, and for reward  
To get a bishopric: he was betray'd  
Back to his puritanic domicile!—  
There was the lock of private muniments  
Broken, and a false document of marriage,  
To gain his heritage for a bastard issue,  
Brought forth, and made a capital accusation  
Before the high tribunal of the State!

He was found guilty, sentenc'd, e'en to death;  
And in three fleeting days dragg'd out, and executed.

There are, who of some secret acts of treason  
With Savoy's Prince suspect him; but for acts  
Not tried or charg'd, no principles of justice  
Allow a man to suffer! It is said  
He died repentant of his heinous sins,  
In the pure temperament of sanctity;  
Acknowledging the justice of his sentence;  
And the sad close of his deceitful life!  
O hypocrites, who aggravate the dreadful  
Infliction of a death of violence,  
And shame, by adding to it false confessions!  
Who would admit the rectitude of judgment,  
That was about to take away his being,  
For such a crime committed years before,  
In dissolute days, and never acted on?

Here Calvin's fierce and unforgiving spirit  
Rul'd o'er the minds of magistrates and statesmen!  
It was a fearful time that I would not  
Have liv'd in, notwithstanding all the boast  
Of golden ages of our ancestors!  
But Calvin and his advocates contended,  
Fierceness alone could counteract the licence  
Of times so dissolute!—and what of evil,  
The change of false religion had brought with it,  
Must be corrected by a pure religion!  
But that cannot be pure, which deals in death,  
And blood, the scaffold, hatchet, and the torture!  
Not home with them did *Whittingham*, and *Knox*,

A pure religion bring;—but sow'd the seeds  
 Of discord, and of war, and rank distrust,  
 And hatred, and of future rapine, cruelty,  
 And fields and rivers cover'd with the slain.  
 Then the arts ceas'd before the cries of war  
 And canting hypocrites rul'd o'er the land!

Thus Caledonia's beautiful and suffering  
 Queen was by Knox's rudeness with foul language  
 Ever insulted; and the eloquent  
 Buchanan upon kings, his venom cast!  
 Kings may abuse their power; and thus will power  
 In all hands be at moments ill administer'd:—  
 But power there must be still! in anarchy  
 Will be alone the power of strength and wickedness!  
 The puritan loves power, and is relentless  
 Against all other power, except his own!

In England a great noble, of high quality,  
 The puritanic party's cause espous'd;—  
 The favourite of his Queen, the prince luxurious,  
 Who liv'd in all the pride of feudal splendor,—  
 Dudley, of Leicester Earl; a man by crimes,  
 Adulteries and murders, stigmatis'd,  
 As *Cumnor's* shrieks, and ghostly stain, will witness.  
 He for the church's spoil design'd it well  
 Such patronage to offer; and old Burleigh,  
 Though wise, yet cunning also, held with him.  
 And thus the heroic princess between puritans,  
 And plots of jesuits, had an anxious life.  
 Sagacious wisdom much it ask'd to meet  
 Counter-ferocity, and counter-cunning!—

Quickness and courage and magnanimous  
Decision were her gifts, and lifted her  
Above the pits and tempests that beset her!  
By opposite defects her successor  
Fell into pitiable feebleness :  
And then the puritanic faction grew,  
Till in its hour of pride it fell to arms.

But we must to the fountain-head return,  
And talk of him, the chronicler of Genevan  
Events and manners. Modern annalists  
Have told strange stories of his latter fate:  
The tale of *Chillon* did not end his sufferings.  
O Bonivard, when from that vault, those chains,  
And that dark domicile beneath the waves,  
Thou didst escape to daylight and to freedom,  
Didst thou not think thy wretchedness and wrongs  
Had clos'd, and that the future would be days  
Of peace, and sun-beams, and of social pleasure?  
But thou hadst fiery blood, that would not rest  
Contented with exemption from sharp misery :  
And thou the puritanic whip didst suffer  
For thy irregularity of manners!  
The nuptial ceremony in the church  
Twice celebrated, not enough for thee,  
Thou didst a third companion at the altar  
Choose, in the bloom of youth and gaiety,  
At thy bold fancy's call; but she, of temper  
Too spritely for thy faded age, with power  
Tyranic, and ferocious blows o'er-rul'd thee!  
Then came the accusation that she took

A younger lover to her arms, a crime  
 Puritan cruelty adjudg'd to death.  
 And now, without the husband's charge or will,  
 The wretched woman, and her paramour  
 Alledg'd, were brought before the state-tribunal,  
 Solemnly each protesting innocence;—  
 Then to the torture they were put, to force  
 Confession; and in agony extreme,  
 Beyond th'endurance of their human strength,  
 Each own'd the crime; yet still it is believ'd  
 They were not guilty. But to mercy's sway  
 There then was no concession. Unavailingly  
 They heard the dreadful sentence, and by hand  
 Of public executioner they died!

Now, Bonivard, were all thy natural movements  
 Of tenderness by long misfortunes harden'd;  
 And wast thou grown to human misery callous?  
 For thou didst still survive, and still pursuedst  
 Thy wonted occupations! If to stone  
 Thy breast had not been turn'd, thou must have died!  
 The story of thy life proclaims, how far  
 E'en to old age man can retain existence,  
 Under a long intense unbroke succession  
 Of inexpressive sorrows, pangs, and horrors.

Up to a certain point, disease, and wrong,  
 And sorrow, soften and ameliorate  
 The human heart:—beyond that point they harden it,  
 And utterly extinguish sympathy.

Thus in a battle a great general,  
 Used all his life to warfare, with calm eye

Sees fields all strewn with slain of friends and foes,  
Which not distract his thoughts, or rob his rest!

But death upon the scaffold is a trial,  
Which human courage would beforehand seem  
Not equal to!—But female innocence  
And loveliness has stood the test, and risen  
Glorious above it! seen the block, the axe  
With its sharp edge, before her, and yet stood  
Unmov'd, with eyes of glowing light, and scarce  
A tear of sorrow mingled with their rays!  
And thus when that sad axe would in a moment  
End a career which offer'd love and rank  
And wealth and fame, and all that this fair scene  
Of worldly pleasures has to offer mortals,  
O lady Jane! O noblest of the Greys,  
Proud Suffolk's pure and most celestial daughter,  
Fair, virtuous, learned, blest with love and hope,  
And admiration of fair nature's scenes,  
And joy e'en in the luxury of innocent  
Existence, yet thy mighty soul could raise  
Its courage to behold the instrument  
Serenely, that would separate thee from all;  
And in a moment bathe thy frame in blood!

He, who with narrow ken would view the mind  
Of man, and have no candour for its frailties,  
Ever miscalculates, and deludes himself:  
He knows not what man can do, in defiance  
Of specks and weaknesses, or faults enormous:  
By some base narrow measure would the world  
Chain man's expanding spirit; and his fires

Extinguish,—with cold freezing waters trying  
To prove to him his utter inability.

Public opinion always is capricious :  
He, who has not a firm self-confidence,  
Can nothing do ; for he will meet with checks  
Ever in places wrong.—On merit fame  
Sometimes attends ;—but, I suspect, too often  
Not for the worth, but some factitious quality !  
He, who would work for immortality,  
Must throw away the thought of temporary  
Applause, and never bend to popular taste.  
Of the works, which for a short moment please  
The public appetite, how few survive !

And how should it be other ? Taste and judgment  
Spring from high gifts, by culture and comparison  
Improv'd ! He has a mercenary soul,  
Who to the public test himself debases !  
But he who does not this, will many a taunt,  
And many a reprobation harsh encounter,  
As if it were his duty to conform  
To what the multitude adjudge the best !—  
Thus in his lonely labours he has not  
Even the cheer of friends, when if they soften  
Hours of anxiety, they are a balm  
Friends ought to bless ! but they would have him work,  
E'en as a slave, for money ! Who would take  
The author's, as a *mercenary* calling ?  
For money-getting work the task is better,  
E'en to break stones upon the public road !  
For then at least the thoughts are free and open,

And the reward is sure and uncapricious;—  
With no illusive measure of the toil!

There is no inward comfort in the labour,  
When the mind works for aught but truth alone!  
To mix a potion for the public draught  
With sweets, and stimulants, and drugs, and poisons,  
Is loathsome travel to a noble heart!  
The price the deleterious draught may sell for,  
Cannot keep down compunctious pains of conscience:  
And when the sin is past, and yet the pay  
Miss'd, and no plaudit follows,—then how sharp  
The pang!—the baseness e'en for nothing done!

A conscious force of genius its reward  
Has in its work, and its own approbation.  
But still the cheer of brother-men is grateful,  
And sometimes will the spirit fail without it,  
And lose that consciousness and self reliance!  
We may despise the people's windy clamour,  
And yet not trust "the still small voice" within!  
We are beset with blights, and clouds, and frosts,  
So thickly and so fiercely, that the fire  
Must be almost too pure, and too enduring  
For mortal frailty, if it ne'er abates  
Its warmth, and hope, and heavenly aspiration.

When the soul is most visionary, and  
The flame most intellectual, comes some earthly  
Damp, and destroys the spell; for in a morbid  
Mould is the magic airiness of genius  
Inclos'd, and when it pleads its sensibility,  
It is but mock'd, and taunted, and insulted.



If the nerves were not sensitive to movements  
 Quick and intense, then there could be no genius.  
 O cruel and irrational to call  
 The mind, whose praise is, to the balmy breeze  
 That it is tremulous, and utters music,  
 To shew resistance firm to the rude blast!  
 A sensibility to good alone;—  
 A rocklike, flintlike bosom to the bad,—  
 Where is it to be found? O do not call us  
 To excellence impossible! It breeds  
 Hypocrisy alone, the worst of sins!

There are, who think that in the Muse's song  
 Nor wisdom's store, nor good is to be found!  
 They are strange, ignorant, and worthless beings,  
 Who thus can deem! whose misinstructed brains  
 Mistake the trifles of false poetry  
 For streams from Helicon! The Muse disdains  
 But with high truths to deal, which draw the veil  
 From the bad movements of man's heart and head,  
 And teach what man it most behoves to know.  
 The flowers of poetry are the petty ornaments,  
 Which stern and lofty censors scorn to value:  
 It is the force and majesty of thought,  
 Which the Muse most acknowledges for hers.

Thus in the ancient records of her art  
 We look for sterling matter; for the stream  
 Of ore, that over golden channels passes.  
 There not the little flowers, that from the banks  
 Upon its surface are reflected, shine.  
 Deep lie its treasures, yet transparent, in

Their gem-like beds, which give their stores to mingle  
 With the rich-laden current! Genuine beauty,  
 Or majesty, disdains factitious dresses!  
 We live but to direct, by issuing rays  
 From the mind's lamp, and throw around the brightness  
 That in the shrine of intellect is nurs'd.  
 All is a mystery without, unless  
 The inward mind the secret clues develop.  
 The face of matter barren is, and dull,  
 Without the mind's associations.  
 But only to a few is the boon given  
 To light the fire, and throw the rays abroad;  
 And e'en that fire must much be fann'd and blown,  
 Ere its due lustre it will reach, and clear  
 Itself from smoke and glimmerings :—then the damps  
 It must defy, and burn with constancy.

Not to the present—only to the future—  
 Forever must the flame's ascent be rais'd!  
 The rays it gives, can only fix their station  
 Over the tomb : the present race will shun  
 The guide, and rather *wil-o'-wisps* run after!  
 Truth is not pleasant to the sensual,  
 Vicious, and profligate ;—and literature  
 Of artifice is easier as a labour  
 Of gain and dirty lucre, than the flow  
 Which issues from the fount of nature's power.  
 By their own rules and instruments, by which  
 They work themselves, will critics others judge :  
 And while mechanically they instruct  
 The multitude, mechanical will be

The multitude in censure or applause.

But artifice forever will be variant  
 In motion and in form :—it is its essence ;—  
 The only mode by which it whets the appetite.  
 Thus all that it into distinction lifts,  
 Must fall again, as wave upswallows wave !

The gift of genius may be rare, but oftenest  
 It in the bud is blighted ; or from clouds  
 Cannot emerge, thro' human opposition ;  
 Thro' sorrow, or mischance, or want of nourriture  
 Of the seeds sow'd by nature,—sometimes copiously ;—  
 Or thro' defect of cheers, or want of courage ;  
 Or envy, jealousy, and cunning malice :  
 Nor more infrequent, and less pardonable,  
 Thro' vile submission to enjoyments sensual.

Far have I wander'd,—now here, and now there,  
 Glancing : but this was e'er allow'd to be  
 The Muse's clear prerogative, and 'twere well  
 If poetry were always as informal !  
 Rapidity of movement, and of distant  
 Objects the prompt association, makes  
 One of the bard's most magic faculties.  
 The flimsy trick of poetry to the ear  
 And eye, and little to the intellect,  
 May pass with fools and children—not the wise.

Who loses all his days in seeking knowledge,  
 Vain, empty, fill'd with windy vapour only,  
 Might do as well in picking straws and pebbles.  
 It puffs him up with self-sufficiency  
 For what is worthless, and misleads the mind.

It is the imagination and the reason,  
Which wanders over mind and matter, makes  
The majesty, and power, and use of genius :  
Not excellence in some one narrow class  
Of learning, or of art!—Thus Shakespeare's book,  
Above all others, is the universal  
Favourite of those who can the language read!  
Not *ornate* language, as the Laureat ever  
Well preaches to the world, can long delight,—  
More than we always can on sweetmeats feed.  
It is the thought,—the ore, and not the workmanship,  
Which gives the sterling value. Glittering words  
Soon tire and nauseate : they are baby's play!  
We cannot long read what is artificial :  
It is a natural eloquence, which bears us  
Onward without fatigue, or loss of interest.

He, who is rich in mind intuitive,  
And well has cultur'd it, can never speak,  
But out he pours a stream of golden ore :—  
Some metal which may turn to useful coin.  
But ornamental trickery of poetry  
Is but a glittering shadow, for a moment  
That flashes, then deserts one, and expires.  
Thoughts multiply on thoughts, and words on words,  
When we retain the natural associations  
Of mental movements : if we interrupt them,  
To reassume them one by one is slow :—  
The tardiness of motion still augments,  
Till all is toil and artificiality.

Not much will he advance upon his task,

To whom it is a painful and dull labour.

But after all that I, and all that men  
More eloquent and wise, have said, the Muse  
Will seem a trifler to a large proportion  
Of man's ungrateful race:—her fruits are thankless,  
And gain not favour, or respect, or smiles:  
But if her lessons be not sound and rational,  
And teach not as much wisdom as philosophers,  
Then let her be rejected and despised!

Much have I travel'd on the grateful theme  
Of this strange land of waters and of mountains,  
Where the seventh part of my o'erclouded life  
I have taken my abode in age and sickness.  
No varnish'd story have I told; no sentiment  
Factitious utter'd: if exaggeration  
Is found in aught, let it be blotted out!  
But to be fervid, is not to exaggerate!

Full many a mighty task, and many a care  
Have I impos'd upon myself, at peril  
Of mockery of a laughing thoughtless world;—  
Tasks which a long life would require to execute,  
When I am at its very termination!  
But innocent and wise are these delusions,  
That from us hide the day of our departure!

Great questions in all States are moving now:—  
In Albion, above all! my stirring brain  
Cannot be tranquil on them. Parliament  
Well-constituted is the fount of right,  
Liberty, and security of person:  
And utterly the nation's wealth, and utterly

The welfare of the Poor, on sapient laws  
 Depends! and heartlessly and stupidly  
 Have both by blind enactments been destroy'd.  
 But will they wisdom in their new condition  
 Hear? Ministers are rarely great in talent;—  
 Still less in genius! Canning was rhetorical;  
 But I am far from sure that he was wise!—  
 The living I by name will not describe!

O who are they that blow up the machinery  
 Of produce, and then wonder it supplies not  
 The nation's wants? who leave without employment  
 The labourer to starve, while lands lie barren?  
 Who plot the means to make him live in idleness  
 At others' cost, while he might make returns  
 For all that he consumes, and give a profit!  
 Who can find stores to feed him unproductively,  
 Yet want the stores that he could well replace!  
 Who can find means to send him cross th'Atlantic,  
 In barbarous lands the native to expell,  
 Far from his country, friends, and fond affections,  
 At a most wasteful cost; yet want the store  
 In toil productive to support his strength?

O vile infatuation! when the barren  
 Rock will repay due labour! when the fruit  
 Is in proportion to the cost and art!  
 'This *paper-money* so misdeem'd as empty—  
 Does it give food and task-work to the Poor,  
 Whose fate it is by sweat of brow to live?  
 Then how can it be empty, immaterial,  
 And valueless? The food must co-exist,

Or paper would have naught to act upon!  
 But does it then to channels left untilled,  
 And less conducive to the nation's welfare;  
 Draw it? O no! the very obvious contrary:—  
 It draws from none, because it reproduces:—  
 Or even if it draw, it would from luxury  
 And idleness to the deserving draw it!  
 Delusions strange, because so clear and palpable!

Ah! pruriency of law-making has been  
 Among the sins or follies of the age!  
 Each self-sufficient booby thinks himself  
 A legislator wise and heaven-born.

• And thus we put chains on the things, whose essence  
 Is freedom; and set free what should be bound.  
 We force the labourer to be paid as charity  
 The sustenance, which is the due return  
 For what he has produc'd:—and then by strange  
 Perversity of contradiction we  
 Tell him he has a right to sustenance,  
 And pay, without the recompense of labour.

The poor laws, as they stand, are a device  
 To rouse all parishes into fierce conflict,  
 Each with the other, and to make the poor  
 Footballs to be backward and forward kick'd  
 From one place to the other, and to feed  
 The law's most ravenous and blood-sucking minions.

We take away the means for the employment  
 Of those who live by labour, by the forceful  
 Enactments of the Senate's interference:  
 And then when they are madden'd to rebellion,

And fire and blood, we punish them with death!  
We take away the means of the employers,  
Yet tell them that they must support the poor  
Without return of produce! We remove  
The check to population nature gives;  
And in its place an impulse false contrive:  
We force the augmentation, and extinguish,  
At the same moment, all the means to feed it:  
We multiply the taxes, and suppress  
In the same breath the instruments to pay them:  
We drive the people, under all the oppression  
Of artificial incumbrances,  
Back to the barbarous device of *barter!*

And this the wisdom of a British Parliament!  
Of statesmen proud, and insolent, and high-bearing  
Of their own intellects the vain pretensions!  
But wisdom does not always with advancement  
Go in the thorny pathway of political  
Ambition, where by ruses and manœuvres  
The post is often won; where flowery words  
And smooth unmeaning voices,—miscall'd eloquence,—  
Enchant the air and ears, and win the race.  
Talent and virtue in the eyes of Government  
Avail but little: for the power of State  
Lies in the regions of Intrigue and Favour!  
He who is cloath'd in office, is deem'd wise,  
Tho ignorant, and tho by nature feeble.  
Thus boobies have the function to prepare,  
And pass, the rules that guide a nation's welfare.  
Hence these enormous wrongs in policy,



Errors incredible, which plunge a people  
In misery, and gloom, and hate, and famine!  
Hence wealth, that is the sword, by which a kingdom  
Alone in modern days can warfare wage,  
Becomes exhausted, or its riches rather  
Buried in earth, and lost by suffocation :  
Our taxes to increase, and yet diminish  
Our riches, is insanity most hopeless.  
Not to augment our debt, but to augment  
Our means of payment, is the only chance  
To ease a nation from the load that stifles it.  
All payment from the same amount of income  
Is a delusion which but aggravates  
The evil;—drawing from the industrious  
And most productive, to enrich the drones.

But statesmen ever busy in intrigues,  
And pressure of the troubles of the day,  
Cannot spare time to think, research, invent.  
Let but the day be struggled through,—enough  
Is done! and that which raises least discussion,  
And passes easiest with the multitude,  
Because it is most trite and most familiar,  
Is best with them, if least of toil it costs!  
And thus, as on Committees on Elections,  
“ *Knock out the brains, and then knock out the brains,*”  
And all is well! and who are emptiest,  
And dread the beaten road, are favour'd most!

To make a statesman and a legislator,  
Demands the mental faculties all high  
In their degree, and all in union, all

Well cultivated, and in constant exercise,  
The dull incessant plodder will work blindly;  
And as he nothing of his way before him  
Sees, he will crush his head against a wall,  
Or sink into unfathomable pits;  
Or from the path direct go wide astray.  
Laws must be regulated well to suit  
Men's passions, habits, customs, and caprices.  
Imagination only can look inward,  
And see the movements of the human heart:  
The toils mechanical of office cannot  
Give it, nor arithmetical profoundness;—  
But it must be the lamp of genius, opening  
A prospect wide in a broad blaze of light.

Thus am I ever ranging o'er the world,  
Taking my flight, O Lemman, from thy banks!  
But once again,—(I cannot tell how often  
I have been straying,)—I return to thee!  
And here in quiet I my meditations  
Nurse; and with novel food my mind repair.  
I think upon the troubles, at a distance,  
Of policy which agitate my country:  
And though I sometimes wish to join the brawls,  
Yet cool reflection ever makes me bless  
The calmer scenes, more fitted to my age.  
I have not nerve for the turmoil and bustle  
Of rude, contentious, cavilling assemblies!  
But rather choose to ponder in the solitude,  
That opens nature's grandeur to my view.  
Here where I see Aurora drive away

The billowy mists of vapour from the summits  
 Of Alpine majesty, and spiral mountains  
 Aspire to heaven, and in the solar rays  
 Blazon their rude shapes,—from their craggy points  
 Reflecting beams of tints innumerable,—  
 Here from precipitous heights the deep blue wave  
 Of Rhone I see into one common flood  
 Fall with the Arve; then down through southern France,  
 Far to the sea its gather'd exit seek!  
 Here to the East Helvetia's numerous craggs  
 Gigantic, with variety of outline,  
 That draw the clouds with every golden hue  
 Fring'd, or transparent, raise the sight to rapture!  
 Far from the stage, on which is play'd the drama  
 Of busy life, should man, who has the means,  
 The tranquil tenor of existence pass!  
 Frail and deceitful are the glittering objects  
 Of the world's passion: they cost dear, and win not  
 The boon expected: not esteem, but calumny  
 Too oft is the result: and if base lucre  
 Because of choosing paths of proud ambition,  
 It is the road of loss, and not of gain.

But yet the grandeur and variety  
 Of nature's scenery the common mind  
 Leaves unaffected: mountains, roaring streams,  
 And precipices, and blue spreading waters,  
 And meads and woods and vallies, might awaken  
 Genius e'en in the dull: but, ah, they leave  
 The intellect in its own native state.  
 The dweller in the mountains has not grander

Thoughts, than the habitant of dirty streets!

Excitement and collision are, perchance,  
Requisite to bring forward human faculties;  
And thus it is, the troubles of ambition  
Produce their own reward. We must not slumber  
Away this precious, labour-doom'd existence:  
And if we fall to idleness, the vapours  
Collect about our brains, and gradually  
The strength and fire extinguish. Silence thus,  
Or murmurs of the breeze, or lull of streams,  
Or song of birds, to tranquil sleep disposes us,  
And we are apt in motionless tranquillity  
To lose the hours to noble efforts destin'd.  
To give to rest its relish we must toil  
Hard; but without strong impulse who will rouse  
Himself from calm repose? And thus retirement,  
However in description it may shine,  
Is yet of doubtful preference. Learned Evelyn,  
Who wrote of woods and forests, and the nature  
Of trees, and gardening, and all *sylvan* pleasures,  
A little treatise against solitude  
Penn'd eloquently, while Mackenzie's pen,  
Who all his life in busy courts had spent,  
Pleaded for deep seclusion, books, and peaceful  
Self-entertainment.—So it is with man;—  
Never with his own destiny content!

'Tis when the mind is full, that Nature's scenery  
Works with a tenfold charm; for then it hangs  
Associations on each glittering object;  
And the redoubled stimulants experiences

In all that round about it lives, and grows;  
 Or motionless, or in its barren state  
 Abides. The statesman, and the traveller,  
 And he, who in the intellectual contests  
 Of man's rivalry, has thought and felt  
 Much, and his brain has ever kept in movement,  
 The more of wonder and magnificence  
 In natural objects shews itself before him,  
 Is more excited into lively flow  
 Of the rich streams that circuit thro the mind;  
 But he, who to corporeal labour bent,  
 A life but little above animal  
 Passes, no difference, perchance, may know  
 Between a mountainous and dull flat country.  
 And he who may be born amid gigantic  
 Shapes of creation, by familiarity  
 May lose the quickness of enraptur'd wonder  
 At the sublimity display'd before him!

Imagination has been represented  
 A Sylvan Goddess, who in solitude  
 Mid nature's grandeur holds her still abode:  
 But she is immaterial, and regards not  
 Embodied shapes, or the globe's substances.  
 Yet atmospheres affect the spirit, when  
 In earthly mould enclos'd, because it acts  
 By aid of matter. Habitants, O Leman,  
 Upon thy banks, of beverage celestial  
 From Helicon's pure fountain ought to drink:  
 But it would seem that strangers only drink it,  
 And not thy natives!—Vain the scrutiny

In Nature's secrets!—But Imagination  
 The lamp of life's most precious knowledge is;—  
 Of moral wisdom, and religious faith.  
 All other science, all exact researches  
 Into material qualities, are trifles  
 Compar'd to this, which only genius can  
 Penetrate, view, arrest, define, and paint.

But stay my hand; and let my voice retain  
 Its long-protracted breath,—lest I becoming  
 Tedious, my lyre should cloy upon the ear!  
 Naught of recondite has it forward brought;  
 No novel tones, as censors will contend;  
 But Memory at least has been awaken'd;  
 And something of association new  
 Been offer'd to the mind by sameness satiated.  
 We know the borrow'd stores, that always travel  
 In the same route, and in the same strict order  
 Of method and alliance; words alone  
 Chang'd for their synonymes as a thin disguise:  
 But order new has something of the novelty  
 E'en of a minor quality of invention.

Should all the thoughts in language here recorded  
 To all familiar be,—yet of sincere,  
 And frank, and clear and simple, and withall  
 Just, they may not be utter'd quite in vain.  
 For by a sympathy we love to see  
 Our own emotions in a mirror pass  
 Shadow'd before us!

A mantle all of gold begins again  
 Invest the Eastern sky, and o'er the Alpine

Summits mounts gradually higher and higher,  
 Driving the billowy vapours all before it,  
 And piercing them with dazzling rays. My task  
 I reassume, that verges to its end.  
 But short though it may be, my own may be  
 Still shorter;—SIMOND,\* by some years my junior,  
 Is gone before me, e'en with scarce a warning :  
 Death struck him in a moment ; he had sense  
 No more—scarce breathing thro a darksome night.  
 Thus I may at this moment hold the pen,  
 And be the next a lump of lifeless clay.  
 And yet I meditate a thousand projects,  
 As if I had a length of days before me !

TOMBS OF THE BARDS in ten long books have I  
 With hope insane for future task design'd.  
 O ye, who mock me for my vain creations  
 Of airy castles, and impossible wishes,  
 Who see me with my snow-white locks, and wrinkled  
 Features, and step infirm, and shaking hand,  
 And tell me of the grave, to which alone  
 I ought to turn my eyes, and thoughts, and feelings,  
 You are as stupid, as you are hard-hearted !  
 Your voices are but whistling wind to me,—  
 As empty and as forceless, as discordant !  
 While I a few choice spirits can engage,  
 And Wordsworth, Southey, Lockhart disapprove not,

\* He died Saturday morning 2 July 1831, after a few hours illness. He was a man of acute, just, and intuitive talent. See his TOURS IN ENGLAND, SWITZERLAND, and ITALY.

Those sarcasms only on themselves return !

If mid the cares, that like a thousand vultures  
Prey on my heart, I can the moments soothe  
By occupations innocent, no crime,  
Or folly, surely is in the indulgence.

He, who expects too much from human nature,  
Does but suppress the little it can do.

Hypocrisy, or stupor, is the consequence  
Of the perfidious counsel thus obtruded.

But Gibbon wisely said, that he who could not  
Counsel himself, was but a broken reed,  
That every wind could blow away to atoms !

Thus for the first six books did I perform  
Uninterruptedly my morning task :

For 'twas the morning, tho the task begun  
The first hours after midnight's sound was heard :  
In seven and twenty days the work was done. \*

Shall I repent it? Much is there combin'd,  
I never else had brought together: much  
Of thought and sentiment I never else  
Had from my mind evok'd.—The clock strikes *one* !  
Deep and distinctly from the town it comes:  
And I must throw the dews of sleep away.

But now \*\* again by some strange new caprice  
Of intellect, its paces and its flights  
Are slow; and I with labour this the last  
Part of my long performance execute.

\* Between 23 May and 18 June, 1831.

\*\* Written 5 July, 1831.



Who ventures in the public eye to act,  
 Or meditate, or shew his sensibility,  
 Must for malignant censure be prepared.  
 Envy, and jealousy, and consequent  
 Detraction, are the actuating passions  
 Of man;—yet strangely oft do we admire  
 In secret those whom openly we criticise;  
 And by degrees is approbation won,  
 Or else extorted from th'unwilling heart!

Shall we in silence and in stupor pass  
 Our days, for fear of cavil and detraction?  
 The storms, that buffet us, but stronger make us,  
 And animate our faculties to actions:  
 Defiance is sometimes a noble feeling.

Few are the cheers, that through a troubled life  
 Have borne me onward:—my reliance then  
 Has been on the indignant impulses  
 Rous'd by ungenerous and wrongful blows.  
 Then it is said, that I am querulous,  
 And ever of my injuries am prating!  
 Defiance and complaint have not a tone  
 Of sympathy: complaint for pity calls,  
 And breathes not battle. I am more inclin'd  
 To think that indignation is my tone!

But it is said, we must not talk of self,  
 For good or bad, for pity or for anger.  
 Yet if the knowledge of internal movement  
 Be the prime lesson, whence with so much certainty  
 Can we the picture of another's bosom  
 Describe as of our own?—It is the cavil

Of that disparagement, which blackens life!

There are, who will deny there is a difference  
In native gifts of mind; but think apparent  
Superiority is accidental,

Or flows from labour, or is mere pretence.  
And all,—that they may rob it of the honour;  
And love, esteem, respect, applause withhold.

But all of real excellence is genius;—  
Not art, or labour. From the springs of mind  
It comes unborrow'd: but it must be aided,  
And warm'd by suns,—by exercise and culture  
Unveil'd!—Or « in the deep unfathom'd cave  
The gem will buried lie!” For Genius never  
The treasure at the bottom knows, till tried.  
Johnson profoundly said, “with the necessity  
Comes the ability!” 'Tis so with genius!  
Necessity cannot create the power;—  
But only draw it forth.

The genuine strength  
Survives the grave, and hovers o'er the tomb!  
The fame, that was in life deserv'd, is green,  
And flourishing, after the lapse of ages.  
The language of true genius ne'er decays,  
Nor obsolete becomes; and each one sees  
Something peculiar to himself, which others  
Have not deliver'd, nor, perchance, e'en thought!  
The fruits of genius by repeated reading  
Ne'er become stale and common-place: a living  
Fire in them dwells; and vigour to the last,  
As in a green old age, pervades their veins.

But never must the exercise relax  
 The constant discipline; the constant effort.  
 Genius, the more it writes, it writes the better;  
 But toil and industry, without the gifts  
 Of nature, fade, grow duller, and exhaust.

Books multiply beyond the utmost reach  
 Of man's attention; but unborrow'd thoughts,  
 And flames by art unlighted, are most rare.  
 And 'twould be well, were groaning shelves discumber'd  
 Of artifice, and nauseous repetitions:  
 Whence precious time is lost in seeking ore,  
 Where nothing can be found but dross and staleness.

There is no torment greater than a stupor:—  
 'Tis not tranquillity;—it is despair!  
 Then every object in horrific tints  
 Displays itself;—and comfort is in naught.  
 Then mind and frame are motionless, except  
 Beneath the writings of disgust and agony.  
 And thus the mind will be, that, form'd for effort  
 And unfatigued activity, is idle.  
 The fogs, that settle on it, breed disease,  
 That like a demon sits upon the heart!

Thus ever must I travel, and my faculties  
 Keep in incessant motion, which the more  
 They work, are buoyant more, and more elastic.  
 And thus with deep regret, and sighs and tears,  
 I backward look on years that I have lost;  
 Discourag'd with a mean and criminal cowardice,  
 By censure, or neglect, or cold reception;—  
 Which ever fortitude, and manliness,

Should breast, and rise against with proud disdain.  
The world by pulling others down suppose  
That they can raise themselves into their places:  
And finding fault they think a proof of talent,  
And that themselves the work could better do.  
Affected scorn is the prevailing tone  
Of visage, that upon the multitude  
Of human countenances holds the sway;  
Or heartless ridicule, or stern apery.

And now, ye Waters, glittering in the sun  
In tints of deepest azure, from the theme  
Of your majestic beauties I must part.  
Be silent now, my Lyre, till thou beginnest  
Another chosen subject. Who will hear thee,  
I hail with joy, and tears of gratitude;—  
Who will reject thee, with tranquillity,  
Now I am old and philosophic grown,  
I leave to their own tastes, and harsher judgments!



















