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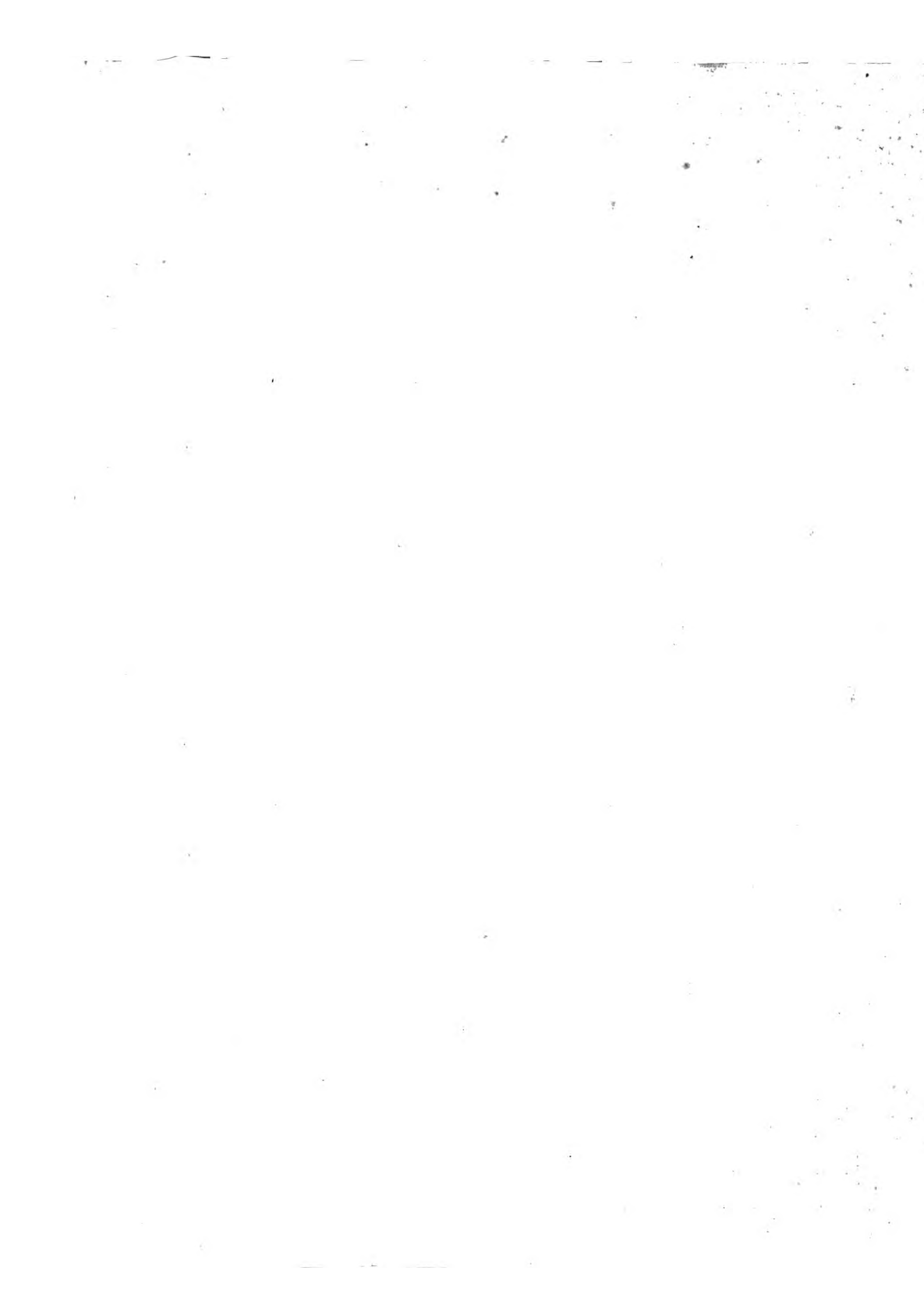


"I'll to my hawk."  
Shakspeare.  
~~James~~  
James Jamieson Lamb,  
Underwood Cottage,  
Paisley.

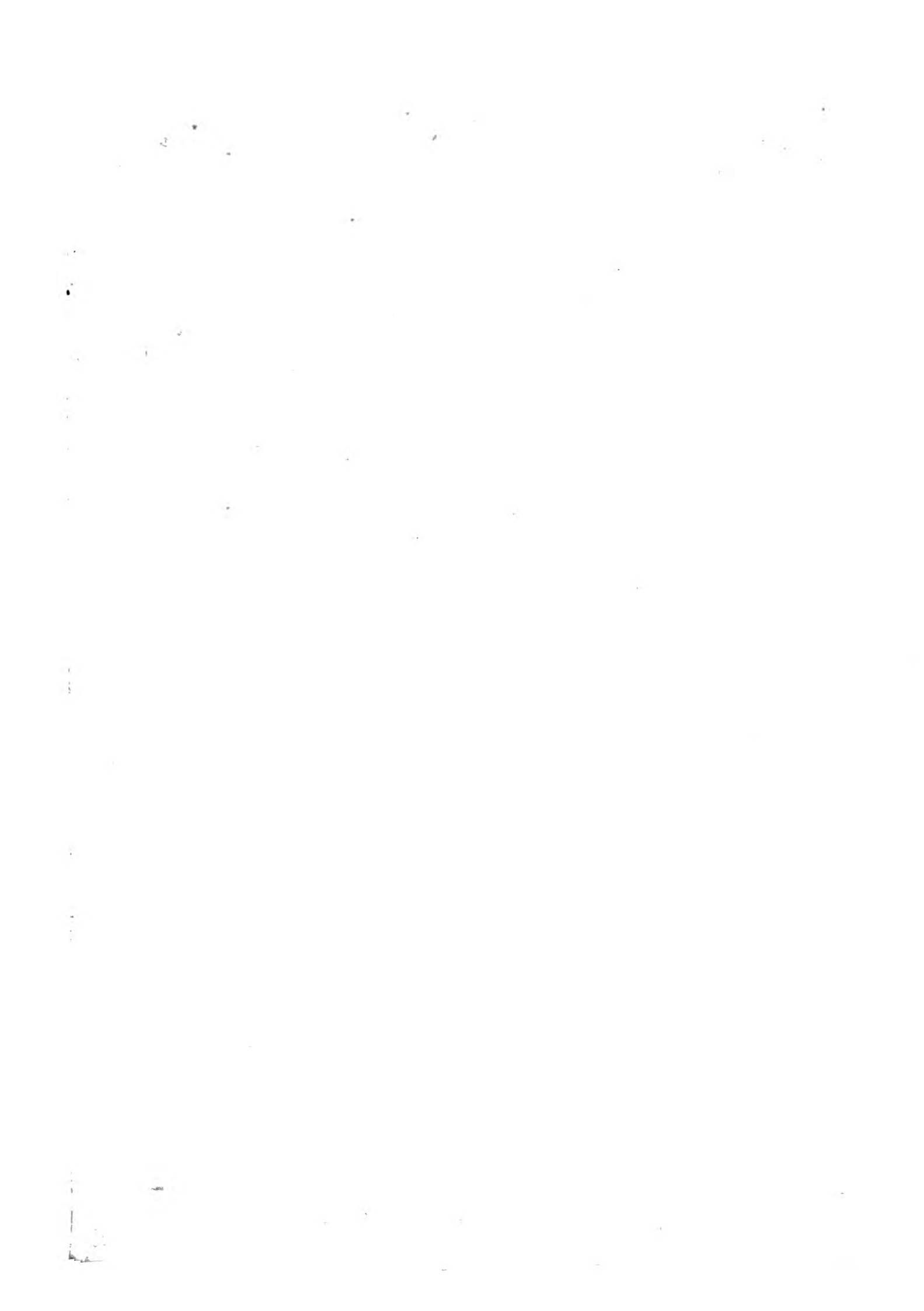
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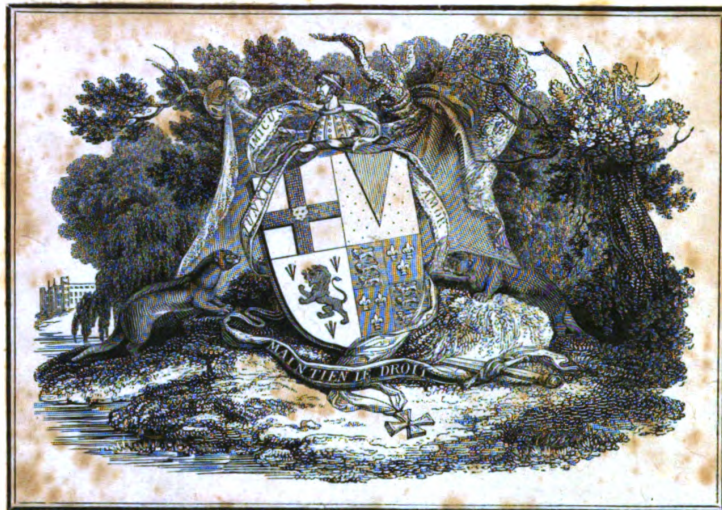




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THIS EDITION  
OF  
**SELECT POEMS,**

BY  
**SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, K.J. M.P.**



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OF WHICH

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# SELECT POEMS,

BY

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, K.J. M.P.

WITH

*A PREFACE.*

---

"FANCY IS COMFORT OFF; OFF INJURY."

*Comedy of Errors.*

....."THE SPIRIT OF A YOUTH  
THAT MEANS TO BE OF NOTE BEGINS BETIME."

*Antony and Cleopatra.*

---



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1814.

Arch. Bodl.

B. sub. 98



TO  
**T. B. BRYDGES BARRETT, Esq.**  
OF  
**LEE PRIORY, IN KENT,**  
**Captain in the First Regiment of Foot Guards;**



IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE VIRTUES OF HIS HEART;  
AND IN  
ADMIRATION OF HIS POWERFUL TALENTS, AND ELEVATED CONDUCT THROUGH LIFE,

THIS  
**SELECTION OF POEMS**

IS  
**DEDICATED**

BY  
HIS AFFECTIONATE FATHER,  
SAMUEL EGERTON BRYDGES.

*London, April 12, 1814.*



## Preface to Select Poems.

---



AGERLY, whenever I first get possession of an old book, especially of an obscure author, do I turn to the Preface, in the hope of finding some exposition, or at least some scattered notices, not only of his motives and views in the volume before me, but of his private and individual feelings, and character, and history. The present Selection from my Poems, all of which, except the first, have been already some years before the public, and which I here exhibit recommended by the Typography of my Private Printers, seems more especially to demand such a Preface. Yet the charge of Egotism is so offensive; and Lord Byron has so pointedly branded it, as a subject on which “all are fluent, and none agreeable!” that I touch it with reluctance and fear.

With a mind, in which the most ardent and unaffected love of Poetry, and the ambition to excel in it, existed at so early a period of my life; which at the age of twenty-two,<sup>a</sup> ventured to

---

<sup>a</sup> In March 1785.

appear before the public as a candidate for poetical fame, with some of the pieces which I now reprint; some apology seems necessary for the few and feeble exertions I have made during a long lapse of years in the cultivation of this divine Art. I will confess the truth. It was the blight of early neglect, which my pusillanimous and morbid spirit had not the strength to surmount. I heard, indeed, the cheering voices of a few partial friends, and a few generous and highly-endowed literati, whose praises ought to have supplied to me the place of multitudes: but for many a dreary year, that followed, my faculties lost all their elasticity; and that self-confidence, which carries us unfatigued through labours, and prompts us to aspire to great things, was utterly overwhelmed in my heart. The effect upon my intellect was like the withdrawing the Magician's wand in a Fairy Tale, when in place of scenes of gorgeous splendour or inexpressible beauty, nothing is spread before the eyes but sterile, blank, and interminable deserts.

To fill up this void, I occupied for some years my languid

Preface to *Select Poems*. . . . . 3

---

and half-sleeping faculties principally in the dull and barren details of Antiquarian investigation. The mighty strides and increasing strength of liberal and enlarged inquiry; the attractive wealth of sentiment daily refining and enlightning; the rapidly-augmenting power of combination in actively employed fancy, were all unattempted, abandoned, and lost. On those gloomy and unfortunate days I can only look back with regret and shame.

Days of energy and hope returned; but not the Muse! Never since have I been able to apply my mind to the cultivation of her favour with that severe and permanent exertion which can alone, perhaps, entitle a votary to be successful. A love of poetry, and (if I shall not be deemed too presumptuous in the expression) of poetical feelings, are so strong, so constant, and so inherent in me, that at all times I have been in the habit of seizing the lyre, and striking carelessly and in haste the few notes which the unsought animation of the moment inspired. A selection of these trifles is to be found in the pages which follow.



4 . . . . . *Preface to Select Poems.*

---

It is probable, that, though no art can make a poet without genius, the seeds of true poetry cannot be brought into full bloom and perfect fruit without the aid of perpetual cultivation, and almost exclusive attention to them. The power of arresting, arranging, and pourtraying those evanescent lights which are always darting across a poetical brain, can scarcely be attained without indefatigable practice, crowned by happiness of effort. It is for these reasons, perhaps, that if we examine with much severity into the pretensions of a large portion even of those who have had the good fortune to obtain the great and enviable name of Poet, we shall find but few deserving of the distinction which has thus been conferred on them. Many of the ingredients of this high endowment are less rarely bestowed than may be suspected; but a combination of all the qualities and accidents necessary for bringing to maturity a production, on which a just fame can be founded, is so uncommon as to be the true object of a deep and ardent admiration.

Among my cotemporaries there are many whom a benign

Preface to *Select Poems*. . . . . 5

---

star at their first appearance, or a firm temper to resist early depression, have been enabled to command the public ear, and extort the praise and popularity which they merit. A continued and animating exercise of the brilliant faculties which Nature has bestowed on them has brought to light beautiful compositions; sure of that mellow and never-dying reception from posterity, which present fame, arising out of real excellence, never fails to impose.

But for me, I feel with certainty which will allow of no escape from mortification, that no such propitious fate is in store. Yet even these casual effusions of an hurried and agitated heart, as they record warm and unsophisticated feelings, and convey sentiments of which I am willing that the memory should survive me, even these I am anxious to obtrude among the offerings of my private Press. I am anxious for it, because I am confident that into whatever other pursuits accident or the course of events may have driven me, this is my predominant bent; and the only line, if in any, in which Nature designed me to excel.

6 . . . . . Preface to *Select Poems*.


---

I would willingly, on this occasion, describe more fully the sentiments which rule over my bosom; and I had hoped to have enjoyed the calm, however short, leisure, which would have enabled me to execute my wishes. But avocations both public and private, both political and literary, of too pressing a nature, put it out of my power, and tear the pen from my hand. I submit; and thus abruptly close a Preface, which I had intended to have made at least four times as long.

*London, May 9, 1814.*

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LINES  
ON THE WORDS  
**"This Beautiful Creation,"**  
WHICH OCCURRED IN  
A LETTER  
OF  
JANUARY 13, 1813.

---



**On the Words "This Beautiful Creation."**

“HIS Beautiful Creation,” didst thou say?  
Yes, “beautiful,” beyond the Poet’s lay!  
Far beyond all the Poet’s fancy breathes,  
And fondly crowns with ever verdant wreaths!  
Dear living scenes, on which my raptur’d eye  
Opes, when Aurora glimmers through the sky,  
O can the Bard’s most brilliant colours glow  
Like those that Nature’s powers on you bestow?  
Though deep the gloom, that casual Sorrows cast,  
And chill Misfortune’s shadows while they last;  
Yet Joy contrasted bursts with brighter beam,  
And light relumes us in a broader stream!  
Where is the Bigot’s rant, the frowning zeal,  
Forbids the heart its purest joys to feel;  
The peopled globe with gratitude to view;  
And human bliss with human love pursue?”



4... On the Words "This Beautiful Creation."

---

O cold, misleading, unenlighten'd lore,  
That first would break a spell, and then deplore!  
Tear off the magic hues from every form,  
Then blindly wonder what the breast can warm!  
O lovely moral chain of banded thought;  
Assemblage sweet by Nature's mintage wrought!  
Unblest the darkling hand, that would untie  
Knots, where so many fairy secrets lie!

O interchange of seasons, that brings round  
Each varying charm of sight, and smell, and sound,  
That through hill, vale, plain, mead and wood  
abound!

O living creatures, that adorn the scene,  
Bask in the sun, or feed upon the green;  
Or wander through the forest's grateful shade,  
Or lonely linger in th' untrodden glade;

**On the Words "This Beautiful Creation." . . . 5**

---

Still with each image rising in the mind,  
How deep the moral pleasure that is twin'd!  
Thee first, whom God, on this terraqueous globe,  
With rank and power, and lordly rule doth robe;  
Man, mighty work of wonderful design,  
Of mingled parts so frail and so divine,  
What joy to praise Thee! what delight to dwell  
On all those virtues which thy bosom swell!  
Man's fairer Half, prime soother of his woes,  
First of all earthly blessings Heaven bestows!  
Companion, help-mate, idol! who has phrase  
That with due eloquence can sing thy praise?  
O thou, whose form, in Nature's loveliest views,  
Still shines with best and most attractive hues;  
Thou, on whose cheek the "the purple light of Love,"  
And "bloom of young Desire" to rapture move!

6... On the Words "This Beautiful Creation."

---

O give the flowing ringlets of thy hair,  
Give, to the breeze that steals along the air;  
Glance thy light step, thine opening bosom show,  
And let thine eyes with conscious kindness glow;  
Then to the heart, illum'd by Fancy's beams,  
How passing beautiful Creation seems!

Spirit of Poesy, that lead'st me on  
To rove through Nature's fields from earliest dawn,  
Eager to gaze upon the tumbling floods,  
And wander pensive through the silent woods,  
What visions to my aching sight appear;  
What notes aerial meet my ravish'd ear!  
To Thee that warmth of temperament I owe  
Which bids in deserts fruitful harvests grow;  
And plenteous streams through barren regions flow!  
Methinks I hear the frigid Cynic cry,

On the Words "This Beautiful Creation..." 7

---

"Wild the delusions, that thy bliss supply;  
False and deceitful are the tints that play  
Before thy dazzled sight with transient ray!"

Not wild, nor false, nor transient is the flame,  
Which neither Grief can quench, nor Age can tame!  
It lights me cheerly on my dangerous way,  
And charms off Care while hovering o'er her prey!

Bard! in thy breast when the first rapture  
springs,

As thy young eyes burst on this scene of things,  
Is all that Fancy's after-work designs,  
Fair as the view that to thy senses shines?  
The gathering darkness, that with growing years  
Collects, and washes every rose with tears,  
Again disperses with maturer age,  
When rash youth changes to the mellowed sage.

8 ... On the Words "This Beautiful Creation."

---

Then beautiful again Creation glows;  
And soften'd Wisdom new enchantment shows  
In every form that breathes, and tree that grows.  
    Since Time has long these temples turn'd to  
    grey,  
And bade this blood a steadier course obey,  
Still the Soul's movements, with a brighter fire,  
Burst through all clouds, and nobler thoughts inspire!  
With clearer light the mental eye surveys  
This mortal state in all its varying ways,  
And bids the heart in softer thrills to beat;  
To change the angrier passions into sweet;  
Swell with new friendship; burn with purer love;  
And bow with holier warmth to Him Above!  
    Ah! when at last the ebbing tide of life  
With dying motion keeps a feeble strife,


**On the Words "This Beautiful Creation."... 9**

---


When this fair scene so glittering with delight  
For ever fades in darkness from the sight,  
When all these veins, through which my trembling  
soul

Has taught the blood in kindest tides to roll,  
Shall swell and beat no longer; and from all  
My heart loves best the palsied hand shall fall,  
Ye, who last cling to my departing breath,  
Who venerate my poor remains in death,  
Guard, above all, that intellectual fame  
I sought on earth with pure incessant flame;  
And fail not with remembrance fond to tell,  
What boundless gratitude was wont to swell  
My bursting bosom, when with ecstasy  
Creation's beauteous scenes my kindling eye  
Beheld in broad expanse before it lie!





**SONNETS**  
AND  
**OTHER POEMS.**







## Sonnets and other Poems.

ON ECHO AND SILENCE.

AUTH. ÆTAT. 20.

Oct. 20, 1782.



**N** eddyng course when leaves began to fly,  
And Autumn in her lap the stores to strew,  
As mid wild scenes I chanc'd the Muse to woo  
Through glens untrod, and woods that frown'd on high,  
Two sleeping nymphs, with wonder mute I spy:  
And, lo! she's gone---In robe of dark-green hue  
'Twas Echo from her sister Silence flew:  
For quick the hunter's horn resounded to the sky.  
In shade affrighted Silence melts away.  
Not so her Sister. Hark! For onward still  
With far-heard step she takes her listening way,  
Bounding from rock to rock, and hill to hill:  
Ah! mark the merry maid, in mockful play,  
With thousand mimic tones the laughing forest fill!

CONCERNING ECHOES.

From "LUCRETIVS," B. IV. V. 577.

Sept. 5, 1784.



AND'RING amid deep woods, and moun-  
tains dark,  
Wilder'd by night, my comrades lost to guide,  
Oft through the void I've rais'd my voice; and hark!  
The rocks with twenty mimic tones replied.  
Within those sacred haunts, 'tis said, abide  
Fauns, Nymphs, and Satyrs, who delight to mark,  
And mock each lonely sound: but ere the lark  
Wakes her shrill note, to secret cells they glide.  
Night-wandering noises, revelry, and joke  
Disturb the air, 'tis said by rustics round,  
Who start to hear its solemn silence broke,  
And warbling strings, and plaintive pipes to sound:  
And oft they hear, when Pan his reed hath woke,  
Hills, vales, and woods, and glens the harmony re-  
bound.

WRITTEN AT WOOTTON, IN KENT.

*Aug. 16, 1784.*



**E** scenes, my melancholy soul that fill,  
Where Nature's voice no crowds tumultuous  
drown,  
And but through breaks of trees, the lawn that crown,  
The paths of men are seen; and farther still,  
Scarce peeps the city-spire o'er many a hill!  
Your green retreats, lone walks, and shadows brown,  
While sheep feed round beneath the branches' frown,  
Shall calm my mind, and holy thoughts instill.  
What though with passion oft my trembling frame  
Each real, and each fancied wrong inflame,  
Wand'ring alone I here my thoughts reclaim:  
Resentment sinks, Disgust within me dies;  
And Charity, and meek Forgiveness rise,  
And melt my soul, and overflow mine eyes.

---

TO AUTUMN, NEAR HER DEPARTURE.

*Oct. 30, 1782.*



**A**UTUMN Maid of gentle light, thy straw-wove vest,  
And russet cincture; thy loose pale-ting'd  
hair;

Thy melancholy voice, and languid air,  
As if shut up within that pensive breast  
Some ne'er-to-be-divulged grief was prest;  
Thy looks resign'd, that smiles of patience wear,  
While Winter's blasts thy scatter'd tresses tear,  
Thee, Autumn, with divinest charms have blest!  
Let blooming Spring with gaudy hopes delight,  
That dazzling Summer shall of her be born;  
Let Summer blaze; and Winter's stormy train  
Breathe awful music in the ear of Night;  
Thee will I court, sweet dying Maid forlorn,  
And from thy glance will catch th' inspired strain.

---

WRITTEN NOV. 30, 1784.



**HIS** thy last day, dark month! to me is dear,  
For this first saw my infant eyes unbound.  
Now two-and-twenty years have hasten'd  
round,

Yet from the bud no ripen'd fruits appear:  
My spirits, drooping at the thought, to cheer,  
By my fond friends the jovial bowl is crown'd,  
While sad I sit, my eyes upon the ground,  
And scarce refrain to drop the silent tear.  
Yet, O beloved Muse! if in me glow  
Ambition for false fame, the thirst abate!  
Teach me, for fields and flocks, mankind to know,  
And ope my eyes to all that's truly great;  
To view the world unmask'd, on me bestow;  
And knaves and fools to scorn, undazzled by their state!

---

TO THE MOON.

From the Story of "*Mary De Clifford*," 1792.



**T**HOU fair Moon, that o'er these fairy hills  
Castest thy silver radiance, while the dew  
On every blade her pearly drops distils,  
And all delighted feed the fleecy crew!  
Sure heavenly Spirits often love to hail  
Thy rising rays, and haunt thy shadowy light,  
And, frequent as thou stoop'st beneath the veil  
Of yonder clouds, repeat the mystic rite!  
At such an hour as this, methinks I hear  
Aërial voices whisper to mine ear,  
And thrill with inexpressive joy my frame!  
With thee, Sweet Beam, oh! ever mayst thou bring  
Such lovely peace, such joy without a sting,  
And lift my soul to so divine a flame!

---

ON A STORM.

From the same.



**W**IND blows the wind; the whistling woods  
among  
Whirl the fall'n leaves, and in the troubled  
sky

Quick and portentous drive the clouds along,  
While o'er the grass the hurried breezes sigh:  
Anon, the fearful moment past, the sun  
Breaks through the darkness; and the brightened  
streams,  
Roaring no more, in silent splendour run,  
While the white steeple glitters in his beams!  
Again the gloom collects; a louder groan  
Shakes all the groves; and down descends the rain:  
And storms and sunshine mark by fits the day.  
Thus me by turns, oft pensive and alone,  
The Passions rule! O who shall soothe the pain,  
Beneath whose threats my youthful hopes decay?



SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY WOODVILLE,  
AT HIS CASTLE OF GRAFTON.

---

From the same.

---



**E** mould'ring towers, these waters deep sur-  
round,  
That, age succeeding age, the forest-shades  
Of yon romantic wilds have proudly crown'd!  
The voice of Revelry no more invades  
Your dreary courts; nor yet with tuneful sound  
Do royal Edwards' woo th' Aonian maids  
To melt the Fair, who on their suit have frown'd:  
But, shook by Time and Fate, your glory fades.  
No more shall Beauty with her winning eyes  
Brighten your halls, and o'er your feasts preside;  
But sad and lonely, while your master flies  
O'er foreign lands his sorrows to divide,  
Silence shall reign along your cheerless walls,  
Save when disturb'd by nightly spirits' calls!

---

\* Alluding to Edward the Fourth's courtship of Elizabeth Woodville, at that place.

BY MARY. ON A FUTURE STATE.


From the same.



WHEN this sad spirit quits its woe-worn frame,  
And flies releas'd to yonder starry sphere,  
O ne'er may it forget its former flame;  
But still the friends it lov'd on earth be dear!  
Then thou, thou idol of my heart, whose name  
My trembling lips pronounce but with a tear,  
Wilt first and most its guardian wishes claim,  
And thee its ceaseless care will hover near!  
O thou, who only can'st my bosom warm,  
Think not a selfish passion fills my heart;  
For if some happier maid of fairer form  
More joy can to thy social hours impart,  
O let me but go hence, and watch above  
Thy earthly bliss with pure seraphic love!

---

FROM A NOVEL, 1798.

“  **WHAT** is wealth,” in pride of heart, he said,  
“ Compar’d with you, ye treasures of the  
mind?”

O what the tinsel toys, in which array’d,  
The rich man strives the eye of Sense to blind?  
In these refreshing lawns, this haunted shade,  
How oft has Fancy splendid forms design’d,  
Whose gleams, before th’ enraptur’d sight display’d,  
Would leave the glare of Eastern Kings behind!  
Can Wealth, the head to form, the heart to feel,  
The soul, that lifts the man to Heaven, bestow?  
The power, from Grief, Scorn, Malice, to appeal,  
And lose, in dreams of bliss, Revenge’s blow?  
No fears then, Poverty, can’st thou inspire,  
Give but the vigorous head, the soul entire!”

---

WRITTEN IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF ORLETON.

From a Novel, 1798.



E, who beneath these mouldering heaps have  
found

Rest from the sorrows of humanity!

I come to keep my vigils on the ground,  
Where I, too, soon at peace with you shall be!  
Then when this throbbing heart has ceas'd to beat,  
And lifeless lies this weak and trembling frame,  
Malice itself perchance may not repeat  
The cruel sounds that now assail my name.  
With flowing tears upon the turf I bend,  
Beneath whose shade my ashes will decay;  
“And thus,” I cry, “Fresh flowers, your perfumes lend  
To the lone gales, that o'er my grave will play!  
And thus, ye breezes, in the solemn tone  
Of calm and heav'n-rapt melancholy, moan!”

---

ON HENRY, LORD CLIFFORD,

WHO DIED 1523.



**WISH** I could have heard thy long-tried lore,  
Thou virtuous Lord of Skipton! Thou  
could'st well

From sage Experience, that best teacher, tell  
How far within the Shepherd's humble door  
Lives the sure happiness, that on the floor  
Of gay Baronial Halls disdains to dwell,  
Though deck'd with many a feast, and many a spell  
Of gorgeous rhyme, and echoing with the roar  
Of Pleasure, clamorous round the full-crown'd bowl!  
Thou hadst, (and who had doubted thee?) exprest  
What empty baubles are the ermin'd stole,  
Proud coronet, rich walls with tapestry drest,  
And music lulling the sick frame to rest!  
---Bliss only haunts the pure contented soul!

---

ON THE SAME.



MONTH after month, and year succeeding year,  
When still the budding Spring, and yet  
again

The eddying leaf upon the dingy plain  
Saw thee still happy in thy humble sphere,  
But still at each return of foliage sere,  
And still as on the warm banks of the lane,  
Shelter'd with covering wood, the primrose train  
Began to ope their yellow buds, a tear  
Would start unbidden from thy placid cheek,  
And a deep pang would swell thy honest heart,  
At hopes so long deferr'd---yet could'st thou speak,  
Would'st thou not thus the precious truth impart?  
“Dearer those scenes, though mix'd with many a  
sigh,  
Than all the joys that Grandeur can supply!

---

ON THE SAME.



**V**TRETCH'D on some mountain's side, commanding wood,  
Vale, mead, and spreading lake, with distant hills

High tow'ring from its feet, thy bosom fills  
Its large desires with a sublimer food:  
Thine eye is upward bent on every cloud,  
And ever as thy shaping fancy wills,  
Thy raptur'd sight with air-drawn visions thrills,  
And thy soul flies on heavenly forms to brood!---  
Ah! how are then forgot the groveling joys  
Of Earth's ambition vile, the din of war,  
The tinsel pomp that human cares employs,  
The trumpet through each tower resounding far!  
Hopes, terrors, virtues, crimes, and flattering state,  
All fade before the Shepherd's simple fate!

---

WRITTEN FEBRUARY 12, 1807.



**T**HOUGH in my veins the blood of monarchs  
flow,

Plantagenet and Tudor!<sup>a</sup> not for these

With empty boasts my lifted mind I please;  
But rather that my heart's emotions glow  
With the pure flame, the Muse's gifts bestow;  
Nor would it my aspiring soul appease,  
In rank, birth, wealth, to loll at sensual ease;  
And none but Folly's stupid flattery know!  
But yet when upstart Greatness turns an eye  
Of scorn and insult on my modest fame,  
And on descent's pretensions vain would try  
To build the honours of a nobler name;  
With pride defensive swelling, I exclaim,  
"Base one, e'en there with *me* thou dar'st not vie!"

---

<sup>a</sup> This is a fact, which may easily be ascertained by obvious authorities, of which it is unnecessary to mention any other than Sandford, or Stebbing. The sentiments are exactly those which the author feels, and has ever felt, on the subject of descent. He would never oppose it but to those who assume airs on that pretence.



FROM A NOVEL, 1802.




'ER this blue wat'ry world, that spreads  
around  
Far, far beyond the utmost stretch of sight,  
How sweet the rippling surge's soothing sound;  
Th' extended canopy of Heaven how bright!  
Smooth as we go, while scarce the keel divides  
The glassy surface, o'er my thrilling breast  
How blissful the serenity that glides!  
How, like the blast, the passions sink to rest!  
But will this brilliant scene, my Eustace, last?  
Will no winds gather, and no clouds arise,  
This wide-invested splendour to o'ercast?  
Dark in the rear perchance the tempest lies;  
But roar the bellowing storm, and rage the sea!  
Still that alone I dread, which separates me from thee!

---

LINES,

WRITTEN ON THE RECOLLECTION OF . . . . .,  
HIS NATIVE PLACE.

-----  
From a Novel.  
-----

“ WEET native spot! at thy long-cherish'd  
name

Again awakes the Muse's dying flame:

It wakes, and lights me to thy 'tangled shades,  
Thy groves umbrageous, and thy leaf-strown glades;  
Thy hills, from whence the blue horizon round,  
With distant spires, and towers, and seas, is crown'd;  
Thy glens, where, deep-retir'd, my childish days  
Too oft were spent in dreams of future praise!  
All rise, and, colour'd in thy fairy light,  
Are bodied forth before my ravish'd sight,  
Bright as when first upon my tender mind  
The deep-hued forms of Nature were design'd.

But, oh! my soul! though bright each object's hue,  
Does Joy again salute thee at the view?  
Have years departed, though they yet bespeak  
No silver hairs, no furrows on my cheek;  
Say, have they past, nor left behind a sting,  
Regret's sharp poison o'er their charms to fling?  
Thou spreading Oak, beneath whose branches dark  
My childhood wont sweet Nature's voice to mark;  
To see the golden orb at morning rise,  
And watch its crimson fall with wistful eyes;  
Why at thine image is my beating breast  
With grief and pensive discontent opprest?  
Ah! now hoarse hollow murmurs meet my ear;  
And thus the deep reproach I seem to hear!  
    " Why was thine infant mind each rural sight  
Form'd to receive, and tremble with delight?  
Why thus thy heart to beat, to thrill, to glow,  
And feel with keener anguish ev'ry woe?"

Oh why, while stretch'd beneath my cov'ring shade,  
Were forms aërial to thy view display'd?  
Why did such visions wild thy soul entrance,  
And fairy circles to thy fancy dance?  
To waste in restless indolence the day;  
Or seem 'mid Mirth's loud sons, while mournful, gay?  
In courts to bow, in forums to dispute,  
'Mid Folly's thoughtless talkers to be mute?  
With fault'ring voice, and looks that speak the fool,  
Helpless to sit, while Dulness gives the rule?  
To rival country squires, and city beaux,  
To seek the palm the chase or course bestows?  
To vie with those, whose hard unfeeling heart  
Can the sure power of Victory impart?  
The paths of mawkish Dissipation run;  
To ride, to drive, to game---to be undone?  
Ah, no! Far other hopes thy youth design'd!  
To try the nobler contests of the mind!

The trembling motions of the heart to trace;  
And catch the beauteous hues of Nature's face!  
Thy talent wasted, how wilt thou atone  
The flagrant crime before Heaven's awful throne!  
Ere yet old Age upon thy fancy lours,  
Weakens thy hopes, and freezes all thy powers,  
The flying moments seize; the path pursue  
That opes Fame's purer chaplets to thy view!"

Enough, lov'd Tree! Ah, now the murmurs close!  
The shadowy branches hang in deep repose!  
Then once more, O ye boughs, whose soothing gloom  
Can with fresh vigour imp the Muse's plume,  
Cherish the dreams, that fir'd my childish brain,  
And bring a just ambition back again!

---

LINES,

WRITTEN IN THE CHARACTER OF THE HERO OF A NOVEL,

1798.

“



**HARK!** See Ruin enters! By his side  
O view the gaunt relentless fiends that ride!  
See Peculation, and Perverted Law,  
And bloated Wealth, whom hounds of Murder draw;  
Extortion, mounted on the pamper'd steed,  
Which the last tears of starv'd Misfortune feed;  
And black Malignity, all drest in smiles;  
And Avarice, striving to conceal his wiles:  
And yet an hundred harden'd imps behind,  
That feast upon the sorrows of Mankind!  
Hark, they approach!---Ye fiends of Hell, away!---  
Dear native fields, ye must not be their prey!

Shades of my fathers, which the circling Sun,  
As twice three centuries his course he run,  
Has seen, in safety, o'er the faithful head  
Of the same race, your ancient umbrage spread!  
Shall cruel hands pollute your dark retreats?  
Shall Infamy defile your sacred seats?  
Ye lawns, on which my happy childhood play'd;  
Ye paths, where first my infant footsteps stray'd;  
Ye boughs, which first I twisted into bowers;  
Ye primrose banks, where first I pick'd your flowers;  
Your long-lov'd charms shall foreign masters own?  
Shall foreign ears insult your slighted moan?  
Along your silent copses, and your dells,  
Shall puff'd-up Folly shake her cap of bells?  
In name of Taste direct the axe's blow?  
Laugh at your shrieks, and lay your glories low?  
Ye towers, that long have rais'd your heads sublime,  
Firm and unshaken 'mid the storms of Time!

Ye halls, that oft with echoing sounds have rung,  
When the rude minstrels tales of heroes sung;  
When Feast, and Hospitality, and roar  
Of Mirth went round, the genial goblet o'er;  
Where still the blazing hearth, at Christmas-tide,  
The frost and snow, and wind and rain, defy'd;  
And Ease at loaded boards, the village crew  
Still to their lord in closer union drew!  
Ye rooms, where poets nurs'd their golden dreams;  
Where statesmen fram'd their country's glorious schemes;  
Where wits their brilliant rays were wont to dart;  
And Beauty's radiant forms to melt the heart!  
Shall the coarse upstart wretch, who never knew  
A thought beyond the figur'd spells, that drew  
The needy to Destruction's net, display,  
Within your sacred walls, a scoundrel's prey;  
New sentiments, new modes of life unfold;  
Corrupt with luxury, and blast with gold!



Great God of Mercy! since it is a crime,  
To end this wretched life before its time,  
If the dire fiends at yonder gate I view,  
Be not mad Fancy's forms, but shapes too true,  
O now direct the pitying dart of Death,  
And in my native forests close my breath!"

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Sonnets and other Poems. . . . . 37

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ELEGIAC LINES ON MRS. LEFROY,

WHO DIED BY A FALL FROM HER HORSE, DEC. 16, 1804.

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Written in Dec. 1806.  
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DEEP grief is dumb; else long ago, dear Shade,  
To thee the mournful Muse her rites had paid!  
Whelm'd with the stroke, e'en now my palsied  
brain

Struggles with feeble effort at the strain:  
The fountain of my former tears is dry;  
And wan Despair sits fix'd in either eye.

Ah! Time, that boasts to mellow down the hues  
Of wild Regret, and o'er her form diffuse  
A soothing sadness, teaches me to know  
With keener certainty my darkening woe!

At every care, and every rising joy,  
Each task, that would my wandering thoughts employ,  
The morning ramble, and the evening toil,  
Through life I look'd for thy consoling smile!  
But now, when'er I Learning's page unroll,  
And strive by studious pains to raise my soul,  
Soon as in vain I seek thy cheering look,  
Down from my' unclasping hands descends the book!

Forgetful of my loss, if transient fire  
Impels these hands to seize the silent lyre,  
To thee I bid it pour its trembling tone!---  
Thou hearest not!---it breathes a dying moan;  
And instantly the rising spirit's flown!  
Sometimes I wake from some enchanting dream  
Bright with the Muse's rainbow-tinctur'd beam,  
Or deck'd with golden pomp, and all the show  
That bold Ambition's gorgeous flames bestow:  
Glowing, I haste, my raptures to impart;

But thou, alas! art gone; and to my heart  
Cold chilling damps of hopeless anguish dart.

Loveliest of human Beings, Sister, Friend,  
Instructor, Guardian, where can ever end  
The praise, that to thy angel worth belongs?  
Worth that has e'en transcended poets' songs!

In every walk of life, belov'd, ador'd,  
How have all ranks thy hapless fate deplor'd!  
How did thy liberal hand, and melting voice,  
Bid the chill'd heart of Poverty rejoice!  
Amid the circles of the rich and wise,  
How spoke the mental radiance of thine eyes!  
How charm'd the wisdom of thy flowing tongue!  
How from thy breast the lore of angels sprung!

But while thy mortal relics slumber here,  
Moisten'd by Love's, by Friendship's, Virtue's tear,  
Thy blissful spirit, O exalted Saint,  
Which not the mixture of earth's mould could taint,

Wanders triumphant; and the swelling lyre,  
Touch'd by thy human hands with hallow'd fire,  
Around the throne, where singing Seraphs blaze,  
Strikes in glad notes to thy Creator's praise!

~~~~~  
*FINIS.*  
~~~~~











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