gift of Mrs. Edward C. Jenkins
The Cambridge Edition of the Poets

WORDSWORTH

EDITED BY

ANDREW J. GEORGE
The Cambridge Edition of the Poets

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ANDREW J. GEORGE
THE
COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
Cambridge Edition

Rydal Mount, Wordsworth's Home

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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EDITOR'S NOTE

LITERATURE is pure spirit, and hence its truths must be spiritually discerned, yet there are two avenues of approach which are likely to prove the most alluring and satisfactory to the student,—the chronological and that of correlation. Where the mind and art of a poet have developed naturally from the simple to the complex, the chronological order seems the most helpful and appropriate; but when we find midway in a poet's career work which is both history and prophecy,—work which reveals the method and spirit of the past and contains the potency of the future,—it may well serve as a point around which other poems are to be gathered, and the method of correlation will be found most suggestive.

It follows that the method of annotation in each of these cases should be different. In the chronological, the eye is upon the past, and the principle hitherto evolved by the poet is made use of in the treatment of each successive poem; while in the method of correlation the eye looks before and after in a study of those elements which may be considered as fundamental in the life and art of the poet. I have illustrated the one method in my selections from Milton, Burns, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and the other in "The Princess" and "Childe Harold." It has been said that as respects a man whom we never saw we are fortunate if we have, as means of knowing him, works revealing the various moods of his mind and emotions of his heart, portraits painted by great artists in a lucky hour of his youth and age, and friends who had the insight to know and were both able and willing to tell us the truth in regard to his character. In the case of Wordsworth we have all of these and there is no excuse for taking half views of him and his work.

The distinctive features of this edition are: the latest text adopted by the poet; the chronological order of the poems; the date of composition and that of publication of each poem; the Essays and Prefaces on Poetry written between 1800 and 1845; a body of notes which Wordsworth printed in his various editions; notes at the head of each poem, dictated by the poet himself late in life to Miss Fenwick, and known as the "L.F." notes; notes revealing the time, place, occasion, and circumstance, so far as can be ascertained, out of which each poem had its origin; bibliography of Wordsworth’s works; a list of biographical and critical reviews.

Long and varied use of Wordsworth in school and college classes; frequent visits to the scenes associated with his work in the inspiring and recreating atmosphere of his beloved lake land; and association with those who knew him as a man and poet, have yielded me material which has proved of the highest value in the teaching of his poetry and the interesting period of political and literary history to which he belonged and in which he was so conspicuous a figure. These experi-
ences have been helpful in preparing this edition, which, it is hoped, will be found equally suited to the needs of the special student and the general reader.

It is to be regretted that the limits of this volume preclude any attempt at giving the interesting variants which the poet from time to time introduced into the text of the poems. These have been given with skill and care in the variorum editions of Professor Knight and Professor Dowden, and any one who cares for such details of workmanship should consult them there.

It hardly need be said that I am indebted to that noble band of disciples of the poet who have written with sympathy, insight, and illumination, upon the various aspects of his mind, art, and influence. One of the most distinguished of these disciples, Mr. Aubrey de Vere, took great delight in my devotion to the poet of his youth. From him, during an acquaintance of nearly a quarter of a century, I received invaluable sympathy and suggestion. On learning of my plan which is revealed in this volume, he wrote me, only shortly before his death, a letter which contained the following significant sentence: "More than anything else, a great and sound literature seems to be now the means of promoting divine truth."

It is not surprising that in many instances the date of composition given in the Fenwick notes is incorrect, owing to the fact that the poet dictated them in his old age and from memory. Many errors have been corrected by the use of Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals and the editions of the poet's works by Professor Dowden and Mr. Thomas Hutchinson; some dates are still conjectural.

In the matter of bibliography original sources have been followed as far as possible; but in several instances I have used the data of Professor Dowden and Mr. J. R. Tutin; this indebtedness is indicated by the terms (D) and (T).

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**Appendix, 1802**  
**Dedication to the Edition of 1815**  
**Preface to the Edition of 1815**  
**Essay, Supplementary to the Preface, 1815**  
**Postscript, 1835**  
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**References, Biographical, Critical, and Descriptive**  
**Map of the Lake Country**  
**Index to the First Lines**  
**Index to the Poems**
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that the notes to this edition are biographical and critical, an attempt to reveal how Wordsworth became the poet of plain living and high thinking — it may be well to review the main events of his life and the distinctive achievement of his art. It will help us to understand what Emerson wrote of him in 1854: "It is so easy to see that to act so powerfully in this practical age, he needed, with all his mental abstraction, the indomitable vigour rooted in animal constitution, for which his ancestors are marked, otherwise he could not have resisted the deluge streams of their inconstancy with success. One would say he is the only man among them who has not in any instant succumbed to their way of thinking, and has prevailed."

William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, April 7, 1770. The use in which he was born, a large substantial mansion, still stands, and is of interest cause of the garden and terrace-walk in the rear associated with events related in "The Arrow's Nest" and "The Prelude." His father, John Wordsworth, a solicitor, and law, tenant of the Earl of Lonsdale, was a descendant of an old family which belonged to the upper class and had settled in Penistone, Yorkshire, in the reign of Edward the Third. A interesting old oak chest or almery, now in the possession of the poet's grandchildren.

The Stepping Stones, Ambleside, bears the pedigree carved by one of the family in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

The poet's mother (Anne Cookson) was the daughter of William Cookson, mercer, of Cockermouth. She was descended on her mother's side from an ancient family of Crackington, which, from the time of Edward the Third, had lived at Newbiggen Hall, Westmorland. She married John Wordsworth at Penrith, February 5, 1768. Besides William, his second son, there were born at Cockermouth three sons, Richard, John, and Christopher, and one daughter, Dorothy.

Wordsworth's infancy and early boyhood were passed at Cockermouth, and with his maternal relatives at Penrith. His teachers at this time were his mother, to whom he paid a touching tribute in "The Prelude," and his father, who early taught him to commit to memory portions of the great English poets, the Rev. Mr. Gilbanks, of Cockermouth, and Dame Birkett, of Penrith. There was nothing in his character during these years that distinguished him in any way from other children in the family, unless it was a manifestation of that "indomitable vigour" which characterized him as a man. This manifested itself in such forms of will and temper as to cause his mother to remark that a only one of her five children about whose future she was anxious was William: "He will be remarkable either for good or for evil." Yet there were influences of Nature and home acting silently upon him thus early which later became his most cherished memories, and revealed how favored he had been in his birthplace and training.

Wordsworth's mother, the heart and hinge of all his learning and his loves, died in 1778, and the family was broken up. William and Richard, the eldest boys, were sent to the school at Hawkshead. It is hardly necessary to review in detail the events of Wordsworth's life from this time until he meets Coleridge in 1795, as it is given with rapturous regard for truth and with entire freedom from vanity in "The Prelude," by the shy man who could describe them with certainty. All who would read his poetry as he
wished it to be read should have this poem by heart. Only the main events will be viewed here.

The old school, situated in a quaint rural village, and surrounded by the unambitious loveliness of Nature in hill and dale, rivers, woods, and fields, maintained a healthy, soul simplicity of social and academic culture. Competition and high pressure were unknown there were the greatest freedom and variety of mental and physical training. The boys while studying mathematics and the classics under accomplished and sympathetic teachers, lived in the cottages of the dalesmen, and were cared for by the homely and motherly dames. When out of school they were left to themselves and their own modest pleasures. They rowed or skated on the lake, ranged the fells for woodcock, fished in brook or pools hid among the mountains, practiced crag-climbing and raven-nesting, unfeverish with weary joints and beating minds” home and to bed they went. In reviewing these happy days Wordsworth found two great periods in his development at the hands of Nature clearly revealed: first, that of unconscious receptivity when life was sweet he knew not why; and the second, that of conscious intercourse with aspects sublime and fair of the external world. Of this experience he writes: —

I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.

His pastime and his happiness now began to grow in the substantial world of great book but his reading was not that of a student with a definite aim, rather that of a lover romance, a child. He read at chance and curiosity dictated. He says: —

What joy was mine! How often in the course
Of those glad respites, though a soft west wind
Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,
For a whole day together, have I lain
Down by thy side, O Derwent ! murmuring stream,
On the hot stones, devouring as I read,
Defrarding the day's glory, desperate !
Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,
I to the sport betook myself again.

The healthy activities of these days at Hawkshead, when spontaneous wisdom breathed by health, and truth by cheerfulness, begat

A race of real children; not too wise,
Too learned, or too good; but wanton, fresh,
And bandied up and down by love and hate;
Not unresentful where self-justified;
Fiercely, moody, patient, venturesous, modest, shy;
Mad at their sports like withered leaves in winds;
Though doing wrong and suffering, and full oft
Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight
Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not
In happiness to the happiest upon earth.
Before Wordsworth had completed his school days at Hawkshead his father died and the family was left in straitened circumstances owing to the fact that Sir James saw that nearly his entire savings and had refused to discharge the debt. Accordingly Dorothy was sent to live with maternal relatives at Penrith. Through the assistance of his uncles, William was enabled to enter St. John's College, Cambridge. Though he had looked forward with a boy's delight to this

Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,
A northern villager,
t after the first novelty of the place and the quaint customs wore off he was filled with appointment. But he conformed to every outward requirement of the place and kept his homesickness to himself. Cambridge was at this time in the depths of intellectual rep; enthusiasm was dead, and academic spirit was at a low ebb. Without stimulus intellectual activity Wordsworth's thoughts were directed, first, quite unconsciously — as he had been previously with Nature — to the historic past as revealed in his environment. If this he says: —

Imagination slept,
And yet not utterly. I could not print
Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps
Of generations of illustrious men,
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass
Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept,
Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old,
That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.

gradually he was aroused to the consciousness of the superficial religious and academic spirit of the place: —

Decency and Custom starving Truth,
And blind Authority beating with his staff
The child that might have led him; Emptiness
Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Realizing that he was not for that place nor for that time, he sought the comradeship of the poets who had made the name of Cambridge famous in the literature of the English tongue; and the love of man began to rise in his heart. Thenceforth he had a world of is own about him, both of Nature and of man; he made it and it lived to him alone. It needless to say that this slight of the means upon which his future worldly maintenance must depend caused anxiety to those interested in his progress. In his first vacations he found consolation for this in revisiting his old haunts at Hawkshead, and in the company of his sister and Mary Hutchinson at Penrith. It was at Hawkshead, after a night pent with his old schoolmates at a farmhouse among the hills, that there was revealed to him as to Burns in "The Vision," that he was set apart for holy services.

Magnificent
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as e'er I had beheld — in front,
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn —
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the fields,
Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim
My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit.

The first fruits of this dedication are to be seen in "An Evening Walk," begun at the time dedicated to his sister, and given to the world in 1793. Until this time he had written only a few school poems.

In his last college vacation he visited the Alps with a college friend, Robert Jones Wales, at a time when the rumblings of the Revolution in France were first heard in England. Europe was then thrilled with joy, and human nature seemed rejoicing in a new birth. They landed at Calais on the day when Louis XVI. swore fidelity to the new Constitution. They then made their way southward rejoicing with the enthusiastic bands of delegates sent from Marseilleilles to the Federation. They visited the Grand Chartres, spent several weeks at the Swiss and Italian lakes, and crossed the Simplon. On their return they met the —

Brabant armies on the fret
For battle in the cause of liberty.

This journey aroused and fed his imagination by association with the grander aspect of Nature than he had viewed in England, but it also awoke a new sentiment within him that Revolutionary fervor which was to influence his life work. The immediate result of this became evident to his friends in the "Descriptive Sketches;" these, expanded, may now be read in the sixth book of "The Prelude." The first distinctive note in the great movement of the return to Nature, of which Wordsworth and Coleridge were to be the leaders, are to be heard in these sketches.

In 1791 Wordsworth took his degree of B.A. After visiting his sister at Formby Rectory, where she was living with her uncle and conducting a little school, with no set plan as to the future, but with a passion for travel, he repaired to London. Here he played the idler; mingled with all sorts and conditions of men, and saw human nature in its extremes of luxury and poverty which every great city affords. He became impressed with the power of the great metropolis over the fortunes of men and nations: —

Fount of my country’s destiny and the world’s,
as he calls it.

After several months in London he visited his friend Jones in Wales. While there became impressed with the picturesque scenery, the historical and legendary associations of the ancient principality, the splendor of the vale of Clwyd, the heights of Snowdon Mynel and her Druids, and the windings of the Dee.

His guardians now became more troubled about him, so he made plans to visit France and study the language in order to fit himself for a tutor; he would thus be able to continue his roving life and visit the country which had aroused his Revolutionary spirit. Accordingly he set out for Orleans, but delayed in Paris, where he

Saw the Revolutionary Power
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms.

He did not remain long at Orleans, but went to Blois, where he became associated with that remarkable philosopher and republican general, Michael Beaupuy.
By birth he ranked
With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound,
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed
To a religious order. Man he loved
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,
And all the homely in their homely works,
Transferred a courtesy which had no air
Of condescension; but did rather seem
A passion and a gallantry, like that
Which he, a soldier in his idler day,
Had paid to woman.

Many were their walks and talks together beside the Loire. They discussed the principles of civil rights which must be the foundation of every republican government. In July, 1792, Beaupuy left Blois for service with his regiment, and Wordsworth returned to Orleans, where he remained during the September Massacres; not disdained by these, he believed in the patriots' cause and hastened to Paris, where amid the tumult and the tragedy of those days his enthusiasm for the cause of liberty led him to think of offering himself as a leader. Fortunately before such a plan could be put in operation—a plan in which he would doubtless have perished—his funds gave out and he was obliged to return to England.

While it is evident that Wordsworth's relatives distrusted him, yet he found comfort and inspiration in the society of the dear sister from whom he had been separated so long. So on his return from France with his future career still unsettled he sought her companionship at Forncett, and set about the publication of "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches." While the Monthly Review, the Edinburgh Review, and Blackwood's could see in this work only subjects for clumsy satire and vulgar rebuff, saying: "Must eternal changes be rung on nodding forests, and brooding clouds, and cells and dells, and dingles?" Coleridge, not yet out of the University, uttered the most significant literary prophecy and acute literary criticism to be found in our language. He says: "During the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication, entitled 'Descriptive Sketches'; and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is a harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating."

Wordsworth was now at the height of his republican ardor, and on hearing of the excitement in London over negro emancipation and the Revolution, he wrote: "I disapprove of monarchical and aristocratical governments however modified. Hereditary distinctions and privileged orders of every species, I think, must necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement." At this time, too, he wrote that remarkable pamphlet in reply to the avowal of political principles by the Bishop of Landaff. He pleaded with lofty eloquence and patriotic fervor for universal education to be followed by universal suffrage, and for a consideration of the great questions of how the general welfare of a nation was to be promoted—questions which at the present time in England are still uppermost.

In this unsettled condition of mind he was still more deeply agitated by the action of
England in preparing to make war against France in 1793. At this time he was rambling in the Isle of Wight with his friend, William Calvert, of Windybrow, Keswick. How he felt is revealed by the following:—

When the proud fleet that bears the red-cross flag
In that unworthy service was prepared
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner
Through a whole month of calm and glassy days
In that delightful island which protects
Their place of convocation; there I heard,
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,
A monitory sound that never failed,—
The sunset cannon. While the orb went down
In the tranquillity of nature, came
That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by me
Without a spirit overcast by dark
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

Soon affairs in France assumed an aspect which was the greatest disappointment of his life. For—

now, become oppressors in their turn,
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-defence
For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for: up mounted now,
Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,
With anger vexed, with disappointment sore.

As a result of the shock he began that intellectual quest to determine the origin, impulses, motives, and obligations which caused such actions; demanding formal proof, he lost those feelings of the heart which had been his safest guides; and at last yielded up more questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,
This the soul’s last and lowest ebb.

Still undecided as to whether he should choose the Church, the Bar, or literary work for his occupation, he wandered with his friend Jones in Wales, with his sister in the lake country, and visited the Speddings and Calverts at Keswick. While waiting at Keswick for a reply to a proposition he had made for literary work on a magazine, Raisley Calvert became ill, and he volunteered to attend him as companion and nurse. Calvert had become interested in Wordsworth’s ideals, and saw that what was needed was leisure in which they might mature. He planned to spend the winter of 1794–5 with Wordsworth in Lisbon, but his health failed so rapidly that this became impossible, and he died early in 1795. He had intimated to Wordsworth that he intended to leave him a small legacy, but when the will was opened it was found that the sum of £900 had been bequeathed him. This generous act opened out a course for the young poet, as he had recorded in “The Prelude” and the sonnet to Calvert. He needed no longer to worry about a profession, and, best of all, he could now be restored to the society of Dorothy. By her ministrations he was able to throw off the unnatural burden of analytical research under which he had fallen.
Then it was —
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good! —
That the beloved Sister in whose sight
Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice
Of sudden admonition — like a brook
That did but cross a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a league —
Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self; for, though bedimmed and changed
Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
Than as a clouded and a waning moon:
She whispered still that brightness would return,
She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth.

The following from one of Dorothy's letters at this time will reveal how lonely the brother must have been in his perplexity. She writes: "The fortunate brother of mine happens to be no favourite with any of his near relations except his brothers, by whom he is adored, I mean John and Christopher." The former was at sea, the latter at Cambridge.

With the proceeds of Calvert's legacy the dreams of the two enthusiasts about beginning life together were realized, and they settled at Racedown Lodge, Dorsetshire, in the summer of 1796. The old farmhouse was delightfully situated in a retired part of the country reached by post only once a week. Here they spent their time in reading, writing, gardening, communing with themselves, with Nature and books. The period of Wordsworth's recovery from the tyranny of intellectual research was here completed, and pessimism forever cast aside, by the creation of that gruesome tragedy, "The Borderers," the only production of these days at Racedown. While this is of little value as poetry, it is most significant as biography. Through the creation of the philosophical villain Oswald, who is moved by "the motive hunting of a motiveless malignity," Wordsworth revealed what was the inevitable outcome of Godwin's revolutionary scheme of Political Justice — a scheme that in the interest of reason would free man from all the laws, social and moral, upon which society is founded.

With the completion of "The Borderers" the great formative period of Wordsworth's life is at an end, and the first creative period begins. Coleridge had but recently settled at Nether Stowey, and on hearing that the author of "Descriptive Sketches" was so near, took an early opportunity (in June) of visiting him. Dorothy tells us "the first thing that was read on that occasion was 'The Ruined Cottage' with which Coleridge was so much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy, 'Osorio.' The next morning William read his tragedy, 'The Borderers.'"

That this was a clear case of love at first sight is shown by the letters written to their friends at this time. Dorothy writes: "You had a great loss in not seeing Coleridge. He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind, and spirit. . . . He has more of 'the poet's eye in fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows and an overhanging forehead." Coleridge in his account of this visit says: "I speak with heartfelt sincerity, and, I think, unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel myself a little man by his side." When the Wordsworths returned this visit and went to Nether Stowey, Coleridge gives this beautiful picture of Dorothy: "W. and his exquisite sister are with me. She is a woman indeed! in mind and heart; for her person is
such that if you expected to see a pretty woman, you would think her rather ordinary; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty! but her manners are simple, ardent, impressive. In every motion her most innocent soul outbeams brightly, that who saw her would say: —

‘Guilt was a thing impossible to her.’

Her information various. Her eye watchful in minutest observation of nature; and her taste a perfect electrometer.” Wordsworth wrote, “Coleridge is the most wonderful man I ever met.”

After reading the expressions of delight of these two young men in each other, we were not surprised that a month later the Wordsworths removed to Alfoxden, near Neth Stowey, Somersetshire, where Coleridge resided.

The poets rambled over the Quantock Hills and held high communion. During one of these excursions, feeling the need of money, they planned a joint production for the New Monthly Magazine. They set about the work in earnest, and selected as a subject the “Ancient Mariner,” founded upon a dream of one of Coleridge’s friends. Coleridge supplied most of the incidents and almost all the lines. Wordsworth contributed the incident of the killing of the albatross, and a few of the lines. They soon found their methods did not harmonize, and the “Mariner” was left to Coleridge, while Wordsworth wrote upon the common incidents of everyday life. When the “Mariner” was finished Wordsworth had so many pieces ready that they concluded to publish a joint volume, and this they did under the title Lyrical Ballads. The volume contained twelve poems, four by Coleridge and the remainder by Wordsworth.

In the manuscript notes which Wordsworth left we find this record: —

“In the autumn of 1797, Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon with a view to visit Linton and the Valley of Stones near to, and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour writing a poem to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine. Accordingly, we set off, proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet; and in the course of this we was planned the poem of the ‘Ancient Mariner’ founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge’s invention, but certain parts I suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke’s Voyages, a day or two before, that while doubly Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. ‘Suppose,’ said I, ‘you represent those as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirit of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.’ The incident was thought fit the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular, —

‘And listened like a three years’ child:  
The Mariner had his will.’
BIographical Sketch

as trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity added, —

'And thou art long and lank, and brown
As is the ribbed sea-sand,' —

ped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I ask of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would be a been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking, which I could only have been a clog. . . . The 'Ancient Mariner' grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five and a half and we began to think of a volume which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects.'

An interesting subject for consideration in connection with the study of literature would be the work poets have done in developing patriotism by showing how much stronger and per is the love of country when thus associated with the love of home with its simple substantial comforts and its endearments of natural associations, — rivers, woods and forests, lakes and vales; and also, how by revealing the beauty of places in a sty they have made it more beloved. There is fascinating wandering in Ireland, les, Scotland, and England for one who wishes to read such poetry in the scenes of its a, and such wandering is the very best lesson in political as well as literary history.

The region of Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, with a wealth of natural beauty, forest hills, cultivated farms, open sea prospect, and simple life, was an ideal place for the read of such poetry as these enthusiasts on man, on Nature, and on human life desired to give to the world. In Dorothy's letters and journal we have the best of guides in these lightful retreats. She writes: “There is everything here, — sea, woods, wild as fancy painted, brooks, clear and pebbly as in Cumberland; villages romantic . . . the deer all here and sheep, so that we have a living prospect.” While the two poets were musing near the running brooks a music sweeter than their own, and Dorothy was beginning to imitate Journals which have become an essential part of the history of these and countless days, somewhat of a sensation was caused in the quiet community of Stowey by the visit there of a young republican by the name of Thelwall, with whom Coleridge had a correspondence. When he arrived Coleridge was with the Wordsworths; and he wrote to his wife: “So after sleeping at Coleridge's cot, Sara and I went to Alfoxden in a coach to call Samuel and Wordsworth up to breakfast.”

Coleridge says of Thelwall (Table-Talk, July, 1820): “We were once sitting in a quiet recess in the Quaintocks, when I said to him, ‘Citizen John, this is a fine place to be treason in!’ ‘Nay, Citizen Samuel,’ he replied, ‘it is rather a place to make a man get that there is any necessity for treason.’”

Coleridge's lectures and preaching and Wordsworth's secluded life with his sister, had, as before the arrival of Thelwall, aroused the suspicions of the good people. They ought Wordsworth a smuggler, a conjurer, and as he was “so silent and dark,” a French robber. Poole was blamed for harboring such suspects (it was through Poole that Wordsworth secured Alfoxden), and now a government spy was sent down to watch their movements. The Anti-Jacobin published the following: —

"Thelwall and ye that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted,
Praise Lepaux !
And ye five other wandering bards that move
In sweet accord of harmony and love,
Coleridge, writing to Cottle of the experience of Wordsworth, says: "Whether
shall be able to procure him a house and furniture near Stowey we know not, and yet
must; for the hills, and the woods, and the streams, and the sea, and the shores, we
break forth into reproaches against us, if we did not strain every nerve to keep their
among them."

The *Lyrical Ballads* were rapidly taking shape. Wordsworth, Dorothy, and Coleridge
had decided to visit Germany to study the language, and the thought of breaking up
Elysian repose among the Quantocks throws the poet into one of his pensive moods
which the affections gently lead him on. In “The Nightingale,” Coleridge returns
his love and his nest,” and finds joy in the thoughts that spring from the simple dome
affections, from the delightful associations with man and Nature in the sylvan retreat
the land he loved.

Wordsworth thus alludes to this period:

That summer, under whose indulgent skies
Upon smooth Quantock’s airy ridge we roved
Uncheck’d, or loitered ’mid her sylvan combs,
Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,
Didst chant the vision of that Ancient Man,
The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;
And I, associate with such labour, steeped
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was found,
After the perils of his moonlight ride,
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate
In misery near the miserable Thorn.

The *Lyrical Ballads* were published in September by Cottle anonymously. Only
poems were by Coleridge, the remainder by Wordsworth.

Before the reviewers had brought their guns to bear upon the frail craft of the *Lyrical
Ballads*, the two poets and Dorothy, having left Mrs. Coleridge and the children
Poole, departed for Germany, where they soon received the cheerful news from
that “the Lyrical Ballads are not liked at all by any.” And yet through the quiet
volution in poetic taste which this little volume wrought, the Bastile of the old
tyranny was destined to fall to the ground.

“So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797
1798,” says Edmund Gosse, “that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close
the latter year, we should, indeed, have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especial
Wordsworth’s; but the direction taken by literature would scarcely have been mod
in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflamma
minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced full-blown and perfect
exquisite new flower of romantic poetry."

Soon Coleridge left the Wordsworths for Ratzeburg, where he remained during
winter, while they went to the old imperial town of Goslar, where, though cold and he
sick, Wordsworth wrote his inimitable poems on English girlhood. Wordsworth
these poems to Coleridge, who, while thinking of the future and hoping that t
ness would be in the same neighborhood, wrote: “Whenever I spring forward into the
ure with noble affections, I always alight by your side.”
In the spring of 1799 the Wordsworths set out for home, and the poet voiced their
lings in the first lines of “The Prelude.” They went to visit their friends the Hutch-
ons at Sockburn, and when Coleridge returned in June of this year he visited them
re. On the conclusion of this visit, Cottle, Coleridge, and Wordsworth began a tour
the lake country. Cottle left the party at Greta Bridge, and they were then joined
Wordsworth’s brother John. They were especially delighted with Grasmere, and as
wordsworth was ready to begin housekeeping with his sister, he rented Dove Cottage at
ement End and took up his abode there in December. The first book of “The Re-
se,” entitled “Home at Grasmere,” gives a vivid picture of the life at Dove Cottage.
The second and greatest creative period in Wordsworth’s work begins with the settle-
at at Grasmere. From this time the external events of his life become of less impor-
se, and those subtle and elemental forces within, “calm pleasures and majestic pains,”
ich enabled him to reach the mount of vision, are of first interest. These must be
in the history of the poems created here, and in those aspects of Nature and man
ich they reflect. In this shy retreat of the mountains dedicated to the genius of Soli-
he attained that view of life as clear and true, as courageous and steadfast, as joyous
pable, as is to be found anywhere in our literature. In his walks with Dorothy
l the sailor brother, and, later — when the circle became widened — with Mary and
Hutchinson, Coleridge, Lamb, Scott, and Sir Humphrey Davy, he revealed the rich
rest of the time in verse of humble theme but noble thought. To one familiar with
verse every lake and tarn, fellside and mountain height, beck and ghyll, from Pen-
h to Morecambe Bay, from Cockermouth to the Duddon Sands, is luminous with —

the gleam,
The light, that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet’s dream.

are “The Recluse,” the first half of “The Excursion,” “The Prelude,” and those revo-
ary Prefaces, so vigorous in critical insight and sound in reflective wisdom upon the
ure of Poetic Diction, were written. These reveal his devotion to Nature, to man, and
his art, and are literary masterpieces essentially Wordsworthian.
Of the long poems, “The Prelude” is probably the most read and “The Excursion”
most talked about. “The Prelude” is a sustained exercise of memory, an attempt
ecapture something of the first fine careless rapture which makes the life of that health-
y a continuous poem. Here the past and the present are brought to act upon each
her in such a way as to cause the pulses of his being to beat anew; consciousness of
ic power is awakened, and hymns to Nature are poured forth. In “The Excursion,”
ile still paying tribute to Nature, Wordsworth seeks light upon the great problems of
 constitution and powers of the mind of man, the haunt and main region of his song.
imation comes to him, in those lonely vigils of contemplation, on the simple yet sur-
ing and strange perceptions and emotions of his own mind and heart. Gems of the
ill, ode, and proverb lie thickly scattered in the pages of “The Excursion.” While
one he may be called philosophical, by another psychological, and by a third mystical,
verywhere he has the patience, the love of truth, and the reverence of the scientific
erver. While he is thus the central figure in the poem, it is not because he gives
aks that he is not as other men are, but because he must seek authentic revelations in
own experience. He is always mindful of the fact that the humblest dalesman is rich
in revelations for the wisest philosopher, could he but enter into his world. Hence he conceived of characters in humble life with a purity, delicacy, insight, and sympathy achieved by no other poet. The Pedlar, Michael, and the Leechgatherer have been through him heroes of history. In his treatment of such characters we have a complete illustration of what he meant by that famous sentence in his Preface of 1800: "If the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling." If one would understand the secret of the short poems one should ponder over these two sources of poetic power — "The Prelude" and "The Excursion." James Russell Lowell says: "Wordsworth has won for himself secure immortality by a depth of intuition which makes only the best minds at their best hours worthy, or indeed capable, of his companionship, and by a homely sincerity of human sympathy which reaches the humblest heart. Our language owes him gratitude for the habitual purity and abstinence of his style, and we who speak it, for having been boldened us to take delight in simple things, and to trust ourselves to our own instinct.

When in 1800 a second edition of the Lyrical Ballads was published, somewhat enlarged, it contained the famous Preface which set forth his theory of poetry in general and of his own poetry in particular; this called down upon him a storm of abuse second only to that caused by the poems themselves. From this time until 1815 neglect, obliquity, ridicule, and disparagement followed his work. It is to these years that we owe the first Preface of 1802 and an Appendix on "Poetic Diction" added. These were repeated in successive editions of his poems until 1815, when, in the edition of that year, the first volume contained a new preface and a supplementary essay of the poetry of the last two centuries while at the close of the second volume was placed the first Preface and the Appendix "Poetic Diction." These Prefaces were changed by alterations, insertions, and omissions in the various editions until they received their last revision in 1845.

While it is true that Wordsworth silenced his opponents by his poems rather than his Prefaces, the two are so inter-related that the history of one is the history of the other. Of no artist can it be more truly said than of Wordsworth that he built better than he knew. Artists cannot explain the secret of their art, and yet they can at times reveal to us much that is helpful to an appreciation of their work. Every artist brings into the world of art a new thing — his own personality — and consequently he must create the taste by which he is to be judged. In these Prefaces we have the principles which constitute the foundation of inductive criticism clearly and forcefully revealed; the fundamental of these is that —

You must love him ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

If they had been productive in nothing else than stimulating Coleridge to write the noble chapters in the Biographia Literaria, in review of the theory they set forth, they would have justified themselves.

The great satisfaction which came to Wordsworth from his friendship with Coleridge was that he was understood; this helped him to endure the public ridicule of many years. Nothing in the history of Coleridge's critical genius better illustrates the unerring precision with which he discerned the elements of greatness where to the ordinary man seemed to be only the commonplace. Witness the marvelously subtle skill in preparing the way for his final masterly tribute to the genius and work of his friend — the noblest tribute yet written by any English critic — by first discriminating between Fa
Imagination, and then revealing the true nature of poetry, where he says: "Finally, od sense is the body of poetic genius, fancy its drapery, motion its life, and imagination a soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent role." He then apparently assents to the most obvious accusations of the Reviewers, ly to rise at last to the heights of his great argument, showing step by step how mis-ded they have been, and concluding with those six fundamentals which entitle Wordsworth to poetic greatness.

The only events of importance in Wordsworth's external life during these Grassmere years were his marriage in 1802 to Mary Hutchinson, the friendship with Sir George Beaumont begun in 1803, and the death of his brother John in 1805. By his marriage to a friend of his youth the home circle was enriched by the presence and devotion of

A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

The atmosphere of serene domestic sweetness grew that poetry full of modesty and strength, of valiant human-heartedness, and homely spiritual truth; a poetry which makes common cause with all that is true to the kindred points of heaven and home. Between 1803 and 1808 four children were born to him and the little cottage became too small for the family. In 1808 he moved to Allan Bank across the lake and under the shadow of Silver How. Here "The Excursion" was completed. It was during his residence at Allan Bank that the estrangement with Coleridge took place—an estrangement as wicked and cruel, for which neither poet was in the least to be blamed. By it that felic friendship begun when they "wanted in wild poetry" among the Quantocks was taken up. The world can never know the full significance of that joyous and radiant friendship. "The reciprocal influence of these two ardent young enthusiasts, the wizard enchantment of the dreamer of dreams, playing against the healing calm of the child of the mountains, can never be completely revealed." It is as significant as it is pathetic that at one of the great creative period in the life of each poet is coincident with this breach. In 1811 the parsonage opposite the church became his home, and here the poet's life was saddened by the death of two of his children. In 1813 he removed to his favorite final abode, Rydal Mount.

The sun of Wordsworth's morning of inspiration, which rose in symbolic glory over the heights at Hawkshead, had reached its meridian and was declining towards the west towards that evening of extraordinary splendor and beauty witnessed at Rydal Mount. The flight of his song was rich in "pontifical purple and dark harvest-gold." The association of Rydal with sympathetic and appreciative friends, Miss Fenwick, Dr. Arnold, Professorson, Hartley Coleridge, and F. W. Faber: his travels on the Continent and in Scotland, his visits to Coleorton; his receptions in London with Gladstone, Rogers, and Crabb Robinson, when he met that devoted band of young disciples; his evenings at Fox How and have been discoursed so eloquently on the great English poets; his reception of young and rich and poor in feast and merrymaking on his birthdays, and his solitude and meditations in his familiar haunts among the hills he loved, could not fail to call forth something the glow and gladsomeness of youth, the pathos and power of maturity. It was such emotion and the consciousness of a lofty and consecrated purpose in all he had written enabled him to withstand the pitiless storm of abuse which beat upon him from the critical reviews, and inspired him to sing:
For thus I live remote
From evil speaking; rancour never sought
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passion, smooth discourse and joyous thought.

In his calm assurance that time would deal justly with all things great and small quieted the fears of his disciples who became anxious about the future of his poems. He writes: “Trouble not yourself upon their present reception; of what moment is that compared with what I trust is their destiny? — to console the afflicted; to add suns to daylight, by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and, therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous.” Honor now came to him from sources which attested how potent his influence had become.

Blessings be with them — and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares, —
The Poets — who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs;
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

Thus wrote Wordsworth in 1805, and long and patiently did he wait for the answer to his prayer. At last, in the summer of 1832, he was permitted to realize that for which he had labored so assiduously and prayed so earnestly, when, by the foremost University of his land and the world, he was honored as one of the chief glories of English poets and the greatest name since Milton. Keble, the professor of Poetry in the University, introduced him to the Vice Chancellor as being “one who had shed a celestial light upon the affections, the occupations, and the piety of the poor.” The ovation which he received was such as had never been witnessed there before, except upon the occasion of visit of the Duke of Wellington. The long battle had been patiently and courageously fought, and victory was at length achieved. Of this victory the Rev. Frederick Robinson says:

“It was my lot, during a short university career, to witness a transition and a reaction or revulsion, of public feeling with regard to two great men. The first of these, Arnold of Rugby; the second, Wordsworth. When he came forward to receive honorary degree, scarcely had his name been pronounced than from three thousand voices at once there broke forth a burst of applause echoed and taken up again and again. There were young eyes then filled with an emotion of which they had no need to be ashamed; there were hearts beating with the proud feeling of triumph that at last the world had recognized the merit of the man they had loved so long and acknowledged their teacher.”

In 1842 there was bestowed on him an annuity of £300 a year from the Civil List distinguished work in the field of literature.

In 1843 a still greater honor was conferred upon him at the hands of the young Queen. He was urged to accept the Laureateship, but gratefully and respectfully declined, he considered that his years unfitted him for the discharge of its duties. He was in his seventy-fourth year. This brought a letter from the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, urging his acceptance of the appointment, saying, “As the Queen can select for honourable appointment no one whose claims for respect and honour, on account of excellence as a poet, can be placed in competition with you, I trust that you will no longer...
hesitate to accept it. There is but one unanimous feeling on the part of all who have
heard of the proposal.

"The offer was made not for the purpose of imposing upon you any onerous task or
disagreeable duties, but in order to pay you that tribute of respect which is justly due to
the first of living poets."

This letter removed his scruples, and the laurel wreath was placed upon the brows "of
him who uttered nothing base." He produced but little poetry after this date; but there
is one poem, written in 1846 upon the fly-leaf of a gift copy of his poems, presented to
the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, which is of special interest as connected with his
Laureateship.

Deign, Sovereign Mistress! to accept a lay,
    No Laureate offering of elaborate art;
But salutation, taking its glad way
    From deep recesses of a loyal heart.

Queen, wife, and mother! may all-judging Heaven
    Shower with a bounteous hand on thee and thine
Felicity, that only can be given
    On earth to goodness blessed by grace divine.

Lady! devoutly honoured and beloved
    Through every realm confided to thy sway;
May'st thou pursue thy course by God approved,
    And he will teach thy people to obey.

As thou art wont thy sovereignty adorn
    With woman's gentleness, yet firm and staid;
So shall that earthly crown thy brows have worn
    Be changed to one whose glory cannot fade.

And now, by duty urged, I lay this book
    Before thy Majesty in humble trust,
That on its simplest pages thou wilt look
    With a benign indulgence, more than just.

Nor wilt thou blame an aged poet's prayer,
    That, issuing hence, may steal into thy mind,
Some solace under weight of royal care,
    Or grief, the inheritance of human kind.

For know we not that from celestial spheres
    When time was young an inspiration came,
(O were it mine!) to hallow saddest tears
    And help life onward in its noblest aim?

BYRDAL MOUNT, 9th January, 1816.

W. W.

The death of the beloved daughter, Dora, in July, 1847, so saddened his declining years
that he never again retouched his harp. His mission was completed. The bright dream of
his boyhood was fulfilled; and that spirit singled out for holy services, after the discipline
of sadness and suffering, entered into its rest.

His body lies, as he had requested, in the churchyard at Grasmere, in the bosom of that
fair vale where he had lived and loved and sung; surrounded by the dalesmen whom he
honored; beneath the shade of those yews planted by his own hands, in sound of Rotha murmuring her plaintive strain that —

few or none
Hear her voice right now he is gone.

While round about in phalanx firm stand the mountains old, faithful guardians of the sacred spot. Earth has no more fitting resting-place for the dust of William Wordsworth.

Plain is the stone that marks the Poet’s rest;  
Not marble worked beneath Italian skies —  
A grey slate headstone tells where Wordsworth lies,  
Cleft from the native hills he loved the best.  
No heavier thing upon his gentle breast  
Than turf starred o’er in spring with daisy eyes,  
Nor richer music makes him lullabies  
Than Rotha fresh from yonder mountain crest.  
His name, his date, the years he lived to sing,  
Are deep incised and eloquently terse;  
But Fancy hears the graver’s hammer ring,  
And sees mid lines of much remembered verse  
These words in gold beneath his title wrought —  
“Singer of Humble Themes and Noble Thought.”  

There was but one thing more which his countrymen could do for him, and this was not long left undone, for in the Venerable Abbey, surrounded by the memorials of Keble, Arnold, Kingsley, and Maurice, may be seen the life-size statue of the poet in white marble; he is represented seated in the attitude of contemplation, the characteristic of all his portraits being thus strikingly reproduced in the marble. Underneath are engraved the words above quoted, “Blessings be with them and eternal praise,” etc.

But perhaps the most significant tribute to his worth as a man and poet is the medallion in Grasmere Church erected by his friends and neighbors. It bears the following inscription:

TO THE MEMORY OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH,
A TRUE PHILOSOPHER AND POET,
WHO BY THE SPECIAL GIFT AND CALLING OF
ALMIGHTY GOD,
WHETHER HE DISCOURSED ON MAN OR NATURE,
FAILED NOT TO LIFT UP THE HEART
TO HOLY THINGS,
TIRED NOT OF MAINTAINING THE CAUSE
OF THE POOR AND SIMPLE:
AND SO IN PERILOUS TIMES WAS RAISED UP
TO BE A CHIEF MINISTER
NOT ONLY OF NOBLEST POETY,
BUT OF HIGH AND SACRED TRUTH.
THIS MEMORIAL
IS PLACED HERE BY HIS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS
IN TESTIMONY OF
RESPECT, AFFECTION, AND GRATITUDE.
ANNO 1851.

* H. D. Broughton.
If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:—
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin,
No purer essence, than the one that burns,
Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge
Of some dark mountain; or than those which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees.
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.
LINES
WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT HAWKSHED, ANNO ÆTATIS 14
1785. 1850

"And has the Sun his flaming chariot driven
Two hundred times around the ring of heaven,
Since Science first, with all her sacred train,
Beneath you roof began her heavenly reign?
While thus I mused, methought, before mine eyes,
The Power of Education seemed to rise;
Not she whose rigid precepts trained the boy
Dead to the sense of every finer joy;
Nor that vile wretch who bade the tender age
Spurn Reason's law and humour Passion's rage;
But she who trains the generous British youth
In the bright paths of fair majestic Truth:
Emerging slow from Academus’ grove
In heavenly majesty she seemed to move.
Stern was her forehead, but a smile serene
'Softened the terrors of her awful mien.'
Close at her side were all the powers, designed
To curb, exalt, reform the tender mind:
With panting breast, now pale as winter snows,
Now flushed as Hebe, Emulation rose;
Shame followed after with reverted eye,
And hue far deeper than the Tyrian dye;
Last Industry appeared with steady pace,
A smile sat beaming on her pensive face.
I gazed upon the visionary train,
Threw back my eyes, returned, and gazed again.
When lo! the heavenly goddess thus began,
Through all my frame the pleasing accents ran.

"‘When Superstition left the golden light
And fled indignant to the shades of night; 30
When pure Religion reared the peaceful breast
And lulled the warring passions into rest,
Drove far away the savage thoughts that roll
In the dark mansions of the bigot’s soul,
Enlivening Hope displayed her cheerful ray,
And beamed on Britain’s sons a brighter day;
So when on Ocean’s face the storm subsides,
Hushed are the winds and silent are the tides;
The God of day, in all the pomp of light,
Moves through the vault of heaven, and dissipates the night; 40
Wide o’er the main a trembling lustre plays,
The glittering waves reflect the dazzling blaze.
Science with joy saw Superstition fly
Before the lustre of Religion’s eye;
With rapture she beheld Britannia smile,
Clapped her strong wings, and sought the cheerful isle,
The shades of night no more the soul involve,
She sheds her beam, and, lo! the shades dissolve;
No jarring monks, to gloomy cell confined,
With many rules perplex the weary mind;
No shadowy forms entice the soul aside;
Secure she walks, Philosophy her guide.
Britain, who long her warriors had adored,
And deemed all merit centred in the sword;
Britain, who thought to stain the field was fame,
Now honoured Edward’s less than Bacon’s name.
Her sons no more in listed fields advance
To ride the ring, or toss the beamy lance;
No longer steel their indurated hearts
To the mild influence of the finer arts;
Quick to the secret grotto they retire
To court majestic truth, or wake the golden lyre;"
By generous Emulation taught to rise,
The seats of learning brave the distant skies.
Then noble Sandys, inspired with great design,
Reared Hawkshead's happy roof, and called it mine.
There have I loved to show the tender age
The golden precepts of the classic page;
To lead the mind to those Elysian plains
Where, throned in gold, immortal Science reigns;
Fair to the view is sacred Truth displayed,
In all the majesty of light arrayed,
To teach, on rapid wings, the curious soul
To roam from heaven to heaven, from pole to pole,
From thence to search the mystic cause of things
And follow Nature to her secret springs;
Nor less to guide the fluctuating youth
Firm in the sacred paths of moral truth,
To regulate the mind's disordered frame,
And quench the passions kindling into flame;
The glimmering fires of Virtue to enlarge,
And purge from Vice's dross my tender charge.
Oft have I said, the paths of Fame pursue,
And all that Virtue dictates, dare to do;
Go to the world, peruse the book of man,
And learn from thence thy own defects to scan;
Severely honest, break no plighted trust,
But coldly rest not here—be more than just;
Join to the rigours of the sires of Rome
The gentler manners of the private dome;
When Virtue weeps in agony of woe,
Teach from the heart the tender tear to flow;
If Pleasure's soothing song thy soul entice,
Or all the gaudy pomp of splendid Vice,
Arise superior to the Siren's power,
The wretch, the short-lived vision of an hour;
Soon fades her cheek, her blushing beauties fly,
As fades the chequered bow that paints the sky.
So shall thy sire, whilst hope his breast inspires,
And wakens new life's glimmering trembling fires,

Hear Britain's sons rehearse thy praise with joy,
Look up to heaven, and bless his darling boy.
If e'er these precepts quelled the passion strife,
If e'er they smoothed the rugged walk of life,
If e'er they pointed forth the blissful way
That guides the spirit to eternal day,
Do thou, if gratitude inspire thy breast,
Spurn the soft fetters of lethargic rest.
Awake, awake! and snatch the slumbering lyre,
Let this bright morn and Sandys the soul inspire.'

"I looked obedience: the celestial Fair
Smiled like the morn, and vanished into air."

EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING SCHOOL

1786. 1815

Written at Hawkshead. The beautiful image with which this poem concludes, suggested itself to me while I was resting in a boat along with my companions under the shade of a magnificent row of sycamores, which then extended their branches from the shore of the promontory upon which stands the ancient, and at that time the more picturesque, Hall of Coniston, the seat of the Le Flemings from very early times. The poem of which it was the conclusion was of many hundred lines, and contained thoughts and images most of which have been dispersed through my other writings.

DEAR native regions, I foretell,
From what I feel at this farewell,
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,
And whenceso'er my course shall end,
If in that hour a single tie
Survive of local sympathy,
My soul will cast the backward view,
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest
Far in the regions of the west,
Though to the vale no parting beam
Be given, not one memorial gleam,
A lingering light he fondly throws
On the dear hills where first he rose.
AN EVENING WALK

ADDRESS TO A YOUNG LADY

1787-9. 1793

The young Lady to whom this was addressed was my Sister. It was composed at school, and during my two first College vacations. There is not an image in it which I have not observed; and now, in my seventy-third year, I recollect the time and place where most of them were noticed. I will confine myself to one instance:

"Waving his bat, the shepherd, from the vale,
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale, —
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,
Hunts, where his master points, the intercepted flocks."

I was an eye-witness of this for the first time while crossing the Pass of Dunmail Raise. Upon second thought, I will mention another image:

"And, fronting the bright west, you oak entwines
Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger lines."

This is feebly and imperfectly expressed, but I recollect distinctly the very spot where this first struck me. It was in the way between Hawkshead and Ambleside, and gave me extreme pleasure. The moment was important in my poetical history; for I date from it my consciousness of the infinite variety of natural appearances which had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country, so far as I was acquainted with them; and I made a resolution to supply, in some degree, the deficiency. I could not have been at that time above fourteen years of age. The description of the swans, that follows, was taken from the daily opportunities I had of observing their habits, not as confined to the gentleman's park, but in a state of nature. There were two pairs of them that divided the lake of Esthwaite and its in-and-out-flowing streams between them, never trespassing a single yard upon each other's separate domain. They were of the old magnificent species, bearing in beauty and majesty about the same relation to the Thames swan which does to the goose. It was from the remembrance of those noble creatures I took, thirty years after, the picture of the swan which I have discarded from the poem of Dion. While I was a school-boy, the late Mr. Curwen introduced a little fleet of those birds, but of the inferior species, to the lake of Windermere. Their principal home was about his own island; but they sailed about into remote parts of the lake, and, either from real or imagined injury done to the adjoining fields, they were got rid of at the request of the farmers and proprietors, but to the great regret of all who had become attached to them, from noticing their beauty and quiet habits. I will conclude my notice of this poem by observing that the plan of it has not been confined to a particular walk or an individual place,—a proof (of which I was unconscious at the time) of my unwillingness to submit the poetic spirit to the chains of fact and real circumstance. The country is idealised rather than described in any one of its local aspects.

General Sketch of the Lakes — Author's regret of his youth which was passed amongst them — Short description of Noon — Cascade — Noontide Retreat — Precipice and sloping Lights — Face of Nature as the Sun declines — Mountain-farm, and the Cock — Slate-quarry — Sunset — Superstitition of the Country connected with that moment — Swans — Female Beggar — Twilight-sounds — Western Lights — Spirits — Night — Moonlight — Hope — Night-sounds — Conclusion.

FAR from my dearest Friend, 't is mine to rove
Through bare grey dell, high wood, and pastoral cove;
Where Derwent rests, and listens to the roar
That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore;
Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island
leads,
To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald
meads;
Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cot-
taged grounds,
Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland
bounds;
Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander
sleeps
'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled
steeps;
Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's
shore,
And memory of departed pleasures, more.
Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy
child,
The echoes of your rocks my carols wild:
The spirit sought not then, in cherished sad-
ness,
A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.
In youth's keen eye the livelong day was
bright,
The sun at morning, and the stars at night,
Alike, when first the bittern's hollow bill
Was heard, or woodcocks roamed the moon-
light hill.

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,
And hope itself was all I knew of pain;
For then, the inexperienced heart would beat
At times, while young Content forsook her
seat,
And wild Impatience, pointing upward,
showed,
Through passess yet unreached, a brighter
road.
Alas! the idle tale of man is found
Depicted in the dial's moral round;
Hope with reflection blends her social rays
To gild the total tablet of his days;
Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,
He knows but from its shade the present
hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain?
To show what pleasures yet to me remain,
Say, will my Friend, with unreluctant ear,
The history of a poet's evening hear?
When, in the south, the wan noon, brood-
ing still,
Breathed a pale steam around the glaring
hill,
And shades of deep-embattled clouds were
seen,
Spotting the northern cliffs with lights be-
tween;
When crowding cattle, checked by rails th
make
A fence far stretched into the shallow lak
Lashed the cool water with their restless
tails,
Or from high points of rock looked out in
fanning gales:
When school-boys stretched their length
upon the green;
And round the broad-spread oak, a glin-
mering scene,
In the rough fern-clad park, the herded de
Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancin
ear;
When horses in the sunburnt intake stood
And vainly eyed below the tempting floor
Or tracked the passenger, in mute distres
With forward neck the closing gate press —

Then, while I wandered where the hudlin
rill
Brightens with water-breaks the hollow
ghyll
As by enchantment, an obscure retreat
Opened at once, and stayed my devious
feet.
While thick above the rill the branches
close,
In rocky basin its wild waves repose,
Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy green
Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weed
between;
And its own twilight softens the whole
scene,
Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams shin
On withered briars that o'er the crags re
cline;
Save where, with sparkling foam, a small
cascade
Illumines, from within, the leafy shade;
Beyond, along the vista of the brook,
Where antique roots its bustling cours
o'erlook,
The eye reposes on a secret bridge
Half grey, half shagged with ivy to it
ridge;

There, bending o'er the stream, the lilies
swain
Lingers behind his disappearing wain.
— Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,
Blandusia's praise, wild stream, should yield
to thine!
Never shall ruthless minister of death
'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering ste
unsheath;
No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned with flowers,
No kid with piteous outcry thrill thy bower;
The mystic shapes that by thy margin rove
A more benignant sacrifice approve —
A mind, that, in a calm angelic mood
Of happy wisdom, meditating good,
Beholds, of all from her high powers required,
Much done, and much designed, and more desired —
Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth refined,
Entire affection for all human kind.

Dear Brook, farewell! To-morrow's noon again
Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood strain;
But now the sun has gained his western road,
And eve's mild hour invites my steps abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the silvered kite
In many a whistling circle wheels her flight;
Slant watery lights, from parting clouds apace,
Travel along the precipice's base;
Cheering its naked waste of scattered stone,
By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'ergrown;
Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or thistle's beard;
And restless stone-chat, all day long, is heard.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to view
The spacious landscape change in form and hue!
Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood
Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and wood;
There, objects, by the searching beams betrayed,
Come forth, and here retire in purple shade;
Even the white stems of birch, the cottage white,
Soften their glare before the mellow light;
The skiffs, at anchor where with umbrage wide
You chestnuts half the latticed boat-house hide,
Shed from their sides, that face the sun's slant beam,
Strong flakes of radiance on the tremulous stream:
Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty cloud
Mounts from the road, and spreads its moving shroud;
The shepherd, all involved in wreaths of fire,
Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is lost entire.
Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,
A blue rim borders all the lake's still brink;
There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage sleep,
And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy deep:
And now, on every side, the surface breaks
Into blue spots, and slowly lengthening streaks;
Here, plots of sparkling water tremble bright
With thousand thousand twinkling points of light;
There, waves that, hardly wetering, die away,
Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray;
And now the whole wide lake in deep repose
Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror glows,
Save where, along the shady western marge,
Coasts, with industrious ear, the charcoal barge.

Their panniered train a group of potters goad,
Winding from side to side up the steep road;
The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful edge
Shot, down the headlong path darts with his sledge;

Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse illumine
Feeding 'mid purple heath, 'green rings,' and broom;
While the sharp slope the slackened team confounds,
Downward the ponderous timber-wain re-sounds;
In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,
Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps along;
From lonesome chapel at the mountain's feet,
Three humble bells their rustic chime repeat;
Sounds from the water-side the hammered boat;
And blasted quarry thunders, heard remote!
While coves and secret hollows, through ray
Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.
Each slip of lawn the broken rocks betwixt
Shines in the light with more than earth green:
Deep yellow beams the scattered statillume,
Far in the level forest's central gloom:
Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the va
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale;
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,
Hunts, where his master points, the interscepted flocks.
Where oaks o'erhang the road the radius shoots
On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisty roots;
The druid-stones a brightened ring unite,
And all the babbling brooks are liquid springs.
Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still;
Gives one bright glance, and drops below the hill.

In these secluded vales, if village fam
Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may clai
When up the hills, as now, retired to light,
Strange apparitions mocked the shepherd's sight.

The form appears of one that spurs his steed
Midway along the hill with desperate speed
Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight, whilst all
Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.
Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show:
Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro;
At intervals imperial banners stream,
And now the van reflects the solar beam;
The rear through iron brown betrays the sullen gleam.

While silent stands the admiring crou
below,
Silent the visionary warriors go,
Winding in ordered pomp their upward way
Till the last banner of the long array
Has disappeared, and every trace is fled
Of splendour — save the beacon's spire head
Tipt with eve's latest gleam of burning flame
Now, while the solemn evening shade sail,
On slowly-waving pinions, down the vale

Even here, amid the sweep of endless woods,
Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and falling floods,
Not unmelodious are the simplest charms,
Found by the grassy door of mountain-farms.
Sweetly ferocious, round his native walks,
Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch stalks;
Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his tread;
A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.
Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-ball hurls
Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls;
On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion throat,
Threatened by faintly-anwsering farms remote:
Again with his shrill voice the mountain rings,
While, flapped with conscious pride, re-sound his wings.
Where, mixed with graceful birch, the sombrous pine
And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline;
I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and numerous wains;

How busy all the enormous hive within, 160
While Echo dallies with its various din!
Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking sound?)
Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf profound;
Some, dim between the lofty cliffs descened,
O'erwalk the slender plank from side to side;
These, by the pale-blue rocks that ceaseless ring;
In airy baskets hanging, work and sing.
Just where a cloud above the mountain rears
An edge all flame, the broadening sun appears;
A long blue bar its ægis orb divides, 170
And breaks the spreading of its golden tides;
And now that orb has touched the purple steep
Whose softened image penetrates the deep;
'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs aspire,
With towers and woods, a 'prospect all on fire;'

And, fronting the bright west, you oak entwines
its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger lines;
'tis pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray
where, winding on along some secret bay,
The swan uplifts his chest, and backward flings
his neck, a varying arch, between his towering wings:
The eye that marks the gliding creature sees
how graceful pride can be, and how majestic, ease.
While tender cares and mild domestic loves
with furtive watch pursue her as she moves,
The female with a meeker charm succeeds,
and her brown little-ones around her leads,
Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,
or playing wanton with the floating grass.
She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride
forgetting, calls the wearied to her side;
alternately they mount her back, and rest
close by her mantling wings' embraces prest.

Long may they float upon this flood serene;
their be these holms un trodden, still, and green,
where leafy shades fence off the blustering gale,
and breathes in peace the lily of the vale!
You isle, which feels not even the milk-maid's feet,
yet hears her song, "by distance made
more sweet."
You isle conceals their home, their hut-like bower;
green water-rushes overspread the floor;
long grass and willows form the woven wall,
and swings above the roof the poplar tall.
Thence issuing often with unwieldy stalk,
they crush with broad black feet their flowery walk;

or, from the neighbouring water, hear at morn
the hound, the horse's tread, and mellow horn;
involve their serpent-necks in changeful rings,
called wantonly between their slippery wings,
or, starting up with noise and rude delight,
set half upon the wave their cumbrous flight.

Fair swan! by all a mother's joys expressed,
haply some wretch has eyed, and called thee blessed;
when with her infants, from some shady seat
by the lake's edge, she rose—to face the noontide heat;
or taught their limbs along the dusty road
a few short steps to totter with their load.
I see her now, denied to lay her head,
on cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built shed,
turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,
by pointing to the gliding moon on high.
—When low-hung clouds each star of summer hide,
and fireless are the valleys far and wide,
where the brook brawls along the public road
dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching broad,
oft has she taught them on her lap to lay
the shining glow-worm; or, in heedless play,
toss it from hand to hand, disquieted;
while others, not unseen, are free to shed
Green unmolested light upon their mossy bed.

Oh! when the sleety showers her path assail,
and like a torrent roars the headstrong gale;
no more her breath can thaw their fingers cold,
their frozen arms her neck no more can fold;
weak roof a cowering form two babes to shield,
and faint the fire a dying heart can yield!
press the sad kiss, fond mother! vainly fears
they flooded cheek to wet them with its tears;
no tears can chill them, and no bosom warms,
thy breast their death-bed, confined in thine arms!
sweet are the sounds that mingle from afar,
heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding star,
where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling sedge,
and feeding pike starts from the water's edge,
Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and bill
Wetting, that drip upon the water still;
And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,
Shoots upward, darting his long neck before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell light
Blends with the solemn colouring of night;
'Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,
And round the west's proud lodge their shadows throw.

Like Una shining on her gloomy way,
The half-seen form of Twilight roams astray;
Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild and small,
Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom fall;
Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale
Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.
With restless interchange at once the bright
Wins on the shade, the shade upon the light.

No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze
On lovelier spectacle in faery days;
When gentle Spirits urged a sportive chase,
Brushing with lucid wands the water's face:
While music, stealing round the glimmering deeps,
Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted steeps.
—The lights are vanished from the watery plains:
No heeded night has overcome the vales:
On the dark earth the wearied vision fails;
The latest lingerer of the forest train,
The lone black fir, forsakes the faded plain;

Last evening sight, the cottage smoke, no more,
Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers hoar;
And, towering from the sullen dark-brown mere,
Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps appear.
—Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel
A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find
The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.

Stay! Pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay!
Ah no! as fades the vale, they fade away.
Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains
Still the cold cheek its shuddering tears contain.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light to thread
Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,
From his grey re-appearing tower she soon
Salute with gladsome note the rising moon.
While with a hoary light she frosts the ground,
And pours a deeper blue to Ether's bound
Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds to fold
In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

Above upon eastern hill, where darkness broods
O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and woods;
Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,
Even now she shews, half-veiled, her love face:
Across the gloomy valley flings her light
Far to the western slopes with hamlet white;
And gives, where woods the chequered land strew,
To the green corn of summer, autumn's first bloom.
Thus Hope, first pouring from her bless'd horn
Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's own morn,
Till higher mounted, strives in vain to che.
The weary hills, impervious, blacken near;
Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while
On darling spots remote her tempting smile.
Even now she decks for me a distant scene,
(For dark and broad the gulf of time betwixt)
Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray.
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way;
How fair its lawns and sheltering woody appear!
How sweet its streamlet murmurs in my ear?)
Where we, my Friend, to happy days shall rise,
Till our small share of hardly-paining sig
formed one piece; but, upon the recommendation of Coleridge, the three last stanzas were separated from the other.

How richly glows the water's breast
Before us, tinged with evening hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
The boat her silent course pursues!
And see how dark the backward stream!
A little moment past so smiling!
And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure;
But, heedless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
Till peace go with him to the tomb.
—And let him nurse his fond deceit,
And what if he must die in sorrow?
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
Though grief and pain may come to-morrow?

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR RICHMOND

1789. 1798

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
O Thames! that other bards may see
As lovely visions by thy side
As now, fair river! come to me.
O glide, fair stream! for ever so,
Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
Till all our minds for ever flow
As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought! — Yet be as now thou art,
That in thy waters may be seen
The image of a poet's heart,
How bright, how solemn, how serene!
Such as did once the Poet bless,
Who murmuring here a later ditty,
Could find no refuge from distress
But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
For him suspend the dashing oar;
And pray that never child of song
May know that Poet's sorrows more.
How calm! how still! the only sound,
The dripping of the oar suspended!
—The evening darkness gathers round
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

LINtES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING

1789. 1798

This title is scarcely correct. It was during a solitary walk on the banks of the Cam that I was first struck with this appearance, and applied it to my own feelings in the manner here expressed, changing the scene to the Thames, near Windsor. This, and the three stanzas of the following poem, "Remembrance of Collins,"
DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR AMONG THE ALPS
1791-2. 1793

Much the greatest part of this poem was composed during my walks upon the banks of the Loire in the years 1791, 1792. I will only notice that the description of the valley filled with mist, beginning—"In solemn shapes," was taken from that beautiful region of which the principal features are Lungarn and Sarnen. Nothing that I ever saw in nature left a more delightful impression on my mind than that which I have attempted, alas! how feebly, to convey to others in these lines. Those two lakes have always interested me especially, from hearing, in their size and other features, a resemblance to those of the North of England. It is much to be deplored that a district so beautiful should be so unhealthy as it is.

TO
THE REV. ROBERT JONES,
FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

DEAR SIR,

However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps, seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you, I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessities upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgelert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steeps of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem,

I am, dear Sir,
Most sincerely yours,
W. WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, 1793.

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller—Author crosses France to the Alps—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse—Lake of Come—Time, Sunset—Same Scene, Twilight—Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous Character; Old man and forest-cottage music—River Tusa—Via Mala and Grison Gipuz—Sekellenen-thal—Lake of Uri—Stormy sunset—Chapel of William Tell—Force of local emotion—Chamois-chaser—View of the higher Alps—Manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed with views of the higher Alps—Golden age of the Alps—Life and views continued—Ranz des Vaches famous Swiss Air—Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims—Valley of Chamouny—Mont Blanc—Slavery of Savoy—Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness—France—Wish for the Extermination of Slavery—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground
Where from distress a refuge might be found,
And solitude prepare a refuge for man's
Sure, nature's God that spot to man has given
Where falls the purple morning far and wide
In flakes of light upon the mountain side;
Where with loud voice the power of water
Shakes
The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.
Yet not unrecompensed the man sha roam,
Who at the call of summer quits his home
And plods through some wide realm of
vale and height,
Though seeking only holiday delight;
Whither is fled that Power whose frown severe
Awed sober Reason till she crouched in fear?
That Silence, once in deathlike fetters bound,
Chains that were loosened only by the sound
Of holy rites chanted in measured round?
— The voice of blasphemy the fane alarms,
The cloister startles at the gleam of arms.
The thundering tube the aged angler hears,
Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps away his tears.

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their troubled heads,
Spires, rocks, and lawns a browner night o'erspreads;
Strong terror checks the female peasant's sighs,
And start the astonished shades at female eyes.
From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted jay,
And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.
A viewless flight of laughing Demons mock
The Cross, by angels planted on the aerial rock.

The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow breath
Along the mystic streams of Life and Death.
Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds
Portentous through her old woods' trackless bounds,
Vallombre, 'mid her falling fanes, deplores
For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.
More pleased, my foot the hidden margin roves
Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut groves.
No meadows thrown between, the giddy steep
Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow deeps.

— To towns, whose shades of no rude noise complain,
From ringing team apart and grating wain —
To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's bound,
Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,
And o'er the whitened wave their shadows fling —
The pathway leads, as round the steeps it twines;
And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.

It least, not owning to himself an aim
To which the sage would give a prouder name.
To gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy,
Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;
Risk toil, alternating with ready ease,
Seeds the clear current of his sympathies.
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening bourn!

Fear is the forest frowning o'er his head,
And dear the velvet green-award to his tread:
Loves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye?

Foward he looks — "and calls it luxury:"
And Nature's charities his steps attend;
Every babbling brook he finds a friend;
While chastening thoughts of sweetest use,
Bestowed by wisdom, moralize his pensive road.
Lost of his welcome inn, the noon-tide bower,
A spare meal he calls the passing poor;
The sun uplift his golden fire,

The moon that comes with kindly ray,
To light him shaken by his rugged way.
Seek from his sight no bashful children steal;
No humble looks no shy restraint impart;
Young him plays at will the virgin heart.
While suspended wheels the village dance,

He maidens eye him with enquiring glance,
Such wondering by what fit of crazing care,
Desperate love, bewildered, he came there.
A hope, that prudence could not then approve,
But cang to Nature with a truant's love,
For Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps led;

Fires of road-elms, high above my head
Long-drawn vists, rustling in the breeze;
Where her pathways straggle as they please
Lonely farms and secret villages.

To the Alps ascending white in air, so
By with the sun and glitter from afar.
And now, emerging from the forest's gloom,
Greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn thy doom.
The loitering traveller hence, at evening, 
sees 
From rock-hewn steps the sail between the 
trees; 
Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-
eyed maids 
Tend the small harvest of their garden 
glades; 
Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to 
view 
Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad and 
blue, 
And track the yellow lights from steep to 
steep, 
As up the opposing hills they slowly creep. 
Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed 
In golden light; half hides itself in shade; 
While, from amid the darkened roofs, the 
spire, 
Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like 
fire: 
There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw 
Rich golden verdure on the lake below. 
Slow glides the sail along the illumined 
shore, 
And steals into the shade the lazy oar; 
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious 
sighs, 
And amorous music on the water dies. 
How blest, delicious scene! the eye that 
greats 
Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats; 
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood that 
scales 
Thy cliffs; the endless waters of thy vales; 
Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore; 
Each with its household boat beside the 
door; 
Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue 
sky; 
Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows’ nests, 
on high; 
That glimmer hoar in eve’s last light, de-
scried 
Dim from the twilight water’s shaggy side, 
Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted 
woods 
Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods; 
Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled, blue or 
grey, 
‘Mid smoking woods gleams hid from morn-
ing’s ray 
Slow-travelling down the western hills, to 
enfold 
Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold; 
Thy glittering steeples, whence the 
bell 
Calls forth the woodman from his den 
cell, 
And quickens the blithe sound of ears to 
pass 
Along the steaming lake, to early mass. 
But now farewell to each and all—adieu! 
To every charm, and last and chief to ye 
Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade 
Rest near your little plots of wheaten grain 
To all that binds the soul in powerless trances 
Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-toosing dance 
Where sparkling eyes and breaking smile 
illume 
The sylvan cabin’s lute-enlivened gloom. 
—Alas! the very murmur of the streams 
Breathes o’er the failing soul voluptuous 
dreams, 
While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to 
dwell 
On joys that might disgrace the captive 
cell, 
Her shameless timbrel shakes on Com 
marge, 
And lures from bay to bay the vocal barg. 
Yet are thy softer arts with power induc’d 
To soothe and cheer the poor man’s solicitude 
By silent cottage doors, the peasant’s home 
Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam. 
But once I pierced the mazes of a wood 
In which a cabin deserted stood; 
There an old man an olden measure seems 
On a rude viol touched with withered hand. 
As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie 
Under a hoary oak’s thin canopy, 
Stretched at his feet, with steadfast upwa 
ised eye, 
His children’s children listened to the tones 
— A Hermit with his family around! 
But let us hence; for fair Locarno exults. 
Embowered in walnut slopes and citter 
ises, 
Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa’s stream. 
Where, ’mid dim towers and woods, her wa 
ters gleam. 
From the bright wave, in solemn gloom 
the retire 
The dull-red steeps, and, darkening still, 
plume 
To where afar rich orange lustres glow. 
Round undistinguished clouds, and rosy 
and snow:
Or, led where Via Mala’s chasms confine 
The indignant waters of the infant Rhi...
DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

... o'er the abyss, whose else impervious
gloom
is burning eyes with fearful light illumne.
The mind condemned, without reprieve,
to go
'er life's long deserts with its charge of
woe,
ith sad congratulation joins the train
here beasts and men together o'er the
plain
ove on — a mighty caravan of pain: 170
ope, strength, and courage, social suffer-
ing brings,
reshening the wilderness with shades and
springs.
- There be whose lot far otherwise is cast:
the human tenant of the piny waste,
y choice or doom a gipsy wanderers here,
nursing babe her only comforter;
o, where she sits beneath you shaggy rock,
cowering shape half hid in curling smoke!
When lightning among clouds and moun-
tain-snows 179
redominate, and darkness comes and goes,
and the fierce torrent, at the flashes broad
sars, like a horse, beside the glaring
road —
he seeks a covert from the battering shower
a the roofed bridge; the bridge, in that
dread hour,
self all trembling at the torrent's power.
Nor is she more at ease on some still night,
hen not a star supplies the comfort of its
ight;
ly the waning moon hangs dull and red
above a melancholy mountain's head,
then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant
sighs,
loos her sick head, and shuts her weary
eyes;
Dr on her fingers counts the distant clock,
Dr, to the drowsy crow of midnight cock,
Listen, or quakes while from the forest's
gulf
ows near and nearer yet the famished
wolf.
From the green vale of Urseren smooth
and wide
Descend we now, the maddened Reuss our
guide;
By rocks that, shutting out the blessed day,
Ging tremblyngly to rocks as loose as they;
By cells upon whose image, while he prays,
The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to
gaze; 201
By many a votive death-cross planted near,
And watered duly with the pious tear,
That faded silent from the upward eye
Unmoved with each rude form of peril nigh;
Fixed on the anchor left by Him who saves
Alike in whelming snows, and roaring waves.
- But soon a peopled region on the sight
Opens — a little world of calm delight;
Where mists, suspended on the expiring
gale,
Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded vale,
And beams of evening slipping in between,
Gently illuminate a sober scene:
Here, on the brown wood-cottages they
sleep,
There, over rock or sloping pasture creep.
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,
The still vale lengthens underneath its shade
Of low-hung vapour: on the fresbened mead
The green light sparkles; the dim bowers
recede.
While pastoral pipes and streams the land-
scape lull,
And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,
In solemn shapes before the admiring eye
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and
towers,
And antique castles seen through gleamy
showers.
- From such romantic dreams, my soul,
awake!
To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake,
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,
Winds neither road nor path for foot to
tread:
The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch
Far o'er the water, hung with groves of
beech;
Aerial pines from loftier steeps ascend,
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.
Yet here and there, if mid the savage scene
Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,
Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep
To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly on
the steep,
- Before those thresholds (never can they
know
The face of traveller passing to and fro,
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell
For whom at morning tolled the funeral bell;
Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark fore-
goes,
Touched by the beggar's moan of human
woes;
Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to show
The west, that burns like one dilated sun.
A crucible of mighty compass, felt
By mountains, glowing till they seem to melt.

But, lo! the boatman, overawed, before
The pictured pane of Tell suspends his ear;
Confused the Marathonian tale appears,
While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.
And who, that walks where men of ancient days
Have wrought with godlike arm the deeds of praise,
Feels not the spirit of the place control,
Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul?
Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,
Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,
On Zutphen's plain; or on that highland dell
Through which rough Garry cleaves his way, can tell
What high resolves exalt the tenderest thought
Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,
Where breathed the gale that caught
Wolfe's happiest sigh,
And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's eye
Where bleeding Sidney from the cup re tired,
And glad Dundee in "faint buzzes" expired?
But now with other mind I stand alone
Upon the summit of this naked cone,
And watch the fearless chamois-hunters chase
His prey, through tracts abrupt of desolate space,
Through vacant worlds where Nature never gave
A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,
Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred keep
Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and Motion sleep;
Where silent Hours their deathlike sway extend,
Save when the avalanche breaks loose, to rend
Its way with uproar, till the ruin, drowne
In some dense wood or gulf of snow profound,
Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf abating sound.
— 'Tis his, while wandering on from height to height,
To see a planet's pomp and steady light
In the least star of scarce-appearing night

The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat
To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.
Yet thither the world's business finds its way
At times, and tales unsought beguile the day,
And there are those fond thoughts which Solitude,
However stern, is powerless to exclude.
There both the maiden watch her lover's sail
Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale;
At midnight listens till his parting oar,
And its last echo, can be heard no more.
And what if ospreys, cormorants, herons, cry
Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,
Or hovering over wastes too bleak to rear
That common growth of earth, the foodful ear;
Where the green apple shrivels on the spray,
And pines the unripened pear in summer's kindliest ray;
Contentment shares the desolate domain
With Independence, child of high Disdain.
Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,
Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,
And grasps by fits her sword, and often eyes;
And sometimes, as from rock to rock she bounds
The Patriot nymph starts at imagined sounds,
And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,
Whether some old Swiss air hath checked her haste
Or thrill of Spartan fire is caught between the blast.
Swoln with incessant rains from hour to hour,
All day the floods a deepening murmur pour:
The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight:
Dark is the region as with coming night;
But what a sudden burst of overpowering light!
Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,
Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious form!
Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;
Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams unfold,
At once to pillars turned that flame with gold:
While the pale moon moves near him, on
the bound
W ether, shining with diminished round,
and far and wide the icy summits blaze,
 rejoicing in the glory of her rays:
To him the day-star glitters small and
bright,
Born of its beams, insufferably white,
And he can look beyond the sun, and view
Those fast-receding depths of sable blue
Tying till vision can no more pursue!
- At once bewildering mists around him
close,
And cold and hunger are his least of woes;
The Demon of the snow, with angry roar
Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.
Soon with despair's whole weight his spirits
sink;
And ere his eyes can close upon the day,
The eagle of the Alps o'ershadow her prey.
Now couch thyself where, heard with fear
afar,
Thunders through echoing pines the head-
long Aar;
Be rather stay to taste the mild delights
Of pensive Underwalden's pastoral heights.
- Is there who 'mid these awful wilds has
seen
The native Genii walk the mountain green?
He heard, while other worlds their charms
reveal,
Is it the music o'er the aerial summit steal?
While o'er the desert, answering every
close,
Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes and
goes.
- And sure there is a secret Power that
reigns
Here, where no trace of man the spot pro-
fanes,
Fought but the chalets, flat and bare, on high
Ispended 'mid the quiet of the sky;
Distant herds that pasturing upward
creep,
And, not unintended, climb the dangerous
steep.
Low still! no irreligious sound or sight
Leaves the soul from her severe delight.
In idle voice the sabbath region fills
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,
And with that voice accords the soothing
sound
Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round;
Faint wail of eagle melting into blue
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods' steady
sigh;
The solitary heifer's deepened low;
Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling snow.
All motions, sounds, and voices, far and
nigh,
Blend in a music of tranquillity;
Save when, a stranger seen below, the boy
Shouts from the echoing hills with savage
joy.
When, from the sunny breast of open
seas,
And bays with myrtle fringed, the southern
breeze
Comes on to gladden April with the sight
Of green isles widening on each snow-clad
height;
When shouts and lowing herds the valley
fill,
And louder torrents stun the noon-tide hill,
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,
Leaving to silence the deserted vale;
And like the Patriarchs in their simple age
Move, as the verdure leads, from stage to
stage:
High and more high in summer's heat they
go,
And hear the rattling thunder far below;
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-de-
terred,
Where huge rocks tremble to the bellowing
herd.
One I behold who, 'cross the foaming
flood,
Leaps with a bound of graceful hardihood;
Another, high on that green ledge; — he
gained
The tempting spot with every sinew
strained;
And downward thence a knot of grass he
threws,
Food for his beasts in time of winter snows.
- Far different life from what Tradition
hoar
Transmits of happier lot in times of yore!
Then Summer lingered long; and honey
flowed
From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe
abode:
Continual waters welling cheered the waste,
And plants were wholesome, now of deadly
taste;
Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled,
Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled:
Nor Hunger driven the herds from pastures bare,
To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty fare.
Then the milk-thistle flourished through the land,
And forced the full-swoln udder to demand,
Thrice every day, the pail and welcome hand.

Thus does the father to his children tell
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too well.
Alas! that human guilt provoked the rod
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.
Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

'T is morn: with gold the verdant mountain glows
More high, the snowy peaks with hues of rose.
Far-stretched beneath the many-tinted hills,
A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,
A solemn sea! whose billows wide around
Stand motionless, to awful silence bound:
Pines, on the coast, through mist their tops uprear,
That like to leaning masts of stranded ships appear.

A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,
Gapes in the centre of the sea—and, through
That dark mysterious gulf ascending, sound
Innumerable streams with roar profound.
Mount through the nearer vapours notes of birds,
And merry flageolet; the low of herds,
The bark of dogs, the heifer’s tinkling bell,
Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-tower bell:

Think not, the peasant from aloft has gazed
And heard with heart unmoved, with soul unraised:
Nor is his spirit less enrapt, nor less
Alive to independent happiness,
Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at eventide,
Upon the fragrant mountain’s purple side:
For as the pleasures of his simple day
Beyond his native valley seldom stray,
Nought round its darling precincts can he find
But brings some past enjoyment to his mind;
While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure’s urn,
Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers his return.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild
Was blest as free—for he was Nature’s child.
He, all superior but his God disdain’d,
Walked none restraining, and by none restrain’d
Confess’d no law but what his reason taught
Did all he wished, and wished but what he ought.

As man in his primeval dower array’d
The image of his glorious Sire displayed,
Even so, by faithful Nature guard’d, hence
The traces of primeval Man appear;
The simple dignity no forms debase;
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace:
The slave of none, of beasts alone the lord.
His book he prizes, nor neglects his sword
Well taught by that to feel his rights, prepared
With this “the blessings he enjoys guard.”

And, as his native hills encircle ground
For many a marvellous victory renowned,
The work of Freedom daring to oppose,
With few in arms, innumerable foes,
When to those famous fields his steps are let
An unknown power connects him with the dead:
For images of other worlds are there;
Awful the light, and holy is the air.
Fittfully, and in flashes, through his soul
Like sun-lit tempests, troubled transport roll;
His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers amain
Beyond the senses and their little reign.
And oft, when that dread vision hath pa’d by,
He holds with God himself communion high;
There where the peal of swelling torrent fills

The sky-roofed temple of the eternal hill
Or when, upon the mountain’s silent brow
Reclined, he sees, above him and below,
Bright stars of ice and azure fields of snow
While needle peaks of granite shooting up
Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.
And when a gathering weight of shadow brown

Falls on the valleys as the sun goes down
And Pikes, of darkness named and fear as storms,
Uplift in quiet their illuminated forms,

In sea-like reach of prospect round he spread,
Tinged like an angel’s smile all rosy red.
Awe in his breast with holiest love unites,  
And the near heavens impart their own delights.
When downward to his winter hut he goes,  
Dear and more dear the lessening circle grows;
That hut which on the hills so oft employs  
His thoughts, the central point of all his joys.
And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,  
Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,  
So to the homestead, where the grandsire tends
A little prattling child, he oft descends,
To glance a look upon the well-matched pair;
Till storm and driving ice blockade him there.
There, safely guarded by the woods behind,
He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,
Hears Winter calling all his terrors round,
And, blest within himself, he shrinks not from the sound.
Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures glide,
Unstained by envy, discontent, and pride;
The bound of all his vanity, to deck,
With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's neck;
Well pleased upon some simple annual feast,
Remembered half the year and hoped the rest,
If dairy-produce, from his inner hoard,
Of three ten summers dignify the board.
— Alas! in every clime a flying ray
Is all we have to cheer our wintry way;
And here the unwilling mind may more than trace
The general sorrows of the human race;
The churlish gales of penury, that blow
Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of snow,
To them the gentle groups of bliss deny
That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.
Yet more;—compelled by Powers which only deign
That solitary man disturb their reign,
Powers that support an unremitting strife
With all the tender charities of life,
Full oft the father, when his sons have grown
To manhood, seems their title to disown;
And from his nest amid the storms of heaven
Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was driven;
With stern composure watches to the plain—
And never, eagle-like, beholds again:
When long-familiar joys are all resigned,
Why does their sad remembrance haunt the mind?
Lo! where through flat Batavia's willowy groves,
Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves;
O'er the curled waters Alpine measures swell,
And search the affections to their inmost cell;
Sweet poison spreads along the listener's veins,
Turning past pleasures into mortal pains;
Poison, which not a frame of steel can brave,
Bows his young head with sorrow to the grave.
Gay lark of hope, thy silent song resume!
Ye flattering eastern lights, once more the hills illume!
Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious morn,
And thou, lost fragrance of the heart, return!
Alas! the little joy to man allowed
Fades like the lustre of an evening cloud;
Or like the beauty in a flower installed,
Whose season was, and cannot be recalled.
Yet, when opprest by sickness, grief, or care,
And taught that pain is pleasure's natural heir,
We still confide in more than we can know;
Death would be else the favourite friend of woe.
'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine,
Between interminable tracts of pine,
Within a temple stands an awful shrine,
By an uncertain light revealed, that falls
On the mute Image and the troubled walls.
Oh! give not me that eye of hard disdain
That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's wretched fane.
While ghastly faces through the gloom appear,
Abortive joy, and hope that works in fear;
While prayer contends with silenced agony,
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear
One flower of hope—oh, pass and leave it there!
The tall sun, pausing on an Alpine spire,
Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of fire:
Now meet we other pilgrims ere the day
Close on the remnant of their weary way;
While they are drawing toward the sacred floor
Where, so they fondly think, the worm shall gnaw no more.
How gaily murmur and how sweetly taste
The fountains reared for them amid the waste!
Their thirst they slake: they wash their toil-worn feet
And some with tears of joy each other greet.
Yes, I must see you when ye first behold
Those holy turrets tipped with evening gold;
In that glad moment will you a sigh
Be heaved, of charitable sympathy;
In that glad moment when your hands are prest
In mute devotion on the thankful breast!
Last, let us turn to Chamouny that shields
With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile fields:
Five streams of ice amid her cots descend,
And with wild flowers and blooming orchards blend;—
A scene more fair than what the Grecian feigns
Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains;
Here all the seasons revel hand in hand:
'Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets fanned,
They sport beneath that mountain's matchless height
That holds no commerce with the summer night.
From age to age, throughout his lonely bounds
The crash of ruin fitfully resounds;
Appalling havoc! but serene his brow,
Where daylight lingers on perpetual snow;
Glitter the stars above, and all is black below.
What marvel then if many a Wanderer sighs
While roars the sullen Arve in anger by,
That not for thy reward, unrivalled Vale!
Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal gale;
That thou, the slaves of slaves, art doomed to pine
And droop, while no Italian arts are thine,
To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine.
Hail Freedom! whether it was mine to stray,
With shrill winds whistling round my lonely way,
On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-enclosed moors,
Or where dank sea-weed laces Scotland's shores;
To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breathing rose,
And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows;
Still have I found, where Tyranny prevails
That virtue languishes and pleasure fails
While the remotest hamlets blessings shah
In thy loved presence known, and on
Heart-blessings — outward treasures, to
Which the eye
Of the sun peeping through the clouds e'er spy,
And every passing breeze will testify.
There, to the porch, belike with jasmin bound
Or woodbine wreaths, a smoother path wound;
The housewife there a brighter garden see
Where hum on busier wing her happy be;
On infant cheeks there fresher roses blow
And grey-haired men look up with livelier brow,—
To greet the traveller needing food to rest;
Housed for the night, or but a half-hour guest.
And oh, fair France! though now the traveller sees
Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on the breeze;
Though martial songs have banished so much of love,
And nightingales desert the village grove
Scared by the fife and rumbling drum alarms,
And the short thunder, and the flash of arm.
That cease not till night falls, when far afield,
Sole sound, the Sourd prolongs his mournful cry!
— Yet, hast thou found that Freedom spread her power
Beyond the cottage-hearth, the cottage-door,
All nature smiles, and owns beneath her eye
Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.
Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's vast glide
Through rustling aspens heard from side to side,
When from October clouds a milder lig
Fell where the blue flood rippled into whi
GUilt AND SORROW

Metaught from every cot the watchful bird
Crowed with ear-piercing power till then
unheard;
Each clacking mill, that broke the murmuring streams,
Rocked the charmed thought in more delightful dreams;
Chasing those pleasant dreams, the falling leaf
Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief;
The measured echo of the distant sail
Wound in more welcome cadence down the vale;
With more majestic course the water rolled,
And ripening foliage shone with richer gold.
— But foes are gathering — Liberty must raise
Red on the hills her beacon’s far-seen blaze;
Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to tower! —
Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour!
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride’s perverted ire
Borne hell’s own aid, and wrap thy fields in fire:
Lo, from the flames a great and glorious birth;
As if a new-made heaven were hailing a new earth!
— All cannot be: the promise is too fair
For creatures doomed to breathe terrestrial air:
Yet not for this will sober reason frown
Upon that promise, nor the hope disown;
She knows that only from high aims ensue
Rich guerdons, and to them alone are due.
Great God! by whom the strifes of men are weighed
In an impartial balance, give thine aid
To the just cause; and, oh! do thou preside
Over the mighty stream now spreading wide:
So shall its waters, from the heavens supplied
In copious showers, from earth by wholesome springs,
Brood o’er the long-parched lands with Nile-like wings!
And grant that every sceptred child of clay
Who cries presumptuous, “Here the flood shall stay,”
May in its progress see thy guiding hand,
And cease the acknowledged purpose to withstand;
Or, swept in anger from the insulted shore,
Sink with his servile bands, to rise no more!
To-night, my Friend, within this humble cot
Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot
In timely sleep; and when, at break of day,
On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams play,
With a light heart our course we may renew,
The first whose footsteps print the mountain dew.

GUilt AND SORROW

OR INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN

1791-4. 1842

Unwilling to be unnecessarily particular, I have assigned this poem to the dates 1791 and ’94; but in fact much of the “Female Va-grant’s” story was composed at least two years before. All that relates to her sufferings as a sailor’s wife in America, and her condition of mind during her voyage home, were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend who had been subjected to the same trials and affected in the same way. Mr. Coleridge, when I first became acquainted with him, was so much impressed with this poem, that it would have encouraged me to publish the whole as it then stood; but the mariner’s fate appeared to me so tragic as to require a treatment more subdued and yet more strictly applicable in expression than I had at first given to it. This fault was corrected nearly fifty years afterwards, when I determined to publish the whole. It may be worth while to remark, that, though the incidents of this attempt do only in a small degree produce each other, and it deviates accordingly from the general rule by which narrative pieces ought to be governed, it is not therefore wanting in continuous hold upon the mind, or in unity, which is effected by the identity of moral interest that places the two personages upon the same footing in the reader’s sympathies. My rambles over many parts of Salisbury Plain put me, as mentioned in the preface, upon writing this poem, and left on my mind imaginative impressions the force of which I have felt to this day. From that district I proceeded to Bath, Bristol, and so on to the banks of the Wye, where I took again to travelling on foot. In remembrance of that part of my journey, which was in ’93, I began the verses — “Five years have passed.”
ADVERTISEMETN

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS POEM, PUBLISHED IN 1842

Not less than one third of the following poem, though it has from time to time been altered in the expression, was published so far back as the year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant." The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here; but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as matter of literary biography than for any other reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widespread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

I

A Traveller on the skirt of Sarum's Plain
Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half bare;
Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain
Help from the staff he bore; for mien ar
Were hardy, though his cheek seemed with care
Both of the time to come, and time lost:
Down fell in straggling locks his thin gr
A coat he wore of military red
But faded, and stuck o'er with many a punctured shred.

II

While thus he journeyed, step by step he on,
He saw and passed a stately inn, for sure
That welcome in such house for him was none.
No board inscribed the needy to allure
Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old and poor
And desolate, "Here you will find friend!"
The pendent grapes glittered above the door;--
On he must pace, perchance 'till night descend,
Where'er the dreary roads their barethelines extend.

III

The gathering clouds grow red with stormy fire,
In streaks diverging wide and mounting high;
That inn he long had passed; the distant spire,
Which oft as he looked back had fixed his eye,
Was lost, though still he looked, in the black sky.
Perplexed and comfortless he gazed around And scarce could any trace of man
Save cornfields stretched and stretch without bound;
But where the sower dwelt was nowhere found.

IV

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant green,
No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear,
GUILT AND SORROW

Round his wife's neck; the prize of victory
laid
In her full lap, he sees such sweet tears
flow
As if thenceforth nor pain nor trouble she
could know.

VIII
Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had
earned.
The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood
Even in the desert's heart; but he, re-
turned,
Bears not to those he loves their needful
food.
His home approaching, but in such a mood
That from his sight his children might have
run.
He met a traveller, robbed him, shed his
blood;
And when the miserable work was done
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's
fate to shun.

IX
From that day forth no place to him could
be
So lonely, but that thence might come a
pang
Brought from without to inward misery.
Now, as he plodded on, with sullen clang
A sound of chains along the desert rang;
He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high
A human body that in irons swang,
Uplifted by the tempest whirling by;
And, hovering, round it often did a raven
fly.

X
It was a spectacle which none might view,
In spot so savage, but with shuddering
pain;
Nor only did for him at once renew
All he had feared from man, but roused a
train
Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.
The stones, as if to cover him from day,
Rolled at his back along the living plain;
He fell, and without sense or motion lay;
But, when the trance was gone, feebly pur-
sued his way.

XI
As one whose brain habitual phrenzy fires
Owes to the fit in which his soul hath tossed
Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,
Even so the dire phantasma which had
crossed
His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,
Left his mind still as a deep evening stream.
Nor, if accosted now, in thought engrossed,
Moody, or inly troubled, would he seem
To traveller who might talk of any casual
theme.

XII
Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness piled,
Gone is the raven timely rest to seek;
He seemed the only creature in the wild
On whom the elements their rage might
wreak;
Save that the bustard, of those regions
bleak
Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light
A man there wandering, gave a mournful
shriek,
And half upon the ground, with strange
affright,
Forced hard against the wind a thick un-
wieldy flight.

XIII
All, all was cheerless to the horizon’s
bound;
The weary eye — which, wheresoe’er it
strays,
Marks nothing but the red sun’s setting
round,
Or on the earth strange lines, in former
days
Left by gigantic arms — at length surveys
What seems an antique castle spreading
wide;
Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise
Their brow sublime: in shelter there to
bide
He turned, while rain poured down smok-
ing on every side.

XIV
Pile of Stone-henge! so proud to hint yet
keep
Thy secrets, thou that lov’st to stand and
hear
The Plain resounding to the whirlwind’s
sweep,
Inmate of lonesome Nature’s endless year;
Even if thou saw’st the giant wicker rear
For sacrifice its throngs of living men,
Before thy face did ever wretch appear,

XV
Who in his heart had groaned with dead
pain
Than he who, tempest-driven, thy she
now would gain.

XVI
Within that fabric of mysterious form,
Winds met in conflict, each by turns
preme;
And, from the perilous ground dislodged
through storm
And rain he wildered on, no moon to str
From gulf of parting clouds one fris beam,
Nor any friendly sound his footsteps le
Once did the lightning’s faint disas tigleam
Disclose a naked guide-post’s double h
Sight which tho’ lost at once a gleans
pleasure shed.

XVII
No swinging sign-board creaked from
tage elm
To stay his steps with faintness o
come;
’Twas dark and void as ocean’s wa
realm
Roaring with storms beneath night’s
less gloom;
No gipsy cowered o’er fire of furz
broom;
No labourer watched his red kiln gla
bright,
Nor taper glimmered dim from sick n
room;
Along the waste no line of mournful li
From lamp of lonely toll-gate strea
athwart the night.

At length, though hid in clouds, the
arose;
The downs were visible — and now reve
A structure stands, which two bare sl
enclose.
It was a spot, where, ancient vows
filled,
Kind pious hands did to the Virgin bu
A lonely Spital, the belated swain
From the night terrors of that wast
shield:
But there no human being could remai
And now the walls are named the ‘I
House’ of the plain.
By the moon's sullen lamp she first discerned,
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.
Her he addressed in words of cheering sound;
Recovering heart, like answer did she make;
And well it was that, of the corpse there found,
In converse that ensued she nothing spake;
She knew not what dire pangs in him such tale could wake.

XXII
But soon his voice and words of kind intent
Banished that dismal thought; and now the wind
In fainter howlings told its rage was spent:
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various kind,
Which by degrees a confidence of mind
And mutual interest failed not to create.
And, to a natural sympathy resigned,
In that forsaken building where they sate
The Woman thus retraced her own untoward fate.

XXIII
"By Derwent's side my father dwelt—a man
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred;
And I believe that, soon as I began
to lispe, he made me kneel beside my bed,
And in his hearing there my prayers I said:
And afterwards, by my good father taught,
I read, and loved the books in which I read;
For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

XXIV
"A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and thyme,
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday morn
Plucked while the church bells rang their earliest chime.
Can I forget our freaks at shearing time!
My hen's rich nest through long grass scarce espied;
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy prime;
The swans that with white chests upreared in pride
Rushing and racing came to meet me at the water-side.

XXV

"The staff I well remember which upbore
The bending body of my active sire;
His seat beneath the honied sycamore
Where the bees hummed, and chair by winter fire;
When market-morning came, the neat attire
With which, though bent on haste, myself I decked;
Our watchful house-dog, that would tease and tire
The stranger till its barking-fit I checked;
The red-breast, known for years, which at my casement pecked.

XXVI

"The suns of twenty summers danced along,—
Too little marked how fast they rolled away:
But, through severe mischance and cruel wrong,
My father's substance fell into decay:
We toiled and struggled, hoping for a day:
When Fortune might put on a kinder look;
But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they;
He from his old hereditary nook
Must part; the summons came;—our final leave we took.

XXVII

"It was indeed a miserable hour
When, from the last hill-top, my sire surveyed,
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower
That on his marriage day sweet music made!
Till then, he hoped his bones might there be laid
Close by my mother in their native bow'ers:
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and prayed;—
I could not pray:—through tears that fell in showers
Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas! no longer ours!

XXVIII

"There was a Youth whom I had loved long,
That when I loved him not I cannot see.
'Mid the green mountains many a thoughtless song
We two had sung, like gladsome birds in May;
When we began to tire of childish play,
We seemed still more and more to part each other;
We talked of marriage and our marriage day;
And in truth did love him like a brother,
For never could I hope to meet with another.

XXIX

"Two years were passed since to a distant town
He had repaired to ply a gainful trade;
What tears of bitter grief, till then known!
What tender vows, our last sad kiss layed!
To him we turned:—we had no aid:
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept:
And her whom he had loved in joy,
said,
He well could love in grief; his faith kept;
And in a quiet home once more my fate slept.

XXX

"We lived in peace and comfort; and we blest
With daily bread, by constant toil supplied.
Three lovely babes had lain upon my breast;
And often, viewing their sweet smiles I sighed,
And knew not why. My happy fate died,
When threatened war reduced the children's meal:
Thrice happy! that for him the grace could hide
The empty loom, cold hearth, and si wheel,
And tears that flowed for ills which patience might not heal.
In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
It would unman the firmest heart to hear.
All perished — all in one remorseless year,
Husband and children! one by one, by sword
And ravenous plague, all perished: every tear
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored.”

Here paused she, of all present thought forlorn,
Nor voice nor sound, that moment’s pain expressed,
Yet Nature, with excess of grief o’erborne,
From her full eyes their watery load released.

He too was mute; and, ere her weeping ceased,
He rose, and to the ruin’s portal went,
And saw the dawn opening the silvery east
With rays of promise, north and southward sent;
And soon with crimson fire kindled the firmament.

“O come,” he cried, “come, after weary night
Of such rough storm, this happy change to view.”
So forth she came, and eastward looked; the sight
Over her brow like dawn of gladness threw;
Upon her cheek, to which its youthful hue
Seemed to return, dried the last lingering tear,
And from her grateful heart a fresh one drew:
The whilst her comrade to her pensive cheer
Tempered fit words of hope; and the lark warbled near.

They looked and saw a lengthening road, and wain
That rang down a bare slope not far remote:
The barrows glittered bright with drops of rain,
Whistled the waggoneer with merry note,
The cock far off sounded his clarion throat;
But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they viewed,
Only were told there stood a lonely cot
A long mile thence. While thither they pursued
Their way, the Woman thus her mournful tale renewed.

XXXVIII

"Peaceful as this immeasurable plain
Is now, by beams of dawning light, prest;
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main;
The very ocean hath its hour of rest.
I too forgot the heavings of my breast.
How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were!
As quiet all within me. I was blest.
And looked, and fed upon the silent air
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my despair.

XXXIX

"Ah! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,
And groans that rage of racking famine spoke;
The unburied dead that lay in festering heaps,
The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke,
The shriek that from the distant battle broke,
The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host
Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke
To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish tossed,
Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost!

XL

"Some mighty gulf of separation past,
I seemed transported to another world;
A thought resigned with pain, when from the mast
The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,
And, whistling, called the wind that hardly curled
The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home
And from all hope I was for ever hurled.
For me—farthest from earthly port to roam
Was best, could I but shun the spot where man might come.

XLIII

"And oft I thought (my fancy was strong)
That I, at last, a resting-place had found.
'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole long,
Roaming the illimitable waters round;
Here will I live, of all but heaven owned,
And end my days upon the peaceful flood.'
To break my dream the vessel reached the bound;
And homeless near a thousand homes stood,
And near a thousand tables pined and wasted food.

XLII

"No help I sought; in sorrow turned adrift
Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare rock
Nor morsel to my mouth that day lift,
Nor raised my hand at any door to knock
I lay where, with his drowsy mates, he cock
From the cross-timber of an out-house hung:
Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock
At morn my sick heart hunger scarce stung,
Nor to the beggar's language could I my tongue.

XLIV

"Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain
Drowsy and weak, and shattered memo
GUILT AND SORROW

And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill:
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts
were brooding still.

XLVIII

"What could I do, unaided and unblest?
My father! gone was every friend of thine:
And kindred of dead husband are at best
Small help; and, after marriage such as mine,
With little kindness would to me incline.
Nor was I then for toil or service fit;
My deep-drawn sighs no effort could confine;
In open air forgetful would I sit
Whole hours, with idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

XLIX

"The roads I paced, I loitered through the fields;
Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused.
Trusted my life to what chance bounty yields,
Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
The ground I for my bed have often used:
But what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth,
Is that I have my inner self abused,
Foregone the home delight of constant truth,
And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

L

"Through tears the rising sun I oft have viewed,
Through tears have seen him towards that world descend
Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude:
Three years a wanderer now my course I bend —
Oh! tell me whither — for no earthly friend
Have I." — She ceased, and weeping turned away;
As if because her tale was at an end,
She wept; because she had no more to say
Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay.

LI

True sympathy the Sailor's looks expressed,
His looks — for pondering he was mute the while.
Of social Order's care for wretchedness,  
Of Time's sure help to calm and reconcile,  
Joy's second spring and Hope's long-treasured smile,  
'Twas not for him to speak—a man so tried.  
Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly style  
Proverbial words of comfort he applied,  
And not in vain, while they went pacing side by side.

LII  
Ere long, from heaps of turf, before their sight,  
Together smoking in the sun's slant beam,  
Rise various wreaths that into one unite  
Which high and higher mounts with silver gleam:  
Fair spectacle,—but instantly a scream  
Thence bursting shrill did all remark prevent;  
They paused, and heard a hoarser voice blaspheme,  
And female cries. Their course they thither bent,  
And met a man who foamed with anger vehement.

LIII  
A woman stood with quivering lips and pale,  
And, pointing to a little child that lay  
Stretched on the ground, began a piteous tale;  
How in a simple freak of thoughtless play  
He had provoked his father, who straightway,  
As if each blow were deadlier than the last,  
Struck the poor innocent. Pallid with dismay  
The Soldier's Widow heard and stood aghast;  
And stern looks on the man her grey-haired Comrade cast.

LIV  
His voice with indignation rising high  
Such further deed in manhood's name forbade;  
The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
With bitter insult and revilings sad;  
Asked him in scorn what business there he had;  
What kind of plunder he was hunting now;  
The gallows would one day of him glad;—  
Though inward anguish damped the or's brow,  
Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so plaint would allow.

LV  
Softly he stroked the child, who lay stretched  
With face to earth; and, as the boy round  
His battered head, a groan the Sailor felt  
As if he saw—there and upon that ground  
Strange repetition of the deadly wound  
He had himself inflicted. Through the brain  
At once the grining iron passage found  
Deluge of tender thoughts then remain  
Nor could his sunken eyes the starting restrain.

LVI  
Within himself he said—What hearts we!  
The blessing this a father gives his child  
Yet happy thou, poor boy! compared to me,  
Suffering not doing ill—fate far more mild.  
The stranger's looks and tears of wrath guiled  
The father, and relenting thoughts awed  
The father, and relenting thoughts awe  
He kissed his son—so all was reconciled.  
Then, with a voice which inward wrong broke  
Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor then spoke.

LVII  
"Bad is the world, and hard is the way law  
Even for the man who wears the woolly fleece;  
Much need have ye that time more el  
Much need have ye that time more el  
The bond of nature, all unkindness ce  
And that among so few there still be p  
Else can ye hope but with much num  
Your pains shall ever with your yea crease?" —
While from his heart the appropriate lesson flows,
Correspondent calm stole gently o'er his woes.

LVIII
North with the pair passed on; and down they look
To a narrow valley's pleasant scene
There wreaths of vapour tracked a winding brook,
That babbled on through groves and meadows green;
A low-roofed house peeped out the trees between;
The dripping groves resound with cheerful lays,
And melancholy lowings intervene
Of scattered herds, that in the meadow graze,
Some amid lingering shade, some touched by the sun's rays.

LIX
They saw and heard, and, winding with the road,
Drew a thick wood, they dropt into the vale;
Comfort, by prouder mansions bestowed,
Their wearied frames, she hoped, would soon regale.

Elbow they reached that cottage in the dale:
'Twas a rustic inn; — the board was spread,
The milk-maid followed with her brimming pail,
And hastily the master carved the bread,
Kindly the housewife pressed, and they in comfort fed.

LX
Their breakfast done, the pair, though loth,
Must part;
Vanderers whose course no longer now agrees.
The rose and bade farewell! and, while her heart
Tangled with tears nor could its sorrow cease,
She left him there; for, clustering round his knees,
With his oak-staff the cottage children played;
And soon she reached a spot o'erhung with trees
And banks of ragged earth; beneath the shade
Across the pebbly road a little runnel strayed.

LXI
A cart and horse beside the rivulet stood;
Chequering the canvas roof the sunbeams shone.
She saw the carman bend to scoop the flood
As the wain fronted her, — wherein lay one,
A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.
The carman wet her lips as well behoved;
Bed under her lean body there was none;
Though even to die near one she most had loved,
She could not of herself those wasted limbs have moved.

LXII
The Soldier's Widow learned with honest pain
And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,
Why thus that worn-out wretch must there sustain
The jolting road and morning air severe.
The wain pursued its way; and following near
In pure compassion she her steps retraced
Far as the cottage. "A sad sight is here,"
She cried aloud; and forth ran out in haste
The friends whom she had left but a few minutes past.

LXIII
While to the door with eager speed they ran,
From her bare straw the Woman half upraised
Her bony visage — gaunt and deadly wan;
No pity asking, on the group she gazed
With a dim eye, distracted and amazed;
Then sank upon her straw with feeble moan.
Fervently cried the housewife — "God be praised,
I have a house that I can call my own;
Nor shall she perish there, unsettled and alone!"

LXIV
So in they bear her to the chimney seat,
And busily, though yet with fear, untie
Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet
And chase her temples, careful hands apply
Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh
She strove, and not in vain, her head to rear; 573
Then said—"I thank you all; if I must die,
The God in heaven my prayers for you will hear;
Till now I did not think my end had been so near.

LXV

"Barred every comfort labour could procure,
Suffering what no endurance could assuage,
I was compelled to seek my father's door,
Though loth to be a burthen on his age. 580
But sickness stopped me in an early stage
Of my sad journey; and within the wain
They placed me—there to end life's pilgrimage,
Unless beneath your roof I may remain;
For I shall never see my father's door again.

LXVI

"My life, Heaven knows, hath long been burdensome;
But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek
May my end be! Soon will this voice be dumb:
Should child of mine e'er wander hither, speak
Of me, say that the worm is on my cheek. —
Torn from our hut, that stood beside the sea 591
Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome creek,
My husband served in sad captivity
On shipboard, bound till peace or death should set him free.

LXVII

"A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,
Yet two sweet little ones partook my bed;
Hope cheered my dreams, and to my daily prayers
Our heavenly Father granted each day's bread;
Till one was found by stroke of violence dead,
Whose body near our cottage chanced to lie; 600
A dire suspicion drove us from our shed;
In vain to find a friendly face we try,
Nor could we live together those poor boys and I;
then on his own he cast a rueful look.

ears were never silent; sleep forsook
burning eyelids stretched and stiff as
lead;

night from time to time under him shook
a floor as he lay shuddering on his bed;
d oft he groaned aloud, “O God, that I
were dead!”

LXXII

a Soldier’s Widow lingered in the cot,
d, when he rose, he thanked her pious
care

rough which his Wife, to that kind shelter
brought,

ed in his arms; and with those thanks a
prayer

breathed for her, and for that merciful
pair.

corner interred, not one hour he re-
mained

seath their roof, but to the open air

furthen, now with fortitude sustained,
bore within a breast where dreadful
quiet reigned.

LXXIII

armed of purpose, fearlessly prepared
cast and suffering, to the city straight
journeyed, and forthwith his crime
declared:

and from your doom,” he added, “now I
wait,

let it linger long, the murderer’s fate.”

timeeffectual was that piteous claim;
welcome sentence which will end though
late,”

said, “the pangs that to my conscience
came

of that deed. My trust, Saviour! is in
thy name!”

LXXIV

fate was pitied. Him in iron case
nder, forgive the intolerable thought)
mg not: — no one on his form or face
gaze, as on a show by idlers sought;
kindred sufferer, to his death-place
brought

lawless curiosity or chance,

into storm the evening sky is
wrought,

his swinging corse an eye can glance,
drop, as he once dropped, in miserable
trance.

LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE,
WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF
ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF
THE SHORE, COMMANDING A BEAUTI-
FUL PROSPECT

1795. 1798

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead.
The tree has disappeared, and the slip of
Common on which it stood, that ran parallel to
the lake and lay open to it, has long been en-
closed; so that the road has lost much of its
attraction. This spot was my favourite walk
in the evenings during the latter part of my
school-time. The individual whose habits and
character are here given, was a gentleman of
the neighbourhood, a man of talent and learn-
ing, who had been educated at one of our Uni-
versities, and returned to pass his time in
seclusion on his own estate. He died a bachelor
in middle age. Induced by the beauty of the
prospect, he built a small summer-house on the
rocks above the peninsula on which the ferry-
house stands. This property afterwards passed
into the hands of the late Mr. Curwen. The
site was long ago pointed out by Mr. West in
his Guide, as the pride of the lakes, and now
goes by the name of “The Station.” So much
used I to be delighted with the view from it,
while a little boy, that some years before the
first pleasure-house was built, I led thither
from Hawkshead a youngster about my own
age, an Irish boy, who was a servant to an
itinerant conjuror. My motive was to witness
the pleasure I expected the boy would receive
from the prospect of the islands below and the
intermingling water. I was not disappointed;
and I hope the fact, insignificant as it may ap-
ppear to some, may be thought worthy of note
by others who may cast their eye over these
notes.

NAY, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-
tree stands

Far from all human dwelling: what if
here

No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant
herb?

What if the bee love not these barren
boughs?

Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling
waves,

That break against the shore, shall lull thy
mind

By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.
Who he was
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember. — He was one who owned
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
A favoured Being, knowing no desire
Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the taint
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
And scorn, — against all enemies prepared,
All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,
Owed him no service; wherefore he at once
With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his soul
In solitude. — Stranger! these gloomy boughs
Had charms for him; and here he loved to sit,
His only visitants a straggling sheep,
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:
And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:
And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze
On the more distant scene, — how lovely 'tis

Thou seest, — and he would gaze till he became
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
The beauty, still more beauteous! No that time,
When nature had subdued him to herself
Would he forget those Beings to whose minds,
Warm from the labours of benevolence,
The world, and human life, appeared scene
Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt
What he must never feel: and so, Man!
On visionary views would fancy feed,
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
He died, — this seat his only monument.
If Thou be one whose heart the hea
Forms
Of young imagination have kept pure,
Stranger! henceforth be warned; —
know that pride,
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used; that thou with him
Is in its infancy. The man whose e
Is ever on himself doth look on one,
The least of Nature's works, one might move
The wise man to that scorn which wise
holds
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!
Instructed that true knowledge lead
love;
True dignity abides with him alone
Who, in the silent hour of inward thou
Can still suspect, and still revere him;
In lowliness of heart.
Of this dramatic work I have little to say in addition to the short note which will be found at the end of the volume. It was composed at Racedown in Dorsetshire during the latter part of the year 1795, and in the course of the following year. Had it been the work of a later period of life, it would have been different in some respects from what it is now. The plot would have been something more complex, and a greater variety of characters introduced to relieve the mind from the pressure of incidents so mournful. The manners also would have been more refined. My care was almost exclusively given to the passions and the characters, and the action in which the persons in the Drama stood relatively to each other, that the reader (for had there been no thought of the Stage) might be moved, and to a degree instructed, by lights nectarating somewhat into the depths of our nature. In this endeavour, I cannot think, upon a very late review, that I have failed. As to the scene and period of action, little more was required for my purpose than the absence of established law and government; so that the agents might be at liberty to act on their own impulses. Nevertheless I do remember that, having a wish to colour the manners in some degree from local history more than my knowledge enabled me to do, I read Redpath's History of the Borders, but found there nothing to my purpose. I see made an observation to Sir Walter Scott, in which he concurred, that it was difficult to conceive how so dull a book could be written on such a subject. Much about the same time, at a little after, Coleridge was employed in writing his tragedy of "Remorse," and it happened that soon after, through one of the Mr. Poole's, Mr. Knight the actor heard that we had been engaged in writing Plays, and upon his suggestion mine was curtailed, and I believe Coleridge's also was offered to Mr. Harris, manager of Covent Garden. For myself, I had no hope nor even a wish (though a successful play would, in the then state of my finances, have been a most welcome piece of good fortune) that he should accept my performance; so that I learned no disappointment when the piece was judiciously returned as not calculated for the stage. In this judgment I entirely concurred, and had it been otherwise, it was so natural for me to shrink from public notice, that any hope I might have had of success would not have compelled me altogether to such an exhibition. Mr. C.'s Play was, as is well known, brought forward several years after through the kindness of Mr. Sheridan. In conclusion I may observe that while I was composing this Play I wrote a short essay illustrative of that constitution and those tendencies of human nature which make the apparently motiveless actions of bad men intelligible to careful observers. This was partly done with reference to the character of Oswald, and his persevering endeavour to lead the man he disliked into so heinous a crime; but still more to preserve in my distinct remembrance what I had observed of transition in character, and the reflections I had been led to make during the time I was a witness of the changes through which the French Revolution passed.

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ**

MARMADUKE
Oswald
WALLACE
LUCY
HERBERT
WILFRED, Servant to Marmaduke.
HOST.
FORESTER.
ELDERED, a Peasant.
Pilgrim, Pilgrim, etc.
IDLEIA.
FEMALE BEGGER.
ELIZABETH, Wife to Eldred.

**SCEEN** — Borders of England and Scotland.

**TIME** — The Reign of Henry III.

Readers already acquainted with my Poems will recognize, in the following composition, some eight or ten lines which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper, however, to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 28, 1842.

**ACT I**

**SCENE** — Road in a Wood

**WALLACE and LACY**

**Lacy.** The troop will be impatient; let us die.

**Back to our post, and strip the Scottish Foray**
Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the Border.
— Pity that our young Chief will have no part
In this good service.

Wal. Rather let us grieve
That, in the undertaking which has caused
His absence, he hath sought, whate’er his aim,
Companionship with One of crooked ways,
From whose perverted soul can come no good
To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader. 10

Lacy. True; and, remembering how the Band have proved
That Oswald finds small favour in our sight,
Well may we wonder he has gained such power
Over our much-loved Captain.

Wal. I have heard
Of some dark deed to which in early life
His passion drove him — then a Voyager
Upon the midland Sea. You knew his bearing
In Palestine?

Lacy. Where he despised alike
Mahommedan and Christian. But enough;
Let us begone — the Band may else be foiled.
[Exeunt.

Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED.

Wil. Be cautious, my dear Master!

Mar. I perceive 21
That fear is like a cloak which old men huddle
About their love, as if to keep it warm.

Wil. Nay, but I grieve that we should part. This Stranger,
For such he is —

Mar. Your busy fancies, Wilfred,
Might tempt me to a smile; but what of him?

Wil. You know that you have saved his life.

Mar. I know it.

Wil. And that he hates you! — Pardon me, perhaps
That word was hasty.

Mar. Fy! no more of it.

Wil. Dear Master! gratitude’s a heavy burden
To a proud Soul. — Nobody loves this Oswald —
Yourself, you do not love him.

Mar. I do no more,
I honour him. Strong feelings to his heart
Are natural; and from no one can be learnt
More of man’s thoughts and ways than from experience
Has given him power to teach: and the first
For courage
And enterprise — what perils hath he shunned?
What obstacles hath he failed to overcome?
Answer these questions, from our common knowledge,
And be at rest.

Wil. Oh, Sir!

Mar. Peace, my good Wilfrid,
Repair to Liddesdale, and tell the Band
I shall be with them in two days, at the first.

Wil. May He whose eye is over all protect you!

Enter Oswald (a bunch of plants in hand).

Osw. This wood is rich in plants — curious simples.

Mar. (looking at them). The wild rose and the poppy, and the nightshade
Which is your favourite, Oswald?

Osw. That which, while strong to destroy, is also strong to heal.
[Looking for awhile;

Not yet in sight! — We’ll saunter awhile;
They cannot mount the hill, by us unseen.

Mar. (a letter in his hand). It is no common thing when one like you
Performs these delicate services, and therefore
I feel myself much bounden to you, Oswald.

’Tis a strange letter this! — You saw write it?

Osw. And saw the tears with which I blotted it.

Mar. And nothing less would satiate him?

Osw. No less;
For that another in his Child’s affection
Should hold a place, as if ‘twere robbe
He seemed to quarrel with the thought.

Besides, I know not what strange preju
Is rooted in his mind; this Band of our
Which you’ve collected for the no

Along the confines of the Esk and Twe
THE BORDERERS

ACT I

To guard the Innocent — he calls us “Outlaws”;
and, for yourself, in plain terms he asserts
his garb was taken up that indolence
that want no cover, and capacity
is better fed.

Mar. Ne’er may I own the heart
that cannot feel for one, helpless as he is.
Osw. Thou know’st me for a Man not
easily moved,
Yet was I grievously provoked to think
If what I witnessed.

Mar. This day will suffice
to end her wrongs.

Osw. But if the blind Man’s tale
should yet be true?

Mar. Would it were possible!
Did not the soldier tell thee that himself,
And others who survived the wreck, behold
The Baron Herbert perish in the waves
That coast of Cyprus?

Osw. Yes, even so,
And I had heard the like before: in sooth
The tale of this his quondam Baron
Incommodiously devised; and, on the back
If his forlorn appearance, could not fail
To make the proud and vain his tributaries,
And stir the pulse of lazy charity.
The seignories of Herbert are in Devon;
We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed: ’tis much
The Arch-Impostor —

Mar. Treat him gently, Oswald;
Though I have never seen his face, methinks,
Here cannot come a day when I shall
to love him. I remember, when a Boy
Of scarcely seven years’ growth, beneath
The Elm
That casts its shade over our village school,
I was my delight to sit and hear Idonea
Repeat her Father’s terrible adventures,
Till all the band of playmates wept together;
And that was the beginning of my love.
And, through all converse of our later
years,
An image of this old Man still was present,
When I had been most happy. Pardon me
If this be idly spoken.

Osw. See, they come,

[Travellers!]

Mar. (points). The woman is Idonea.
Osw. And leading Herbert.

Mar. We must let them pass —
This thicket will conceal us.

[They step aside.

Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.

Idon. Dear Father, you sigh deeply;
ever since
We left the willow shade by the brook-side,
Your natural breathing has been troubled.

Her. Nay,
You are too fearful; yet must I confess,
Our march of yesterday had better suited
A firmer step than mine.

Idon. That dismal Moor —
In spite of all the larks that cheered our
path,
I never can forgive it: but how steadily
You paced along, when the bewilderings
moonlight
Mocked me with many a strange fantastic
shape! —
I thought the Convent never would appear;
It seemed to move away from us: and yet,
That you are thus the fault is mine: for the
air
Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the
grass,
And midway on the waste ere night had
fallen
I spied a Covert walled and roofed with
sods —
A miniature; belike some Shepherd-
boy,
Who might have found a nothing-doing
hour
Heavier than work, raised it: within that hut
We might have made a kindly bed of heath
And thankfully there rested side by side
Wrapped in our cloaks, and, with recruited
strength,
Have hailed the morning sun. But cheerily,
Father, —
That staff of yours, I could almost have
heart
To fling ’t away from you: you make no use
Of me, or of my strength; — come, let me
feel
That you do press upon me. There — in-
deed
You are quite exhausted. Let us rest
awhile

On this green bank.

[He sits down.

Her. (after some time). Idonea, you are
silent,
And I divine the cause.
Do not reproach me: I pondered patiently your wish and will
When I gave way to your request; and now,
When I behold the ruins of that face,
Those eyeballs dark — dark beyond hope of light,
And think that they were blasted for my sake,
The name of Marmaduke is blown away:
Father, I would not change that sacred feeling
For all this world can give.

Nay, be composed: Few minutes gone a faintness overspread
My frame, and I bethought me of two things
I ne'er had heart to separate — my grave,
And thee, my Child!

Believe me, honoured Sire! 'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy fancies,
And you mistake the cause: you hear the woods
Resound with music, could you see the sun,
And look upon the pleasant face of Nature —

I comprehend thee — I should be as cheerful
As if we two were twins; two songsters bred
In the same nest, my spring-time one with thine.

My fancies, fancies if they be, are such
As come, dear Child! from a far deeper source
Than bodily weariness. While here we sit
I feel my strength returning. — The bequest
Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive
We have thus far adventured, will suffice
To save thee from the extreme of penury;
But when thy Father must lie down and die
How wilt thou stand alone?

Is he not valiant?

Am I then so soon
Forgotten? have my warnings passed so quickly
Out of thy mind? My dear, my only, Child;
Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed —
This Marmaduke —

O could you hear his voice:

Alas! you do not know him. He is one
(I wot not what ill tongue has wronged him with you)
All gentleness and love. His face bespeaks
A deep and simple meekness: and the Soul,
Which with the motion of a virtuous act
Flashes a look of terror upon guilt,
Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,
By a miraculous finger, still'd at once.

Nay, it was my duty
Thus much to speak; but think not I forget —
Dear Father! how could I forget and live
You and the story of that doleful night.
When, Antioch blazing to her topmost towers,
You rushed into the murderous flames, turned
Blind as the grave, but, as you oft told me,
Clasping your infant Daughter to your heart.

Thy Mother too! — scarce had I gained the door,
I caught her voice; she threw herself upon me,
I felt thy infant brother in her arms;
She saw my blasted face — a tide of diers
That instant rushed between us, and I heard
Her last death-shriek, distinct among thousand.

Nay, Father, stop not; let me it all.

Dear Daughter! precious relic of that time —
For my old age, it doth remain with th
To make it what thou wilt. Thou been told,
That when, on our return from Palesti
I found how my domains had been usurped
I took thee in my arms, and we began
Our wanderings together. Providence
At length conducted us to Rossal
Our melancholy story moved a Stranger
To take thee to her home — and for my
Soon after, the good Abbot of St. C
burt’s
Supplied my helplessness with food and
And, as thou know’st, gave me that ble Cot
Where now we dwell.—For many years I bore
Thy absence, till old age and fresh infirmi-
ties
Instructed thy return, and our reunion.
I did not think that, during that long ab-
sence,
My Child, forgetful of the name of Herbert,
Bal given her love to a wild Freebooter,
Who here, upon the borders of the Tweed,
Both prey alike on two distracted Coun-
tries, traitor to both.

Idon. Oh, could you hear his voice!
I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me,
But let this kiss speak what is in my heart.

Enter a Peasant.

Pea. Good morrow, Strangers! If you want a Guide,
Let me have leave to serve you!

Idon. My Companion

Search need of rest; the sight of Hut or Hostel
Would be most welcome.

Pea. You white hawthorn gained,
You will look down into a dell, and there
Will see an ash from which a sign-board hangs;
The house is hidden by the shade. Old Man,
You seem worn out with travel — shall I support you?

Her. I thank you; but, a resting-place so near,
I was wrong to trouble you.

Pea. God speed you both.

[Exit Peasant.

Her. Idonea, we must part. Be not alarmed —
It but for a few days — a thought has struck me.

Idon. That I should leave you at this house, and hence
Proceed alone. It shall be so; for strength
Would fail you ere our journey’s end be reached.

[Exit Herbert supported by Idonea.

Re-enter MARMADUKE and OSWALD.

Mar. This instant will we stop him ——
Osw. Be not hasty, now, sometimes, in despite of my conviction,
I tempted me to think the Story true; —

'Tis plain he loves the Maid, and what he said
That savoured of aversion to thy name
 Appeared the genuine colour of his soul —
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her
After his death.

Mar. I have been much deceived.
Osw. But sure he loves the Maiden, and never love
Could find delight to nurse itself so strangely,
Thus to torment her with inventions! —

Death —
There must be truth in this.

Mar. Truth in his story!
He must have felt it then, known what it was,
And in such wise to rack her gentle heart
Had been a tenfold cruelty.

Osw. Strange pleasures
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves!
To see him thus provoke her tenderness
With tales of weakness and infirmity!
I’d wager on his life for twenty years.

Mar. We will not waste an hour in such a cause.

Osw. Why, this is noble! shake her off at once.

Mar. Her virtues are his instruments. —
A Man

Who has so practised on the world’s cold sense,

May well deceive his Child — what! leave her thus,
A prey to a deceiver? — no — no — no —

It is but a word and then —

Osw. Something is here
More than we see, or whence this strong aversion?

Marmaduke! I suspect unworthy tales
Have reached his ear — you have had enemies.


Osw. That may be,
But wherefore slight protection such as you
Have power to yield? perhaps he looks elsewhere, —

I am perplexed.

Mar. What hast thou heard or seen?

Osw. No — no — the thing stands clear of mystery;

(As you have said) he coins himself the slander
With which he taints her ear; — for a plain reason;
He dreads the presence of a virtuous man
Like you; he knows your eye would search
his heart,
Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds
The punishment they merit. All is plain:
It cannot be —
Mar. What cannot be?
Osw. Yet that a Father
Should in his love admit no rivalship,
And torture thus the heart of his own
Child —
Mar. Nay, you abuse my friendship!
Osw. Heaven forbid! —
There was a circumstance, trifling indeed —
It struck me at the time — yet I believe
I never should have thought of it again
But for the scene which we by chance have
witnessed.
Mar. What is your meaning?
Osw. Two days gone I saw,
Though at a distance and he was disguised,
Hovering round Herbert's door, a man
whose figure
Resembled much that cold voluntary,
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and he
knows
Where he can stab you deepest.
Mar. Clifford never
Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage door —
It could not be.
Osw. And yet I now remember,
That, when your praise was warm upon my
tongue,
And the blind Man was told how you had
rescued
A maiden from the ruffian violence
Of this same Clifford, he became impatient
And would not hear me.
Mar. No — it cannot be —
I dare not trust myself with such a
thought —
Yet whence this strange aversion? You
are a man
Not used to rash conjectures —
Osw. If you deem it
A thing worth further notice, we must act
With caution, sift the matter artfully.
[Exeunt Marmaduke and Oswald.

Scene — The Door of the Hostel

Herbert, Idonea, and Host.

Her. (seated). As I am dear to you, re-
member, Child!
This last request.

Idon. You know me, Sire; farewell;
Her. And are you going then? Come
here, Idonea,
We must not part, — I have measured man
a league
When these old limbs had need of rest, —
and now
I will not play the sluggard.
Idon. Nay, sit down
[Turning to Ho
Good Host, such tendance as you well
expect
From your own Children, if yourself we
sick,
Let this old Man find at your hands; p
Leader,
[Looking at the d
We soon shall meet again. If thou negl
This charge of thine, then ill befal thee!
Look,
The little fool is loth to stay behind.
Sir Host! by all the love you bear to co-
tesy,
Take care of him, and feed the truant w
Host. Fear not, I will obey you; —
One so young,
And One so fair, it goes against my heart
That you should travel unattended, Lady!
I have a palfrey and a groom: the last
Shall aquire you, (would it not be bett
Sir?)
And for less fee than I would let him r
For any lady I have seen this twelvemo
Idon. You know, Sir, I have been
long your guard
Not to have learnt to laugh at little fear.
Why, if a wolf should leap from our
thicket,
A look of mine would send him scorn
back,
Unless I differ from the thing I am
When you are by my side.
Her.
Idonea, woul
Are not the enemies that move my fear
Idon. No more, I pray, of this. Th
days at farthest
Will bring me back — protect him, Sa
— farewell!
[Exit Idon
Host. 'Tis never drought with us —
Cuthbert and his Pilgrims,
Thanks to them, are to us a stream of e
fort:
Pity the Maiden did not wait a while;
She could not, Sir, have failed of comp
Her. Now she is gone, I fain would
her back.
Host (calling). Holla!  
Her. No, no, the business must be done. — That means this riotous noise?  
Host. The villagers are flocking in — a wedding festival — hat’s all — God save you, Sir.  

Enter Oswald.  

Osw. Hal as I live, the Baron Herbert.  
Host. Mercy, the Baron Herbert! So far into your journey! on my life, ou are a lusty Traveller. But how fare you?  
Her. Well as the wreck I am permits. And you, Sir? Osw. I do not see Idonea.  
Her. Dutiful Girl, he is gone before, to spare my weariness.  
Host. What has brought you hither? Osw. A slight affair; hat will be soon despatched.  
Her. Did Marmaduke receive that letter? Osw. Be at peace. — The tie is broken, you will hear no more of him.  
Her. This is true comfort, thanks a thousand times! — hat noise! — would I had gone with her as far.  
Host. In the Lord Clifford’s Castle: I have heard that, in his milder moods, he has expressed compassion for me. His influence is great.  
Her. The Baron might love heard my suit, and urged my plea at Court.  
Host. In any matter — he’s a dangerous Man. — That noise! — It’s too disorderly for sleep or rest.  
Her. You must lead me back. Osw. You are most lucky; I have been waiting in the wood hard by for a companion — here he comes; our journey.  

Enter Marmaduke.  

Host. on your way; accept us as your Guides.  
Her. Alas! I creep so slowly.  
Osw. We’ll not complain of that.  
Her. Never fear; My limbs are stiff.  
Host. And need repose. Could you but wait an hour?  
Osw. Most willingly! — Come, let me lead you in, And, while you take your rest, think not of us; We’ll stroll into the wood; lean on my arm.  
[Conducts Herbert into the house. Exit Marmaduke.  

Enter Villagers.  
Osw. (to himself coming out of the Hostel). I have prepared a most apt Instrument — The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loitering somewhere About this ground; she hath a tongue well skilled, By mingling natural matter of her own. With all the daring fictions I have taught her, To win belief, such as my plot requires.  
[Exit Oswald.  

Enter more Villagers, a Musician among them.  
Host (to them). Into the court, my Friend, and perch yourself.  
Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids, Garlands and flowers, and cakes and merry thoughts, Are here, to send the sun into the west More speedily than you believe would wish.  

Scene changes to the Wood adjoining the Hostel.  

MARMADUKE and OSWALD entering.  
Mar. I would fain hope that we deceive ourselves: When first I saw him sitting there, alone, It struck upon my heart I know not how. Osw. To-day will clear up all. — You marked a Cottage, That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a rock By the brook-side: it is the abode of One, A Maiden innocent till ensnared by Clifford, Who soon grew weary of her; but, alas! What she had seen and suffered turned her brain. Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells alone,
Nor moves her hands to any needful work:  
She eats her food which every day the peasants 
Bring to her hut; and so the Wretch has lived 
Ten years; and no one ever heard her voice;  
But every night at the first stroke of twelve 
She quits her house, and, in the neighbouring Churchyard  
Upon the self-same spot, in rain or storm, 
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and one —  
She paces round and round an Infant's grave, 
And in the churchyard sod her feet have worn 
A hollow ring; they say it is knee-deep —  
Ah! what is here? 

[. A female Beggar rises up, rubbing her eyes as if in sleep — a Child in her arms. 

Beg. Oh! Gentlemen, I thank you;  
I've had the saddest dream that ever troubled 
The heart of living creature. — My poor Babe 

Was crying, as I thought, crying for bread 
When I had none to give him; whereupon, 
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand,  
Which pleased him so, that he was hushed at once:  
When, into one of those same spotted bells 
A bee came darting, which the Child with joy 
Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear, 
And suddenly grew black, as he would die. 

Mar. We have no time for this, my babbling Gossip; 
Here's what will comfort you. 

[Appears her money. 

Beg. The Saints reward you 
For this good deed! — Well, Sirs, this passed away;  
And afterwards I fancied, a strange dog, 
Trotting alone along the beaten road,  
Came to my child as by my side he slept  
And, fondling, licked his face, then on a sudden 
Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his head:  
But here he is (kissing the Child) it must have been a dream. 

Osw. When next inclined to sleep, take my advice, 
And put your head, good Woman, under cover.

Beg. Oh, sir, you would not talk thus if you knew 
What life is this of ours, how sleep we master 
The weary-worn. — You gentlefolk be got 
Warm chambers to your wish. I'd rather be 
A stone than what I am. — But two night gone, 
The darkness overtook me — wind and rain — Beat hard upon my head — and yet I saw 
A glow-worm, through the covert of furze, 
Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the sky; 
At which I half accused the God of Heaven. — 
You must forgive me. 

Osw. Ay, and if you think the Fairies are to blame, and you scold 
Your favourite saint — no matter — a good day 
Has made amends. 

Beg. Thanks to you both; but, Oswin, 
How would you like to travel on with hours 
As I have done, my eyes upon the ground? 
Expecting still, I knew not how, to find 
A piece of money glittering through the dust. 

Mar. This woman is a prater. Pray, good Lady! 
Do you tell fortunes? 

Beg. Oh, sir, you are like the 
This Little-one — it cuts me to the heart. 
Well! they might turn a beggar from the doors, 
But there are Mothers who can see 
Babe 
Here at my breast, and ask me when I bought it: 
This they can do, and look upon my face 
But you, Sir, should be kinder. 

Mar. Come hither, Faithful 
And learn what nature is from this Wretch! 

Beg. Ay, Sir, there's nobody that 
For us. 

Why now — but yesterday I overtook 
A blind old Greybeard and accosted him 
I' th' name of all the Saints, and by Mass 
He should have used me better! — Char 
If you can melt a rock, he is your man;
If there's a lawyer in the land, the knave
Shall give me half.

Osw. What's this? — I fear, good Woman,
You have been insolent.

Beg. And there's the Baron, I spied him skulking in his peasant's dress.

Osw. How say you? in disguise? —

Mar. But what's your business
With Herbert or his Daughter?

Beg. Daughter! truly —
But how's the day? — I fear, my little Boy,
We've overslept ourselves. — Sirs, have you seen him?

[Offers to go.

Mar. I must have more of this; — you shall not stir
An inch, till I am answered. Know you aught
That doth concern this Herbert?

Beg. You are provoked,
And will misuse me, Sir?

Mar. No trifling, Woman!

Osw. You are as safe as in a sanctuary;

Speak.

Mar. Speak!

Beg. He is a most hard-hearted Man.
Mar. Your life is at my mercy.

Beg. Do not harm me,
And I will tell you all! — You know not, Sir,
What strong temptations press upon the Poor.

Osw. Speak out.

Beg. Oh Sir, I've been a wicked Woman.

Osw. Nay, but speak out!

Beg. He flattered me, and said
What harvest it would bring us both; and so,
I parted with the Child.

Mar. Parted with whom?

Beg. I don't, as he calls her; but the Girl
Is mine.

Mar. Yours, Woman! are you Herbert's wife?

Beg. Wife, Sir! his wife — not I; my husband, Sir,
Was of Kirkoswald — many a snowy winter
We've weathered out together. My poor Gilfred!
He has been two years in his grave.

Mar. Enough.

Osw. We've solved the riddle — Miscreant!
THE BORDERERS

ACT I

Mar. (to himself). Father! — to God himself we cannot give
A holier name; and, under such a mask,
To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed,
To that abhorred den of brutish vice! —
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life
Is going from under me; these strange disclosures —
Looked at from every point of fear or hope,
Duty, or love — involve, I feel, my ruin.

ACT II

SCENE — A Chamber in the Hostel

Oswald alone, rising from a Table on which he had been writing.

Osw. They chose him for their Chief! I will not take part
He, in the preference, modest Youth, my
More of contempt than hatred; both a
That either e'er existed is my shame:
That died the moment the air breathes upon it.
— These fools of feeling are mere birds of winter
That haunt some barren island of the nor
Where, if a famishing man stretch forth his hand,
They think it is to feed them. I have
To solitary meditation; — now
For a few swelling phrases, and a flash
Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind,
And he is mine for ever — here he comes.

Enter Marmaduke.

Mar. These ten years she has moved his lips all day
And never speaks!

Osw. Who is it?

Mar. I have seen him.

Osw. Oh! the poor tenant of that ragg homestead,
Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove to madness.

Mar. I met a peasant near the spot; he told me,
These ten years she had sate all day aloft
Within those empty walls.
THE BORDERERS

ACT II

Osw. I too have seen her; hence to pass this way some six months gone.

At midnight, I betook me to the Churchyard:
The moon shone clear, the air was still, so
still
The trees were silent as the graves beneath
them.

Long did I watch, and saw her pacing
round
Upon the self-same spot, still round and
round,
Her lips for ever moving.

Mar. At her door
I stood; for, looking at the woman,
I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea.

Osw. But the pretended Father —

Mar. Earthly law
Measures not crimes like his.

Osw. We rank not, happily,
With those who take the spirit of their rule
From that soft class of devotees who feel
Sovereignty for life so deeply, that they
spare
The verminous brood, and cherish what
they spare
While feeding on their bodies. Would that
Idonea
Were present, to the end that we might hear
What she can urge in his defence; she loves
him.

Mar. Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth that
multiplies
His guilt a thousand-fold.

Osw. 'Tis most perplexing:

What must be done?

Mar. We will conduct her hither;
These walls shall witness it — from first to
last
He shall reveal himself.

Osw. Happy are we,
Who live in these disputed tracts, that own
No law but what each man makes for him-
self;
Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

Mar. Let us be gone and bring her
hither; — here
The truth shall be laid open, his guilt
proved
Before her face. The rest be left to me.

Osw. You will be firm: but though we
well may trust
The issue to the justice of the cause,
Justice must not be flung aside; remember,

Yours is no common life. Self-stationed
here
Upon these savage confines, we have seen
you
Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy
seas
That oft have checked their fury at your
bidding.
Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy
waste,
Your single virtue has transformed a
Band
Of fierce barbarians into Ministers
Of peace and order. Aged men with tears
Have blessed their steps, the fatherless re-
tire
For shelter to their banners. But it is,
As you must needs have deeply felt, it is
In darkness and in tempest that we seek
The majesty of Him who rules the world.
Benevolence, that has not heart to use
The wholesome ministry of pain and evil,
Becomes at last weak and contemptible.

Your generous qualities have won due
praise,
But vigorous Spirits look for something
more
Than Youth's spontaneous products; and
to-day
You will not disappoint them; and here-
after —

Mar. You are wasting words; hear me
then, once for all:
You are a Man — and therefore, if com-
passion,
Which to our kind is natural as life,
Be known unto you, you will love this
Woman,
Even as I do; but I should loathe the light,
If I could think one weak or partial feel-
ing —

Osw. You will forgive me —

Mar. If I ever knew
My heart, could penetrate its inmost core,
'Tis at this moment. — Oswald, I have
loved
To be the friend and father of the oppressed,
A comforter of sorrow; — there is some-
thing
Which looks like a transition in my soul,
And yet it is not. — Let us lead him hither.

Osw. Stoop for a moment; 'tis an act of
justice;
And where's the triumph if the delegate
Must fall in the execution of his office?
The deed is done — if you will have it so —
Here where we stand — that tribe of vulgar wretches
(You saw them gathering for the festival)
Rush in — the villains seize us —

Mar. Seize!
Osw. Yes, they —

Men who are little given to sift and weigh —
Would wreak on us the passion of the moment.

Mar. The cloud will soon disperse —
farewell — but stay,
Thou wilt relate the story.
Osw. Am I neither
To bear a part in this Man’s punishment,
Nor be its witness?

Mar. I had many hopes too
That were most dear to me, and some will bear
To be transferred to thee.

Osw. When I’m dishonoured!
Mar. I would preserve thee. How may this be done?
Osw. By showing that you look beyond
the instant,
A few leagues hence we shall have open ground,
And nowhere upon earth is place so fit
To look upon the deed. Before we enter
The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling rock
The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft
Has held infernal orgies — with the gloom,
And very superstition of the place, ... Seasoning his wickedness. The Debauchee Would there perhaps have gathered the first fruits
Of this mock Father’s guilt.

Enter Host conducting HERBERT.

Host. The Baron Herbert
Attends your pleasure.
Osw. (to Host). We are ready —

(To Herbert) Sir!
I hope you are refreshed. — I have just written
A notice for your Daughter, that she may know
What is become of you. — You’ll sit down
and sign it; —
’Twill glad her heart to see her father’s signature.

[Give the letter he had written.

Her. Thanks for your care.

[Sits down and writes. Exit Host.

Osw. (aside to Marmaduke). Perhaps it would be useful
That you too should subscribe your name
[Marmaduke overlooks Herbert — A writes — examines the letter eagerly.
Mar. I cannot leave this paper.

[He puts it up, agitation.
Osw. (aside). Dastard! Con
[Marmaduke goes towards Herbert or supports him — Marmaduke trebly beckons Oswald to take place.
Mar. (as he quits Herbert). There is palsy in his limbs — he shakes.

[Exeunt Oswald and Herbert — Marmaduke following.

Scene changes to a Wood

A group of Pilgrims, IDONEA with them

First Pil. A grove of darker and more lofty shade
I never saw.

Second Pil. The music of the birds
Drops deadened from a roof so thick with leaves.

Old Pil. This news! It made my heart leap up with joy.

Idon. I scarcely can believe it.

Old Pil. Myself, I hear
The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter:
Which purported it was the royal pleasure.
The Baron Herbert, who, as was supposed
Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood,
Should be forthwith restored. The beating, Lady,
Filled my dim eyes with tears. — When returned
From Palestine, and brought with me heart,
Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly comfort,
I met your Father, then a wandering Outcast:
He had a Guide, a Shepherd’s boy; b euved
He was that One so young should pass the youth
In such sad service; and he parted with his
We joined our tales of wretchedness together,
And begged our daily bread from door to door.
I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady! For once you loved me.
Idon. You shall back with me
And see your Friend again. The good old Man
Will be rejoiced to greet you.

Old Pil. It seems but yesterday
That a fierce storm o’ertook us, worn with travel,
A deep wood remote from any town.
A cave that opened to the road presented friendly shelter, and we entered in. 

Idon. And I was with you?

Old Pil. If indeed ‘t was you —
As you were then a tottering Little-one —
We sate us down. The sky grew dark and darker:

Struck my flint, and built up a small fire
Through rotten boughs and leaves, such as the winds
Many autumns in the cave had piled.

Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the woods;
A little fire sent forth a cheering warmth
And we were comforted, and talked of comfort;

’t was an angry night, and o’er our heads

Be thunder rolled in peals that would have made sleeping man uneasy in his bed.

Lady, you have need to love your Father's voice — methinks I hear it now, his voice

Then, after a broad flash that filled the cave, He said to me, that he had seen his Child, whose face (no cherub’s face more beautiful) was revealed by lustre brought with it from Heaven;

And it was you, dear Lady!

Idon. God be praised, that I have been his comforter till now! And will be so through every change of fortune

And every sacrifice his peace requires. — As I come gone with speed, that he may hear these joyful tidings from no lips but mine.

[Exeunt Idonea and Pilgrims.]

Scene — The Area of a half-ruined Castle — on one side the entrance to a dungeon.

HOWL and MARSDUKKI pacing backwards and forwards.

Mar. ’Tis a wild night.

One. I’d give my cloak and bonnet for sight of a warm fire.

Mar. The wind blows keen;

My hands are numb.

Osw. Ha! ha! ’t is nipping cold.

[Blowing his fingers.

I long for news of our brave Comrades; Lacy

Would drive those Scottish Rovers to their dens.

If once they blew a horn this side the Tweed.

Mar. I think I see a second range of Towers;

This castle has another Area — come,

Let us examine it.

Osw. ’T is a bitter night;

I hope Idonea is well housed. That horseman,

Who at full speed swept by us where the wood

Roared in the tempest, was within an ace

Of sending to his grave our precious Charge:

That would have been a vile mishap.

Mar. It would.

Osw. Justice had been most cruelly defrauded.

Mar. Most cruelly.

Osw. As up the steep we clomb,

I saw a distant fire in the north-east;

I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon:

With proper speed our quarters may be gained

To-morrow evening.

[Looks restlessly towards the mouth of the dungeon.

Mar. When, upon the plank,

I had led him ‘cross the torrent, his voice blessed me:

You could not hear, for the foam beat the rocks

With deafening noise, — the benediction fell

Back on himself; but changed into a curse.

Osw. As well indeed it might.

Mar. And this you deem

The fittest place?

Osw. (aside). He is growing pitiful.

Mar. (listening). What an odd meaning is what is!

Osw. Mighty odd

The wind should pipe a little, while we stand

Cooling our heels in this way! — I’ll begin

And count the stars.

Mar. (still listening). That dog of his, you are sure,
Could not come after us — he must have perished;
The torrent would have dashed an oak to splinters.
You said you did not like his looks — that he would trouble us; if he were here again, I swear the sight of him would quail me more
Than twenty armies.

Os.    How?

Mar.    The old blind Man,
When you had told him the mischance, was troubled
Even to the shedding of some natural tears
Into the torrent over which he hung,
Listening in vain.

Os.    He has a tender heart!

[Osvald offers to go down into the dungeon.

Mar.    How now, what mean you?

Os.    Truly, I was going
To waken our stray Baron. Were there not
A farm or dwelling-house within five leagues,
We should deserve to wear a cap and bells,
Three good round years, for playing the fool
Here in such a night as this.

Mar.    Stop, stop.

Os.    Perhaps,
You'd better like we should descend together,
And lie down by his side — what say you to it?

Three of us — we should keep each other warm:
I'll answer for it that our four-legged friend
Shall not disturb us; further I'll not engage;
Come, come, for manhood's sake!

Mar.    These drowsy shiverings,
This mortal stupor which is creeping over me,
What do they mean? were this my single body
Opposed to armies, not a nerve would tremble:
Why do I tremble now? — is not the depth
Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach of thought?

And yet, in plumbing the abyss for judgment,
Something I strike upon which turns my mind
Back on herself, I think, again — my breast
Concentres all the terrors of the Universe:
I look at him and tremble like a child.

Os.    Is it possible?

Mar.    One thing you noticed no
Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder
Burst on the mountains with hell-roused force.
This is a time, said he, when guilt must shudder;
But there's a Providence for them who wait
In helplessness, when innocence is with them.
At this audacious blasphemy, I thought
The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride the air.

Os.    Why are you not the man you were
That moment?

[He draws Marmaduke to the dungeon

Mar.    You say he was asleep, — look at this arm,
And tell me if 'tis fit for such a work.

Os.    Oswald! [Leans upon Oswald.

Os.    This is some sudden seizure
Mar.    A most strange faintness, — with you hunt me out
A draught of water?

Os.    Nay, to see you the
Moves me beyond my bearing. — I will
To gain the torrent's brink. [Exit Oswald

Mar.    (after a pause). It seems an age
Since that Man left me. — No, I am not the

Her.    (at the mouth of the dungeon). Give me your hand, where are your friends? and tell me

How goes the night.

Mar.    'Tis hard to measure time
In such a weary night, and such a place

Her.    I do not hear the voice of my friend

Os.    Mar.    A minute past, he went to fetch
Draught of water from the torrent. 'Tis you'll

Her.    How good it was in you
To stay behind! — Hearing at first no answer,
I was alarmed.

Mar.    No wonder; this is a pla

That well may put some fears into your heart.

Her.    Why so? a roofless rock had been
A comfort,

Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were
And in a night like this, to lend your cloak
To make a bed for me! — My Girl weep

When she is told of it.
ACT II

THE BORDERERS

47

Mar. This Daughter of yours is very dear to you.

Her. Oh! but you are young; Over your head twice twenty years must roll,
With all their natural weight of sorrow and pain, Ere can be known to you how much a Father
May love his Child.

Mar. Thank you, old Man, for this! [Aside.

Her. Fallen am I, and worn out, a useless Man;
Kindly have you protected me to-night,
And no return have I to make but prayers;
May you in age be blest with such a daughter! —

When from the Holy Land I had returned
Sightless, and from my heritage was driven,
A wretched Outcast — but this strain of thought
Would lead me to talk fondly.

Mar. Do not fear;
Your words are precious to my ears; go on.

Her. You will forgive me, but my heart runs over.
When my old Leader slipped into the flood
And perished, what a piercing outcry you Sent after him. I have loved you ever since.
You start — where are we?

Mar. Oh, there is no danger;
The cold blast struck me.

Her. It was a foolish question.

Mar. But when you were an Outcast? — Heaven is just;
Your piety would not miss its due reward;
The little Orphan then would be your succour,
And do good service, though she knew it not.

Her. I turned me from the dwellings of my Fathers,
Where none but those who trampled on my rights
Seemed to remember me. To the wide world
I bore her, in my arms; her looks won pity;
She was my Raven in the wilderness,
And brought me food. Have I not cause to love her?

Mar. Yes.

Her. More than ever Parent loved a Child?

Mar. Yes, yes.

Her. I will not murmur, merciful God! I will not murmur; blasted as I have been,
Thou hast left me ears to hear my Daughter’s voice,
And arms to fold her to my heart. Submissively
Thee I adore, and find my rest in faith.

Enter Oswald.

Osw. Herbert! — confusion! (Aside.) Here it is, my Friend,

[Present the Horn.

A charming beverage for you to carouse,
This bitter night.

Her. Ha! Oswald! ten bright crosses I would have given, not many minutes gone,
To have heard your voice.

Osw. Your couch, I fear, good Baron, Has been but comfortless; and yet that place,
When the tempestuous wind first drove us hither,
Felt warm as a wren’s nest. You’d better turn
And under covert rest till break of day,
Or till the storm abate.

(To Marmaduke aside.) He has restored you.
No doubt you have been nobly entertained? But soft! — how came he forth? The Night-mare Conscience
Has driven him out of harbour?

Mar. I believe
You have guessed right.

Her. The trees renew their murmur:
Come, let us house together.

[Oswald conducts him to the dungeon.

Osw. (returns). Had I not Esteemed you worthy to conduct the affair To its most fit conclusion, do you think I would so long have struggled with my Nature, And smothered all that’s man in me? — away! —

[Looking towards the dungeon. This man’s the property of him who best Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a privilege;
It now becomes my duty to resume it.

Mar. Touch not a finger —

Osw. What then must be done?

Mar. Which way soe’er I turn, I am perplexed.
Osw. Now, on my life, I grieve for you.
The misery
Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts
Did not admit of stronger evidence; Twelve honest men, plain men, would set us right;
Their verdict would abolish these weak scruples.
Mar. Weak! I am weak—there does my torment lie,
Feeding itself.
Osw. Verily, when he said
How his old heart would leap to hear her steps,
You thought his voice the echo of Idonea's.
Mar. And never heard a sound so terrible.
Osw. Perchance you think so now?
Mar. I cannot do it:
Twice did I spring to grasp his withered throat,
When such a sudden weakness fell upon me,
I could have dropped asleep upon his breast.
Osw. Justice—is there not thunder in the word?
Shall it be law to stab the petty robber
Who aims but at our purse; and shall this Parricide—
Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dishonour
Be worse than death) to that confiding Creature
Whom he to more than filial love and duty
Hath falsely trained—shall he fulfil his purpose?
But you are fallen.
Mar. Fallen should I be indeed—
Murder—perhaps asleep, blind, old, alone,
Betrayed, in darkness! Here to strike the blow—
Away! away!—
[Flings away his sword.
Osw. Nay, I have done with you:
We'll lead him to the Convent. He shall live,
And she shall love him. With unquestioned title
He shall be seated in his Barony,
And we too chant the praise of his good deeds.
I now perceive we do mistake our masters,
And most despise the men who best can teach us:
Henceforth it shall be said that bad men only
Are brave: Clifford is brave; and that of Man
Is brave.

[Taking Marmaduke's sword and giving it to him.
To Clifford's arms he would have led His Victim—haply to this desolate house.
Mar. (advancing to the dungeon). I must be ended!—
Osw. Softly; do not rouse him
He will deny it to the last. He lies
Within the Vault, a spear's length to the left.

[Marmaduke descends to the dungeon
(Alone.) The Villains rose in mutiny to destroy me;
I could have quelled the Cowards, but this Stripling
Must needs step in, and save my life. The look
With which he gave the boon—I see it now!
The same that tempted me to loathe the gift.—
For this old venerable Greybeard—faith
'Tis his own fault if he hath got a face
Which doth play tricks with them that look on it:
'Twas this that put it in my thoughts—that countenance—
His staff—his figure—Murder!—what, of whom?
We kill a worn-out horse, and who but women
Sigh at the deed? Hew down a withered tree,
And none look grave but dotards. He may live
To thank me for this service. Rainbow arches,
Highways of dreaming passion, have too long,
Young as he is, diverted wish and hope
From the unpretending ground we mortals tread;—
Then shatter the delusion, break it up
And set him free. What follows? I have learned
That things will work to ends the slaves of the world
Do never dream of. I have been what he—
This Boy—when he comes forth with bloody hands—
Might envy, and am now,—but he shall know
When round my wrist I felt a cord drawn tight,
As if the blind Man’s dog were pulling at it.

Osw. But after that?

Mar. The features of Idonea
Lurked in his face —

Osw. Psha! Never to these eyes
Will retribution show itself again.
With aspect so inviting. Why forbid me
To share your triumph?

Mar. Yes, her very look,
Smiling in sleep —

Osw. A pretty feat of Fancy!

Mar. Though but a glimpse, it sent me
to my prayers.

Osw. Is he alive?

Mar. What mean you? who alive?

Osw. Herbert! since you will have it,
Baron Herbert;
He who will gain his Seignory when Idonea
Hath become Clifford’s harlot — is he living?

Mar. The old Man in that dungeon is alive.

Osw. Henceforth, then, will I never in
camp or field
Obey you more. Your weakness, to the Band
Shall be proclaimed: brave Men, they all
shall hear it.
You a protector of humanity!
Avenger you of outraged innocence!

Mar. ’Twas dark — dark as the grave;
yet did I see,
Saw him — his face turned toward me; and
I tell thee
Idonea’s filial countenance was there
To baffle me — it put me to my prayers.
Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a crevice,
Beheld a star twinkling above my head,
And, by the living God, I could not do it.

[Sinks exhausted.]

Osw. (to himself). Now may I perish if
this turn do more
Than make me change my course.

(To Marmaduke.) Dear Marmaduke,
My words were rashly spoken; I recall them:
I feel my error; shedding human blood
Is a most serious thing.

Mar. Not I alone,
Thou too art deep in guilt.

Osw. We have indeed
Been most presumptuous. There is guilt in this,
Else could so strong a mind have ever known
These trepidations? Plain it is that Heaven
Has marked out this foul Wretch as one
whose crimes
Must never come before a mortal judgment-seat,
Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

_Mar._ A thought that's worth a thousand worlds! [Goes towards the dungeon.

_Osw._ I grieve
That, in my zeal, I have caused you so much pain.

_Mar._ Think not of that! 'tis over—we are safe.

_Osw._ (as if to himself, yet speaking aloud).
The truth is hideous, but how stifle it? [Turning to Marmaduke.

Give me your sword—nay, here are stones and fragments,
The least of which would beat out a man's brains;
Or you might drive your head against that wall.

No! this is not the place to hear the tale:
It should be told you pinioned in your bed,
Or on some vast and solitary plain,
Blown to you from a trumpet.

_Mar._ Why talk thus?
Whate'er the monster brooding in your breast
I care not: fear I have none, and cannot fear—

[The sound of a horn is heard.

That horn again—'Tis some one of our Troop;
What do they here? Listen!

_Osw._ What! dogged like thieves!

_Enter WALLACE and LACY, etc.

_Lacy._ You are found at last, thanks to the vagrant Troop
For not misleading us.

_Osw. (looking at Wallace). That subtle Greybeard—
I'd rather see my father's ghost.

_Lacy (to Marmaduke)._ My Captain,
We come by order of the Band. Belike
You have not heard that Henry has at last
Dissolved the Barons' League, and sent abroad
His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate

The genuine owners of such Lands as Barony
As, in these long commotions, have been seized.
His Power is this way tending. It befits us
To stand upon our guard, and with our swords
Defend the innocent.

_Mar._ Lacy! we look
But at the surfaces of things; we hear &
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young and old
Driven out in troops to want and nakedness
Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure
That flatters us, because it asks not thought.
The deeper malady is better hid;
The world is poisoned at the heart.

_Lacy._ What mean you?

_Wal._ (whose eye has been fixed suspiciously upon Oswald). Ay, what is it you mean?

_Mar._ Hark'e, my Friends;—

[Appearing gay.

Were there a Man who, being weak and helpless
And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother pressed
By penury, to yield him up her Daughter,
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe,

Prattling upon his knee, to call him Father—

_Lacy._ Why, if his heart be tender, that offence
I could forgive him.

_Mar. (going on)._ And should he make the Child
An instrument of falsehood, should he teach her
To stretch her arms, and dim the gladsome light
Of infant playfulness with piteous looks
Of misery that was not—

_Lacy._ Troth, 'tis hard—
But in a world like ours—

_Mar. (changing his tone)._ This same Man—
Even while he printed kisses on the cheek
Of this poor Babe, and taught its innocent tongue

To lip the name of Father—could he look
To the unnatural harvest of that time
When he should give her up, a Woman grown,

To him who bid the highest in the market
Of foul pollution—-
Lacy. The whole visible world contains not such a Monster!
Mar. For this purpose should he resolve to taint her Soul by means
Which bathe the limbs in sweat to think of them;
Should he, by tales which would draw tears from iron,
Work on her nature, and so turn compassion
And gratitude to ministers of vice,
And make the spotless spirit of filial love
Prime mover in a plot to damn his Victim
Both soul and body —
Wal. 'Tis too horrible; Oswald, what say you to it?
Lacy. Hew him down, And fling him to the ravens.
Mar. But his aspect it is so meek, his countenance so venerable.
Wal. (with an appearance of mistrust). But how, what say you, Oswald?
Lacy (at the same moment). Stab him, were it
Before the Altar.
Mar. What, if he were sick, Pottering upon the very verge of life,
And old, and blind —
Lacy. Blind, say you?
Osw. (coming forward). Are we Men, Or own we baby Spirits? Genuine courage
Is not an accidental quality,
A thing dependent for its casual birth
On opposition and impediment.
Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats down
The giant's strength; and, at the voice of Justice,
Spare not the worm. The giant and the worm —
She weighs them in one scale. The wiles
Of woman, And craft of age, seducing reason, first
Made weakness a protection, and obscured
The moral shapes of things. His tender cries
And helpless innocence — do they protect
The infant lamb? and shall the infirmities,
Which have enabled this enormous Culpit
To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a Sanctuary
To cover him from punishment? Shame!
— Justice,
Admitting no resistance, bends alike
The feeble and the strong. She needs not here
Her bonds and chains, which make the mighty feeble.
— We recognize in this old Man a victim
Prepared already for the sacrifice.
Lacy. By heaven, his words are reason!
Osw. Yes, my Friends, His countenance is meek and venerable;
And, by the Mass, to see him at his prayers! —
I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish
When my heart does not ache to think of it! —
Poor Victim! not a virtue under heaven
But what was made an engine to ensnare thee;
But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.
Lacy. Idonea!
Wal. How! what? your Idonea?
(Lto Marmaduke.)
Mar. Mine! But now no longer mine. You know Lord Clifford;
He is the Man to whom the Maiden — pure
As beautiful, and gentle and benign,
And in her ample heart loving even me —
Was to be yielded up.
Lacy. Now, by the head Of my own child, this Man must die; my hand,
A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine
In his grey hairs! —
Mar. (to Lacy). I love the Father in thee.
You know me, Friends; I have a heart to feel,
And I have felt, more than perhaps becomes me
Or duty sanctions.
Lacy. We will have ample justice.
Who are we, Friends? Do we not live on ground
Where Souls are self-defended, free to grow
Like mountain oaks rocked by the stormy wind.
Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which decreed
This monstrous crime to be laid open —
Where Reason has an eye that she can use,
And Men alone are Umpires. To the Camp
He shall be led, and there, the Country round
All gathered to the spot, in open day
Shall Nature be avenged.

Osw. 'Tis nobly thought;
His death will be a monument for ages.

Mar. (to Lady). I thank you for that hint. He shall be brought
Before the Camp, and would that best and wisest
Of every country might be present. There, His crime shall be proclaimed; and for the rest
It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide:
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and see
That all is well prepared.

Wal. We will obey you.

(Aside.) But softly! we must look a little nearer.

Mar. Tell where you found us. At some future time
I will explain the cause. [Exeunt.

ACT III

SCENE—The Door of the Hostel

A group of Pilgrims as before; IDONEA and the Host among them.

Host. Lady, you'll find your Father at the Convent
As I have told you: He left us yesterday
With two Companions; one of them, as seemed,
His most familiar Friend. (Going.) There was a letter
Of which I heard them speak, but that I fancy
Has been forgotten.

Idon. (to Host). Farewell!

Host. Gentle pilgrims,
St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy errand.

[Exeunt Idonea and Pilgrims.

SCENE—A desolate Moor

OSWALD (alone).

Osw. Carry him to the Camp! Yes, to the Camp.
Oh, Wisdom! a most wise resolve! and then,
That half a word should blow it to the winds!

This last device must end my work. — Mrs thinks
It were a pleasant pastime to construct
A scale and table of belief — as thus —
Two columns, one for passion, one for proof;
Each rises as the other falls: and first,
Passion a unit and against us — proof —
Nay, we must travel in another path,
Or we're stuck fast for ever; — passion then,
Shall be a unit for us; proof — no, passion
We'll not insult thy majesty by time,
Person, and place — the where, the when, the how,
And all particulars that dull brains require
To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact,
They bow to, calling the idol, Demonstration.

A whipping to the Moralists who preach That misery is a sacred thing: for me, I know no cheaper engine to degrade man,
Nor any half so sure. This Stripling mind
Is shaken till the dregs float on the surface
And, in the storm and anguish of the heart
He talks of a transition in his Soul,
And dreams that he is happy. We dissect The senseless body, and why not the mind? —
These are strange sights — the mind of man
upturned,
Is in all natures a strange spectacle;
In some a hideous one — hem! shall stop?
No. — Thoughts and feelings will sink deep but then
They have no substance. Pass but a few minutes,
And something shall be done which Memory
May touch, whene'er her Vassals are at work.

Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.

Osw. (turning to meet him). But listen for my peace —

Mar. Why, I believe you

Osw. But hear the proofs —

Mar. Ay, prove that when twopod
Lie snugly in a pod, the pod must then
Be larger than the peas — prove this -t were matter
Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to dress
It ever could be otherwise!
ACT III

THE BORDERERS

53

Osw.

Last night
When I returned with water from the brook,
I overheard the Villains — every word
Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart.
said one, “It is agreed on. The blind
Man
shall feign a sudden illness, and the Girl,
Who on her journey must proceed alone,
Under pretence of violence, be seized.
She is,” continued the detested Slave,
* She is right willing — strange if she were
not! —
They say, Lord Clifford is a savage man;
But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic,
Fitting his low voice to the minstrel’s harp,
There’s witchery in’t. I never knew a
maid
That could withstand it. True,” continued
he,
* When we arranged the affair, she wept a
little
(Not the less welcome to my Lord for that)
And said, ‘My Father he will have it so.'”

Mar. I am your hearer.

Osw. This I caught, and more
That may not be retold to any ear.
The obstinate bolt of a small iron door
Detained them near the gateway of the
Castle.
By a dim lantern’s light I saw that wreaths
Of flowers were in their hands, as if de-
signed
For festive decoration; and they said, 70
With brutal laughter and most foul allu-
sion,
That they should share the banquet with
their Lord
And his new Favourite.

Mar. Misery! —

Osw. I knew
How you would be disturbed by this dire
news,
And therefore chose this solitary Moor,
Here to impart the tale, of which, last
night,
I strove to ease my mind, when our two
Comrades,
Commissioned by the Band, burst in upon
us.

Mar. Last night, when moved to lift the
avenging steel,
I did believe all things were shadows —
yea,
Living or dead all things were bodiless,
Or but the mutual mockeries of body,

Till that same star summoned me back
again.
Now I could laugh till my ribs ached. Oh
Fool!
To let a creed, built in the heart of things,
Dissolve before a twinkling atom! — Os-
wald,
I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools
Than you have entered, were it worth the
pains.
Young as I am, I might go forth a teacher,
And you should see how deeply I could
reason
Of love in all its shapes, beginnings; ends;
Of moral qualities in their diverse aspects;
Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

Osw. You take it as it merits —

Mar. One a King,
General or Cham, Sultan or Emperor,
Strews twenty acres of good meadow-
ground
With carcasses, in lineament and shape
And substance nothing differing from his
own,
But that they cannot stand up of them-

Another sits’ th’ sun, and by the hour

IOO
Floats kinecups in the brook — a Hero one
We call, and scorn the other as Time’s
spendthrift;
But have they not a world of common
ground
To occupy — both fools, or wise alike,
Each in his way?

Osw. Troth, I begin to think so.

Mar. Now for the corner-stone of my
philosophy:
I would not give a denier for the man
Who, on such provocation as this earth
Yields, could not chuck his babe beneath
the chin,
And send it with a fillip to its grave.

Osw. Nay, you leave me behind.

Mar. That such a One,
So pious in demeanour! in his look
So saintly and so pure! — Hark’e, my
Friend,
I’ll plant myself before Lord Clifford’s
Castle,
A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a med-
ley
Most tunable.

Osw. In faith, a pleasant scheme;
But take your sword along with you, for that
Might in such neighbourhood find seemly use.
But first, how wash our hands of this old Man?

Mar. Oh yes, that mole, that viper in the path;
Plague on my memory, him I had forgotten.

Osw. You know we left him sitting — see him yonder.

Mar. Ha! ha! —

Osw. As 't will be but a moment's work,
I will stroll on; you follow when 't is done.

[Exeunt.

Scene changes to another part of the Moor at a short distance

Herbert is discovered seated on a stone.

Her. A sound of laughter, too! — 't is well — I feared,
The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow
Pressing upon his solitary heart.
Hush! — 't is the feeble and earth-loving wind
That creeps along the bells of the crisp heather.
Alas! 't is cold — I shiver in the sunshine —
What can this mean? There is a psalm that speaks
Of God's parental mercies — with Idonea
I used to sing it. — Listen! — what foot is there?

Enter Marmaduke.

Mar. (aside — looking at Herbert). And I have loved this Man! and she hath loved him!
And I loved her, and she loves the Lord Clifford!
And there it ends; — if this be not enough
To make mankind merry for evermore,
Then plain it is as day, that eyes were made
For a wise purpose — verily to weep with!

[Looking round.

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece
Of Nature, finished with most curious skill!
(To Herbert.) Good Baron, have you ever practised tillage?
Pray tell me what this land is worth by the acre?

Her. How glad I am to hear your voice!
I know not
Wherein I have offended you; — last night
I found in you the kindest of Protectors;
This morning, when I spoke of weariness,
You from my shoulder took my scrip and threw it.
About your own; but for these two hours past
Once only have you spoken, when the last
Whirred from among the fern beneath our feet,
And I, no coward in my better days,
Was almost terrified.

Mar. That's excellent!
So, you betheought you of the many ways
In which a man may come to his end whose crimes
Have roused all Nature up against him.

Her. For mercy's sake, is nobody sight?
No traveller, peasant, herdsmen?

Mar. Not a soul.
Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, a bare,
That turns its goat's-beard flakes of pe
green moss
From the stern breathing of the rough sea wind;
This have we, but no other company:
Commend me to the place. If a man should die
And leave his body here, it were all one.
As he were twenty fathoms underground.

Her. Where is our common Friend?

Mar. A ghost, methinks.
The Spirit of a murdered man, for instance —
Might have fine room to ramble about here:
A grand domain to squeak and gibb in.

Her. Lost Man! if thou have any clement guilt
Pressing upon thy heart, and this the hour
Of visitation —

Mar. A bold word from you.

Her. Restore him, Heaven!

Mar. The desperate Wretch —

Flower,
Fairest of all flowers, was she once, now
They have snapped her from the stem:
Poh! let her lie
Besoiled with mire, and let the house be snail
Feed on her leaves. You knew her well,
Old Man! you were a very Lynx, you knew
The worm was in her ——
ACT III

THE BORDERERS

55

Her. Mercy! Sir, what mean you?

Mar. You have a Daughter!

Her. Oh that she were here! —

She hath an eye that sinks into all hearts,
And if I have in aught offended you,
Let her gentle voice make peace between us.

Mar. (aside). I do believe he weeps —

I could weep too —

There is a vein of her voice that runs through his:

Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth
From the first moment that I loved the Maid;
And for his sake I loved her more: these tears —

I did not think that aught was left in me

Of what I have been — yes, I thank thee,

Heaven!

One happy thought has passed across my mind.

— It may not be — I am cut off from man;
No more shall I be man — no more shall I have human feelings! — (To Herbert) —

Now, for a little more

About your Daughter!

Her. Troops of armed men,
Met in the roads, would bless us; little children,
Rushing along in the full tide of play,
Stood silent as we passed them! I have heard

The boisterous carman, in the miry road,
Check his loud whip and hail us with mild voice,

And speak with milder voice to his poor beasts.

Mar. And whither were you going?

Her. Learn, young Man,
To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery,
Whether too much for patience, or, like mine,
Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

Mar. Now, this is as it should be!

Her. I am weak! —

My Daughter does not know how weak I am;

And, as thou seest, under the arch of heaven

Here do I stand, alone, to helplessness,

By the good God, our common Father, doomed! —

But I had once a spirit and an arm —

Mar. Now, for a word about your Barony:

I fancy when you left the Holy Land,
And came to — what's your title — eh? your claims

Were undisputed!

Her. Like a mendicant,
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood alone; —

I murmured — but, remembering Him who feeds

The pelican and ostrich of the desert,
From my own threshold I looked up to Heaven

And did not want glimmerings of quiet hope.

So, from the court I passed, and down the brook,

Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak

I came; and when I felt its cooling shade,

I sat me down, and cannot but believe —

While in my lap I held my little Babe

And clasped her to my heart, my heart that ached

More with delight than grief — I heard a voice

Such as by Cherith on Elijah called;

It said, "I will be with thee." A little boy,

A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was gone,

Hailed us as if he had been sent from heaven,

And said, with tears, that he would be our guide:

I had a better guide — that innocent Babe —

Her, who hath saved me, to this hour, from harm,

From cold, from hunger, penury, and death;

To whom I owe the best of all the good

I have, or wish for, upon earth — and more

And higher far than lies within earth's bounds:

Therefore I bless her: when I think of Man,

I bless her with sad spirit, — when of God,

I bless her in the fulness of my joy!

Mar. The name of daughter in his mouth, he prays!

With nerves so steady, that the very flies

Sit unmolested on his staff. — Innocent! —

If he were innocent — then he would tremble

And be disturbed, as I am. (Turning aside.)

I have read
In Story, what men now alive have witnessed,
How, when the People's mind was racked
with doubt,
Appeal was made to the great Judge: the
Accused
With naked feet walked over burning
ploughshares.
Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared
For a like trial, but more merciful.
Why else have I been led to this bleak
Waste?
Bare is it, without house or track, and
destitute
Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea.
Here will I leave him — here — All-seeing
God!
Such as he is, and sore perplexed as I am,
I will commit him to this final Ordeal! —
He heard a voice — a shepherd-lad came to
him
And was his guide; if once, why not again,
And in this desert? If never — then the
whole
Of what he says, and looks, and does, and
is,
Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave
him here
To cold and hunger! — Pain is of the heart,
And what are a few throes of bodily suffer-
ing
If they can waken one pang of remorse?
Goes up to Herbert.
Old Man! my wrath is as a flame burnt
out,
It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here
Led by my hand to save thee from perdi-
tion;
Thou wilt have time to breathe and think —
Her. Oh, Mercy!
Mar. I know the need that all men have
of mercy,
And therefore leave thee to a righteous
judgment.
Her. My Child, my blessed Child!
Mar. No more of that;
Thou wilt have many guides if thou art
innocent;
Yea, from the utmost corners of the earth,
That Woman will come o'er this Waste to
save thee.
[He pauses and looks at Herbert's staff.
Ha! what is here? and carved by her own
hand!  [Reads upon the staff.
“I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.
He that puts his trust in me shall not
fail!”
Yes, be it so; — repent and be forgiven —
God and that staff are now thy only guide
[He leaves Herbert on the Moore.

SCENE — An eminence, a Beacon on the
summit

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, etc. etc.

Several of the Band (confusedly). Be
patience!

One of the Band. Curses on that Traitor
Oswald! —
Our Captain made a prey to foul device! —
Len. (to Wal.). His tool, the wander-
Beggar, made last night
A plain confession, such as leaves no doubt
Knowing what otherwise we know too well,
That she revealed the truth. Stand by a
now;
For rather would I have a nest of vipers
Between my breast-plate and my skin, than
make
Oswald my special enemy, if you
Deny me your support.

Lacy. We have been fooled.
But for the motive?

Wal. Natures such as his
Spin motives out of their own bowels, Lacy;
I learned this when I was a Confessor.
I know him well; there needs no other
motive
Than that most strange incontinence
crime
Which haunts this Oswald. Power is li-
to him
And breath and being; where he can
Govern,
He will destroy.

Lacy. To have been trapped like
molees! —
Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for
motive;
There is no crime from which this man
would shrink;
He recks not human law; and I have
noticed
That often when the name of God
uttered,
A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

Len. Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride is
built
Some uncouth superstition of its own.
Wal. I have seen traces of it.

Len. Once he headed
band of Pirates in the Norway seas;
and when the King of Denmark summoned
him
the oath of fealty, I well remember,
was a strange answer that he made; he
said,
hold of Spirits, and the Sun in heaven."

Lacy. He is no madman.

Wal. A most subtle doctor
ere that man, who could draw the line
that parts
ide and her daughter, Cruelty, from
Madness,
that should be scourged, not pitied. Rest-
less Minds, as find amid their fellow-men
a heart that loves them, none that they
can love,
ill turn perforse and seek for sympathy
dim relation to imagined Beings.

One of the Band. What if he mean to
offer up our Captain
expiation and a sacrifice
those infernal fiends!

Wal. Now, if the event
would be as Lennox has foretold, then
swear,
y Friends, his heart shall have as many
wounds
there are daggers here.

Lacy. What need of swearing!

One of the Band. Let us away!

Another. Away!

A third. Hark! how the horns
of those Scotch Rovers echo through the
vale.

Lacy. Stay you behind; and when the sun
is down,
light up this beacon.

One of the Band. You shall be obeyed.

[They go out together.

---The Wood on the edge of the
Moor.

Marmaduke (alone).

Mar. Deep, deep and vast, vast beyond
human thought,
at calm. — I could believe, that there was
here
no only quiet heart on earth. In terror,
remembered terror, there is peace and
rest.

Enter Oswald.

Osw. Ha, my dear Captain.

Mar. A later meeting, Oswald,
Would have been better timed.

Osw. Alone, I see;
You have done your duty. I had hopes,
which now
I feel that you will justify.

Mar. I had fears,
From which I have freed myself — but 'tis
my wish
To be alone, and therefore we must part.

Osw. Nay, then — I am mistaken.
There's a weakness
About you still; you talk of solitude —
I am your friend.

Mar. What need of this assurance
At any time? and why given now?

Osw. Because
You are now in truth my Master; you have
taught me
What there is not another living man
Had strength to teach; — and therefore
gratitude
Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.

Mar. Wherefore press this on me?

Osw. Because I feel
That you have shown, and by a signal in-
stance,
How they who would be just must seek the
rule
By diving for it into their own bosoms.
To-day you have thrown off a tyranny
That lives but in the torpid acquiescence
Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny
Of the world's masters, with the musty rules
By which they uphold their craft from age
to age:
You have obeyed the only law that sense
Submits to recognise; the immediate law,
From the clear light of circumstances, flashed
Upon an independent Intellect.
Henceforth new prospects open on your path;
Your faculties should grow with the demand;
I still will be your friend, will cleave to you
Through good and evil, obloquy and scorn,
Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

Mar. I would be left alone.

Osw. (exultingly). I know your motives!
I am not of the world's presumptuous judges,
Who damn where they can neither see nor
feel,

With a hard-hearted ignorance; your strug-
gles
I witnessed, and now hail your victory.
Mar. Spare me awhile that greeting.
Osw. It may be,
That some there are, squemish half-thinking cowards,
Who will turn pale upon you, call you mur-derer,
And you will walk in solitude among them.
A mighty evil for a strong-built mind! —
Join twenty tapers of unequal height
And light them joined, and you will see the less
How ’twill burn down the taller; and they all.
Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude! —
The Eagle lives in Solitude.
Mar. Even so,
The Sparrow so on the housetop, and I,
The weakest of God’s creatures, stand re-solved
To abide the issue of my act, alone.
Osw. Now would you? and for ever? —
My young Friend,
As time advances either we become
The prey or masters of our own past deeds.
Fellowship we must have, willing or no;
And if good Angels fail, slack in their duty,
Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,
Are still forthcoming; some which, though they bear
Ill names, can render no ill services,
In recompense for what themselves re-quired.
So meet extremes in this mysterious world,
And opposites thus melt into each other.
Mar. Time, since Man first drew breath,
has never moved
With such a weight upon his wings as now;
But they will soon be lightened.
Osw. Ay, look up —
Cast round you your mind’s eye, and you will learn
Fortitude is the child of Enterprise:
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly
Because they carry in themselves an earnest
That we can suffer greatly.
Mar. Very true.
Osw. Action is transitory — a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle — this way or that —
’Tis done, and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And shares the nature of infinity.
Mar. Truth — and I feel it.
Osw. What! if you had bid
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy
And the light dancing of the thoughtless heart;
It is the toy of fools, and little fit
For such a world as this. The wise abjures
All thoughts whose idle composition lives
In the entire forgetfulness of pain.
— I see I have disturbed you.
Mar. By no mean.
Osw. Compassion! — pity! — pride or do without them;
And what if you should never know the more! —
He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,
Finds ease because another feels it too.
If e’er I open out this heart of mine
It shall be for a nobler end — to teach
And not to purchase piling sympathy.
— Nay, you are pale.
Mar. It may be so.
Osw. Remorse—
It cannot live with thought; think on, this on,
And it will die. What! in this universe,
Where the least things control the greater where
The faintest breath that breathes can move a world;
What I feel remorse, where, if a cat has sneezed,
A leaf had fallen, the thing had never been
Whose very shadow gnaws us to the vital
Mar. Now, whither are you wandering
That a man
So used to suit his language to the time,
Should thus so widely differ from himself—
It is most strange.
Osw. Murder! — what’s in the word!
I have no cases by me ready made
To fit all deeds. Carry him to the Camp—
A shallow project; — you of late have seen
More deeply, taught us that the institutes
Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation
Banished from human intercourse, exist
Only in our relations to the brutes
That make the fields their dwelling. If snake
Crawl from beneath our feet we do not ask
A license to destroy him; our good governo
Hedge in the life of every pest and plague
That bears the shape of man; and for what purpose,
But to protect themselves from extirpation? —
This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.
Mar. My Office is fulfilled — the Man is now
Delivered to the Judge of all things.

Osw. Dead!

Mar. I have borne my burthen to its destined end.

Osw. This instant we'll return to our companions —
Oh how I long to see their faces again!

Enter IDONEA, with Pilgrims who continue their journey.

Idon. (after some time). What, Marmaduke! now thou art mine for ever.
And Oswald, too! (To Marmaduke.) On will we to my Father
With the glad tidings which this day hath brought;
We'll go together, and, such proof received
If his own rights restored, his gratitude
to God above will make him feel for ours.

Osw. I interrupt you?

Idon. Think not so.

Mar. IDONEA, what I should ever live to see this moment!
Idon. Forgive me. — Oswald knows it all
— he knows,
Each word of that unhappy letter fell
As a blood drop from my heart.

Osw. I was even so.

Mar. I have much to say, but for whose ear? — not thine.

Idon. Ill can I bear that look — Plead for me, Oswald!

To Marmaduke.) Alas, you know not, and never can you know, how much he loved me.

Once had he been to me a father, twice
Had given me breath, and was not to be his daughter, once his daughter? could I withstand
His pleasing face, and feel his clasping arms,
Had hear his prayer that I would not forsake him
In his old age —

Mar. Patience — Heaven grant me patience! —
He weeps, she weeps — my brain shall burn for hours
I can shed a tear.

Idon. I was a woman;
And, balancing the hopes that are the dearest

To womankind with duty to my Father,
I yielded up those precious hopes, which nought
On earth could else have wrested from me; — if erring,
Oh let me be forgiven!

Mar. I do forgive thee.

Idon. But take me to your arms — this breast, alas!
It throbs, and you have a heart that does not feel it.

Mar. (exultingly). She is innocent.

Osw. (aside). Were I a Moralist, I should make wondrous revolution here;
It were a quaint experiment to show
The beauty of truth —

[Addressing them. I see I interrupt you;
I shall have business with you, Marmaduke;
Follow me to the Hostel.]

Exit Oswald.

Marmaduke,
This is a happy day. My Father soon
Shall sun himself before his native doors;
The lame, the hungry, will be welcome there.
No more shall he complain of wasted strength,
Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying heart;
His good works will be balm and life to him.

Mar. This is most strange! — I know not what it was,
But there was something which most plainly said,

That thou wert innocent.

Idon. How innocent! —
Oh heavens! you've been deceived.

Mar. Thou art a Woman,
To bring perdition on the universe.

Idon. Already I've been punished to the height
Of my offence. [Smiling affectionately.]

I see you love me still,
The labours of my hand are still your joy;
Bethink you of the hour when on your shoulder
I hung this belt.

[Pointing to the belt on which was suspended Herbert's scrip.


Idon. What ails you? [Distractedly.

Mar. The scrip that held his food, and I forgot
To give it back again!

Idon. What mean your words?
Mar. I know not what I said — all may be well.

Idon. That smile hath life in it!

Mar. This road is perilous; I will attend you to a Hut that stands near the wood's edge — rest there to-night, I pray you:

For me, I have business, as you heard, with Oswald,

But will return to you by break of day.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV

Scene — A desolate prospect — a ridge of rocks — a Chapel on the summit of one — Moon behind the rocks — night stormy — irregular sound of a Bell

Herbert enters exhausted.

Her. That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed to guide me,

But now it mocks my steps; its fitful stroke can scarcely be the work of human hands.

Hear me, ye Men, upon the cliffs, if such there be who pray nightly before the Altar.

Oh that I had but strength to reach the place!

My Child — my child — dark — dark — I faint — this wind —

These stifling blasts — God help me!

Enter Eldred.

Eld. Better this bare rock, though it were tottering over a man's head, than a tight case of dungeon walls for shelter from such rough dealing.

[Arriving voice is heard.

Ha! what sound is that?

Trees creaking in the wind (but none are here)

Send forth such noises — and that weary bell!

Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-night is ringing it — 'twould stop a Saint in prayer,

And that — what is it? never was sound so like a human groan. Ha! what is here?

Poor Man —

Murdered! alas! speak — speak, I am your friend:

No answer — hush — lost wretch, he lifts his hand

And lays it to his heart — (Kneels to him)

I pray you speak!

What has befallen you?

Her. (feeably). A stranger has done this And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

Eld. Nay, think not so: come, let me raise you:

This is a dismal place — well — that well —

I was too fearful — take me for your guide And your support — my hut is not far off.

[Draws him gently off the stage.

Scene — A room in the Hostel

MARMADUKE and OSWALD.

Mar. But for Idonea — I have cause to think that she is innocent.

Ono. Leave that thought aside. As one of those beliefs, which in their base lovers lock up as pearls, though oft better Than feathers clinging to their points of passion.

This day's event has laid on me the duty of opening out my story; you must hear And without further preface. — In youth,

Except for that abatement which is paid By envy as a tribute to desert,

I was the pleasure of all hearts, the darl Of every tongue — as you are now. You heard that I embarked for Syria. On our voyage Was hatched among the crew a foul conspiracy Against my honour, in the which our captain Was, I believed, prime Agent. The well;

We lay becalmed week after week, until the water of the vessel was exhausted; I felt a double fever in my veins, yet rage suppressed itself; — to a deep ness

Did my pride tame my pride; — for my days,

On a dead sea under a burning sky, I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted by man and nature; — if a breeze blown,

It might have found its way into my heart And I had been — no matter — do you me?
And laughed so loud it seemed that the smooth sea
Did from some distant region echo us.

Mar. We all are of one blood, our veins are filled

At the same poisonous fountain!

Osw. 'T was an island

Only by sufferance of the winds and waves,
Which with their foam could cover it at will.

I know not how he perished; but the calm,
The same dead calm, continued many days.

Mar. But his own crime had brought on him this doom,

His wickedness prepared it; these expedients
Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

Osw. The man was famished, and was innocent!

Mar. Impossible!

Osw. The man had never wronged me.

Mar. Banish the thought, crush it, and be at peace.

His guilt was marked — these things could never be

Were there not eyes that see, and for good ends,
Where ours are baffled.

Mar. I had been deceived.

Osw. And from that hour the miserable man

No more was heard of?

Osw. I had been betrayed.

Mar. And he found no deliverance!

Osw. The Crew

Gave me a hearty welcome; they had laid
The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,
Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed.
So we pursued our voyage: when we landed,
The tale was spread abroad; my power at once

Shrank from me; plans and schemes, and lofty hopes —

All vanished. I gave way — do you attend?

Mar. The Crew deceived you?

Osw. Nay, command yourself.

Mar. It is a dismal night — how the wind howls!

Osw. I hid my head within a Convent, there

Lay passive as a dormouse in mid-winter.
That was no life for me — I was o'erthrown,
But not destroyed.

Mar. The proofs — you ought to have seen
The guilt—have touched it—felt it at your heart—
As I have done.

_Osw._ A fresh tide of Crusaders
Drove by the place of my retreat: three nights
Did constant meditation dry my blood;
Three sleepless nights I passed in sounding on,
Through words and things, a dim and perilous way;
And, wheresoe'er I turned me, I beheld
A slavery compared to which the dungeon
And clanking chains are perfect liberty.
You understand me—I was comforted;
I saw that every possible shape of action
Might lead to good—I saw it and burst forth
Thirsting for some of those exploits that fill
The earth for sure redemption of lost peace.

[Marking Marmaduke's countenance.

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity
Subsided in a moment, like a wind
That drops down dead out of a sky it vexed.
And yet I had within me evermore
A salient spring of energy; I mounted
From action up to action with a mind
That never rested—without meat or drink
Have I lived many days—my sleep was bound
To purposes of reason—not a dream
But had a continuity and substance
That waking life had never power to give.

_Mar._ O wretched Human-kind!—Until the mystery
Of all this world is solved, well may we envy
The worm, that, underneath a stone whose weight
Would crush the lion's paw with mortal anguish,
Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep, in safety.
Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those traitors?

_Osw._ Give not to them a thought. From Palestine
We marched to Syria: oft I left the Camp,
When all that multitude of hearts was still,
And followed on, through woods of gloomy cedar,
Into deep chasms troubled by roaring streams;

Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed
The moonlight desert, and the moonlit sea:
In these my lonely wanderings I perceived
What mighty objects do impress forms
To elevate our intellectual being;
And felt, if aught on earth deserved curse,
’Tis that worst principle of ill which doth A thing so great to perish self-consume—So much for my remorse!

_Mar._ Unhappy

_Osw._ When from these forms I turn to contemplate
The World's opinions and her usages,
I seemed a Being who had passed along
Into a region of futurity,
Whose natural element was freedom—

_Sat._ I may not, cannot, follow thee.

_Osw._ You

I had been nourished by the sickly food
Of popular applause. I now perceive
That we are praised, only as men in us
Do recognise some image of themselves;
An abject counterpart of what they are Or the empty thing that they would to be.
I felt that merit has no surer test
Than obloquy; that, if we wish to see
The world in substance, not deceiv show,
We must become obnoxious to its hate
Or fear disguised in simulated scorn.

_Mar._ I pity, can forgive, you; but wretches—
That monstrous perfidy!

_Osw._ Keep down your False Shame discarded, spurious Fam spised,
Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found
Life stretched before me smooth as broad way
Cleared for a monarch's progress. P might spin
Their veil, but not for me—'t was place
Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been
And in that dream had left my native
One of Love's simple bondsmen—

_Was_ off for ever; and the man, from
This liberation came, you would destroy
Join me in thanks for their blind serv.
Mar. 'Tis a strange aching that, when we would curse
And cannot. — You have betrayed me — I have done —
I am content — I know that he is guiltless —
That both are guiltless, without spot or stain,
Mutually consecrated. Poor old Man!
And I had heart for this, because thou lovedst
Her who from very infancy had been
Light to thy path, warmth to thy blood! —
Together [Turning to Oswald.
We propped his steps, he leaned upon us both.

Osw. Ay, we are coupled by a chain of adamant;
Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to enlarge
Man’s intellectual empire. We subsist
In slavery; all is slavery; we receive
Laws, but we ask not whence those laws
have come;
We need an inward sting to goad us on.

Mar. Have you betrayed me? Speak to that.

Osw. The mask,
Which for a season I have stooped to wear,
Must be cast off. — Know then that I was
urged,
(For other impulse let it pass) was driven,
To seek for sympathy, because I saw
In you a mirror of my youthful self;
I would have made us equal once again,
But that was a vain hope. You have struck
home,
With a few drops of blood cut short the business;
Therein for ever you must yield to me.
But what is done will save you from the blank
Of living without knowledge that you live:
Now you are suffering — for the future day,
'Tis his who will command it. — Think of
my story —
Herbert is innocent.

Mar. (in a faint voice, and doubtingly).
You do but echo
My own wild words?

Osw. Young Man, the seed must lie
Hid in the earth, or there can be no harvest;
'Tis Nature’s law. What I have done in
darkness
I will avow before the face of day.
Herbert is innocent.

Mar. What fiend could prompt
This action? Innocent! — oh, breaking
heart! —
Alive or dead, I’ll find him. [Exit.

SCENE — The inside of a poor Cottage

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

Idon. The storm beats hard — Mercy
for poor or rich,
Whose heads are shelterless in such a night!
A Voice without. Holla! to bed, good
Folks, within!

Elea. O save us!
Idon. What can this mean?
Elea. Alas, for my poor husband! —
We’ll have a counting of our flocks to
morrow;
The wolf keeps festival these stormy nights:
Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers
[The voices die away in the distance.
Returning from their Feast — my heart
beats so —
A noise at midnight does so frighten
me.

Elea. They are gone. On such a
night my husband,
Dragged from his bed, was cast into a dun
geon,
Where, hid from me, he counted many
years,
A criminal in no one’s eyes but theirs —
Not even in theirs — whose brutal violence
So dealt with him.

Idon. I have a noble Friend
First among youths of knightly breeding,
One
Who lives but to protect the weak or injured.
There again! [Listening.
Elea. 'Tis my husband’s foot. Good
Eldred
Has a kind heart; but his imprisonment
Has made him fearful, and he’ll never be
The man he was.

Idon. I will retire; — good night! [She goes within.

Enter ELDRED (hides a bundle).

Eld. Not yet in bed, Eleanor! — there
are stains in that frock which must be
washed out.
Elea. What has befallen you?

Eld. I am belated, and you must know the cause — (speaking low) that is the blood of an unhappy man.

Elea. Oh! we are undone for ever. 260

Eld. Heaven forbid that I should lift my hand against any man. Eleanor, I have shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to think of it.

Elea. Where, where is he?

Eld. I have done him no harm, but — it will be forgiven me; it would not have been so once.

Elea. You have not buried anything? You are no richer than when you left me?

Eld. Be at peace; I am innocent.

Elea. Then God be thanked —

[A short pause; she falls upon his neck.]

Eld. To-night I met with an old Man lying stretched upon the ground — a sad spectacle: I raised him up with a hope that we might shelter and restore him.

Elea. (as if ready to run). Where is he? You were not able to bring him all the way with you; let us return, I can help you. [Eldred shakes his head. 281

Eld. He did not seem to wish for life: as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes — he waved his hand, as if it were all useless; and I let him sink again to the ground.

Elea. Oh that I had been by your side!

Eld. I tell you his hands and his body were cold — how could I disturb his last moments? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep.

Elea. But, for the stains of blood —

Eld. He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut; but I think his malady was cold and hunger.

Elea. Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble.

Eld. Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour? I come home, and this is my comfort!

Elea. But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease?

Eld. I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child — his Daughter — (starting as if he heard a noise). What is that?

Elea. Eldred, you are a father.

Eld. God knows what was in my heart and will not curse my son for my sake.

Elea. But you prayed by him? you waited the hour of his release?

Eld. The night was fasting fast; I had no friend; I am spited by the world — I would terrified me — if I had brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms! — I am sure I heard something breathing — and this chair!

Elea. Oh, Eldred, you will die also! You will have nobody to close your eyes, no hand to grasp your dying hand — I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us.

Eld. Have you forgot your own trouble when I was in the dungeon?

Elea. And you left him alive?

Eld. Alive! — the damps of death were upon him — he could not have survived the hour.

Elea. In the cold, cold night.

Eld. (in a savage tone). Ay, and his head was bare; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it — Y will never rest till I am brought to a full end.

Elea. Is there nothing to be done? or do you not go to the Convent?

Eld. Ay, and say at once that I murdered him!

Elea. Eldred, I know that ours is but a house upon the Waste; let us trust in our heart; this Man may be rich; and could we be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us.

Eld. 'Tis all in vain.

Elea. But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may be children — let us return to the spot; may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him.

Eld. He will never open them more even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed as if he had been blind.

Idon. (rushing out). It is, it is,

Father —

Eld. We are betrayed (looking at Idonea).

Elea. His Daughter! — God have mercy!

Idon. (turning to Idonea).

Idon. (sinking down). Oh! lift me up and carry me to the place.

You are safe; the whole world shall not harm you.

Elea. This Lady is his Daughter.
Eld. (moved). I'll lead you to the spot.
Idem. (springing up). Alive!—you
heard him breathe? quick, quick—

[Exeunt.

ACT V

SCENE—A wood on the edge of the 
Waste

Enter Oswald and a Forester.

For. He leaned upon the bridge that
spans the glen,
had down into the bottom cast his eye,
that fastened there, as it would check the
current.

Oswald. He listened too; did you not say
he listened?

For. As if there came such moaning
from the flood
he's heard often after stormy nights.

Oswald. But did he utter nothing?

For. See him there!

MARMADUKE appearing.

Mar. Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged
freebooters;

That is no substance which ye settle on!

For. His senses play him false; and see,
his arms

Outspread, as if to save himself from falling—

Some terrible phantom I believe is now
Passing before him, such as God will not
permit to visit any but a man

Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[Marmaduke disappears.

Oswald. The game is up!—

For. If it be needful, Sir, I will assist you to lay hands upon
him.

Oswald. No, no, my Friend, you may pursue
your business—

I am a poor wretch of an unsettled mind,
Who has a trick of straying from his keep-
er;

We must be gentle. Leave him to my
care. [Exit Forester.

If his own eyes play false with him, these
freaks
Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine;
The goal is reached. My Master shall be-

A shadow of myself—made by myself.

SCENE—The edge of the Moor

MARMADUKE and ELDRED enter from
opposite sides.

Mar. (raising his eyes and perceiving
Eldred). In any corner of this
savage Waste,

Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old
Man?

Eld. I heard—

Mar. You heard him, where? when
heard him?

Eld. As you know,
The first hours of last night were rough
with storm:

I had been out in search of a stray heifer;

Returning late, I heard a moaning sound;

Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived
me,

I hurried on, when straight a second moan,
A human voice distinct, struck on my ear,

So guided, distant a few steps, I found
An aged Man, and such as you describe.

Mar. You heard!—he called you to
him? Of all men

The best and kindest!—but where is he?

Guide me,

That I may see him.

Eld. On a ridge of rocks
A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now:

The bell is left, which no one dares remove;

And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the
peak,

It rings, as if a human hand were there

To pull the cord. I guess he must have
heard it;

And it had led him towards the precipice,

To climb up to the spot whence the sound
 came;

But he had failed through weakness. From
his hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the
brink

Of a small pool of water he was laid,

As if he had stooped to drink, and so re-

Without the strength to rise.

Mar. Well, well, he lives,
And all is safe: what said he?

Eld. But few words:
He only spake to me of a dear Daughter,

Who, so he feared, would never see him

more;

And of a Stranger to him, One by whom

He had been sore misused; but he forgave
The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are troubled—
Perhaps you are his son?

Mar. The All-seeing knows,
I did not think he had a living Child.—
But whither did you carry him?

Eld. He was torn,
His head was bruised, and there was blood
about him——

Mar. That was no work of mine.

Eld. Nor was it mine.

Mar. But had he strength to walk? I
could have borne him
A thousand miles.

Eld. I am in poverty,
And know how busy are the tongues of men;
My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one
Whose good deeds will not stand by their
own light;
And, though it amuse me more than words
can tell,
I left him.

Mar. I believe that there are phantoms,
That in the shape of man do cross our path
On evil instigation, to make sport
Of our distress—and thou art one of them!
But things substantial have so pressed on
me——

Eld. My wife and children came into my
mind.

Mar. Oh Monster! Monster! there are
three of us,
And we shall howl together.

[After a pause and in a feeble voice.

I am deserted
At my worst need, my crimes have in a net
(Pointing to Eldred) Entangled this poor
man.— Where was it? where?

[Dragging him along.

Eld. 'T is needless; spare your violence.
His Daughter——

Mar. Ay, in the word a thousand scorpions lodge

This old man had a Daughter.

Eld. To the spot
I hurried back with her.— O save me, Sir,
From such a journey! — there was a black
tree,
A single tree; she thought it was her
Father.—
Oh Sir, I would not see that hour again
For twenty lives. The daylight dawned, and
now—
Nay; hear my tale, 't is fit that you should
hear it——

As we approached, a solitary crow
Rose from the spot; — the Daughter
clapped her hands,
And then I heard a shriek so terrible

[Marmaduke shrinks back

The startled bird quivered upon the wing.

Mar. Dead, dead!—

Eld. (after a pause). A dismal matter
Sir, for me,
And seems the like for you; if 't is you
wish,
I'll lead you to his Daughter; but 't were
best
That she should be prepared; I'll go before

Mar. There will be need of preparation

[Eldred goes of

Elea. (enters).
Your limbs sink under you, shall I support
you?

Mar. (taking her arm). Woman, I've
lent my body to the service
Which now thou tak'st upon thee. God for
bid

That thou shouldst ever meet a like occa
sion

With such a purpose in thine heart as was.

Elea. Oh, why have I to do with thine
like these? [Exeunt

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRED
cottage

IDONEA seated — enter ELDRED.

Eld. Your Father, Lady, from a woful
hand
Has met unkindness; so indeed he told me.
And you remember such was my report:
From what has just befallen me I ha
cause
To fear the very worst.

Idon. My Father is dead
Why dost thou come to me with words like
these?

Eld. A wicked Man should answer for
his crimes.

Idon. Thou seest me what I am.

Eld. It was most heinously

And doth call out for vengeance.

Idon. Do not ail
I prithee, to the harm thou'st done already

Eld. Hereafter you will thank me for
this service.

Hard by, a Man I met, who, from pl
proofs
interfering Heaven, I have no doubt, d hands upon your Father. Fit it were d should prepare to meet him.
don. I have nothing do with others; help me to my Father — [She turns and sees Marmaduke leaning on Eleanor — throws herself upon his neck, and after some time, joy I met thee, but a few hours past; d thus we meet again; one human stay left me still in thee. Nay, shake not so. Mar. In such a wilderness — to see no thing, 122 not the pitying moon!
don. And perish so. Mar. Without a dog to moan for him.
don. Think not of it, enter there and see him how he sleeps, quiescent as he had died in his own bed. Mar. Tranquil — why not? don. Oh, peace! Mar. He is at peace; his body is at rest; there was a plot, hideous plot, against the soul of man: took effect — and yet I baffled it, 130 some degree.
don. Between us stood, I thought, cup of consolation, filled from Heaven to both our needs; must I, and in thy presence, come partake of it? — Beloved Marmaduke! Mar. Give me a reason why the wisest thing at the earth owns shall never choose to die, at some one must be near to count his groans. The wounded deer retires to solitude, and dies in solitude: all things but man, will die in solitude.

[Moving towards the cottage door.
Mysterious God, 140 if she had never lived I had not done it! —
don. Alas, the thought of such a cruel death has overwhelmed him. — I must follow.
Eld. Lady! don. I will do well; (she goes) unjust suspicion may have to this Stranger; if, upon his entering, the dead Man heave a groan, or from his side lift his hand — that would be evidence.
Eld. Shame! Eldred, shame! Mar. (both returning). The dead have but one face (to himself).
And such a Man — so meek and unoffending — 149 Helpless and harmless as a babe: a Man, By obvious signal to the world’s protection, Solemnly dedicated — to decoy him! —
don. Oh, had you seen him living! —
Mar. I (so filled With horror is this world) am unto thee The thing most precious, that it now contains:
Therefore through me alone must be revealed
By whom thy Parent was destroyed, Idonea! I have the proofs! —
don. O miserable Father! Thou didst command me to bless all mankind;
Nor to this moment, have I ever wished to evil any living thing; but hear me, Hear me, ye Heavens! — (kneeling) — may vengeance haunt the fiend
For this most cruel murder: let him live And move in terror of the elements;
The thunder send him on his knees to prayer In the open streets, and let him think he sees,
If e’er he entereth the house of God,
The roof, self-moving, unsettling o’er his head;
And let him, when he would lie down at night,
Point to his wife the blood-drops on his pillow! 170
Mar. My voice was silent, but my heart hath joined thee.
don. (leaning on Marmaduke). Left to the mercy of that savage Man!
How could he call upon his Child! — O Friend! [Turns to Marmaduke.
My faithful true and only Comforter.
Mar. Ay, come to me and weep. (He kisses her.) (To Eldred.) Yes, Varlet, look,
The devils at such sights do clap their hands.
[Eldred retires alarmed.
don. Thy vest is torn, thy cheek is deadly pale;
Hast thou pursued the monster?
Mar. I have found him. —
Oh I would that thou hadst perished in the flames!
don. Here art thou, then can I be desolate? —
Mar. There was a time, when this protecting hand
Availed against the mighty; never more
Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

Idon. Wild words for me to hear, for me,
an orphan
Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven;
And, if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope,
In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine
For closer care; — here, is no malady.

[Taking his arm.

Mar. There, is a malady —
(Striking his heart and forehead.) And here,
A mortal malady. — I am accurst:
All nature curses me, and in my heart
Thy curse is fixed; the truth must be laid bare.
It must be told, and borne. I am the man,
(Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not)
Presumptuous above all that ever breathed,
Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person
Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did become
An instrument of Fiends. Through me, through me
Thy Father perished.

Idon. Perished — by what mischance?

Mar. Beloved! — if I dared, so would I

Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen heart,
The extremes of suffering meet in absolute peace.

[He gives her a letter.

Idon. (reads). "Be not surprised if you hear
that some signal judgment has befallen
the man who calls himself your father; he
is now with me, as his signature will shew:
abstain from conjecture till you see me.

"HERBERT.
"MARMADUKE."

The writing Oswald's; the signature my Father's:
(Looks steadily at the paper). And here is
yours, — or do my eyes deceive me?
You have then seen my Father?

Mar. He has leaned
Upon this arm.

Idon. You led him towards the Convent?

Mar. That Convent was Stone-Arthur
Castle. Thither

We were his guides. I on that night re-

solved
That he should wait thy coming till the day
Of resurrection.

Idon. Miserable Woman,

Too quickly moved, too easily giving way
I put denial on thy suit, and hence,
With the disastrous issue of last night,
Thy perturbation, and these frantic words
Be calm, I pray thee!

Mar. Oswald —

Idon. Name him a

Enter female Beggar.

Beg. And he is dead! — that Moon
how shall I cross it?
By night, by day, never shall I be able
To travel half a mile alone. — Good Lady,
Forgive me! — Saints forgive me. Had thought
It would have come to this! —

Idon. What brings you hither? speak
Beg. (pointing to Marmaduke). This
nocent Gentleman. Sweet heavens
I told him
Such tales of your dead Father! — God
my judge,
I thought there was no harm: but that b
Man,
He bribed me with his gold, and looked fierce.
Mercy! I said I know not what — oh p
me —
I said, sweet Lady, you were not his Daq
ter —
Pity me, I am haunted; — thrice this day
My conscience made me wish to be stri
blind;
And then I would have prayed, and had
voice.

Idon. (to Marmaduke). Was it my l
ther? — no, no, no, for he
Was meek and patient, feeble, old and bli
Helpless, and loved me dearer than his li
— But hear me. For one question, I b
a heart
That will sustain me. Did you murder hi

Mar. No, not by stroke of arm. I le
learn the process;
Proof after proof was pressed upon my

Made evident, as seemed, by blacker gu
Whose impious folds enwrapped even th

And innocence, embodied in his looks,
His words and tones and gestures, did s

With me to aggravate his crimes, s

Ruin upon the cause for which they pleat
And flung it to the dogs: but I am raised
Above, or sunk below, all further sense
Of provocation. Leave me, with the weight
Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy
heart,
Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.
Coward I have been; know, there lies not
now
Within the compass of a mortal thought,
A deed that I would shrink from; — but to
endure,
That is my destiny. May it be thine:
Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.
When seas and continents shall lie between
us —
The wider space the better — we may
find
In such a course fit links of sympathy,
An incommunicable rivalship
Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond our
view.

[Confused voices — several of the band
enter — rush upon Oswald, and seize
him.
One of them. I would have dogged him
to the jaws of hell —
Osw. Ha! is it so! — That vagrant Hag!
— this comes
Of having left a thing like her alive!

Aside.
Several voices. Despatch him!
Osw. If I pass beneath a rock
And shout, and, with the echo of my voice,
Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it crush
me,
I die without dishonour. Famished, starved,
A Fool and Coward blended to my wish!

[Smiles scornfully and exultingly at
Marmaduke.
Wal. 'Tis done! (Stabs him).
Another of the Band. The ruthless
Traitor!
Mar. A rash deed! —
With that reproof I do resign a station
Of which I have been proud.
Wil. (approaching Marmaduke). O my
poor Master!
Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faithful
Wilfred,
Why art thou here? [Turning to Wallace.
Wallace, upon these Borders,
Many there be whose eyes will not want
cause
To weep that I am gone. Brothers in arms!
Raise on that dreary Waste a monument
That may record my story; nor let words—
Few must they be, and delicate in their
touch
As light itself—be these withheld from
Her
Who, through most wicked arts, was made
an orphan
By One who would have died a thousand
times,
To shield her from a moment’s harm. To
you,
Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the Lady,
By lowly nature reared, as if to make
her
In all things worthier of that noble birth,
Whose long-suspended rights are now on
the eve
Of restoration: with your tenderest care
Watch over her, I pray—sustain her——
Several of the Band (eagerly). Captain!

Mar. No more of that; in silence
my doom:
A hermitage has furnished fit relief
To some offenders: other penitents,
Less patient in their wretchedness, have
fallen,
Like the old Roman, on their own swan
point.
They had their choice: a wanderer must I
The Spectre of that innocent Man, to
guide.
No human ear shall ever hear me speak;
No human dwelling ever give me food,
Or sleep, or rest: but, over waste and
wild,
In search of nothing, that this earth can
give,
But expiation, will I wander on —
A Man by pain and thought compelled
to live,
Yet loathing life — till anger is appeased
In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to
die.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN
1797. 1800

This arose out of my observation of the af-
flecting music of these birds hanging in this
way in the London streets during the freshness
and stillness of the Spring morning.

At the corner of Wood Street, when day-
light appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has
sung for three years:
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has
heard
In the silence of morning the song of the
Bird.

’Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her?
She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury
glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of
Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of
the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with
her pail;

And a single small cottage, a nest like
dove’s,
The one only dwelling on earth that
loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and
shade:
The stream will not flow, and the hill
not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from
her eyes!

THE BIRTH OF LOVE
1797. 1842

Translated from some French stanzas
Francis Wrangham, and printed in “Poems
Francis Wrangham, M. A.”

When Love was born of heavenly line,
What dire intrigues disturbed Cythe
joy!
Till Venus cried, “A mother’s heart
mine;
None but myself shall nurse my boy.
WE ARE SEVEN

infant as he was, the child
that divine embrace enchanted lay;
by the beauty of the vase beguiled,
forgot the beverage — and pined away.

nd must my offspring languish in my
sight?"
Alive to all a mother’s pain,
Queen of Beauty thus her court
addressed)
No: Let the most discreet of all my train
receive him to his breast:
all, he is the God of young delight."

TENDERNESs with CANDOUR joined,
and GAIETY the charming office sought;
even DELICACY stayed behind:
but none of those fair Graces brought
herewith to nurse the child — and still
he pined.

me fond hearts to COMPLIANCE seemed
inclined;
But she had surely spoiled the boy:
And sad experience forbade a thought
the wild Goddess of VOLUPTIOUS JOY.

eg undecided lay th’ important choice,
of the beauteous court, at length, a voice
announced the name of HOPE: — The
conscious child
reached forth his little arms, and smiled.

s said ENJOYMENT (who averred
The charge belonged to her alone)
saus that HOPE had been preferred
Laid snares to make the babe her own.

I INNOCENCE the garb she took,
be blushing mien and downcast look;
And came her services to proffer:
nd HOPE (what has not Hope believed !)
y that seducing air deceived,
Accepted of the offer.

happened that, to sleep inclined,
Deluded HOPE for one short hour
To that false INNOCENCe’s power
ler little charge consigned.

The Goddess then her lap with sweetmeats
filled
And gave, in handfuls gave, the treacher-
ous store:
A wild delirium first the infant thrilled;
But soon upon her breast he sunk — to
wake no more.

A NIGHT-PIECE

1798. 1815

Composed on the road between Nether
Stowey and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly
recollect the very moment when I was struck,
as described, — “He looks up — the clouds are
split,” etc.

— The sky is overcast
With a continuous cloud of texture close,
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,
Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,
A dull, contracted circle, yielding light
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,
Chequering the ground — from rock, plant,
tree, or tower.
At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam
Startles the pensive traveller while he
treads
His lonesome path, with unobserving eye
Bent earthward; he looks up — the clouds are
split
Asunder, — and above his head he sees
The clear Moon, and the glory of the hea-
vens.
There, in a black-blue vault she sails along,
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small
And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss
Drive as she drives: how fast they wheel
away,
Yet vanish not! — the wind is in the tree,
But they are silent; — still they roll along
Immeasurably distant; and the vault,
Built round by those white clouds, enor-
mous clouds,
Still deepens its unfathomable depth.
At length the Vision closes; and the mind,
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

WE ARE SEVEN

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798,
under circumstances somewhat remarkable.
The little girl who is the heroine I met within
the area of Goodrich Castle in the year 1798.
Having left the Isle of Wight and crossed
Salisbury Plain, as mentioned in the preface to
“Guilt and Sorrow,” I proceeded by Bristol up
the Wye, and so on to North Wales, to the
Vale of Clwydd, where I spent my summer
under the roof of the father of my friend, Robert Jones. In reference to this Poem I will here mention one of the most remarkable facts in my own poetic history and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the spring of the year 1798, he, my Sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden, pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Lenton and the valley of Stones near it; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aikin. Accordingly we set off and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the "Ancient Mariner," founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend, Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention; but certain parts I myself suggested:—for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime, and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvock's Voyages a day or two before that while doubling Cape Horn they frequently saw Albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or fifteen feet. "Suppose," said I, "you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary Spirits of those regions take upon them to avenge the crime." The incident was thought fit for the purpose and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The Gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time; at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous after-thought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular:—

"And listened like a three years' child;  
The Mariner had his will."

These trifling contributions, all but one (which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded) slip out of his mind as they well might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a delightful tour, of which I have many plants, and some of them droll-enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The "Ancient Mariner" grew and grew till it became too important for our first object which was limited to our expectation of five pounds, and we began to talk of a Valu which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has in the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects taken from common life, but told at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium. Accordingly I wrote "The Id Boy," "Her eyes are wild," etc., "We are seven," "The Thorn," and some others return to "We are seven," the piece that call forth this note, I composed it while walking the grove at Alfoxden. My friends will deem it too trifling to relate that while walking to and fro I composed the last stanza first, beginning with the last line. When it was but finished, I came in and recited it to Mr. Coleridge and my Sister, and said, "A prologue stanza must be added, and I should be down to our little tea-meal with greater pleasure if my task were finished." I mentioned substance what I wished to be expressed. Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza thus:—

"A little child, dear brother Jem,—"

I objected to the rhyme, "dear brother Jem," as being ludicrous, but we all enjoyed the jest of hitching-in our friend, James T.—'s name who was familiarly called Jem. He was the brother of the dramatist, and this reminds of an anecdote which it may be worth while to notice. The said Jem got a sight of the Lyrical Ballads as it was going through press at Bristol, during which time I was residing in that city. One evening he came to me with a grave face, and said, "Wordsworth have seen the volume that Coleridge and I are about to publish. There is one poem in which I earnestly entreat you will cancel, for published, it will make you everlasting ridiculous." I answered that I felt much obliged by the interest he took in my good name as a writer, and begged to know what was the fortunate piece he alluded to. He said, "I called 'We are seven.'" Nay! I said I, it shall take its chance, however, and he left me in despair. I have only to add that in the spring of 1841 I revisited Goodrich Castle, having seen that part of the Wye since I was the little Girl there in 1793. It would have given me greater pleasure to have found in the neighbouring hamlet traces of one who had interested me so much; but that was impossible as unfortunately I did not even know his name. The ruin, from its position and f
AN ECDOTE FOR FATHERS

The anecdote begins with a description of a most impressive object. The speaker could not help but regret its solemnity, as it was not to be altered by a fantastic new castle set up on a hill which would be done by antiquity and nature with their united graces, remembrances, and associations.

— A SIMPLE Child,
that lightly draws its breath,
and feels its life in every limb, how should it know of death?

She was a little cottage Girl:
Her hair was thick with many a curl that clustered round her head.

And where are they? I pray you tell.
I answered, "Seven are we; and two of us at Conway dwell, and two are gone to sea."

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go, and he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply, "O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
"I was throwing words away; for still the little Maid would have her will, and said, "Nay, we are seven!"

AN ECDOTE FOR FATHERS

1798. 1798

"Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges." — EUSEBIUS.

This was suggested in front of Alfoxden. The Boy was a son of my friend, Basil Montagu, who had been two or three years under our care. The name of Kilve is from a village on the Bristol Channel, about a mile from Alfoxden; and the name of Lyswyn Farm was taken from a beautiful spot on the Wye. When Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and I, had
been visiting the famous John Thelwall, who had taken refuge from politics, after a trial for high treason, with a view to bring up his family by the profits of agriculture, which proved as unfortunate a speculation as that he had fled from, Coleridge and he had both been public lecturers; Coleridge mingling, with his politics, Theology, from which the other eloquencer abstained, unless it were for the sake of a sneer. This quandam community of public employment induced Thelwall to visit Coleridge at Nether Stowey, where he fell in my way. He really was a man of extraordinary talent, an affectionate husband, and a good father. Though brought up in the City, he was truly sensible of the beauty of natural objects. I remember once, when Coleridge, he, and I were seated together upon the turf on the brink of a stream in the most beautiful part of the most beautiful glen of Alfoxden, Coleridge exclaimed, "This is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world." — "Nay," said Thelwall, "to make one forget them altogether." The visit of this man to Coleridge was, as I believe Coleridge has related, the occasion of a spy being sent by Government to watch our proceedings, which were, I can say with truth, such as the world at large would have thought ludicrously harmless.

I HAVE a boy of five years old;
His face is fair and fresh to see;
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
Our quiet home all full in view,
And held such intermittent talk
As we went to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,
Our pleasant home when spring began,
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
Some fond regrets to entertain;
With so much happiness to spare,
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me — and each trace
Of inward sadness had its charm;

Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
And graceful in his rustic dress!
And, as we talked, I questioned him,
In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"
I said, and took him by the arm,
"On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green
Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,
While still I held him by the arm;
And said, At Kilve I'd rather be
Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so:
My little Edward, tell me why." —
"I cannot tell, I do not know." —
"Why, this is strange," said I;

"For, here are woods, hills smooth and warm:
There surely must some reason be
Why you would change sweet Liswyn for
Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy hung down his head,
He blushed with shame, nor made reply;
And three times to the child I said,
"Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised — there was in sight,
It caught his eye, he saw it plain —
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
And eased his mind with this reply:
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock;
And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth part
Of what from thee I learn.

THE THORN

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. Arose out of my serving, on the ridge of Quantock Hill,
my day, a thorn which I had often past, in
sun bright weather, without noticing it.

The sky in this picture slyly dome,
but it reminds one too much of
Wilson. The only fault, however, of any
conquest is the female figure, which is too old
and decrepit for one likely to frequent an emi-
ience on such a call.

I
There is a Thorn — it looks so old,
that fact, you'd find it hard to say
how it could ever have been young,
it looks so old and grey.
Lot higher than a two years' child,
stands erect, this aged Thorn;
is leaves it has, no prickly points;
is a mass of knotted joints,
wretched thing forlorn.
stands erect, and like a stone
with lichens is it overgrown.

II
Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
with lichens to the very top,
and hung with heavy tufts of moss,
melancholy crop;
From the earth these moeses creep,
and this poor Thorn they clasp it round
so close, you'd say that they are bent
with plain and manifest intent
to drag it to the ground;
and all have joined in one endeavour
to bury this poor Thorn for ever.

III
High on a mountain's highest ridge,
There oft the stormy winter gale
sweeps from vale to vale;
at five yards from the mountain path,
Thorn you on your left espying;
at to the left, three yards beyond,
see a little muddy pond
water — never dry
but of compass small, and bare
swells and parching air.

IV
"And, close beside this aged Thorn,
There is a fresh and lovely sight,
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
Just half a foot in height.
All lovely colours there you see,
All colours that were ever seen;
And mossy network too is there,
As if by hand of lady fair
The work had woven been;
And cups, the darlings of the eye,
So deep is their vermilion dye.

V
"Ah me! what lovely tints are there
Of olive green and scarlet bright,
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
Green, red, and pearly white!
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
Which close beside the Thorn you see,
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
Is like an infant's grave in size,
As like as like can be:
But never, never any where,
An infant's grave was half so fair.

VI
"Now would you see this aged Thorn,
This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,
You must take care and choose your time
The mountain when to cross.
For oft there sits between the heap
So like an infant's grave in size,
And that same pond of which I spoke,
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,
And to herself she cries,
'Oh misery! oh misery!
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'

VII
"At all times of the day and night
This wretched Woman thither goes;
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows;
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits
When the blue daylight's in the skies
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And to herself she cries,
'Oh misery! oh misery!
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'

VIII
"Now therefore, thus, by day and night,
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,
Thus to the dreary mountain-top
Does this poor Woman go?
And why sits she beside the Thorn
When the blue daylight’s in the sky,
Or when the whirlwind’s on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And wherefore does she cry? —
O wherefore? wherefore? tell me why
Does she repeat that doleful cry?"

"I cannot tell; I wish I could;
For the true reason no one knows:
But would you gladly view the spot,
The spot to which she goes;
The hillock like an infant’s grave,
The pond — and Thorn, so old and grey;
Pass by her door — ’tis seldom shut —
And, if you see her in her hut —
Then to the spot away!
I never heard of such as dare
Approach the spot when she is there."

"But wherefore to the mountain-top
Can this unhappy Woman go?
Whatever star is in the skies,
Whatever wind may blow?"
"Full twenty years are past and gone
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave with a maiden’s true good-will
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
While friends and kindred all approved
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

"And they had fixed the wedding day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another Maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other Maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went —
Poor Martha! on that woeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

"They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen.
What could she seek? — or wish to hide?
Her state to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often was she sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
O guilty Father — would that death
Had saved him from that breach of faith

"Sad case for such a brain to hold
Communion with a stirring child!
Sad case, as you may think, for one
Who had a brain so wild!
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen
Held that the unborn infant wronged
About its mother’s heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

"More know I not, I wish I did,
And it should all be told to you;
For what became of this poor child
No mortal ever knew;
Nay — if a child to her was born
No earthly tongue could ever tell;
And if ’t was born alive or dead,
Far less could this with proof be said;
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

"And all that winter, when at night
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,
’Twas worth your while, though in the da
The churchyard path to seek!
For many a time and oft were heard
Cries coming from the mountain head:
Some plainly living voices were;
And others, I’ve heard many swear,
Were voices of the dead:
I cannot think, what’er they say,
They had to do with Martha Ray.

"But that she goes to this old Thorn,
The Thorn which I described to you,
And there sits in a scarlet cloak
I will be sworn is true.
For one day with my telescope,
To view the ocean wide and bright,
When to this country first I came,
Ere I had heard of Martha’s name,
GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL

I climbed the mountain’s height: —
A storm came on, and I could see
No object higher than my knee.

XVII
’T was mist and rain, and storm and
rain:
No screen, no fence could I discover;
And then the wind! in sooth, it was
A wind full ten times over.
I looked around, I thought I saw
A jutting crag,—and off I ran,
Head foremost, through the driving rain,
The shelter of the crag to gain;
And, as I am a man,
Instead of jutting crag, I found
A Woman seated on the ground.

XVIII
"I did not speak — I saw her face;
Her face! — it was enough for me;
I turned about and heard her cry,
‘Oh misery! oh misery!’
And there she sits, until the moon
Through half the clear blue sky will go;
And, when the little breezes make
The waters of the pond to shake,
As all the country know,
She shudders, and you hear her cry,
‘Oh misery! oh misery!’"

XIX
"But what’s the Thorn? and what the
pond?
And what the hill of moss to her?
And what the creeping breeze that comes
The little pond to stir?"
"I cannot tell; but some will say
She bade her baby on the tree;
Some say she drowned it in the pond,
Which is a little step beyond:
But all and each agree,
The little Babe was buried there,
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XX
I’ve heard, the moss is spotted red
With drops of that poor infant’s blood;
But kill a new-born infant thus,
I do not think she could!
Some say, if to the pond you go,
And fix on it a steady view,
The shadow of a babe you trace,
A baby and a baby’s face,
And that it looks at you;

Whene’er you look on it, ’tis plain
The baby looks at you again.

XXI
“And some had sworn an oath that she
Should be to public justice brought;
And for the little infant’s bones
With spades they would have sought.
But instantly the hill of moss
Before their eyes began to stir!
And, for full fifty yards around,
The grass — it shook upon the ground!
Yet all do still aver
The little Babe lies buried there,
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXII
“I cannot tell how this may be,
But plain it is the Thorn is bound
With heavy tufts of moss that strive
To drag it to the ground;
And this I know, full many a time,
When she was on the mountain high,
By day, and in the silent night,
When all the stars shone clear and bright,
That I have heard her cry,
‘Oh misery! oh misery!
Oh woe is me! oh misery!’"

GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL
A TRUE STORY
1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. The incident from
Dr. Darwin’s Zoënomia.

Oh! what’s the matter? what’s the matter?
What is it that ails young Harry Gill?
That evermore his teeth they chatter,
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,
Good duffle grey, and flannel fine;
He has a blanket on his back,
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,
’Tis all the same with Harry Gill;
The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
At night, at morning, and at noon,
’Tis all the same with Harry Gill;
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!
Young Harry was a lusty drover,
And who so stout of limb as he?
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;
His voice was like the voice of three. 50
Old Goody Blake was old and poor;
Ill fed she was, and thinly clad;
And any man who passed her door
Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling:
And then her three hours' work at night,
Alas! 't was hardly worth the telling,
It would not pay for candle-light.
Remote from sheltered village-green,
On a hill's northern side she dwelt,
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,
Two poor old Dames, as I have known,
Will often live in one small cottage;
But she, poor Woman! housed alone.
'T was well enough when summer came,
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,
Then at her door the comely Dame
Would sit, as any linnet, gay.

But when the ice our streams did fetter,
Oh then how her old bones would shake!
You would have said, if you had met her,
'T was a hard time for Goody Blake.
Her evenings then were dull and dead:
Sad case it was, as you may think,
For very cold to go to bed,
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her! whene'er in winter
The winds at night had made a rout;
And scattered many a lusty splinter
And many a rotten bough about.
Yet never had she, well or sick,
As every man who knew her says,
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,
And made her poor old bones to ache,
Could any thing be more alluring
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake? 50
And, now and then, it must be said,
When her old bones were cold and chill,
She left her fire, or left her bed,
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected
This trespass of old Goody Blake;
And vowed that she should be detected—
That he on her would vengeance take.
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,
And to the fields his road would take;
And there, at night, in frost and snow,
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,
Thus looking out did Harry stand:
The moon was full and shining clearly,
And crisp with frost the stubble land.
— He hears a noise — he's all awake—
Again? — on tip-toe down the hill
He softly creeps — 't is Goody Blake;
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill!

Right glad was he when he beheld her:
Stick after stick did Goody pull:
He stood behind a bush of elder,
Till she had filled her apron full.
When with her load she turned about,
The by-way back again to take;
He started forward, with a shout,
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,
And by the arm he held her fast,
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,
And cried, "I've caught you then last!" —
Then Goody, who had nothing said,
Her bundle from her lap let fall;
And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,
While Harry held her by the arm —
"God! who art never out of hearing,
O may he never more be warm!"
The cold, cold moon above her head,
Thus on her knees did Goody pray;
Young Harry heard what she had said:
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow
That he was cold and very chill:
His face was gloom, his heart was slow,
Row,
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!
That day he wore a riding-coat,
But not a whitt the warmer he:
Another was on Thursday brought,
And ere the Sabbath he had three.
HER EYES ARE WILD

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden. The subject was reported to me by a lady of Bristol, who had seen the poor creature.

I

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,
The sun has burnt her coal-black hair;
Her eyebrows have a rustv stain,
And she came far from over the main.
She has a baby on her arm,
Or else she were alone:
And underneath the hay-stack warm,
And on the greenwood stone,
She talked and sung the woods among,
And it was in the English tongue.

II

"Sweet babe! they say that I am mad,
But nay, my heart is far too glad;
And I am happy when I sing
Full many a sad and doleful thing:
Then, lovely baby, do not fear!
I pray thee have no fear of me;
But safe as in a cradle, here,
My lovely baby! thou shalt be:
To thee I know too much I owe;
I cannot work thee any woe.

III

"A fire was once within my brain;
And in my head a dull, dull pain;
And fiendish faces, one, two, three,
Hung at my breast, and pulled at me;
But then there came a sight of joy;
It came at once to do me good;
I waked, and saw my little boy,
My little boy of flesh and blood;
Oh joy for me that sight to see!
For he was here, and only he.

IV

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!
It cools my blood; it cools my brain;
Thy lips I feel them, baby! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh! press me with thy little hand;
It loosens something at my chest;
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze I see is in the tree:
It comes to cool my babe and me.

V

"Oh! love me, love me, little boy!
Thou art thy mother's only joy;
And do not dread the waves below,
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go;
The high crag cannot work me harm,
Nor leaping torrents when they bowl;
The babe I carry on my arm,
He saves for me my precious soul;
Then happy lie; for blest am I;
Without me my sweet babe would die.

VI

"Then do not fear, my boy! for thee
Bold as a lion will I be;
And I will always be thy guide,
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
I'll build an Indian bower; I know
The leaves that make the softest bed:
And, if from me thou wilt not go,
But still be true till I am dead,
My pretty thing! then thou shalt sing
As merry as the birds in spring.

VII

"Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest;
'Tis all thine own! — and, if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love,
And what if my poor cheek be brown?
'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be.
VIII

"Dread not their taunts, my little Life;
I am thy father's wedded wife;
And underneath the spreading tree
We two will live in honesty.
If his sweet boy he could forsake,
With me he never would have stayed:
From him no harm my babe can take;
But he, poor man! is wretched made;
And every day we two will pray
For him that's gone and far away.

IX

"I'll teach my boy the sweetest things:
I'll teach him how the owlet sings.
My little babe! thy lips are still,
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.
—Where art thou gone, my own dear child?
What wicked looks are those I see?
Alas! alas! that look so wild,
It never, never came from me:
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
Then I must be for ever sad.

X

"Oh! smile on me, my little lamb!
For I thy own dear mother am:
My love for thee has well been tried:
I've sought thy father far and wide.
I know the poisons of the shade;
I know the earth-nuts fit for food:
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid:
We'll find thy father in the wood.
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away!
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN;
WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED

1798. 1798

This old man had been huntsman to the
squires of Alfoxden, which, at the time we oc-
cupied it, belonged to a minor. The old man's
cottage stood upon the common, a little way
from the entrance to Alfoxden Park. But it
had disappeared. Many other changes had
taken place in the adjoining village, which I
could not but notice with a regret more natural
than well-considered. Improvements but rarely
appear such to those who, after long intervals of
time, revisit places they have had much pleasure

in. It is unnecessary to add, the fact was men-
tioned in the poem; and I have, after an
interval of forty-five years, the image of the
old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had
seen him yesterday. The expression when the
hounds were out, "I dearly love their voice,
was word for word from his own lips.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Iovar-hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo banded, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage;
To blithers tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change! — bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred

Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His Master's dead, — and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Iovar;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
scrap of land they have, but they're poorest of the poor.

his scrap of land he from the heath closed when he was stronger;
at what to them avails the land which he can till no longer?

ft, working by her Husband's side, 50

or she, with scanty cause for pride,

stouter of the two.

and, though you with your utmost skill

from labour could not wear them,

is little, very little—all

hat they can do between them.

ew months of life has he in store

is he to you will tell,

for still, the more he works, the more

to his weak ankles swell.

gentle Reader, I perceive

how patiently you've waited,

and now I fear that you expect

some tale will be related.

Reader! had you in your mind

such stores as silent thought can bring;

gentle Reader! you would find

tale in every thing.

What more I have to say is short,

And you must kindly take it:

It is no tale; but, should you think,

Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see

This old Man doing all he could

to unearth the root of an old tree,

A stump of rotten wood.

The mattock tottered in his hand;

So vain was his endeavour,

That at the root of the old tree

He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,

Give me your tool," to him I said;

And at the word right gladly he

Received my proffered aid.

I struck, and with a single blow

The tangled root I severed,

At which the poor old Man so long

And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,

And thanks and praises seemed to run

So fast out of his heart, I thought

They never would have done.

— I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds

With coldness still returning;

Alas! the gratitude of men

Hath often left me mourning.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

1798. 1798

Actually composed while I was sitting by the side of the brook that runs down from the Comb, in which stands the village of Alford, through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a chosen resort of mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock so as to make a waterfall considerable for that country, and across the pool below had fallen a tree, an ash if I rightly remember, from which rose perpendicularly, boughs in search of the light intercepted by the deep shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green that for want of sunshine had faded into almost lily-white; and from the underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended long and beautiful tresses of ivy which waved gently in the breeze that might poetically speaking be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied of course in proportion to the power of water in the brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited this spot, after an interval of more than forty years, this interesting feature of the scene was gone. To the owner of the place I could not but regret that the beauty of this retired part of the grounds had not tempted him to make it more accessible by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep along without difficulty.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,

While in a grove I sate reclined,

In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts

Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link

The human soul that through me ran;

And much it grieved my heart to think

What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,

The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;

And 'tis my faith that every flower

Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,

Their thoughts I cannot measure:
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

Edward will come with you; — and, pray
Put on with speed your woodland dress!
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar:
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth:
— It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason:
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey:
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls:
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

“A WHIRL-BLAST FROM BEHIND THE HILL”

1798. 1800

Observed in the holly-grove at Alfoxden
where these verses were written in the spring
1798. I had the pleasure of again seeing, with
dear friends, this grove in unimpaired beauty
forty-one years after.

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound:
Then — all at once the air was still,
And showers of hailstones pattered round.
Where leafless oaks towered high above,
I sat within an undergrove
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;
A fairer bowery was never seen.
From year to year the spacious floor
With withered leaves is covered o'er,
all the year the bower is green.
But see! where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop;
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
Yet here, and there, and everywhere
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
as if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

1798. 1798

This poem is a favourite among the Quakers,
As I have learnt on many occasions. It was
composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in
the spring of 1798.

"Why, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?"

"Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Eathwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,

That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away."

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

1798. 1798

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.
THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN

1798. 1798

Written at Alfoxden, where I read Hearne’s Journey with deep interest. It was composed for the volume of Lyrical Ballads.

When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work Hearne’s Journey from Hudson’s Bay to the Northern Ocean. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.

I

Before I see another day,
Oh let my body die away!
In sleep I heard the northern gleams;
The stars, they were among my dreams;
In rustling conflict through the skies,
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,
And yet they are upon my eyes,
And yet I am alive;
Before I see another day,
Oh let my body die away!

II

My fire is dead: it knew no pain;
Yet is it dead, and I remain:
All stiff with ice the ashes lie;
And they are dead, and I will die.
When I was well, I wished to live,
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire;
But they to me no joy can give,
No pleasure now, and no desire.
Then here contented will I lie!
Alone, I cannot fear to die.

III

Alas! ye might have dragged me on
Another day, a single one!
Too soon I yielded to despair;
Why did ye listen to my prayer?

When ye were gone my limbs were stronger,
And oh, how grievously I rue,
That, afterwards, a little longer,
My friends, I did not follow you!
For strong and without pain I lay,
Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

IV

My Child! they gave thee to another,
A woman who was not thy mother.
When from my arms my Babe they took,
On me how strangely did he look!
Through his whole body something ran,
A most strange working did I see;
—As if he strove to be a man,
That he might pull the sledge for me:
And then he stretched his arms, how wild!
Oh mercy! like a helpless child.

V

My little joy! my little pride!
In two days more I must have died.
Then do not weep and grieve for me;
I feel I must have died with thee.
O wind, that o’er my head art flying
The way my friends their course did bend,
I should not feel the pain of dying,
Could I with thee a message send;
Too soon, my friends, ye went away;
For I had many things to say.

VI

I'll follow you across the snow;
Ye travel heavily and slow;
In spite of all my weary pain
I'll look upon your tents again.
—My fire is dead, and snowy white
The water which beside it stood:
The wolf has come to me to-night,
And he has stolen away my food.
For ever left alone am I;
Then wherefore should I fear to die?

VII

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun;
I cannot lift my limbs to know
If they have any life or no.
My poor forsaken Child, if I
For once could have thee close to me,
With happy heart I then would die,
And my last thought would happy be;
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,
Nor shall I see another day.
THE LAST OF THE FLOCK
1798. 1798

Produced at the same time and for the same purpose. The incident occurred in the village of Holford, close by Alfoxden.

I
In distant countries have I been, And yet I have not often seen A healthy man, a man full grown, Weep in the public roads, alone. But such a one, on English ground, And in the broad highway, I met; Along the broad highway he came, His cheeks with tears were wet: Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad; And in his arms a Lamb he had.

II
He saw me, and he turned aside, As if he wished himself to hide: And with his coat did then essay To wipe those briny tears away. I followed him, and said, "My friend, What ails you? wherefore weep you so?" — "Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb, He makes my tears to flow. To-day I fetched him from the rock; He is the last of all my flock.

III
"When I was young, a single man, And after youthful follies ran, Though little given to care and thought, Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought; And other sheep from her I raised, As healthy sheep as you might see; And then I married, and was rich As I could wish to be; Of sheep I numbered a full score, And every year increased my store.

IV
"Year after year my stock it grew; And from this one, this single ewe, Full fifty comely sheep I raised, As fine a flock as ever grazed! Upon the Quantock hills they fed; They thrrove, and we at home did thrive: — This lusty Lamb of all my store Is all that is alive; And now I care not if we die, And perish all of poverty.

V
"Six Children, Sir! had I to feed; Hard labour in a time of need! My pride was tamed, and in our grief I of the Parish asked relief. They said, I was a wealthy man; My sheep upon the uplands fed, And it was fit that thence I took Whereof to buy us bread. 'Do this: how can we give to you,' They cried, 'what to the poor is due?'

VI
"I sold a sheep, as they had said, And bought my little children bread, And they were healthy with their food, For me — it never did me good. A woeful time it was for me, To see the end of all my gains, The pretty flock which I had reared With all my care and pains, To see it melt like snow away — For me it was a woeful day.

VII
"Another still! and still another! A little lamb, and then its mother! It was a vein that never stopped — Like blood — drops from my heart they dropped. Till thirty were not left alive They dwindled, dwindled, one by one, And I may say, that many a time I wished they all were gone — Reckless of what might come at last Were but the bitter struggle past.

VIII
"To wicked deeds I was inclined, And wicked fancies crossed my mind; And every man I chanced to see, I thought he knew some ill of me: No peace, no comfort could I find, No ease, within doors or without; And, crazily and wearily I went my work about; And oft was moved to flee from home, And hide my head where wild beasts roam.

IX
"Sir! 't was a precious flock to me As dear as my own children be; For daily with my growing store I loved my children more and more. Alas! it was an evil time;
God cursed me in my sore distress;  
I prayed, yet every day I thought  
I loved my children less;  
And every week, and every day,  
My flock it seemed to melt away.

"They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!  
From ten to five, from five to three,  
A lamb, a wether, and a ewe;—  
And then at last from three to two;  
And, of my fifty, yesterday  
I had but only one:  
And here it lies upon my arm,  
Alas! and I have none;—  
To-day I fetched it from the rock;  
It is the last of all my flock."

THE IDIOT BOY

1798. 1798

The last stanza — "The Cocks did crow to-  
whoo, to-whoo, And the sun did shine so cold" —  
was the foundation of the whole. The words  
were reported to me by my dear friend, Thomas  
Poole; but I have since heard the same repeated  
of other Idiots. Let me add that this long poem  
was composed in the groves of Alfoxden, almost  
extempore; not a word, I believe, being cor-  
corrected, though one stanza was omitted. I men-  
tion this in gratitude to those happy moments,  
for, in truth, I never wrote anything with so  
much glee.

'Tis eight o'clock, — a clear March night,  
The moon is up, — the sky is blue,  
The owlet, in the moonlight air,  
Shouts from nobody knows where;  
He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
Hallo! halloo! a long halloo!

— Why bustle thus about your door,  
What means this bustle, Betty Foy?  
Why are you in this mighty fret?  
And why on horseback have you set  
Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy?

Scarcely a soul is out of bed;  
Good Betty, put him down again;  
His lips with joy they burn at you;  
But, Betty! what has he to do  
With stirrup, saddle, or with rein?

But Betty 's bent on her intent;  
For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,

Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
Is sick, and makes a piteous moan  
As if her very life would fail.

There 's not a house within a mile,  
No hand to help them in distress;  
Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,  
And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband 's at the wood,  
Where by the week he doth abide,  
A woodman in the distant vale;  
There 's none to help poor Susan Gale;  
What must be done? what will betide?

And Betty from the lane has fetched  
Her Pony, that is mild and good;  
Whether he be in joy or pain,  
Feeding at will along the lane,  
Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim, —  
And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
Has on the well-girl saddle set  
(The like was never heard of yet)  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay  
Across the bridge and through the dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,  
There is no need of whip or wand;  
For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
And with a hurly-burly now  
He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
The Boy, who is her best delight,  
Both what to follow, what to shun,  
What do, and what to leave undone,  
How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,  
Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that you  
Come home again, nor stop at all, —  
Come home again, what's'er befall,  
My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,  
Both with his head and with his hand.
THE IDIOT BOY

That, should he lose his eyes and ears,
And should he live a thousand years,
He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks!
And when he thinks, his pace is slack;
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,
And far into the moonlight dale,
And by the church, and o'er the down,
To bring a Doctor from the town,
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,
Is in the middle of her story,
What speedy help her Boy will bring,
With many a most diverting thing,
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,
By this time is not quite so flurried:
Demure with porringer and plate
She sits, as if in Susan's fate
Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman! she,
You plainly in her face may read it,
Could lend out of that moment's store
Five years of happiness or more
To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then
With Betty all was not so well;
And to the road she turns her ears,
And thence full many a sound she hears,
Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;
"As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again;
They'll both be here — 'tis almost ten —
Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;
The clock gives warning for eleven;
'Tis on the stroke — "He must be near,"
Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,
As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
And Johnny is not yet in sight:
Then off she hies; but with a prayer
That God poor Susan's life would spare,
Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,
And far into the moonlight dale;
And how she ran, and how she walked,
And all that to herself she talked,
Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,
In great and small, in round and square,
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,
In bush and brake, in black and green;
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, every where.

And while she crossed the bridge, the came
A thought with which her heart is sore—
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
To hunt the moon within the brook,
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,
Alone amid a prospect wide;
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse
Among the fern or in the gorse;
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"O saints! what is become of him?
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,
Where he will stay till he is dead;
Or, sadly he has been mised,
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

"Or him that wicked Pony's carried
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall;
Or in the castle he's pursuing
Among the ghosts his own undoing;
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,
While to the town she posts away;
"If Susan had not been so ill,
Alas! I should have had him still,
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
The Doctor's self could hardly spare:
Unworthy things she talked, and wild;
Even he, of cattle the most mild,
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,
And to the Doctor's door she hies;

—The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,
But Betty is not quite at ease;
And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,
On Johnny vile reflections cast:
"A little idle sauntering Thing!"
With other names, an endless string;
But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,
That happy time all past and gone,
"How can it be he is so late?
The Doctor, he has made him wait;
Susan! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,
And Betty's in a sad quandary;
And then there's nobody to say
If she must go, or she must stay!
—She's in a sad quandary.

The clock is on the stroke of one;
But neither Doctor nor his Guide
Appears along the moonlight road;
There's neither horse nor man abroad,
And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear
Of sad mischances not a few:
That Johnny may perhaps be drowned,
Or lost, perhaps, and never found;
Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this
With, "God forbid it should be true!"
At the first word that Susan said
Cried Betty, rising from the bed,
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you.

"I must be gone, I must away:
Consider, Johnny's but half-wise;
Susan, we must take care of him,
If he is hurt in life or limb"—
"Oh God forbid!" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do?" says Betty, going,
"What can I do to ease your pain?
Good Susan tell me, and I will stay;
I fear you're in a dreadful way,
But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go! good Betty, go!
There's nothing that can ease my pain."
'Tis silence all on every side;  
'the town so long, the town so wide,  
s silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,  
he lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap;  
he Doctor at the casement shows  
is glimmering eyes that peep and doze!  
and one hand rubs his old night-cap.

O Doctor! Doctor! where's my  
Johnny?"

'I am here, what is't you want with me?"  
'O Sir! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
and I have lost my poor dear Boy,  
you know him — him you often see;

'He's not so wise as some folks be:"  
The devil take his wisdom!" said  
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,  
'What, Woman! should I know of him?"  
And, grumbling, he went back to bed!

'O woe is me! O woe is me!  
Here will I die; here will I die;  
I thought to find my lost one here,  
But he is neither far nor near,  
Oh! what a wretched Mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;  
Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain  
If she had heart to knock again;  
— The clock strikes three — a dismal knell!

Then up along the town she hies,  
No wonder if her senses fail;  
This piteous news so much it shocked her,  
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,  
And she can see a mile of road:  
"O cruel! I'm almost three-score;  
Each night as this was ne'er before,  
There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear  
The foot of horse, the voice of man;  
The streams with softest sound are flowing,  
The grass you almost hear it growing,  
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night  
Are shouting to each other still:

Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob,  
They lengthen out the tremulous sob,  
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,  
A green-grown pond she just has past,  
And from the brink she hurries fast,  
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;  
Such tears she never shed before;  
"Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!  
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy!  
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:  
The Pony he is mild and good,  
And we have always used him well;  
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,  
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;  
She thinks no more of deadly sin;  
If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
The last of all her thoughts would be  
To drown herself therein.

O Reader! now that I might tell  
What Johnny and his Horse are doing,  
What they've been doing all this time,  
Oh could I put it into rhyme,  
A most delightful tale pursuing!

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!  
He with his Pony now doth roam  
The cliffs and peaks so high that are;  
To lay his hands upon a star,  
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
His face unto his horse's tail,  
And, still and mute, in wonder lost;  
All silent as a horseman-ghost,  
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep;  
A fierce and dreadful hunter he;  
You valley, now so trim and green,  
In five months' time, should he be seen,  
A desert wilderness will be!

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,  
And like the very soul of evil,
He's galloping away, away,
And so will gallop on for aye,
The bane of all that dread the devil!

I to the Muses have been bound
These fourteen years, by strong indentures.
O gentle Muses! let me tell
But half of what to him befell;
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses! is this kind?
Why will ye thus my suit repel?
Why of your further aid bereave me?
And can ye thus unfriend me?
Ye Muses! whom I love so well?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,
Which thunders down with headlong force,
Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,
As careless as if nothing were,
Sits upright as a feeding horse?

Unto his horse — there feeding free,
He seems, I think, the rein to give;
Of moon or stars he takes no heed;
Of such we in romances read:
— 'Tis Johnny! Johnny! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too!
Where is she, where is Betty Foy?
She hardly can sustain her fears;
The roaring waterfall she hears,
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold:
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy!
She's coming from among the trees,
And now all full in view she sees
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too:
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy?
It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,
'Tis he whom you so long have lost
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again — her arms are up —
She screams — she cannot move for joy;
She darts, as with a torrent's force,
She almost has o'erturned the Horse,
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burns, and laughs aloud;
Whether in cunning or in joy

I cannot tell; but while he laughs,
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs
To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,
And now is at the Pony's head, —
On that side now, and now on this;
And, almost stifled with her bliss,
A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy;
She's happy here, is happy there,
She is uneasy every where;
Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when
She knows not, happy Betty Foy!
The little Pony glad may be,
But he is milder far than she,
You hardly can perceive his joy.

"Oh! Johnny, never mind the Doctor;
You've done your best, and that is all."
She took the reins, when this was said,
And gently turned the Pony's head
From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,
The moon was setting on the hill,
So pale you scarcely looked at her:
The little birds began to stir,
Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,
Wind slowly through the woody dale;
And who is she, betimes abroad,
That hobbles up the steep rough road?
Who is it, but old Susan Gale?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought;
And many dreadful fears beset her,
Both for her Messenger and Nurse;
And, as her mind grew worse and worse,
Her body — it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,
On all sides doubts and terrors met her;
Point after point did she discuss;
And, while her mind was fighting thus,
Her body still grew better.

"Alas! what is become of them?
These fears can never be endured;
"Till to the wood." — The word scarce said, 

And Susan rise up from her bed, 

As if by magic cured.

Way she goes up hill and down, 

And to the wood at length is come; 

He spies her Friends, she shouts a greeting; 

And I in it is a merry meeting ) y 430 

As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last, 

While our four travellers homeward wend; 

The owls have hooted all night long, 

And with the owls began my song, 

And with the owls must end.

For while they all were travelling home, 

Said Betty, "Tell us, Johnny, do, 

Where all this long night you have been, 

What you have heard, what you have seen: 

And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard 

The owls in tuneful concert strive; 

No doubt too he the moon had seen; 

For in the moonlight he had been 

From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he 

Made answer, like a traveller bold, 

(He very words I give to you,) 

"The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo, 450 

And the sun did shine so cold!" 

—Thus answered Johnny in his glory, 

And that was all his travel's story.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798

1798. 1798

No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the little volume of which so much has been said in these Notes. — (The Lyrical Ballads, as first published at Bristol by Cottle.)

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the length 

Of five long winters! and again I hear 

These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs 

With a soft inland murmur. — Once again 

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, 

That on a wild secluded scene impress 

Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect 

The landscape with the quiet of the sky. 

The day is come when I again repose 

Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10 

These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts, 

Which at this season, with their unripe fruits, 

Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves 

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see 

These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines 

Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms, 

Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke 

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees! 

With some uncertain notice, as might seem 

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20 

Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire 

The Hermit sits alone. 

These beauteous forms, 

Through a long absence, have not been to me 

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye: 

But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din 

Of towns and cities, I have owed to them 

In hours of weariness, sensations sweet, 

Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart; 

And passing even into my purer mind, 

With tranquil restoration: — feelings too of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps, 

As have no slight or trivial influence 

On that best portion of a good man's life, 

His little, nameless, unremembered, acts 

Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust, 

To them I may have owed another gift, 

Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood, 

In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft —
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads,
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then
to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall ever prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
to blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh!
Then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing
Thoughts my tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes
These gleams
Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Aweary’d in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
But after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
These dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR

1798. 1800

Observed, and with great benefit to my own heart, when I was a child: written at Racedown and Alfoxden in my twenty-third year. The political economists were about that time beginning their war upon mendicity in all its forms, and by implication, if not directly, on alms-giving also. This heartless process has been carried as far as it can go by the amended poor-law bill, though the inhumanity that prevails in this measure is somewhat disguised by the profession that one of its objects is to throw the poor upon the voluntary donations of their neighbours; that is, if rightly interpreted, to force them into a condition between relief in the Union poorhouse, and alms robbed of their Christian grace and spirit, as being forced rather from the benevolent than given by them; while the avaricious and selfish, and all in fact but the humane and charitable, are at liberty to keep all they possess from their distressed brethren.

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk;
And he was seated, by the highway side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged Man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
That overays the pile; and, from a bag
All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one;
And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
Of idle computation. In the sun,
Upon the second step of that small pile,
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
He sat, and ate his food in solitude;
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
Fell on the ground; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
Approached within the length of half his staff.
Him from my childhood have I known; and then
He was so old, he seems not older now;
He travels on, a solitary Man,
So helpless in appearance, that for him
The sauntering Horseman throws not with a slack
And careless hand his alms upon the ground, but stops,—that he may safely lodge the coin
Within the old Man’s hat; nor quits him so, but still, when he has given his horse the rein,
Watches the aged Beggar with a look Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends The toll-gate, when in summer at her door She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees The aged beggar coming, quits her work, and lifts the latch for him that he may pass. The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o’ertake
The aged Beggar in the woody lane, Shouts to him from behind; and if, thus warned,
The old man does not change his course, the boy
Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside, and passes gently by, without a curse Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.
He travels on, a solitary Man; his age has no companion. On the ground his eyes are turned, and, as he moves along They move along the ground; and, evermore,
Instead of common and habitual sight Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale, And the blue sky, one little span of earth Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day, Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground, He plies his weary journey; seeing still, And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track, The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left Impressed on the white road,—in the same line,
At distance still the same. Poor Traveller! His staff trails with him; scarcely do his feet Disturb the summer dust; he is so still In look and motion, that the cottage cure Ere he has passed the door, will turn away Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls The vacant and the busy, maids and youth, And urchins newly breeched—all pass by:
Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.
But deem not this Man useless.—State men! ye
Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a brolm still ready in your hand To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud, Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
A burthen of the earth! That is Nature’s law That none, the meanest of created things Or forms created the most vile and brutish, The dullest or most noxious, should exist Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being inseparably linked. Then be assured That least of all can aught—that is owned The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime Which man is born to—sink, howe’er despised,
So low as to be scorned without a sin; Without offence to God cast out of view; Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower Whose seeds are shed, or as an implemet Worn out and worthless. While from door to door, This old Man creeps, the villagers in him Behold a record which together binds Past deeds and offices of charity, Else unremembered, and so keeps alive The kindly mood in hearts which lapse years, And that half-wisdom half-experience give Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resist To selfishness and cold oblivious cares. Among the farms and solitary huts, Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages, Where’er the aged Beggar takes his round The mild necessity of use compels To acts of love; and habit does the work Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued
Dost find herself insensibly disposed
To virtue and true goodness.
Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such minds
In childhood, from this solitary Being,   110
Or from like wanderer, haply have received
(A thing more precious far than all that books
Or the solicitudes of love can do!)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
In which they found their kindred with a world
Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
Who sits at his own door, — and, like the pear
That overhangs his head from the green wall,
Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and young,
The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
Of their own kindred; — all behold in him
A silent monitor, which on their minds
Must needs impress a transitory thought
Of self-congratulation, to the heart
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
His charters and exemptions; and, perchance,
Though he to no one give the fortitude
And circumspection needful to preserve
His present blessings, and to husband up
The respite of the season, he, at least,   131
And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them felt.
Yet further. — Many, I believe, there are
Who live a life of virtuous decency,
Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
No self-reproach; who of the moral law
Established in the land where they abide
Are strict observers; and not negligent
In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
Their kindred, and the children of their blood.  140
Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace!
— But of the poor man ask, the abject poor;
Is, and demand of him, if there be here
This cold abstinence from evil deeds,
And these inevitable charities,
Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?
No — man is dear to man; the poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life
When they can know and feel that they have been,
Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
As needed kindness, for this single cause,
That we have all of us one human heart.
— Such pleasure is to one kind being known,
My neighbour, when with punctual care,
each week
Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
By her own wants, she from her store of meal
Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
Returning with exhilarated heart,  160
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.
Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And while in that vast solitude to which
The tide of things has borne him, he appears
To breathe and live but for himself alone,
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
The good which the benignant law of Heaven
Has hung around him: and, while life is his,
Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
To tender offices and pensive thoughts.  170
— Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
The freshness of the valleys; let his blood
Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;
And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
Beat his grey locks against his withered face.
Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
Gives the last human interest to his heart.
May never House, misnamed of Industry,
Make him a captive! — for that pent-up
Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
Be his the natural silence of old age!
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;
And have around him, whether heard or not,
The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have now
ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY

1798. 1798

The little hedgerow birds, That peck along the roads, regard him not. He travels on, and in his face, his step, His gait, is one expression: every limb, His look and bending figure, all bespeak A man who does not move with pain, but moves With thought. — He is insensibly subdued To settled quiet; he is one by whom All effort seems forgotten; one to whom Long patience hath such mild composure given, That patience now doth seem a thing of which He hath no need. He is by nature led To peace so perfect that the young behold With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L., ETC. ETC.

My dear Friend,
The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its minority: — for it first saw the light in the summer of 1786. During this long interval, it has been taken at different times and made the production less unworthy of a favorable reception; and, rather, to fit it for filling permanently a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poet which, you know, have been sufficiently laudable to prove that I deem the Art not light to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it may Laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any m
PROLOGUE

There's something in a flying horse,
There's something in a huge balloon;
But through the clouds I'll never float
Until I have a little Boat,
Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I have a little Boat,
In shape a very crescent-moon:
Fast through the clouds my boat can sail;
But if perchance your faith should fail,
Look up — and you shall see me soon!

The woods, my Friends, are round you roaring,
Loosing and roaring like a sea;
The noise of danger's in your ears,
And ye have all a thousand fears
Both for my little Boat and me!

Meanwhile untroubled I admire
The pointed horns of my canoe;
And, did not pity touch my breast,
To see how ye are all distrest,
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you!

Away we go, my Boat and I —
Frail man ne'er sate in such another;
Whether among the winds we strive,
Or deep into the clouds we dive,
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go — and what care we
For treasons, tumults, and for wars?
We are as calm in our delight
As is the crescent-moon so bright
Among the scattered stars.

Up goes my Boat among the stars
Through many a breathless field of light,
Through many a long blue field of ether,
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her:
Up goes my little Boat so bright!

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull —
We pray among them all; have shot
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,
Covered from top to toe with scars;
Such company I like it not!

The towns in Saturn are decayed,
And melancholy Spectres throng them; —
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss
Each other in the vast abyss,
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,
Great Jove is full of stately bowers;
But these, and all that they contain,
What are they to that tiny grain,
That little Earth of ours?

Then back to Earth, the dear green
Earth: —
Whole ages if I here should roam,
The world for my remarks and me
Would not a whit the better be;
I've left my heart at home.

See! there she is, the matchless Earth!
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean!
Old Andes thrusts you craggy spear
Through the grey clouds; the Alps are here,
Like waters in commotion!

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands;
That silver thread the river Dnieper!
And look, where clothed in brightest green
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen;
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her!
And see the town where I was born!  
Around those happy fields we span  
In boyish gambols; — I was lost  
Where I have been, but on this coast  
I feel I am a man.  

Never did fifty things at once  
Appear so lovely, never, never; —  
How tunefully the forests ring!  
To hear the earth’s soft murmuring  
Thus could I hang for ever!  

"Shame on you!" cried my little Boat,  
"Was ever such a homesick Loon,  
Within a living Boat to sit,  
And make no better use of it;  
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon!"

"Ne’er in the breast of full-grown Poet  
Fluttered so faint a heart before; —  
Was it the music of the spheres  
That overpowered your mortal ears?  
— Such sin shall trouble them no more.

"These nether precincts do not lack  
Charms of their own; — then come with me;  
I want a comrade, and for you  
There’s nothing that I would not do;  
Nought is there that you shall not see.

"Haste! and above Siberian snows  
We’ll sport amid the boreal morning;  
Will mingle with her lustres gliding  
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,  
And now the stars adorning.

"I know the secrets of a land  
Where human foot did never stray;  
Fair is that land as evening skies,  
And cool, though in the depth it lies  
Of burning Africa.

"Or we’ll into the realm of Faery,  
Among the lovely shades of things;  
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,  
And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,  
The shades of palaces and kings!

"Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal  
Less quiet regions to explore,  
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal  
How earth and heaven are taught to feel  
The might of magic lore!"
"To the stone-table in my garden,
  Loved haunt of many a summer hour,
The Squire is come; his daughter Bess
  Beside him in the cool recess
Sits blooming like a flower.
160
"With these are many more convened;
  They know not I have been so far; —
I see them there, in number nine,
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine!
I see them — there they are!

"There sits the Vicar and his Dame;
  And there my good friend, Stephen Otter;
And, ere the light of evening fail,
To them I must relate the Tale
Of Peter Bell the Potter."
170
Off flew the Boat — away she flees,
  Spurning her freight with indignation!
And I, as well as I was able,
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with sore vexation.

"O, here he is!" cried little Bess —
She saw me at the garden-door;
"We've waited anxiously and long,"
They cried, and all around me throng,
Full nine of them or more!
180
"Reproach me not — your fears be still —
Be thankful we again have met; —
Resume, my Friends! within the shade
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid
The well-remembered debt."

I speak with faltering voice, like one
Not wholly rescued from the pale
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion;
But, straight, to cover my confusion,
Began the promised Tale.
190

PART FIRST

Lit by the moonlight river side
  Framed the poor Beast — alas! in vain;
He staff was raised to loftier height,
  And the blows fell with heavier weight
Is Peter struck — and struck again.

"Hold!" cried the Squire, "against the rules
If common sense you’re surely sinning;
His leap is for us all too bold;
  The Peter was, let that be told,
And start from the beginning."
10

— "A Potter, Sir, he was by trade,”
  Said I, becoming quite collected;
"And wheresoever he appeared,
  Full twenty times was Peter feared
For once that Peter was respected.
20

"He, two-and-thirty years or more,
  Had been a wild and woodland rover;
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar
  On farthest Cornwall’s rocky shore,
And trod the cliffs of Dover.

"And he had seen Caernarvon’s towers,
  And well he knew the spire of Sarum;
And he had been where Lincoln bell
Flings o’er the fen that ponderous knell —
  A far-renowned alarum!

"At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,
  And merry Carlisle had he been;
And all along the Lowlands fair,
  All through the bonnie shire of Ayr,
And far as Aberdeen.
30

"And he had been at Inverness;
  And Peter, by the mountain-rills,
Had danced his round with Highland lasses;
  And he had lain beside his asses
On lofty Cheviot Hills:

"And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,
  Among the rocks and winding scarps;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
  Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars:
40

"And all along the indented coast,
  Bespattered with the salt-sea foam;
Where'er a knot of houses lay
  On headland, or in hollow bay; —
Sure never man like him did roam!

"As well might Peter, in the Fleet,
  Have been fast bound, a begging debtor; —
He travelled here, he travelled there; —
  But not the value of a hair
Was heart or head the better.
50

"He roved among the vales and streams,
  In the green wood and hollow dell;
They were his dwellings night and day; —
  But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.
"In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

"Small change it made on Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

"In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

"At noon, when, by the forest's edge
He lay beneath the branches high,
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart; he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky!

"On a fair prospect some have looked
And felt, as I have heard them say,
As if the moving time had been
A thing as steadfast as the scene
On which they gazed themselves away.

"Within the breast of Peter Bell
These silent raptures found no place;
He was a Carl as wild and rude
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,
As ever ran a felon's race.

"Of all that lead a lawless life,
Of all that love their lawless lives,
In city or in village small,
He was the wildest far of all; —
He had a dozen wedded wives.

"Nay, start not! — wedded wives — and
twelve!
But how one wife could e'er come near
him,
In simple truth I cannot tell;
For, be it said of Peter Bell,
To see him was to fear him.

"Though Nature could not touch his heart
By lovely forms, and silent weather,
And tender sounds, yet you might see
At once, that Peter Bell and she
Had often been together.

"A savage wildness round him hung
As of a dweller out of doors;
In his whole figure and his mien
A savage character was seen
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

"To all the unshaped half-human though
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds.

"His face was keen as is the wind
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence; —
Of courage you saw little there,
But, in its stead, a medley air
Of cunning and of impudence.

"He had a dark and sidelong walk,
And long and slouching was his gait;
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,
You might perceive, his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait.

"His forehead wrinkled was and furred;
A work, one half of which was done
By thinking of his 'whens' and 'hours';
And half, by knitting of his brows
Beneath the glaring sun.

"There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky!

One night, (and now my little Bess!
We've reached at last the promised Tal
One beautiful November night,
When the full moon was shining bright
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks
Peter was travelling all alone; —
Whether to buy or sell, or led
By pleasure running in his head,
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and bra
He trudged along o'er hill and dale;
Nor for the moon cared be a title,
And for the stars be cared as little,
And for the murmuring river Swale.
t, chancing to espy a path
at promised to cut short the way,
many a wiser man hath done,
left a trusty guide for one
at might his steps betray.

a thick wood he soon is brought
here cheerily his course he weaves,
d whistling loud may yet be heard,
cough often buried, like a bird
raking, among the boughs and leaves.

quickly Peter's mood is changed,
don he drives with cheeks that burn
downright fury and in wrath;
ere's little sign the treacherous path
t to the road return!

a path grows dim, and dimmer still;
up, now down, the Rover wends,
with all the sail that he can carry,
ill brought to a deserted quarry —
d there the pathway ends.

paused — for shadows of strange shape,
uss and black, before him lay;
don through the dark, and through the cold,
don through the yawning fissures old,
d Peter boldly press his way

ght through the quarry; — and behold
scene of soft and lovely hue!
here blue and grey, and tender green,
gether make as sweet a scene
ever human eye did view.

searth the clear blue sky he saw
field of meadow ground;
field or meadow name it not;
all of earth a small green plot,
th rocks encompassed round.

Swale flowed under the grey rocks,
flowed quiet and unseen; —
need a strong and stormy gale
bring the noises of the Swale
that green spot, so calm and green!

Is there no one dwelling here,
hermit with his beads and glass?
 does little cottage look
on this soft and fertile nook?
no one live near this green grass?

Across the deep and quiet spot
Is Peter driving through the grass —
And now has reached the skirting trees;
When, turning round his head, he sees
A solitary Ass.

"A Prize!" cries Peter — but he first
Must spy about him far and near;
There's not a single house in sight,
No woodman's hut, no cottage light —
Peter, you need not fear!

There's nothing to be seen but woods,
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,
And this one Beast, that from the bed
Of the green meadow hangs his head
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound;
The halter seizing, Peter leapt
Upon the Creature's back, and plied
With ready heels his shaggy side;
But still the Ass his station kept.

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor
Would have pulled up an iron ring;
But still the heavy-headed Thing
Stood just as he had stood before!

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,
"There is some plot against me laid;"
Once more the little meadow-ground
And all the hoary cliffs around
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent — rocks and woods,
All still and silent — far and near!
Only the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this?
Some ugly witchcraft must be here!
Once more the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turned round his long left ear.

Suspicion ripened into dread;
Yet with deliberate action slow,
His staff high-raising, in the pride
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,
He dealt a sturdy blow.
The poor Ass staggered with the shock;
And then, as if to take his ease,
In quiet uncomplaining mood,
Upon the spot where he had stood,
Dropped gently down upon his knees.

As gently on his side he fell;
And by the river's brink did lie;
And, while he lay like one that mourned,
The patient Beast on Peter turned
His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,
A look more tender than severe;
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,
He turned the eye-ball in his head
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings;
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they stirred;
He gave a groan, and then another,
Of that which went before the brother,
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side
He gave three miserable groans;
And not till now hath Peter seen
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean
And sharp his staring bones!

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay:
No word of kind commiseration
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue;
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death;
And Peter's lips with fury quiver;
Quoth he, "You little mulish dog,
I'll fling your carcass like a log
Head foremost down the river!"

An impious oath confirmed the threat—
Whereat from the earth on which he lay
To all the echoes, south and north,
And east and west, the Ass sent forth
A long and clamorous bray!

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks;
But in the echo of the rocks
Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,
Or that he could not break the chain,
In this serene and solemn hour,
Twined round him by demoniac power,
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags;
Among the mountains far away;
Once more the Ass did lengthen out
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray.

What is there now in Peter's heart?
Or whence the might of this strange somber
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,
The broad blue heavens appeared to gimmer,
And the rocks staggered all around—

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped
Threat has he none to execute;
"If any one should come and see
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he
"I'm helping this poor dying brute."

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,
And ventures now to uplift his eyes;
More steady looks the moon, and clear,
More like themselves the rocks appear
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns—his hate revives;
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize
With malice—that again takes flight;
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him, among the inverted trees.

Is it the moon's distorted face?
The ghost-like image of a cloud?
Is it a gallows there portrayed?
Is Peter of himself afraid?
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud?

A grisly idol hewn in stone?
Or imp from witch's lap let fall?
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies?
Such as pursue their feared vagaries
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall?

Is it a fiend that to a stake
Of fire his desperate self is tethered?
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell
In solitary ward or cell,
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren.
river did pulse so quickly thro, 
and never heart so loudly panted; 
so, looks, he cannot choose but look; 
to some one reading in a book— 
book that is enchanted. 330

a, well-a-day for Peter Bell! 
e will be turned to iron soon, 
see that Statue for the court of Fear! 
is hat is up—and every hair 
ristles, and whitens in the moon!

it looks, he ponders, looks again; 
t sees a motion—hears a groan; 
t eyes will burst—his heart will break— 
t gives a loud and frightful shriek, 
and back he falls, as if his life were 
flown! 340

PART SECOND

We left our Hero in a trance, 
neath the alders, near the river; 
he Ass is by the river-side, 
and, where the feeble breezes glide, 
upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite! but at length 
he feels the glimmering of the moon; 
he takes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing— 
to sink, perhaps, where he is lying, 
to a second swoon! 10

He lifts his head, he sees his staff; 
He touches—'tis to him a treasure! 
Hamt recollection seems to tell 
that he is yet where mortals dwell— 
A thought received with languid pleasure!

His head upon his elbow propped, 
becoming less and less perplexed, 
sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood— 
and then—upon the glassy flood 
his wandering eye is fixed. 20

Thought he, that is the face of one 
in his last sleep securely bound! 
'toward the stream his head he bent, 
and downward thrust his staff, intent 
the river's depth to sound.

He—like a tempest-shattered bark, 
at overwhelmed and prostrate lies, 
'in a moment to the verge 
Is lifted of a foaming surge— 
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise! 30

His staring bones all shake with joy, 
And close by Peter's side he stands: 
While Peter o'er the river bends, 
The little Ass his neck extends, 
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes, 
Such life is in his limbs and ears; 
That Peter Bell, if he had been 
The veriest coward ever seen, 
Must now have thrown aside his fears. 40

The Ass looks on—and to his work 
Is Peter quietly resigned; 
He touches here—he touches there— 
And now among the dead man's hair 
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again; 
And he whom the poor Ass had lost, 
The man who had been four days dead, 
Head-foremost from the river's bed 
Uprises like a ghost! 50

And Peter draws him to dry land; 
And through the brain of Peter pass 
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster; 
"No doubt," quoth he, "he is the Master 
Of this poor miserable Ass!"

The meagre Shadow that looks on— 
What would he now? what is he doing? 
His sudden fit of joy is flown,— 
He on his knees hath laid him down, 
As if he were his grief renewing; 60

But no—that Peter on his back 
Must mount, he shows well as he can: 
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe, 
I'll do what he would have me do, 
In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts 
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass; 
And then, without a moment's stay, 
That earnest Creature turned away 
Leaving the body on the grass. 70

Intent upon his faithful watch, 
The Beast four days and nights had past; 
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen, 
And there the Ass four days had been, 
Nor ever once did break his fast:
Yet firm his step, and stout his heart;  
The mead is crossed — the quarry's mouth  
Is reached; but there the trusty guide  
Into a thicket turns aside,  
And deftly ambles towards the south.  

When hark a burst of doleful sound!  
And Peter honestly might say,  
The like came never to his ears,  
Though he has been, full thirty years,  
A rover — night and day!  

'T is not a plover of the moors,  
'T is not a bittern of the fen;  
Nor can it be a barking fox,  
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,  
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen!  

The Ass is startled — and stops short  
Right in the middle of the thicket;  
And Peter, wont to whistle loud  
Whether alone or in a crowd,  
Is silent as a silent cricket.  

What ails you now, my little Bess?  
Well may you tremble and look grave!  
This cry — that rings along the wood,  
This cry — that floats adown the flood,  
Comes from the entrance of a cave:  

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,  
And if I had the power to say  
How sorrowful the wanderer is,  
Your heart would be as sad as his  
Till you had kissed his tears away!  

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,  
All bright with berries ripe and red,  
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps;  
Thence back into the moonlight creeps;  
Whom seeks he — whom? — the silent dead:  

His father! — Him doth he require —  
Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,  
Among the rocks, behind the trees;  
Now creeping on his hands and knees,  
Now running o'er the open plains.  

And hither is he come at last,  
When he through such a day has gone,  
By this dark cave to be distrest  
Like a poor bird — her plundered nest  
Hovering around with dolorous moan!  

Of that intense and piercing cry  
The listening Ass conjectures well;  
Wild as it is, he there can read  
Some intermingled notes that plead  
With touches irresistible.  

But Peter — when he saw the Ass  
Not only stop but turn, and change  
The cherished tenor of his pace  
That lamentable cry to chase —  
It wrought in him conviction strange;  

A faith that, for the dead man's sake  
And this poor slave who loved him well,  
Vengeance upon his head will fall,  
Some visitation worse than all  
Which ever till this night befell.  

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,  
Is striving sturdily as he may;  
But, while he climbs the woody hill,  
The cry grows weak — and weaker still;  
And now at last it dies away.  

So with his freight the Creature turns  
Into a gloomy grove of beech,  
Along the shade with footsteps true  
Descending slowly, till the two  
The open moonlight reach.  

And there, along the narrow dell,  
A fair smooth pathway you discern,  
A length of green and open road —  
As if it from a fountain flowed —  
Winding away between the fern.  

The rocks that tower on either side  
Build up a wild fantastic scene;  
Temples like those among the Hindoos,  
And mosques, and spires, and abbey dews,  
And castles all with ivy green!  

And, while the Ass pursues his way,  
Along this solitary dell,  
As pensively his steps advance,  
The mosques and spires change countens  
And look at Peter Bell!  

That unintelligible cry  
Hath left him high in preparation, —  
Convinced that he, or soon or late,  
This very night will meet his fate —  
And so he sits in expectation!
PETER BELL

Strenuous animal hath clomb
The green path; and now he wends
Here, shining like the smoothest sea,
Undisturbed immensity
Evel plain extends.

But whence this faintly-rustling sound
Which the journeying pair are chased?
A withered leaf is close behind,
Plat plaything for the sportive wind
On that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,
Only doubled his distress;
'Where there is not a bush or tree,
As every leaves they follow me—
Huge hath been my wickedness!'

On a close lane they now are come,
Here, as before, the enduring Ass
Loves on without a moment's stop,
Or once turns round his head to crop,
Bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,
The white dust sleeps upon the lane;
And Peter, ever and anon
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,
In the dust, a crimson stain.

A stain—as of a drop of blood
By moonlight made more faint and wan;
Is why these sinkings of despair?
He knows not how the blood comes there—
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,
Where he had struck the Ass's head;
He sees the blood, knows what it is,—
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,
But then it quickly fled.

Of him whom sudden death had seized
He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass!
And once again those ghastly pains,
From to and fro through heart and reins,
And through his brain like lightning pass.

PART THIRD

I heard of one, a gentle Soul,
Though given to sadness and to gloom,
Yet for the fact will vouch,—one night
Enchanted that by a taper's light
This man was reading in his room;

Bending, as you or I might bend
At night o'er any pious book,
When sudden blackness overspread
The snow-white page on which he read,
And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—
And to his book he turned again;
—The light had left the lonely taper,
And formed itself upon the paper
Into large letters—bright and plain!

The godly book was in his hand—
And, on the page, more black than coal,
Appeared, set forth in strange array,
A word—which to his dying day
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,
Did never from his lips depart;
But he hath said, poor gentle wight!
It brought full many a sin to light
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits! to confound the meek
Why wander from your course so far,
Disordering colour, form, and stature!
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,
And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits! well I know,
How ye, that play with soul and sense,
Are not unused to trouble friends
Of good men, for most gracious ends—
And this I speak in reverence!

But might I give advice to you,
Whom in my fear I love so well;
From men of pensive virtue go,
Dread Beings! and your empire show
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt
In darkness and the stormy night;
And, with like force, if need there be,
Ye can put forth your agency
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,
That powerful world in which ye dwell,
Come, Spirits of the Mind! and try
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,
What may be done with Peter Bell!

—O, would that some more skilful voice
My further labour might prevent!
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,
I feel that I am all unfit
For such high argument.

I've played, I've danced, with my narra-
tion;
I loitered long ere I began:
Ye waited then on my good pleasure;
Pour out indulgence still, in measure
As liberal as ye can!

Our Travellers, ye remember well,
Are thridding a sequestered lane;
And Peter many tricks is trying,
And many anodynes applying,
To ease his conscience of his pain.

By this his heart is lighter far;
And, finding that he can account
So snugly for that crimson stain,
His evil spirit up again
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial;
"Blood drops — leaves rustle — yet," quoth he,
"This poor man never, but for me,
Could have had Christian burial.

"And, say the best you can, 't is plain,
That here has been some wicked dealing;
No doubt the devil in me wrought;
I'm not the man who could have thought
An Ass like this was worth the steal-
ing!"

So from his pocket Peter takes
His shining horn tobacco-box;
And, in a light and careless way,
As men who with their purpose play,
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,
Tell to a curious world the cause
Why, making here a sudden pause,
The Ass turned round his head, and
grinned.

Appalling process! I have marked
The like on heath, in lonely wood;
And, verily, have seldom met
A spectacle more hideous — yet
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth
He in jocose defiance showed —
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,
A murmur, pent within the earth,
In the dead earth beneath the road
Rolled audibly! it swept along,
A muffled noise — a rumbling sound! —
'Twas by a troop of miners made,
Plying with gunpowder their trade,
Some twenty fathoms under ground.

Small cause of dire effect! for, surely,
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,
Believed that earth was charged to quake
And yawn for his unworthy sake,
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But, as an oak in breathless air
Will stand though to the centre hewn;
Or as the weakest things, if frost
Have stiffened them, maintain their post
So he, beneath the gazing moon!

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,
A little chapel stands alone,
With greenest ivy overgrown,
And tufted with an ivy grove;

Dying insensibly away
From human thoughts and purposes,
It seemed — wall, window, roof and town
To bow to some transforming power,
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife
That served my turn, when following still
From land to land a reckless will
I married my sixth wife!

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,
And now is passing by an inn
Brim-full of a carousing crew,
That make, with curses not a few,
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts
Which Peter in those noises found; —
A stifling power compressed his frame,
While as a swimming darkness came
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound;
The language of those drunken joys
He sees an unsubstantial creature,  
His very self in form and feature,  
Not four yards from the broad highway:

And stretched beneath the furze he sees  
The Highland girl — it is no other;  
And hears her crying as she cried,  
The very moment that she died,  
"My mother! oh my mother!"

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,  
So grievous is his heart's contrition;  
With agony his eye-balls ache  
While he beholds by the furze-brake  
This miserable vision!

Calm is the well-deserving brute,  
His peace hath no offence betrayed;  
But now, while down that slope he wends,  
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,  
Resounding from the woody glade:

The voice, though clamorous as a horn  
Re-echoed by a naked rock,  
Comes from that tabernacle — List!  
Within, a fervent Methodist  
Is preaching to no heedless flock!

"Repent! repent!" he cries aloud,  
"While yet ye may find mercy; — strive  
To love the Lord with all your might;  
Turn to him, seek him day and night,  
And save your souls alive!

"Repent! repent! though ye have gone,  
Through paths of wickedness and woe,  
After the Babylonian harlot;  
And, though your sins be red as scarlet,  
They shall be white as snow!"

Even as he passed the door, these words  
Did plainly come to Peter's ears;  
And they such joyful tidings were,  
The joy was more than he could bear! —  
He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness!  
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower!  
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt;  
Through all his iron frame was felt  
A gentle, a relaxing, power!

Each fibre of his frame was weak;  
Weak all the animal within;
But, in its helplessness, grew mild
And gentle as an infant child,
An infant that has known no sin.

'Tis said, meek Beast! that, through
Heaven's grace,
He not unmoved did notice now
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,
For lasting impress, by the Lord
To whom all human-kind shall bow; 240

Memorial of his touch — that day
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,
Entering the proud Jerusalem,
By an immeasurable stream
Of shouting people deified!

Meanwhile the persevering Ass
Turned towards a gate that hung in view
Across a shady lane; his chest
Against the yielding gate he pressed
And quietly passed through. 250

And up the stony lane he goes;
No ghost more softly ever trod;
Among the stones and pebbles, he
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass
Went twice two hundred yards or more,
And no one could have guessed his aim,—
Till to a lonely house he came,
And stopped beside the door. 260

Thought Peter, 't is the poor man's home!
He listens — not a sound is heard
Save from the trickling household rill;
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound
In hopes some tidings there to gather:
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam;
She saw — and uttered with a scream,
"My father! here's my father!" 270

The very word was plainly heard,
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother —
Her joy was like a deep affright:
And forth she rushed into the light,
And saw it was another!

And, instantly, upon the earth,
Beneath the full moon shining bright,
Close to the Ass's feet she fell;
At the same moment Peter Bell
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

As he beheld the Woman lie
Breathless and motionless, the mind
Of Peter sadly was confused;
But, though to such demands unused,
And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up; and, while he held
Her body propped against his knee,
The Woman waked — and when she spied
The poor Ass standing by her side,
She moaned most bitterly.

"Oh! God be praised — my heart's ease —
For he is dead — I know it well!"
— At this she wept a bitter flood;
And, in the best way that he could,
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles — he is pale as death;
His voice is weak with perturbation;
He turns aside his head, he pauses;
Poor Peter, from a thousand causes,
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied
The Ass in that small meadow-ground;
And that her Husband now lay dead,
Beside that luckless river's bed
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Widow cast
Upon the Beast that near her stands;
She sees 't is he, that 't is the same;
She calls the poor Ass by his name,
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

"O wretched loss — untimely stroke!
If he had died upon his bed!
He knew not one forewarning pain;
He never will come home again —
Is dead, for ever dead!"

Beside the woman Peter stands;
His heart is opening more and more;
A holy sense pervades his mind;
He feels what he for human kind
Had never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,
The Woman rises from the ground —
Oh, mercy! something must be done,
By my little Rachel, you must run,—
Some willing neighbour must be found.

"Make haste—my little Rachel—do,
The first you meet with—bid him come,
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,
And this good Man, whom Heaven require,
Will help to bring the body home."

Away goes Rachel weeping loud;—
In Infant, waked by her distress,
Makes in the house a piteous cry;
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,
"Seven are they, and all fatherless!"

And now is Peter taught to feel
That man's heart is a holy thing;
And Nature, through a world of death,
Breathes into him a second breath,
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits
In agony of silent grief—
From his own thoughts did Peter start;
He longed to press her to his heart,
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb
Had past a sudden shock of dread,
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,
And up the cottage stairs she hies,
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside
Into a shade of darksome trees,
Where he sits down, he knows not how,
With his hands pressed against his brow,
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit
Until no sign of life he makes,
As if his mind were sinking deep
Through years that have been long asleep
The trance is passed away—he wakes;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass
Yet standing in the clear moonshine;
"When shall I be as good as thou?
Oh! would, poor beast, that I had now
A heart but half as good as thine!"

But He—who deviously hath sought
His Father through the lonesome woods,

Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—
He comes, escaped from fields and floods;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh;
He sees the Ass—and nothing living
Had ever such a fit of joy
As hath this little orphan Boy,
For he has no misgiving!

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,
And up about his neck he climbs;
In loving words he talks to him,
He kisses, kisses face and limb,—
He kisses him a thousand times!

This Peter sees, while in the shade
He stood beside the cottage-door;
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,
"O God! I can endure no more!"

—Here ends my Tale: for in a trice
Arrived a neighbour with his horse;
Peter went forth with him straightway;
And, with due care, ere break of day,
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,
Whom once it was my luck to see
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,
Help by his labour to maintain
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,
Had been the wildest of his clan,
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,
And, after ten months' melancholy,
Became a good and honest man.

THE SIMPLON PASS
1799. 1845

—Brook and road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
And with them did we journey several hours
At a slow step. The immeasurable height
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

1799. 1809

Written in Germany. This Extract is reprinted from "The Friend."

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe! Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought! All things are with me, and images a breath And everlasting motion! not in vain, My day or star-light, thus from my first dawn Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me The passions that build up our human soul; Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man; But with high objects, with enduring things, With life and nature; purifying thus the elements of feeling and of thought, And sanctifying by such discipline Both pain and fear,—until we recognise A sunshine in the beatings of the heart.

Why was this fellowship vouchsafed to me? With averted kindness. In November days, When vapours rolling down the valleys drone,

A lonely scene more lonesome; among woods At noon, and 'mid the calm of summer nights, When, by the margin of the trembling lake,

Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went In solitude, such intercourse was mine: Mine was it in the fields both day and night, And by the waters, all the summer long. And in the frosty season, when the sun Was set, and, visible for many a mile, The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,

I heeded not the summons: happy time It was indeed for all of us; for me It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled about, Proud and exulting like an untired horse That cares not for his home. — All shot with steel We hissed along the polished ice, in game Confederate, imitative of the chase And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn, The pack loud-chiming, and the huntsman's hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we flew, And not a voice was idle: with the din Smitten, the precipices rang aloft. The leafless trees and every icy crag Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills Into the tumult sent an alien sound Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars, Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired Into a silent bay, or sportively Glanced seaside, leaving the tumultuous throng, To cut across the reflex of a star; Image, that, flying still before me, gleamed Upon the glassy plain: and oftentimes, When we had given our bodies to the wind, And all the shadowy banks on either side Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still The rapid line of motion, then at once Have I, reclining back upon my heels, Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs Wheeled by me—in even as if the earth be rolled With visible motion her diurnal round! Behind me did they stretch in solemn tracts Fœbler and feebler, and I stood and watch Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.
THERE WAS A BOY

1799. 1800

Written in Germany. This is an extract from the poem on my own poetical education. This practice of making an instrument of their own fingers is known to most boys, though some are more skilful at it than others. William Raincock of Rayrigg, a fine spirited lad, took the lead of all my schoolfellows in this art.

There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander! — many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, 10
That they might answer him. — And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call, — with quivering peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild
Of jocund din! And, when there came a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill:
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice 20
Of mountain-torrents’ or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks, its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake. This boy was taken from his mates, and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
Where he was born and bred: the church-yard hangs
Upon a slope above the village-school; 30

And, through that church-yard when my way has led
On summer-evenings, I believe, that there
A long half-hour together I have stood
Mute — looking at the grave in which he lies!

NUTTING

1799. 1800

Written in Germany; intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my schoolfellows I was an impassioned nutter. For this pleasure, the vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice-wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys.

— It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, saluting forth
With a huge wallet o’er my shoulders slung,
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps
Tow’rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been husbanded,
By exhortation of my frugal Dame — 11
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, — and, in truth,
More ragged than need was! O’er pathless rocks,
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation; but the hazels rose 19
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,
A virgin scene! — A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet; — or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
A temper known to those, who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam;
And — with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep —
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being: and, unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past;
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky —
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand
Touch — for there is a spirit in the woods.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide seas;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped;
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

"SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTROdden WAYS"

1799. 1800
Written in Germany.
She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

"I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKnown MEN"

1799. 1807
Written in Germany.
I travelled among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.
A POET’S EPITAPH

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake — The work was done —
How soon my Lucy’s race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

“A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL”

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth’s diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

A POET’S EPITAPH

1799. 1800

“Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy’s eyes surveyed.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER"

1799. 1800

Composed in the Hartz Forest.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, “A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
She shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

“She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.

“The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred?
— First learn to love one living man;
Then may’st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou? — draw not nigh!
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
A rosy Man, right plump to see?
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A Soldier and no man of chaff?
Welcome! — but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant’s staff.
Physician art thou? one, all eyes,  
Philosopher! a fingering slave,  
One that would peep and botanise  
Upon his mother's grave?

Wreapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,  
That he below may rest in peace,  
Thy ever-dwindling soul, away!

A Moralist perchance appears;  
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod:  
And he has neither eyes nor ears;  
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling  
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;  
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the latch;  
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;  
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,  
And clad in homely russet brown?  
He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;  
And you must love him, ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart,—  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,  
Hath been an idler in the land;  
Contented if he might enjoy  
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength:  
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!  
Here stretch thy body at full length;  
Or build thy house upon this grave.

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —

1799. 1845

Composed at Goslar, in Germany.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,  
Not long your pastime to prevent;  
I heard the blessing which to you  
Our common Friend and Father sent.  
I kissed his cheek before he died;  
And when his breath was fled,  
I raised, while kneeling by his side,  
His hand:—it dropped like lead.  
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all  
That can be done, will never fall  
Like his till they are dead.

By night or day blow foul or fair,  
Ne'er will the best of all your train  
Play with the locks of his white hair,  
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours;  
But he could see the woods and plains,  
Could hear the wind and mark the shower.  
Come streaming down the streaming panes  
Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound  
He rests a prisoner of the ground.  
He loved the breathing air,  
He loved the sun, but if it rise  
Or set, to him where now he lies,  
Brings not a moment's care.

Alas! what idle words; but take  
The Dirge which for our Master's sake  
And yours, love prompted me to make.  
The rhymes so homely in attire  
With learned ears may ill agree,  
But chanted by your Orphan Quire  
Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone:  
Thou Angler, by the silent flood;  
And mourn when thou art all alone,  
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood!

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy  
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;  
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy!  
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide  
Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,
As he before had sanctified
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
With one accord our voices raise,
Let sorrow overcharged with pain
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
From ill we meet or good we miss,
May touches of his memory bring
Fond healing, like a mother’s kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS AFTER

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat,
But benefits, his gift, we trace—
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
Flowed from his life what still they hold,
Light pleasures, every day, resumed;
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,
Thy faults, where not already gone
From memory, prolong their stay
For charity’s sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss;
And what beyond this thought we crave
Comes in the promise from the Cross,
Shining upon thy happy grave.

MATTHEW
1799. 1800

In the School of —— is a tablet, on which
are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the
several persons who have been Schoolmasters
there since the foundation of the School, with
the time at which they entered upon and quitted
their office. Opposite to one of those names the
Author wrote the following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued
to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though
the inscriptions were not brought down to our
time. This and other poems connected with
Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of

facts. Like the Wanderer in “The Excursion,”
this Schoolmaster was made up of several both
of his class and men of other occupations. I do
not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in
such verses, considered strictly as matters of
fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent
in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not
unworthy of a Poet’s calling.

If Nature, for a favourite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o’er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

— When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew’s name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o’er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney’s merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew’s eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up —
He felt with spirit so profound.

— Thou soul of God’s best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS
1799. 1800

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
“The will of God be done!”
A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought ?

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"You cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang; — she would have been
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

"No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again:
And did not wish her mine !"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

THE FOUNTAIN

A CONVERSATION

1799. 1800

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew !" said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears;
How merrily it goes !
'T will murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.
My eyes are dim with childish tears, 
My heart is idly stirred, 
or the same sound is in my ears 
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay: 
And yet the wiser mind 
Foursome less for what age takes away 
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees, 
The lark above the hill, 
Let loose their carols when they please, 
Are quiet when they will.

'With Nature never do they wage 
A foolish strife; they see 
A happy youth, and their old age 
As beautiful and free:

'But we are pressed by heavy laws; 
And often, glad no more, 
We wear a face of joy, because 
We have been glad of yore.

'If there be one who need bemoan 
His kindred laid in earth, 
The household hearts that were his own; 
It is the man of mirth.

'My days, my Friend, are almost gone, 
My life has been approved, 
And many love me; but by none 
Am I enough beloved.'

'Now both himself and me he wrongs, 
The man who thus complains; 
I live and sing my idle songs 
Upon these happy plains;

'And, Matthew, for thy children dead 
I'll be a son to thee!' 
At this he grasped my hand, and said, 
'Alas! that cannot be.'

We rose up from the fountain-side; 
And down the smooth descent 
Of the green sheep-track did we glide; 
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock, 
He sang those witty rhymes 
About the crazy old church-clock, 
And the bewildered chimes.

TO A Sexton

1799. 1800

Written in Germany.

Let thy wheel-barrow alone —
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still
In thy bone-house bone on bone?
'T is already like a hill
In a field of battle made,
Where three thousand skulls are laid;
These died in peace each with the other, —
Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point!
From this platform, eight feet square,
Take not even a finger-joint:
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.
Here, alone, before thine eyes,
Simon's sickly daughter lies,
From weakness now, and pain defended,
Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride —
How he glories, when he sees
Roses, lilies, side by side,
Violets in families!
By the heart of Man, his tears,
By his hopes and by his fears,
Thou, too heedless, art the Warden
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,
Let them all in quiet lie,
Andrew there, and Susan here,
Neighbours in mortality.
And, should I live through sun and rain
Seven widowed years without my Jane,
O Sexton, do not then remove her,
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover!

THE DANISH BOY

A Fragment

1799. 1800

Written in Germany. It was entirely a fancy; 
but intended as a prelude to a ballad poem 
ever written.

I

Between two sister Moorland rills
There is a spot that seems to lie
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
And sacred to the sky.
And in this smooth and open dell
There is a tempest-stricken tree;
A corner-stone by lightning cut,
The last stone of a lonely hut;
And in this dell you see
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

II

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
But drops not here to earth for rest;
Within this lonesome nook the bird
Did never build her nest.
No beast, no bird hath here his home;
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,
Pass high above those fragrant bells
To other flowers: — to other dells
Their burthen do they bear;
The Danish Boy walks here alone:
The lovely dell is all his own.

III

A Spirit of noon-day is he;
Yet seems a form of flesh and blood;
Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
Nor herd-boy of the wood.
A regal vest of fur he wears,
In colour like a raven’s wing;
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew;
But in the storm ’tis fresh and blue
As budding pines in spring;
His helmet pines a vernal grace,
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

IV

A harp is from his shoulder slung;
Resting the harp upon his knee,
To words of a forgotten tongue
He suits its melody.
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill
He is the darling and the joy;
And often, when no cause appears,
The mountain-ponies prick their ears,
— They hear the Danish Boy,
While in the dell he sings alone
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

V

There sits he; in his face you spy
No trace of a ferocious air,
Nor ever was a cloudless sky
So steady or so fair.
The lovely Danish Boy is blest
And happy in his flowery cove:

From bloody deeds his thoughts are far
And yet he warbles songs of war,
That seem like songs of love,
For calm and gentle is his mien;
Like a dead Boy he is serene.

LUCY GRAY

OR, SOLITUDE

1799. 1800

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavoured to throw over common life with Crabbe’s math of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands the notes may fall, to a comparison that may be enlarged the circle of their sensibilities, as tend to produce in them a catholic judgment.

Of old I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
— The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green,
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

“To-night will be a stormy night —
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.”

“That, Father! I will gladly do:
’Tis scarcely afternoon —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!”
At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band;  
He plied his work; — and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:  
She wandered up and down;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb:  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept — and, turning homeward, cried,  
"In heaven we all shall meet;"  
— When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill’s edge  
They tracked the footmarks small;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;  
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank;  
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

O’er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

Written in Germany. Suggested by an account I had of a wanderer in Somersetshire.

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
Her Father took another Mate;  
And Ruth, not seven years old,  
A slighted child, at her own will  
Went wandering over dale and hill,  
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,  
And music from that pipe could draw  
Like sounds of winds and floods;  
Had built a bower upon the green,  
As if she from her birth had been  
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father’s roof, alone  
She seemed to live; her thoughts her own;  
Herself her own delight;  
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;  
And, passing thus the live-long day,  
She grew to woman’s height.

There came a Youth from Georgia’s shore —  
A military casque he wore,  
With splendid feathers drest;  
He brought them from the Cherokees;  
The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:  
But no! he spake the English tongue,  
And bore a soldier’s name;  
And, when America was free  
From battle and from jeopardy,  
He ’cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek  
In finest tones the Youth could speak:  
— While he was yet a boy,  
The moon, the glory of the sun,  
And streams that murmur as they run,  
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely youth! I guess  
The panther in the wilderness  
Was not so fair as he;  
And, when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.
Among the Indians he had fought,
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear;
Such tales as told to any maid
By such a Youth, in the green shade,
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout!
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
Their pleasant Indian town,
To gather strawberries all day long;
Returning with a choral song
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
Their blossoms, through a boundless range
Of intermingling hues;
With budding, fading, faded flowers
They stand the wonder of the bowers
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread
High as a cloud, high over head!
The cypress and her spire;
—Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,
And many an endless, endless lake,
With all its fairy crowds
Of islands, that together lie
As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

"How pleasant," then he said, "it were
A fisher or a hunter there,
In sunshine or in shade
To wander with an easy mind;
And build a household fire, and find
A home in every glade!"

"What days and what bright years! Ah me!
Our life were life indeed, with thee
So passed in quiet bliss,
And all the while," said he, "to know
That we were in a world of woe,
On such an earth as this!"

And then he sometimes interwove
Fond thoughts about a father’s love;
"For there," said he, "are spun
Around the heart such tender ties,
That our own children to our eyes
Are dearer than the sun.

"Sweet Ruth! and could you go with me
My helpmate in the woods to be,
Our shed at night to rear;
Or run, my own adopted bride,
A sylvan huntress at my side,
And drive the flying deer!

"Beloved Ruth!"—No more he said,
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed
A solitary tear:
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

"And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife."
Even so they did; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That on those lonesome floods,
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And, with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a Youth to whom was given
So much of earth—so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seemed allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers;
The breezes their own languor lent;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those favoured bowers.
Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
They for the voyage were prepared,
And went to the sea-shore,
But, when they thither came the Youth
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth! — Such pains she had,
That she in half a year was mad,
And in a prison housed;
And there, with many a doleful song
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
Nor pastimes of the May;
— They all were with her in her cell;
And a clear brook with cheerful knell
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
There came a respite to her pain;
She from her prison fled;
But of the Vagrant none took thought;
And where it liked her best she sought
Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again:
The master-current of her brain
Ran permanent and free;
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,
There did she rest; and dwell alone
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
And airs that gently stir
The vernal leaves — she loved them still;
Nor ever taxed them with the ill
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her winter bed supplies;
But, till the warmth of summer skies
And summer days is gone,
(And all do in this tale agree)
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray!
And Ruth will, long before her day,
Be broken down and old:
Sore aches she needs must have! but less
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.
If she is prex by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a road-side;
And there she begs at one steep place
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
Or thrown away; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers:
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child!

Farewell! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
Thy corpse shall buried be,
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

During these walks I composed the poem that follows.
The Reader must be apprised, that the Story in North-Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, the King being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse!
Let me have the song of the kettle;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
That gallops away with such fury a force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature
Perhaps a child of the field or the grove;
And, sorrow for him! the dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his wintry retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas! how he fumbles about the domain
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a travel-bemazed:
The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the north;
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh!
His eyesight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood is free
and thaws;
And his two pretty pinions of blue damus,
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of Love;

WRITTEN IN GERMANY

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY
1799. 1800

A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my Sister, in our lodgings at a draper’s house in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz Forest. In this town the German emperors of the Franconian line were accustomed to keep their court, and it retains vestiges of ancient splendour. So severe was the cold of this winter, that when we passed out of the parlour warmed by the stove, our cheeks were struck by the air as by cold iron. I slept in a room over a passage which was not ceiled. The people of the house used to say, rather unfeelingly, that they expected I should be frozen to death some night; but, with the protection of a pelisse lined with fur, and a dog’s-skin bonnet, such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts, or in a sort of public ground or garden, in which was a pond. Here, I had no companion but a kingfisher, a beautiful creature, that used to glance by me. I consequently became much attached to it.
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,  
As if green summer grass were the floor of  
my room,  
And woodbines were hanging above.  

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless  
Thing!  
By life I would gladly sustain  
All summer come up from the south, and  
with crowds  
Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst  
sound through the clouds,  
And back to the forests again!

“BLEAK SEASON WAS IT,  
TURBULENT AND WILD”  
1800 (?). 1851

BLEAK season was it, turbulent and wild,  
When hitherward we journeyed, side by  
side,  
Through bursts of sunshine and through  
Faced the long vales,—how long they were,  
and yet  
How fast that length of way was left be-  
hind! —  
Wensley’s rich dale, and Sedberge’s naked  
heights.  
The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
For its keen breath, was aiding to our  
steps,  
And drove us onward as two ships at sea;  
Or like two birds, companions in mid-air,  
Start and reunited by the blast.  
Trem was the face of Nature; we rejoiced  
in that stern countenance; for our souls  
Thence drew  
A feeling of their strength.  

The naked trees,  
The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
To question us, "Whence come ye, to what  
end?"

“ON NATURE’S INVITATION DO  
I COME”  
1800 (?). 1851

On Nature’s invitation do I come,  
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mis-  
lead,

That made the calmest, fairest spot on  
earth,  
With all its unappropriated good,  
My own; and not mine only, for with me  
Entrenched — say rather peacefully em-  
obered —  
Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
A younger orphan of a name extinct,  
The only daughter of my parents, dwells:  
Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to  
stir;  
Pause upon that, and let the breathing  
frame  
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.  
Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God  
For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
where then  
Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did  
ne’er  
Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
Take pleasure in the midst of happy  
thought,  
But either she, whom now I have, who now  
Divides with me that loved abode, was  
there,  
Or not far off. Where’er my footsteps  
turned,  

Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang;  
The thought of her was like a flash of light,  
Or an unseen companionship; a breath  
Or fragrance independent of the wind.  
In all my goings, in the new and old  
Of all my meditations, and in this  
Favourite of all, in this the most of all.  
Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.  
Now in the clear and open day I feel  

Your guardianship: I take it to my heart;  
’T is like the solemn shelter of the night.  
But I would call thee beautiful; for mild  
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,  
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,  
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou  
art pleased,  
Pleased with thy crags, and woody steepes,  
thy lake,  
Its one green island, and its winding shores,  
The multitude of little rocky hills,  
Thy church, and cottages of mountain stone  
Clustered like stars some few, but single  
most,  
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks  
Like separated stars with clouds between.
THE PRELUDE; OR, GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM
1799-1805. 1850
ADVERTISMENT

The following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the "Excursion," first published in 1814, where he thus speaks:

"Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he also take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

"As a subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

"That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the 'Recluse;,' as having for principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be for the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them a place to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in the edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will then be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the "Recluse" and that the "Recluse," if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone: viz. the "Excursion," was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the "Recluse" still remains in manuscript; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to "Excursion."

The friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country), are recorded in a Letter, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the Sibylline Leaves, p. 197, 1817, or Poetical Works, by S. T. Coleridge, vol. i. p. 206.

BYDAL MOUNT, July 13th, 1850.

BOOK FIRST
INTRODUCTION — CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME

Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze,
A visitant that while it fans my cheek
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings
From the green fields, and from yon azure sky.

Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze come
To none more grateful than to me; esch
From the vast city, where I long had p
A discontented sojourner: now free,
Free as a bird to settle where I will.
What dwelling shall receive me? in a vale
Shall be my harbour? underneath what g
call I take up my home? and what clear stream
all with its murmur lull me into rest? be earth is all before me. With a heart
pious, nor scared at its own liberty, look about; and should the chosen guide
nothing better than a wandering cloud, cannot miss my way. I breathe again!
ances of thought and mountings of the mind
some fast upon me: it is shaken off, that burthen of my own unnatural self,
be heavy weight of many a weary day of mine, and such as were not made for me.
ong months of peace (if such bold word accord
With any promises of human life),
ong months of ease and undisturbed de-
are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn,
y road or pathway, or through trackless field,
p hill or down, or shall some floating thing
pon the river point me out my course? 30

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail
but for a gift that consecrates the joy?
for I, methought, while the sweet breath of heaven
Was blowing on my body, felt within
A correspondent breeze, that gently moved
With quickening virtue, but is now become
A tempest, a redundant energy,
fixing its own creation. Thanks to both,
And their congenial powers, that, while they join
in breaking up a long-continued frost,
bring with them vernal promises, the hope
Of active days urged on by flying hours,—
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought
Abstemiae, nor wanting punctual service high,
Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to make
A present joy the matter of a song,
Four forth that day my soul in measured strains
That would not be forgotten, and are here
Recorded: to the open fields I told
A prophecy: poetic numbers came
Instantaneously to clothe in priestly robe
A renovated spirit singled out,
Such hope was mine, for holy services.
My own voice cheered me, and, far more,
the mind's
Internal echo of the imperfect sound;
To both I listened, drawing from them both
A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give
A respite to this passion, I paced on
With brisk and eager steps; and came, at length,
To a green shady place, where down I sate
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice
And settling into gentler happiness.
'T was autumn, and a clear and placid day,
With warmth, as much as needed, from a sun
Two hours declined towards the west; a day
With silver clouds, and sunshine on the grass,
And in the sheltered and the sheltering grove
A perfect stillness. Many were the thoughts
Encouraged and dismissed, till choice was made
Of a known Vale, whither my feet should turn,
Nor rest till they had reached the very door
Of the one cottage which methought I saw
No picture of mere memory ever looked
So fair; and while upon the fancied scene
I gazed with growing love, a higher power
Than Fancy gave assurance of some work
Of glory there forthwith to be begun,
Perhaps too there performed. Thus long I mused,
Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,
Save when, amid the stately grove of oaks,
Now here, now there, an acorn, from its cup
Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or at once
To the bare earth dropped with a startling sound.
From that soft couch I rose not, till the sun
Had almost touched the horizon; casting then
A backward glance upon the curling cloud
Of city smoke, by distance ruralised;
Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive,
But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,
Even with the chance equipment of that hour,
The road that pointed toward the chosen Vale.
It was a splendid evening, and my soul
Once more made trial of her strength, nor lacked
Æolian visitations; but the harp
Was soon defrauded, and the banded host
Of harmony dispersed in straggling sounds,
And lastly utter silence! “Be it so; 99
Why think of anything but present good?”
So, like a home-bound labourer, I pursued
My way beneath the mellowing sun, that shed
Mild influence; nor left in me one wish
Again to bend the Sabbath of that time
To a servile yoke. What need of many words?
A pleasant loitering journey, through three days
Continued, brought me to my hermitage.
I spare to tell of what ensued, the life
In common things — the endless store of things,
Rare, or at least so seeming, every day 110
Found all about me in one neighbourhood —
The self-congratulation, and, from morn
to night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.
But speedily an earnest longing rose
To brace myself to some determined aim,
Reading or thinking; either to lay up
New stores, or rescue from decay the old
By timely interference: and therewith
Came hopes still higher, that with outward life
I might endue some airy phantasies 120
That had been floating loose about for years,
And to such beings temperately deal forth
The many feelings that oppressed my heart.
That hope hath been discouraged; welcome light
Dawns from the east, but dawns to disappear
And mock me with a sky that ripens not
Into a steady morning; if my mind,
Remembering the bold promise of the past,
Would gladly grapple with some noble theme,
Vain is her wish; where'er she turns she finds
Impediments from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield up
Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts
Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend!
The Poet, gentle creature as he is,
Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times;
His fits when he is neither sick nor well,
Though no distress be near him but his own
Unmanageable thoughts: his mind, be pleased
While she as duteous as the mother dove
Sits brooding, lives not always to that end
But like the innocent bird, hath goadings
That drive her as in trouble through the groves;
With me is now such passion, to be blamed
No otherwise than as it lasts too long.

When, as becomes a man who would prepare
For such an arduous work, I through myse
Make rigorous inquisition, the report
Is often cheering; for I neither seem
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul
Nor general Truths, which are themselves a sort
Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,
Subordinate helpers of the living mind:
Nor am I naked of external things,
Forms, images, nor numerous other aids
Of less regard, though won perhaps with to
And needing to build up a Poet’s praise.
Time, place, and manners do I seek, as these
Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere such
As may be singled out with steady choice
No little band of yet remembered names
Whom I, in perfect confidence, might beg
To summon back from lonesome banishment,
And make them dwellers in the hearts of men
Now living, or to live in future years.
Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice
mistaken
Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular sea,
Will settle on some British theme, some o
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;
More often turning to some gentle place
Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe
To shepherd swains, or seated harp in har
Amid reposeing knights by a river side
Or fountain, listen to the grave reports
Of dire enchantments faced and overcome
By the strong mind, and tales of warlike feats,
Where spear encountered spear, and swor
with sword
Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry
That the shield bore, so glorious was the strife;
Whence inspiration for a song that winds
Through ever-changing scenes of votive quest
Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid
To patient courage and unblemished truth,
To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,
And Christian meekness hallowing faithful loves.
Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would relate
How vanquished Mithridates northward passed,
And, hidden in the cloud of years, became Odín, the Father of a race by whom
Perished the Roman Empire: how the friends
And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain
Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate Isles,
And left their usages, their arts and laws,
To disappear by a slow gradual death,
To dwindle and to perish one by one,
Starved in those narrow bounds: but not the soul
Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years
Survived, and, when the European came
With skill and power that might not be withstood,
Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold
And wasted down by glorious death that race
Of natural heroes: or I would record
How, in tyrannic times, some high-souled man,
Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,
Suffered in silence for Truth's sake: or tell,
How that one Frenchman, through continued force
Of meditation on the inhuman deeds
Of those who conquered first the Indian Isles,
Went single in his ministry across
The Ocean; not to comfort the oppressed,
But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about
Withering the Oppressor: how Gustavus sought
Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines:
How Wallace fought for Scotland; left the name
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear Country; left the deeds
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,
To people the steep rocks and river banks,
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
Of independence and stern liberty.
Sometimes it suits me better to invent
A tale from my own heart, more near akin
To my own passions and habitual thoughts;
Some variegated story, in the main
Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts
Before the very sun that brightens it,
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,
My last and favourite aspiration, mounts
With yearning toward some philosophic song
Of Truth that cherishes our daily life;
With meditations passionate from deep
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;
But from this awful burthen I full soon
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust
That mellower years will bring a riper mind
And clearer insight. Thus my days are past
In contradiction; with no skill to part
Vague longing, haply bred by want of power,
From paramount impulse not to be withstood,
A timorous capacity, from prudence,
From circumspection, infinite delay.
Humility and modest awe, themselves
Betray me, serving often for a cloak
To a more subtle selfishness; that now
Locks every function up in blank reserve,
Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye
That with intrusive restlessness beats off
Simplicity and self-presented truth.
Ah! better far than this, to stray about
Voluptuously through fields and rural walks,
And ask no record of the hours, resigned
To vacant musing, unreproved neglect
Of all things, and deliberate holiday.
Far better never to have heard the name
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live
Baffled and plagued by a mind that every hour
Turns recreant to her task; takes heart again,
Then feels immediately some hollow thought
Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.
This is my lot; for either still I find
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,
Or see of absolute accomplishment
Much wanting, so much wanting, in myself,
That I recoil and brood, and seek repose
In listlessness from vain perplexity,
Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,
Like a false steward who hath much received
And renders nothing back.
Was it for this
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
That flowed along my dreams?  For this,
didst thou,
O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts.
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.

When he had left the mountains and received
On his smooth breast the shadow of those towers
That yet survive, a shattered monument
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed
Along the margin of our terrace walk;
A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved.
Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,
In a small mill-race sever'd from his stream,
Made one long bathing of a summer's day;
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked again
Alternate, all a summer's day, or secured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves
Of yellow ragwort; or, when rock and hill,
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty height,
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood alone
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no less
In that belovéd Vale to which ere long
We were transplanted; — there were we let loose
For sports of wider range.  Ere I had told
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain slopes
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
With store of springes o'er my shoulders hung
To range the open heights where wood cocks run
Along the smooth green turf.  Through half the night,
Scudding away from snare to snare, I pieced
That anxious visitation; — moon and star
Were shining o'er my head.  I was alone
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them.  Sometimes befell
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, as sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less, when spring had warmed t
    cultur'd Vale,
Moved we as plunderers where the moth
    bird
Had in high places built her lodge; thou mean
Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble.  Oh! when I hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of gras
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seems)
Suspected by the blast that blew amain
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at time
While on the perilous ridge I hung along
With what strange utterance did the keen dry wind
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed
Of earth — and with what motion mo the clouds!
Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows
Like harmony in music; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling togeth-
er
In one society. How strange, that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, jissitudes intermixed
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned
to employ;
Whether her fearless visitings, or those
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless light
Opening the peaceful clouds; or she would use
Severer interventions, ministry
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cove, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
 Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unwavering line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon’s utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnacle; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon’s bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
And through the meadows homeward went,
in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o’er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe! Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
But with high objects, with enduring things —
With life and nature — purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear, until we recognise
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
With stinted kindness. In November days,
When vapours rolling down the valley
Made a lonely scene more lonesome, among woods,
At noon and 'mid the calm of summer
night,
When, by the margin of the trembling
lake,
Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I
went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine;
Mine was it in the fields both day and
night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twi-
light gloom,
I heeded not their summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and
loud
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled
about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod
with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding
horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted
hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we
flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the
west

The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideward, leaving the tumultuous
throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me,
gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spin-
ning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,

Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth be
rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn trail
Feebler and feebler, and I stood as
watched

Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills
And Souls of lonely places! can I think
A vulgar hope was yours when ye employ
Such ministry, when ye, through many
year

Haunting me thus among my boyish sport
On caves and trees, upon the woods in
hills,

Impressed, upon all forms, the characters
Of danger or desire; and thus did make
The surface of the universal earth,
With triumph and delight, with hope in
fear,

Work like a sea?

Not uselessly employ
Might I pursue this theme through ever
change
Of exercise and play, to which the year
Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew; the sun in heaven
Beheld not vales more beautiful than our
Nor saw a band in happiness and joy
Richer, or worthier of the ground they trod
I could record with no reluctant voice
The woods of autumn, and their hazel
bowers
With milk-white clusters hung; the rod ar
line,

True symbol of hope’s foolishness, who
strong
And unreproved enchantment led us on
By rocks and pools shut out from every
star,

All the green summer, to forlorn cascade
Among the windings hid of mounta
brooks.

—Unfading recollections! at this hour
The heart is almost mine with which I fe
From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,
The paper kite high among fleecy clouds
Pull at her rein like an impetuous course
Or, from the meadows sent on gusty day
Beheld her breast the wind, then sudden
Dashed headlong, and rejected by the storm.
Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt, 
amidst the cheerful scenes of life, 
which ye stood? or can I here forget he plain and seemly countenance with 
which 

We dealt out your plain comforts? Yet had ye 
delights and exultations of your own. 
Eager and never weary we pursued 
our home-amusements by the warm peat-

fire 
it evening, when with pencil, and smooth slate 
in square divisions parcelled out and all 
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled o'er, 
We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to head 
in strife too humble to be named in verse: 
Or round the naked table, snow-white deal, 
Cherry or maple, sate in close array; 
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on 
A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world, 

Neglected and ungratefully thrown by 
E'en for the very service they had wrought, 
But husbanded through many a long camp-

aign. 
Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few 
Had changed their functions: some, ple-
brian cards 
Which Fate, beyond the promise of their birth, 
Had dignified, and called to represent 
The persons of departed potentates. 

Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell! 
Ironic diamonds,—clubs, hearts, diamonds, 
spades, 
A congregation piteously akin! 
Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit, 
Those sooty knaves, precipitated down 

With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of heaven: 
The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse, 
Queens gleaming through their splendour's last decay, 
And monarchs sourly at the wrongs sus-
tained 
By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad 
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost 
Eager bitterly, with keen and silent tooth; 
And, interrupting oft that eager game, 
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of ice 

The pent-up air, struggling to free itself, 
Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a loud 

Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves 
Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main. 

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace 
How Nature by extrinsic passion first 
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair, 
And made me love them, may I here omit 
How other pleasures have been mine, and joys 

Of subtler origin; how I have felt, 
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time, 
Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense 

Which seem, in their simplicity, to own 
An intellectual charm; that calm delight 
Which, if I err not, surely must belong 
To those first-born affinities that fit 
Our new existence to existing things, 
And, in our dawn of being, constitute 
The bond of union between life and joy. 

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth, 
And twice five summers on my mind had stamped 

The faces of the moving year, even then 
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty 

Old as creation, drinking in a pure 
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths 
Of curling mist, or from the level plain 
Of waters coloured by impending clouds. 

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks and bays 

Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell 

How, when the Sea threw off his evening shade, 
And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills 

Sent welcome notice of the rising moon, 
How I have stood, to fancies such as these 

A stranger, linking with the spectacle 
No conscious memory of a kindred sight, 
And bringing with me no peculiar sense 
Of quietness or peace; yet have I stood, 
Even while mine eye hath moved o'er many 

A league 

Of shining water, gathering as it seemed, 
Through every hair-breadth in that field of light, 

New pleasure like a bee among the flowers.
May spur me on, in manhood now mature
To honourable toil. Yet should these hopes
Prove vain, and thus should neither I nor thou
be taught
To understand myself, nor thou to know
With better knowledge how the heart was
framed
Of him thou lovest; need I dread from the
Harsh judgments, if the song be lot to quell
Those recollected hours that have the charm
Of visionary things, those lovely forms
And sweet sensations that throw back a
life,
And almost make remotest infancy
A visible scene, on which the sun is shining.

One end at least hath been attained; —
Hath been revived, and if this genial mood
Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought
Through later years the story of my life.
The road lies plain before me; — 'tis the theme
Single and of determined bounds; —
I choose it rather at this time, than work
Of ampler or more varied argument.
Where I might be discomfited and lost:
And certain hopes are with me, that to this
This labour will be welcome, honourable
Friend!

BOOK SECOND

SCHOOL-TIME (continued)

Thus far, O Friend! have we, though
leaving much
Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace
The simple ways in which my childhood
walked;
Those chiefly that first led me to the love
Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion
Was in its birth, sustained as might be
By nourishment that came unsought; I
still
From week to week, from month to month
we lived
A round of tumult. Duly were our games
Prolonged in summer till the daylight failed.
No chair remained before the doors; the
bench
And threshold steps were empty; fast as
The labourer, and the old man who had
later lingerer; yet the revelry
mined and the loud uproar: at last,
hen all the ground was dark, and twinkle
ed the black clouds, home and to bed
we went,
verish with weary joints and beating
minds.
h is there one who ever has been young,
or needs a warning voice to tame the
pride
f intellect and virtue’s self-esteem?
se is there, though the wisest and the best
f all mankind, who covets not at times
ion that cannot be; — who would not give
so he might, to duty and to truth
he eagerness of infantine desire?
tranquillising spirit presses now
my corporeal frame, so wide appears
he vacancy between me and those days
which yet have such self-presence in my
mind,
hat, musing on them, often do I seem
wo consciousnesses, conscious of myself
nd of some other Being. A rude mass
native rock, left midway in the square
our small market village, was the goal
b centre of these sports; and when, re-
turned
fter long absence, thither I repaired,
one was the old grey stone, and in its place
smart Assembly-room usurped the ground
that had been ours. There let the fiddle
scream,
nd be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I know
hat more than one of you will think with me
f those soft starry nights, and that old
Dame
from whom the stone was named, who
there had sate,
nd watched her table with its huckster’s
wares
samious, through the length of sixty years.

We ran a boisterous course; the year
span round
With giddy motion. But the time ap-
proached
hat brought with it a regular desire
for calmer pleasures, when the winning
forms
Of Nature were collateraly attached
to every scheme of holiday delight

And every boyish sport, less grateful else
And languidly pursued.

When summer came,
Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,
To sweep along the plain of Windermere
With rival ears; and the selected bourne
Was now an Island musical with birds
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle
Beneath the oaks’ umbrageous covert, sown
With lilies of the valley like a field;
And now a third small Island, where sur-
vived

In solitude the ruins of a shrine
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race
So ended, disappointment could be none,
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride
of strength,
And the vain-glory of superior skill,
Were tempered; thus was gradually pro-
duced
A quiet independence of the heart:
And to my Friend who knows me I may
add,
Fearless of blame, that hence for future days
Ensued a diffidence and modesty,
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much,
The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine fare! More than we wished we knew the blessing then
Of vigorous hunger — hence corporeal
strength
Unsapped by delicate viands; for, exclude
A little weekly stipend, and we lived
Through three divisions of the quartered
year
In penniless poverty. But now to school
From the half-yearly holidays returned,
We came with weightier purses, that suf-
ced
To furnish treats more costly than the
Dame
Of the old grey stone, from her scant board,
supplied.
Hence rustic dinners on the cool green
ground,
Or in the woods, or by a river side
Or shady fountains, while among the leaves
Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day sun
Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.
Nor is my aim neglected if I tell
How sometimes, in the length of those half-years,
We from our funds drew largely; — proud to curb,
And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose stud
Supplied our want, we haply might employ
Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound.
Were distant: some famed temple where of yore
The Druids worshipped, or the antique walls
Of that large abbey, where within the Vale
Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour built,
Stands yet a mouldering pile with fractured arch,
Belfry, and images, and living trees; —
A holy scene! — Along the smooth green turf
Our horses grazed. To more than inland peace,
Left by the west wind sweeping overhead
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and towers
In that sequestered valley may be seen,
Both silent and both motionless alike;
Such the deep shelter that is there, and such
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the summons given,
With whip and spur we through the country flew
In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged knight,
And the stone-abbot, and that single wren
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave
Of the old church, that — though from recent showers
The earth was comfortless, and, touched by faint
Internal breezes, sobbings of the place
And respirations, from the roofless walls
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops —
Yet still
So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible bird
Sang to herself, that there I could have made
My dwelling-place, and lived for ever there
To hear such music. Through the walls we flew
And down the valley, and, a circuit made

In wantonness of heart, through rough and smooth
We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks and streams,
And that still spirit shed from evening air
Even in this joyous time I sometimes felt
Your presence, when with slackened step we breathed
Along the sides of the steep hills, or when
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the sea
We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

Midway on long Winander's western shore,
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,
A tavern stood; no homely -feature house,
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,
But 't was a splendid place, the door best
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, as within
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was built
On the large island, had this dwelling bee
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore shade.

But — though the rhymes were gone the once inscribed
The threshold, and large golden charnels,
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had dislodged
The old Lion and usurped his place, a slight
And mockery of the rustic painter's hand.
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear
With all its foolish pomp. The garden is
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain
Of a small bowling-green; beneath stood
A grove, with gleams of water through the trees
And over the tree-tops; nor did we want
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow cream.
There, while through half an afternoon we played
On the smooth platform, whether skill prevailed
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of glee
lade all the mountains ring. But, ere
night-fall,
then in our pinnacle we returned at leisure
over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
if some small island steered our course
with one,
the Minstrel of the Troop, and left him
there,
and rowed off gently, while he blew his
flute
alone upon the rock — oh, then, the calm
and dead still water lay upon my mind 171
even with a weight of pleasure, and the
sky,
never before so beautiful, sank down
into my heart, and held me like a dream!
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
Daily the common range of visible things
bored dear to me: already I began
To love the sun; a boy I loved the sun,
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
And surety of our earthly life, a light 180
Which we behold and feel we are alive;
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds —
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
The western mountain touch his setting orb,
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess
Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy.
And, from like feelings, humble though intense,
To patriotic and domestic love 190
Analogous, the moon to me was dear;
For I could dream away my purposes,
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung
Midway between the hills as if she knew
No other region, but belonged to thee, Yea, appertained by a peculiar right
To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear Vale!
Those incidental charms which first attached
My heart to rural objects, day by day
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell
How Nature, interventient till this time
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake. But who shall parcel out
His intellect by geometric rules,
Split like a province into round and square?
Who knows the individual hour in which
His habits were first sown, even as a seed?
Who that shall point as with a wand and say
"This portion of the river of my mind
Came from yon fountain?" Thou, my Friend! art one
More deeply read in thy own thoughts; to thee
Science appears but what in truth she is,
Not as our glory and our absolute boast,
But as a succedaneum, and a prop
To our infirmity. No officious slave
Art thou of that false secondary power
By which we multiply distinctions, then
Deem that our puny boundaries are things
That we perceive, and not that we have made.
To thee, unblinded by these formal arts, 220
The unity of all hath been revealed,
And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly skilled
Than many are to range the faculties
In scale and order, class the cabinet
Of their sensations, and in voluble phrase
Run through the history and birth of each
As of a single independent thing.
Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the mind,
If each most obvious and particular thought,
Not in a mystical and idle sense, 230
But in the words of Reason deeply weighed,
Hath no beginning.
Blest the infant Babe,
(For with my best conjecture I would trace
Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the Babe,
Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks to sleep
Rocked on his Mother's breast; who with his soul
Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye!
For him, in one dear Presence, there exists
A virtue which irradiates and exalts
Objects through widest intercourse of sense;
No outcast he, bewildered and depressed:
Along his infant veins are interfused
The gravitation and the filial bond
Of nature that connect him with the world.
Is there a flower, to which he points with hand
Too weak to gather it, already love
Drawn from love's purest earthly fount for him
Hath beautified that flower; already shades
Of pity cast from inward tenderness
Do fall around him upon aught that bears
Unsighty marks of violence or harm.
Emphatically such a Being lives,
Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,
An inmate of this active universe:
For, feeling has to him imparted power
That through the growing faculties of sense
Doth like an agent of the one great Mind
Create, creator and receiver both,
Working but in alliance with the world
Which it beholds. — Such, verily, is the first
Poetic spirit of our human life,
By uniform control of after years,
In most, abated or suppressed; in some,
Through every change of growth and of decay,
Pre-eminent till death.

From early days,
Beginning not long after that first time
In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch
I held mute dialogues with my Mother's heart,
I have endeavoured to display the means
Whereby this infant sensibility,
Great birthright of our being, was in me
Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path
More difficult before me; and I fear
That in its broken windings we shall need
The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's wing:
For now a trouble came into my mind
From unknown causes. I was left alone
Seeking the visible world, nor knowing why.
The props of my affections were removed,
And yet the building stood, as if sustained
By its own spirit! All that I beheld
Was dear, and hence to finer influxes
The mind lay open to a more exact
And close communion. Many are our joys
In youth, but oh! what happiness to live
When every hour brings palpable access
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,
And sorrow is not there! The seasons came,
And every season wheresoe'er I moved
Unfolded transitory qualities,
Which, but for this most watchful power of love,
Had been neglected; left a register
Of permanent relations, else unknown.
Hence life, and change, and beauty, solitude
More active ever than "best society"—
Society made sweet as solitude
By silent inobtrusive sympathies,
And gentle agitations of the mind
From manifold distinctions, difference
Perceived in things, where, to the unwatchful eye,
No difference is, and hence, from the same source,
Sublimer joy; for I would walk alone,
Under the quiet stars, and at that time
Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound
To breathe an elevated mood, by form
Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,
If the night blackened with a coming storm
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.
Thence did I drink the visionary power;
And deem not profitless those fleeting moods
Of shadowy exultation: not for this,
That they are kindred to our purer mind
And intellectual life; but that the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
Remembering not, retains an obscure sens
Of possible sublimity, where the broth
With growing faculties she doth aspire,
With faculties still growing, feeling still
That whatsoever point they gain, they yet
Have something to pursue.

And not alone,
'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid fair
And tranquil scenes, that universal power
And fitness in the latent qualities
And essences of things, by which the mind
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me
Came strengthened with a superadded soul
A virtue not its own. My morning walks
Were early; — oft before the hours of school
I travelled round our little lake, five mile
Of pleasant wandering. Happy time! my dear
For this, that one was by my side, a Friend.
Then passionately loved; with heart but full
Would he peruse these lines! For many years
Have since flowed in between us, and, on minds
Both silent to each other, at this time
We live as if those hours had never been.
Of that interminable building reared
By observation of affinities
In objects where no brotherhood exists
To passive minds. My seventeenth year
was come
And, whether from this habit rooted now
So deeply in my mind, or from excess
In the great social principle of life
Coercing all things into sympathy, 390
To unorganic natures were transferred
My own enjoyments; or the power of truth
Coming in revelation, did converse
With things that really are; I, at this time,
Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.
Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
From Nature and her overflowing soul,
I had received so much, that all my
thoughts
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then
Contented, when with bliss ineffable 400
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth
still;
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of
thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and
sings,
Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that
glides
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth and
heaven
With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
Of adoration, with an eye of love.
One song they sang, and it was audible,
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,
Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith
Find easier access to the pious mind,
Yet were I grossly destitute of all
Those human sentiments that make this
earth
So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
That dwell among the hills where I was
born.
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
With God and Nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires —
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
This melancholy waste of hopes o’erthrown,
If, ’mid indifference and apathy,
And wicked exultation when good men
On every side fall off, we know not how,
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
Of peace and quiet and domestic love
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
On visionary minds; if, in this time
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
Despair not of our nature, but retain
A more than Roman confidence, a faith
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
The blessing of my life — the gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! ’t is yours,
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed
My lofty speculations; and in thee,
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest passion.
Thou, my friend! wert reared
In the great city, ’mid far other scenes;
But we, by different roads, at length have gained
The selfsame bourne. And for this cause
to thee
I speak, unapprehensive of contempt,
The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,
And all that silent language which so oft
In conversation between man and man
Blots from the human countenance all trace
Of beauty and of love. For thou hast sought
The truth in solitude, and, since the days
That gave thee liberty, full long desired,
To serve in Nature’s temple, thou hast been
The most assiduous of her ministers;
In many things my brother, chiefly here
In this our deep devotion.
Fare thee well!
Health and the quiet of a healthful mind
Attend thee! seeking oft the haunts of men,
And yet more often living with thyself,
And for thyself, so hapily shall thy days
Be many, and a blessing to mankind.

BOOK THIRD

RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE

It was a dreary morning when the wheel
Rolled over a wide plain o’erhung with clouds,
And nothing cheered our way till first we saw
The long-roofed chapel of King’s College lift
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road
A student clothed in gown and tassel cap,
Striding along as if o’ertasked by Time,
Or covetous of exercise and air;
He passed — nor was I master of my eye
Till he was left an arrow’s flight behind.
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,
It seemed to suck us in with an eddying force.
Onward we drove beneath the Castle; sang
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse
Of Cam;
And at the Hoop alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full of hope;
Some friends I had, acquaintances who the Seemed friends, poor simple schoolboys, hung round
With honour and importance: in a world
Of welcome faces up and down I roved;
Questions, directions, warnings and advices
Flowed in upon me, from all sides; for day
Of pride and pleasure! to myself I seem
A man of business and expense, and went From shop to shop about my own affairs
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,
From street to street with loose and careless
mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dreamers roamed
Delighted through the motley spectacle
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students streets,
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, ways, towers:
Migration strange for a stripling of hills,
A northern villager.
As if the change
Had waited on some Fairy’s wand, at once
Behold me rich in monies, and attired
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and
hair
Powdered like riny trees, when frost is
keen.
My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by, 40
With other signs of manhood that supplied
The lack of beard. — The weeks went
roundly on,
With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,
Smooth housekeeping within, and all without
Liberal, and suitting gentleman’s array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was:
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure;
Right underneath, the College kitchens
made
A humming sound, less tuneable than
bees, 50
But hardly less industrious; with shrill
notes
Of sharp command and scolding inter-
mixed.
Near me hung Trinity’s loquacious clock,
Who never let the quarters, night or day,
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the
hours
Twice over with a male and female voice.
Her pealing organ was my neighbour too;
And from my pillow, looking forth by light
Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold
The antechapel where the statue stood 60
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought,
alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer’s
room
All studded round, as thick as chairs could
stand,
With loyal students, faithful to their books,
Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,
And honest dunces — of important days,
Examinations, when the man was weighed
As in a balance! of excessive hopes, 70
Tremblings withal and commendable fears,
Small jealousies, and triumphs good or
bad —
Let others that know more speak as they
know.

Such glory was but little sought by me,
And little won. Yet from the first crude
days
Of settling time in this untried abode,
I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,
Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears
About my future worldly maintenance,
And, more than all, a strangeness in the
mind, 80
A feeling that I was not for that hour,
Nor for that place. But wherefore be cast
down?
For (not to speak of Reason and her pure
Reflective acts to fix the moral law
Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian
Hope,
Bowing her head before her sister Faith
As one far mightier), hither I had come,
Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy
powers
And faculties, whether to work or feel.
Oft when the dazzling show no longer new
Had ceased to dazzle, offtimes did I quit 90
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings
and groves,
And as I paced alone the level fields
Far from those lovely sights and sounds
sublime
With which I had been conversant, the
mind
Drooped not; but there into herself return-
ing,
With prompt rebound seemed fresh as here-
tofoore.
At least I more distinctly recognised
Her native instincts: let me dare to speak
A higher language, say that now I felt 100
What independent solaces were mine,
To mitigate the injurious sway of place
Or circumstance, how far soever changed
In youth, or to be changed in after years.
As if awakened, summoned, roused, con-
strained,
I looked for universal things; perused
The common countenance of earth and sky:
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace
Of that first Paradise whence man was
driven;
And sky, whose beauty and bounty are ex-
pressed 110
By the proud name she bears — the name
of Heaven.
I called on both to teach me what they
might;
Or, turning the mind in upon herself,
Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread
my thoughts
And spread them with a wider creeping;
felt
Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,
That tolerates the indignities of Time,
And, from the centre of Eternity
All finite motions overruling, lives
In glory immutable. But peace! enough
Here to record that I was mounting now
To such community with highest truth —
A track pursuing, not untrod before,
From strict analogies by thought supplied
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.
To every natural form, rock, fruits, or
flower,
Even the loose stones that cover the highway,
I gave a moral life: I saw them feel,
Or linked them to some feeling: the great
mass
Lay imbedded in a quickening soul, and all
That I beheld respiring with inward meaning.
Add that whate’er of Terror or of Love
Or Beauty, Nature’s daily face put on
From transitory passion, unto this
I was as sensitive as waters are
To the sky’s influence in a kindred mood
Of passion; was obedient as a lute
That waits upon the touch of the wind.
Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most
rich —
I had a world about me — ’t was my own;
I made it, for it only lived to me,
And to the God who sees into the heart.
Such sympathies, though rarely, were betrayed
By outward gestures and by visible looks:
Some called it madness — so indeed it was,
If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,
If steady moods of thoughtfulness matured
To inspiration, sort with such a name;
If prophecy be madness; if things viewed
By poets in old time, and higher up
By the first men, earth’s first inhabitants,
May in these tutored days no more be seen
With undisordered sight. But leaving this,
It was no madness, for the bodily eye
Amid my strongest workings evermore
Was searching out the lines of difference
As they lie hid in all external forms,

Near or remote, minute or vast; an eye
Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered leaf,
To the broad ocean and the azure heavens
Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars,
Could find no surface where its power might sleep;
Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,
And by an unrelenting agency
Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend! have I retraced
my life
Up to an eminence, and told a tale
Of matters which not falsely may be called
The glory of my youth. Of genius
power,
Creation and divinity itself
I have been speaking, for my theme has been
What has passed within me. Not of outward things
Done visibly for other minds, words, signs,
Symbols or actions, but of my own heart.
Have I been speaking, and my youthful mind.
O Heavens! how awful is the might
souls,
And what they do within themselves who
yet
The yoke of earth is new to them, the
world
Nothing but a wild field where they are sown.

This is, in truth, heroic argument,
This genuine prowess, which I wished to make
Breathings for incommunicable powers;
But is not each a memory to himself,
And, therefore, now that we must quit the theme,
I am not heartless, for there’s not a man
That lives who hath not known his go-like hours,
And feels not what an empire we inherit
As natural beings in the strength of Nature.

No more: for now into a populous plain
We must descend. A Traveller I am,
BOOK III

THE PRELUDE

Whose tale is only of himself; even so, so be it, if the pure of heart be prompt to follow, and if thou, my honoured Friend!

Whoe in these thoughts art ever at my side, support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first delight that flashed upon me from this novel show had failed, the mind returned into herself; Yet true it is, that I had made a change in climate, and my nature's outward coat changed also slowly and insensibly. Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts Of loneliness gave way to empty noise And superficial pastimes; now and then forced labour, and more frequently forced hopes; And, worst of all, a treasonable growth Of indecisive judgments, that impaired And shook the mind's simplicity. — And yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I behold —

Who, less insensible than sodden clay In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide, Could have beheld — with undelightened heart, So many happy youths, so wide and fair A congregation in its budding-time Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at once So many divers samples from the growth Of life's sweet season — could have seen unmoved That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers Decking the matron temples of a place So famous through the world? To me, at least, It was a kindly prospect: for, in sooth, Though I had learnt betimes to stand unpropped, And independent musings pleased me so That spells seemed on me when I was alone, Yet could I only cleave to solitude in lonely places; if a throng was near That way I leaned by nature; for my heart Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might participate My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once, Though not unused to mutter lonesome songs,

Even with myself divided such delight, Or looked that way for aught that might be clothed

In human language), easily I passed From the remembrances of better things, And slipped into the ordinary works Of careless youth, unburthened, unalarmed. Caverns there were within my mind which sun

Could never penetrate, yet did there not Want store of leafy arbours where the light Might enter in at will. Companionships, Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome all.

We sauntered, played, or rioted; we talked Unprofitable talk at morning hours; Drifted about along the streets and walks,

Read lazily in trivial books, went forth To gallop through the country in blind zeal Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the stars Come forth, perhaps without one quiet thought.

Such was the tenor of the second act In this new life. Imagination slept, And yet not utterly. I could not print Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps Of generations of illustrious men, Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept, Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old, That garden of great intellects, undisturbed. Place also by the side of this dark sense Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men, Even the great Newton's own ethereal self, Seemed humbled in these precincts, thence to be The more endeared. Their several memo- ries here (Even like their persons in their portraits clothed With the accustomed garb of daily life)

Put on a lowly and a touching grace Of more distinct humanity, that left All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn shade;
Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell his tales
Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,
Chosen by the Muses for their Page of State —
Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded heaven
With the moon’s beauty and the moon’s soft pace,
I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend!
Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,
Stood almost single; uttering odious truth —
Darkness before, and danger’s voice behind,
Soul awful — if the earth has ever lodged
An awful soul — I seemed to see him here Familiarly, and in his scholar’s dress
Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth —
A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks
Angelic, keen eye, courageous look,
And conscious step of purity and pride.
Among the band of my compeers was one
Whom chance had stationed in the very room
Honoured by Milton’s name. O temperate Bard!
Be it confessed, that, for the first time, seated
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,
One of a festive circle, I poured out
Liberations, to thy memory drank, till pride
And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain
Never excited by the fumes of wine
Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I ran
From the assembly; through a length of streets,
Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel door
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,
Albeit long after the importunate bell
Had stopped, with earsome Cassandra voice
No longer haunting the dark winter night.
Call back, O Friend! a moment to thy mind,
The place itself and fashion of the rites.
With careless ostentation shouldering up
My surprise, through the inferior throng I clove
Of the plain Burghers, who in audience stood
On the last skirts of their permitted ground,
Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts! I
am ashamed of them: and that great Bard,
And thou, O Friend! who in thy ample mind
Hast placed me high above my best deserts,
Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour
In some of its unworthy vanities,
Brother to many more.

In this mixed state
The months passed on, remissly, not giving up
To wilful alienation from the right,
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague
And loose indifference, easy likings, aims
Of a low pitch — duty and zeal dismissed
Yet Nature, or a happy course of things
Not doing in their stead the needful work
The memory languidly revolted, the heart
Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse
Of contemplation almost failed to beat.
Such life might not inaptly be compared
To a floating island, an amphibious spot
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal
Not wanting a fair face of water weeds
And pleasant flowers. The thirst of livly praise,
Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, its sight
Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,
Where mighty minds lie visibly entombed
Have often stirred the heart of youth, a bred
A fervent love of rigorous discipline. —
Alas! such high emotion touched not me.
Look was there none within these walls
shame
My easy spirits, and countenance
Their light composure, far less to instil
A calm resolve of mind, firmly address
To puissant efforts. Nor was this the bliss
Of others but my own; I should, in truth,
As far as doth concern my single self,
Misdrew most widely, lodging it elsewhere.
For I, bred up ’mid Nature’s luxuries,
Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like a wind,
As I had done in daily intercourse
With those crystalline rivers, sole heights,
And mountains, ranging like a fowl of air,
I was ill-tutored for captivity;
To quit my pleasure, and, from month to month,
Take up a station calmly on the perch
Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms
Had also left less space within my mind
Which, wrought upon instinctively, I
found
A freshness in those objects of her love,
A winning power, beyond all other power.
Not that I slighted books,—that were to lack
All sense,—but other passions in me ruled,
Passions more fervent, making me less prompt
To in-door study than was wise or well,
Or suited to those years. Yet I, though used
In magisterial liberty to rove,
Culling such flowers of learning as might tempt
A random choice, could shadow forth a place
(If now I yield not to a flattering dream)
Whose studious aspect should have bent me down
To instantaneous service; should at once
Have made me pay to science and to arts
And written lore, acknowledged my liege lord,
A homage frankly offered up, like that
Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and pains
In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built,
Should spread from heart to heart; and stately groves,
Majestic edifices, should not want
A corresponding dignity within.
The congregating temper that pervades
Our unripe years, not wasted, should be taught
To minister to works of high attempt—
Works which the enthusiast would perform
with love.
Youth should be awed, religiously possessed
With a conviction of the power that waits
On knowledge, when sincerely sought and prized
For its own sake, on glory and on praise
If but by labour won, and fit to endure
The passing day; should learn to put aside
Her trappings here, should strip them off abashed
Before antiquity and steadfast truth
And strong book-mindedness; and over all
A healthy sound simplicity should reign,
A seemingly plainness, name it what you will,
Republican or pious.

If these thoughts
Are a gratuitous embrazoury
That mocks the recreant age we live in,
then
Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect
Whatever formal gait of discipline

Shall raise them highest in their own es-teem—
Let them parade among the Schools at will,
But spare the House of God. Was ever known
The witless shepherd who persists to drive
A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked?
A weight must surely hang on days begun
And ended with such mockery. Be wise,
Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the spirit
Of ancient times revive, and youth be trained
At home in pious service, to your bells
Give seasonable rest, for ’tis a sound
Hollow as ever vexed the tranquil air;
And your officious doings bring disgrace
On the plain steeples of our English Church,
Whose worship, ’mid remotest village trees,
Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at hand
In daily sight of this irreverence,
Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,
Loses her just authority, falls beneath
Collateral suspicion, else unknown.
This truth escaped me not, and I confess,
That having ’mid my native hills given loose
To a schoolboy’s vision, I had raised a pile
Upon the basis of the coming time,
That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what joy
To see a sanctuary for our country’s youth
Informed with such a spirit as might be
Its own protection; a primeval grove,
Where, though the shades with cheerfulness were filled,
Nor indigent of songs warbled from crowds
In under-coverts, yet the countenance
Of the whole place should bear a stamp of awe;
A habitation sober and demure
For ruminating creatures; a domain
For quiet things to wander in; a haunt
In which the heron should delight to feed
By the shy rivers, and the pelican
Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought
Might sit and sun himself.—Alas! Alas!
In vain for such solemnity I looked;
Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies, ears vexed
By chattering popinjays; the inner heart
Seemed trivial, and the impresses without
Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight
Those venerable Doctors saw of old,
When all who dwelt within these famous walls
Led in abstemious, less a studious life;
When, in forlorn and naked chambers
   cooped
And crowded, o'er the ponderous books
  they hung
Like caterpillars eating out their way
In silence, or with keen devouring noise
Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes then
At matins froze, and couched at curfew-time,
Trained up through piety and zeal to prize
Spare diet, patient labour, and plain weeds.
O seat of Arts! renowned throughout the world!
Far different service in those homely days
The Muses' modest nurseries underwent.
From their first childhood: in that glorious time
When Learning, like a stranger come from far,
    Sounding through Christian lands her trumpet, roused
Peasant and king; when boys and youths, the growth
Of ragged villages and crazy huts,
    Forsook their homes, and, errant in the quest
Of Patron, famous school or friendly nook,
Where, pensioned, they in shelter might sit down,
From town to town and through wide scattered realms
Journeyed with ponderous folios in their hands;
And often, starting from some covert place,
    Saluted the chance comer on the road,
Crying, "An obolus, a penny give
To a poor scholar!"—when illustrious men,
Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,
Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read
Before the doors or windows of their cells
By moonshine through mere lack of taper light.

But peace to vain regrets! We see but darkly
Even when we look behind us, and best things
Are not so pure by nature that they needs
Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,
Their highest promise. If the mariner,
When at reluctant distance he hath passed
Some tempting island, could but know the ills
That must have fallen upon him had he brought
His bark to land upon the wished-for shore
Good cause would oft be his to thank the surf.
Whose white belt scared him thence, as wind that blew
Inexorably adverse: for myself
I grieve not; happy is the gowned youth,
Who only misses what I missed, who fails
No lower than I fell.
    I did not love,
Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course
Of our scholastic studies; could have wished
To see the river flow with ampler range
And freer pace; but more, far more, grieved
To see displayed among an eager few,
Who in the field of contest persevered,
Passions unworthy of youth's generous gifts
And mounting spirit, pitiable repaid,
When so disturbed, whatever palms were won.
From these I turned to travel with the sea
Of more unthinking natures, easy minds
And pillowy; yet not wanting love the makes
The day pass lightly on, when foresig
sleeps,
And wisdom and the pledges interchange
With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given
To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood
In my own mind remote from social life,
(At least from what we commonly so name)
Like a lone shepherd on a promontory,
Who lacking occupation looks far forth
Into the boundless sea, and rather makes
Than finds what he beholds. And sure it is
That this first transit from the smooth
lights
And wild outlandish walks of simple youth
To something that resembles an approach
Towards human business, to a privilege
Within a world, a midway residence
With all its intervenient imagery
Did better suit my visionary mind,
Far better, than to have been bolted for
Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way
Among the conflicts of substantial life;
By a more just gradation did lead on
To higher things; more naturally matur
For permanent possession, better fruits.
Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue.
In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,
With playful zest of fancy, did we note
(How could we less?) the manners and the
ways
Of those who lived distinguished by the
badge
Of good or ill report; or those with whom
By frame of Academic discipline
We were perforce connected, men whose
sway
And known authority of office served
To set our minds on edge, and did no more.
Nor wanted we rich pastime of this kind, 540
Found everywhere, but chiefly in the ring
Of the grave Elders, men unscour'd, gro-
tesque
In character, tricked out like aged trees
Which through the lapse of their infirmity
Give ready place to any random seed
That chooses to be reared upon their trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly
Those shepherd swains whom I had lately
left
Appeared a different aspect of old age; 549
How different! yet both distinctly marked,
Objects embossed to catch the general eye,
Or portraiture for special use designed,
As some might seem, so aptly do they serve
To illustrate Nature’s book of rudiments —
That book upheld as with maternal care
When she would enter on her tender scheme
Of teaching comprehension with delight,
And mingling playful with pathetic thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life
And manners finely wrought, the delicate
race
Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and down
Through that state arras woven with silk
and gold;
This wily interchange of snaky hues,
Willingly or unwillingly revealed,
I neither knew nor cared for; and as such
Were wanting here, I took what might be
found
Of less elaborate fabric. At this day
I smile, in many a mountain solitude
Surjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks
Of character, in points of wit as broad, 560
As aught by wooden images performed
for entertainment of the gaping crowd
It wake or fair. And oftentimes do flit
Memorances before me of old men —
Old humourists, who have been long in their
graves,
And having almost in my mind put off
Their human names, have into phantoms
passed
Of texture midway between life and books.

I play the loiterer: ’tis enough to note
That here in dwarf proportions were ex-
pressed 580
The limbs of the great world; its eager
strifes
Collaterally pourtrayed, as in mock fight,
A tournament of blows, some hardly dealt
Though short of mortal combat; and what-
e'er
Might in this pageant be supposed to hit
An artless rustic’s notice, this way less,
More that way, was not wasted upon me —
And yet the spectacle may well demand
A more substantial name, no mimic show,
Itself a living part of a live whole, 590
A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees
And shapes of spurious fame and short-lived
praise
Here sate in state, and fed with daily alms
Retainers won away from solid good;
And here was Labour, his own bond-slave;
Hope,
That never set the pains against the prize;
Idleness halting with his weary clog,
And poor misguided Shame, and witless
Fear,
And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;
Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray; 600
Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and guile,
Murmuring submission, and bald govern-
ment,
(The idol weak as the idolater),
And Decency and Custom starving Truth,
And blind Authority beating with his staff
The child that might have led him; Empti-
ness
Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Of these and other kindred notices
I cannot say what portion is in truth 610
The naked recollection of that time,
And what may rather have been called to
life
By after-meditation. But delight
That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,
is still with Innocence its own reward,
This was not wanting. Carelessly I roamed
As through a wide museum from whose
stores
A casual rarity is singled out
And has its brief perusal, then gives way
To others, all supplanted in their turn; 620
Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of
things
That are by nature most unneighbourly,
The head turns round and cannot right
itself;
And though an aching and a barren sense
Of gay confusion still be uppermost,
With few wise longings and but little love,
Yet to the memory something cleaves at
last,
Whence profit may be drawn in times to
come.
Thus in submissive idleness, my Friend!
The labouring time of autumn, winter,
spring,
Eight months I rolled pleasingly away; the
ninth
Came and returned me to my native hills.

BOOK FOURTH
SUMMER VACATION

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when quick-
ening steps
Followed each other till a dreary moor
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon whose
top
Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,
I overlooked the bed of Windermere,
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.
With exultation, at my feet I saw
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,
A universe of Nature's fairest forms
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.
I bounded down the hill shouting amain
For the old Ferryman; to the shout the
rocks
Replied, and when the Charon of the flood
Had staid his cars, and touched the jutting
pier,
I did not step into the well-known boat
Without a cordial greeting. Thence with
speed
Up the familiar hill I took my way
Towards that sweet Valley where I had been
reared;
'Twas but a short hour's walk, ere veering
round
I saw the snow-white church upon her hill

Sit like a throned Lady, sending out
A gracious look all over her domain.
Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking town
With eager footsteps I advance and reap!
The cottage threshold where my journals
closed.
Glad welcome had I, with some tears, per
haps,
From my old Dame, so kind and motherly!
While she perused me with a parent's pride,
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like
dew
Upon thy grave, good creature! While n
heart
Can beat never will I forget thy name.
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where the
deliest
After thy innocent and busy stir
In narrow cares, thy little daily growth
Of calm enjoyments, after eighty years,
And more than eighty, of untroubled life,
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy bosom
Honoured with little less than filial love.
What joy was mine to see thee once again
Thee and thy dwelling, and a crowd of
things
About its narrow precincts all beloved,
And many of them seeming yet my own.
Why should I speak of what a thousand
hearts
Have felt, and every man alive can guess
The rooms, the court, the garden were n
left
Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat
Round the stone table under the dark
plut
Friendly to studious or to festive hours;
Nor that unruly child of mountain birth,
The famous brook, who, soon as he was
boxed
Within our garden, found himself at once
As if by trick insidious and unkind,
Stripped of his voice and left to dim
down
(Without an effort and without a will)
A channel paved by man's officious care.
I looked at him and smiled, and smiled
again,
And in the press of twenty thou
thoughts,
"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are y
there?"
Well might sarcastic Fancy then ha
whispered,
"An emblem here behold of thy own life,
In its late course of even days with all
I have been harassed with the toil of verse,
Much pains and little progress, and at once
Some lovely Image in the song rose up
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the sea;
Then have I darted forwards to let loose
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,
Caressing him again and yet again.
And when at evening on the public way
I sauntered, like a river murmuring
And talking to itself when all things else
Are still, the creature trotted on before;
Such was his custom; but when'er he met
A passenger approaching, he would turn
To give me timely notice, and straightway,
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed
My voice, composed my gait, and, with the air
And mien of one whose thoughts are free, advanced.
To give and take a greeting that might save
My name from piteous rumours, such as wait
On men suspected to be crazed in brain.

Those walks well worthy to be prized and loved —
Regretted! — that word, too, was on my tongue,
But they were richly laden with all good,
And cannot be remembered but with thanks
And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart —
Those walks in all their freshness now came back
Like a returning Spring. When first I made
Once more the circuit of our little lake,
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,
That day consummate happiness was mine,
Wide-spread, steady, calm, contemplative.
The sun was set, or setting, when I left
Our cottage door, and evening soon brought on
A sober hour, not winning or serene,
For cold and raw the air was, and untuned:
But as a face we love is sweetest then
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart
Have fulness in herself; even so with me
It fared that evening. Gently did my soul
Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood
Naked, as in the presence of her God.
While on I walked, a comfort seemed to touch
A heart that had not been disconsolate:
Strength came where weakness was not known to be, 
At least not felt; and restoration came
Like an intruder knocking at the door
Of unacknowledged weariness. I took
The balance, and with firm hand weighed myself.
— Of that external scene which round me lay, 160
Little, in this abstraction, did I see;
Remembered less; but I had inward hopes
And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and soothed,
Conversed with promises, had glimmering views
How life pervades the undecaying mind;
How the immortal soul with God-like power
Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest sleep
That time can lay upon her; how on earth, Man, if he do but live within the light 169
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad His being armed with strength that cannot fail.
Nor was there want of milder thoughts, of love,
Of innocence, and holiday repose;
And more than pastoral quiet, 'mid the stir Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end At last, or glorious, by endurance won.
Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down Alone, continuing there to muse: the slopes And heights meanwhile were slowly overspread
With darkness, and before a rippling breeze The long lake lengthened out its hoary line, And in the sheltered coppice where I sate, Around me from among the hazel leaves, Now here, now there, moved by the straggling wind,
Came ever and anon a breath-like sound, Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog, The off and on companion of my walk; And such, at times, believing them to be, I turned my head to look if he were there; Then into solemn thought I passed once more. 179

A freshness also found I at this time In human Life, the daily life of those Whose occupations really I loved;
The peaceful scene oft filled me with surprise Changed like a garden in the heat of spring
After an eight-days' absence. For (to ome The things which were the same and ye appeared
Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude, A narrow Vale where each was known to all, 
T was not indifferent to a youthful mind To mark some sheltering bower or summer nook
Where an old man had used to sit alone, Now vacant; pale-faced babes whom I left
In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet Of a pleased grandame tottering up and down;
And growing girls whose beauty, filched away
With all its pleasant promises, was gone To deck some slighted playmate's homely cheek.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense And often looking round was moved to smiles Such as a delicate work of humour bred
I read, without design, the opinion thoughts, Of those plain-living people now observed With clearer knowledge; with another e I saw the quiet woodman in the woods, The shepherd roam the hills. With me delight, This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired Dame;
Saw her go forth to church or other word Of state equipped in monumental trim; Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the like A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers Wore in old times. Her smooth domes life,
Affectionate without disquietude, Her talk, her business, pleased me; a no less Her clear though shallow stream of piety That ran on Sabbath days a fresher cours With thoughts unfelt till now I saw I read Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons, And loved the book, when she had dropp asleep And made of it a pillow for her head.

Nor less do I remember to have felt, Distinctly manifested at this time, A human-heartedness about my love
For objects hitherto to the absolute wealth
Of my own private being and no more;
Which I had loved, even as a blessed spirit
Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,
Might love in individual happiness.
But now there opened on me other thoughts
Of change, congratulation or regret,
A pensive feeling! It spread far and wide;
The trees, the mountains shared it, and the
brooks,
The stars of Heaven, now seen in their old
haunts —
White Sirius glittering o'er the southern
crags,
Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,
Acquaintances of every little child,
And Jupiter, my own beloved star!
Whatever shadings of mortality,
Whatever imports from the world of death
Had come among these objects hereto-
fore,
Were, in the main, of mood less tender:
strong,
Deep, gloomy were they, and severe; the
scatterings
Of awe or tremulous dread, that had given
way
In later youth to yearnings of a love
Enthusiastic, to delight and hope.

As one who hangs down-bending from
the side
Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast
Of a still water, solacing himself
With such discoveries as his eye can make
Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,
Sees many beauteous sights — weeds, fishes,
flowers,
Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies
more,
Yet often is perplexed, and cannot part
The shadow from the substance, rocks and
sky,
Mountains and clouds, reflected in the depth
Of the clear flood, from things which there
abide
In their true dwelling; now is crossed by
gleam
Of his own image, by a sunbeam now,
And wavering motions sent he knows not
whence,
Impediments that make his task more
sweet;
Such pleasant office have we long pursued
Incumbent o'er the surface of past time
With like success, nor often have appeared
Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned
Than these to which the Tale, indulgent
Friend!
Would now direct thy notice. Yet in spite
Of pleasure won, and knowledge not with-
held,
There was an inner falling off — I loved,
Loved deeply all that had been loved before,
More deeply even than ever: but a swarm
Of heady schemes jostling each other,
gawds,
And feast and dance, and public revelry,
And sports and games (too grateful in
themselves,
Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,
Than as they were a badge glossy and fresh
Of manliness and freedom) all conspired
To lure my mind from firm habitual quest
Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal
And damp those yearnings which had once
been mine —
A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given
up
To his own eager thoughts. It would de-
mand
Some skill, and longer time than may be
spared
To paint these vanities, and how they
wrought
In haunts where they, till now, had been
unknown.
It seemed the very garments that I wore
Preyed on my strength, and stopped the
quiet stream
Of self-forgetfulness.
Yes, that heartless chase
Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
For books and nature at that early age.
'Tis true, some casual knowledge might be
 gained
Of character or life; but at that time,
Of manners put to school I took small note,
And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.
Far better had it been to exalt the mind
By solitary study, to uphold
Intense desire through meditative peace;
And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,
The memory of one particular hour
Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a
 throng
Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons
staid,
A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,
With din of instruments and shuffling feet,  
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,  
And unaimed prattle flying up and down;  
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there  
Slight shocks of young love-like inter-  
spersed,  
Whose transient pleasure mounted to the  
head,  
And tingled through the veins. Ere we  
retired,  
The cock had crowed, and now the eastern  
sky  
Was kindling, not unseen, from humble  
copse  
And open field, through which the pathway  
wound,  
And homeward led my steps. Magnificent  
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,  
Glorious as e'er I had beheld — in front,  
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,  
The solid mountains shone, bright as the  
clouds,  
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean  
light;  
And in the meadows and the lower grounds  
Was all the sweetness of a common  
dawn —  
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,  
And labourers going forth to till the fields.  
Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the  
brim  
My heart was full; I made no vows, but  
vows  
Were then made for me; bond unknown to  
me  
Was given, that I should be, else sinning  
greatly,  
A dedicated Spirit. On I walked  
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was at  
that time  
A parti-coloured show of grave and gay,  
Solid and light, short-sighted and profound;  
Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,  
Consorting in one mansion unreproved.  
The worth I knew of powers that I pos-  
sessed,  
Though slighted and too oft misused. Be-  
sides,  
That summer, swarming as it did with  
thoughts  
Transient and idle, lacked not intervals  
When Folly from the frown of fleeting  
Time

Shrunk, and the mind experienced in be  
self
Conformity as just as that of old  
To the end and written spirit of God  
works,
Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,  
Through pregnant vision, separate or co-  
joined.

When from our better selves we live  
too long  
Been parted by the hurrying world, and  
droop,
Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,  
How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;  
How potent a mere image of her sway;
Most potent when impressed upon the mind  
With an appropriate human centre — be  
mit,
Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;  
Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot  
is treading, where no other face is seen)  
Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on ti  
top
Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves;  
Or as the soul of that great Power is met  
Sometimes embodied on a public road,  
When, for the night deserted, it assumes  
A character of quiet more profound  
Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer morn  
Were flown, and autumn brought its annu-  
show  
Of oars with oars contending, sails with  
sails,
Upon Winander's spacious breast,  
chanced  
That — after I had left a flower-deck  
room
(Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, sur-  
vived
To a late hour), and spirits overwrought  
Were making night do penance for a day  
Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—  
My homeward course led up a long asc  
Where the road's watery surface, to the  
top  
Of that sharp rising, glittered to the eye  
And bore the semblance of another strea  
Stealing with silent lapse to join the brook  
That murmured in the vale. All else was  
still;  
No living thing appeared in earth or air,  
And, save the flowing water's peace-  
voice,
nd there was none—but, lo! an un-
couth shape,

own by a sudden turning of the road,

ear that, slipping back into the shade

t a thick hawthorn, I could mark him

well,

self unseen. He was of stature tall,

pan above man’s common measure, tall,

, lank, and upright; a more meagre

man

were his arms, pallid his hands; his

mouth

ked gnostly in the moonlight: from

behind,

mile-stone propped him; I could also ken

at he was clothed in military garb,

ough faded, yet entire. Companionless,

dog attending, by no staff sustained, stood, and in his very dress appeared

desolation, a simplicity,

which the trappings of a gaudy world

a strange back-ground. From his

lips, ere long,

ed low muttered sounds, as if of pain

ome uneasy thought; yet still his form

pt the same awful steadiness—at his

et

shadow lay, and moved not. From

self-blame

et wholly free, I watched him thus; at

ength

ubduing my heart’s specious cowardice, left the shady nook where I had stood

and hailed him. Slowly from his resting-

place

rose, and with a lean and wasted arm

measured gesture lifted to his head

urned my salutation; then resumed

station as before; and when I asked

is history, the veteran, in reply,

was neither slow nor eager; but, unmoved,

ad with a quiet uncomplaining voice,

ately air of mild indifference,

le told in few plain words a soldier’s tale —

hat in the Tropic Islands he had served,

ence he had landed scarcely three weeks

past;

hat on his landing he had been dismissed,

d now was travelling towards his native

ome.

his heard, I said, in pity, “Come with me.”

ho stooped, and straightway from the

ground took up

An oaken staff by me yet unobserved —

staff which must have dropped from his

slack hand

And lay till now neglected in the grass. 430

Though weak his step and cautious, he ap-

peared

To travel without pain, and I beheld,

With an astonishment but ill suppressed,

His ghostly figure moving at my side;

or could I, while we journeyed thus, for-

bear

To turn from present hardships to the past,

And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,

Sprinkling this talk with questions, better

spared,

On what he might himself have seen or

felt.

He all the while was in demeanour calm, 440

Corusc in answer; solemn and sublime

He might have seemed, but that in all he

said

There was a strange half-absence, as of

one

Knowing too well the importance of his

theme,

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse

Soon ended, and together on we passed

In silence through a wood gloomy and still.

Up-turning, then, along an open field,

We reached a cottage. At the door I

knocked,

And earnestly to charitable care 450

Commended him as a poor friendless man,

Belated and by sickness overcome.

Assured that now the traveller would repose

In comfort, I entreated that henceforth

He would not linger in the public ways,

But ask for timely furtherance and help

Such as his state required. At this reproof,

With the same ghastly mildness in his look,

He said, “My trust is in the God of Hea-

ven,

And in the eye of him who passes me !”

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,

And now the soldier touched his hat once

more

With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice,

Whose tone bespoke reviving interests

Till then unfelt, he thanked me; I returned

The farewell blessing of the patient man,

And so we parted. Back I cast a look,

And lingered near the door a little space,

Then sought with quiet heart my distant

home.
BOOK FIFTH

BOOKS

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm felt
Through earth and sky, spreads widely, and sends deep
Into the soul its tranquillisising power,
Even then I sometimes grieve for thee, O Man,
Earth's paramount Creature! not so much for woes
That thou endurest; heavy though that weight be,
Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light divine
Doth melt away; but for those palms achieved
Through length of time, by patient exercise
Of study and hard thought; there, there, it is
That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto, in progress through this Verse, my mind hath looked
Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven
As her prime teacher, intercourse with man
Established by the sovereign Intellect,
Who through that bodily image hath diffused,
As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,
A deathless spirit. Thou also, man! hast wrought,
For commerce of thy nature with herself,
Things that aspire to unconquerable life;
And yet we feel—we cannot choose but feel—
That they must perish. Tremblings of the heart
It gives, to think that our immortal being
No more shall need such garments; and yet man,
As long as he shall be the child of earth,
Might almost "weep to have" what he may lose,
Nor be himself extinguished, but survive,
Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.
A thought is with me sometimes, and I say,—
Should the whole frame of earth by inward threes
Be wrenched, or fire come down from far to scorch
Her pleasant habitations, and dry up
Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,
Yet would the living Presence still subsist
Victorious, and composure would ensue,
And kindlings like the morning—pressure
Of day returning and of life revived.
But all the meditations of mankind,
Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth
By reason built, or passion, which itself
Is highest reason in a soul sublime;
The consecrated works of Bard and Sage
Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men
Twin labourers and heirs of the same hope
Where would they be? Oh! why hath the Mind
Some element to stamp her image on
In nature somewhat nearer to her own?
Why, gifted with such powers to see abroad
Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so frail

One day, when from my lips a like complaint
Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,
He with a smile made answer, that in truth
'T was going far to seek disquietude;
But on the front of his reproof confessed
That he himself had oftentimes given way
To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told
That once in the stillness of a summer noon,
While I was seated in a rocky cave
By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,
The famous history of the errant knight
Recorded by Cervantes, these same thoughts
Beset me, and to height unusual rose,
While listlessly I sate, and, having close
The book, had turned my eyes toward the wide sea.
On poetry and geometric truth,
And their high privilege of lasting life,
From all internal injury exempt,
I mused; upon these chiefly: and at length
My senses yielding to the sultry air,
Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream
I saw before me stretched a boundless plain
Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,
And as I looked around, distress and fear
Came creeping over me, when at my side
Close at my side, an uncouth shape appeared
Upon a dromedary, mounted high.
He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribe
A lance he bore, and underneath one arm
A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell
Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight
He rode, I keeping pace with him; and now
He, to my fancy, had become the knight
Whose tale Cervantes tells; yet not the
Knight,
But was an Arab of the desert too;
Of these was neither, and was both at once.
His countenance, meanwhile, grew more
Disturbed;
And, looking backwards when he looked,
Mine eyes
Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,
A bed of glittering light: I asked the cause:
"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep;
Gathering upon us;" quickening then the
Pace
Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,
He left me: I called after him aloud;
He heeded not; but, with his twofold charge
Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,
Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,
With the fleet waters of a drowning world
In chase of him; whereat I waked in terror,
And saw the sea before me, and the book,
In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of
Sleep
This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given
A substance, fancied him a living man,
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed
By love and feeling, and internal thought
Protracted among endless solitudes;
Have shaped him wandering upon this quest!
Nor have I pitied him; but rather felt
Reverence was due to a being thus em-
ployed;

And thought that, in the blind and awful
Lair
Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.
Enow there are on earth to take in charge
Their wives, their children, and their virgin
Loves,
Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;
Enow to stir for these; yea, will I say,
Contemplating in sobriety the approach
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth
Or heaven made manifest, that I could share
That maniac's fond anxiety, and go
Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least
Me hath such strong entrenchment over-
come,
When I have held a volume in my hand,
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,
Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine!
Great and benign, indeed, must be the power
Of living nature, which could thus so long
Detain me from the best of other guides
And dearest helpers, left unthanked, unpraised,
Even in the time of lisping infancy; 170
And later down, in prattling childhood even,
While I was travelling back among those days,
How could I ever play an ingrate’s part?
Once more should I have made those bowers resound,
By intermingling strains of thankfulness
With their own thoughtless melodies; at least
It might have well beseemed me to repeat
Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,
In slender accents of sweet verse, some tale
That did bewitch me then, and soothes me now.

O Friend! O Poet! brother of my soul,
Think not that I could pass along untouched
By these remembrances. Yet wherefore speak?
Why call upon a few weak words to say
What is already written in the hearts
Of all that breathe?—what in the path of all
Drops daily from the tongue of every child,
Wherever man is found? The trickling tear
Upon the cheek of listening Infancy
Proclaims it, and the insuperable look
That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave
There registered: whatever else of power
Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may be
Peculiar to myself, let that remain
Where still it works, though hidden from all search
Among the depths of time. Yet is it just
That here, in memory of all books which lay
Their sure foundations in the heart of man,
Whether by native prose, or numerous verse,
That in the name of all inspired souls— 201
From Homer the great Thunderer, from the voice
That roars along the bed of Jewish song,
And that more varied and elaborate,
Those trumpet-tones of harmony that shake
Our shores in England,—from those loftiest notes
Down to the low and wren-like warblings, made

For cottagers and spinners at the wheel
And sun-burnt travellers resting their limbs,
Stretched under wayside hedge-rows, bal- tunes,
Food for the hungry ears of little ones,
And of old men who have survived its joys—
’Tis just that in behalf of these, the we
And of the men that framed them, whose known
Or sleeping nameless in their scatte graves,
That I should here assert their rights, at
Their honours, and should, once for all, nounce
Their benediction; speak of them as Po
For ever to be hallowed; only less,
For what we are and what we may be,
Than Nature’s self, which is the great God,
Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I 210
To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,
And, by these thoughts admonished, pour out
Thanks with uplifted heart, that I reared
Safe from an evil which these days laid
Upon the children of the land, a pest
That might have dried me up, body and soul.
This verse is dedicate to Nature’s self,
And things that teach as Nature teach then,
Oh! where had been the Man, the Fri
Where had we been, we two, beloved Fri
If in the season of un perilous choice,
In lieu of wandering, as we did, thr
vales
Rich with indigenous produce, open gro
Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at w
We had been followed, hourly watched, noosed,
Each in his several melancholy walk
Stringed like a poor man’s heifer a feed,
Led through the lanes in forlorn servit
Or rather like a stalled ox debared
From touch of growing grass, that not taste
A flower till it have yielded up its swo
A prelibation to the mower’s scythe.
Behold the parent hen amid her brood,
Though fledged and feathered, and well
pleased to part
And straggles from her presence, still a
brood,
And she herself from the maternal bond 249
Still undischarged; yet doth she little more
Than move with them in tenderness and
love,
A centre to the circle which they make;
And now and then, alike from need of theirs
And call of her own natural appetites,
She scratches, ransacks up the earth for
food,
Which they partake at pleasure. Early
died
My honoured Mother, she who was the
heart
And hinge of all our learnings and our
loves:
She left us destitute, and, as we might,
Trooping together. Little suits it me 250
To break upon the sabbath of her rest.
With any thought that looks at others’
blame;
Nor would I praise her but in perfect love.
Hence am I checked: but let me boldly say,
In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,
Unheard by her, that she, not falsely taught,
Fetching her goodness rather from times
past,
Than shaping novelties for times to come,
Had no presumption, no such jealousy, 269
Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust
Our nature, but had virtual faith that He
Who fills the mother’s breast with innocent
milk,
Doth also for our nobler part provide,
Under His great correction and control,
As innocent instincts, and as innocent food;
Or draws, for minds that are left free to
trust
In the simplicities of opening life,
Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded
weeds.
This was her creed, and therefore she was
pure
From anxious fear of error or mishap, 280
And evil, overweeningly so called;
Was not puffed up by false unnatural hopes,
For selfish with unnecessary cares,
For with impatience from the season asked
More than its timely produce; rather loved
The hours for what they are, than from
regard
Glanced on their promises in restless pride.
Such was she — not from faculties more
strong
Than others have, but from the times, per-
haps,
And spot in which she lived, and through a
grace 290
Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,
A heart that found benignity and hope,
Being itself benign.
My drift I fear
Is scarcely obvious; but, that common sense
May try this modern system by its fruits,
Leave me to take to place before her sight
A specimen pourtrayed with faithful hand.
Full early trained to worship sembliness,
This model of a child is never known
To mix in quarrels; that were far beneath
Its dignity; with gifts it bubbles o’er 301
As generous as a fountain; selfishness
May not come near him, nor the little throng
Of fitting pleasures tempt him from his
path;
The wandering beggars propagate his name,
Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,
And natural or supernatural fear,
Unless it leap upon him in a dream,
Touches him not. To enhance the wonder,
see
How arch his notices, how nice his sense
Of the ridiculous; not blind is he
To the broad follies of the licensed world,
Yet innocent himself withal, though shrewd,
And can read lectures upon innocence;
A miracle of scientific lore,
Ships he can guide across the pathless sea,
And tell you all their cunning; he can read
The inside of the earth, and spell the stars;
He knows the policies of foreign lands;
Can string you names of districts, cities,
towns, 320
The whole world over, tight as beads of
dew
Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he
weighs;
All things are put to question; he must live
Knowing that he grows wiser every day
Or else not live at all, and seeing too
Each little drop of wisdom as it falls
Into the dimpling cistern of his heart:
For this unnatural growth the trainer blame,
Pity the tree. — Poor human vanity, 329
Wert thou extinguished, little would be left
Which he could truly love; but how escape?
For, ever as a thought of purer birth
Rises to lead him toward a better clime,
Some intermeddler still is on the watch
To drive him back, and pound him, like a stray,
Within the pinfold of his own conceit.
Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved to find
The playthings, which her love designed for him,
Unthought of: in their woodland beds the flowers
Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn. 340
Oh! give us once again the wishing-cap
Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat
Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,
And Sabra in the forest with St. George!
The child, whose love is here, at least, doth reap
One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,
Who, with a broad highway, have overbridged
The froward chaos of futurity,
Tamed to their bidding; they who have the skill
To manage books, and things, and make them act
On infant minds as surely as the sun
Deals with a flower; the keepers of our time,
The guides and wardens of our faculties,
Sages who in their presence would control
All accidents, and to the very road
Which they have fashioned would confine us down,
Like engines; when will their presumption learn,
That in the unreasoning progress of the world
A wiser spirit is at work for us,
A better eye than theirs, most prodigal
Of blessings, and most studious of our good,
Even in what seem our most unfruitful hours?

There was a Boy: ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander! — many a time
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm, and to mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him; and th' would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call, with quivering pea
And long halloos and screams, and echo loud,
Redoubled and redoubled, concourse will
Of jocund din; and, when a lengthen pause
Of silence came and baffled his best skill
Then sometimes, in that silence while hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain torrents; or the visible seas
Would enter unawares into his mind,
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates, died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve ye old,
Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale
Where he was born; the grassy churchyard hangs
Upon a slope above the village school,
And through that churchyard when my way had led
On summer evenings, I believe that ther
A long half hour together I have stood
Mute, looking at the grave in which he li
Even now appears before the mind's eye
That self-same village church; I see her
(The throned Lady whom erewhile we hail
On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy
Who slumbers at her feet, — forgetful
Of all her silent neighbourhood of grave
And listening only to the gladsome song
That, from the rural school ascending, p
Beneath her and about her. May she see
Behold a race of young ones like to the With whom I herded! — (easily, indeed
We might have fed upon a fatter soil
Of arts and letters — but be that forgiven)
A race of real children; not too wise,
Too learned, or too good; but wanton, free
And bandied up and down by love and h
Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre shape
Of terror; yet no soul-debasing fear,
Young as I was, a child not nine years old,
Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen
Such sights before, among the shining streams
Of faëry land, the forest of romance.
Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle
With decoration of ideal grace;
A dignity, a smoothness, like the works
Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long possess'd,
A little yellow, canvas-covered book,
A slender abstract of the Arabian tales;
And, from companions in a new abode,
When first I learnt, that this dear prize of mine
Was but a block hewn from a mighty quarry—
That there were four large volumes, laden all
With kindred matter, 't was to me, in truth,
A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,
With one not richer than myself, I made
A covenant that each should lay aside
The moneys he possessed, and hoard up more
Till our joint savings had amassed enough
To make this book our own. Through several months,
In spite of all temptation, we preserved
Religiously that vow; but firmness failed,
Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's house
The holidays returned me, there to find
That golden store of books which I had left,
What joy was mine! How often in the course
Of those glad respite's, though a soft west wind
Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,
For a whole day together, have I lain
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmuring stream,
On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,
And there have read, devouring as I read,
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!
Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,
I to the sport betook myself again.
A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides,
And o'er the heart of man; invisibly
It comes, to works of unproved delight,
And tendency benign, directing those
Who care not, know not, think not, what
they do.
The tales that charm away the wakeful night
In Araby; romances; legends penned
For solace by dim light of monkish lamps;
Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised
By youthful auries; adventures endless,
spun
By the dismantled warrior in old age,
Out of the bowels of those very schemes
In which his youth did first extravagate;
These spread like day, and something in
the shape
Of these will live till man shall be no more.
Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours,
And they must have their food. Our child-
hood sits,
Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne
That hath more power than all the ele-
ments.
I guess not what this tells of Being past,
Nor what it augurs of the life to come;
But so it is; and, in that dubious hour —
That twilight — when we first begin to see
This dawning earth, to recognise, expect,
And, in the long probation that ensues,
The time of trial, ere we learn to live
In reconcilement with our stinted powers;
To endure this state of meagre vassalage,
Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,
Uneasy and unsettled, yokel-fellows,
To custom, mettlesome, and not yet tamed
And humbled down — oh! then we feel, we
feel,
We know where we have friends. Ye
dreamers, then,
Forgers of daring tales! we bless you then,
Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape
Philosophy will call you: then we feel
With what, and how great might ye are in
league,
Who make our wish, our power, our thought
a deed,
An empire, a possession, — ye whom time
And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom
Earth crouches, the elements are potter's
clay,
Space like a heaven filled up with northern
lights,
Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere at
once.

Relinquishing this lofty eminence
For ground, though humbler, not the less
tract
Of the same isthmus, which our spirit
cross
In progress from their native continent
To earth and human life, the Song might
dwell
On that delightful time of growing youth,
When craving for the marvellous gave
way
To strengthening love for things that have
seen;
When sober truth and steady sympathies,
Offered to notice by less daring pens,
Take firmer hold of us, and words then
selves
Move us with conscious pleasure.

I am
At thought of rapture now for ever flown
Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad
To think of, to read over, many a page,
Poems withal of name, which at that time
Did never fail to entrance me, and now
Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre
Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice five
years
Or less I might have seen, when first in
mind
With conscious pleasure opened to the
charm
Of words in tuneful order, found the
sweet
For their own sake, a passion, and a power
And phrases pleased me chosen for delight
For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public road,
Yet unfrequented, while the morning lig
Was yellowing the hill tops, I went abroad
With a dear friend, and for the better
Of two delightful hours we strolled along
By the still borders of the misty lake,
Repeating favourite verses with one voice
Or conning more, as happy as the birds
That round us chaunted. Well might we
be glad,
Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,
More bright than madness or the dream
of wine;
And, though full oft the objects of our
lo
Were false, and in their splendour over
wrought,
Yet was there surely then no vulgar pow
Working within us, — nothing less, in truth
han that most noble attribute of man, bough yet untutored and inordinate, han is the common aspect, daily garb, f human life. What wonder, then, if sounds of exultation echoed through the groves ! or, images, and sentiments, and words, and everything encountered or pursued so a that delicious world of poesy, kept holiday, a never-ending show, with music, incense, festival, and flowers !

Here must we pause: this only let me add, from heart-experience, and in humblest sense if modesty, that he, who in his youth, daily wanderer among woods and fields with living Nature hath been intimate, not only in that raw unpractised time stirred to ecstasy, as others are, by glittering verse; but further, doth receive, a measure only dealt out to himself, knowledge and increase of enduring joy from the great Nature that exists in works of mighty Poets. Visionary power attends the motions of the viewless winds, imbodied in the mystery of words: here, darkness makes abode, and all the host of shadowy things work endless changes — there, in a mansion like their proper home, even forms and substances are circumcused by that transparent veil with light divine, and, through the turnings intricate of verse, resent themselves as objects recognised, flashes, and with glory not their own.

BOOK VI

THE PRELUDE

Or eager, though as gay and undepressed In mind, as when I thence had taken flight A few short months before. I turned my face Without repining from the coves and heights
Clothed in the sunshine of the withering fern; Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and you, Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumberland, You and your not unwelcome days of mirth, Relinquished, and your nights of revelry, And in my own unlovely cell sate down In lightsome mood — such privilege has youth.

That cannot take long leave of pleasant thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived More to myself. Two winters may be passed Without a separate notice: many books Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously perused, But with no settled plan. I was detached Internally from academic cares; Yet independent study seemed a course Of hardy disobedience toward friends And kindred, proud rebellion and unkind. This spurious virtue, rather let it bear A name it now deserves, this cowardice, Gave treacherous sanction to that over-love Of freedom which encouraged me to turn From regulations even of my own As from restraints and bonds. Yet who can tell — Who knows what thus may have been gained, both then And at a later season, or preserved; What love of nature, what original strength Of contemplation, what intuitive truths The deepest and the best, what keen research,

Unbiased, unbewildered, and unawed?

The Poet’s soul was with me at that time; Sweet meditations, the still overflow Of present happiness, while future years Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams, No few of which have since been realised; And some remain, hopes for my future life. Four years and thirty, told this very week,
Have I been now a sojourner on earth,
By sorrow not unsmitten; yet for me
Life's morning radiance hath not left the
Hills,
Her dew is on the flowers. Those were
The days
Which also first emboldened me to trust
With firmness, hitherto but slightly touched
By such a daring thought, that I might
Leave
Some monument behind me which pure
Hearts
Should reverence. The instinctive humbleness,
Maintained even by the very name and
Thought
Of printed books and authorship, began
To melt away; and further, the dread awe
Of mighty names was softened down and
Seemed
Approachable, admitting fellowship
Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,
Though not familiarly, my mind put on,
Content to observe, to achieve, and to enjoy.

All winter long, whenever free to choose,
Did I by night frequent the College grove
And tributary walks; the last, and oft
The only one, who had been lingering there
Through hours of silence, till the porter's
Bell;
A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,
Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice;
Inexorable summons! Lofty elms,
Inviting shades of opportune recess,
Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood
Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree
With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely
Wreathed,
Grew there; an ash which Winter for himself
Decked out with pride, and with outlandish grace:
Up from the ground, and almost to the top,
The trunk and every master branch were
Green
With clustering ivy, and the lightsome twigs
And outer spray profusely tipped with seeds
That hung in yellow tassels, while the air
Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have I stood
Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree
Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere
Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance
May never tread; but scarcely Spenser's self
Could have more tranquil visions in his youth,
Or could more bright appearances create
Of human forms with superhuman power
Than I beheld, loitering on calm clear nights
Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant youth,
'T were idle to descant. My inner judgment
Not seldom differed from my taste in book
As it appertained to another mind,
And yet the books which then I valued most
Are dearest to me now; for, having scanned
Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched them
Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed
A standard, often usefully applied,
Even when unconsciously, to things removed
From a familiar sympathy. — In fine,
I was a better judge of thoughts than words
Misled in estimating words, not only
By common inexperience of youth,
But by the trade in classic niceties,
The dangerous craft, of culling terms and
Phrases;
From languages that want the living voice
to carry meaning to the natural heart;
To tell us what is passion; what is truth,
What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook
The pleasure gathered from the rudiments
Of geometric science. Though advanced
In these enquiries, with regret I speak,
No farther than the threshold, there I found
Both elevation and composed delight:
With Indian awe and wonder, ignorant
Pleased
With its own struggles, did I meditate
On the relation those abstractions bear
to Nature's laws, and by what process
Those immaterial agents bowed their heads
Duly to serve the mind of earth-born man.
From star to star, from kindred sphere
Sphere,
From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source drew
A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense
Of permanent and universal sway,
And paramount belief; there, recognised
A type, for finite natures, of the one
Supreme Existence, the surpassing life
Which — to the boundaries of space and time,
Of melancholy space and doleful time,
Superior and incapable of change,
Nor touched by witterings of passion — is,
And hath the name of, God. Transcendent
peace
And silence did await upon these thoughts
That were a frequent comfort to my youth.

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters
threw,
With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck
spared,
Upon a desert coast, that having brought
To land a single volume, saved by chance,
A treatise of Geometry, he went,
Although of food and clothing destitute,
And beyond common wretchedness de-
pressed,
To part from company and take this book
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its
truths)
To spots remote, and draw his diagrams
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost
Forget his feeling: so (if like effect
From the same cause produced, 'mid out-
ward things
So different, may rightly be compared),
So was it then with me, and so will be
With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm
Of those abstractions to a mind beset
With images and haunted by herself,
And specially delightful unto me
Was that clear synthesis built aloft
So gracefully; even then when it appeared
Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy
To sense embodied: not the thing it is
In verity, an independent world,
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine un-
earned
Brought, I fear, of genuine desert —
Mine, through heaven's grace and inborn
aptitudes.
And not to leave the story of that time
Imperfect, with these habits must be joined,
Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that loved
A pensive sky, sad days, and piping winds,
The twilight more than dawn, autumn than
spring;

A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice
And inclination mainly, and the mere
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.
— To time thus spent, add multitudes of
hours
Pilfered away, by what the Bard who sang
Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called
"Good-natured lounging," and behold a map
Of my collegiate life — far less intense
Than duty called for, or, without regard
To duty, might have sprung up of itself
By change of accidents, or even, to speak
Without unkindness, in another place.
Yet why take refuge in that plea? — the
fault,
This I repeat, was mine; mine be the blame.

In summer, making quest for works of
art,
Or scenes renowned for beauty, I explored
That streamlet whose blue current works
its way
Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;
Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden tracts
Of my own native region, and was blest
Between these sundry wanderings with a joy
Above all joys, that seemed another morn
Risen on mid noon; blest with the presence,
Friend,
Of that sole Sister, her who hath been long
Dear to thee also, thy true friend and mine,
Now, after separation desolate,
Restored to me — such absence that she
seemed
A gift then first bestowed. The varied
banks
Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,
And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,
Low standing by the margin of the stream,
A mansion visited (as fame reports)
By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might pen
Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love
Inspired; — that river and those mouldering
towers
Have seen us side by side, when, having
climb
The darksome windings of a broken stair,
And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,
Not without trembling, we in safety looked
Forth, through some Gothic window's open
space,
And gathered with one mind a rich reward
From the far-stretching landscape, by the light
Of morning beautified, or purple eve;
Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's
head,
Catching from tufts of grass and hare-bell
flowers
Their faintest whisper to the passing breeze,
Given out while mid-day heat oppressed the
plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed
A gladness o'er that season, then to me,
By her exulting outside look of youth
And placid under-countenance, first en-
dear'd;
That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,
So reverenced by us both. O'er paths and
fields
In all that neighbourhood, through narrow
lanes
Of eglandine, and through the shady woods,
And o'er the Border Beacon, and the waste
Of naked pools, and common crags that lay
Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered
love,
The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden
gleam.
O Friend! we had not seen thee at that
time,
And yet a power is on me, and a strong
Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.
Far art thou wandered now in search of
health
And milder breezes, — melancholy lot!
But thou art with us, with us in the past,
The present, with us in the times to come.
There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,
No languor, no dejection, no dismay,
No absence scarcely can there be, for those
Who love as we do. Speed thee well! divide
With us thy pleasure; thy returning
strength,
Receive it daily as a joy of ours;
Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether gift
Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.

I, too, have been a wanderer; but, alas!
How different the fate of different men.
Though mutually unknown, yea nursed and
reared
As if in several elements, we were framed
To bend at last to the same discipline,
Predestined, if two beings ever were,
To seek the same delights, and have one
health,

One happiness. Throughout this narrati-
Else sooner ended, I have borne in mind,
For whom it registers the birth, and marks
the growth,
Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,
And joyous loves, that hallow innocent day
Of peace and self-command. Of river
fields,
And groves I speak to thee, my Friend!
thee,
Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the depl
Of the huge city, on the leaded roof
Of that wide edifice, thy school and home
Wert used to lie and gaze upon the cloud
Moving in heaven; or, of that pleasure tire
To shut thine eyes, and by internal light
See trees, and meadows, and thy native
stream,

Far distant, thus beheld from year to year
Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,
In this late portion of my argument,
That scarcely, as my term of pupilage
Ceased, had I left those academic bowers
When thou writest there guided. From thine
heart
Of London, and from cloisters, there, the
camest,

And didst sit down in temperance and peace
A rigorous student. What a stormy cour
Then followed. Oh! it is a pang that cal
For utterance, to think what easy change
Of circumstances might to thee have spare
A world of pain, ripened a thousand hope
For ever withered. Through this retrospe
Of my collegiate life I still have had
Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place
Present before my eyes, have played with
times

And accidents as children do with cards,
Or as a man, who, when his house is buil
A frame locked up in wood and stone, do
still,
As impotent fancy prompts, by his firesid
Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought
Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence
And all the strength and plumage of th
youth,
Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse
Among the schoolmen, and Platonic form
Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out
From things well-matched or ill, and won
for things,
The self-created sustenance of a mind
Debarred from Nature's living images,
Compelled to be a life unto herself,
And unrelentingly possessed by thirst
Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not alone,
Ah! surely not in singleness of heart
Should I have seen the light of evening fade
From smooth Cam’s silent waters: had we met,
Even at that early time, needs must I trust
In the belief, that my maturer age,
My calmer habits, and more steady voice,
Would with an influence benign have soothed,
Or chased away, the airy wretchedness
That battened on thy youth. But thou hast trod
A march of glory, which doth put to shame
These vain regrets; health suffers in thee,
else
Such grief for thee would be the weakest thought
That ever harboURED in the breast of man.

A passing word erewhile did lightly touch
On wanderings of my own, that now embraced
With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from restraint,
A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,
Not slow to share my wishes, took his staff,
And sallying forth, we journeyed side by side,
Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy slight,
Did this unprecedented course imply,
Of college studies and their set rewards;
Nor had, in truth, the scheme been formed
Without uneasy forethought of the pain,
The censures, and ill-omening, of those to whom my worldly interests were dear.
But Nature then was sovereign in my mind,
And mighty forms, seizing a youthful fancy,
Had given a charter to irregular hopes.
In any age of uneventful calm
Among the nations, surely would my heart
Have been possessed by similar desire;
But Europe at that time was thrilled with joy,
Francee standing on the top of golden hours,
And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief looks
Last on the white cliffs of our native shore
From the receding vessel’s deck, we chanced
To land at Calais on the very eve
Of that great federal day; and there we saw,
In a mean city, and among a few,
How bright a face is worn when joy of one
Is joy for tens of millions. Southward thence
We held our way, direct through hamlets, towns,
Gaudy with relics of that festival,
Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,
And window-garlands. On the public roads
And, once, three days successively, through paths
By which our toilsome journey was abridged,
Among sequestered villages we walked
And found benevolence and blessedness
Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when spring
Hath left no corner of the land untouched;
Where elms for many and many a league
In files
With their thin umbrage, on the stately roads
Of that great kingdom, rustled o’er our heads,
For ever near us as we paced along:
How sweet at such a time, with such delight
On every side, in prime of youthful strength,
To feed a Poet’s tender melancholy
And fond conceit of sadness, with the sound
Of undulations varying as might please
The wind that swayed them; once, and more than once,
Unhoused beneath the evening star we saw
Dances of liberty, and, in late hours
Of darkness, dances in the open air
Deftly prolonged, though grey-haired lookers on
Might waste their breath in chiding.

Under hills —
The vine-clad hills and slopes of Burgundy,
Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone
We glided forward with the flowing stream.
Swift Rhone! thou wert the wings on which we cut
A winding passage with majestic ease
Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting show
Those woods and farms and orchards did present,
And single cottages and lurking towns,
Reach after reach, succession without end
Of deep and stately vales! A lonely pair
Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed along
Clustered together with a merry crowd
Of those emancipated, a blithe host
Of travellers, chiefly delegates, returning
From the great spousals newly solemnised
At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.
Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay as bees;
Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,
And with their swords flourished as if to fight
The saucy air. In this proud company
We landed — took with them our evening meal,
Guests welcome almost as the angels were
To Abraham of old. The supper done,
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts
We rose at signal given, and formed a ring
And, hand in hand, danced round and round the board;
All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
With amity and glee; we bore a name
Honoured in France, the name of Englishmen,
And hospitably did they give us hail,
As their forerunners in a glorious course;
And round and round the board we danced again.
With these blithe friends our voyage we renewed
At early dawn. The monastery bells
Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears;
The rapid river flowing without noise,
And each uprising or receding spire
Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals
Touching the heart amid the boisterous crew
By whom we were encompassed. Taking leave
Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side by side,
Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued
Our journey, and ere twice the sun had set
Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and there
Rested within an awful solitude.
Yes; for even then no other than a place
Of soul-affecting solitude appeared
That far-famed region, though our eye had seen,
As toward the sacred mansion we advance
Arms flashing, and a military glare
Of riotous men commissioned to expel
The blameless inmates, and belike subvert
That frame of social being, which so long
Had bodied forth the ghostliness of things
In silence visible and perpetual calm.
— "Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!" —
The voice
Was Nature's, uttered from her Alp's throne;
I heard it then and seem to hear it now—
"Your impious work forbear, perish who may,
Let this one temple last, be this one spot
Of earth devoted to eternity!"
She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno's pines
Waved their dark tops, not silent as the waved,
And while below, along their several beds
Murmured the sister streams of Life as Death,
Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my heart
responded; "Honour to the patriot's zeal,
Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!
Hail to the mighty projects of the time!
Discerning sword that Justice wields, thou
Go forth and prosper; and, ye purgits fires,
Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,
Fanned by the breath of angry Providence
But oh! if Past and Future be the wings
On whose support harmoniously conjoined
Moves the great spirit of human knowledge
These courts of mystery, where a step advanced
Between the portals of the shadowy rock
Leaves far behind life's treacherous varieties,
For penitential tears and trembling hopes
Exchanged — to equalise in God's purview
Monarch and peasant: be the house deemed
With its unworlly votaries, for the sake
Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved
Through faith and meditative reason, res
Upon the word of heaven-imparted truth,
Solemnly triumphant; and for humbler claim
Of that imaginative impulse sent
From these majestic floods, you shining cliffs,
The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,
Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants,
These forests unapproachable by death,
That shall endure as long as man endures,
To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,
To struggle, to be lost within himself
In trepidation, from the blank abyss
To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled." Not seldom since that moment have I wished
That thou, O Friend! the trouble or the calm
Hadst shared, when, from profane regards apart,
In sympathetic reverence we trod
The floors of those dim cloisters, till that hour,
From their foundation, strangers to the presence
Of unrestricted and unthinking man.
Abroad, how cheeringly the sunshine lay
Upon the open lawns! Vallombre's groves
Entering, we fed the soul with darkness; thence
Issued, and with uplifted eyes beheld,
In different quarters of the bending sky,
The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if
Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there,
Memorial reverenced by a thousand storms;
Yet then, from the undiscriminating sweep
And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.

'Tis not my present purpose to retrace
That variegated journey step by step.
A march it was of military speed,
And Earth did change her images and forms
Before us, as fast as clouds are changed in heaven.
Day after day, up early and down late,
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to hill
Mounted—from province on to province swept,
Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship.
Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing fair:
Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life,
Enticing valleys, greeted them and left
Too soon, while yet the very flash and gleam
Of salutation were not passed away.
Oh! sorrow for the youth who could have seen,
Unchastened, unsubdued, unwed, unraised
To patriarchal dignity of mind,
And pure simplicity of wish and will,
Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,
Pleased (though to hardship born, and compassed round)
With danger, varying as the seasons change),
Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,
Contented, from the moment that the dawn
(Ah! surely not without attendant gleams
Of soul-illumination) calls him forth
To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,
Whose evening shadows lead him to repose.

Well might a stranger look with bounding heart
Down on a green recess, the first I saw
Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,
Quiet and lorded over and possessed
By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like tents
Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns
And by the river side.

That very day,
From a bare ridge we also first beheld
Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and grieved
To have a soulless image on the eye
That had usurped upon a living thought
That never more could be. The wondrous Vale
Of Chamouny stretched far below, and soon
With its dumb cataracts and streams of ice,
A motionless array of mighty waves,
Five rivers broad and vast, made rich
And reconciled us to realities;
There small birds warble from the leafy trees,
The eagle soars high in the element,
There doth the reaper bind the yellow sheaf,
The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,
While Winter like a well-tamed lion walks,
Descending from the mountain to make sport
Among the cottages by beds of flowers.
Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,
Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state
Of intellect and heart. With such a book
Before our eyes, we could not choose but read
Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain
And universal reason of mankind,
The truths of young and old. Nor, side by side
Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone
Each with his humour, could we fail to abound
In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:
Dejection taken up for pleasure’s sake, 551
And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,
And sober posies of funereal flowers,
Gathered among those solitudes sublime
From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,
Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries
Mixed something of stern mood, an under-thrist
Of vigour seldom utterly allayed:
And from that source how different a sadness
Would issue, let one incident make known.
When from the Vallais we had turned, and clomb
Along the Simplon’s steep and rugged road,
Following a band of muleteers, we reached
A halting-place, where all together took
Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our guide,
Leaving us at the board; awhile we lingered,
Then paced the beaten downward way that led
Right to a rough stream’s edge, and there broke off;
The only track now visible was one
That from the torrent’s further brink held forth
Conspicuous invitation to ascend
A lofty mountain. After brief delay
Crossing the unbridged stream, that road we took,
And clomb with eagerness, till anxious fears
Intruded, for we failed to overtake
Our comrades gone before. By fortunate chance,
While every moment added doubt to doubt,
A peasant met us, from whose mouth we learned
That to the spot which had perplexed us first
We must descend, and there should find the road,
Which in the stony channel of the stream
Lay a few steps, and then along its banks;
And, that our future course, all plain and sight,
Was downwards, with the current of the stream.
Loth to believe what we so grieved to hear
For still we had hopes that pointed to the clouds,
We questioned him again, and yet again;
But every word that from the peasant’s lips Came in reply, translated by our feelings,
Ended in this,—that we had crossed the Alps.

Imagination—here the Power so calls
Through sad incompetence of human spec!
That awful Power rose from the mind abyss
Like an unfathered vapour that unwraps,
At once, some lonely traveller. I was led
Halted without an effort to break through But to my conscious soul I now can say—
“‘I recognise thy glory;’ in such strength
Of usurpation, when the light of sense Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
The invisible world, doth greatness dwell abode,
There harbours; whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being’s heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there;
With hope it is, that hope can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be.
Under such banners militant, the soul Seeks for no trophies, struggles for spoils
That may attest her prowess, blest thoughts
That are their own perfection and rewar
Strong in herself and in beatitude
That hides her, like the mighty flood Nile
Poured from his fount of Abyssinian clou
To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensues
Upon those tidings by the peasant given
Was soon dislodged. Downwards we hurried fast,
And, with the half-shaped road which we
had missed,
Entered a narrow chasm. The brook and
road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy strait,
And with them did we journey several hours
At a slow pace. The immeasurable height
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And in the narrow rent at every turn
Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and for-
lorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear blue
sky,
The rocks that muttered close upon our
ears,
Black drizzling crags that spake by the
way-side
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
The unfettered clouds and region of the
Heavens,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the
light—
Were all like workings of one mind, the
features
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;
Characters of the great Apocalypse,
The types and symbols of Eternity,
Of first, and last, and midst, and without
end.

That night our lodging was a house that
stood
Alone within the valley, at a point
Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent
swelled
The rapid stream whose margin we had
trod;
A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,
With high and spacious rooms, deafened
and stunned
By noise of waters, making innocent sleep
Lie melancholy among weary bones.

Uprisen betimes, our journey we re-
newed,
Led by the stream, ere noon-day magni-
fi ed
Into a lordly river, broad and deep,
Dimpling along in silent majesty,
With mountains for its neighbours, and in
view
Of distant mountains and their snowy tops,
And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,
Fit resting-place for such a visitant.
Locarno! spreading out in width like
Heaven,
How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,
Bask in the sunshine of the memory;
And Como! thou, a treasure whom the
earth
Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth
Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake
Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden
plots
Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed maids;
Thy lofty steeps, and pathways roofed with
vines,
Winding from house to house, from town
to town,
Sole link that binds them to each other;
wells,
League after league, and cloistral avenues,
Where silence dwells if music be not there:
While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,
Through fond ambition of that hour I strove
To chant your praise; nor can approach
you now
Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,
Where tones of Nature smoothed by learned
Art
May flow in lasting current. Like a breeze
Or sunbeam over your domain I passed
In motion without pause; but ye have left
Your beauty with me, a serene accord
Of forms and colours, passive, yet endowed
In their submissiveness with power as sweet
And gracious, almost, might I dare to say,
As virtue is, or goodness; sweet as love,
Or the remembrance of a generous deed,
Or mildest visitations of pure thought,
When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked
Religiously, in silent blessedness;
Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we ad-
vanced,
For two days' space, in presence of the
Lake,
That, stretching far among the Alps, as-
sumed
A character more stern. The second night,
From sleep awakened, and misled by sound
Of the church clock telling the hours with
strokes
Whose import then we had not learned, we
rose
By moonlight, doubting not that day was nigh,
And that meanwhile, by no uncertain path,
Along the winding margin of the lake,
Led, as before, we should behold the scene
Hushed in profound repose. We left the town
Of Gravedona with this hope; but soon
We were lost, bewildered among woods immense,
And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.
An open place it was, and overlooked,
From high, the sullen water far beneath,
On which a dull red image of the moon
Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to hour
We sate and sate, wondering, as if the night
Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On the rock
At last we stretched our weary limbs for sleep,
But could not sleep, tormented by the stings
Of insects, which, with noise like that of noon,
Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown birds;
The mountains more by blackness visible
And their own size, than any outward light;
The breathless wilderness of clouds; the clock
That told, with unintelligible voice,
The widely parted hours; the noise of streams,
And sometimes rustling motions nigh at hand,
That did not leave us free from personal fear;
And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that set
Before us, while she still was high in heaven;—
These were our food; and such a summer's night
Followed that pair of golden days that shed
On Como's Lake, and all that round it lay,
Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid farewell
To days, each offering some new sight, or fraught
With some untried adventure, in a course
Prolonged till sprinklings of autumn snow
Checked our unwearied steps. Let them alone
Be mentioned as a parting word, that not
In hollow exultation, dealing out Hyperboles of praise comparative;
Not rich one moment to be poor for ever
Not prostrate, overcome, as if the mind
Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner
On outward forms—did we in present stand
Of that magnificent region. On the front
Of this whole Song is written that heart
Must, in such Temple, needs have offered up
A different worship. Finally, what'er I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream
That flowed into a kindred stream; a gay Confederate with the current of the soul.
To speed my voyage; every sound or sight
In its degree of power, administered
To grandeur or to tenderness, — to the one
Directly, but to tender thoughts by mere
Less often instantaneous in effect;
Led me to these by paths that, in the main
Were more circuitous, but not less sure
Duly to reach the point marked out
Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend! a glorious time,
A happy time that was; triumphant look
Were then the common language of our eyes;
As if awaked from sleep, the Nations hail
Their great expectancy: the fife of war
Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,
A blackbird’s whistle in a budding grove
We left the Swiss exulting in the fate
Of their near neighbours; and, with shortening fast
Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from home
We crossed the Brabant armies on the fi
For battle in the cause of Liberty.
A stripling, scarcely of the household tv
Of social life, I looked upon these things
As from a distance; heard, and saw, a felt,
Was touched, but with no intimate conception
I seemed to move along them, as a bird
Moves through the air, or as a fish pursues
Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;
I wanted not that joy, I did not need
Such help; the ever-living universe,  
Turn where I might, was opening out its  
glories,  
And the independent spirit of pure youth  
Called forth, at every season, new delights,  
Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er  
green fields.

BOOK SEVENTH
RESIDENCE IN LONDON

Six changeful years have vanished since I  
first  
Pour’d out (saluted by that quickening  
breeze  
Which met me issuing from the City’s  
walls)  
A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang  
Aloud, with fervour irresistible  
Of short-lived transport, like a torrent  
bursting,  
From a black thunder-cloud, down Scafell’s  
side  
To rush and disappear. But soon broke  
forth  
(So willed the Muse) a less impetuous  
stream,  
That flowed awhile with unabating strength,  
Then stopped for years; not audible again  
Before last primrose-time. Belov’d Friend!  
The assurance which then cheered some  
heavy thoughts  
On thy departure to a foreign land  
Has failed; too slowly moves the promised  
work.  
Through the whole summer have I been at  
rest,  
Partly from voluntary holiday,  
And part through outward hindrance. But  
I heard,  
After the hour of sunset yester-even,  
Sitting within doors between light and  
dark,  
A choir of redbreasts gathered somewhere  
near  
My threshold,—minstrels from the distant  
woods  
Sent in on Winter’s service, to announce,  
With preparation artful and benign,  
That the rough lord had left the surly  
North  
On his accustomed journey. The delight,  
Due to this timely notice, unawares  
knew me, and, listening, I in whispers said,  

"Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will be  
Associates, and, unscared by blustering  
winds,  
Will chant together." Thereafter, as the  
shades  
Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied  
A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume  
Or canopy of yet unwithered fern,  
Clear-shining, like a hermit’s taper seen  
Through a thick forest. Silence touched  
me here  
No less than sound had done before; the  
child  
Of Summer, lingering, shining, by herself,  
The voiceless worm on the unfrequented  
hills,  
Seemed sent on the same errand with the  
choir  
Of Winter that had warbled at my door,  
And the whole year breathed tenderness  
and love.

The last night’s genial feeling overflowed  
Upon this morning, and my favourite grove,  
Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs aloft,  
As if to make the strong wind visible,  
Wakes in me agitations like its own,  
A spirit friendly to the Poet’s task,  
Which we will now resume with lively hope,  
Nor checked by aught of tamer argument  
That lies before us, needful to be told.

Returned from that excursion, soon I bade  
Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats  
Of gowned students, quitted hall and  
bower,  
And every comfort of that privileged  
ground,  
Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among  
The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life  
I should adhere, and seeming to possess  
A little space of intermediate time  
At full command, to London first I turned,  
In no disturbance of excessive hope,  
By personal ambition unenslaved,  
Frugal as there was need, and, though  
self-willed,  
From dangerous passions free. Three  
years had flown  
Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock  
Of the huge town’s first presence, and had  
paced  
Her endless streets, a transient visitant:
Now, fixed amid that concourse of mankind
Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly, 70
And life and labour seem but one, I filled
An idler's place; an idler well content
To have a house (what matter for a home?)
That owned him; living cheerfully abroad
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,
And all my young affections out of doors.

There was a time when whatso'er is
feigned
Of airy palaces, and gardens built
By Genii of romance; or hath in grave
Authentic history been set forth of Rome,
Alcaiso, Babylon, or Persepolis; 81
Or given upon report by pilgrim friars,
Of golden cities ten months' journey deep
Among Tartarian wilds — fell short, far short,
Of what my fond simplicity believed
And thought of London — held me by a
chain
Less strong of wonder and obscure delight.
Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy shot
For me beyond its ordinary mark,
I were vain to ask; but in our flock of
boys
Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom chance
Summoned from school to London; fortunate
And envied traveller! — When the Boy returned,
After short absence, curiously I scanned
His mien and person, nor was free, in sooth,
From disappointment, not to find some change
In look and air, from that new region
brought,
As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned
him;
And every word he uttered, on my ears
Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note, 100
That answers unexpectedly awry,
And mocks the prompter's listening. Marvelous things
Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears
Almost as deeply seated and as strong
In a Child's heart as fear itself) conceived
For my enjoyment. Would that I could now
Recall what then I pictured to myself,
Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,
The King, and the King's Palace, and, not last,

Nor least, Heaven bless him! the renowned
Lord Mayor.
Dreams not unlike to those which once began
A change of purpose in young Whittington
When he, a friendless and a drooping boy,
Sate on a stone, and heard the bells sound out
Articulate music. Above all, one though
Baffled my understanding: how men lived
Even next-door neighbours, as we say, y
still
Strangers, not knowing each the other's name.

Oh, wondrous power of words, by simple
faith
Licensed to take the meaning that we love,
Vauxhall and Ranelagh! I then had seen
Of your green groves, and wilderness
lamps
Dimming the stars, and fireworks magic.
And gorgeous ladies, under splendid domes
Floating in dance, or warbling high in air
The songs of spirits! Nor had I been
fed
With less delight upon that other class
Of marvels, broad-day wonders permanen
The River proudly bridged; the dizzy to
And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's; the
tombs
Of Westminster; the Giants of Guildhall
Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at
the
gates,
Perpetually recumbent: Statues — man,
And the horse under him — in gilded pl
Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid waste
squares;
The Monument, and that Chamber of
Tower
Where England's sovereigns sit in k
array,
Their steeds bestriding, — every mix
shape
Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch
wore,
Whether for gorgeous tournament
addressed,
Or life or death upon the battle-field.
Those bold imaginations in due time
Had vanished, leaving others in their ste:
And now I looked upon the living scene
Familiarly perused it; oftentimes,
In spite of strongest disappointment, plea
Through courteous self-submission, as a
Paid to the object by prescriptive right.
Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the plain
Of a too busy world! Before me flow, 150
Thou endless stream of men and moving things!
Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes —
With wonder heightened, or subdued by awe —
On strangers, of all ages; the quick dance
Of colours, lights, and forms; the deafening din;
The comers and the goers face to face,
Face after face; the string of dazzling wares,
Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned names,
And all the tradesman's honours overhead:
Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page, 160
With letters huge inscribed from top to toe,
Stationed above the door, like guardian saints;
There, allegoric shapes, female or male,
Or physiognomies of real men,
Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the sea,
Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the attractive head
Of some quack-doctor, famous in his day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at length,
Escaped as from an enemy, we turn
Abruptly into some sequestered nook,
Still as a sheltered place when winds blow loud!
At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin resort,
And sights and sounds that come at intervals,
We take our way. A raree-show is here,
With children gathered round; another street
Presents a company of dancing dogs,
Or dromedary, with an antic pair
Of monkeys on his back; a minstrel band
Of Savoyards; or, single and alone,
An English ballad-singer. Private courts,
Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes
Thrilled by some female vendor's scream, belike
The very shrillest of all London cries,
May then entangle our impatient steps;
Conducted through those labyrinths, unaware,
To privileged regions and inviolate,

Where from their airy lodges studious lawyers
Look out on waters, walks, and gardens green.

Thence back into the throng, until we reach,
Following the tide that slackens by degrees,
Some half-frequented scenes, where wider streets
Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.
Here files of ballads dangle from dead walls;
Advertisements, of giant-size, from high
Press forward, in all colours, on the sight;
These, bold in conscious merit, lower down;
That, fronted with a most imposing word,
Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.
As on the broadening causeway we advance,
Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and strong
In lineaments, and red with over-toil.
'T is one encountered here and everywhere;
A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut short,
And stumping on his arms. In sailor's garb
Another lies at length, beside a range
Of well-formed characters, with chalk inscribed
Upon the smooth flat stones: the Nurse is here,
The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,
The military Idler, and the Dame,
That field-ward takes her walk with decent steps.

Now homeward through the thickening hubbub, where
See, among less distinguishable shapes,
The begging scavenger, with hat in hand;
The Italian, as he thirds his way with care,
Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images
Upon his head; with basket at his breast
The Jew; the stately and slow-moving Turk,
With freight of slippers piled beneath his arm!

Enough; — the mighty concourse I surveyed
With no unthinking mind, well pleased to note
Among the crowd all specimens of man,
Through all the colours which the sun bestows,
And every character of form and face:
The Swede, the Russian; from the genial south,
The Frenchman and the Spaniard; from remote
America, the Hunter-Indian; Moors,
Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese,
And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns.

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day to day,
The spectacles within doors, — birds and beasts
Of every nature, and strange plants convened
From every clime; and, next, those sights that ape
The absolute presence of reality,
Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land,
And what earth is, and what she has to show.

I do not here allude to subtlest craft,
By means refined attaining purest ends,
But imitations, fondly made in plain
Confession of man's weakness and his loves.
Whether the Painter, whose ambitious skill
Submits to nothing less than taking in
A whole horizon's circuit, do with power,
Like that of angels or commissioned spirits,
Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle,
Or in a ship on waters, with a world
Of life, and life-like mockery beneath,
Above, behind, far stretching and before;
Or more mechanic artist represent
By scale exact, in model, wood or clay,
From blended colours also borrowing help,
Some miniature of famous spots or things, —
St. Peter's Church; or, more aspiring aim,
In microscopic vision, Rome herself;
Or, haply, some choice rural haunt, — the
Falls
Of Tivoli; and, high upon that steep,
The Sibyl's mouldering Temple! every tree,
Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks
Throughout the landscape; tuft, stone scratch minute
All that the traveller sees when he is there.

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still,
Others of wider scope, where living men,
Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes,
Diversified the allurement. Need I fear
To mention by its name, as in degree,
Lowest of these and humblest in attempt,
Yet richly graced with honours of her own,
Half-rural Sadler's Wells? Though at that time
Intolerant, as is the way of youth

Unless itself be pleased, here more than once
Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add,
With ample recompense) giants and dwarfs,
Clowns, conjurors, posture-masters, barrel-quirns,
Amid the uproar of the rabblement,
Perform their feats. Nor was it meant for light
To watch crude Nature work in untamed minds;
To note the laws and progress of belief;
Though obstinate on this way, yet on that
How willingly we travel, and how far!
To have, for instance, brought upon the scene
The champion, Jack the Giant-killer: Lo
He dons his coat of darkness; on the stage
Walks, and achieves his wonders, from the eye
Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."
Delusion bold! and how can it be wrought?
The garb bold! and how can it be wrought?
"Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

Here, too, were "forms and pressures of the time."
Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed
When Art was young; dramas of living men,
And recent things yet warm with life; —
Shipwreck, or some domestic incident
Divulged by Truth and magnified by Fame;
Such as the daring brotherhood of late
Set forth, too serious theme for that light
place —
I mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn
From our own ground, — the Maid of Buttermere,—
And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife,
Deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came
And wooed the artless daughter of the hills
And wedded her, in cruel mockery
Of love and marriage bonds. These words to thee
Must needs bring back the moment when we first,
Ere the broad world rang with the maiden's name,
Beheld her serving at the cottage inn;
Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,
With admiration of her modest mien
He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose
Just three parts blown — a cottage-child —
if e'er,
By cottage-door on breezy mountain-side,
Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a babe
By Nature's gifts so favoured. Upon a board
Decked with refreshments had this child been placed,
His little stage in the vast theatre,
And there he sate, surrounded with a throng
Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute men
And shameless women, treated and en-ressed;
Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses played,
While oaths and laughter and indecent speech
Were rife about him as the songs of birds
Contending after showers. The mother now
Is fading out of memory, but I see
The lovely Boy as I beheld him then
Among the wretched and the falsely gay,
Like one of those who walked with hair unsinged
Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and spells
Muttered on black and spiteful instigation
Have stopped, as some believe, the kindliest growths.
Ah, with how different spirit might a prayer
Have been preferred, that this fair creature, checked
By special privilege of Nature's love,
Should in his childhood be detained for ever!
But with its universal freight the tide
Hath rolled along, and this bright innocent,
Mary! may now have lived till he could look
With envy on thy nameless babe that sleeps,
Beside the mountain chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then been told
Since, travelling southward from our pastoral hills,
I heard, and for the first time in my life,
The voice of woman utter blasphemy —
Saw woman as she is, to open shame
Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;
I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once
Thrown in that from humanity divorced
Humanity, splitting the race of man
In twain, yet leaving the same outward form.

Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,
And ardent meditation. Later years
Brought to such spectacle a milder sadness,
Feelings of pure commiseration, grief
For the individual and the overthrow
Of her soul's beauty; farther I was then
But seldom led, or wished to go; in truth
The sorrow of the passion stopped me there.

But let me now, less moved, in order take
Our argument. Enough is said to show
How casual incidents of real life,
Observed where pastime only had been sought,
Outweighed, or put to flight, the set events
And measured passions of the stage, albeit
By Siddons trod in the fulness of her power.
Yet was the theatre my dear delight;
The very gilding, lamps and painted scrolls,
And all the mean upholstery of the place,
Wanted not animation, when the tide
Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast
With the ever-shifting figures of the scene,
Solemn or gay: whether some beauteous dame
Advanced in radiance through a deep recess
Of thick entangled forest, like the moon
Opening the clouds; or sovereign king, announced
With flourishing trumpet, came in full-blown state
Of the world's greatness, winding round with train
Of courtiers, banners, and a length of guards;
Or captive led in abject weeds, and jingling
His slender manacles; or romping girl
Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air; or mumbling sire,
A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed up
In all the tatters of infirmity
All loosely put together, hobbled in,
Stumping upon a cane with which he smites,
From time to time, the solid boards, and makes them
Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabouts
Of one so overloaded with his years.
But what of this! the laugh, the grin, grimmace,

The antics striving to outstrip each other,
Were all received, the least of them as lost,
With an unmeasured welcome. Through the night,
Between the show, and many-headed mass
Of the spectators, and each several book,
Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly
And with what flashes, as it were, the mind
Turned this way — that way! sportive alert
And watchful, as a kitten when at play,
While winds are eddying round her, amorous straws
And rustling leaves. Enchanting age, so sweet!
Romantic almost, looked at through a spyglass
How small, of intervening years! For the
Though surely no mean progress had been made
In meditations holy and sublime,
Yet something of a girlish child-like glow
Of novelty survived for scenes like these.
Enjoyment haply handed down from times
When at a country-playhouse, some rural barn
Tricked out for that proud use, if I perceive
Chanced, on a summer evening through the chink
In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse
Of daylight, the bare thought of whose was
Gladdened me more than if I had been
Into a dazzling cavern of romance,
Crowded with Genii busy among works
Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detained us now, as seem,
To many, neither dignified enough
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned
Who, looking inward, have observed ties
That bind the perishable hours of life
Each to the other, and the curious prop
By which the world of memory and thou
Exists and is sustained. More lofty then
Such as at least do wear a prouder face,
Solicit our regard; but when I think
Of these, I feel the imaginative power
Languish within me; even then it slept,
When, pressed by tragic sufferings, heart
Was more than full; amid my sobs and tears
It slept, even in the pregnant season of youth.
For though I was most passionately moved
And yielded to all changes of the scene
With an obsequious promptness, yet the storm
Passed not beyond the suburbs of the mind;
Save when realities of act and mien,
The incarnation of the spirits that move
In harmony amid the Poet’s world,
Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth by power of contrast, made me recognise,
As at a glance, the things which I had shaped,
And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely seen,
When, having closed the mighty Shakespear’s page,
I mused, and thought, and felt, in solitude.

Pass we from entertainments, that are such
Professedly, to others titled higher,
Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,
More near akin to those than names imply,
I mean the brawls of lawyers in their courts
Before the ermined judge, or that great stage
Where senators, tongue-favoured men, perform,
Admired and envied. Oh! the beating heart,
When one among the prime of these rose up,—
One, of whose name from childhood we had heard
Familiarly, a household term, like those,
The Bedfords, Glosters, Salsburys, of old, Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence! hush!
This is no trifler, no short-sighted wit,
No stammerer of a minute, painfully delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked
The Hours, like young Aurora, to his ear: Thrice welcome Presence! how can patience e’er
Grow weary of attending on a track
That kindles with such glory! All are charmed,
Astonished; like a hero in romance, He winds away his never-ending horn;

Words follow words, sense seems to follow sense:
What memory and what logic! till the strain
Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed, Grows tedious even in a young man’s ear.

Genius of Burke! forgive the pen seduced
By specious wonders, and too slow to tell
Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered men,
Beginning to mistrust their boastful guides, And wise men, willing to grow wiser, caught,
Rapt auditors! from thy most eloquent tongue —
Now mute, for ever mute in the cold grave. I see him,—old, but vigorous in age,—
Stand like an oak whose stag-horn branches start
Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe
The younger brethren of the grove. But some —
While he forewarns, denounces, launches forth,
Against all systems built on abstract rights, Keen ridicule; the majesty proclaims
Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by time; Declares the vital power of social ties
Endeared by Custom; and with high disdain,
Exploding upstart Theory, insists
Upon the allegiance to which men are born —
Some — say at once a froward multitude —
Murmur (for truth is hated, where not loved)
As the winds fret within the Æolian cave, Galled by their monarch’s chain. The times were big
With ominous change, which, night by night, provoked
Keen struggles, and black clouds of passion raised;
But memorable moments intervened,
When Wisdom, like the Goddess from Jove’s brain, Broke forth in armour of resplendent words, Startling the Synod. Could a youth, and one
In ancient story versed, whose breast had heaved
Under the weight of classic eloquence,
Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired?
Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail
To achieve its higher triumph. Not unfelt
Were its admonishments, nor lightly heard
The awful truths delivered thence by
tongues
Endowed with various power to search the
soul;
Yet ostentation, domineering, oft
Poured forth harangues, how sadly out of
place! —
There have I seen a comely bachelor,
Fresh from a toilette of two hours, ascend
His rostrum, with seraphic glance look up,
And, in a tone elaborately low
Beginning, lead his voice through many a
maze
A minuet; and, winding up his
mouth,
From time to time, into an orifice
Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,
And only not invisible, again
Open it out, diffusing thence a smile
Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.
Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,
Moses, and he who penned, the other day,
The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the
Bard
Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy theme
With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,
And Ossian (doubt not — it is the naked
truth)
Summoned from streamy Morven — each
and all
Would, in their turns, lend ornaments and
flowers
To entwine the crook of eloquence that
helped
This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the plains,
To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glanced but at a few conspicuous marks,
Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,
Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop,
In public room or private, park or street,
Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,
Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,
Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,
And all the strife of singularity,
Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense —
Of these, and of the living shapes they
wear,
There is no end. Such candidates for re-
gard,
Although well pleased to be where they
were found,

But foolishness and madness in parade,
Though most at home in this their dear
domain,
Are scattered everywhere, no rarities,
Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.
Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep
In memory, those individual sights
Of courage, or integrity, or truth,
Of tenderness, which there, set off by foil,
Appeared more touching. One will I se-
lect —
A Father — for he bore that sacred
name; —
Him saw I, sitting in an open square,
Upon a corner-stone of that low wall,
Wherein were fixed the iron pales that
fenced
A spacious grass-plot; there, in silence,
sate
This One Man, with a sickly babe out-
stretched
Upon his knee, whom he had thither
brought
For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher
air.
Of those who passed, and me who looked at
him,
He took no heed; but in his brawny arms
(The Artificer was to the elbow bare,
And from his work this moment had been
stolen)
He held the child, and, bending over it,
As if he were afraid both of the sun
And of the air, which he had come to seek,
Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.

As the black storm upon the mountain top
Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so
That huge fermenting mass of human-kind
Serves as a solemn back-ground, or relief,
To single forms and objects, whence they
draw,
For feeling and contemplative regard,
More than inherent liveliness and power.
How oft, amid those overflowing streets,
Have I gone forward with the crowd, and
said
Unto myself, "The face of every one
That passes by me is a mystery!"
Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look, op-
pressed

By thoughts of what and whither, when
and how,
Until the shapes before my eyes became
A second-sight procession, such as glides
Over still mountains, or appears in dreams;
And once, far-travelled in such mood, be-
yond
The reach of common indication, lost
Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten
Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)
Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,
Stood, propped against a wall, upon his
chest

Wearing a written paper, to explain
His story, whence he came, and who he
was.
Caught by the spectacle my mind turned
round
As with the might of waters; and apt type
This label seemed of the utmost we can
know,
Both of ourselves and of the universe;
And, on the shape of that unmoving man,
His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I
gazed,
As if admonished from another world.

Though reared upon the base of outward
things,
Structures like these the excited spirit
mainly
Builds for herself; scenes different there
are,
Full-formed, that take, with small internal
help,
Possession of the faculties,—the peace
That comes with night; the deep solemnity
Of nature’s intermediate hours of rest,
When the great tide of human life stands
still:
The business of the day to come, unborn,
Of that gone by, locked up, as in the grave;
The blended calmness of the heavens and
earth,

Moonlight and stars, and empty streets, and

Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours
Of winter evenings, when unwholesome
rains
Are falling hard, with people yet astir,
The feeble salutation from the voice
Of some unhappy woman, now and then
Heard as we pass, when no one looks about,
Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,
Are falsely catalogued; things that are, are
not,
As the mind answers to them, or the
heart
Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say you,
then,
To times, when half the city shall break
out
Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or
fear?
To executions, to a street on fire,
Mobs, riots, or rejoicings? From these
sights
Take one,—that ancient festival, the Fair,
Holden where martyrs suffered in past
time,
And named of St. Bartholomew; there, see
A work completed to our hands, that lays,
If any spectacle on earth can do,
The whole creative powers of man
asleep!—
For once, the Muse’s help will we implore,
And she shall lodge us, wafted on her
wings,
Above the press and danger of the crowd,
Upon some showman’s platform. What a
shock
For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din,
Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,
Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight,
sound!
Below, the open space, through every nook
Of the wide area, twinkle, is alive
With heads; the midway region, and above,
Is thronged with staring pictures and huge
scrolls,
Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies;
With chattering monkeys dangling from
their poles,
And children whirling in their roundabouts;
With those that stretch the neck and strain
the eyes,
And crack the voice in rivalry, the crowd
Inviting; with buffoons against buffoons
Grimacing, writhing, screaming,—him who
grinds
The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves,
Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-drum,
And him who at the trumpet puffs his cheeks,
The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,
Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and boys,
Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-towering plumes.—
All moveables of wonder, from all parts,
Are here—Albinos, painted Indians, Dwarfs,
The Horse of knowledge, and the learned Pig,
The Stone-eater, the man that swallows fire,
Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,
The Bust that speaks and moves its goggling eyes,
The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the marvellous craft
Of modern Merlin, Wild Beasts, Puppet-shows,
All out-o’-the-way, far-fetched, perverted things,
All freaks of nature, all Promethean thoughts
Of man, his dulness, madness, and their feats
All jumbled up together, to compose A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and Booths
Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast mill,
Are vomiting, receiving on all sides, Men, Women, three-years’ Children, Babes in arms.

Oh, blank confusion! true epitome Of what the mighty City is herself, To thousands upon thousands of her sons,
Living amid the same perpetual whirl Of trivial objects, melted and reduced To one identity, by differences That have no law, no meaning, and no end— Oppression, under which even highest minds Must labour, whence the strongest are not free.
But though the picture weary out the eye, By nature an unmanageable sight, It is not wholly so to him who looks In steadiness, who hath among least things An under-sense of greatest; sees the parts

As parts, but with a feeling of the whole. This, of all acquisitions, first awaits On sundry and most widely different modes Of education, nor with least delight On that through which I passed. Attention springs,
And comprehensiveness and memory flow, From early converse with the works of God Among all regions; chiefly where appear Most obviously simplicity and power.
Think, how the everlasting streams and woods, Stretched and still stretching far and wide exalt
The roving Indian, on his desert sands: What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnancy show Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab’s eye And, as the sea propels, from zone to zone,
Its currents; magnifies its shoals of life Beyond all compass; spreads, and send aloft Armies of clouds,—even so, its powers are aspects
Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed, The views and aspirations of the soul To majesty. Like virtue have the forms Perennial of the ancient hills; nor less The changeful language of their countenances
Quickens the slumbering mind, and aid the thoughts,
However multitudinous, to move
With order and relation. This, if still, As hitherto, in freedom I may speak, Not violating any just restraint, As may be hoped, of real modesty,— This did I feel, in London’s vast domain. The Spirit of Nature was upon me there; The soul of Beauty and enduring Life Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused, Through meagre lines and colours, and the press
Of self-destroying, transitory things, Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

BOOK EIGHTH

RETROSPECT—LOVE OF NATURE LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN

What sounds are those, Helvellyn, that are heard Up to thy summit, through the depth of a
The children now are rich, for the old to-day
Are generous as the young; and, if content
With looking on, some ancient wedded pair
Sit in the shade together; while they gaze,
"A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled brow,
The days departed start again to life,
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,
Faint, but more tranquil, like the changing sun
To him who slept at noon and wakes at eve."
Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,
Spreading from young to old, from old to young,
And no one seems to want his share.—

Is the recess, the circumambient world
Magnificent, by which they are embraced:
They move about upon the soft green turf:
How little they, they and their doings, seem,
And all that they can further or obstruct!
Through utter weakness pitiously dear,
As tender infants are: and yet how great!
For all things serve them: them the morn-
ing light
Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;
And them the silent rocks, which now from high
Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;
The wild brooks prattling from invisible haunts;
And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir
Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel, 70
In that enormous City's turbulent world
Of men and things, what benefit I owed
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart
Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand trees,
Or Geholi's matchless gardens, for delight
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous, 79
China's stupendous mound) by patient toil
Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,
Fulfilling (could enchantment have done more?)
A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with domes
Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells
For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts
With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,  
Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught  
to melt  
Into each other their obsequious hues,  
Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase,  
Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth  
In no discordant opposition, strong  
And gorgeous as the colours side by side  
Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;  
And mountains over all, embracing all;  
And all the landscape, endlessly enriched  
With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise  
Where I was reared; in Nature’s primitive  
gifts  
Favoured no less, and more to every sense  
Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,  
The elements, and seasons as they change,  
Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there  
Man free, man working for himself, with  
choice  
Of time, and place, and object; by his  
wants,  
His comforts, native occupations, cares,  
Cheerfully led to individual ends  
Or social, and still followed by a train  
Unwooded, unthought-of even — simplicity,  
And beauty, and inevitable grace.

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial  
bowers  
Would to a child be transport over-great,  
When but a half-hour’s roam through such a place  
Would leave behind a dance of images,  
That shall break in upon his sleep for weeks;  
Even then the common haunts of the green earth,  
And ordinary interests of man,  
Which they embosom, all without regard  
As both may seem, are fastening on the heart  
Insensibly, each with the other’s help.  
For me, when my affections first were led  
From kindred, friends, and playmates, to  
partake  
Love for the human creature’s absolute self,  
That noticeable kindliness of heart  
Sprang out of fountains, there abounding  
most,  
Where sovereign Nature dictated the tasks  
And occupations which her beauty adorned,  
And Shepherds were the men that pleased me first;

Not such as Saturn ruled ‘mid Latian wilds  
With arts and laws so tempered, that the lives  
Left, even to us toiling in this late day,  
A bright tradition of the golden age;  
Not such as ’mid Arcadian fastnesses  
Sequestered, handed down among themselves  
Felicity, in Grecian song renowned;  
Nor such as — when an adverse fate is driven,  
From house and home, the courtly baron whose fortunes  
Entered, with Shakspeare’s genius, the wild woods  
Of Arden — amid sunshine or in shade  
Culled the best fruits of Time’s uncounted hours,  
Ere Phæbe sighed for the false Ganymede  
Or there where Perdita and Florizel  
Together danced, Queen of the feast, a King;  
Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,  
That I had heard (what he perhaps is seen)  
Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far  
Their May-bush, and along the streets their flocks  
Parading with a song of taunting rhymes  
Aimed at the laggards slumbering with their doors;  
Had also heard, from those who yet remem-bered,  
Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreath that decked  
Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and youths,  
Each with his maid, before the sun was up  
By annual custom, issuing forth in troop  
To drink the waters of some sainted well  
And hang it round with garlands. So survives;  
But, for such purpose, flowers no long grow:  
The times, too sage, perhaps too long have dropped  
These lighter graces; and the rural ways  
And manners which my childhood look upon  
Were the unluxuriant produce of a life  
Intent on little but substantial needs,  
Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt  
But images of danger and distress,  
Man suffering among awful Powers and Forms;
In turn its visitant, telling there his hours
In unlabourous pleasure, with no task
More toilsome than to carve a beechen bowl
For spring or fountain, which the traveller finds,
When through the region he pursues at will
His devious course. A glimpse of such sweet life
I saw when, from the melancholy walls Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed
My daily walk along that wide champaign, That, reaching to her gates, spreads east and west,
And northwards, from beneath the mountainous verge Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to you Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye hollow vales,
Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's voice,
Powers of my native region! Ye that seize
The heart with firmer grasp! Your snows and streams Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds, That howl so dismally for him who treads Companionless your awful solitudes!
There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter long
To wait upon the storms: of their approach Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives His flock, and thither from the homestead bears
A toilsome burden up the craggy ways, And deals it out, their regular nourishment Strewn on the frozen snow. And when the spring Looks out, and all the pastures dance with lambs,
And when the flock, with warmer weather, climbs Higher and higher, him his office leads To watch their goings, whatsoever track The wanderers choose. For this he quits his home
At day-spring, and no sooner doth the sun Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat, Than he lies down upon some shining rock, And breakfasts with his dog. When they have stolen, As is their wont, a pittance from strict time,
For rest not needed or exchange of love,
Then from his couch he starts; and now his feet
Crush out a livelier fragrance from the flowers
Of lowly thyme, by Nature’s skill enwrought
In the wild turf: the lingering dews of morn
Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he hies,
His staff prettending like a hunter’s spear,
Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,
And o’er the brawling beds of unbridged streams.
Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy’s call,
Might deign to follow him through what he does
Or sees in his day’s march; himself he feels,
In those vast regions where his service lies,
A freeman, wedded to his life of hope
And hazard, and hard labour interchanged
With that majestic indolence so dear
To native man. A rambling schoolboy, thus,
I felt his presence in his own domain,
As of a lord and master, or a power,
Or genius, under Nature, under God,
Presiding; and severest solitude
Had more commanding looks when he was there.

When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,
In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,
His sheep like Greenland bears; or, as he stepped
Beyond the boundary line of some hill-shadow,
His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
By the deep radiance of the setting sun: 270
Or him have I descried in distant sky,
A solitary object and sublime,
Above all height! like an aerial cross
Stationed alone upon a spiry rock
Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus was man
Ennobled outwardly before my sight,
And thus my heart was early introduced
To an unconscious love and reverence
Of human nature; hence the human form
To me became an index of delight,
Of grace and honour, power and worthiness.

Meanwhile this creature — spiritual alma
As those of books, but more exalted far;
Far more of an imaginative form
Than the gay Corin of the groves, who lives
For his own fancies, or to dance by the hour,
In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst —
Was, for the purposes of kind, a man
With the most common; husband, false learned,
Could teach, admonish; suffered with the rest
From vice and folly, wretchedness and fear;
Of this I little saw, cared less for it,
But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances
Which I beheld of shepherds in my own
This sanctity of Nature given to man—
A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore
On the dead letter, miss the spirit
Whose truth is not a motion or a shape
Instinct with vital functions, but a block
Or waxen image which yourselves have made,
And ye adore! But blessed be the God
Of Nature and of Man that this was so;
That men before my inexperienced eyes
Did first present themselves thus purified
Removed, and to a distance that was fit:
And so we all of us in some degree
Are led to knowledge, wheresoe’er led,
And howsoever; were it otherwise,
And we found evil fast as we find good
In our first years, or think that it found,
How could the innocent heart bear up
And live!

But doubly fortunate my lot; not here
Alone, that something of a better life
Perhaps was round me than it is the pre
Of most to move in, but that first I look
At Man through objects that were great and fair;
First communed with him by their beauty
And thus
Was founded a sure safeguard and defense
Against the weight of meanness, sel
Cares,
Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that be
In
On all sides from the ordinary world
In which we traffic. Starting from this point
I had my face turned toward the truth, began
With an advantage furnished by that kind
Of prepossession, without which the soul
Receives no knowledge that can bring forth good,
No genuine insight ever comes to her.
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,
Happy, and now most thankful that my walk
Was guarded from too early intercourse
With the deformities of crowded life,
And those ensuing laughings and contempts,
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to think
With a due reverence on earth’s rightful lord,
Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,
Will not permit us; but pursue the mind,
That to devotion willingly would rise,
Into the temple and the temple’s heart.

Yet deem not, Friend! that human kind
with me
Thus early took a place pre-eminent;
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,
But secondary to my own pursuits
And animal activities, and all
Their trivial pleasures; and when these had drooped
And gradually expired, and Nature, prized
For her own sake, became my joy, even then—
And upwards through late youth, until not less
Than two-and-twenty summers had been told—
Was Man in my affections and regards
Subordinate to her, her visible forms
And viewless agencies: a passion, she, A rapture often, and immediate love
Ever at hand; he, only a delight
Occasional, an accidental grace,
His hour being not yet come. Far less had then
The inferior creatures, beast or bird, attuned
My spirit to that gentleness of love,
(Though they had long been carefully observed),
Won from me those minute obeisances
Of tenderness, which I may number now
With my first blessings. Nevertheless, on these
The light of beauty did not fall in vain,
Or grandeur circumfuse them to no end.

But when that first poetic faculty
Of plain Imagination and severe,
No longer a mute influence of the soul,
Ventured, at some rash Muse’s earnest call,
To try her strength among harmonious words;
And to book-notions and the rules of art
Did knowingly conform itself; there came
Among the simple shapes of human life
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit;
And Nature and her objects beautified
These fictions, as in some sort, in their turn,
They burnished her. From touch of this new power
Nothing was safe: the elder-tree that grew
Beside the well-known charnel-house had then
A dismal look: the yew-tree had its ghost,
That took his station there for ornament:
The dignities of plain occurrence then
Were tasteless, and truth’s golden mean, a point
Where no sufficient pleasure could be found.
Then, if a widow, staggering with the blow
Of her distress, was known to have turned her steps
To the cold grave in which her husband slept,
One night, or haply more than one, through pain
Or half-insensate impotence of mind,
The fact was caught at greedily, and there
She must be visitant the whole year through,
Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might pursue
These cravings; when the foxglove, one by one,
Upwards through every stage of the tall stem,
Had shed beside the public way its bells,
And stood of all dismantled, save the last
Left at the tapering ladder’s top, that seemed
To bend as doth a slender blade of grass
Tipped with a rain-drop, Fancy loved to seat,
Beneath the plant despooled, but crested still
With this last relic, soon itself to fall,
Some vagrant mother, whose arch little ones, 
All unconcerned by her dejected plight, 
Laughed as with rival eagerness their hands 
Gathered the purple cups that round them lay, 
Strewing the turf's green slope. 
A diamond light (Whene'er the summer sun, declining, smote) A smooth rock wet with constant springs) was seen Sparkling from out a copee-clad bank that rose 
Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the hearth Seated, with open door, often and long Upon this restless lustre have I gazed, That made my fancy restless as itself. 'Twas now for me a burnished silver shield Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood: An entrance now into some magic cave Or palace built by fairies of the rock; Nor could I have been bribed to disenchant The spectacle, by visiting the spot. Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood, Engrafted far-fetched shapes on feelings bred By pure Imagination: busy Power She was, and with her ready pupil turned Instinctively to human passions, then Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fervent swarm,

Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich As mine was through the bounty of a grand And lovely region, I had forms distinct To steady me: each airy thought resolved Round a substantial centre, which at once Incited it to motion, and controlled. I did not pine like one in cities bred, As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend! Great Spirit as thou art, in endless dreams Of sickness, disjoining, joining, things Without the light of knowledge. Where the harm,

If, when the woodman languished with disease

Induced by sleeping nightly on the ground
Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise, I called the pangs of disappointed love,
And all the sad etcetera of the wrong, To help him to his grave? Meanwhile the man, If not already from the woods retired

To die at home, was haply, as I knew, Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle Birds, running streams, and hills so beautiful On golden evenings, while the charcoal pit Breathed up its smoke, an image of his gbs Or spirit that full soon must take her flight! Nor shall we not be tending towards the point Of sound humanity to which our Tale Leads, though by sinuous ways, if here show How Fancy, in a season when she wove Those slender cords, to guide the unconscious Boy For the Man's sake, could feed at Natural call Some pensive musings which might w beseen Maturer years.

A grove there is whose boughs Stretch from the western marge of Th stommere, With length of shade so thick, that when glides Along the line of low-roofed water, mov As in a cloister. Once—while, in the shade Loitering, I watched the golden beams light Flung from the setting sun, as they repay In silent beauty on the naked ridge Of a high eastern hill — thus flowed thoughts In a pure stream of words fresh from the heart: Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er sh close My mortal course, there will I think you; Dying, will cast on you a backward look Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vak Is no where touched by one mem glem) Doth with the fond remains of his power Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds, On the dear mountain-tops where first rose.

Enough of humble arguments; recall, My Song! those high emotions which voice Has heretofore made known; that burst forth
Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,
When everywhere a vital pulse was felt, 480
And all the several frames of things, like stars,
Through every magnitude distinguishable,
Some mutually indebted, or half lost
Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy
Of life and glory. In the midst stood
Man,
Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,
As, of all visible natures, crown, though born
Of dust, and kindred to the worm; a Being,
Both in perception and discernment, first
In every capability of rapture,
Through the divine effect of power and love;
As, more than anything we know, instinct
With godhead, and, by reason and by will,
Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left, I moved,
Began, from day to day, with temporal shapes
Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,
Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,
manners and characters discriminate,
And little bustling passions that eclipse, 500
As well they might, the impersonated thought,
The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An idler among academic bowers,
Such was my new condition, as at large
Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar light
Of present, actual, superficial life,
Steaming through colouring of other times,
Usages and local privilege,
Was welcomed, softened, if not solemnised.
His notwithstanding, being brought more near
Of vice and guilt, forerunning wretchedness,
Trembled, — thought, at times, of human life
With an indefinite terror and dismay,
Such as the storms and angry elements
Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim
Astrology to uproar and misrule,
Squint, danger, and obscenity.

It might be told (but wherefore speak of things
Common to all?) that, seeing, I was led
Gravely to ponder — judging between good
And evil, not as for the mind's delight 521
But for her guidance — one who was to act,
As sometimes to the best of feeble means
I did, by human sympathy impelled:
And, through dislike and most offensive
Pain,
Was to the truth conducted; of this faith
Never forsaken, that, by acting well,
And understanding, I should learn to love
The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress! for at times
Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;
London, to thee I willingly return.
Erewhile my verse played idly with the flowers
Enwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied
With that amusement, and a simple look
Of child-like inquisition now and then
Cast upwards on thy countenance, to detect
Some inner meanings which might harbour there.

But how could I in mood so light indulge,
Keeping such fresh remembrance of the day,
When, having thridded the long labyrinth
Of the suburban villages, I first
Entered thy vast dominion? On the roof
Of an itinerant vehicle I sate,
With vulgar men about me, trivial forms
Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and things,
—
Mean shapes on every side; but, at the instant,
When to myself it fairly might be said,
The threshold now is overpast, (how strange
That aught external to the living mind 550
Should have such mighty sway! yet so it was),
A weight of ages did at once descend
Upon my heart; no thought embodied, no
Distinct remembrances, but weight and power,—
Power growing under weight: alas! I feel
That I am trifling: 't was a moment's pause,—
All that took place within me came and went
As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.
The curious traveller, who, from open day,
Hath passed with torches into some huge
cave,
The Grotto of Antiparos, or the Den
In old time haunted by that Danish Witch,
Yordas; he looks around and sees the vault
Widening on all sides; sees, or thinks he
sees,
Erelong, the massy roof above his head,
That instantly unsettles and recedes,—
Substance and shadow, light and darkness, all
Commingled, making up a canopy
Of shapes and forms and tendencies to shape
That shift and vanish, change and inter-
change
Like spectres,—ferment silent and sublime!
That after a short space works less and less,
Till, every effort, every motion gone,
The scene before him stands in perfect view
Exposed, and lifeless as a written book! —
But let him pause awhile, and look again,
And a new quickening shall succeed, at first
Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,
Till the whole cave, so late a senseless mass,
Busies the eye with images and forms
Boldly assembled, — here is shadowed forth
From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,
A variegated landscape, — there the shape
Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail,
The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,
Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his staff:
Strange congregation! yet not slow to meet
Eyes that perceive through minds that can inspire.

Even in such sort had I at first been moved,
Nor otherwise continued to be moved,
As I explored the vast metropolis,
Fount of my country’s destiny and the world’s;
That great emporium, chronicle at once
And burial-place of passions, and their home
Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it did
Of past and present, such a place must needs
Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at that time
Far less than craving power; yet knowledge came,
Sought or unsought, and influxes of power
Came, of themselves, or at her call derived
In fits of kindliest apprehensiveness,
From all sides, when what’er was in it
Capacious found, or seemed to find, in me
A correspondent amplitude of mind;
Such is the strength and glory of our youth,
The human nature unto which I felt
That I belonged, and reverenced with love.
Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit
Diffused through time and space, with which
Of evidence from monuments, erect,
Prostrate, or leaning towards their commo-
rest
In earth, the widely scattered wreck sublim
Of vanished nations, or more clearly drawn
From books and what they picture as a record.

’T is true, the history of our native land
With those of Greece compared and popu-
Rome,
And in our high-wrought modern narrati
Striped of their harmonising soul, the life
Of manners and familiar incidents —
Had never much delighted me. And let
Than other intellects had mine been used
To lean upon extrinsic circumstance
Of record or tradition; but a sense
Of what in the Great City had been done
And suffered, and was doing, suffering, st
Weighed with me, could support the test
thought;
And, in despite of all that had gone by,
Or was departing never to return,
There I conversed with majesty and pow
Like independent natures. Hence the ph
Was thronged with impressions like the
Wilds
In which my early feelings had been
nursed —
Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns, roe
And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,
Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed crag
That into music touch the passing wind.
Here then my young imagination found
No uncongenial element; could here
Among new objects serve or give comma
Even as the heart’s occasions might quire,
To forward reason’s else too-scrupul
march.

The effect was, still more elevated view
Of human nature. Neither vice nor gui
Debasement undergone by body or mind
BOOK NINTH
RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

Even as a river, — partly (it might seem)
Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed
In part by fear to shape a way direct,
That would engulf him soon in the raven-
ous sea —
Turns, and will measure back his course,
far back,
Seeking the very regions which he crossed
In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!
Turned and returned with intricate delay.
Or as a traveller, who has gained the brow
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts
For breathing-time, is tempted to review
The region left behind him; and, if aught
Deserving notice have escaped regard,
Or been regarded with too careless eye,
Strives, from that height, with one and yet
one more
Last look, to make the best amends he may:
So have we lingered. Now we start afresh
With courage, and new hope risen on our
Toil.
Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,
Whene'er it comes! needful in work so
long,
Thrice needful to the argument which now
Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,
I ranged at large, through London’s wide
domain,
Month after month. Obscurely did I live,
Not seeking frequent intercourse with men,
By literature, or elegance, or rank,
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus
spent
Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,
With less regret for its luxurious pomp,
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,
Than for the humble book-stalls in the
streets,
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I turned.

France lured me forth; the realm that I
had crossed
So lately, journeying toward the snow-clad
Alps.
But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,
And all enjoyment which the summer sun
Sheds round the steps of those who meet
the day

For all the misery forced upon my sight,
Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes
scanned
Most feelingly, could overthrow my trust
In what I may become; induce belief
That I was ignorant, had been falsely
 taught,
A solitary, who with vain conceits
Had been inspired, and walked about in
dreams.
From those sad scenes when meditation
turned,
Lo! everything that was indeed divine
Retained its purity inviolate,
May brighter shone, by this portentous
gloom
Set off; such opposition as aroused
The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise
Though fallen from bliss, when in the East
he saw
Darkness ere day’s mid course, and morn-
ing light
More orient in the western cloud, that drew
O’er the blue firmament a radiant white,
Descending slow with something heavenly
fraught.

Add also, that among the multitudes
Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen
Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere
is possible, the unity of man,
One spirit over ignorance and vice
Predominant, in good and evil hearts;
One sense for moral judgments, as one eye
for the sun’s light. The soul when smitten
thus
By a sublime idea, whenoesoe’er
Vouchsafed for union or communion, feeds
On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with
God.

Thus from a very early age, O Friend!
My thoughts by slow gradations had been
drawn
To human-kind, and to the good and ill
Of human life: Nature had led me on;
And oft amid the “busy hum” I seemed
To travel independent of her help,
As if I had forgotten her; but no,
The world of human-kind outweighed not
hers
In my habitual thoughts; the scale of love,
Though filling daily, still was light, com-
pared
With that in which her mighty objects lay.
With motion constant as his own, I went
Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,
Washed by the current of the stately Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course,
and there
Sojourn ing a few days, I visited
In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,
The latter chiefly; from the field of Mars
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,
And from Mont Martre southward to the
Dome
Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous
Halls,
The National Synod and the Jacobins,
I saw the Revolutionary Power
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by
storms;
The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace
huge
Of Orleans; coasted round and round the
line
Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and
Shop,
Great rendezvous of worst and best, the
walk
Of all who had a purpose, or had not;
I stared and listened, with a stranger’s
ears,
To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!
And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look
Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to
wear,
But seemed there present; and I scanned
them all,
Watched every gesture uncontrollable,
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,
All side by side, and struggling face to
face,
With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the
dust
Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,
And pocketed the relic, in the guise
Of an enthusiast: yet, in honest truth,
I looked for something that I could not find,
Affecting more emotion than I felt;
For ’tis most certain, that these various
sights,
However potent their first shock, with me
Appeared to recompense the traveller’s
pains
Less than the painted Magdalene of
Brun,
A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair
Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and red
cheek
Pale and bedropped with overflowing

But hence to my more permanent abode
I hasten; there, by novelties in speech,
Domestic manners, customs, gestures, loc
And all the attire of ordinary life,
Attention was engrossed; and, thus amus
I stood ’mid those concussions, unconcerned
Tranquil almost, and careless as a flow
Glassed in a green-house, or a park
shrub
That spreads its leaves in unmolested pal
While every bush and tree, the court
through,
Is shaking to the roots: indifference this
Which may seem strange: but I was prepared
With needful knowledge, had abruptly
passed
Into a theatre, whose stage was filled
And busy with an action far advanced.
Like others, I had skimmed, and so
times read
With care, the master pamphlets of a day;
Nor wanted such half-insight as grew up
Upon that meagre soil, helped out by t
And public news; but having never seen
A chronicle that might suffice to show
Whence the main organs of the pu
power
Had sprung, their transmigrations, wis
and how
Accomplished, giving thus unto events A form and body; all things were to me
Loose and disjointed, and the affecti
left
Without a vital interest. At that time, Moreover, the first storm was overblow
And the strong hand of outward violen
Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear
Now, in connection with so great a then
To speak (as I must be compelled to do) Of one so unimportant; night by night Did I frequent the formal haunts of me
Whom, in the city, privilege of birth
Sequestered from the rest, societies
Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed
Whence, and from deeper causes, all
Of good and evil of the time was shunned
With scrupulous care; but these restric-
tions soon
Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew
Into a noisier world, and thus ere long
Became a patriot; and my heart was all
Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

A band of military Officers,
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates; some of these wore
swords
That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
Were men well-born; the chivalry of
France.
In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart; alike
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done:
This was their rest and only hope; there-
with
No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come; nor would
have stirred,
Or deemed it worth a moment’s thought to stir,
In anything, save only as the act
Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by years,
Was in the prime of manhood, and ere-
while
He had sate lord in many tender hearts;
Though heedless of such honours now, and
changed:
His temper was quite mastered by the times,
And they had blighted him, had eaten away
The beauty of his person, doing wrong
Alike to body and to mind: his port,
Which once had been erect and open, now
Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, ex-
pressed,
As much as any that was ever seen,
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,
That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man,
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow
cheek
Into a thousand colours; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch
Continually, like an uneasy place
In his own body. ’T was in truth an hour
Of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated; and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
The soil of common life was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Of I said then,
And not then only/“What a mockery this
Of history, the past and that to come!
Now do I feel how all men are deceived,
Reading of nations and their works, in
faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;
Oh! laughter for the page that would re-
fect
To future times the face of what now is!”
The land all swarmed with passion, like a
plain
Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—add
A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more; yet they were
powers,
Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by
day,
And felt through every nook of town and
field.

Such was the state of things. Mean-
while the chief
Of my associates stood prepared for flight
To augment the band of emigrants in arms
Upon the borders of the Rhine, and leagued
With foreign foes mustered for instant war.
This was their undisguised intent, and they
Were waiting with the whole of their de-
sires
The moment to depart.

An Englishman,
Born in a land whose very name appeared
To license some unruliness of mind;
A stranger, with youth’s further privilege,
And the indulgence that a half-learnt
speech
Wins from the courteous; I, who had been
else
Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived
With these defenders of the Crown, and
talked,
And heard their notions; nor did they disdain
The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by books
To reason well of polity or law,
And nice distinctions, then on every tongue,
Of natural rights and civil; and to acts
Of nations and their passing interests
(If with unworldly ends and aims compared)
Almost indifferent, even the historian’s tale
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart
Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair forms,
Old heroes and their sufferings and their deeds;
Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,
That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned
And ill could brook, beholding that the best
Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which yet
Retaineth more of ancient homelessness,
Than any other nook of English ground,
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,
Through the whole tenor of my school-day time,
The face of one, who, whether boy or man,
Was vested with attention or respect
Through claims of wealth or blood; nor was it least
Of many benefits, in later years
Derived from academic institutes
And rules, that they held something up to view
Of a Republic, where all stood thus far
Upon equal ground; that we were brothers all
In honour, as in one community,
Scholars and gentlemen; where, furthermore,
Distinction open lay to all that came,
And wealth and titles were in less esteem
Than talents, worth, and prosperous industry.
Add unto this, subservience from the first
To presences of God’s mysterious power
Made manifest in Nature’s sovereignty,
And fellowship with venerable books,
To sanction the proud workings of the soul,
And mountain liberty. It could not be
But that one tutored thus should look with awe
Upon the faculties of man, receive
Gladsly the highest promises, and hail,
As best, the government of equal rights
And individual worth. And hence, O Friend!
If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced
Less than might well befit my youth, the cause
In part lay here, that unto me the events
Seemed nothing out of nature’s certain course,
A gift that was come rather late than soon.
No wonder, then, if advocates like these,
Inflamed by passion, blind with prejudice,
And stung with injury, at this riper day,
Were impotent to make my hopes put on
The shape of theirs, my understanding bend
In honour to their honour: zeal, which yet
Had slumbered, now in opposition burst
Forth like a Polar summer: every word
They uttered was a dart, by counter-wind
Blown back upon themselves; their reason seemed
Confusion-stricken by a higher power
Than human understanding, their discourse
Maimed, spiritless; and, in their weakness strong,
I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the road
Were crowded with the bravest youth of France,
And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
In gallant soldiership, and posting on
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.
Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep—
I wept not then,—but tears have dimmed my sight.
In memory of the farewells of that time,
Domestic severings, female fortitude
At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;  
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,  
And for a moment, men from far with sound  
Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,  
Entering the city, here and there a face,  
Or person, singled out among the rest, 279  
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such;  
Even by these passing spectacles my heart  
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed  
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the cause  
Good, pure, which no one could stand up against,  
Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,  
Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,  
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,  
Already hinted at, of other mould —  
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest, 290  
And with an oriental loathing spurned,  
As of a different caste. A meeker man  
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,  
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries  
Made him more gracious, and his nature then  
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,  
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,  
When foot hath crushed them. He through the events  
Of that great change wandered in perfect faith, 299  
As through a book, an old romance, or tale  
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought  
Behind the summer clouds. By birth he ranked  
With the most noble, but unto the poor  
Among mankind he was in service bound,  
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed  
To a religious order. Man he loved  
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,  
And all the homely in their homely works,  
Transferred a courtesy which had no air  
Of condescension; but did rather seem 310  
A passion and a gallantry, like that  
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day  
Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,  
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,  
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy  
Diffused around him, while he was intent  
On works of love or freedom, or revolved  
Complacently the progress of a cause,  
Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek

And placid, and took nothing from the man  
That was delightful. Oft in solitude 321  
With him did I discourse about the end  
Of civil government, and its wisest forms;  
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,  
Custom and habit, novelty and change;  
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few  
For patrimonial honour set apart,  
And ignorance in the labouring multitude.  
For he, to all intolerance indisposed, 329  
Balanced these contemplations in his mind;  
And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped  
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment  
Than later days allowed; carried about me,  
With less alloy to its integrity,  
The experience of past ages, as, through help  
Of books and common life, it makes sure way  
To youthful minds, by objects over near  
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled  
By struggling with the crowd for present ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find  
Error without excuse upon the side 341  
Of them who strove against us, more delight  
We took, and let this freely be confessed,  
In painting to ourselves the miseries  
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life  
Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul  
The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,  
True personal dignity, abideth not;  
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off  
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,  
From lowly sympathy and chastening truth; 351  
Where good and evil interchange their names,  
And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired  
With vice at home. We added dearest themes —  
Man and his noble nature, as it is  
The gift which God has placed within his power,  
His blind desires and steady faculties  
Capable of clear truth, the one to break  
Bondage, the other to build liberty  
On firm foundations, making social life, 360  
Through knowledge spreading and imperishable,  
As just in regulation, and as pure  
As individual in the wise and good.
We summoned up the honourable deeds
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright
spot,
That would be found in all recorded time,
Of truth preserved and error passed away;
Of single spirits that catch the flame from
Heaven,
And how the multitudes of men will feed
And fan each other; thought of sects, how
keen
They are to put the appropriate nature on,
Triumphant over every obstacle
Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,
And what they do and suffer for their creed;
How far they travel, and how long endure;
How quickly mighty Nations have been
formed,
From least beginnings; how, together locked
By new opinions, scattered tribes have made
One body, spreading wide as clouds in
heaven.
To aspirations then of our own minds
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld
A living confirmation of the whole
Before us, in a people from the depth
Of shameful imbecility uprising,
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,
And continence of mind, and sense of right,
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves,
Or such retirement, Friend! as we have
known
In the green dales beside our Rotha's
stream,
Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,
On rational liberty, and hope in man,
Justice and peace. But far more sweet
such toil —
Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts ab-
struse —
If nature then be standing on the brink
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice
Of one devoted, — one whom circumstance
Hath called upon to embody his deep
sense
In action, give it outwardly a shape,
And that of benediction, to the world.
Then doubt is not, and truth is more than
truth, —
A hope it is, and a desire; a creed
Of zeal, by an authority Divine
Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.
Such conversation, under Attic shades,
Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus
For a Deliverer's glorious task, — and such
He, on that ministry already bound,
Held with Eudemus and Timonides,
Surrounded by adventurers in arms,
When those two vessels with their daring
freight,
For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow,
Sailed from Zacynthus, — philosophic war,
Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,
Though like ambition, such was he, 0
Friend!
Of whom I speak. So Beauquis (let the
name
Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity) as
Fashioned his life; and many a long dis-
course,
With like persuasion honoured, we main-
tained:
He, on his part, accoutred for the worst,
He perished fighting, in supreme command
Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire,
For liberty, against deluded men,
His fellow-countrymen; and yet most
blessed
In this, that he the fate of later times
Lived not to see, nor what we now behold
Who have as ardent hearts as he had
then.

Along that very Loire, with festal mirth
Resounding at all hours, and innocent yet
Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;
Or in wide forests of continuous shade,
Lofty and over-arched, with open space
Beneath the trees, clear footing many
mile —
A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,
From earnest dialogues I slipped in thought
And let remembrance steal to other times
When, o'er those interwoven roots, most
clad,
And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,
Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed
might pace
In sylvan meditation undisturbed;
As on the pavement of a Gothic church
Walks a lone Monk, when service hath ex-
pired,
In peace and silence. But if e'er we
heard —
Heard, though unseen, — a deviouse tra-
er,
The Prelude

By cressets and love-beacons, intercourse
Twixt her high-seated residence and his
Far off at Chambord on the plain beneath;
Even here, though less than with the peace-
ful house
Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments
Of Kings, their vices and their better deeds,
Imagination, potent to inflame
At times with virtuous wrath and noble
corn,
Did also often mitigate the force
Of civic prejudice, the bigotry,
So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;
And on these spots with many gleams I
looked
Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,
Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one
Is law for all, and of that barren pride
In them who, by immunities unjust,
Between the sovereign and the people
stand,
His helper and not theirs, laid stronger hold
Daily upon me, mixed with pity too
And love; for where hope is, there love
will be
For the abject multitude. And when we
chanced
One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl,
Who crept along fitting her languid gait
Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord
Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the
lane
Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid
hands
Was busy knitting in a heartless mood
Of solitude, and at the sight my friend
In agitation said, "'Tis against that
That we are fighting," I with him believed
That a benignant spirit was abroad
Which might not be withstood, that
poverty
Abject as this would in a little time
Be found no more, that we should see the
earth
Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,
All institutes for ever blotted out
That legalised exclusion, empty pomp
Abolished, sensual state and cruel power
Whether by edict of the one or few;
And finally, as sum and crown of all,
Should see the people having a strong hand
In framing their own laws; whence better
days

Retiring or approaching from afar
With speed and echoes loud of trampling
hoofs
From the hard floor reverberated, then
It was Angelica thundering through the
woods
Upon her palfrey, or that gentle maid
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.
Sometimes methought I saw a pair of
knights
Joust underneath the trees, that as in storm
Rocked high above their heads; anon, the
din
Of boisterous merriment, and music's roar,
In sudden proclamation, burst from haunt
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with
dance
Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst,
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.
The width of those huge forests, unto me
A novel scene, did often in this way
Master my fancy while I wandered on
With that revered companion. And some-
times
When to a convent in a meadow green,
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,
And not by reverential touch of Time
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt —
In spite of those heart-bracing collo-
quies,
In spite of real fervour, and of that
Less genuine and wrought up within my-
self —
I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,
And for the Matin-bell to sound no more
Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the
cross
High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign
(How welcome to the weary traveller's
eyes!)
Of hospitality and peaceful rest.
And when the partner of those varied walks
Pointed upon occasion to the site
Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,
To the imperial edifice of Blois,
Or to that rural castle, name now slipped
From my remembrance, where a lady
lodged,
By the first Francis wooed, and bound to
him
In chains of mutual passion, from the
tower,
As a tradition of the country tells,
Practised to commune with her royal
knight
To all mankind. But, these things set apart,
Was not this single confidence enough
To animate the mind that ever turned
A thought to human welfare? That henceforth
Captive by mandate without law
Should cease; and open accusation lead
To sentence in the hearing of the world,
And open punishment, if not the air
Be free to breathe in, and the heart of man
Dread nothing. From this height I shall not stoop
To humbler matter that detained us oft
In thought or conversation, public acts,
And public persons, and emotions wrought
Within the breast, as ever-varying winds
Of record or report swept over us;
But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,
Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,
That prove to what low depth had struck the roots,
How widely spread the boughs, of that old tree
Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul
And black dishonour, France was weary of.

Oh, happy time of youthful lovers, (thus
The story might begin,) oh, balmy time,
In which a love-knot, on a lady’s brow,
Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven!
So might — and with that prelude did begin
The record; and, in faithful verse, was given
The doleful sequel.

But our little bark
On a strong river boldly hath been launched;
And from the driving current should we turn
To loiter wilfully within a creek,
Howe’er attractive, Fellow voyager!
Wouldst thou not chide? Yet deem not
my pains lost:
For Vaudracour and Julia (so were named
The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will draw
Tears from the hearts of others, when their own
Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there may’st read,
At leisure, how the enamoured youth was driven,

By public power abased, to fatal crime, 540
Nature’s rebellion against monstrous law;
How, between heart and heart, oppression thrust
Her mandates, severing whom true love had joined,
Harassing both; until he sank and pressed,
The couch his fate had made for him supine,
Save when the stings of viperous remorse,
Trying their strength, enforced him to start up,
Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep wood
He fled, to shun the haunts of human kind;
There dwelt, weakened in spirit more and more;
Nor could the voice of Freedom, which
through France
Full speedily resounded, public hope,
Or personal memory of his own wrongs,
Rouse him; but, hidden in those gloomy shades,
His days he wasted, — an imbecile mind.

BOOK TENTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE (continued)

It was a beautiful and silent day
That overspread the countenance of earth,
Then fading with unusual quietness, —
A day as beautiful as e’er was given
To soothe the regret, though deepening what is soothed,
When by the gliding Loire I passed, and cast
Upon his rich domains, vineyard and tilth,
Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured woods,
Again, and yet again, a farewell look;
Then from the quiet of that scene passed on,
Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From his throne
The King had fallen, and that invading host —
Presumptuous cloud, on whose black from was written
The tender mercies of the dismal wind
That bore it — on the plains of Liberty
Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder words
They — who had come elate as eastern hunters
Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when he
Are memorable, but from him locked up, 60
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,
So that he questions the mute leaves with
pain,
And half upbraids their silence. But that
night
I felt most deeply in what world I was,
What ground I trod on, and what air I
breathed.
High was my room and lonely, near the
roof
Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge
That would have pleased me in more quiet
times;
Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.
With unextinguished taper I kept watch, 70
Reading at intervals; the fear gone by
Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.
I thought of those September massacres,
Divided from me by one little month,
Saw them and touched: the rest was con-
jured up
From tragic fictions or true history,
Remembrances and dim admonishments.
The horse is taught his manage, and no
star
Of wildest course but treads back his own
steps;
For the spent hurricane the air provides 80
As fierce a successor; the tide retreats
But to return out of its hiding-place
In the great deep; all things have second
birth;
The earthquake is not satisfied at once;
And in this way I wrought upon myself,
Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,
To the whole city, “Sleep no more.” The
trance
Fled with the voice to which it had given
birth;
But vainly comments of a calmer mind
Promised soft peace and sweet forgetful-
ness.
The place, all hushed and silent as it was,
Appeared unfit for the repose of night,
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

With early morning towards the Palace-
walk
Of Orleans eagerly I turned: as yet
The streets were still; not so those long
Arcades;
There, ’mid a peal of ill-matched sounds
and cries,
That greeted me on entering, I could hear
Shrill voices from the hawkers in the throng,
Bawling, "Denunciation of the Crimes of Maximilian Robespierre;" the hand,
Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed speech,
The same that had been recently pronounced,
When Robespierre, not ignorant for what mark
Some words of indirect reproof had been intended, rose in hardihood, and dared
The man who had an ill surmise of him
To bring his charge in openness; whereat,
When a dead pause ensued, and no one stirred,
In silence of all present, from his seat
Louvet walked single through the avenue,
And took his station in the Tribune, saying,
"I, Robespierre, accuse thee!" Well is known
The inglorious issue of that charge, and how
He, who had launched the startling thunderbolt,
The one bold man, whose voice the attack had sounded,
Was left without a follower to discharge his perilous duty, and retire lamenting
That Heaven's best aid is wasted upon men who to themselves are false.
But these are things
Of which I speak, only as they were storm
Or sunshine to my individual mind,
No further. Let me then relate that now —
In some sort seeing with my proper eyes
That Liberty, and Life, and Death, would
soon
To the remotest corners of the land
Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled
The capital City; what was struggled for,
And by what combatants victory must be won;
The indecision on their part whose aim
Seemed best, and the straightforward path of those
Who in attack or in defence were strong
Through their impiety — my inmost soul
Was agitated; yea, I could almost have prayed that throughout earth upon all men,
By patient exercise of reason made
Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled
With zeal expanding in Truth's holy light,
The gift of tongues might fall, and power arrive
From the four quarters of the winds to do
For France, what without help she could not do,
A work of honour; think not that to this I added, work of safety: from all doubt
Or trepidation for the end of things
Far was I, far as angels are from guilt.
Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved, but thought
Of opposition and of remedies:
An insignificant stranger and obscure,
And one, moreover, little graced with power
Of eloquence even in my native speech,
And all unfit for tumult or intrigue,
Yet would I at this time with willing heart
Have undertaken for a cause so great
Service however dangerous, I resolved,
How much the destiny of Man had still
Hung upon single persons; that there was,
Transcendent to all local patrimony,
One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;
That objects, even as they are great, thence
Do come within the reach of humble eyes;
That Man is only weak through his mistrust
And want of hope where evidence divine
Proclaims to him that hope should be most sure;
Nor did the inexperience of my youth
Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong
In hope, and trained to noble aspirations,
A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,
Is for Society's unreasoning herd
A domineering instinct, serves at once
For way and guide, a fluent receptacle
That gathers up each petty straggling rill
And vein of water, glad to be rolled on
In safe obedience; that a mind, whose rest
Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,
In circumspection and simplicity,
Falls rarely in entire discomfiture
Below its aim, or meets with, from without
A treachery that foils it or defeats;
And, lastly, if the means on human will,
Frail human will, dependent should betray
Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt;
That 'mid the loud distractions of the world
A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,
Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong,
Of life and death, in majesty severe
Enjoining, as may best promote the aims
Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,
From whatsoever region of our cares
Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,
Earnest and blind, against the stern decree.

On the other side, I called to mind those truths
That are the commonplaces of the schools —
(A theme for boys, too hackneyed for their sires,)
Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,
In all their comprehensive bearings known
And visible to philosophers of old,
Men who, to business of the world untrained,
Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius known
And his comper Aristogiton, known
To Brutus — that tyrannic power is weak,
Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor love,
Nor the support of good or evil men
To trust in; that the godhead which is ours
Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;
That nothing hath a natural right to last
But equity and reason; that all else
Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best
Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my thoughts
Strong and perturbed, not doubting at that time
But that the virtue of one paramount mind
Would have abashed those impious crests — have quelled
Outrage and bloody power, and — in despite
Of what the People long had been and were
Through ignorance and false teaching, sadder proof
Of immaturity, and — in the teeth
Of desperate opposition from without —
Have cleared a passage for just government,
And left a solid birthright to the State,
Redeemed, according to example given
By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind, Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,
So seemed it, — now I thankfully acknowledge,
Forced by the gracious providence of Heaven,—
To England I returned, else (though assured
That I both was and must be of small weight,
So better than a landsman on the deck
Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)
Doubtless, I should have then made common cause
With some who perished; haply perished too,
A poor mistaken and bewildered offering; —
Should to the breast of Nature have gone back,
With all my resolutions, all my hopes,
A Poet only to myself, to men
Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a soul
To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall
Their leaves, as often Winter had put on
His hoary crown, since I had seen the surge
Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of mine
Had caught the accents of my native speech
Upon our native country's sacred ground.
A patriot of the world, how could I glide
Into communion with her sylvan shades,
Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased me more
To abide in the great City, where I found
The general air still busy with the stir
Of that first memorable onset made
By a strong levy of humanity
Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;
Effort which, though defeated, had recalled
To notice old forgotten principles,
And through the nation spread a novel heat
Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own
That this particular strife had wanted power
To rivet my affections; nor did now
Its unsuccessful issue much excite
My sorrow; for I brought with me the faith
That, if France prospered, good men would not long
Pay fruitless worship to humanity,
And this most rotten branch of human shame,
Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains,
Would fall together with its parent tree.
What, then, were my emotions, when in arms
Britain put forth her free-born strength in league,
Oh, pity and shame! with those confederate Powers!
Not in my single self alone I found,
But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,
Change and subversion from that hour. No shock
Given to my moral nature had I known
Down to that very moment; neither lapse
Nor turn of sentiment that might be named
A revolution, save at this one time;
All else was progress on the self-same path
On which, with a diversity of pace,
I had been travelling: this a stride at once
Into another region. As a light
And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze
On some grey rock — its birth-place — so
had I
Wanted, fast rooted on the ancient tower
Of my beloved country, wishing not 280
A happier fortune than to wither there:
Now was I from that pleasant station torn
And tossed about in whirlwind. I rejoiced,
Yea, afterwards — truth most painful to
record!

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul,
When Englishmen by thousands were o'er-
thrown,
Left without glory on the field, or driven,
Brave hearts to shameful flight. It was
a grief,

Grief call it not, 't was anything but that, —
A conflict of sensations without name, 290
Of which he only, who may love the sight
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,
When, in the congregation bending all
To their great Father, prayers were offered
up,

Or praises for our country's victories;
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance
I only, like an uninvited guest
Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall I
add,
Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh! much have they to account for, who
could tear,

By violence, at one decisive rent,
From the best youth in England their dear
pride,

Their joy, in England; this, too, at a time
In which worst losses easily might mean
The best of names, when patriotic love
Did of itself in modesty give way,
Like the Precursor when the Deity
Is come Whose harbinger he was; a time
In which apostasy from ancient faith
Seemed but conversion to a higher creed;
Withal a season dangerous and wild, 311
A time when sage Experience would have
snatched

Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose
A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

When the proud fleet that bears the red
cross flag
In that unworthy service was prepared
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner
Through a whole month of calm and glassy
days
In that delightful island which protects
Their place of convocation — there I heard
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore
A monitory sound that never failed, —
The sunset cannon. While the orb went
down
In the tranquillity of nature, came
That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by
me
Without a spirit overcast by dark
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart

In France, the men, who, for their de-
perate ends,
Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were

glad
Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong be:
In wicked pleas, were strong as demons
now;
And thus, on every side beset with foes,
The goaded land waxed mad; the crime
of few
Spread into madness of the many: blasts
From hell came sanctified like airs from
heaven.

The sternness of the just, the faith of those
Who doubted not that Providence has
times

Of vengeful retribution, theirs who threw
The human Understanding paramount
And made of that their God, the hopes of
men
Who were content to barter short-lived
pangs
For a paradise of ages, the blind rage
Of insolent tempers, the light vanity
Of intermeddlers, steady purposes
Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,
And all the accidents of life — were pressed
Into one service, busy with one work.

The Senate stood aghast, her prudence
quenched,
Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scarce
Her frenzy only active to extol
Fast outrages, and shape the way for new
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigat
Domestic carnage now filled the whole year
With feast-days; old men from the chimney-nook,
The maiden from the bosom of her love,
The mother from the cradle of her babe,
The warrior from the field — all perished,
all — 360
Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages, ranks,
Head after head, and never heads enough
For those that bade them fall. They found their joy,
They made it proudly, eager as a child,
(If like desires of innocent little ones
May with such heinous appetites be compared),
Pleased in some open field to exercise
A toy that mimics with revolving wings
The motion of a wind-mill; though the air
Do of itself blow fresh, and make the vanes
Spin in his eyesight, that contents him not,
But with the plaything at arm's length, he sets
His front against the blast, and runs amain,
That it may whirl the faster.

372
Of those enormities, even thinking minds
Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their being,
Forgot that such a sound was ever heard
As Liberty upon earth: yet all beneath
Her innocent authority was wrought,
Nor could have been, without her blessed name.

380
The illustrious wife of Roland, in the hour
Of her composure, felt that agony,
And gave it vent in her last words. O Friend!
It was a lamentable time for man,
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not:
A woful time for them whose hopes survived
The shock; most woful for those few who still
Were flattered, and had trust in human kind:
They had the deepest feeling of the grief.
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they deserved:
390
The Herculean Commonwealth had put forth her arms,
And throttled with an infant godhead's might
The snakes about her cradle; that was well,
And as it should be; yet no cure for them
Whose souls were sick with pain of what would be
Hereafter brought in charge against mankind.
Most melancholy at that time, O Friend!
Were my day-thoughts, — my nights were miserable;
Through months, through years, long after the last beat
Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep
To me came rarely charged with natural gifts,
Such ghastly visions had I of despair
And tyranny, and implements of death;
And innocent victims sinking under fear,
And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,
Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds
For sacrifice, and struggling with fond mirth
And levity in dungeons, where the dust
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the scene
Changed, and the unbroken dream entangled me
410
In long orations, which I strove to plead
Before unjust tribunals,— with a voice
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a sense,
Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt
In the last place of refuge — my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful prime
To yield myself to Nature, when that strong
And holy passion overcame me first,
Nor day nor night, evening or morn, was free
From its oppression. But, O Power Supreme!
420
Without Whose call this world would cease to breathe,
Who from the fountain of Thy grace dost fill
The veins that branch through every frame of life,
Making man what he is, creature divine,
In single or in social eminence,
Above the rest raised infinite ascents
When reason that enables him to be
Is not sequestered — what a change is here!
How different ritual for this after-worship,
What countenance to promote this second love!
430
The first was service paid to things which lie
Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.
Therefore to serve was high beatitude;
Tumult was therefore gladness, and the fear
Ennobling, venerable; sleep secure,
And waking thoughts more rich than happiest dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne aloft
In vision, yet constrained by natural laws
With them to take a troubled human heart,
Wanted not consolations, nor a creed
Of reconciliation, then when they denounced,
On towns and cities, wallowing in the abyss
Of their offences, punishment to come;
Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,
Before them, in some desolated place,
The wrath consummate and the threat fulfilled;
So, with devout humility be it said,
So did a portion of that spirit fall
On me uplifted from the vantage-ground
Of pity and sorrow to a state of being
That through the time's exceeding fierceness saw
Glimpses of retribution, terrible,
And in the order of sublime behests:
But, even if that were not, amid the awe
Of unintelligible chastisement,
Not only acquiescences of faith
Survived, but daring sympathies with power,
Motions not treacherous or profane, else why
Within the folds of no ungentle breast
Their dread vibration to this hour prolonged?
Wild blasts of music thus could find their way
Into the midst of turbulent events;
So that worst tempests might be listened to.
Then was the truth received into my heart,
That, under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,
If from the affliction somewhere do not grow
Honour which could not else have been, a faith,
An elevation, and a sanctity,
If new strength be not given nor old restored,
The blame is ours, not Nature's. When a taunt
Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,
Saying, “Behold the harvest that we reap
From popular government and equality,”
I clearly saw that neither these nor aught
Of wild belief engrafted on their names
By false philosophy had caused the woe,
But a terrific reservoir of guilt
And ignorance filled up from age to age,
That could no longer hold its loathsome charge,
But burst and spread in deluge through the land.

And as the desert hath green spots, the sea
Small islands scattered amid stormy waves
So that disastrous period did not want
Bright sprinklings of all human excellence
To which the silver wands of saints in Heaven
Might point with rapturous joy. Yet no less,
For those examples, in no age surpassed,
Of fortitude and energy and love,
And human nature faithful to herself
Under worst trials, was I driven to think
Of the glad times when first I traversed France
A youthful pilgrim; above all reviewed
That eventide, when under windows bright
With happy faces and with garlands hung,
And through a rainbow-arch that spanned the street,
Triumphant pomp for liberty confirmed,
I paced, a dear companion at my side,
The town of Arras, whence with promise high
Issued, on delegation to sustain
Humanity and right, that Robespierre,
He who thereafter, and in how short time!
Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.
When the calamity spread far and wide—
And this same city, that did then appear
To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned
Under the vengeance of her cruel son,
As Lear reproached the winds—I could almost
Have quarrelled with that blameless spectacle
For lingering yet an image in my mind
To mock me under such a strange reverse.

O Friend! few happier moments have been mine
Than that which told the downfall of this Tribe
So dreaded, so abhorred. The day deserves
A separate record. Over the smooth sands
Of Leven's ample estuary lay
My journey, and beneath a genial sun,
With distant prospect among gleams of sky
And clouds and intermingling mountain tops,
Who crossed the sands with ebb of morning tide.
Not far from that still ruin all the plain
Lay spotted with a variegated crowd
Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,
Wading beneath the conduct of their guide
In loose procession through the shallow stream
Of inland waters; the great sea meanwhile
Hoaved at safe distance, far retired. I paused,
Longing for skill to paint a scene so bright
And cheerful, but the foremost of the band
As he approached, no salutation given
In the familiar language of the day,
Cried, "Robespierre is dead!" nor was a doubt,
After strict question, left within my mind
That he and his supporters all were fallen.

Great was my transport, deep my gratitude
To everlasting Justice, by this flat
Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden times,"
Said I forth-pouring on those open sands
A hymn of triumph: "as the morning comes"
From out the bosom of the night, come ye:
Thus far our trust is verified; behold!
They who with clumsy desperation brought
A river of Blood, and preached that nothing else
Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the might
Of their own helper have been swept away;
Their madness stands declared and visible;
Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and earth
March firmly towards righteousness and peace." —
Then schemes I framed more calmly, when and how
The madding factions might be tranquillised,
And how through hardships manifold and long
The glorious renovation would proceed.
Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts
Of exultation, I pursued my way
Along that very shore which I had skimmed
In former days, when — spurring from the Vale
Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's mouldering fane,
And the stone abbot, after circuit made
In wantonness of heart, a joyous band
Of schoolboys hastening to their distant home
Along the margin of the moonlight sea—
We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

BOOK ELEVENTH
FRANCE (concluded)
FROM that time forth, Authority in France
Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,
Yet everything was wanting that might give
Courage to them who looked for good by light
Of rational Experience, for the shoots
And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:
Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;
The Senate’s language, and the public acts
And measures of the Government, though both
Weak, and of heartless omen, had not power
To daunt me; in the People was my trust:
And, in the virtues which mine eyes had seen,
I knew that wound external could not take
Life from the young Republic; that new foes
Would only follow, in the path of shame,
Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the end
Great, universal, irresistible.
This intuition led me to confound
One victory with another, higher far,—
Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,
And noiseless fortitude. Beholdning still
Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought
That what was in degree the same was likewise
The same in quality,—that, as the worse
Of the two spirits then at strife remained
Untired, the better, surely, would preserve
The heart that first had roused him. Youth
maintains,
In all conditions of society,
Communion more direct and intimate
With Nature,—hence, oftentimes, with reason too—
Than age or manhood, even. To Nature then,
Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,
Had left an interregnum’s open space
For her to move about in, uncontrolled.
Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,
Who, by the recent deluge stupified,
With their whole souls went culling from the day
Its petty promises, to build a tower
For their own safety; laughed with my compers
At gravest heads, by enmity to France.
Distempered, till they found, in every blast
Forced from the street-disturbing newsman’s horn,
For her great cause record or prophecy
Of utter ruin. How might we believe
That wisdom could, in any shape, come near
Men clinging to delusions so insane?
And thus, experience proving that no few
Of our opinions had been just, we took
Like credit to ourselves where less was due.
And thought that other notions were as sound,
Yea, could not but be right, because we saw
That foolish men opposed them.

To a strain
More animated I might here give way,
And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,
What in those days, through Britain, was performed
To turn all judgments out of their right course;
But this is passion over-near ourselves,
Reality too close and too intense,
And intermixed with something, in my mind,
Of scorn and condemnation personal,
That would profane the sanctity of verse.
Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time
Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men
Thirsting to make the guardian crook of law
A tool of murder; they who ruled the State—
Though with such awful proof before their eyes
That he, who would sow death, reaps death or worse,
And can reap nothing better—child-like
Longed
To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;
Or left (by mere timidity betrayed)
The plain straight road, for one no better chosen
Than if their wish had been to undermine
Justice, and make an end of Liberty.
But from these bitter truths I must return
To my own history. It hath been told
That I was led to take an eager part
In arguments of civil polity,
Abruptly, and indeed before my time:
I had approached, like other youths, the
shield
Of human nature from the golden side, &c
And would have fought, even to the death,
to attest
The quality of the metal which I saw.
What there is best in individual man,
Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,
Benevolent in small societies,
And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,
Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood
By reason: nay, far from it; they were yet,
As cause was given me afterwards to learn,
Not proof against the injuries of the day;
Lodged only at the sanctuary’s door,
Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,
And with such general insight into evil,
And of the bounds which sever it from good,
As books and common intercourse with life
Must needs have given — to the inexperi-
cenced mind,
When the world travels in a beaten road,
Guide faithful as is needed — I began
To meditate with ardour on the rule
And management of nations; what it is
And ought to be; and strove to learn how far
Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,
Their happiness or misery, depends
Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the auxiliaries which then
stood
Upon our side, us who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven! O
times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her
rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime enchantress — to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole
Earth,
The beauty wore of promise — that which
sets

(As at some moments might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon
dreams,
The play-fellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and
strength
Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had
stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it; — they, too, who of gentle
mood
Had watched all gentle motions, and to
these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
more mild,
And in the region of their peaceful selves; —
Now was it that both found, the meek and
lofty
Did both find, helpers to their hearts’ desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could
wish, —
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, — subterranean fields, —
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows
where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us, — the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all!

Why should I not confess that Earth was
then
To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,
Seems, when the first time visited, to one
Who thither comes to find in it his home?
He walks about and looks upon the spot
With cordial transport, moulds it and re-
moulds,
And is half-pleased with things that are
amiss,
’T will be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked
From every object pleasant circumstance
To suit my ends; I moved among mankind
With genial feelings still predominant;
When erring, erring on the better part,
And in the kinder spirit; placable,
Indulgent, as not uninformed that men.
See as they have been taught — Antiquity
Gives rights to error; and aware, no less
That throwing off oppression must be work
As well of License as of Liberty;
And above all — for this was more than
all —
Not caring if the wind did now and then
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave
Prospect so large into futurity;
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,
Diffusing only those affections wider
That from the cradle had grown up with
me,
And losing, in no other way than light
Is lost in light, the weak in the strong.

In the main outline, such it might be
said
Was my condition, till with open war
Britain opposed the liberties of France.
This threw me first out of the pale of love;
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the
source,
My sentiments; was not, as hitherto, 178
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,
But change of them into their contraries;
And thus a way was opened for mistakes
And false conclusions, in degree as gross,
In kind more dangerous. What had been
a pride,
Was now a shame; my likings and my loves
Ran in new channels, leaving old ones dry;
And hence a blow that, in maturer age,
Would but have touched the judgment,
struck more deep
Into sensations near the heart: meantime,
As from the first, wild theories were afloat,
To whose pretensions, sedulously urged, 190
I had lent a careless ear, assured
That time was ready to set all things right,
And that the multitude, so long oppressed,
Would be oppressed no more.

But when events
Brought less encouragement, and unto these
The immediate proof of principles no more
Could be entrusted, while the events them-
selves,
Worn out in greatness, stripped of novelty,
Less occupied the mind, and sentiments
Could through my understanding’s natural
growth
No longer keep their ground, by faith main-
tained
Of inward consciousness, and hope that laid
Her hand upon her object — evidence
Safer, of universal application, such
As could not be impeached, was sought else-
where.

But now, become oppressors in their turn,
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-
defence
For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for: up mounted
now,
Openly in the eye of earth and heaven, 210
The scale of liberty. I read her doom.
With anger vexed, with disappointment
sore,
But not dismayed, nor taking to the shame
Of a false prophet. While resentment rose,
Striving to hide, what nought could heal,
the wounds
Of mortified presumption, I adhered
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove
Their temper, strained them more; and
thus, in heat
Of contest, did opinions every day
Grow into consequence, till round my
mind 220
They clung, as if they were its life, may
more,
The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things tend-
ing fast
To depravation, speculative schemes —
That promised to abstract the hopes of Man
Out of his feelings, to be fixed thenceforth
For ever in a purer element —
Found ready welcome. Tempting region
that
For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,
Where passions had the privilege to work,
And never hear the sound of their own
names. 231
But, speaking more in charity, the dream
Flattered the young, pleased with ex-
tremes, nor least
With that which makes our Reason’s naked
self
The object of its fervour. What delight!
How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-
rule,
To look through all the frailties of the
world,
And, with a resolute mastery shaking off
Infirmities of nature, time, and place,
Build social upon personal Liberty,
I summoned my best skill, and toiled, intent
To anatomise the frame of social life; 280
Yea, the whole body of society
Searched to its heart. Share with me,
Friend! the wish
That some dramatic tale, endued with
Shapes
Livelier, and flinging out less guarded
Words
Than suit the work we fashion, might set forth
What then I learned, or think I learned, of truth,
And the errors into which I fell, betrayed
By present objects, and by reasonings false
From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn
Out of a heart that had been turned aside
From Nature’s way by outward accidents,
And which was thus confounded, more and more
292
Misguided, and misguiding. So I feared,
Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
Her titles and her honours; now believing,
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
With impulse, motive, right and wrong,
The ground
Of obligation, what the rule and whence
The sanction; till, demanding formal proof,
And seeking it in every thing, I lost
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,
This the soul’s last and lowest ebb; I drooped,
Deeming our blessed reason of least use
Where wanted most: “The lordly attributes
Of will and choice,” I bitterly exclaimed,
“What are they but a mockery of a Being
Who hath in no concerns of his a test
312
Of good and evil; knows not what to fear
Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;
And who, if those could be discerned,
would yet
Be little profited, would see, and ask
Where is the obligation to enforce?
And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,
As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;
The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime.”
Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not walk
With scoffers, seeking light and gay revenge.
From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate down
In reconciliation with an utter waste
Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear reward)
But turned to abstract science, and there sought
Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
Where the disturbances of space and time —
Whether in matters various, properties
Inherent, or from human will and power
Derived — find no admission. Then it was —
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good! —
That the beloved Sister in whose sight
Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice
Of sudden admonition — like a brook
That did but cross a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a league —
Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self; for, though bedimmed and changed
Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
Than as a clouded and a waning moon:
She whispered still that brightness would return;
She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth;
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,
By all varieties of human love
Assisted, led me back through opening day
To those sweet counsels between head and heart
Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught with peace,
Which, through the later sinkings of this cause,
Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now
In the catastrophe (for so they dream,
And nothing less), when, finally to close
And seal up all the gains of France,
Pope
Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor —
This last opprobrium, when we see a people,
That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven,
For manna, take a lesson from the dog
Returning to his vomit; when the sun
That rose in splendour, was alive, and moved
In exultation with a living pomp
Of clouds — his glory's natural retinue —
Hath dropped all functions by the gods bestowed,
And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,
Sets like an Opera phantom.
Thus, O Friend!
Through times of honour and through times of shame
Descending, have I faithfully retraced
The perturbations of a youthful mind
Under a long-lived storm of great events
A story destined for thy ear, who now,
Among the fallen nations, dost abide
Where Etna, over hill and valley, casts
His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,
The city of Timoleon! Righteous Heaven!
How are the mighty prostrated! They first,
They first of all that breathe should have awaked
When the great voice was heard from the tombs
Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief
For ill-requted France, by many deemed
A trifler only in her proudest day;
Have been distressed to think of what I once
Promised, now is; a far more sober cause
Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land
To the reanimating influence lost
Of memory, to virtue lost and hope,
Though with the wreck of loftier yet bestrown.

But indignation works where hope is not
And thou, O Friend! wilt be refreshed
There is
One great society alone on earth:
The noble Living and the noble Dead.

Thine be such converse strong and sanative,
A ladder for thy spirit to ascend

o health and joy and pure contentedness;  
o me the grief confined, that thou art  
gone  
rom this last spot of earth, where Freedom  
now  
tands single in her only sanctuary;  
. lonely wanderer, art gone, by pain  
ompelled and sickness, at this latter day,  
his sorrowful reverse for all mankind.  
feel for thee, must utter what I feel:  
he sympathies erewhile in part discharged,  
ether afresh, and will have vent again:  
fy own delights do scarcely seem to me  
fy own delights; the lordly Alps them-  
selves,  
those rosy peaks, from which the Morning  
looks  
broad on many nations, are no more  
for me that image of pure gladnessomeness  
Which they were wont to be. Through  
kindred scenes,  
for purpose, at a time, how different!  
Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart and  
soul  
That Nature gives to Poets, now by thought  
Matured, and in the summer of their  
strength.  
Oh! wrap him in your shades, ye giant  
woods,  
On Etna’s side; and thou, O flowery field  
Of Etna! is there not some nook of thine,  
From the first play-time of the infant world  
Kept sacred to restorative delight,  
When from afar invoked by anxious love?  
Child of the mountains, among shepherds  
reared,  
Es ye yet familiar with the classic page,  
I learnt to dream of Sicily; and lo,  
The gloom, that, but a moment past, was  
deepened  
At thy command, at her command gives  
way;  
A pleasant promise, wafted from her shores,  
Comes o'er my heart: in fancy I behold  
Her sea yet smiling, her once happy valet  
Nor can my tongue give utterance to a  
name  
Of note belonging to that honoured isle,  
Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,  
Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul!  
That doth not yield a solace to my grief:  
And, O Theocritus, so far have some  
Prevailed among the powers of heaven and  
earth,  
By their endowments, good or great, that  
they  
Have had, as thou reportest, miracles  
Wrought for them in old time: yea, not  
unmoved,  
When thinking on my own beloved friend,  
I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed  
Divine Comates, by his impious lord  
Within a chest imprisoned; how they came  
Laden from blooming grove or flowery field,  
And fed him there, alive, mouth after  
month,  
Because the goatherd, blessed man! had  
lips  
Wet with the Muses’ nectar.  
Thus I soothe  
The pensive moments by this calm fire-side,  
And find a thousand bounteous images  
To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and  
mine.  
Our prayers have been accepted; thou wilt  
stand  
On Etna’s summit, above earth and sea,  
Triumphant, winning from the invaded  
heavens  
Thoughts without bound, magnificent de-  
signs,  
Worthy of poets who attuned their harps  
In wood or echoing cave, for discipline  
Of heroes; or, in reverence to the gods,  
Mid temples, served by sapient priests, and  
choirs  
Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in vain  
Those temples, where they in their ruins yet  
Survive for inspiration, shall attract  
Thy solitary steps: and on the brink  
Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethusa;  
Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,  
Then, near some other spring — which, by  
the name  
Thou gratulatest, willingly deceived —  
I see thee linger a glad votary,  
And not a captive pining for his home.  

BOOK TWELFTH
IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED  
AND RESTORED

Long time have human ignorance and guilt  
Detained us, on what spectacles of woe  
Compelled to look, and inwardly oppressed  
With sorrow, disappointment, vexing  
thoughts,  
Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,
And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself
And things to hope for! Not with these
Our song, and not with these our song
must end.
Ye motions of delight, that haunt the sides
Of the green hills; ye breezes and soft
airs,
Whose subtle intercourse with breathing
flowers,
Feelingly watched, might teach Man’s
haughty race
How without injury to take, to give
Without offence; ye who, as if to show
The wondrous influence of power gently
used,
Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,
And, with a touch, shift the stupendous
clouds
Through the whole compass of the sky; ye
brooks,
Muttering along the stones, a busy noise
By day, a quiet sound in silent night;
Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal
forth
In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,
Not mute, and then retire, fearing no
storm;
And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is
To interpose the covert of your shades,
Even as a sleep, between the heart of
man
And outward troubles, between man him-
self,
Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart:
Oh! that I had a music and a voice
Harmonious as your own, that I might tell
What ye have done for me. The morning
shines,
Nor heedeth Man’s perverseness; Spring
returns,—
I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,
In common with the children of her love,
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh
fields,
Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven
On wings that navigate cerulean skies.
So neither were complacency, nor peace,
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my good
Through these distracted times; in Nature
still
Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her,
Which, when the spirit of evil reached its
height,
Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend! I hath chiefly
told
Of intellectual power, fostering love,
Dispensing truth, and, over men and things
Where reason yet might hesitate, diffusing
Prophetic sympathies of genial faith:
So was I favoured — such my happy lot —
Until that natural graciousness of mind
Gave way to overpressure from the times
And their disastrous issues. What aaved
When spells forbade the voyager to land,
That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore
Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower
Of blissful gratitude and fearless love?
Dare I avow that wish was mine to see,
And hope that future times would surely
see,
The man to come, parted, as by a gulp,
From him who had been; that I could no
more
Trust the elevation which had made me an
With the great family that still survives
To illuminate the abyss of ages past,
Sage, warrior, patriot, hero; for it seems
That their best virtues were not free fro-
taint
Of something false and weak, that could not stand
The open eye of Reason. Then I said,
“Go to the Poets, they will speak to thee;
More perfectly of purer creatures; — yet
If reason be nobility in man,
Can he be more ignoble than the man
Whom they delight in, blinded as he is
By prejudice, the miserable slave
Of low ambition or distempered love?”

In such strange passion, if I may or
more
Review the past, I warred against myself
A bigot to a new idolatry —
Like a cowed monk who hath forswe-
the world,
Zealously laboured to cut off my heart
From all the sources of her former stren-
And as, by simple waving of a wand,
The wizard instantaneously dissolves
Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul
As readily by syllogistic words
Those mysteries of being which have mas
And shall continue evermore to make,
Of the whole human race one brother-

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so 1
Parverted, even the visible Universe
Fell under the dominion of a taste
Less spiritual, with microscopic view
Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral world?

O Soul of Nature! excellent and fair!
That didst rejoice with me, with whom I, too,
Rejoiced through early youth, before the winds
And roaring waters, and in lights and shades
That marched and countermarched about the hills
In glorious apparition, Powers on whom
I daily waited, now all eye and now
All ear; but never long without the heart
Employed, and man's unfolding intellect:
O Soul of Nature! that, by laws divine
Sustained and governed, still dost overflow
With an impassioned life, what feeble ones
Walk on this earth! how feeble have I been
When thou wert in thy strength! Nor this
Through stroke
Of human suffering, such as justifies
Pamissence and inaptitude of mind,
But through presumption; even in pleasure pleased
Exwallowly, disliking here, and there
This thing; by rules of mimic art transferred
To things above all art; but more, — for this,
Although a strong infection of the age,
Was never much my habit — giving way
To a comparison of scene with scene,
Ent overmuch on superficial things,
Empering myself with meagre novelties
Of colour and proportion; to the moods
Of time and season, to the moral power,
Affections and the spirit of the place,
Sensible. Nor only did the love
Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt
Deeper feelings, but another cause,
Sare subtle and less easily explained,
But almost seems inherent in the creature,
Twofold frame of body and of mind.
Speak in recollection of a time
When the bodily eye, in every stage of life
Most despotic of our senses, gained
In strength in me as often held my mind
Absolute dominion. Gladly here,
Stering upon abstruser argument,
I endeavoured to unfold the means
Which Nature studiously employs to thwart
This tyranny, summons all the senses each
To counteract the other, and themselves,
And makes them all, and the objects with which all
Are conversant, subservient in their turn
To the great ends of Liberty and Power.
But leave we this: enough that my delights
(Such as they were) were sought insatiably.
Vivid the transport, vivid though not profound;
I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock,
Still craving combinations of new forms,
New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,
Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced
To lay the inner faculties asleep.
Amid the turns and countermoves, the strife
And various trials of our complex being,
As we grow up, such thraldom of that sense
Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a maid,
A young enthusiast, who escaped these bonds;
Her eye was not the mistress of her heart;
Far less did rules prescribed by passive taste,
Or barren intermeddling subtleties,
Perplex her mind; but, wise as women are
When genial circumstance hath favoured them,
She welcomed what was given, and craved
No more;
Whate'er the scene presented to her view
That was the best, to that she was attuned
By her benign simplicity of life,
And through a perfect happiness of soul,
Whose variégate feelings were in this
Sisters, that they were each some new delight.
Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green field,
Could they have known her, would have loved; methought
Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,
That flowers, and trees, and even the silent hills,
And everything she looked on, should have had
An intimation how she bore herself
Towards them and to all creatures. God delights
In such a being; for, her common thoughts
Are piety, her life is gratitude.
Even like this maid, before I was called forth
From the retirement of my native hills,
I loved whate’er I saw: nor lightly loved,
But most intensely; never dreamt of aught
More grand, more fair, more exquisitely framed
Than those few nooks to which my happy feet
Were limited. I had not at that time 180
Lived long enough, nor in the least survived
The first diviner influence of this world,
As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.
Worshipping them among the depth of things,
As piety ordained, could I submit
To measured admiration, or to aught
That should preclude humility and love?
I felt, observed, and pondered; did not judge,
Yea, never thought of judging; with the gift
Of all this glory filled and satisfied. 190
And afterwards, when through the gorgeous Alps
Roaming, I carried with me the same heart;
In truth, the degradation — howse’er
Induced, effect, in whatso’er degree,
Of custom that prepares a partial scale
In which the little oft outweighs the great;
Or any other cause that hath been named;
Or lastly, aggravated by the times;
And their impassioned sounds, which well might make
The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes 200
Inaudible — was transient; I had known
Too forcibly, too early in my life,
Visitings of imaginative power
For this to last: I shook the habit off
Entirely and for ever, and again
In Nature’s presence stood, as now I stand,
A sensitive being, a creative soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain 209
A renovating virtue, whence — depressed
By false opinion and contentious thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
In trivial occupations, and the round
Of ordinary intercourse — our minds
Are nourished and invisibly repaired;
A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount,
When high, more high, and lifts us up
when fallen.

This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
Among those passages of life that give
Profoundest knowledge to what point, and how,
The mind is lord and master — outward sense
The obedient servant of her will. Sad moments
Are scattered everywhere, taking their dat
From our first childhood. I remember well
That once, while yet my inexperienced hand
Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud hopes
I mounted, and we journeyed towards the hills:
An ancient servant of my father’s house
Was with me, my encourager and guide:
We had not travelled long, ere some mischance
Disjoined me from my comrade; and through fear
Dismounting, down the rough and stern moor
I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom, where in former times
A murderer had been hung in iron chains.
The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the bones
And iron case were gone; but on the turf,
Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,
Some unknown hand had carved the mur¬
derer’s name. 22
The monumental letters were inscribed
In times long past; but still, from year to year
By superstition of the neighbourhood,
The grass is cleared away, and to this hour
The characters are fresh and visible:
A casual glance had shown them, and I fled
Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road:
Then, reascending the bare common, saw
A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
The beacon on the summit, and, more near
A girl, who bore a pitchcr on her head, 23
And seemed with difficult steps to fore
her way
Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth
An ordinary sight; but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man
To paint the visionary dreaminess
Which, while I looked all round for my
lost guide,
vested moorland waste and naked pool,
The beacon crowning the lone eminence,
The female and her garments vexed and tossed
by the strong wind. When, in the blessed hours
Of early love, the loved one at my side,
roamed, in daily presence of this scene,
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
And on the melancholy beacon, fell
A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam;
And think ye not with radiance more sublime
For these remembrances, and for the power
They had left behind? So feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.
Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth
Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see
In simple childhood something of the base
On which thy greatness stands; but this I feel,
That from thyself it comes, that thou must give,
Else never canst receive. The days gone by
Return upon me almost from the dawn
Of life: the hiding-places of man's power
Open; I would approach them, but they close.

I see by glimpses now; when age comes on,
May scarcely see at all; and I would give,
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,
Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past
For future restoration. — Yet another
Of these memorials: —

One Christmas-time,
On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth
Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those led palfreys that should bear us home;
My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,
That, from the meeting-point of two highways
Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched;
Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
My expectation, thither I repaired,
Scout-like, and gained the summit; 't was a day
Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass
I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall;
Upon my right hand crouched a single sheep,
Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood;
With those companions at my side, I watched,
Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
Gave intermitting prospect of the copee
And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,—
That dreary time, — ere we had been ten days
Sojourners in my father's house, he died;
And I and my three brothers, orphans then,
Followed his body to the grave. The event,
With all the sorrow that it brought, appeared
A chastisement; and when I called to mind
That day so lately past, when from the crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope;
With trite reflections of morality,
Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low
To God, Who thus corrected my desires;
And, afterwards, the wind and sleetly rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music from that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist
That on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes;
All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
To which I oft repaired, and thence would drink,
As at a fountain; and on winter nights,
Down to this very time, when storm and rain
Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
Some inward agitations thence are brought,
Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
Or animate an hour of vacant ease.
BOOK THIRTEENTH

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED (concluded)

From Nature doth emotion come, and
moods.

Of calmness equally are Nature's gift:
This is her glory; these two attributes
Are sister horns that constitute her strength.
Hence Genius, born to thrive by interchange
Of peace and excitation, finds in her
His best and purest friend; from her re-
ceives
That energy by which he seeks the truth,
From her that happy stillness of the mind
Which fits him to receive it when unsought.

Such benefit the humblest intellects
Partake of, each in their degree; 'tis mine
To speak, what I myself have known and felt;
Smooth task! for words find easy way, ins-
pired
By gratitude, and confidence in truth.
Long time in search of knowledge did I
range
The field of human life, in heart and mind
Benighted; but, the dawn beginning now
To re-appear, 't was proved that not in vain
I had been taught to reverence a Power
That is the visible quality and shape
And image of right reason; that matures
Her processes by steadfast laws; gives birth
To no impatient or fallacious hopes,
No heat of passion or excessive zeal,
No vain conceits; provokes to no quick
turns
Of self-approving intellect; but trains
To meekness, and exalts by humble faith;
Holds up before the mind intoxicate
With present objects, and the busy dance
Of things that pass away, a temperate show
Of objects that endure; and by this course
Disposes her, when over-foolishly set
On throwing off incumbrances, to seek
In man, and in the frame of social life,
Whate'er there is desirable and good
Of kindred permanence, unchanged in form
And function, or, through strict vicissitude
Of life and death, revolving. Above all
Were re-established now those watchful
thoughts
Which, seeing little worthy or sublime
In what the Historian's pen so much delights

To blazon — power and energy detached
From moral purpose — early tutored me
To look with feelings of fraternal love
Upon the unassuming things that hold
A silent station in this beauteous world.

Thus moderated, thus composed, I four
Once more in Man an object of delight,
Of pure imagination, and of love;
And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged
Again I took the intellectual eye
For my instructor, studious more to see
Great truths, than touch and handle lit-
tones.

Knowledge was given accordingly; my true
Became more firm in feelings that had stood
The test of such a trial; clearer far
My sense of excellence — of right and
wrong:
The promise of the present time retired
Into its true proportion; sanguine scheme
Ambitious projects, pleased me less; I sought
For present good in life's familiar face,
And built thereon my hopes of good to com-

With settling judgments now of what
would last
And what would disappear; prepared
find
Presumption, folly, madness, in the men
Who thrust themselves upon the past
world
As Rulers of the world; to see in these
Even when the public writer is their aim
Plans without thought, or vain on theore-
vague and unsound; and having brou-
the books
Of modern statist's to their proper test.
Life, human life, with all its sacred charm
Of sex and age, and heaven-descended
rights,
Mortal, or those beyond the reach of de-
And having thus discovered how rare a thing
Is worshipped in that vast realm — name
"The Wealth of Nations" were these the
wealth
Is lodged, and how increased and how

A man judicious knowledge of the world
And dignity of intellect on
No composition of the men ye call
Of whom we read the new names we
hold
With our own eyes — I mean not requi-


Oh! next to such enjoyment of our youth,
In my esteem, next to such dear delight,
Was that of wandering on from day to day
Where I could meditate in peace, and cull
Knowledge that step by step might lead
me on

To wisdom; or, as lightsome as a bird
Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,
Singing notes of greeting to strange fields or
groves,
Which lacked not voice to welcome me in
turn;
And, when that pleasant toil had ceased to
please,
Converse with men, where if we meet a face
We almost meet a friend, on naked heaths
With long long ways before, by cottage
bench,
Or well-spring where the weary traveller
reste.

Who doth not love to follow with his eye
The windings of a public way? the sight,
Familiar object as it is, hath wrought
On my imagination since the morn
Of childhood, when a disappearing line,
One daily present to my eyes, that crossed
The naked summit of a far-off hill
Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,
Was like an invitation into space
Boundless, or guide into eternity.

Yes, something of the grandeur which in-
vests
The mariner, who sails the roaring sea
Through storm and darkness, early in my
mind
Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the earth;
Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.
Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites;
From many other uncouth vagrants (passed
In fear) have walked with quicker step; but
why
Take note of this? When I began to en-
quire,

To watch and question those I met, and
speak
Without reserve to them, the lonely roads
Were open schools in which I daily read
With most delight the passions of mankind,
Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears
revealed;
There saw into the depth of human souls,
Souls that appear to have no depth at all
To careless eyes. And — now convinced at
heart
How little those formalities, to which
With overweening trust alone we give 170
The name of Education, have to do
With real feeling and just sense; how vain
A correspondence with the talking world
Proves to the most; and called to make good
search
If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked
With toil, be therefore yoked with igno-
rance;
If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,
And intellectual strength so rare a boon—
I prized such walks still more, for there I found
Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure peace
And steadiness, and healing and repose 18;
To every angry passion. There I heard,
From mouths of men obscure and lowly, truths
Replete with honour; sounds in unison
With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong affection, love
Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed
A gift, to use a term which they would use,
Of vulgar nature; that its growth requires Retirement, leisure, language purified 190
By manners studied and elaborate;
That whose feels such passion in its strength
Must live within the very light and air
Of courteous usages refined by art.
True is it, where oppression worse than death
Salutes the being at his birth, where grace
Of culture hath been utterly unknown,
And poverty and labour in excess
From day to day pre-occupy the ground
Of the affections, and to Nature's self 200
Oppose a deeper nature; there, indeed,
Love cannot be; nor does it thrive with ease
Among the close and overcrowded haunts
Of cities, where the human heart is sick,
And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.
—Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I feel
How we mislead each other; above all,
How books mislead us, seeking their reward
From judgments of the wealthy Few, who see
By artificial lights; how they debase 210
The Many for the pleasure of those Few;
Effeminately level down the truth
To certain general notions, for the sake
Of being understood at once, or else
Through want of better knowledge in their heads
That framed them; flattering self-conceit with words,
That, while they most ambitiously set for Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
Whereby society has parted man
From man, neglect the universal heart:

Here, calling up to mind what then saw,
A youthful traveller, and see daily now
In the familiar circuit of my home,
Here might I pause, and bend in reverence To Nature, and the power of human mind
To men as they are within themselves
How oft high service is performed with
When all the external man is rude show,—
Not like a temple rich with pomp and glory
But a mere mountain chapel, that pro-
tects
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower.
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of the If future years mature me for the task,
Will I record the praises, making verse Deal boldly with substantial things; truth
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
That justice may be done, obesiance paid
Where it is due: thus haply shall I teach
Inspire; through unadulterated ears
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—

No other than the very heart of man,
As found among the best of those who live—
Not exalted by religious faith,
Nor uninformed by books, good boot
though few—
In Nature's presence: thence may I seek
Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight;
And miserable love, that is not pain
To hear of, for the glory that redounds
Therefrom to human kind, and what
are.
Be mine to follow with no timid step
Where knowledge leads me: it shall be pride
That I have dared to tread this holy
ground,
Speaking no dream, but things oracular;
Matter not lightly to be heard by those
Who to the letter of the outward promi
a read the invisible soul; by men adroit
speech, and for communion with the
world
accomplished; minds whose faculties are
then
lost active when they are most eloquent,
and elevated most when most admired. 260
Men may be found of other mould than
these,
who are their own upholders, to them-
selves
encouragement, and energy, and will,
expressing liveliest thoughts in lively
words
a native passion dictates. Others, too,
beneath them, summoned to such inter-
course:
Heirs is the language of the heavens, the
power,
The thought, the image, and the silent
joy:
Words are but under-agents in their souls;
When they are grasping with their greatest
strength,
They do not breathe among them: this I
speak
in gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts
for His own service; knoweth, loveth us,
When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive
convictions still more strong than hereto-
fore,
Not only that the inner frame is good,
and graciously composed, but that, no less,
Nature for all conditions wants not power
to consecrate, if we have eyes to see,
The outside of her creatures, and to breathe
grandeur upon the very humblest face
Of human life. I felt that the array
Of act and circumstance, and visible form,
is mainly to the pleasure of the mind
What passion makes them; that meanwhile
the forms
Of Nature have a passion in themselves,
That intermingles with those works of man
To which she summons him; although the
works
Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own;
And that the Genius of the Poet hence
May boldly take his way among mankind
Wherever Nature leads; that he hath
stood
By Nature's side among the men of old,
And so shall stand for ever. Dearest
Friend!
If thou partake the animating faith
That Poets, even as Prophets, each with
each
Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
Have each his own peculiar faculty,
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to per-
ceive
Objects unseen before, thou wilt not blame
The humblest of this band who dares to
hope
That unto him hath also been vouchsafed
An insight that in some sort he possesses,
A privilege whereby a work of his,
Proceeding from a source of untaught
things,
Creative and enduring, may become
A power like one of Nature's. To a hope
Not less ambitious once among the wilds
Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was
raised;
There, as I ranged at will the pastoral
downs
Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare
white roads
Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,
Time with his retinue of ages fled
Backwards, nor checked his flight until I
saw
Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear; 320
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and
there,
A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,
With shield and stone-axe, stride across the
wold;
The voice of spears was heard, the rattling
spear
Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in
strength,
Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
I called on Darkness — but before the word
Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed to
take
All objects from my sight; and lo! again
The Desert visible by dismal flames; 330
It is the sacrificial altar, fed
With living men — how deep the groans!
the voice
Of those that crowd the giant wicker thrills
The monumental hillocks, and the pomp
Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.
At other moments—(for through that
wide waste
Three summer days I roamed) where'er
the Plain
Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or
mounds,
That yet survive, a work, as some divine,
Shaped by the Druids, so to represent
Their knowledge of the heavens, and image
forth
The constellations—gently was I charmed
Into a waking dream, a reverie
That, with believing eyes, where'er I
turned,
Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white
wands
Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,
Alternately, and plain below, while breath
Of music swayed their motions, and the
waste
Rejoiced with them and me in those sweet
sounds.

This for the past, and things that may
be viewed
Or fancied in the obscurity of years
From monumental hints: and thou, O
Friend!
Pleased with some unpremeditated strains
That served those wanderings to beguile,
has said
That then and there my mind had exercised
Upon the vulgar forms of present things,
The actual world of our familiar days,
Yet higher power; had caught from them
a tone,
An image, and a character, by books
Not hitherto reflected. Call we this
A partial judgment—and yet why? for
then
We were as strangers; and I may not
speak
Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,
Which on thy young imagination, trained
In the great City, broke like light from
far.
Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself
Witness and judge; and I remember well
That in life's every-day appearances
I seemed about this time to gain clear sight
Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit
To be transmitted, and to other eyes
Made visible; as ruled by those fixed laws
Whence spiritual dignity originates,
Which do both give it being and maintain,
A balance, an ennobling interchange
Of action from without and from within.
The excellence, pure function, and bad
power
Both of the objects seen, and eye that
BOOK FOURTEENTH
CONCLUSION

In one of those excursions (may they as
Fade from remembrance!) through
Northern tracts
Of Cambria ranging with a youthful frie
I left Bethgelert's huts at couching-time
And westward took my way, to see the
Rise, from the top of Snowdon. To the
door
Of a rude cottage at the mountain's base
We came, and roused the shepherd who
attends
The adventurous stranger’s steps, a true
guide;
Then, cheered by short refreshment, sail
forth.

It was a close, warm, breezeless sumn
night,
Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping
Low-hung and thick that covered all the
sky;
But, undiscouraged, we began to climb
The mountain-side. The mist soon girl
round,
And, after ordinary travellers' talk
With our conductor, pensively we sank
Each into commerce with his private
thoughts:
Thus did we breast the ascent, and by our
self
Was nothing either seen or heard to
checked
Those musings or diverted, save that on
The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the
craggs,
Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog, tea
His coiled-up prey with barking turbulence
This small adventure, for even such seemed
In that wild place and at the dead of nig
Being over and forgotten, on we wound
In silence as before. With forehead be
Earthward, as if in opposition set
Its voices issuing forth to silent light
In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
By recognitions of transcendent power,
In sense conducting to ideal form,
In soul of more than mortal privilege.
One function, above all, of such a mind
Had Nature shadowed there, by putting forth,
'Mid circumstances awful and sublime,
That mutual domination which she loves
To exert upon the face of outward things,
So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed
With interchangeable supremacy,
That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,
And cannot choose but feel. The power,
which all
Acknowledge when thus moved, which Na-
ture thus
To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
Resemblance of that glorious faculty
That higher minds bear with them as their
own.
This is the very spirit in which they deal
With the whole compass of the universe:
They from their native selves can send
abroad
Kindred mutations; for themselves create
A like existence; and, when'er it dawns
Created for them, catch it, or are caught
By its inevitable mastery,
Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound
Of harmony from Heaven's remotest
spheres.
Them the enduring and the transient both
Serve to exalt; they build up greatest
things
From least suggestions; ever on the watch,
Willing to work and to be wrought upon,
They need not extraordinary calls
To rouse them; in a world of life they
live,
By sensible impressions not enthralled,
But by their quickening impulse made more
prompt
To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,
And with the generations of mankind
Spread over time, past, present, and to
come,
Age after age, till Time shall be no more.
Such minds are truly from the Deity,
For they are Powers; and hence the high-
est bliss
That flesh can know is theirs — the con-
sciousness
Of Whom they are, habitually infused
Through every image and through every
thought,
And all affections by communion raised
From earth to heaven, from human to di-
vine;
Hence endless occupation for the Soul,
Whether discursive or intuitive; 130
Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,
Emotions which best foresight need not fear,
Most worthy then of trust when most in-
tense.
Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that
crush
Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ
May with fit reverence be applied—that
peace
Which passeth understanding, that repose
In moral judgments which from this pure
source
Must come, or will by man be sought in vain.

Oh! who is he that hath his whole life
long 130
Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in him-
self?
For this alone is genuine liberty:
Where is the favoured being who hath held
That course unchecked, unerring, and un-
tired,
In one perpetual progress smooth and
bright?—
A humbler destiny have we retraced,
And told of lapse and hesitating choice,
And backward wanderings along thorny
ways:
Yet—compassed round by mountain soli-
tudes,
Within whose solemn temple I received 140
My earliest visitations, careless then
Of what was given me; and which now I
range,
A meditative, oft a suffering man—
Do I declare—in accents which from
truth
Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend
Their modulation with these vocal streams—
That, whatsoever falls my better mind,
Revolving with the accidents of life,
May have sustained, that, howsoever mis-
led,
Never did I, in quest of right and wrong, 150
Tamper with conscience from a private
aim;
Nor was in any public hope the dupe

Of selfish passions; nor did ever yield
Wilfully to mean cares or low pursuits,
But shrunk with apprehensive jealousy
From every combination which might aid
The tendency, too potent in itself,
Of use and custom to bow down the soul
Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,
And substitute a universe of death and
informed,
Actual, divine, and true. To fear and love
To love as prime and chief, for there fa-
ends,
Be this ascribed; to early intercourse,
In presence of sublime or beautiful forms
With the adverse principles of pain and
joy—
Evil as one is rashly named by men
Who know not what they speak. By love
subsists
All lasting grandeur, by pervading love;
That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the
fields
In balmy spring-time full of rising flower
And joyous creatures; see that pair, the
lamb
And the lamb’s mother, and their tender
ways
Shall touch thee to the heart; thou call
this love,
And not inaptly so, for love it is,
Far as it carries thee. In some great
bower
Rest, and be not alone, but have thou the
The One who is thy choice of all the work
There linger, listening, gazing, with delight
Impassioned, but delight how pitiable!—
Unless this love by a still higher love
Be hallowed, love that breathes not with-
awe;
Love that adores, but on the knees of
prayer,
By heaven inspired; that frees from cha-
the soul,
Lifted, in union with the purest, best,
Of earth-born passions, on the wings of
praise
Bearing a tribute to the Almighty’s Three

This spiritual Love acts not nor can exi-
Without Imagination, which, in truth,
Is but another name for absolute power.
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And Reason in her most exalted mood.
This faculty hath been the feeding sourc
our long labour: we have traced the stream
on the blind cavern whence is faintly heard
midst the murmur; followed it to light
and open day; accompanied its course among the ways of Nature, for a time at sight of it bewildered and engulphed; even given it greeting as it rose once more.

Imagination having been our theme, 
also that intellectual Love,
or they are each in each, and cannot stand individually. — Here must thou be, O Man! Lower to thyself; no Helper hast thou here;

For, spite of thy sweet influence and the touch
Of kindred hands that opened out the springs
Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite
Of all that unassisted I had marked
In life or nature of those charms minute
That win their way into the heart by stealth.
(Still to the very going-out of youth)
I too exclusively esteemed that love,
And sought that beauty, which, as Milton sings,
Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down
This over sternness; but for thee, dear Friend!

My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had stood
In her original self too confident,
Retained too long a countenance severe;
A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds
Familiar, and a favourite of the stars:
But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,
Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze,
And teach the little birds to build their nests
And warble in its chambers. At a time
When Nature, destined to remain so long
Foremost in my affections, had fallen back
Into a second place, pleased to become
A handmaid to a nobler than herself,
When every day brought it with some new sense
Of exquisite regard for common things,
And all the earth was budding with these gifts
Of more refined humanity, thy breath,
Dear Sister! was a kind of gentler spring
That went before my steps. Thereafter came
One whom with thee friendship had early paired;

She came, no more a phantom to adorn
A moment, but an inmate of the heart,
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined
To penetrate the lofty and the low;
Even as one essence of pervading light
Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars
And the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp
Couched in the dewy grass.

Child of my parents! Sister of my soul! Steaks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere burned out for all the early tenderness
With which I from thee imbibed: and 'tis most true
That later seasons owed to thee no less;

With such a theme,
Coleridge! with this my argument, of thee
Finally, and above all, O Friend! speak
With due regret) how much is overlooked
In human nature and her subtle ways,
As studied first in our own hearts, and
And life among the passions of mankind.
Varying their composition and their hues
Where'er we move, under the diverse sky
That individual character presents
To an attentive eye. For progress meet
Along this intricate and difficult path.
Whate'er was wanting, something has gained,
As one of many schoolfellows compelled
In hardy independence, to stand up
Admiring conflicting interests, and the shock
Of various tempers; to endure and note
What was not understood, though known to be;
Among the mysteries of love and hate,
Honour and shame, looking to right and left,
Unchecked by innocence too delicate,
And moral notions too intolerant,
Sympathies too contracted. Hence, we called
To take a station among men, the step
Was easier, the transition more secure,
More profitable also; for, the mind
Learsns from such timely exercise to keep
In wholesome separation the two natures
The one that feels, the other that observes.

Yet one word more of personal concern
Since I withdrew unwillingly from Finsbury
I led an undomestic wanderer's life
In London chiefly harboured, where I roamed,
Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot
Of rural England's cultivated vales
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth—bore
The name of Calvert—it shall live.

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Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief
That by endowments not from me with
Good might be furthered —in his last de
By a bequest sufficient for my needs
Enabled me to pause for choice, and wi
At large and unrestrained; nor damped soon
By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, ye
Far less a common follower of the world
He deemed that my pursuits and lab
art from all that leads to wealth, or 
even
necessary maintenance insures,
about some hazard to the finer sense;
he cleared a passage for me, and the stream
swept in the bent of Nature.

Having now

d what best merits mention, further
pains 370
my present purpose seems not to require,
I have other tasks. Recall to mind
a mood in which this labour was begun,
Friend! The termination of my course
nearer now, much nearer; yet even then,
that distraction and intense desire,
aid unto the life which I had lived,
here art thou? Hear I not a voice from
thee
which is reproach to hear? Anon I rose
up to the sunlight, and saw beneath me
a prospect of the world which I had
seen; and hence this Song, which, like
a lark,
have protracted, in the unwearied heavens
aging, and often with more plaintive
voice
a earth tempered and her deep-drawn
sighs,
are centered all in love, and in the end
ill gratulant, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,
and, with life, power to accomplish aught
of worth,
that will be deemed no insufficient plea
390
or having given the story of myself,
all uncertain: but, beloved Friend!
then, looking back, thou seest, in clearer
view
he any liveliest sight of yesterday,
but summer, under whose indulgent skies,
a summery Quantock’s airy ridge we
roved
sought, or loitered ’mid her sylvan
combs;
how in bewitching words, with happy
heart,
chant the vision of that Ancient
Man,
be bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
of the Lady Christabel;
and I, associate with such labour, steeped
in soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,

Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was
found,
After the perils of his moonlight ride,
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate
In misery near the miserable Thorn —
When thou dost to that summer turn thy
thoughts,
And hast before thee all which then we
were,
To thee, in memory of that happiness,
It will be known, by thee at least, my
Friend!
Felt, that the history of a Poet’s mind
Is labour not unworthy of regard;
To thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift
Have been prepared, not with the buoyant
spirits
That were our daily portion when we first
Together wantoned in wild Poesy,
But, under pressure of a private grief,
Keen and enduring, which the mind and
heart,
420
That in this meditative history
Have been laid open, needs must make me
feel
More deeply, yet enable me to bear
More firmly; and a comfort now hath risen
From hope that thou art near, and wilt be
soon
Restored to us in renovated health;
When, after the first minglings of our tears,
‘Mong other consolations, we may draw
Some pleasure from this offering of my love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,
And all will be complete, thy race be run,
Thy monument of glory will be raised;
432
Then, though (too weak to tread the ways
of truth)
This age fall back to old idolatry,
Though men return to servitude as fast
As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame,
By nations, sink together, we shall still
Find solace — knowing what we have learnt
to know,
Rich in true happiness if allowed to be
Faithful alike in forwarding a day
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work
(Should Providence such grace to us vouch-
safe)
Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.
Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
A lasting inspiration, sanctified
THE RECLUSE

PART FIRST

BOOK FIRST—HOME AT GRASMERE

ONCE to the verge of your steep barrier
A roving school-boy; what the adventurer's age
Hath now escaped his memory,—but the hour,
One of a golden summer holiday,
He well remembers, though the year be gone—
Alone and devious from afar he came;
And, with a sudden influx overpowered
At sight of this seclusion, he forgot
His haste, for hasty had his footsteps been
As boyish his pursuits; and sighing said, "What happy fortune were it here to live!
And, if a thought of dying, if a thought
Of mortal separation, could intrude
With paradise before him, here to die!"
No Prophet was he, had not even a hope,
Scarce a wish, but one bright pleasing thought,
A fancy in the heart of what might be
The lot of others, never could be his.
The station whence he looked was soft and green,
Not giddy yet aerial, with a depth
Of vale below, a height of hills above.
For rest of body perfect was the spot,
All that luxurious nature could desire;
But stirring to the spirit; who could gaze
And not feel motions there? He thought
That sail on winds: of breezes that delight
To play on water, or in endless chase
Pursue each other through the yielding plain
Of grass or corn, over and through and through,

On which he dwells, above this frame of things
(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes
And fears of men, doth still remain unchangeable)
In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.

THE RECLUSE

1800 (?). 1888

In billow after billow, evermore
Disporting—nor unmindful was the boy
Of sunbeams, shadows, butterflies and birds.
Of fluttering sylphs and softly-gliding Fay
Genii, and winged angels that are Lords
Without restraint of all which they behold
The illusion strengthening as he gazed, I felt
That such unfettered liberty was his,
Such power and joy; but only for this earth
To flit from field to rock, from rock to sea
From shore to island, and from isle to shore,
From open ground to covert, from a bed
Of meadow-flowers into a tuft of wood;
From high to low, from low to high, yea still
Within the bounds of this huge concave
Must be his home, this valley be his work
Since that day forth the Place to him
(For I who live to register the truth
Was that same young and happy Being
became
As beautiful to thought, as it had been
When present, to the bodily sense; a human
Of pure affections, shedding upon joy
A brighter joy; and through such days
Of the gay mind, as oftentimes splenetic you
Mistakes for sorrow, darting beams of light
That no self-cherished sadness could withstand;
And now 'tis mine, perchance for life, de Vale,
Beloved Grasmere (let the wanderer's streams
Take up, the cloud-capt hills repeat, the Name)
One of thy lowly Dwellings is my Home.
And was the cost so great? and could it seem
An act of courage, and the thing itself
A conquest? who must bear the blame?
Sage man
Thy prudence, thy experience, thy desires,
Thy apprehensions—blush thou for them all.
Yea the realities of life so cold,
So cowardly, so ready to betray,
So stinted in the measure of their grace
As we pronounce them, doing them much wrong,
Have been to me more bountiful than hope,
Less timid than desire—but that is past.
On Nature’s invitation do I come,
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mislead,
That made the calmest, fairest spot of earth
With all its unappropiated good
My own; and not mine only, for with me
Entrenched, say rather peacefully embowered,
Under your orchard, in your humble cot,
A younger Orphan of a home extinct,
The only Daughter of my Parents dwells.
Ay, think on that, my heart, and cease to stir,
Pause upon that and let the breathing frame
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.
—Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God
For what hath been bestowed, then where, where then
Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did ne'er
Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind
Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,
But either She whom now I have, who now
Divides with me this loved abode, was there
Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned,
Her voice was like a hidden Bird that sang.
The thought of her was like a flash of light,
Or an unseen companionship, a breath
Of fragrance independent of the Wind.
In all my goings, in the new and old
Of all my meditations, and in this
Favourite of all, in this the most of all.
—What being, therefore, since the birth of Man
Had ever more abundant cause to speak
Thanks, and if favours of the Heavenly Muse
Make him more thankful, then to call on Verse
To aid him and in song resound his joy?
The boon is absolute; surpassing grace
To me hath been vouchsafed; among the bowers
Of blissful Eden this was neither given
Nor could be given, possession of the good
Which had been sighed for, ancient thought fulfilled,
And dear Imaginations realised,
Up to their highest measure, yea and more.
Embrace me then, ye Hills, and close me in;
Now in the clear and open day I feel
Your guardianship; I take it to my heart;
'T is like the solemn shelter of the night.
But I would call thee beautiful, for mild,
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,
Dear Valley, having in thy face a smile,
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,
Pleased with thy crags and woody steeps,
thy Lake,
Its one green island and its winding shores;
The multitude of little rocky hills,
Thy Church and cottages of mountain stone
Clustered like stars some few, but single most,
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks
Like separated stars with clouds between.
What want we? have we not perpetual streams,
Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh green fields,
And mountains not less green, and flocks and herds,
And thickets full of songsters, and the voice
Of lordly birds, an unexpected sound.
Heard now and then from morn to latest eve,
Admonishing the man who walks below
Of solitude and silence in the sky?
These have we, and a thousand nooks of earth
Have also these, but nowhere else is found,
Nowhere (or is it fancy?) can be found
The one sensation that is here; 't is here,
Here as it found its way into my heart
In childhood, here as it abides by day,
By night, here only; or in chosen minds
That take it with them hence, where'er they go.
—'T is, but I cannot name it, 't is the sense
Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,
A blended holiness of earth and sky,
Something that makes this individual spot,
This small abiding-place of many men,
A termination, and a last retreat,
A centre, come from wheresoe’er you will,
A whole without dependence or defect,
Made for itself, and happy in itself, 150
Perfect contentment, Unity entire.

Bleak season was it, turbulent and bleak,
When hitherward we journeyed side by side
Through burst of sunshine and through fly-
ing showers;
Paced the long vales — how long they were — and yet
How fast that length of way was left be-
hind,
Wensley’s rich Vale, and Sedbergh’s naked
heights.
The frosty wind, as if to make amends
For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,
And drove us onward like two ships at sea,
Or like two birds, companions in mid-air,
Parted and reunited by the blast. 162

Stern was the face of nature; we rejoiced
In that stern countenance, for our souls
thence drew
A feeling of their strength. The naked
trees,
The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared
To question us. "Whence come ye, to
what end?"
They seemed to say. "What would ye," said the shower,
"Wild Wanderers, whither through my
dark domain?"
The sunbeam said, "Be happy." When
this vale
We entered, bright and solemn was the sky
That faced us with a passionate welcoming,
And led us to our threshold. Daylight
failed
Insensibly, and round us gently fell
Composing darkness, with a quiet load
Of full contentment, in a little shed
Disturbed, uneasy in itself as seemed,
And wondering at its new inhabitants.
It loves us now, this Vale so beautiful
Begin to love us! by a sudden storm, 180
Two months unwearied of severest storm,
It put the temper of our minds to proof,
And found us faithful through the gloom,
and heard
The poet mutter his prelusive songs
With cheerful heart, an unknown voice of
joy

Among the silence of the woods and hills;
Silent to any gladsomeness of sound
With all their shepherds.

But the gates of Spring
Are opened; churlish winter hath give
leave
That she should entertain for this one day
Perhaps for many genial days to come, his
Guests, and make them jocund. — The
are pleased,
But most of all the birds that haunt the
flood,
With the mild summons; inmates though
they be
Of Winter’s household, they keep festival
This day, who drooped, or seemed to droop
so long;
They show their pleasure, and shall I doubt
less;
Happier of happy though I be, like them
When I cannot take possession of the sky,
Mount with a thoughtless impulse, and
wheel there
One of a mighty multitude, whose way
Is a perpetual harmony and dance
Magnificent. Behold how with a grace
Of ceaseless motion, that might seem
Inferior to angelical, they prolong
Their curious pastime, shaping in mid-air,
And sometimes with ambitious wing they
soar
High as the level of the mountain tops,
A circuit amplier than the lake beneath,
Their own domain; — but ever, while inter
On tracing and retracing that large round
Their jubilant activity evolves
Hundreds of curves and circllets, to and fr
Upwards and downwards; progress intrica-
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed
Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done,
Ten times and more I fancied it had ceas
But lo! the vanished company again
Ascending, they approach. I hear the
wings
Faint, faint at first; and then an eager son
Passed in a moment — and as faint again
They tempt the sun to sport among the
plumes;
Tempt the smooth water, or the gleam of
ice,
To show them a fair image, — 'tis their
selves,
Their own fair forms upon the glimmeri
plain
painted more soft and fair as they descend,
Almost to touch, — then up again aloft,
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,
As if they scorned both resting-place and rest!

— This day is a thanksgiving, 'tis a day
Of glad emotion and deep quietness;
Not upon me alone hath been bestowed,
Me rich in many onward-looking thoughts,
The penetrating bliss; oh surely these
Have felt it, not the happy choirs of spring,
Her own peculiar family of love
That sport among green leaves, a blither train!

But two are missing, two, a lonely pair
Of milk-white Swans; wherefore are they
not seen
Partaking this day's pleasure? From afar
They came, to sojourn here in solitude,
Choosing this Valley, they who had the choice
Of the whole world. We saw them day by day,
Through those two months of unrelenting storm,
Conspicuous at the centre of the Lake
Their safe retreat, we knew them well, I guess
That the whole valley knew them; but to us
They were more dear than may be well believed,
Not only for their beauty, and their still
And placid way of life, and constant love
Inseparable, not for these alone,
But that their state so much resembled ours,
They having also chosen this abode;
They strangers, and we strangers, they a pair,
And we a solitary pair like them.
They should not have departed; many days
Did I look forth in vain, nor on the wing
Could see them, nor in that small open space
Of blue unfrozen water, where they lodged
And lived so long in quiet, side by side.

Shall we behold them consecrated friends,
Faithful companions, yet another year
Surviving, they for us, and we for them,
And neither pair be broken? nay perchance
It is too late already for such hope;
The Dalesmen may have aimed the deadly tube,
And parted them; or haply both are gone
One death, and that were mercy given to both.

Recall, my song, the ungenerous thought;
Forgive,
Thrice favoured Region, the conjecture harsh
Of such inhospitable penalty
Inflicted upon confidence so pure.
Ah! if I wished to follow where the sight
Of all that is before my eyes, the voice
Which speaks from a presiding spirit here,
Would lead me, I should whisper to myself:
They who are dwellers in this holy place
Must needs themselves be hallowed, they require
No benediction from the stranger's lips,
For they are blessed already; none would give
The greeting "peace be with you" unto them,
For peace they have; it cannot but be theirs,
And mercy, and forbearance — nay — not these —
Their healing offices a pure good-will
Precludes, and charity beyond the bounds
Of charity — an overflowing love;
Not for the creature only, but for all
That is around them; love for everything
Which in their happy Region they behold!
Thus do we soothe ourselves, and when the thought
Is passed, we blame it not for having come.
— What if I floated down a pleasant stream,
And now am landed, and the motion gone,
Shall I reprove myself? Ah no, the stream
Is flowing, and will never cease to flow,
And I shall float upon that stream again.
By such forgetfulness the soul becomes,
Words cannot say how beautiful: then hail,
Hail to the visible Presence, hail to thee,
Delightful Valley, habitation fair!
And to whatever else of outward form
Can give an inward help, can purify,
And elevate, and harmonise, and soothe,
And steal away, and for a while deceive
And lap in pleasing rest, and bear us on
Without desire in full complacency,
Contemplating perfection absolute,
And entertained as in a placid sleep.
But not betrayed by tenderness of mind
That feared, or wholly overlooked the truth,
Did we come hither, with romantic hope
To find in midst of so much loveliness
Love, perfect love: of so much majesty
A like majestic frame of mind in those
Who here abide, the persons like the place.
Not from such hope, or aught of such belief,
Hath issued any portion of the joy
Which I have felt this day. An awful voice
'Tis true hath in my walks been often heard,
Sent from the mountains or the sheltered
fields, 320
Shout after shout — reiterated whoop,
In manner of a bird that takes delight
In answering to itself: or like a hound
Single at chase among the lonely woods,
His yell repeating; yet it was in truth
A human voice — a spirit of coming night;
How solemn when the sky is dark, and earth
Not dark, nor yet enlightened, but by snow
Made visible, amid a noise of winds
And bleatings manifold of mountain sheep,
Which in that iteration recognise
Their summons, and are gathering round
for food,
Devoured with keenness, ere to grove or
bank
Or rocky bield with patience they retire.
That very voice, which, in some timid
mood
Of superstitious fancy, might have seemed
Awful as ever stray demoniac uttered,
His steps to govern in the wilderness;
Or as the Norman Curfew's regular beat
To hearths when first they darkened at the
knell:
That shepherd's voice, it may have reached
mine ear
Debased and under profanation, made
The ready organ of articulate sounds
From ribaldry, impiety, or wrath,
Issuing when shame hath ceased to check
the brawls
Of some abused Festivity — so be it.
I came not dreaming of unrolled life,
Untainted manners; born among the hills,
Bred also there, I wanted not a scale
To regulate my hopes; pleased with the
good 340
I shrink not from the evil with disgust,
Or with immoderate pain. I look for Man,
The common creature of the brotherhood,
Differing but little from the Man elsewhere,
For selfishness and envy and revenge,
Ill neighbourhood — pity that this should
be —
Flattery and double-dealing, strife and
wrong.
Yet is it something gained, it is in truth
A mighty gain, that Labour here preserves
His rosy face, a servant only here 360
Of the fireside or of the open field,

A Freeman therefore sound and unimpaired:
That extreme penury is here unknown,
And cold and hunger's abject wretchedness
Mortal to body and the heaven-born mind:
That they who want are not too great a
weight
For those who can relieve; here may the
heart
Breathe in the air of fellow-suffering
Dreadless, as in a kind of fresher breeze
Of her own native element, the hand
Be ready and unwearied without plea,
From tasks too frequent or beyond its
power,
For languor or indifference or despair.
And as these lofty barriers break the form
Of winds, — this deep Vale, as it doth a
part
Conceal us from the storm, so here abide
A power and a protection for the mind,
Dispensed indeed to other solitudes
Favoured by noble privilege like this,
Where kindred independence of estate
Is prevalent, where he who tills the field,
He, happy man! is master of the field,
And treads the mountains which his Father
trod.
Not less than halfway up you mountain's
side,
Behold a dusky spot, a grove of Firs
That seems still smaller than it is; the
grove
Is haunted — by what ghost? a gentle spirit
Of memory faithful to the call of love;
For, as reports the Dame, whose fire send
up
Yon curling smoke from the grey cot below
The trees (her first-born child being then
babe)
Were planted by her husband and herself,
That ranging o'er the high and houseless
ground
Their sheep might neither want from perilous storm
Of winter; nor from summer's sultry heat
A friendly covert; "and they knew it well,
Said she, "for toither as the trees grew up
We to the patient creatures carried food
In times of heavy snow." She then bega
In fond obedience to her private thoughts
To speak of her dead husband; is there not
An art, a music, and a strain of words
That shall be life, the acknowledged voice
of life,
Shall speak of what is done among the field.
one truly there, or felt, of solid good

Shadows or breezes, scents or sounds. Nor
deem
These feelings, though subservient more

To every day's demand for daily bread, 450
And borrowing more their spirit and their
shape
From self-respecting interests; deem them not
Unworthy therefore, and unhallowed — no,
They lift the animal being, do themselves
By nature's kind and ever-present aid
Refine the selfishness from which they
spring,
Redeem by love the individual sense
Of anxiousness, with which they are com-
bined.
And thus it is that fitly they become
Associates in the joy of purest minds: 460
They blend therewith congenially: mean-
while
Calmly they breathe their own undying life
Through this their mountain sanctuary; long
Oh long may it remain inviolate,
Diffusing health and sober cheerfulness,
And giving to the moments as they pass
Their little boons of animating thought
That sweeten labour, make it seen and felt
To be no arbitrary weight imposed,
But a glad function natural to man. 470

Fair proof of this, newcomer though I be,
Already have I gained; the inward frame,
Though slowly opening, opens every day
With process not unlike to that which cheers
A pensive stranger journeying at his leisure
Through some Helvetic Dell; when low-
hung mists
Break up and are beginning to recede,
How pleased he is where thin and thinner
grows
The veil, or where it parts at once, to spy
The dark pines thrusting forth their spiky
heads;
To watch the spreading lawns with cattle
grazed;
Then to be greeted by the scattered huts
As they shine out; and see the streams whose
murmur
Had soothed his ear while they were hidden;
how pleased
To have about him which way e'er he goes
Something on every side concealed from
view,
In every quarter something visible
Half seen or wholly, lost and found again,
Alternate progress and impediment,
And yet a growing prospect in the main. 490
Such pleasure now is mine, albeit forced,
Herein less happy than the Traveller,
To cast from time to time a painful look
Upon unwelcome things which unawares
Reveal themselves, not therefore is my heart
Depressed, nor does it fear what is to come;
But confident, enriched at every glance,
The more I see the more delight my mind
Receives, or by reflection can create:
Truth justifies herself, and as she dwells
With Hope, who would not follow where
she leads?
Nor let me pass unheeded other loves
Where no fear is, and humbler sympathies.
Already hath sprung up within my heart
A liking for the small grey horse that bears
The paralytic man, and for the brute
In Scripture sanctified — the patient brute
On which the cripple, in the quarry maimed,
Rides to and fro: I know them and their ways.
The famous sheep-dog, first in all the vale,
Though yet to me a stranger, will not be
A stranger long; nor will the blind man’s guide,
Meek and neglected thing, of no renown!
Soon will peep forth the primrose, ere it fades
Friends shall I have at dawn, blackbird
and thrush
To rouse me, and a hundred warblers more!
And if those Eagles to their ancient hold
Return, Helvellyn’s Eagles! with the Pair
From my own door I shall be free to claim
Acquaintance, as they sweep from cloud to cloud.
The owl that gives the name to Owlet-Crag
Have I heard whooping, and he soon will be
A chosen one of my regards. See there
The heifer in yon little croft belongs
To one who holds it dear; with duteous care
She reared it, and in speaking of her charge
I heard her scatter some endearing words
Domestic, and in spirit motherly,
She being herself a mother; happy Beast,
If the caresses of a human voice
Can make it so, and care of human hands.
And ye as happy under Nature’s care,
Strangers to me and all men, or at least
Strangers to all particular amity,
All intercourse of knowledge or of love
That parts the individual from his kind.
Whether in large communities ye keep
From year to year, not shunning man’s abode,
A settled residence, or be from far
Wild creatures, and of many homes, the come
The gift of winds, and whom the wind again
Take from us at your pleasure; yet shall
Not want for this your own subordinate place
In my affections. Witness the delight
With which erewhile I saw that multitud
Wheel through the sky, and see them at rest,
Yet not at rest upon the glassy lake:
They cannot rest — they gambol like your whelps;
Active as lambs, and overcome with joy
They try all frolic motions; flutter, plung
And beat the passive water with the wings.
Too distant are they for plain view, but lo
Those little fountains, sparkling in the sun
Betray their occupation, rising up
First one and then another silver spout,
As one or other takes the fit of glee,
Fountains and spouts, yet somewhat in disguise
Of plaything fireworks, that on festal night
Sparkle about the feet of wanton boys.
— How vast the compass of this theatre,
Yet nothing to be seen but lovely pomp
And silent majesty; the birch-tree woods
Are hung with thousand thousand diamond drops
Of melted hoar-frost, every tiny knot
In the bare twigs, each little budding-pla
Cased with its several beads; what myrias these
Upon one tree, while all the distant grove
That rises to the summit of the steep,
Shows like a mountain built of silver light
See yonder the same pageant, and again
Behold the universal imagery
Inverted, all its sun-bright features touch
As with the varnish and the gloss dreams.
Dreamlike the blending also of the whole
Harmonious landscape: all along the sho
The boundary lost — the line invisible
That parts the image from reality;
And the clear hills, as high as they ascend
Heavenward, so deep piercing the lake be-
low.
Admonished of the days of love to come
The raven croaks, and fills the upper air
With a strange sound of genial harmony;
And in and all about that playful band,
Incapable although they be of rest,
And in their fashion very rioters,
There is a stillness; and they seem to make
Calm revelry in that their calm abode.
Them leaving to their joyous hours I pass,
Pass with a thought the life of the whole
year
That is to come: the throng of woodland
flowers
And lilies that will dance upon the waves.
Say boldly then that solitude is not
Where these things are: he truly is alone,
He of the multitude whose eyes are doomed
To hold a vacant commerce day by day
With Objects wanting life — repelling love;
By he the vast metropolis immured,
Where pity shrinks from unremitting calls,
Where numbers overwhelm humanity,
And neighbourhood serves rather to divide
Than to unite — what sighs more deep than
his,
Whose nobler will hath long been sacrificed;
Who must inhabit under a black sky
A city, where, if indifference to disgust
Yield not to scorn or sorrow, living men
Are oftentimes to their fellow-men no more
Than to the forest Hermit are the leaves
That hang aloft in myriads; nay, far less,
For they protect his walk from sun and
shower,
Well his devotion with their voice in
storms,
And whisper while the stars twinkle among
them
His lullaby. From crowded streets remote,
Far from the living and dead Wilderness
Of the thronged world, Society is here
A true community — a genuine frame
Of many into one incorporate.
That must be looked for here: paternal
away,
One household, under God, for high and
low,
One family and one mansion; to themselves
appropriate, and divided from the world,
as if it were a cave, a multitude
Man and brute, possessors undisturbed
At this Recess — their legislative Hall,

Their Temple, and their glorious Dwelling-
place.
Dismissing therefore all Arcadian dreams,
All golden fancies of the golden age,
The bright array of shadowy thoughts from
times.
That were before all time, or are to be
Ere time expire, the pageantry that stirs
Or will be stirring, when our eyes are fixed
On lovely objects, and we wish to part
With all remembrance of a jarring world,
— Take we at once this one sufficient hope,
What need of more? that we shall neither
droop
Nor pine for want of pleasure in the life
Scattered about us, nor through want of
aught
That keeps in health the insatiable mind.
— That we shall have for knowledge and
for love
Abundance, and that feeling as we do
How goodly, how exceeding fair, how pure
From all reproach is yon ethereal vault,
And this deep Vale, its earthly counterpart,
By which and under which we are enclosed
To breathe in peace; we shall moreover find
(If sound, and what we ought to be our-
selves,
If rightly we observe and justly weigh)
The inmates not unworthy of their home,
The Dwellers of their Dwelling.

And if this
Were otherwise, we have within ourselves
Enough to fill the present day with joy,
And overspread the future years with hope,
Our beautiful and quiet home, enriched
Already with a stranger whom we love
Deeply, a stranger of our Father’s house,
A never-resting Pilgrim of the Sea,
Who finds at last an hour to his content
Beneath our roof. And others whom we
love
Will seek us also, Sisters of our hearts,
And one, like them, a Brother of our hearts,
Philosopher and Poet, in whose sight
These mountains will rejoice with open joy.
— Such is our wealth! O Vale of Peace
we are
And must be, with God’s will, a happy
Band.
Yet ’tis not to enjoy that we exist,
For that end only; something must be done:
I must not walk in unreproved delight
These narrow bounds, and think of nothing
more,
No duty that looks further, and no care.
Each Being has his office, lowly some
And common, yet all worthy if fulfilled
With zeal, acknowledgment that with the

gift
Keeps pace a harvest answering to the seed.
Of ill-advised Ambition and of Pride
I would stand clear, but yet to me I feel
That an internal brightness is vouchsafed
That must not die, that must not pass
away.

Why does this inward lustre fondly seek
And gladly blend with outward fellowship?
Why do they shine around me whom I love?
Why do they teach me, whom I thus revere?
Strange question, yet it answers not itself.
That humble Roof embowered among the
trees,

That calm fireside, it is not even in them,
Blest as they are, to furnish a reply
That satisfies and ends in perfect rest.
Possessions have I that are solely mine,
Something within which yet is shared by
none,
Not even the nearest to me and most dear,
Something which power and effort may im-
part;
I would impart it, I would spread it wide:
Immortal in the world which is to come —
Forgive me if I add another claim —
And would not wholly perish even in this,
Lie down and be forgotten in the dust,
I and the modest Partners of my days
Making a silent company in death;
Love, knowledge, all my manifold delights,
All buried with me without monument
Or profit unto any but ourselves!
It must not be, if I, divinely taught,
Be privileged to speak as I have felt
Of what in man is human or divine.

While yet an innocent little one, with a
heart
That doubtless wanted not its tender moods,
I breathed (for this I better recollect)
Among wild appetites and blind desires,
Motions of savage instinct my delight
And exaltation. Nothing at that time
So welcome, no temptation half so dear
As that which urged me to a daring feat,
Deep pools, tall trees, black chasms, and
dizzy crags,
And tottering towers: I loved to stand and
read
Their looks forbidding, read and disobey,
Sometimes in act and evermore in thought.

With impulses, that scarcely were by then
Surpassed in strength, I heard of dangers
not
Or sought with courage; enterprise forlor
By one, solo keeper of his own intent,
Or by a resolute few, who for the sake
Of glory fronted multitudes in arms.
Yea, to this hour I cannot read a Tale
Of two brave vessels matched in death
fight,
And fighting to the death, but I am pleas
More than a wise man ought to be; I wish
Fret, burn, and struggle, and in soul be
there.
But me hath Nature tamed, and bade to
seek
For other agitations, or be calm;
Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent
stream,
Some nursling of the mountains which it
leads
Through quiet meadows, after he has lean
His strength, and had his triumph and his
joy,
His desperate course of tumult and of grief
That which in stealth by Nature was per
formed
Hath Reason sanctioned: her deliberate
Voice
Hath said; be mild, and cleave to gent
things,
Thy glory and thy happiness be there.
Nor fear, though thou confide in me, a wa
Of aspirations that have been — of foes
To wrestle with, and victory to complete,
Bounds to be leapt, darkness to be explored.
All that inflamed thy infant heart, the love
The longing, the contempt, the undaun
ted quest,
All shall survive, though changed their or
face, all
Shall live, it is not in their power to die.
Then farewell to the Warrior's Scheme
farewell
The forwardness of soul which looks that
way
Upon a less incitement than the Cause
Of Liberty endangered, and farewell
That other hope, long mine, the hope to f
The heroic trumpet with the Muse's breath
Yet in this peaceful Vale we will not spe
Unheard-of days, though loving peacef
thought;
A voice shall speak, and what will be th
theme?
On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
Accompanied by feelings of delight
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed;
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
And dear remembrances, whose presence
Soothes 760
Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh
The good and evil of our mortal state.
— To these emotions, whence soe'er they come,
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
Or from the Soul — an impulse to herself —
I would give utterance in numerous verse.
Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith;
Of blessed consolations in distress;
Of moral strength, and intellectual Power;
Of joy in widest commonalty spread;
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To Conscience only, and the supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all —
I sing: — "Fit audience let me find though few!"

So prayed, more gaining than he asked,
the Bard —
In holiest mood. Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must
Sink 771
Deep — and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
All strength — all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form —
Jehovah — with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones —
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams — can breed such fear
And awe 781
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man —
My haunt, and the main region of my song —
Beauty — a living Presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms
Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed
From earth's materials — waits upon my steps;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields — like those of old
801
Sought in the Atlantic Main — why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was?
For the discerning intellect of Man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.
— I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
810
Of this great consummation: — and, by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual Mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external World
Is fitted: — and how exquisitely, too —
Theme this but little heard of among men —
The external World is fitted to the Mind;
And the creation (by no lower name
Can it be called) which they with blended might
Accomplish: — this is our high argument.
— Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
Must turn elsewhere — to travel near the tribes
And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
Of madding passions mutually inflamed;
Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang
830
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore
Within the walls of cities — may these sounds
Have their authentic comment; that even these
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn! —
Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspirit
The human Soul of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty Poets; upon me bestow
840
A gift of genuine insight; that my Song
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
Shedding benignant influence, and secure
Itself from all malevolent effect
Of those mutations that extend their sway
Throughout the nether sphere! — And if
I mix more lowly matter; with the thing
Contemplated, describe the mind and Man
Contemplating; and who, and what he
was —
The transitory Being that beheld
This Vision; — when and where, and how
he lived;

Be not this labour useless. If such these
May sort with highest objects, then — dread
Power!
Whose gracious favour is the primal source
Of all illumination — may my Life
Express the image of a better time,
More wise desires, and simpler manners; —
nurse
My Heart in genuine freedom: — all pure
thoughts
Be with me; — so shall thy unfailing love
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the
end!

THE BROTHERS
1800. 1800

This poem was composed in a grove at the
north-easter end of Grasmere lake, which
grove was in a great measure destroyed by
turning the high-road along the side of the
water. The few trees that are left were spared
at my intercession. The poem arose out of the
fact, mentioned to me at Ennerdale, that a
shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the
rock called The Pillar, and perished as here
described, his staff being left midway on the
rock.

"These Tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must live
A profitable life: some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
Or reap an acre of his neighbour’s corn. 10
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,
Why can he tarry yonder? — In our church-
yard
Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name — only the turf we
tread
And a few natural graves.”

To Jane, his wife,
Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
It was a July evening; and he sate
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves
Of his old cottage, — as it chanced, that day,
Employed in winter’s work. Upon the
stone

His wife sate near him, teasing matted
wool,
While, from the twin cards toothed with
glittering wire,
He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
Who, in the open air, with due accord
Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps
Her large round wheel was turning. To-
wards the field
In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
While half an hour went by, the Priest had
sent
Many a long look of wonder: and, at last,
Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white
ridge
Of carded wool which the old man had piled
He laid his implements with gentle care,
Each in the other locked; and, down the
path
That from his cottage to the church-yard
led,
He took his way, impatient to accost
The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering
there.

"T was one well known to him in former
days,
A Shepherd-lad; who ere his sixteenth year
Had left that calling, tempted to entrust
His expectations to the fickle winds
And perilous waters; with the mariners
A fellow-mariner; — and so had fared
Through twenty seasons; but he had been
reared
Among the mountains, and he in his heart
Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard
heard
The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
Of caves and trees: — and, when the regular wind
Between the tropics filled the steady sail, 50
And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
Lengthening invisibly its weary line
Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze;
And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam
Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
In union with the employment of his heart,
He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye, 60
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
On verdant hills — with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country grey
Which he himself had worn.

And now, at last,
From perils manifold, with some small wealth
Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,
To his paternal home he is returned,
With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there; both for the sake
Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy time
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.
— They were the last of all their race: and now,
When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
Failed in him; and, not venturing to enquire
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,
He to the solitary churchyard turned;
That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his Brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added. — He had found
Another grave, — near which a full half-hour
He had remained; but, as he gazed, there grew
Such a confusion in his memory,
That he began to doubt; and even to hope
That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
That it was not another grave; but one 90
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been well known to him:
And oh what joy this recollection now
Sent to his heart! he lifted up his eyes, and,
Looking round, imagined that he saw
Strange alteration wrought on every side
Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,
And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come,
Unseen by Leonard, at the churchyard gate
Stopped short, — and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
Perused him with a gay complacency.
Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
'T is one of those who need not leave the path
Of the world's business to go wild alone:
His arms have a perpetual holiday;
The happy man will creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
Into his face, until the setting sun
Write fool upon his forehead. — Planted thus
Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
Of this rude churchyard, till the stars appeared
The good Man might have communed with himself,
But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
Approached; he recognised the Priest at once,
And, after greetings interchanged, and given
By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life:
Your years make up one peaceful family;
And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come
And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral
Comes to this churchyard once in eighteen months;
And yet, some changes must take place among you:
And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
Can trace the finger of mortality,
And see, that with our threescore years and ten

We are not all that perish. — I remember,
(For many years ago I passed this road)
There was a foot-way all along the fields
By the brook-side — 'tis gone — and that dark crest!
To me it does not seem to wear the face
Which then it had!

Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
That chasm is much the same —

Leonard. But, surely, yonder —

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory
Is a friend,
That does not play you false. — On that tall pike
(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
As if they had been made that they might be
Companions for each other: the huge crag
Was rent with lightning — one hath disappeared;
The other, left behind, is flowing still.
For accidents and changes such as these,
We want not store of them; — a water-spool
Will bring down half a mountain; what a feast
For folks that wander up and down like you

To see an acre’s breadth of that wide cliff
One roaring cataract! a sharp May-storm
Will come with loads of January snow,
And in one night send twenty score of sheep
To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies
By some untoward death among the rocks:
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge;
A wood is felled: — and then for our own homes!
A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
The old house-clock is decked with a new face;
And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates

To chronicle the time, we all have here
A pair of diaries, — one serving, Sir,
For the whole dale, and one for each fireside —

Yours was a stranger’s judgment: for the historians,
Command me to these valleys!

Leonard. Yet your churchyard seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
To say that you are heedless of the past:
An orphan could not find his mother’s grave:
Here’s neither head nor foot stone, plate of brass,
Cross-bones nor skull, — type of our earthy state
NOR EMBLEM OF OUR HOPES: THE DEAD MAN’S HOME
Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that’s new to me!
The stone-cutters, ‘tis true, might beg their bread
If every English churchyard were like ours:
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth.
We have no need of names and epitaphs;
We talk about the dead by our firesides.
And then, for our immortal part! we want no symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale:
The thought of death sits easy on the mind
Who has been born and died among the mountains.

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do it each other’s thoughts
Possess a kind of second life: no doubt
You, Sir, could help me to the history
Of half these graves?

Priest. For eight-score winters past
With what I’ve witnessed, and with what I’ve heard,
Perhaps I might; and, on a winter-evening,
If you were seated at my chimney nook,
By turning o’er these hillocks one by one,
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round;
Yet all in the broad highway of the world
Now there’s a grave — your foot is on it, —
It looks just like the rest; and yet that man
Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. ‘T is a common case
We’ll take another: who is he that lies
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves?

It touched on that piece of native rock

Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbanks.

He had as white a head and fresh a cheek

As ever were produced by youth and age

Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.

Through five long generations had the heart

Of Walter's forefathers overflowed the bounds

Of their inheritance, that single cottage —

You see it yonder! and those few green fields.

They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as before

A little — yet a little, — and old Walter.

They left to him the family heart, and land

With other burthens than the crop it bore.

Year after year the old man still kept up

A cheerful mind, — and buffetted with bond, interest, and mortgages; at last he sank,

And went into his grave before his time.

Poor Walter! whether it was care that spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last

He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale:

His pace was never that of an old man: I almost see him tripping down the path

With his two grandsons after him: — but you,

Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,

Have far to travel, — and on these rough paths

Even in the longest day of midsummer —

Leonard. But those two Orphans!

Priest. Orphans! — Such they were — yet not while Walter lived: for, though their parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,

The old man was a father to the boys,

Two fathers in one father: and if tears,

Shed when he talked of them where they were not,

And hauntings from the infirmity of love,

Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,

This old Man, in the day of his old age,

Was half a mother to them. — If you weep,

Sir,

To hear a stranger talking about strangers,

Heaven bless you when you are among your kindred!

Ay — you may turn that way — it is a grave

Which will bear looking at.

Leonard. These boys — I hope

They loved this good old Man? —

Priest. They did — and truly: But that was what we almost overlooked,

They were such darlings of each other.

Yes,

Though from the cradle they had lived with Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though he

Inclined to both by reason of his age,

With a more fond, familiar, tenderness;

They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.

Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,

Was two years taller: 't was a joy to see,

To hear, to meet them! — From their house the school

Is distant three short miles, and in the time

Of storm and thaw, when every watercourse

And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,

Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,

Would Leonard then, when elder boys re-

Mained

At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,

Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,

On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,

Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-

Leg deep,

Their two books lying both on a dry stone,

Upon the hither side: and once I said,

As I remember, looking round these rocks

And hills on which we all of us were born,

That God who made the great book of the world

Would bless such piety —

Leonard. It may be then —

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English bread:

The very brightestest Sunday Autumn saw

With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,

Could never keep those boys away from church,

Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.

Leonard and James! I warrant, every cor-

ner
Among these rocks, and every hollow place
That venturous foot could reach, to one or both
Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills;
They played like two young ravens on the crags:
Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well
As many of their betters—and for Leonard!
The very night before he went away, in
My own house I put into his hand
A Bible, and I 'd wager house and field
That, if he be alive, he has it yet.
Leonard. It seems, these Brothers have not lived to be
A comfort to each other —
Priest. That they might
Live to such end is what both old and young
In this our valley all of us have wished,
And what, for my part, I have often prayed:
But Leonard —
Leonard. Then James still is left among you!
Priest. 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking:
They had an uncle; — he was at that time
A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas:
And, but for that same uncle, to this hour
Leonard had never handled rope or shroud:
For the boy loved the life which we lead here;
And though of unripe years, a stripling only,
His soul was knit to this his native soil.
But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
To strive with such a torrent; when he died,
The estate and house were sold; and all
their sheep,
A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years:
Well — all was gone, and they were desti-
tute,
And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,
Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.
If there were one among us who had heard
That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
From the Great Gavel, down by Leera's banks,
And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
The day would be a joyous festival;
And those two bells of ours, which there you see —
Hanging in the open air — but, O good Sir!
This is sad talk — they 'l never sound for him —
Living or dead. — When last we heard of him,
He was in slavery among the Moors
Upon the Barbary coast. — 'T was not a little
That would bring down his spirit; and no doubt,
Before it ended in his death, the Youth
Was sadly crossed. — Poor Leonard! when we parted,
He took me by the hand, and said to me,
If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,
To live in peace upon his father's land,
And lay his bones among us.
Leonard. If that day
Should come, 't would needs be a glad day for him;
He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
As any that should meet him —
Priest. Happy! Sir —
Leonard. You said his kindred all were
in their graves,
And that he had one Brother —
Priest. That is but
A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate;
And Leonard being always by his side
Had done so many offices about him,
That, though he was not of a timid nature,
Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
In him was somewhat checked; and, when his Brother
Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
The little colour that he had was soon
Stolen from his cheek; he drooped, and pined, and pined —
Leonard. But these are all the graves of full-grown men!
Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away: we took him to us;
He was the child of all the dale — he lived
Three months with one, and six months with another,
And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor
love:
And many, many happy days were his.
But, whether blithe or sad, 't is my belief
His absent Brother still was at his heart.
Leonard. And all went well with him? —
Priest. If he had one, the Youth had twenty homes.
Leonard. And you believe, then, that his mind was easy? —
Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that time
Is a true friend to sorrow; and unless
His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune.
He talked about him with a cheerful love.
Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed end!
Priest. Nay, God forbid! — You recollect I mentioned
A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him; and we all conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
On the soft heath, — and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong:
And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth
Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,
His shepherd's staff; for on that Pillar of rock
It had been caught mid-way; and there for years
It hung; — and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended —
The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away
The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence;
And Leonard, when they reached the churchyard gate,
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,
And, looking at the grave, he said, "My Brother!"
The Vicar did not hear the words: and now,
He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating
That Leonard would partake his homely fare:
The other thanked him with an earnest voice;
But added, that, the evening being calm,
He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
That overhung the road: he there stopped short,
And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed
All that the Priest had said: his early years
Were with him:—his long absence, cherished hopes,
And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,
This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
A place in which he could not bear to live:
So he relinquished all his purposes.
He travelled back to Egremont: and thence,
That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
Reminding him of what had passed between them;
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
That it was from the weakness of his heart
He had not dared to tell him who he was.
This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!
And to that simple object appertains
A story,—unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unpitiful, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved; not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy,
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel;
For passions were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt;
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the
South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipes on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would
say,
"The winds are now devising work for
me!"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that
drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the
heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should
suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams
and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
breathed
The common air; hills, which with vigorous
step
He had so often climbed; which had im-
pressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain;
Those fields, those hills — what could they
less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.
His days had not been passed in single-
ness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old —
Though younger than himself full twenty
years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels
she had
Of antique form; this large, for spinning
wool;
That small, for flax; and if one wheel had
rest
It was because the other was at work.
The Fair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's
phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a
storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even
then,
Their labour did not cease; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and
there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed
milk,
Sat round the basket piled with oat cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet
when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was
named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to
card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.
Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's
edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country style
With huge and black projection overbrowed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a
lamp;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn — and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had
found,
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with
hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his
eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they
sate,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies,
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it
chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north
and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named The
Evening Star.

Thus living on through such a length of
years,
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must
needs
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael’s
heart
This son of his old age was yet more dear —
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood
of all —
Than that a child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking
thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart’s joy! For often-
times
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman’s gentle hand.
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy’s attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd’s
stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him
stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of
shade,
Chosen for the Shearer’s covert from the
sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called

The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it
bears.
There, while they two were sitting in the
shade,
With others round them, earnest all and
blistere,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his
shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath
the shears.

And when by Heaven’s good grace the
boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old;
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut

With his own hand a sapling, which he
hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd’s staff,
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;
Though nought was left undone which
staff, or voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could
perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts; and to the
heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved
before
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there
came
Feelings and emanations—things which
were
Light to the sun and music to the wind;
And that the old Man’s heart seemed born
again?

Thus in his Father’s sight the Boy grew
up:
And now, when he had reached his eight-
eenth year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.
While in this sort the simple household lived from day to day, to Michael's ear there came distressful tidings. Long before the time of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound as surety for his brother's son, a man of an industrious life, and ample means; but unforeseen misfortunes suddenly laid prest upon him; and old Michael now was summoned to discharge the forfeiture, a grievous penalty, but little less than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim, at the first hearing, for a moment took more hope out of his life than he supposed that any old man ever could have lost. As soon as he had armed himself with strength to look his trouble in the face, it seemed the Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once a portion of his patrimonial fields. Such was his first resolve; he thought again, and his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he, two evenings after he had heard the news, 'I have been toiling more than seventy years, and in the open sunshine of God's love have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours should pass into a stranger's hand, I think that I could not lie quiet in my grave. Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself has scarcely been more diligent than I; and I have lived to be a fool at last to my own family. An evil man that was, and made an evil choice, if he were false to us; and if he were not false, there are ten thousand to whom loss like this had been no sorrow. I forgive him; — but were better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak of remedies and of a cheerful hope. Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land shall not go from us, and it shall be free; he shall possess it, free as is the wind that passes over it. We have, thou know'st, another kinsman — he will be our friend in this distress. He is a prosperous man, thriving in trade — and Luke to him shall go.

And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift he quickly will repair this loss, and then He may return to us. If here he stay, what can be done? Where every one is poor, what can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused, and Isabel sat silent, for her mind was busy, looking back into past times. There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself, he was a parish-boy — at the church-door they made a gathering for him, shillings, pence and halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought a basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares; and, with this basket on his arm, the lad went up to London, found a master there, who, out of many, chose the trusty boy to go and overlook his merchandise beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous rich, and left estates and monies to the poor.

And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floored with marble which he sent from foreign lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like sort, passed quickly through the mind of Isabel, and her face brightened. The old Man was glad, and thus resumed: — "Well, Isabel! this scheme these two days, has been meat and drink to me. Far more than we have lost is left us yet.

— We have enough — I wish indeed that I were younger; — but this hope is a good hope.

— Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best buy for him more, and let us send him forth to-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:

— If he could go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth with a light heart. The Housewife for five days was restless morn and night, and all day long wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son. But Isabel was glad when Sunday came To stop her in her work: for, when she lay By Michael's side, she through the last two nights Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep: And when they rose at morning she could see That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon She said to Luke, while they two by themselves Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go: We have no other Child but thee to lose — None to remember — do not go away, For if thou leave thy Father he will die." The Youth made answer with a jocund voice; And Isabel, when she had told her fears, Recovered heart. That evening her best fare Did she bring forth, and all together sat Like happy people round a Christmas fire. With daylight Isabel resumed her work; And all the ensuing week the house appeared As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length The expected letter from their kinsman came, With kind assurances that he would do His utmost for the welfare of the Boy; To which, requests were added, that forthwith He might be sent to him. Ten times or more The letter was read over; Isabel Went forth to show it to the neighbours round; Nor was there at that time on English land A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel Had to her house returned, the old Man said, "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word The Housewife answered, talking much of things Which, if at such short notice he should go, Would surely be forgotten. But at length She gave consent, and Michael was at ease. Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see
That these are things of which I need not
speak."

— Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father: and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands; for, though now
old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together: here they
lived,
As all their Forefathers had done; and when
At length their time was come, they were
not loth
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou should'st live the life
they lived:
But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burtioned when they
came to me;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my
work,
And till these three weeks past the land
was free.
— It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me,
Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;
Then, pointing to the stones near which
they stood,
Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone —
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own
hands.
Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both
may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy
part;
I will do mine. — I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to
thee:
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless
thee, Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beat-
ing fast
With many hopes; it should be so — yes —
yes —
I knew that thou could'st never have a wish
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound
to me
Only by links of love: when thou art gone,
What will be left to us! — But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
And of this moment; hither turn thy
thoughts,
And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers
lived,
Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee
well —
When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt
see
A work which is not here: a covenant
'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the
grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke
stooped down,
And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheeplid. At the
sight
The old Man's grief broke from him; to
his heart
He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.
— Hushed was that House in peace, or
seeming peace,
Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn
the Boy
Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;
And all the neighbours, as he passed their
doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell
prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.
A good report did from their Kinsman
come,
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were
throughout
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
Both parents read them with rejoicing
hearts.
So, many months passed on; and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and
now
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke
began
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.
There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'T will make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have conversed with more than one who
well
Remember the old Man, and what he was
Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and
cloud,
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'T is not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man — and 't is believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.
There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he
seen
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to
time,
He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the est-
te
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the EVEN-
ING STAR
Is gone — the ploughshare has been through
the ground
On which it stood; great changes have been
wrought

In all the neighbourhood: — yet the oak is
left
That grew beside their door; and the re-
 mains
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll.

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS
OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE
A PASTORAL
1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I will only
add a little monitory anecdote concerning this
subject. When Coleridge and Southey went
walking together upon the Fells, Southey
observed that, if I wished to be considered a
faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not
to have said that my Shepherd-boys trimmed
their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just
as the words had passed his lips two boys ap-
peared with the very plant entwined round
their hats. I have often wondered that Southey,
who rambled so much about the mountains,
should have fallen into this mistake, and I re-
cord it as a warning for others who, with far
less opportunity than my dear friend had of
knowing what things are, and far less sagacity
give way to presumptuous criticism, from
which he was free, though in this matter mis-
taken. In describing a tarn under Helvellyn,
I say —

"There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer."

This was branded by a critic of these days as
a review ascribed to Mrs. Barbauld, as unna-
rual and absurd. I admire the genius of Mr.
Barbauld, and am certain that, had her educa-
tion been favourable to imaginative influences
no female of her day would have been more
likely to sympathise with that image, and to
acknowledge the truth of the sentiment.

The valley rings with mirth and joy;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never never ending song,
To welcome in the May.
The magpie chatters with delight;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.
THE PET-LAMB

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun;
Their work, if any work they have,
Is out of mind—or done.

On pipes of sycamore they play
The fragments of a Christmas hymn;
Or with that plant which in our dale
We call stag-born, or fox's tail,
Their rusty hats they trim:
And thus, as happy as the day,
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
"Down to the stump of you old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race."
—Away the shepherds flew;
They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
James stopped with no good will:
Said Walter then, exulting: "Here
You'll find a task for half a year.

"Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread."
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.
It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock:
The gulf is deep below;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march;
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.
When list! he hears a piteous moan—
Again!—his heart within him dies—

His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne;
And, while with all a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
That sent this rueful cry; I ween
The Boy recovered heart, and told
The sight which he had seen.
Both gladly now deferred their task;
Nor was there wanting other aid—
A Poet, who loves the brooks
Far better than the sages' books,
By chance had thither strayed;
And there the helpless lamb he found
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,
And brought it forth into the light:
The Shepherds met him with his charge,
An unexpected sight!
Into their arms the lamb they took,
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared;
Then up the steep ascent they hied,
And placed him at his mother's side;
And gently did the Bard
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
And bade them better mind their trade.

THE PET-LAMB

A PASTORAL

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Barbara
Lewthwaite, now living at Ambleside (1843),
though much changed as to beauty, was one of
two most lovely sisters. Almost the first words
my poor brother John said, when he visited us
for the first time at Grasmere, were, "Were
those two Angels that I have just seen?" and
from his description I have no doubt they were
those two sisters. The mother died in childbed;
and one of our neighbours at Grasmere told me that the loveliest sight she had ever seen was that mother as she lay in her coffin with her babe in her arm. I mention this to notice what I cannot but think a salutary custom once universal in these vales. Every attendant on a funeral made it a duty to look at the corpse in the coffin before the lid was closed, which was never done (nor I believe is now) till a minute or two before the corpse was removed. Barbara Lewthwaite was not in fact the child whom I had seen and overheard as described in the poem. I chose the name for reasons implied in the above; and will here add a caution against the use of names of living persons. Within a few months after the publication of this poem, I was much surprised, and more hurt, to find it in a child’s school-book which, having been compiled by Lindley Murray, had come into use at Grasmere School where Barbara was a pupil; and, alas! I had the mortification of hearing that she was very vain of being thus distinguished; and, in after-life, she used to say that she remembered the incident and what I said to her upon the occasion.

The dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink;
I heard a voice; it said, “Drink, pretty creature, drink!”
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near; the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone;
With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel,
While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,
Seemed to feast with head and ears; and his tail with pleasure shook.
“Drink, pretty creature, drink,” she said in such a tone
That I almost received her heart into my own.

’T was little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare!
I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.

Now with her empty can the Maiden turned away:
But ere ten yards were gone her footstep did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked; and from a shady place
I unobserved could see the workings of her face:
If Nature to her tongue could measure numbers bring,
Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might sing:

“What ails thee, young One? what? Why pull so at thy cord?
Is it not well with thee? well both for board and board?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be;
Rest, little young One, rest; what is’t that aileth thee?

“What is it thou wouldst seek? What is’t wanting to thy heart?
Thy limbs are they not strong? And beautiful thou art:
This grass is tender grass; these flowers have no peers;
And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears!

“If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen chain,
This beech is standing by, its covert the canst gain;
For rain and mountain-storms! the like thou need’st not fear,
The rain and storm are things that scarce can come here.

“Rest, little young One, rest; thou hast got the day
When my father found thee first in place far away;
Many flocks were on the hills, but the wert owned by none,
And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

“He took thee in his arms, and in pit brought thee home;
A blessed day for thee! then whistle wouldst thou roam?
faithful nurse thou hast; the dam that
did thee yeant
pon the mountain-tops no kinder could
have been.  

Thou know'st that twice a day I have
brought thee in this can
reah water from the brook, as clear as ever
ran;
nd twice in the day, when the ground is
wet with dew,
bringt thee draughts of milk, warm milk
it is and new.

Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout
as they are now,
hen I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony
in the plough;
ly playmate thou shalt be; and when the
wind is cold
ur hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall
be thy fold.

It will not, will not rest! — Poor creature,
can it be
hat 'tis thy mother's heart which is working
so in thee?
Things that I know not of belike to thee are
dear,
nd dreams of things which thou canst
neither see nor hear.

Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green
and fair!
've heard of fearful winds and darkness
that come there;
The little brooks that seem all pastime and
all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for
their prey.

Here thou need'st not dread the raven in
the sky;
ight and day thou art safe,—our cottage
is hard by.
Why bleed so after me? Why pull so at
thy chain?
leep — and at break of day I will come to
thee again!"

— As homeward through the lane I went
with lazy feet,
his song to myself did I oftentimes re-
peat;

And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line
by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one half
of it was mine.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the
song;
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the
damsel must belong,
For she looked with such a look and she
spake with such a tone,
That I almost received her heart into my
own."

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES
1800. 1800

ADVERTISEMENT

By persons resident in the country and at-
tached to rural objects, many places will be
found unnamed or of unknown names, where
little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings
been experienced, which will have given to
such places a private and peculiar interest.
From a wish to give some sort of record to such
Incidents, and renew the gratification of such
feelings, Names have been given to Places by
the Author and some of his Friends, and the
following Poems written in consequence.

I

Written at Grasmere. This poem was sug-
gested on the banks of the brook that runs
through Easedale, which is, in some parts of
its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can
be. I have composed thousands of verses by
the side of it.

It was an April morning: fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the
voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves seemed eager to urge
on
The steps of June; as if their various hues
Were only hindrances that stood between
Them and their object: but, meanwhile,
prevailed
Such an entire contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
With which it looked on this delightful day
Were native to the summer. — Up the brook
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that
all
Which I till then had heard, appeared the
voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the
lamb,
The shepherd’s dog, the linnet and the
thrush
Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,
Which, while I listened, seemed like the
wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves
were here;
But 't was the foliage of the rocks — the
birch,
The yew, the holly, and the bright green
thorn,
With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
And, on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
“Our thoughts at least are ours; and this
wild nook,
My Emma, I will dedicate to thee.”
— Soon did the spot become my other
home,
My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me
there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild
place,
May call it by the name of Emma’s Dell.

II

TO JOANNA

Written at Grasmere. The effect of her
laugh is an extravagance; though the effect
of the reverberation of voices in some parts
of the mountains is very striking. There is, in
the “Excursion,” an allusion to the bleat of a
lamb thus re-echoed, and described with
any exaggeration, as I heard it, on the side
Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretched
on to Langdale Fikes.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
The time of early youth; and there you
learned,
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living Beings by your own fireside,
With such a strong devotion, that your
heart
Is slow to meet the sympathies of them
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
And make dear friendships with the strem
and groves.
Yet we, who are transgressors in this
Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, we love well,
Joanna! and I guess, since you have been
So distant from us now for two long yest
That you will gladly listen to discourse,
However trivial, if you think can be taught
That they, with whom you once were hap
talk
Familiarly of you and of old times.
While I was seated, now some ten days
past,
Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
Their ancient neighbour, the old steep
tower,
The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
Came forth to greet me; and when he asked,
“How fares Joanna, that wild heart
Maid!
And when will she return to us?”
paused;
And, after short exchange of village new
He with grave looks demanded, for what
cause,
Reviving obsolete idolatry,
I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
Of formidable size had chiselled out
Some uncouth name upon the native rock
Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
— Now, by those dear immunities of her
Engendered between malice and true love
I was not loth to be so catechised,
And this was my reply: — As it befell,
One summer morning we had walked abro
At break of day, Joanna and myself.
— ‘T was that delightful season when the
broom,
ill-flowered, and visible on every steep,
ong the cospes runs in veins of gold. 40
r pathway led us on to Rotha’s banks;
x when we came in front of that tall rock
at eastward looks, I there stopped short
 — and stood
acing the lofty barrier with my eye
um base to summit; such delight I found
ote in shrub and tree, in stone and
flower
at internixture of delicious hues,
ong so vast a surface, all at once,
one impression, by connecting force
‘their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
When I had gazed perhaps two minutes’
space,
anna, looking in my eyes, beheld
at ravishment of mine, and laughed
aloud.
se Rock, like something starting from a
leep,
ook up the Lady’s voice, and laughed
again;
at ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
as ready with her cavern; Hammar-scar,
he tall Steep of Silver-howl, sent forth
oise of laughter; southern Loughrigg
heard,
d Fairfield answered with a mountain
one;
vellyn far into the clear blue sky
ried the Lady’s voice, — old Skiddaw
lew
ke speaking-trumpet; — back out of the
clouds
’aramara southward came the voice;
d Kirkstone tossed it from his misty
head.
Now whether (said I to our cordial
Friend,
o the hey-day of astonishment
iled in my face) this were in simple
truth
work accomplished by the brotherhood
of ancient mountains, or my ear was
 touched
ith dreams and visionary impulses
me alone imparted, sure I am
at there was a loud uproar in the hills.
, while we both were listening, to my
side
fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
shelter from some object of her fear.
And hence, long afterwards, when eight-
een moons
were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
In memory of affections old and true, 81
I chiselled out in those rude characters
Joanna’s name deep in the living stone: —
And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
Have called the lovely rock, Joanna’s
Rock.”

III

It is not accurate that the Eminence here al-
luded to could be seen from our orchard-seat.
It rises above the road by the side of Gras-
mere lake, towards Keswick, and its name is
Stone-Arthur.

There is an Eminence,—of these our
hills
The last that parleys with the setting sun;
We can behold it from our orchard-seat;
And, when at evening we pursue our walk
Along the public way, this Peak, so high
Above us, and so distant in its height,
Is visible; and often seems to send
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
As when he shines above it. ’Tis in truth
The loneliest place we have among the
clouds.
And She who dwells with me, whom I have
loved
With such communion, that no place on
earth
Can ever be a solitude to me,
Hath to this lonely Summit given my
Name.

IV

The character of the eastern shore of Gras-
mere lake is quite changed, since these verses
were written, by the public road being carried
along its side. The friends spoken of were
Coleridge and my Sister, and the facts oc-
curred strictly as recorded.

A narrow girdle of rough stones and
crags,
A rude and natural causeway, interposed
Between the water and a winding slope
Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern
shore
Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy:
And there myself and two beloved Friends,
One calm September morning, ere the mist
Had altogether yielded to the sun,
Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.
—— Ill suits the road with one in haste;
but we 10
Played with our time; and, as we strolled
along,
It was our occupation to observe
Such objects as the waves had tossed
ashore —
Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered
bough,
Each on the other heaped, along the line
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant
mood,
Not seldom did we stop to watch some
tuft
Of dandelion seed or thistle’s beard,
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm
lake,
Suddenly halting now — a lifeless stand! 20
And starting off again with freak as sudden;
In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
Making report of an invisible breeze.
That was its wings, its chariot, and its
horse,
Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.
—— And often, trilling with a privilege
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
And now the other, to point out, perchance
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too
fair
Either to be divided from the place 30
On which it grew, or to be left alone
To its own beauty. Many such there are,
Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall
fern,
So stately, of the queen Osmunda named;
Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
On Grasmere’s beach, than Naiad by the
side
Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.
—— So fared we that bright morning: from
the
fields
Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy
mirth 40
Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced
Along the indented shore; when suddenly,
Through a thin veil of glittering haze was
seen
Before us, on a point of jutting land,
The tall and upright figure of a Man
Attired in peasant’s garb, who stood alone
Angling beside the margin of the lake.
“Improvident and reckless,” we exclaimed
“The Man must be, who thus can lose a
day
Of the mid harvest, when the labourers
hire
Is ample, and some little might be stored
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time.”
Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached
Close to the spot where with his rod and
line
He stood alone; whereat he turned his
head
To greet us — and we saw a Man wore
down
By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken
cheeks,
And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
That for my single self I looked at them,
Forgetful of the body they sustained. —
Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
The Man was using his best skill to gain
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
That knew not of his wants. I will not say
What thoughts immediately were ours, so
how
The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
With all its lovely images, was changed
To serious musing and to self-reproach. 50
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
What need there is to be reserved in speech
And temper all our thoughts with charity.
—— Therefore, unwilling to forget that day
My Friend, Myself, and She who then re
ceived
The same admonishment, have called this
place
By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
As e’er by mariner was given to bay
Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast;
And Point Rash-Judgment is the name
it bears.

To M. H.
The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park
Our walk was far among the ancient trees
There was no road, nor any woodman’s
path;
But a thick umbrage — checking the wild
growth
THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE

1800. 1800

Suggested nearer to Grasmere, on the same mountain track as that referred to in the following Note. The Eglantine remained many years afterwards, but is now gone.

I

"BEWARE, thou fond presumptuous Elf," exclaimed an angry Voice, "Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self between me and my choice!"

A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows Has threatened a poor Briar-rose, That, all bespattered with his foam, In dancing high and dancing low, Was living, as a child might know, An unhappy home.

II

Dost thou presume my course to block? My, off! or, puny Thing!

I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock To which thy fibres cling."
The Flood was tyrannous and strong; The patient Briar suffered long, Nor did he utter groan or sigh, Hoping the danger would be past; But, seeing no relief, at last, He ventured to reply.

III

"Ah!" said the Briar, "blame me not; Why should we dwell in strife? We who in this sequestered spot Once lived a happy life! You stirred me on my rocky bed — What pleasure through my veins you spread The summer long, from day to day, My leaves you freshened and bedewed; Nor was it common gratitude That did your cares repay.

IV

"When spring came on with bud and bell, Among these rocks did I Before you hang my wreaths to tell That gentle days were nigh! And in the sultry summer hours, I sheltered you with leaves and flowers; And in my leaves — now shed and gone, The linnet lodged, and for us two Chanted his pretty songs, when you Had little voice or none.

V

"But now proud thoughts are in your breast — What grief is mine you see, Ah! would you think, even yet how blest Together we might be! Though of both leaf and flower bereft, Some ornaments to me are left — Rich store of scarlet hips is mine, With which I, in my humble way, Would deck you many a winter day, A happy Eglantine!"

VI

What more he said I cannot tell, The Torrent down the rocky dell Came thundering loud and fast; I listened, nor aught else could hear; The Briar quaked — and much I fear Those accents were his last.
THE OAK AND THE BROOM

A PASTORAL

1800. 1800

Suggested upon the mountain pathway that leads from Upper Rydal to Grasmere. The ponderous block of stone which is mentioned in the poem remains, I believe, to this day, a good way up Nab-Scar. Broom grows under it, and in many places on the side of the precipice.

I

His simple truths did Andrew glean
Beside the babbling rills;
A careful student he had been
Among the woods and hills.
One winter's night, when through the trees
The wind was roaring, on his knees
His youngest born did Andrew hold;
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This Tale the Shepherd told.

II

"I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat!
Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-west:
When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus addressed:— 10

III

"Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain's edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred;
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
The splinters took another road—
I see them yonder—what a load
For such a Thing as you! 20

IV

"You are preparing as before,
To deck your slender shape;
And yet, just three years back—no more—
You had a strange escape:

Down from you cliff a fragment broke;
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,
And hitherward pursued its way;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'T is hanging to this day!

V

"If breeze or bird to this rough steep
Your kind's first seed did bear;
The breeze had better been asleep,
The bird caught in a snare:
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy
To come and slumber in your bower;
And, trust me, on some sultry noon,
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon
Will perish in one hour.

VI

"From me this friendly warning take—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus, to keep herself awake,
Did gently interpose:
'My thanks for your discourse are due;
That more than what you say is true,
I know, and I have known it long;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

VII

"Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small;
And he is oft the wisest man,
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam?
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage;
My father many a happy year,
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age.

VIII

"Even such as his may be my lot.
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors? Am I not
In truth a favoured plant!
On me such bounty Summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers;
And, when the Frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This Plant can never die.
IX
"The butterfly, all green and gold,  
To me hath often flown,  
Here in my blossoms to behold  
Wings lovely as his own.  
When grass is chill with rain or dew,  
Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe  
Lies with her infant lamb; I see  
The love they to each other make,  
And the sweet joy which they partake,  
It is a joy to me."

X
"Her voice was blithe, her heart was light:  
The Broom might have pursued  
Her speech, until the stars of night  
Their journey had renewed;  
But in the branches of the oak  
Two ravens now began to croak  
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air;  
And to her own green bower the breeze  
That instant brought two stripping bees  
To rest, or murmur there."

XI
"One night, my Children! from the north  
There came a furious blast;  
At break of day I ventured forth,  
And near the cliff I passed.  
The storm had fallen upon the Oak,  
And struck him with a mighty stroke,  
And whirled, and whirled him far away;  
And, in one hospitable cleft,  
The little careless Broom was left  
To live for many a day."

HART-LEAP WELL
1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage; when, after having tired myself with labouring at an awkward passage in "The Brothers," I started with a sudden impulse to this to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My Sister and I had past the place a few weeks before in our old winter journey from Stockburn on the side of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant told me near the spot told us the story so as concerned the name of the Well, and the last, and pointed out the Stones. Both the Name and the Well are objects that may easily be missed; the tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighbourhood: the man who stated it to us was very old.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

PART FIRST

The Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor  
With the slow motion of a summer’s cloud,  
And now, as he approached a vassal’s door,  
"Bring forth another horse!" he cried aloud.

"Another horse!" — That shout the vassal heard  
And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;  
Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third  
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser’s eyes;  
The horse and horseman are a happy pair;  
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter’s Hall,  
That as they galloped made the echoes roar;  
But horse and man are vanished, one and all;  
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:  
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,  
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on  
With suppliant gestures and upbraiding stern;  
But breath and eyesight fail; and, one by one,  
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race?  
The bugles that so joyfully were blown?  
— This chase it looks not like an earthly chase;  
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.
The poor Hart toils along the mountainside;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he died;
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy: He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn, But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat; Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned; And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched: His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill, And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest, (Never had living man such joyful lot!) Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west, And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill — (it was at least Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now Such sight was never seen by human eyes: Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow, Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot, And a small arbour, made for rural joy; 'T will be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot, A place of love for damsels that are coy.

"A cunning artist will I have to frame A basin for that fountain in the dell!

And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth, shall call it Hart-Leap Well.

"And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised;
Three several pillars, each a rough-beaten stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

"And, in the summer-time when days are long,
I will come hither with my Paramour; And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its arbour shall endure:—
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure!"

Then home he went, and left the Hart stone-dead, With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring. — Soon did the Knight perform what he had said; And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere throve the Moon into her port steered, A cup of stone received the living well; Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared, And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall With trailing plants and trees were intertwined, — Which soon composed a little sylvan hall, A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long, Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour; And with the dancers and the minstrel's song Made merriment within that pleasant bower.
The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale. — But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND

The moving accident is not my trade;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine:
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,— 11
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head;
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
"Here in old time the hand of man hath been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay. 20

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow: — him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old! But something ails it now: the spot is cursed.

"You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood —
Some say that they are beeches, others elms —

These were the bower; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms!

"The arbour does its own condition tell;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream;
But as to the great Lodge! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

"There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep, 39
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

"Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood: but, for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

"What thoughts must through the creature's brain have past!
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds — and look, Sir, at this last —
O Master! it has been a cruel leap.

"For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his deathbed near the well.

"Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summertime;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

"In April here beneath the flowering thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring."
"'T IS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE DIED FOR LOVE"

1800. 1800

'T is said, that some have died for love:
And here and there a churchyard grave is found
In the cold north's unhaunted ground,
Because the wretched man himself had slain,
His love was such a grievous pain.
And there is one whom I five years have known;

He dwells alone
Upon Helvellyn's side:
He loved — the pretty Barbara died;
And thus he makes his moan:
Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid
When thus his moan he made:

"Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak!
Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
That in some other way you smoke
May mount into the sky!
The clouds pass on; they from the heavens depart.
I look — the sky is empty space;
I know not what I trace;
But when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

"Oh! what a weight is in these shades! Ye leaves,
That murmur once so dear, when will it cease?
Your sound my heart of rest bereavest,
It robs my heart of peace.
Thou Thrush, that singest loud — and loud and free,
Into you row of willows flit,
Upon that alder sit;
Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

"Roll back, sweet Rill! back to thy mountain-bounds,
And there for ever be thy waters chained!
For thou dost haunt the air with sounds,
That cannot be sustained;
If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
Headlong you waterfall must come,
Oh let it then be dumb!
Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

"Thou Eglinante, so bright with sunny showers,
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
Thou one fair shrub, oh! shed thy flowers,
And stir not in the gale.
For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
Thus rise and thus descend, —
Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can bear."
The Man who makes this feverish complaint
Is one of giant stature, who could dance
Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.
Ah gentle Love! if ever thought was thine
To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
Turn from me, gentle Love! nor let me walk
Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor know
Such happiness as I have known to-day.

THE CHILDLESS FATHER
1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. When I
was a child at Cockermouth, no funeral took place
without a basin filled with sprigs of box-wood
being placed upon a table covered with
a white cloth in front of the house. The hunt-
ings on foot, in which the old man is supposed
to join as here described, were of common, al-
most habitual, occurrence in our vales when I
was a boy; and the people took much delight in
them. They are now less frequent.

"Up, Timothy, up with your stuff and away!
Not a soul in the village this morning will
stay;
The hare has just started from Hamilton's
grounds,
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the
hounds."

— Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and
green,
On the slopes of the pastures all colours
were seen;
With their comely blue aprons, and caps
white as snow,
The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six
months before,
Filled the funeral basin at Timothy's door;
A coffin through Timothy's threshold had
past;
One Child did it bear, and that Child was
his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the
fray,
The horse and the horn, and the hark! hark away!
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut
With a leisurely motion the door of his hnt.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said;
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead."
But of this in my ears not a word did he
speak;
And he went to the chase with a tear on his
cheek.

SONG
FOR THE WANDERING JEW
1800. 1800

Though the torrents from their fountains
Roar down many a raggy steep,
Yet they find among the mountains
Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,
Ere the storm its fury stills,
Helmet-like themselves will fasten
On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,
Yet he has a home to enter
In some nook of chosen ground:

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean
Yield him no domestic cave,
Slumbers without sense of motion,
Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven
Gambol like a dancing skiff,
Not the less she loves her haven
In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,
Vagrant over desert sands,
Brooding on her eggs reposes
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,
Never nearer to the goal;
Night and day, I feel the trouble
Of the Wanderer in my soul.

RURAL ARCHITECTURE
1800. 1800

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. These
structures, as every one knows, are common
amongst our hills, being built by shepherds, as
conspicuous marks, and occasionally by boys in
sport.
There's George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald Shore,
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest not more
Than the height of a counsellor's bag;
To the top of Great How did it please them to climb:
And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as they lay:
They built him and christened him all in one day,
An urchin both vigorous and hale;
And so without scruple they called him Ralph Jones.
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of his bones;
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,
And, in anger or merriment, out of the north,
Coming on with a terrible pother,
From the peak of the crag blew the giant away.
And what did these school-boys? — The very next day
They went and they built up another.

— Some little I've seen of blind boisterous works
By Christian disturbers more savage than Turks,
Spirits busy to do and undo:
At remembrance whereof my blood sometimes will flag;
Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the crag!
And I'll build up a giant with you.

ELLEN IRWIN
OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLLE
1800. 1800

It may be worth while to observe that as there are Scotch Poems on this subject in simple ballad strain, I thought it would be both presumptuous and superfluous to attempt treating it in the same way; and, accordingly, I chose a construction of stanza quite new in our language; in fact, the same as that of Bürger's Leonora, except that the first and third lines do not, in my stanzas, rhyme. At the outset I threw out a classical image to prepare the reader for the style in which I meant to treat the story, and so to preclude all comparison.

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
Upon the braes of Kirtle,
Was lovely as a Grecian maid
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle;
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
And there did they beguile the day
With love and gentle speeches,
Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
The Bruce had been selected;
And Gordon, fairest of them all,
By Ellen was rejected.
Sad tidings to that noble Youth!
For it may be proclaimed with truth,
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
His shattered hopes and crosses,
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
Reclined on flowers and mosses?
Alas that ever he was born!
The Gordon, couchèd behind a thorn,
Sees them and their caressing;
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thought
That through his brain are travelling,
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
He launched a deadly javelin!
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
And, starting up to meet the same,
Did with her body cover
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,
The mortal spear repelling.
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain;
And fought with rage incessant
Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,
And many years ensuing,
This wretched Knight did vainly seek
The death that he was wooing.
And hence I said, that Andrew's boys
Will all be trained to waste and pillage;
And wished the press-gang, or the drum
With its tantara sound, would come
And sweep him from the village.

THE TWO THIEVES

OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE

1800. 1800

This is described from the life, as I was in
the habit of observing when a boy at Hawkshead School. Daniel was more than eighty
years older than myself when he was daily,
thus occupied, under my notice. No book
could have so early taught me to think of the
changes to which human life is subject; and
while looking at him I could not but say to
myself — we may, one of us, I or the happiest
of my playmates, live to become still more the
object of pity than this old man, this half-doating
pilferer!

O now that the genius of Bewick were mine.
And the skill which he learned on the banks
of the Tyne.
Then the Muses might deal with me just as
they chose,
For I'd take my last leave both of verse
and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical
hand!
Book-learning and books should be banished
the land:
And, for hunger and thirst and such trouble-
some calls,
Every ale-house should then have a feast
on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes
on a chair;
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw
would he care!
For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and
his sheaves,
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two
Thieves?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three birth-
days old,
His Grand sire that age more than thirty
times told;

Andrew Jones

1800. 1800

I hate that Andrew Jones; he'll breed
His children up to waste and pillage.
I wish the press-gang or the drum
With its tantara sound would come,
And sweep him from the village!

I said not this, because he loves
Through the long day to swear and tipple;
But for the poor dear sake of one
To whom a foul deed he had done,
A friendless man, a travelling cripple!

For this poor crawling helpless wretch,
Some horseman who was passing by,
A penny on the ground had thrown;
But the poor cripple was alone
And could not stoop — no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground
For it had long been droughty weather;
So with his staff the cripple wrought
Among the dust till he had brought
The half-pennies together.

It chanced that Andrew passed that way
Just at the time; and there he found
The cripple in the mid-day heat
Standing alone, and at his feet
He saw the penny on the ground.

He stopped and took the penny up:
And when the cripple nearer drew,
Quoth Andrew, "Under half-a-crown,
What a man finds is all his own,
And so, my Friend, good-day to you."

So, coming his last help to crave,
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave
His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkconnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen:
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn epitaph! 
There are ninety good seasons of fair and foul weather 
Between them, and both go a-pilfering together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor?
Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's door?
Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide!
And his Grandson's as busy at work by his side.

Old Daniel begins; he stops short—and his eye.
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly:
'T is a look which at this time is hardly his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires: 
And what if he cherished his purse? 'T was no more 
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'T was a path trod by thousands; but Daniel is one
Who went something farther than others have gone, 
And now with old Daniel you see how it fares; 
You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand: ere the sun 
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun: 
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall, 
This child but half knows it, and that, not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread, 
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led; 
And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles, 
Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they roam;
For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter at home,
Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done;
And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

Old Man! whom so oft I with pity have eyed, 
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side: 
Long yet may'st thou live! for a teacher we see 
That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

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A CHARACTER

1800. 1800

The principal features are taken from that of my friend Robert Jones.

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space 
For so many strange contrasts in one human face:
There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both redundant and vain;
Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
Could pierce through a temper that's soft to disease,
Would be rational peace—a philosopher's ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
And attention full ten times as much as there needs;
Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy;
And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a d iffident stare
Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she's there,
There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.
This picture from nature may seem to depart,
Yet the Man would at once run away with your heart;
And I for five centuries right glad would be
Such an odd, such a kind happy creature as he.

INSCRIPTIONS

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENTWATER

1800. 1800

If thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not unmov'd
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude. — But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And, when with eye upraised
To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Screamed to his orisons, and when he paced along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled
might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
be prayed he: — as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE

1800. 1800

Rude is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
Proportions more harmonious, and approached
To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
But take it in good part: — alas! the poor
Vitruvius of our village had no help.
From the great City; never, upon leaves
Of red Morocco folio, saw displayed,
In long succession, pre-existing ghosts
Of Beauties yet unborn — the rustic Lodge
Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.
Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
And hither does one Poet sometimes row
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
With plenteous store of heath and withered fern,
(A ladling which he with his sickle cuts, 20
Among the mountains) and beneath this roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,
the Sheep,
Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own Household: nor, while from his bed
He looks, through the open door-place,
toward the lake
And to the stirring breezes, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep —
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy! 30

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY, UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL

1800. 1800

Stranger! this hillock of mis-shapen stones
Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
Of some old British Chief: 'tis nothing more
Than the rude embryo of a little Dome
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built
Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
That from the shore a full-grown man might wade,
And make himself a freeman of this spot
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
Are monuments of his unfinished task.
The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
Was once selected as the corner-stone
Of that intended Pile, which would have been
Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
And other little builders who dwell here, had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him, and for the outrage which he had devised
Entire forgiveness! — But if thou art one
On fire with thy impatience to become
An inmate of these mountains, — if, disturbed
By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
Out of the quiet rock the elements
Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze
In snow-white splendour, — think again; and, taught
By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose;
There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

THE SPARROW'S NEST
1801. 1807

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grassmere. At the end of the garden of my father's house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth Castle. This was our favourite play-ground. The terrace-wall, a low one was covered with closely-clipt privet and roses which gave an almost impervious shelter to birds that built their nests there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of those nests.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
I started — seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
My Father's house, in wet or dry
My sister Emmeline and I
Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:
Such heart was in her, being then
A little Prattler among men.
The Blessing of my later years
Was with me when a boy:
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares, and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
And love, and thought, and joy.

"PELION AND OSSA FLOURISH SIDE BY SIDE"

1801. 1815

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
Together in immortal books enrolled:
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold
And that inspiring Hill, which "did divide
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"
Shines with poetic radiance as of old;
While not an English Mountain we hold
By the celestial Muses glorified.
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise crowds:
What was the great Parnassus' self
Thee,
Mount Skiddaw? In his natural sovereign
Our British Hill is nobler far; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.
THE PRIORRESS’S TALE
FROM CHAUCER
1801. 1820

“Call up him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold.”

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer’s time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as also and already, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Priorress forms a fine background for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told vouchsafes for the extravagance of the miracle.

I

"O Lord, our Lord! how wondrously,”
(quoteth she)

"Thy name in this large world is spread abroad!
For not alone by men of dignity
Thy worship is performed and precious land;
But by the mouths of children, gracious God!
Thy goodness is set forth; they when they lie
Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

II

"Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I may,
Jesu! of thee, and the white Lily-flower
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for aye,
To tell a story I will use my power;
Not that I may increase her honour’s dower,
For she herself is honour, and the root
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul’s best boot.

III

"O Mother Maid! O Maid and Mother free!
O bush unburnt! burning in Moses’ sight!
That down didst ravish from the Deity,
Through humbleness, the spirit that did alight
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory’s might,
Conceived was the Father’s sapience,
Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

IV

"Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,
Surpass all science and all utterance; For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to thee
Thou goest before in thy benignity,
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

V

"My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen!
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
That I the weight of it may not sustain;
But as a child of twelve months old or less,
That laboureth his language to express,
Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee pray,
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall say.

VI

"There was in Asia, in a mighty town,
’Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews might be,
Assigned to them and given them for their own
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to his company;
And through this street who list might ride and wend;
Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

VII

"A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the farther end, in which there were
A nest of children come of Christian blood,
That learned in that school from year to year
Such sort of doctrine as men used there,
That is to say, to sing and read also,
As little children in their childhood do.

VIII

"Among these children was a Widow’s son,
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,
And eke, when he the image did behold
Of Jesu’s Mother, as he had been told,
This Child was wont to kneel adown and
say
Ave Marie, as he goeth by the way.

IX
“This Widow thus her little Son hath taught
Our blissful Lady, Jesu’s Mother dear,
To worship aye, and he forgot it not;
For simple infant hath a ready ear.
Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,
Calling to mind this matter when I may,
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

X
“This little Child, while in the school he sate
His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,
The whilst the rest their anthem-book repeat
The Alma Redemptoris did he hear;
And as he durst he drew him near and near,
And hearkened to the words and to the note,
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

XI
“This Latin knew he nothing what it said,
For he too tender was of age to know;
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed
That he the meaning of this song would show,
And unto him declare why men sing so;
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,
This child did him beseech on his bare knees.

XII
“His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,
Answered him thus: — ‘This song, I have heard say,
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;
Her to salute, and also her to pray
To be our help upon our dying day:
If there is more in this, I know it not;
Song do I learn, — small grammar I have got.’

XIII
“‘And is this song fashioned in reverence
Of Jesu’s Mother?’ said this Innocent;

‘Now, certès, I will use my diligence
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent;
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,
And shall be beaten three times in an hour
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.

XIV
“His Schoolfellow, whom he had so been sought,
As they went homeward taught him privily
And then he sang it well and fearlessly
From word to word according to the note.
Twice in a day it passed through his throat
Homeward and schoolward whensoe’er he went,
On Jesu’s Mother fixed was his intent.

XV
“Through all the Jewry (this before sai’d)
This little Child, as he came to and fro,
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,
O Alma Redemptoris! high and low:
The sweetness of Christ’s Mother pierced s
His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

XVI
“The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hat
His wasp’s nest in Jew’s heart, upswelleth:
‘O woe, O Hebrew people!’ said he in his wrath,
‘Is it an honest thing? Shall this be so?‘
That such a Boy where’er he lists shall go
In your despite, and sing his hymns as saws,
Which is against the reverence of our laws!

XVII
“From that day forward have the Jews conspired
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;
And to this end a Homicide they hired,
That in an alley had a privy place,
And, as the Child ‘gan to the school to pass,
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast.
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

XVIII
“I say that him into a pit they threw,
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents exhale;
O cursed folk! away, ye Herods new!
What may your ill intentions you avail?
Murder will out; certès it will not fail;
Know, that the honour of high God may spread,  
The blood cries out on your accursed deed.

XIX
"O Martyr established in virginity!  
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the throne,  
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,  
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,  
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go  
Before the Lamb singing continually,  
That never fleshly woman they did know.

XX
"Now this poor widow waiteth all that night  
After her little Child, and he came not;  
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning light,  
With face all pale with dread and busy thought,  
She at the School and elsewhere him hath sought  
Until thus far she learned, that he had been  
In the Jews' street, and there he last was seen.

XXI
"With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed she goeth, as she were half out of her mind,  
To every place wherein she hath supposed by likelihood her little Son to find;  
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind she cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,  
And him among the accursed Jews she sought.

XXII
"She asketh, and she piteously doth pray  
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place  
To tell her if her child had passed that way;  
They all said — Nay; but Jesu of his grace gave to her thought, that in a little space he for his Son in that same spot did cry  
There he was cast into a pit hard by.

XXIII
O thou great God that dost perform thy land  
By mouths of Innocents, lo! here thy might;

This gem of chastity, this emerald,  
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,  
There, where with mangled throat he lay upright,  
The Alma Redemptoris 'gan to sing,  
So loud, that with his voice the place did ring.

XXIV
"The Christian folk that through the Jewry went  
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;  
And hastily they for the Provost sent;  
Immediately he came, not tarrying,  
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly King,  
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind:  
Which done he bade that they the Jews should bind.

XXV
"This Child with piteous lamentation then  
Was taken up, singing his song alway;  
And with procession great and pomp of men  
To the next Abbey him they bare away;  
His Mother swooning by the body lay:  
And scarcely could the people that were near  
Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

XXVI
"Torment and shameful death to every one  
This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare  
That of this murder wist, and that anon:  
Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare;  
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;  
Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,  
And after that he hung them by the law.

XXVII
"Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie  
Before the altar while the Mass doth last:  
The Abbot with his convent's company  
Then sped themselves to bury him full fast;  
And, when they holy water on him cast,  
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water,  
And sang, O Alma Redemptoris Mater!
THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE

"Eke the whole Convent on the pavement lay,
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;
And after that they rose, and took their way,
And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,
And in a tomb of precious marble clear
Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet.—
Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

"Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid low
By cursed Jews—thing well and widely known,
For it was done a little while ago—
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry
Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,
In mercy would his mercy multiply
On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary!"

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE
FROM CHAUCER
1801. 1842

I
The God of Love—ah, benedicite!
How mighty and how great a Lord is he!
For he of low hearts can make high, of high
He can make low, and unto death bring nigh;
And hard hearts can make them kind and free.

II
Within a little time, as hath been found,
He can make sick folk whole and fresh and sound:
Them who are whole in body and in mind,
He can make sick,—bind can he and unbind
All that he will have bound, or have unbound.

III
To tell his might my wit may not suffice;
Foolish men he can make them out of wise;—
For he may do all that he will devise;
Loose lives he can make abate their vice,
And proud hearts can make tremble in a trice.

IV
In brief, the whole of what he will, he may;
Against him dare not any wight say nay;
To humble or afflict whom’er he will,
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill;
But most his might he sheds on the eve of May.

V
For every true heart, gentle heart and free,
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,
Now against May shall have some stirring — whether
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never
At other time, methinks, in like degree.

VI
For now they may hear the small birds’ song,
And see the budding leaves the branches throng,
This unto their remembrance doth bring
All kinds of pleasure mixed with sorrowing;
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever long.

VII
And of that longing heaviness doth come,
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart and home:
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;
And thus in May their hearts are set on fire,
So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

VIII
In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though now
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;
Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every day,—
How hard, alas! to bear, I only know.

IX
Such shaking doth the fever in me keep
Through all this May that I have little sleep;
And also ’tis not likely unto me,
That any living heart should sleepy be
In which Love’s dart its fiery point doth steep.

X
But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;
How among them it was a common tale,
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,
Ere the vile Cuckoo’s note be uttered.

XI
And then I thought anon as it was day,
I gladly would go somewhere to essay
If perchance a Nightingale might hear,
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,
And it was then the third night of the May.

XII
And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,
No longer would I in my bed abide,
But straightway to a wood that was hard by,
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,
And held the pathway down by a brookside;

XIII
Till to a lawn I came all white and green,
I in so fair a one had never been.
The ground was green, with daisy powdered over;
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty cover,
All green and white; and nothing else was seen.

XIV
There sate I down among the fair fresh flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night; and they,
Who were so joyful at the light of day, began to honour May with all their powers.

XV
Well did they know that service all by rote,
And there was many and many a lovely note,
Some, singing loud, as if they had complained;
Some with their notes another manner feigned;
And some did sing all out with the full throat.
XVI
They pruned themselves, and made themselves right gay,
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;
And ever two and two together were,
The same as they had chosen for the year,
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day. 80

XVII
Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sat upon,
Was making such a noise as it ran on
According to the sweet Birds' harmony;
Methought that it was the best melody
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

XVIII
And for delight, but how I never wot,
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought.

XIX
And that was right upon a tree fast by,
And who was then ill satisfied but I?
Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the rood,
From thee and thy base throat, keep all that's good,
Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

XX
And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,
In the next bush that was me fast beside,
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,
Echoing thorough all the green wood wide.

XXI
Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my heart's cheer,
Hence hast thou stayed a little while too long;
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,
And she hath been before thee with her song;
Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

XXII
But hear you now a wondrous thing, I pray;
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,
Methought I wist right well what these birds meant,
And had good knowing both of their intent,
And of their speech, and all that they would say.

XXIII
The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake:—
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or brake,
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell here;
For every wight eschews thy song to bear,
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

XXIV
What! quoth she then, what is 't that ails thee now?
It seems to me I sing as well as thou;
For mine's a song that is both true and plain,—
Although I cannot quaver so in vain
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how.

XXV
All men may understanding have of me,
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee; For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry:—
Thou say'st Osee, Osee, then how may I
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be?

XXVI
Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it is?
Oft as I say Osee, Osee, I wis,
Then mean I, that I should be wondrous fain
That shamefully they one and all were slain,
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII
And also would I that they all were dead,
Who do not think in love their life to lead:
For who is loth the God of Love to obey,
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,
And for that cause Osee I cry; take heed!

XXVIII
Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,
That all must love or die; but I withdraw,
And take my leave of all such company,
For mine intent it neither is to die, Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

XXX
For lovers of all folk that be alive, The most disquiet have and least do thrive; Most feeling have of sorrow, woe and care, And the least welfare cometh to their share; What need is there against the truth to strive?

XXX
What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy mind, That in thy churlishness a cause canst find To speak of Love's true Servants in this mood; For in this world no service is so good To every wight that gentle is of kind.

XXXI
For thereof comes all goodness and all worth; All gentleness and honour thence come forth; Thence worship comes, content and true heart's pleasure, And full-assured trust, joy without measure, And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth;

XXXII
And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy, And seemliness, and faithful company, And dread of shame that will not do amiss; For he that faithfully Love's servant is, Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die.

XXXIII
And that the very truth it is which I Now say — in such belief I'll live and die; And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice. Then, quoth she, let me never hope for bliss, If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

XXXIV
Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous fair, Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere; For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis: And Love in old folk a great dotage is; Who most it useth, him 't will most impair.

XXXV
For thereof come all contraries to gladness! Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming sadness, Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate, Dishonour, shame, envy importunate, Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and madness.

XXXVI
Loving is aye an office of despair, And one thing is therein which is not fair; For whoso gets of love a little bliss, Unless it alway stay with him, I wis He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

XXXVII
And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep nigh, For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint cry, If long time from thy mate thou be, or far, Thou 'll be as others that forsaken are; Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

XXXVIII
Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill be-seen! The God of Love afflict thee with all teen, For thou art worse than mad a thousand fold; For many a one hath virtues manifold, Who had been nought, if Love had never been.

XXXIX
For evermore his servants Love amendeth, And he from every blemish them defendeth; And maketh them to burn, as in a fire, In loyalty, and worshipful desire, And, when it likes him, joy enough them sendeth.

XL
Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still, For Love no reason hath but his own will; — For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy; True lovers doth so bitterly annoy, He lets them perish through that grievous ill.

XLI
With such a master would I never be; For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,
And knows not when he hurts and when he heals;
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,
How from her inmost heart a sigh she brought,
And said, Alas! that ever I was born,
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn,—
And with that word, she into tears burst out.

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus speak
Of Love, and of his holy services;
Now, God of Love; thou help me in some wise,
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may wreak.

And so methought I started up anon,
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,
Which at the Cuckoo hardly I cast,
And he for dread did fly away full fast; 219
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was gone.

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,
Kept crying “Farewell! — farewell, Pop-injay!”
As if in scornful mockery of me;
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

Then straightway came the Nightingale to me,
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank thee,
That thou wert near to rescue me; and now,
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,
That all this May I will thy songstressed be.

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou heard’st me;
Yet if I live it shall amended be,
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

And one thing will I counsel thee also,
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love’s saw;
All that she said is an outrageous lie.
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereeto, quoth I,
For Love, and it hath done me mighty we.

Yea, hath it? use, quoth she, this medicine; This May-time, every day before thou dine,
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,
Although for pain thou may’st be like to die,
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and pine.

And mind always that thou be good and true,
And I will sing one song, of many new,
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry;
And then did she begin this song full high,
“Beshrew all them that are in love untrue.”

And soon as she had sung it to the end,
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must wend;
And, God of Love, that can right well and may,
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of me;
I pray to God with her always to be,
And joy of love to send her evermore;
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her love,
For there is not so false a bird as she.

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,
To all the Birds that lodged within that dale,
And gathered each and all into one place;
And them besought to hear her doeful case,
And thus it was that she began her tale.

The Cuckoo —’t is not well that I should hide
How she and I did each the other chide,
And without ceasing, since it was daylight;
And now I pray you all to do me right. 269
Of that false Bird whom Love cannot abide.

LV
Then spake one Bird, and full assent all gave;
This matter asketh counsel good as grave,
For birds we are—all here together brought;
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is not;
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

LVI
And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,
And other Peers whose names are on record;
A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,
And judgment there be given; or that intent
Failing, we finally shall make accord. 280

LVII
And all this shall be done, without a nay,
The morrow after Saint Valentine’s day,
Under a maple that is well beseen,
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and gay.

LVIII
She thanked them; and then her leave she took,
And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;
And there she sat and sung—upon that tree—
“For term of life Love shall have hold of me.” —
So loudly, that I with that song awoke. 290

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,
For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,
Who did on thee the hardiness bestow
To appear before my Lady? but a sense
Thou surely hast of her benevolence,
Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth give;
For all of good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,
To show to her some pleasant meanings writ
In winning words, since thorough her gentleness,
Thee she accepts as for her service fit!
Oh! it repents me I have neither wit
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;
For all of good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,
Though I be far from her I reverence,
To think upon my truth and steadfastness,
And to abridge my sorrow’s violence,
Caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,
She of her liking proof to me would give;
For of all good she is the best alive. 311

L’ENVoy
Pleasure’s Aurora, Day of gladsomeness!
Luna by night, with heavenly influence
Illumined! root of beauty and goodness,
Write, and allay, by your beneficence,
My sighs breathed forth in silence,—comfort give!
Since of all good, you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT

TROILUS AND CRESIDA
FROM CHAUCER
1801. 1842

Next morning Troilus began to clear
His eyes from sleep, at the first break of day,
And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,
For love of God, full piteously did say,
We must the Palace see of Cresida;
For since we yet may have no other feast,
Let us behold her Palace at the least!

And therewithal to cover his intent
A cause he found into the Town to go,
And they right forth to Cresid’s Palace went;

But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,
Him thought his sorrowful heart would break in two;
For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,
Well nigh for sorrow down he ‘gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover ’gan behold,
How shut was every window of the place,
Like frost he thought his heart was icy cold;
For which, with changed, pale, and deadly face,
Without word uttered, forth he ’gan to pace;
And on his purpose bent so fast to ride,

That no wight his continuance espied.
Then said he thus, — O Palace desolate!
O house of houses, once so richly dight!
O Palace empty and disconsolate!
Thou lamp of which extinguished is the light;
O Palace whilom day that now art night,
Thou ought'st to fall and I to die; since she
Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast!
Palace illumined with the sun of bliss;
O ring of which the ruby now is lost,
O cause of woe, that cause has been of bliss;
Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss
Thy cold doors; but I dare not for this rout;
Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is out.

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,
With changed face, and piteous to behold;
And when he might his time aright espy,
Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told
Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,
So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,
And everything to his remembrance
Came as he rode by places of the town
Where he had felt such perfect pleasure once.
Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,
And in that Temple she with her bright eyes,
My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I
Heard my own Créside's laugh; and once at play
I yonder saw her eke full blissfully;
And yonder once she unto me 'gan say —
Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I pray!
And there so graciously did me behold,
That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house
Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,
So womanly, with voice melodious
Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,
That in my soul methinks I yet do hear
The blissful sound; and in that very place
My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love! then thus he cried,
When I the process have in memory,
How thou hast wearied me on every side,
Men thence a book might make, a history;
What need to seek a conquest over me,
Since I am wholly at thy will? what joy
Hast thou thy own liege subjects to destroy?

Dread Lord! so fearful when provoked,
Thine ire
Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and grief.
Now mercy, Lord! thou know'st well I desire
Thy grace above all pleasures first and chief;
And live and die I will in thy belief;
For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,
That Créside again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,
As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
Then know I well that she would not so journ.

Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,
As Juno was unto the Theban blood,
From whence to Thebes came griefs in multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go,
Whence Créside rode, as if in haste she was;
And up and down there went, and to and fro,
And to himself full oft he said, alas!
From hence my hope, and solace forth did pass.
O would the blissful God now for his joy,
I might her see again coming to Troy!

And up to yonder hill was I her guide;
Alas, and there I took of her my leave;
Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,
For very grief of which my heart shall cleave; —
And hither home I came when it was eve;
And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,
And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,
That he was blighted, pale, and wane less
Than he was wont; and that in whispers soft
Men said, what may it be, can no one guess
Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?
All which he of himself conceited wholly
Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,
That every wight, who in the way passed
Had of him ruth, and fancied that they
said,
I am right sorry Troilus will die:
And thus a day or two drove waryly; 110
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to lead
As one that standeth betwixt hope and
dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to
show
The occasion of his woe, as best he might;
And made a fitting song, of words but few,
Somewhat his woeful heart to make more
light;
And when he was removed from all men's
sight,
With a soft night voice, he of his Lady
dear,
That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.
O star, of which I lost have all the light, 120
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,
That ever dark in torment, night by night,
Toward my death with wind I steer and
sail;
For which upon the tenth night if thou fail
With thy bright beams to guide me but
one hour,
My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung
through,
He fell again into his sorrows old;
And every night, as was his wont to do,
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold; 130
And all his trouble to the moon he told,
And said; I wis, when thou art horn'd
anew,
I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that
morrow,
When hence did journey my bright Lady
dear;
That cause is of my torment and my sor-
row;
For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and
clear;
For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;

For when thy horns begin once more to
spring,
Then shall she come, that with her bliss
may bring. 140

The day is more, and longer every night
Than they were wont to be — for he thought
so;
And that the sun did take his course not
right,
By longer way than he was wont to go;
And said, I am in constant dread I trow,
That Phaeton his son is yet alive,
His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,
To the end that he the Grecian host might
see; 149
And ever thus he to himself would talk: —
Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;
Or yonder is it that the tents must be;
And thence does come this air which is so
sweet,
That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and
more
By moments thus increaseth in my face,
Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;
I prove it thus; for in no other space
Of all this town, save only in this place, 159
Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain;
It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,
Till fully past and gone was the ninth
night;
And ever at his side stood Pandarus,
Who busily made use of all his might
To comfort him, and make his heart more
light;
Giving him always hope, that she the
morrow
Of the tenth day will come, and end his
sorrow.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER
1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I met this
woman near the Wishing-gate, on the high-
road that then led from Grasmere to Ambles-
side. Her appearance was exactly as here
described, and such was her account, nearly to
the letter.
ONE morning (raw it was and wet —
A foggy day in winter time)
A Woman on the road I met,
Not old, though something past her
prime:
Majestic in her person, tall and straight;
And like a Roman matron’s was her mien
and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead;
Old times, thought I, are breathing there;
Proud was I that my country bred
Such strength, a dignity so fair:
She begged an alms, like one in poor
estate;
I looked at her again, nor did my pride
abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
“What is it,” said I, “that you bear,
Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
Protected from this cold damp air?”
She answered, soon as she the question
heard,
“A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-
bird.”

And, thus continuing, she said,
“I had a Son, who many a day
Sailed on the seas, but he is dead;
In Denmark he was cast away:
And I have travelled weary miles to
see
If aught which he had owned might still
remain for me.

“The bird and cage they both were
his:
’t was my Son’s bird; and neat and
trim
He kept it: many voyages
The singing-bird had gone with him;
When last he sailed, he left the bird
behind;
From bodings, as might be, that hung upon
his mind.

“He to a fellow-lodger’s care
Had left it, to be watched and fed,
And pipe its song in safety; — there
I found it when my Son was dead;
And now, God help me for my little
wit!
I bear it with me, Sir; — he took so much
delight in it.”
There, twisted between nave and spoke,  
It hung, nor could at once be freed;  
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,  
A miserable rag indeed!

"And whither are you going, child,  
To-night along these lonesome ways?"  
"To Durham," answered she, half wild—  
"Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief  
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send  
Sob after sob, as if her grief  
Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"  
She checked herself in her distress,  
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;  
I'm fatherless and motherless.

"And I to Durham, Sir, belong."  
Again, as if the thought would choke  
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;  
And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end  
Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,  
As if she had lost her only friend  
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;  
Of Alice and her grief I told;  
And I gave money to the host,  
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,  
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"  
Proud creature was she the next day,  
The little orphan, Alice Fell!

BEGGARS

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Met, and described to me by my Sister, near the quarry at the head of Rydal lake, a place still a chosen resort of vagrants travelling with their families.

She had a tall man's height or more;  
Her face from summer's noontide heat  
No bonnet shaded, but she wore  
A mantle, to her very feet

Descending with a graceful flow,  
And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown;  
Haughty, as if her eye had seen  
Its own light to a distance thrown,  
She towered, fit person for a Queen  
To lead those ancient Amazonian files;  
Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Gracian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand  
And begged an alms with doleful plea  
That ceased not; on our English land  
Such woes, I knew, could never be;  
And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature  
Was beautiful to see — a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way;  
And soon before me did espy  
A pair of little Boys at play,  
Chasing a crimson butterfly;  
The taller followed with his hat in hand,  
Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown  
With leaves of laurel stuck about;  
And, while both followed up and down,  
Each whooping with a merry shout,  
In their fraternal features I could trace  
Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face.

Yet they, so blithe of heart, seemed fit  
For finest tasks of earth or air:  
Wings let them have, and they might flit  
Precursors to Aurora's car,  
Scattering fresh flowers; though happier far, I ween,  
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level green.

They dart across my path — but lo,  
Each ready with a plaintive whine!  
Said I, "not half an hour ago  
Your Mother has had alms of mine."  
"That cannot be," one answered — "she is dead:" —  
I looked reproof — they saw — but neither hung his head.
"She has been dead, Sir, many a day."
"Hush, boys! you're telling me a lie;
It was your Mother, as I say!"
And, in the twinkling of an eye,
"Come! Come!" cried one, and without
more ado,
Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants
flew!

TO A BUTTERFLY
1802. 1807

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.
My sister and I were parted immediately after
the death of our mother, who died in 1778,
both being very young.

STAY near me — do not take thy flight!
A little longer stay in sight!
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy!
Float near me; do not yet depart!
Dead times revive in thee:
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!
A solemn image to my heart,
My father's family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time, when, in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly!
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey: — with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush;
But she, God love her, feared to brush
The dust from off its wings.

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER
1802. 1807

Suggested by what I have noticed in more
than one French fugitive during the time of
the French Revolution. If I am not mistaken,
the lines were composed at Sockburn, when I
was on a visit to Mrs. Wordsworth and her
brother.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
In which a Lady driven from France did
dwell;
The big and lesser griefs with which she
mourned,
In friendship she to me would often tell.
This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,
Where she was childless, daily would repair

To a poor neighbouring cottage; as I found,
For sake of a young Child whose home was
there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond
embrace
This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to
trace
Such things as she unto the Babe might
say:
And thus, from what I heard and knew, or
guessed,
My song the workings of her heart
expressed.

I
"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,
One moment let me be thy mother!
An infant's face and looks are thine,
And sure a mother's heart is mine:
Thy own dear mother's far away,
At labour in the harvest field:
Thy little sister is at play: —
What warmth, what comfort would it yield
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
One little hour a child to me!

II
"Across the waters I am come,
And I have left a babe at home:
A long, long way of land and sea!
Come to me — I'm no enemy:
I am the same who at thy side
Sate yesterday, and made a nest
For thee, sweet Baby! — thou hast tried,
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast;
Good, good art thou: — alas! to me
Far more than I can be to thee.

III
"Here, little Darling, dost thou lie;
An infant thou, a mother I!
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears;
Mine art thou — spite of these my tears.
Alas! before I left the spot,
My baby and its dwelling-place;
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not
Be shed upon an infant's face,
It was unlucky' — no, no, no;
No truth is in them who say so!

IV
"My own dear Little-one will sigh,
Sweet Babe! and they will let him die.
"Among all lovely things my love had been"

He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,
And you may see his hour is come.'
Oh! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
Lims stout as thine, and lips as gay,
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
And countenance like a summer's day,
They would have hopes of him; — and
then
should behold his face again!

'T is gone — like dreams that we forget;
There was a smile or two — yet — yet
Can remember them, I see
The smiles, worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby! I must lay thee down;
Thou troubllest me with strange alarms;
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own;
I cannot keep thee in my arms;
For they confound me; — where — where is
That last, that sweetest smile of his?

Oh! how I love thee! — we will stay
Together here this one half day.
My sister's child, who bears my name,
From France to sheltering England came;
She with her mother crossed the sea;
The babe and mother near me dwell:
Yet does my yearning heart to thee
Turn rather, though I love her well:
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!
Never was any child more dear!

'I cannot help it; ill intent
I've none, my pretty Innocent!
I weep — I know they do thee wrong,
These tears — and my poor idle tongue.
Oh, what a kiss was that! my cheek
How cold it is! but thou art good;
Thine eyes are on me — they would speak,
I think, to help me if they could.
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,
My heart again is in its place!

While thou art mine, my little Love,
This cannot be a sorrowful grove;
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
I seem to find them all in thee:
Here's grass to play with, here are flowers;
I'll call thee by my darling's name;
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
Thy features seem to me the same;
His little sister thou shalt be;
And, when once more my home I see,
I'll tell him many tales of Thee.'"

"My heart leaps up when I behold"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

"Among all lovely things my love had been"

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been;
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
About her home; but she had never seen
A glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy night
A single glow-worm did I chance to espy;
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,
And from my horse I leapt; great joy had I.

Upon a leaf the glow-worm did I lay,
To bear it with me through the stormy night:
And, as before, it shone without dismay;
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the dwelling of my Love I came,
I went into the orchard quietly;
And left the glow-worm, blessing it by name,
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped
with fear;
At night the glow-worm shone beneath the tree;
I led my Lucy to the spot, "Look here,"
Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!
WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER’S WATER

1802. 1807

Extempore. This little poem was a favourite with Joanna Baillie.

The Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing;
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The eldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing;
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping — anon — anon:
There’s joy in the mountains;
There’s life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY

1802. 1807

Observed, as described, in the then beautiful orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

Art thou the bird whom Man loves best,
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
Our little English Robin;
The bird that comes about our doors
When Autumn-winds are sobbing?
Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors?
Their Thomas in Finland,
And Russia far inland?
The bird, that by some name or other
All men who know thee call their brother,
The darling of children and men?
Could Father Adam open his eyes
And see this sight beneath the skies,
He’d wish to close them again.

— If the butterfly knew but his friend,
Hither his flight he would bend;
And find his way to me,
Under the branches of the tree:
In and out, he darts about;
Can this be the bird, to man so good,
That, after their bewildering,
Covered with leaves the little children,
So painfully in the wood?
What ailed thee, Robin, that thou couldst pursue
A beautiful creature,
That is gentle by nature?
Beneath the summer sky
From flower to flower let him fly;
’Tis all that he wishes to do.
The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,
He is the friend of our summer gladness:
What hinders, then, that ye should be
Playmates in the sunny weather,
And fly about in the air together!
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
A crimson as bright as thine own;
Would’st thou be happy in thy nest,
O pious Bird! whom man loves best,
Love him, or leave him alone!

TO A BUTTERFLY

1802. 1807

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

I’ve watched you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And, little Butterfly! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless! — not frozen seas
More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my sister’s flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We’ll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we were young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.
TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air.

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies, Let them live upon their praises; Long as there's a sun that sets, Primroses will have their glory; Long as there are violets, They will have a place in story: There's a flower that shall be mine, 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far For the finding of a star; Up and down the heavens they go, Men that keep a mighty rout! I'm as great as they, I trow, Since the day I found thee out, Little Flower! — I'll make a stir, Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf Bold, and lavish of thyself; Since we needs must first have met I have seen thee, high and low, Thirty years or more, and yet 'T was a face I did not know; Thou hast now, go where I may, Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush, In the time before the thrush Has a thought about her nest, Thou wilt come with half a call, Spreading out thy glossy breast Like a careless Prodigal; Telling tales about the sun, When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood! Travel with the multitude: Never heed them; I aver That they all are wanton wooers; But the thrifty cottager, Who stirs little out of doors, Joys to spy thee near her home; Spring is coming, Thou art come! Comfort have thou of thy merit, Kindly, unassuming Spirit! Careless of thy neighbourhood, Thou dost show thy pleasant face On the moor, and in the wood, In the lane; — there's not a place, Howsoever mean it be, But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers, Children of the flaring hours!
TO THE SAME FLOWER

1802. 1807

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
When they lie about our feet:
February last, my heart
First at sight of thee was glad;
All unheard of as thou art,
Thou must needs, I think, have had,
Celandine! and long ago,
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
Whose'er the man might be,
Who the first with pointed rays
(Workman worthy to be sainted)
Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think, I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

1802. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This evening Man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkes; at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell.

I

There was a roaring in the wind all night,
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright.
The birds are singing in the distant woods.
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant notes of waters.

II

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on the moors
he hare is running races in her mirth;
and with her feet she from the plashy earth
rises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,
ran with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

III
was a Traveller then upon the moor,
now the hare that raced about with joy;
heard the woods and distant waters roar;
I heard them not, as happy as a boy:
the pleasant season did my heart employ:
yold remembrances went from me wholly;
and all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

IV
(at it sometimes chanceth, from the might
of joy in minds that can no further go,
as high as we have mounted in delight
our dejection do we sink as low;
me that morning did it happen so)
and fears and fancies thick upon me came;
my sadness — and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor could name.

V
heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky;
and I bethought me of the playful hare:
was such a happy Child of earth am I;
and as these blissful creatures do I fare;
from the world I walk, and from all care;
at there may come another day to me —
Situation, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

VI
My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
if life's business were a summer mood;
if all needful things would come unsought;
Genial faith, still rich in genial good;
at how can He expect that others should will for him, sow for him, and at his call serve him, who for himself will take no heed at all?

VII
thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
he sleepless Soul that perished in his pride;

Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
Following his plough, along the mountainside:
By our own spirits are we deified:
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

VIII
Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
I saw a Man before me unawares:
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

IX
As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come, and whence;
So that it seems a thing endued with sense:
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposest, there to sun itself;

X
Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep — in his extreme old age:
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

XI
Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood:
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that moorish flood
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

XII
At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book:  
And now a stranger’s privilege I took;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
"This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew:  
And him with further words I thus bespake,  
"What occupation do you there pursue?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."

Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance drest—  
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach  
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come  
To gather leeches, being old and poor:  
Employment hazardous and wearisome!  
And he had many hardships to endure:  
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor;  
Housing, with God’s good help, by choice or chance,  
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The old Man still stood talking by my side;  
But now his voice to me was like a stream  
Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;  
And the whole body of the Man did seem  
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;  
Or like a man from some far region sent,  
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills;  
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;  
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ill.

And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
— Perplexed, and longing to be comforted.

My question eagerly did I renew,  
"How is it that you live, and what is it you do?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat  
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide  
He travelled; stirring thus above his feet  
The waters of the pools where they abide.  
"Once I could meet with them on every side;  
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;  
Yet still I persevere, and find them where they may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place  
The old Man’s shape, and speech — all troubled me:  
In my mind’s eye I seemed to see him pace  
About the weary moors continually,  
Wandering about alone and silently.  
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,  
He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blessedly  
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind  
But stately in the main; and when he ended,  
I could have laughed myself to scorn and find  
In that decrepit Man so firm a mind:  
"God," said I, "be my help and stay my cure;  
I’ll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!"

I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTE

1802. 1807

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! The tender mood
Of that Man’s mind — what can it be
Fed his first hopes? what knowledge o’er

is not in battles that from youth we train
a Governor who must be wise and good,
our temper with the sternness of the brain
oughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
Farewell doth live with children round her knees:
aks, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
in holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
of the mind's business: these are the degrees
which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
the Power doth grow on; and her rights are these.

A FAREWELL
1802. 1815

Composed just before my sister and I went
fetch Mrs. Wordsworth from Gallow-hill,
as Scarborough.

Farewell, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
the rocky corner in the lowest stair
of that magnificent temple which doth bound
the side of our whole vale with grandeur rare;
weit garden-orchard, eminently fair,
the loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
Farewell! — we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
see, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell!
For two months now in vain we shall be sought:
We leave you here in solitude to dwell
With these our latest gifts of tender thought;
Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
Bright gewan, and marigold, farewell!
Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;
And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
Our own contrivance, Building without peer!
— A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
Will come to you; to you herself will wed;
And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with tender heed,
Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
Making all kindness registered and known;
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
Thou hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let them go!"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Hear tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best;
Joy will be flown in its mortality;
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
Here, thronged with primroses, the steep
rock's breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky;
And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of
flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers;
Two burning months let summer overlap,
And, coming back with Her who will be
ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

"THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN SET"

1802. 1807

Reprinted at the request of my Sister, in
whose presence the lines were thrown off.
This Impromptu appeared, many years ago,
among the Author's poems, from which, in subse-
quent editions, it was excluded.

The sun has long been set,
The stars are out by twos and threes,
The little birds are piping yet
Among the bushes and trees;
There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,
And a far-off wind that rushes,
And a sound of water that gushes,
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
Fills all the hollow of the sky.
Who would "go parading,"
In London, "and masquerading,"
On such a night of June
With that beautiful soft half-moon,
And all these innocent blisses?
On such a night as this is!

COMPOSED UPON WESTMIN-
STER BRIDGE, SEP'T. 3, 1802

1802. 1807

Written on the roof of a coach, on my way
to France.
Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:

This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temple
lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless
air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE
NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

1802. 1807

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west
Star of my Country!— on the horizon's
brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to
sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to
rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and
should'st wink,
Bright Star! with laughter on her bani-
ers, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dark
spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one love,
One life, one glory!— I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

1802. 1807

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low
degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick, lam
and blind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one kind.
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the
knee
In France, before the new-born Majesty.
ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

1802. 1807

Once did She hold the gorgeous east in fee;
And was the safeguard of the west: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day.

His business as he likes. Far other show
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time;
The senselessness of joy was then sublime!
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

"IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE"

1802. 1807

This was composed on the beach near Calais,
in the autumn of 1802.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlasting.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

1802. 1807

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802

1802. 1807

Festivals have I seen that were not names:
This is young Buonaparte's natal day,
And his is henceforth an established sway—
Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
Her approbation, and with pomp and games.
Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay!
Calais is not: and I have bent my way
To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames

Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
A seemly reverence may be paid to power;
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
In haste, nor springing with a transient shower:
When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
What hardship had it been to wait an hour?
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone!

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARDRES, AUGUST 7, 1802

1802. 1807

Jones! as from Calais southward you and I
Went pacing side by side, this public Way
Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day,
When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty:
A homeless sound of joy was in the sky:
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, garlands, mirth,
Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!
And now, sole register that these things were,
Two solitary greetings have I heard,
"Good-morrow, Citizen!" a hollow word,
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great, is passed away.

THE KING OF SWEDEN
1802. 1807

The Voice of song from distant lands shall call
To that great King; shall hail the crowned Youth
Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
By one example hath set forth to all
How they with dignity may stand; or fall,
If fall they must. Now, whither doth it tend?
And what to him and his shall be the end?
That thought is one which neither can appal;
Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede hath done
The thing which ought to be; is raised above
All consequences: work he hath begun
Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
Which all his glorious ancestors approve:
The heroes bless him, him their rightful son.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE
1802. 1807

Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den;—
O miserable Chieftain! where and when
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LANDING
1802. 1807

Here, on our native soil, we breathe once more.
The cock that crows, the smoke that curl that sound
Of bells; those boys who in your meadow-ground
In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and the roar
Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore;—
All, all are English. Oft have I looked round
With joy in Kent's green vales; but never found
Myself so satisfied in heart before. Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,
Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
My Country! and 'tis joy enough and pride
For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
Of England once again, and hear and see,
With such a dear Companion at my side.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802
1802. 1807

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times, was the closing of all Negroes from France by decree of the government: we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.

We had a female Passenger who came From Calais with us, spotless in array, — A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay, Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame; Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim She sate, from notice turning not away, But on all proffered intercourse did lay A weight of languid speech, or to the same No sign of answer made by word or face: Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire, That, burning independent of the mind, Joined with the lustre of her rich attire To mock the Outcast. — O ye Heavens, be kind! And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!
NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER 1802
1802. 1807

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was
clear,
The coast of France — the coast of France
how near!
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters; yet what power is there!
What mightiness for evil and for good!
Even so doth God protect us if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters
roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and
Deity:
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
Spake laws to them, and said that by the
soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1802
1802. 1807

This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not
but be struck, as here described, with the vanity
and parade of our own country, especially in
great towns and cities, as contrasted with the
quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the
revolution had produced in France. This must
be borne in mind, or else the reader may think
that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have
exaggerated the mischief engendered and fos-
tered among us by undisturbed wealth. It
would not be easy to conceive with what a depth
of feeling I entered into the struggle carried
on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from
the usurped power of the French. Many times
have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale,
where we were then residing, to the top of the
Raisgape as it is called, so late as two o'clock
in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing
the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces
of the state of mind in which I then was may
be found in my Tract on the Convention of
Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets.

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must
look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,
cook,

Or groom! — We must run glittering like
a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are ublest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household
laws.

LONDON, 1802
1802. 1807

MILTON! thou should'st be living at this
hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and
bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,
power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like
the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

"GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN AMONG US"

1802. 1807

GREAT men have been among us; hands
that penned
And tongues that uttered wisdom — better
none:
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others who called Milton
friend.

These moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour: what strength was, that
would not bend
But in magnanimous meekness. France,
't is strange,
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.  
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

“IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF”  
1802. 1807

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world’s praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, “with pomp of waters, un-  
withstood.”
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands  
Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
That Shakspere spake; the faith and morals hold  
Which Milton held. — In everything we are sprung  
Of Earth’s first blood, have titles manifold.

“WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY”  
1802. 1807

When I have borne in memory what has tamed  
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart  
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert  
The student’s bower for gold, some fears unnamed  
I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed?  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art, Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY  
ACROSS THE HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE

1802. 1807

Composed October 4th, 1802, after a journey over the Hambleton Hills, on a day memorable to me—the day of my marriage. The horizon commanded by those hills is most magnificent. — The next day, while we were travelling in a post-chaise up Wensleydale, we were stopped by one of the horses proving restless, and were obliged to wait two hours in a severe storm before the post-boy could fetch from the inn another to supply its place. The spot was in front of Bolton Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner soon after her unfortunate landing at Workington. The place then belonged to the Scroopes, and memorials of her are yet preserved there. To beguile the time I composed a Sonnet. The subject was our own confinement contrasted with hers; but it was not thought worthy of being preserved.

DARK and more dark the shades of evening fell;  
The wished-for point was reached — but at an hour  
When little could be gained from that rich dower  
Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.  
Yet did the glowing west with marvellous power  
Salute us; there stood Indian citadel,  
Temple of Greece, and minster with its tower  
Substantially expressed — a place for bell  
Or clock to toll from! Many a tempting isle,  
With groves that never were imagined, lay  
Mid seas how steadfast! objects all for the eye  
Of silent rapture; but we felt the while  
We should forget them; they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON’S “CASTLE OF INDOLENCE”  
1802. 1815

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, Coleridge living with us much at the time: his son Hartley has said, that his father’s
STANZAS

character and habits are here preserved in a jivelier way than in anything that has been written about him.

Within our happy Castle there dwelt One Whom without blame I may not overlook; For never sun or living creature shone Who more devout enjoyment with us took: Here on his hours he hung as on a book, On his own time here would he float away, As doth a fly upon a summer brook; But go to-morrow, or belike to-day, Seek for him,—he is fled; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home, 10 And find elsewhere his business or delight; Out of our Valley’s limits did he roam: Full many a time, upon a stormy night, His voice came to us from the neighbouring height: Oft could we see him driving full in view At mid-day when the sun was shining bright; What ill was on him, what he had to do, A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah! piteous sight it was to see this Man When he came back to us, a withered flower,— Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan. Down would he sit; and without strength or power Look at the common grass from hour to hour: And oftentimes, how long I fear to say, Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower, Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay; And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was Whenever from our Valley he withdrew; For happier soul no living creature has Than he had, being here the long day through. Some thought he was a lover, and did woo: Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong; But verse was what he had been wedded to;

And his own mind did like a tempest strong Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise, Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree, A noticeable Man with large gray eyes, 39 And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly As if a blooming face it ought to be; Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear, Depressed by weight of musings Phantasy; Profound his forehead was, though not severe;

Yet some did think that he had little business here.

Sweet heaven forfend! his was a lawful right; Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy; His limbs would toss about him with delight Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy. Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy To banish listlessness and irksome care; 5 He would have taught you how you might employ Yourself; and many did to him repair,— And certes not in vain; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried: Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay, Made, to his ear attentively applied, A pipe on which the wind would deftly play; Glasses he had, that little things display, The beetle panapplied in gems and gold, 60 A mail’d angel on a battle-day; The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold, And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear His music, and to view his imagery: And, sooth, these two were each to the other dear: No livelier love in such a place could be: There did they dwell — from earthly labour free, As happy spirits as were ever seen; If but a bird, to keep them company, 70 Or butterfly sat down, they were, I ween, As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.
TO THE DAISY
1802. 1807

This and the two following were composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, where the bird was often seen as here described.

"Her divine skill taught me this,
That from every thing I saw
I could some instruction draw,
TO THE DAISY

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Have I derived from thy sweet power
Some apprehension;
Some steady love; some brief delight;
Some memory that had taken flight;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right;
Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to Thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn
A lowlier pleasure;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life, our nature breeds;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
When thou art up, alert and gay,
Then, cheery Flower! my spirits play
With kindred gladness:
And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
Thou sink’st, the image of thy rest
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing;
An instinct call it, a blind sense;
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run
Thy pleasant course,—when day’s begun
As ready to salute the sun
As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time;—thou not in vain
Art Nature’s favourite.

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit, and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising:
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame,
As is the humour of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love’s court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seems, to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next,—and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish,—and behold
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star;
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem’st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee!

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleft fast,
Sweet silent creature!
That breath’st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!

TRANSFERRED TO THE SAME FLOWER

1802. 1807

Wrrh little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy! again I talk to thee,
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace,
Which Love makes for thee!

TO THE DAISY

1802. 1807

This and the other Poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-end, Grassmers, during the earlier part of my residence there. I have been censured for the last line but one—“thy function apostolical”—as being little less than profane. How could it be
thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
Of joy or sorrow;
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,
Or on his reason,
And Thou would'st teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
In peace fulfilling.

THE GREEN LINNET
1803. 1807

BENKATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment:
A life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid you tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A Brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes;
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

YEw-TREES
1803. 1815

Written at Grasmere. These yew-trees are still standing, but the spread of that at Lorus
is much diminished by mutilation. I will here mention that a little way up the hill, on the
road leading from Roasthwaite to Stonethwaite (in Borrowdale), lay the trunk of a yew-tree,
which appeared as you approached, so vast was its diameter, like the entrance of a cave,
and not a small one. Calculating upon what I have observed of the slow growth of this tree
in rocky situations, and of its durability, I have often thought that the one I am describing
must have been as old as the Christian era. The tree lay in the line of a fence. Great
masses of its ruins were strewn about, and some had been rolled down the hillside
and lay near the road at the bottom. As you approached the tree, you were struck with the
number of shrubs and young plants, ashes, etc., which had found a bed upon the decayed trunk
and grew to no inconsiderable height, forming, as it were, a part of the hedgerow. In no part
of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude,
as it must have stood. By the bye, Hutton, the old Guide, of Keswick, had been so im-
With living snow-drops? circlet bright!
How glorious to this orchard-ground!
Who loved the little Rock, and set
Upon its head this coronet?

Was it the humour of a child?
Or rather of some gentle maid,
Whose brows, the day that she was styled
The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed?
Of man mature, or matron sage?
Or old man toying with his age?

I asked — 't was whispered; The device
To each and all might well belong:
It is the Spirit of Paradise
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,
That gives to all the self-same bent
Where life is wise and innocent.

"IT IS NO SPIRIT WHO FROM
HEAVEN HATH FLOWN"

1803. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I remem-
ber the instant my sister, S. H., called me to
the window of our Cottage, saying, "Look
how beautiful is your star! It has the sky
all to itself." I composed the verses imme-
diately.

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,
And is descending on his embassy;
Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens
to espy!
'Tis Hesperus — there he stands with glit-
tering crown,
First admonition that the sun is down!
For yet it is broad day-light: clouds pass
by;
A few are near him still — and now the sky,
He hath it to himself — 't is all his own.
O most ambitious Star! an inquest wrought
Within me when I recognised thy light;
A moment I was startled at the sight:
And, while I gazed, there came to me a
thought
That I might step beyond my natural race
As thou seem'st now to do; might one day
trace
Some ground not mine; and, strong her
strength above,
My Soul, an Apparition in the place,
Tread there with steps that no one shall
reprove!

"WHO FANCIED WHAT A PRETTY SIGHT"

1803. 1807

Who fancied what a pretty sight
This Rock would be if edged around
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND
1803

Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and myself started together from Town-end to make a tour in Scotland. Poor Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection; and he departed from us, as is recorded in my Sister’s Journal, soon after we left Loch Lomond. The verses that stand foremost among these Memorials were not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my “Epistle to Sir George Beaumont.”

I
DEPARTURE FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE
AUGUST 1803
1803. 1827

The gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains
Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,
Methinks I would heighten joy, to overlap
At will the crystal battlements, and peep
Into some other region, though less fair,
To see how things are made and managed there.

Change for the worse might please, incursion bold
Into the tracts of darkness and of cold;
O’er Limbo lake with aery flight to steer,
And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.

Such animation often do I find,
Power in my breast, wings growing in my mind,
Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,
Perchance without one look behind me cast.

Some barrier with which Nature, from the birth
Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on earth.
O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign
Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine;
Not like an outcast with himself at strife;
The slave of business, time, or care for life,

But moved by choice; or, if constrained in part,
Yet still with Nature’s freedom at the heart;

To cull contentment upon wildest shores,
And luxuries extract from bleakest moors;
With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,
And having rights in all that we behold.

— Then why these lingering steps? — a bright adieu,
For a brief absence, proves that love is true;
Ne’er can the way be irksome or forlorn
That winds into itself for sweet return.

II
AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS
1803
SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH
1803. 1845

For illustration, see my Sister’s Journal. Here may be proper to add that the second of these pieces, though felt at the time, was not composed till many years after.

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold:
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold,
Strike pleasure dead,

So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?

As if it were thyself that’s here
I shrink with pain;

And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! — away
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due

To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius “glimted” forth,
loose like a star that touching earth,  
   For so it seems,  
   Both glorify its humble birth  
      With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
The struggling heart, where be they now? —  
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one  
More deeply grieved, for He was gone  
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,  
And showed my youth  
How Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

Hast! where'er the current tends,  
Regret pursues and with it blends,—  
Huge Griffel's hoary top ascends  
By Skiddaw seen,—  
Neighbours we were, and loving friends  
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;  
But heart with heart and mind with mind,  
Where the main fibres are entwined,  
Through Nature's skill,  
May even by contraries be joined  
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;  
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"  
At this dread moment — even so —  
Might we together  
Have sate and talked wheregowans blow,  
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed  
Within my reach; of knowledge graced  
By fancy what a rich repast!  
But why go on? —  
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,  
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)  
Lies gathered to his Father's side,  
Soul-moving sight!  
Yet one to which is not denied  
Some sad delight:

For He is safe, a quiet bed  
Hath early found among the dead,  
Harboured where none can be misled,  
Wronged, or distressed;  
And surely here it may be said  
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
May He who halloweth the place  
Where Man is laid  
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere  
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,  
Music that sorrow comes not near,  
A ritual hymn,  
Haunted in love that casts out fear  
By Seraphim.

III

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH, NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE

1803. 1845

Too frail to keep the lofty vow  
That must have followed when his brow  
Was wreathed — "The Vision" tells us how —  
With holly spray,  
He faltered, drifted to and fro,  
And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng  
Our minds when, lingering all too long,  
Over the grave of Burns we hung  
In social grief —  
Indulged as if it were a wrong  
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme  
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,  
And prompt to welcome every gleam  
Of good and fair,  
Let us beside this limpid Stream  
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight;  
Think rather of those moments bright  
...
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,
When Wisdom prospered in his sight
And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When side by side, his Book in hand,
We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
These pathways, you far-stretching road!
There lurks his home; in that Abode,
With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image oversawes,
Before it humbly let us pause,
And ask of Nature, from what cause
And by what rules
She trained her Burns to win applause
That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen;
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
Bees fill their hives;
Deep in the general heart of men
His power resounds.

What need of fields in some far clime
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
Folds up his wings?

Sweet Mercy! to the gates of Heaven
This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;
The rueful conflict, the heart riven
With vain endeavour,
And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
When kindred thoughts and yearnings
bear
On the frail heart the purest share
With all that live? —
The best of what we do and are,
Just God, forgive!

IV

TO THE SONS OF BURNS

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THE FATHER

1803. 1807

"The Poet's grave is in a corner of the church-yard. We looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses —

"Is there a man whose judgment clear," etc."

Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Traveller's

'Mid crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
With sorrow true;
And more would grieve, but that it turns
Trembling to you!

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display;
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
Intemperance with less harm, beware!
But if the Poet's wit ye share,
Like him can speed
The social hour — of tenfold care
There will be need;

For honest men delight will take
To spare your failings for his sake,
Will flatter you, — and fool and make
Your steps pursue;
And of your Father's name will make
A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
And add your voices to the quire
That sanctify the cottage fire
With service meet;
There seek the genius of your Sire,
His spirit greet;

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,
He paid to Nature tuneful vows;
Or wiped his honourable brows
Bedewed with toil,
While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
Upturned the soil;
his judgment with benignant ray
shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;
but ne’er to a seductive lay
Let faith be given;
Nor deem that “light which leads astray,
Is light from Heaven.”

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;
be independent, generous, brave;
our Father such example gave,
And such revere;
but be admonished by his grave,
And think, and fear!

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

1803. 1807

This delightful creature and her demeanour are particularly described in my Sister’s Journal. The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God’s goodness, been realised; and now, approaching the close of my 73d year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded. She is alluded to in the Poem of “The Three Cottage Girls” among my Continental Memorials. In illustration of this class of poems I have scarcely anything to say beyond what is anticipated in my Sister’s faithful and admirable Journal.

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head:
And these grey rocks; that household
Lawn;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmurs near the silent lake;
This little bay; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But, O fair Creature! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart;
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away:
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness:
Thou wear’st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer:
A face with gladness overspread!
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech:
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.
What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father—anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its
Grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then, why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part:
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

VI

GLEN-ALMAIN
OR, THE NARROW GLEN
1803. 1807

In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;
In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one:
He sang of battles, and the breath
Of stormy war, and violent death;
And should, methinks, when all was past,
Have rightfully been laid at last
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
As by a spirit turbulent;
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled;
In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet;
But this is calm; there cannot be
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?
Or is it but a groundless creed?
What matters it? — I blame them not
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
Was moved; and in such way expressed
Their notion of its perfect rest.
A convent, even a hermit’s cell,
Would break the silence of this Dell:
It is not quiet, is not ease;
But something deeper far than these:
The separation that is here
Is of the grave; and of austere
Yet happy feelings of the dead:
And, therefore, was it rightly said
That Ossian, last of all his race!
Lies buried in this lonely place.

VII

STEPPING WESTWARD
1803. 1807

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut

where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, “What, you are stepping westward?”

“What, you are stepping westward?” —
“Yea,"
— “Would be a wildish destiny,
If we, who thus together roam
In a strange Land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of Chance:
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
Behind, all gloomy to behold;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of heavenly destiny:
I liked the greeting; ’twas a sound
Of something without place or bound;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake:
The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy:
Its power was felt; and while my eye
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

VIII

THE SOLITARY REAPER
1803. 1807

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; —
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers
That touch each other to the quick in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of. What art Thou, from care
Cast off — abandoned by thy rugged Sire, 10
Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in place
And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm;)
Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims
To reverence, suspends his own; submitting
All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
All that he holds in common with the stars,
To the memorial majesty of Time 20
Impersonated in thy calm decay!
Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unreproved!
Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,
Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule
Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods, unite
To pay thee homage; and with these are joined,
In willing admiration and respect,
Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called
Youthful as Spring. — Shade of departed Power,
Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
The chronicle were welcome that should call
Into the compass of distinct regard
The toils and struggles of thy infant years!
Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice;
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
Frozen by distance; so, majestic Pile,
To the perception of this Age, appear
Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued
And quieted in character — the strife,
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
Lost on the aërial heights of the Crusades.
ROB ROY’S GRAVE

1803. 1807

I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy. If so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely, that of a well-educated Lady who lived at the head of the Lake, within a mile or less of the point indicated as containing the remains of One so famous in the neighbourhood.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small piufold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
The English ballad-singer’s joy!
And Scotland has a thief as good,
An outlaw of as daring mood;
She has her brave Rob Roy!
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
And let us chant a passing stave,
In honour of that Hero brave!

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
And wondrous length and strength of arm:
Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as wise as brave;
Forgive me if the phrase be strong;—
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave;
As wise in thought as bold in deed:
For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, “What need of books?
Burn all the statutes and their shelves:
They stir us up against our kind;
And worse, against ourselves.

“We have a passion — make a law,
Too false to guide us or control!
And for the law itself we fight
In bitterness of soul.

“And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few:
These find I graven on my heart:
That tells me what to do.

“The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind!
With them no strife can last; they live
In peace, and peace of mind.

“For why? — because the good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That they should take, who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

“A lesson that is quickly learned,
A signal this which all can see!
Thus nothing here provokes the strong
To wanton cruelty.

“All freakishness of mind is checked;
He tamed, who foolishly aspires;
While to the measure of his might
Each fashions his desires.

“All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit:
’Tis God’s appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit.

“Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
And longest life is but a day;
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I’ll take the shortest way.”

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer heat and winter snow:
The Eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below.

So was it — would, at least, have been
But through untowardness of fate;
For Polity was then too strong —
He came an age too late;

Or shall we say an age too soon?
For, were the bold Man living now,
How might he flourish in his pride,
With buds on every bough!

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
Would all have seemed but paltry things,
Not worth a moment’s pains.
Rob Roy had never lingered here,
To these few meagre Vales confined;
But thought how wide the world, the times
How fairly to his mind!

And to his Sword he would have said,
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact
From land to land through half the earth!
Judge thou of law and fact!"

"T is fit that we should do our part,
Becoming, that mankind should learn
That we are not to be surpassed
In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough: —
We'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings that take
From me the sign of life and death:
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
As might have been, then, thought of joy!
France would have had her present Boast,
And we our own Rob Roy!

Oh! say not so; compare them not;
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!
Would wrong thee nowhere; least of all
Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan!
Hast this to boast of; thou didst love
The liberty of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
And by Loch Lomond's braes!

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same;
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
At sound of Rob Roy's name.

XI
SONNET
COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE
1803. 1807

The Castle here mentioned was Nidpath
near Peebles. The person alluded to was the
then Duke of Queensbury. The fact was told
me by Walter Scott.

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy
Lord!
Whom mere despite of heart could so far
please,
And love of havoc, (for with such disease
Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth
word
To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like
these,
Beggared and outraged! — Many hearts
deplored
The fate of those old Trees; and oft with
pain
The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems
to heed:
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and
bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle
Tweed,
And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

XII
YARROW UNVISITED
1803. 1807

See the various Poems the scene of which is
laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particu-
lar, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton begin-
ing
"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow! — "

FROM Stirling castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled;
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

And when we came to Clovenford, They sang my "winsome Marrow," "Whatever betide, we'll turn aside, And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town, Who have been buying, selling, Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own; Each maiden to her dwelling! On Yarrow's banks let herons feed, Hares, couch, and rabbits burrow! But we will downward with the Tweed, Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs, Both lying right before us; And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed The lintwhites sing in chorus; There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land Made bithle with plough and harrow: Why throw away a needful day To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare, That glides the dark hills under? There are a thousand such elsewhere As worthy of your wonder."

— Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn
My True-love sighed for sorrow; And looked me in the face, to think I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms, And sweet is Yarrow flowing! Fair hangs the apple frae the rock, But we will leave it growing. O'er hilly path, and open Strath, We'll wander Scotland thorough; But, though so near, we will not turn Into the vale of Yarrow.

"Let bees and home-bred kine partake The sweets of Burn-mill meadow; The swan on still St. Mary's Lake Float double, swan and shadow! We will not see them; will not go, To-day, nor yet to-morrow, Enough if in our hearts we know There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown! It must, or we shall rue it: We have a vision of our own; Ah! why should we undo it?

The treasured dreams of times long past, We'll keep them, winsome Marrow! For when we're there, although 'tis fair, 'Twill be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come, And wandering seem but folly,— Should we be loth to stir from home, And yet be melancholy; Should life be dull, and spirits low, 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow, That earth has something yet to show, The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

XIII

THE MATRON OF JEDBURGH AND HER HUSBAND

1803. 1807

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers, And call a train of laughing Hours; And bid them dance, and bid them sing; And thou, too, mingle in the ring! Take to thy heart a new delight; If not, make merry in despite That there is One who scorches thy power:— But dance! for under Jedburgh Tower, A Matron dwells who, though she bears The weight of more than seventy years, 10 Lives in the light of youthful glee, And she will dance and sing with thee. Nay! start not at that Figure — there! Him who is rooted to his chair! Look at him — look again! for he Hath long been of thy family. With legs that move not, if they can, And useless arms, a trunk of man, He sits, and with a vacant eye; A sight to make a stranger sigh! Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom: His world is in this single room: Is this a place for mirthful cheer? Can merry-making enter here? The joyous Woman is the Mate Of him in that forlorn estate! He breathes a subterraneous damp; But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:
He is as mute as Jedborough Tower:  
She jocund as it was of yore,  
With all its bravery on; in times  
When all alive with merry chimes,  
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,  
It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron! and thy due  
Is praise, heroic praise, and true!  
With admiration I behold  
Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:  
Thy looks, thy gestures, all present  
The picture of a life well spent:  
This do I see; and something more;  
A strength unthought of heretofore!

Delighted am I for thy sake;  
And yet a higher joy partake:  
Our Human-nature throws away  
Its second twilight, and looks gay;  
A land of promise and of pride  
Unfolding; wide as life is wide.

Ah! see her helpless Charge! enclosed  
Within itself it seems, composed;  
To fear of loss, and hope of gain,  
The strife of happiness and pain,  
Utterly dead! yet in the guise  
Of little infants, when their eyes  
Begin to follow to and fro  
The persons that before them go,  
He tracks her motions, quick or slow,  
Her buoyant spirit can prevail  
Where common cheerfulness would fail;  
She strikes upon him with the heat  
Of July suns; he feels it sweet;  
An animal delight though dim!  
'T is all that new remains for him!

The more I looked, I wondered more—  
And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,  
Some inward trouble suddenly  
Broke from the Matron's strong black eye—  
A remnant of uneasy light,  
A flash of something over-bright!  
Nor long this mystery did detain  
My thoughts;—she told in pensive strain  
That she had borne a heavy yoke,  
Been stricken by a twofold stroke;  
Ill health of body; and had pined  
Beneath worse ailsments of the mind.  
'So be it!—but let praise ascend  
To Him who is our lord and friend!  
Who from disease and suffering  
Hath called for thee a second spring;  
Repaid thee for that sore distress  
By no untimely joyousness;  
Which makes of thine a blissful state;  
And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

XIV

"FLY, SOME KIND HARBINGER,  
TO GRASMERE-DALE!"

1803. 1815

This was actually composed the last day of  
our tour between Dalston and Grasmere.

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-  
dale!

Say that we come, and come by this day's  
light;

Fly upon swiftest wing round field and  
height,

But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale;

There let a mystery of joy prevail,

The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,

And Rover whine, as at a second sight

Of near-approaching good that shall not  
fail:

And from that Infant's face let joy appear;

Yea, let our Mary's one companion child —  
That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled  
With intimations manifold and dear,

While we have wandered over wood and  
wild —

Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

XV

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER  
RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRASMERE

1803. 1807

The story was told me by George Mackereth,  
for many years parish-clerk of Grasmere.  
He had been an eye-witness of the occurrence.  
The vessel in reality was a washing-tub, which the  
little fellow had met with on the shore of  
The Loch.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,  
Have romped enough, my little Boy!  
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,  
And you shall bring your stool and rest;  
This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see  
That you can listen quietly:  
And, as I promised, I will tell  
That strange adventure which befell  
A poor blind Highland Boy.
A Highland Boy! — why call him so?
Because, my Darlings, ye must know
That, under hills which rise like towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours!
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthily sight,
The sun, the day; the stars, the night;
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love:
For, was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk he on the Sabbath day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog, too, had he; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow —
And thus from house to house would go;
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood;
But one of mighty size, and strange;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came —
Returns, on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales
With warmer suns and softer gales,
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard
The shouting, and the jolly cheers;
The bustle of the mariners
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail?
For He must never handle sail;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this: "My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;
The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befell)
He in a vessel of his own,
On the swift flood is hurrying down,
Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore!
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner!
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him? — Ye have seen
The Indian’s bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen;
Each hut, perchance, might have its own,
And to the Boy they all were known —
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
Which he, poor Child, had studied well;
A shell of ample size, and light
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves
On Vaga’s breast the fretful waves,
This shell upon the deep would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew:
And he a story strange yet true
Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss!
Had stoutly launched from shore;

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father’s ship, and had sailed far —
To join that gallant ship of war,
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house that held this prize; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,
That story flashed upon his mind; —
A bold thought roused him, and he took
The shell from out its secret nook,
And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel, — and in pride
Of spirit, from Loch Leven’s side,
Stepped into it — his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
Sang through the adventurer’s hair.

A while he stood upon his feet;
He felt the motion — took his seat;
Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.
How rapidly the Child is driven!
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me
What shrieking and what misery!
For many saw; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy!
The bravest traveller in balloon,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay!
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled — all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace;
So have ye seen the fowler chase
On Grasmere’s clear unruffled breast
A youngling of the wild-duck’s nest
With deftly-lifted oar;

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shell,
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near;  
But in his darkness he can hear,  
And guesses their intent.  

"Lei-gha — Lei-gha" — he then cried out,  
"Lei-gha — Lei-gha" — with eager shout;  
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,  
And what he meant was, "Keep away,  
And leave me to myself!"

Alas! and when he felt their hands — —  
You've often heard of magic wands,  
That with a motion overthrew  
A palace of the proudest show,  
Or melt it into air:  

So all his dreams — that inward light  
With which his soul had shone so bright —  
All vanished; — 't was a heartfelt cross  
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,  
As he had ever known.

But hark! a gratulating voice,  
With which the very hills rejoice:  
'T is from the crowd, who tremulously  
Have watched the event, and now can see  
That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,  
Full sure they were a happy band,  
Which, gathering round, did on the banks

Of that great Water give God thanks,  
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart  
The blind Boy's little dog took part;  
He leapt about, and oft did kiss  
His master's hands in sign of bliss,  
With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,  
She who had fainted with her fear,  
Rejoiced when waking she espies  
The Child; when she can trust her eyes,  
And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,  
When he was in the house again:  
Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;  
She kissed him — how could she chastise?  
She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved  
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved;  
And, though his fancies had been wild,  
Yet he was pleased and reconciled  
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell  
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell  
And long the story will repeat  
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,  
And how he was preserved.

OCTOBER 1803
1803. 1807

ONE might believe that natural miseries  
Had blasted France, and made of it a land  
Unfit for men; and that in one great band  
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease.  
But 't is a chosen soil, where sun and breeze  

Shed gentle favours: rural works are there,  
And ordinary business without care;  
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and please!  

How piteous then that there should be such dearth  
Of knowledge; that whole myriads should unite  
To work against themselves such fell despot:  

Should come in phrensy and in drunken mirth,  
Impatient to put out the only light  
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth!

"THERE IS A BONDAGE WORSE,  
FAR WORSE, TO BEAR"  
1803. 1807

There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear  
Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,  
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:  
'Tis his who walks about in the open air,  
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear  
Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,  
Who, even the best, in such condition, free
From self-reproach, reproach that he must share
With Human-nature? Never be it ours
To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
And know that noble feelings, many powers,
Instead of gathering strength, must droop and pine;
And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
Fade, and participate in man's decline.

OCTOBER 1803
1803. 1807
These times strike monied worldlings with dismay:
Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
With words of apprehension and despair:
While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
Men unto whom sufficient for the day
And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
What do we gather hence but firmer faith
That every gift of noble origin
Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath;
That virtue and the faculties within
Are vital, — and that riches are akin
To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

"ENGLAND! THE TIME IS COME
WHEN THOU SHOULDEST WEAN"
1803. 1807
England! the time is come when thou should'st wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food;
The truth should now be better understood;
Old things have been unsettled; we have seen
Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,
If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
Aught good were destined, thou would'st step between.
England! all nations in this charge agree:
But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY
1803. 1807

An invasion being expected, October 1803.
Six thousand veterans practised in war’s game,
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen. — Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame;
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
Of the dead bodies. — ’Twas a day of shame
For them whom precept and the pedantry
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
O for a single hour of that Dundee,
Who on that day the word of onset gave!
Like conquest would the Men of England see;
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

ANTICIPATION, OCTOBER 1803
1803. 1807

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won!
On British ground the Invaders are laid low;
The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
And left them lying in the silent sun,
Never to rise again! — the work is done.
Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show
And greet your sons! drums beat and trumpets blow!
Make merry, wives! ye little children, stun
Your grandame’s ears with pleasure of your noise!
Clap, infants, clap your hands! Divine must be
That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
Hath something in it which the heart enjoys:
In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION, 1803
1803. 1845

COME ye — who, if (which Heaven avert!) the Land
Were with herself at strife, would take your stand,
Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch’s side,
And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your pride —
COME ye — who, not less zealous, might display
Banners at enmity with regal sway,
And, like the Pym’s and Miltons of that day,
Think that a State would live in sounder health
If Kingship bowed its head to Commonwealth —
YE too — whom no disgradable fear
Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless tear,
Uncertain what to choose and how to steer —
And ye — who might mistake for sober sense
And wise reserve the plea of indolence —
COME ye — whate’er your creed — O waken all,
Whate’er your temper, at your Country’s call;
Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
Or save this honoured Land from every Lord
But British reason and the British sword.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE
1803. 1815

The character of this man was described to me, and the incident upon which the verses turn was told me, by Mr. Pool of Nether Stowey, with whom I became acquainted through our common friend, S. T. Coleridge. During my residence at Alfoxden I used to see much of him and had frequent occasions to admire the course of his daily life, especially his conduct to his labourers and poor neighbours: their virtues he carefully encouraged, and weighed their faults in the scales of charity. If I seem in these verses to have treated the weaknesses of the farmer, and his transgression, too ten-
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea, 19
All caught the infection — as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
The fields better suited the ease of his soul:
He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought; and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door:
He gave them the best that he had; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm:
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm:
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out, — he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,— all were free with their money;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey,
That they dreamt not of dearth; — He continued his rounds,
Knocked here — and knocked there, pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself:
Then (what is too true) without hinting a word,
Turned his back on the country — and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes! — but I guess that you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the ease of his heart.

To London — a sad emigration I ween —
With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the green;
TO THE CUCKOO

And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume,—
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom;
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,
He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is stout;
Twice as fast as before does his blood run about;
You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
About work that he knows, in a track that he knows;
But often his mind is compelled to demur,
And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
Like one whose own country's far over the sea;
And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue;
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desol hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fields and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that he made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon rolls
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam draws;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sound of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay;
He thinks of the fields he so often has mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with him there.
The breath of the cows you may see his inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam! when low thy heart laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoe'er be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

TO THE CUCKOO

1804. 1807

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

O BLithe New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?
While I am lying on the grass
by twofold shout I hear,
rhom hill to hill it seems to pass,
it once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
To bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;
The same whom in my school-boy days
Listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious.

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

"I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD"

1804. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:
THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

1804. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son.

I

Where art thou, my beloved Son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead?
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same
That I may rest; and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

II

Seven years, alas! to have received
No tidings of an only child;
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
And been for evermore beguiled;
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!
I catch at them, and then I miss;
Was ever darkness like to this?

III

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold;
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base;
And never blush was on my face.

IV

Ah! little doth the young one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother unawares!
He knows it not, he cannot guess:
Years to a mother bring distress;
But do not make her love the less.

V

Neglect me! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought; and, being blind,
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong;
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed:" and that is true;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

VI

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour and of gain,
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
Think not of me with grief and pain:
I now can see with better eyes;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

VII

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;
They mount — how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight!
Chains tie us down by land and sea;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

VIII

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

IX

I look for ghosts; but none will force
Their way to me: 't is falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

X

My apprehensions come in crowds;
I dread the rustling of the grass;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass:
I question things and do not find
One that will answer to my mind;
And all the world appears unkind.
Beyond participation lies
my troubles, and beyond relief:
if any chance to heave a sigh,
they pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my son, or send
some tidings that my woes may end;
I have no other earthly friend!

THE FORSAKEN
1804. 1845

This was an overflow from the "Affliction of Margaret ——", and was excluded as superfluous there, but preserved in the faint hope that it may turn to account by restoring a shy over to some forsaken damsel. My poetry has been complained of as deficient in interests of his sort,—a charge which the piece beginning, "Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live," will scarcely tend to obviate. The natural imagery of these verses was supplied by frequent, I might say intense, observation of the Rydal torrent. What an animating contrast is the ever-changing aspect of that, and indeed every one of our mountain brooks, to the monotonous tone and unmitigated fury of such streams among the Alps as are fed all the summer long by glaciers and melting snows. A traveller observing the exquisite purity of the great rivers, such as the Rhine at Geneva, and the Reuss at Lucerne, when they issue out of their respective lakes, might fancy for a moment that some power in nature produced this beautiful change, with a view to make amends for those Alpine sullivings which the waters exhibit near their fountain heads; but, alas! how soon does that purity depart before the influx of tributary waters that have flowed through cultivated plains and the crowded abodes of men.

The peace which others seek they find;
The heaviest storms not longest last;
Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind
An amnesty for what is past;
When will my sentence be reversed?
Only pray to know the worst;
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle! silent years
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;
And yet they leave it short, and fears
And hopes are strong and will prevail.
My calmest faith escapes not pain;
And, feeling that the hope is vain,
I think that he will come again.

REPENTANCE

A PASTORAL BALLAD
1804. 1820

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by the conversation of our next neighbour, Margaret Ashburner.

The fields which with covetous spirit we sold,
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the day,
Would have brought us more good than a burden of gold,
Could we but have been as contented as they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us, said I,
"Let him come, with his purse proudly grasped in his hand;
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—we'll die
Before he shall go with an inch of the land!"

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their bowers;
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide;
We could do what we liked with the land, it was ours;
And for us the brook murmured that ran by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late;
And often, like one overburthened with sin,
With my hand on the latch of the half-opened gate,
I look at the fields, but I cannot go in!

When I walk by the hedge on a bright summer's day,
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's tree,
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,
"What ails you, that you must come creeping to me!"

With our pastures about us, we could not be sad;
Our comfort was near if we ever were crost;
But the comfort, the blessings, and wealth
That we had,
We slighted them all,—and our birth-right was lost.
Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son
Who must now be a wanderer! but peace
to that strain!
Think of evening's repose when our labour
was done,
The sabbath's return; and its leisure's soft
chain!
And in sickness, if night had been sparing
of sleep,
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I
stood,
Looking down on the kine, and our treasure
of sheep
That besprinkled the field; 't was like youth
in my blood!
Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as a
snail;
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with
a sigh,
That follows the thought — We've no land
in the vale,
Save six feet of earth where our forefathers
lie!

THE SEVEN SISTERS
OR, THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE
1804. 1807

I
Seven Daughters had Lord Archibald,
All children of one mother:
You could not say in one short day
What love they bore each other.
A garland, of seven lilies, wrought!
Seven Sisters that together dwell;
But he, bold Knight as ever fought,
Their Father, took of them no thought,
He loved the wars so well.
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie!

II
Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,
And from the shores of Erin,
Across the wave, a Rover brave
The gallant ship is borne;
To Binnorie is steering:
Right onward to the Scottish strand
The warriors leap upon the land,
And hark! the Leader of the band
Hath blown his bugle horn.

Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie.

III
Beside a grotto of their own,
With boughs above them closing,
The Seven are laid, and in the shade
They lie like fawns repose.
But now, upstarting with a right
At noise of man and steed,
Away they fly to left, to right —
Of your fair household, Father-knight,
Methinks you take small heed!
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie.

IV
Away the seven fair Campbells fly,
And, over hill and hollow,
With menace proud, and insult loud,
The youthful Rovers follow.
Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam:
Enough for him to find
The empty house when he comes home;
For us your yellow ringlets comb,
For us be fair and kind!"
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie.

V
Some close behind, some side to side,
Like clouds in stormy weather;
They run, and cry, "Nay, let us die,
And let us die together."
A lake was near; the shore was steep;
There never foot had been;
They ran, and with a desperate leap
Together plunged into the deep,
Nor ever more were seen.
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie.

VI
The stream that flows out of the lake,
As through the glen it rambles,
Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,
For those seven lovely Campbells.
Seven little Islands, green and bare,
Have risen from out the deep:
The fishers say, those sisters fair,
By faeries all are buried there,
And there together sleep.
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The solitude of Binnorie.
ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA

I BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A
MONTH OLD THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16

1804. 1815

Hast thou then survived —
ild Offspring of infant humanity,
seek Infant! among all forlornest things
be most forlorn — one life of that bright
star,
be second glory of the Heavens? — Thou
hast,
ready hast survived that great decay,
hat transformation through the wide earth
felt,
by all nations. In that Being's sight
rom whom the Race of human kind pro-
ceed,
thousand years are but as yesterday;
nd one day's narrow circuit is to Him
of less capacious than a thousand years.
at what time? What outward glory?
neither
measure is of Thee, whose claims extend
through "heaven's eternal year." — Yet
hail to Thee,
ail, feeble Monthling! — by that name,
methinks,
hy scanty breathing-time is portioned out
idly. — Hadst thou been of Indian birth,
couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,
rudely canopied by leafy boughs,
rr to the churlish elements exposed
n the blank plains, — the coldness of the
ight,
the night's darkness, or its cheerful
ace
f beauty, by the changing moon adorned,
ould, with imperious admonition, then
ave scored thine age, and punctually
timed
ime infant history, on the minds of those
who might have wandered with thee.—
Mother's love,
for less than mother's love in other breasts,
ill, among us warm-clad and warmly
housed,
for thee what the finger of the heavens
oth all too often harshly execute
for thy unblest coevals, amid wilds
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace
the affections, to exalt them or refine;
and the maternal sympathy itself,

Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless
tie
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours!
Even now — to solemnise thy helpless state,
And to enliven in the mind's regard
Thy passive beauty — parallels have risen,
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,
Within the region of a father's thoughts,
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.
And first; — thy sinless progress, through a
world
By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,
Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered
clouds,
Moving untouched in silvery purity,
And cheering oft-times their reluctant
gloom.
Fair are ye both, and both are free from
stain:
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy
horn
With brightness! leaving her to post along,
And range about, disquieted in change,
And still impatient of the shape she wears.
Once up, once down the hill, one journey,
Babe,
That will suffice thee; and it seems that
now
Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is
thine;
Thou travelled so contentedly, and sleep'st
In such a heedless peace. Alas! full soon
Hath this conception, grateful to behold, o.
Changed countenance, like an object sullied
o'er
By breathing mist; and thine appears
to be
A mournful labour, while to her is given
Hope, and a renovation without end.
— That smile forbids the thought; for on
thy face
Smiles are beginning, like the beams of
dawn,
To shoot and circulate; smiles have there
been seen,
Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers
Thy loneliness: or shall those smiles be
called
Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore
This untried world, and to prepare thy
way
Through a strait passage intricate and
dim?
Such are they; and the same are tokens, signs,
Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,
Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt;
And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own.

THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

1804. 1807

Seen at Town-end, Grasmere. The elder-bush has long since disappeared: it hung over the wall near the Cottage; and the Kitten continued to leap up, catching the leaves as here described. The infant was Dora.

THAT way look, my Infant, lo!
What a pretty baby-show!
See the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves—one—two—and three—
From the lofty elder-tree!
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddy ing round and round they sink
Softly, slowly: one might think,
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—
To this lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In his wavering parachute.
— But the Kitten, how she starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!
First at one, and then its fellow
Just as light and just as yellow;
There are many now—now one—
Now they stop and there are none.
What intenseness of desire
In her upward eye of fire!
With a tiger-leap half-way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Let's it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again:
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shout and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd?

Over happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure!
'Tis a pretty baby-treat;
Nor, I deem, for me unmeet;
Here, for neither Babe nor me,
Other play-mate can I see.
Of the countless living things,
That with stir of feet and wings
(In the sun or under shade,
Upon bough or grassy blade)
And with busy revellings,
Chirp and song, and murmurrings,
Made this orchard's narrow space,
And this vale so blithe a place;
Multitudes are swept away
Never more to breathe the day:
Some are sleeping; some in bands
Travelled into distant lands;
Others slunk to moor and wood,
Far from human neighbourhood;
And, among the Kinds that keep
With us closer fellowship,
With us openly abide,
All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
Who was blest as bird could be,
Feeding in the apple-tree;
Made such wanton spoil and rout,
Turning blossoms inside out;
Hung—head pointing towards the ground—
Fluttered, perched, into a round
Bound himself, and then unbound;
Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin!
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen!
Light of heart and light of limb;
What is now become of Him?
Lambs, that through the mountains went
Frisking, bleating merriment,
When the year was in its prime,
They are sobered by this time.
If you look to vale or hill,
If you listen, all is still,
Save a little neighbouring rill,
That from out the rocky ground
 Strikes a solitary sound.
Vainly glitter hill and plain,
And the air is calm in vain;
Vainly Morning spreads the lure
Of a sky serene and pure;
Creature none can she decoy
Into open sign of joy:
Is it that they have a fear
Of the dreary season near?
Or that other pleasures bee
Sweeter even than gaiety?
Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
In the impenetrable cell
Of the silent heart which Nature
Furnishes to every creature;
Whatsoe'er we feel and know
Too sedate for outward show,
Such a light of gladness breaks,
Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks, —
Spreads with such a living grace
O'er my little Dora's face;
Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
That almost I could repine
That your transports are not mine,
That I do not wholly share
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair!
And I will have my careless season
Spite of melancholy reason,
Will walk through life in such a way
That, when time brings on decay,
Now and then I may possess
Hours of perfect gladness.
— Pleased by any random toy;
By a kitten's busy joy,
Or an infant's laughing eye
Sharing in the ecstasy;
I would fare like that or this,
Find my wisdom in my bliss;
Keep the sprightly soul awake,
And have faculties to take,
Even from things by sorrow wrought,
Matter for a jocund thought,
Spite of care, and spite of grief,
To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND
(AN AGRICULTURIST)
COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING TOGETHER IN HIS PLEASURE-GROUND
1804. 1807

This person was Thomas Wilkinson, a quaker
by religious profession; by natural constitution of mind, or shall I venture to say, by God's grace, he was something better. He had inherited a small estate, and built a house upon it near Yanwath, upon the banks of the Emont. I have heard him say that his heart used to beat, in his boyhood, when he heard the sound of a drum and fife. Nevertheless, the spirit of enterprise in him confined itself to tilling his ground, and conquering such obstacles as stood in the way of its fertility. Persons of his religious persuasion do now, in a far greater degree than formerly, attach themselves to trade and commerce. He kept the old track. As represented in this poem, he employed his leisure hours in shaping pleasant walks by the side of his beloved river, where he also built something between a hermitage and a summer-house, attaching to it inscriptions after the manner of Shenstone at his Leasowe. He used to travel from time to time, partly from love of nature, and partly with religious friends in the service of humanity. His admiration of genius in every department did him much honour. Through his connection with the family in which Edmund Burke was educated, he became acquainted with that great man, who used to receive him with great kindness and consideration; and many times have I heard Wilkinson speak of those interesting interviews. He was honoured also by the friendship of Elizabeth Smith, and of Thomas Clarkson and his excellent wife, and was much esteemed by Lord and Lady Lonsdale, and every member of that family. Among his verses (he wrote many) are some worthy of preservation — one little poem in particular upon disturbing, by prying curiosity, a bird while hatching her young in his garden. The latter part of this innocent and good man's life was melancholy. He became blind, and also poor by becoming surety for some of his relations. He was a bachelor. He bore, as I have often witnessed, his calamities with unfailing resignation. I will only add that, while working in one of his fields, he unearthed a stone of considerable size, then another, then two more, and, observing that they had been placed in order as if forming the segment of a circle, he proceeded carefully to uncover the soil, and brought into view a beautiful Druid's temple of perfect though small dimensions. In order to make his farm more compact, he exchanged this field for another; and, I am sorry to add, the new proprietor destroyed this interesting relic of remote ages for some vulgar purpose.

Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands,
And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,
Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;
I press thee through the yielding soil, with pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;
Long hast Thou served a man to reason true;
Whose life combines the best of high and low,  
The labouring many and the resting few;  
Health, meekness, ardent, quietness secure,  
And industry of body and of mind;  
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure  
As nature is; too pure to be refined.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing  
In concord with his river murmuring by;  
Or in some silent field, while timid spring  
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has laid  
Low in the darksome cell thine own dear lord?  
That man will have a trophy, humble Spade!  
A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part  
False praise from true, or, greater from the less,  
Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,  
Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome day—  
Thee his loved servant, his inspiring mate!  
And, when thou art past service, worn away,  
No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;  
An heirloom in his cottage wilt thou be:—  
High will he hang thee up, well pleased to adorn  
His rustic chimney with the last of Thee!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,  
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrust,  
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,  
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed  
And recognised it, though an altered form,  
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,  
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly muttered voice,  
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:  
This neither is its courage nor its choice,  
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;  
It cannot help itself in its decay;  
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."  
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favourite — then, worse truth,  
A Miser's Pensioner — behold our lot!  
O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth  
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK  
1804-1807

This place was presented to me by Sir George Beaumont with a view to the erection of a house upon it, for the sake of being near to Coleridge, then living, and likely to remain at Greta Hall near Keswick. The severe necessities that prevented this arose from his domestic situation. This little property, with a considerable addition that still leaves it very small, lies beautifully upon the banks of a rib that gurgles down the side of Skiddaw, and the orchard and other parts of the grounds command a magnificent prospect of Derwent Water, and of the mountains of Borrowdale and Newlands. Many years ago I gave the place to my daughter.
OEDE TO DUTY

BEAUMONT ! it was thy wish that I should rear
A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I might dwell
In neighbourhood with One to me most dear,
That undivided we from year to year
Might work in our high Calling — a bright hope
To which our fancies, mingling, gave free scope
Till checked by some necessities severe.
And should these slacken, honoured BEAU-
MONT ! still
Even then we may perhaps in vain implore
Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfill.
Whether this boon be granted us or not,
Old Skiddaw will look down upon the Spot
With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

TO THE SUPREME BEING
FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO

1804. 1807

The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray:
My unassisted heart is barren clay,
That of its native self can nothing feed:
Of good and pious works thou art the seed,
That quickens only where thou say'st it may:
Unless Thou show to us thine own true way
No man can find it: Father! Thou must lead.
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts
Into my mind
By which such virtue may in me be bred
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread;
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of thee,
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

ODE TO DUTY

1805. 1807

This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode to Fortune. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been,

from hour to hour, from day to day: I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren.
But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us.
"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more ed per-
ductus, ut non tantum rectē facere possim, sed nisi rectē facere non possim."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail hu-
manity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power !

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have repos'd my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
TO A SKY-LARK

Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead’s most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let
me live!

TO A SKY-LARK

UP with me! up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary
And to-day my heart is weary;
Had I now the wings of a Faery,
Up to thee would I fly.
There is madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Lift me, guide me high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! thou would’st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy Liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must
wind;
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on;
And hope for higher raptures, when life’s
day is done.

FIDELITY

1805. 1807

The young man whose death gave occasion
to this poem was named Charles Gough, and
had come early in the spring to Patterdale for
the sake of angling. While attempting to
cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere he slipped
from a steep part of the rock where the ice
was not thawed, and perished. His body was
discovered as is told in this poem. Walter
Scott heard of the accident, and both he and I,
without either of us knowing that the other
had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem
in admiration of the dog’s fidelity. His con-
tains a most beautiful stanza: —

"How long didst thou think that his silence was slum-
ber,
When the wind waved his garment how oft didst thou
start."

I will add that the sentiment in the last four
lines of the last stanza in my verses was uttered
by a shepherd with such exactness, that a
traveller, who afterwards reported his account
in print, was induced to question the man
whether he had read them, which he had not.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox;
He halts — and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks:
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy;
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry:
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;
What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December’s snow;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn below!
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land;
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
The crags repeat the raven’s croak,
In symphony austere;
Thither the rainbow comes — the cloud —
And mists that spread the flying shroud;
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past;
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The Shepherd stood; then makes his way
O’er rocks and stones, following the Dog
As quickly as he may;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground;
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear!
At length upon the Shepherd’s mind
It breaks, and all is clear:
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell!
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog had been through three months’
space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master’s side:
How nourished here through such long
time
He knows, who gave that love sublime;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate!

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG
1805. 1807

This Dog I knew well. It belonged to Mrs.
Wordsworth’s brother, Mr. Thomas Hutchin-
son, who then lived at Stockburn on the Tees, a
beautiful retired situation where I used to visit
him and his sisters before my marriage. My
sister and I spent many months there after our
return from Germany in 1790.

On his morning rounds the Master
Looks to learn how all things fare;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Sheep and cattle eyes with care;
And, for silence or for talk,
He hath comrades in his walk;
Four dogs, each pair a different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started!
— Off they fly in earnest chase;
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race:
And the hare whom they pursue,
Knows from instinct what to do;
Her hope is near: no turn she makes;
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted
Thinly by a one night’s frost;
But the nimble Hare hath trusted
To the ice, and safely crost;
She hath crost, and without heed
All are following at full speed,
When, lo! the ice, so thinly spread,
Breaks — and the greyhound, DART, is over-
head!

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW —
See them cleaving to the sport!
MUSIC has no heart to follow,
Little MUSIC, she stops short.
She hath neither wish nor heart,
Hers is now another part:
A loving creature she, and brave!
And fondly strives her struggling friend to
save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
Very hands as you would say!
And afflicting moans she fetches,
As he breaks the ice away.
For herself she hath no fears, —
Him alone she sees and hears, —
Makes efforts with complainings; nor gives o'er
Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more.

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG

1805. 1807

Lie here, without a record of thy worth,
Beneath a covering of the common earth!
It is not from unwillingness to praise,
Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise;
More thou deserv'st; but this man gives to man,
Brother to brother, this is all we can.
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
Shall find thee through all changes of the year:
This Oak points out thy grave; the silent tree
Will gladly stand a monument of thee. 10
We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past;
And willingly have laid thee here at last:
For thou hadst lived till everything that cheers
In thee had yielded to the weight of years;
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
And left thee but a glimmering of the day:
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
It came, and we were glad; yet tears were shed; 21
Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead;
Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share;
But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
Found scarcely anywhere in like degree!
For love, that comes wherever life and sense
Are given by God, in thee was most intense;
A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:

Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
A soul of love, love's intellectual law: —
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;
Our tears from passion and from reason came,
And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name!

"WHEN TO THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE BUSY WORLD"

1805. 1815

The grove still exists, but the plantation has been walled in, and is not so accessible as when my brother John wore the path in the manner here described. The grove was a favourite haunt with us all while we lived at Town-end.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
Sharp season followed of continual storm
In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
At a short distance from my cottage, stands
A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.
Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I loth
To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds
That, for protection from the nipping blast,
Hither repaired. — A single beech-tree grew
Within this grove of firs! and, on the fork
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;
A last year's nest, conspicuously built
At such small elevation from the ground
As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
Of nature and of love had made their home
Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite’s pleasant shore,
And taken thy first leave of those green hills
And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,
Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,
Conversing not, knew little in what mould
Each other’s mind was fashioned; and at length,
When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
Between us there was little other bond
Than common feelings of fraternal love.
But thou, a Schoolboy, to the sea hadst carried
Undying recollections! Nature there
Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she still
Was with thee; and even so didst thou become
A silent Poet; from the solitude
Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
And an eye practised like a blind man’s touch.
—Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone;
Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
Could I withhold thy honoured name,— and now
I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong;
And there I sit at evening, when the steepl
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere’s peaceful lake,
And one green island, gleam between the stems
Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
Muttering the verses which I muttered first
Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel’s deck
In some far region, here, while o’er my head,
At every impulse of the moving breeze,
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
Alone I tread this path; — for aught I know,
Timing my steps to thine; and, with a store
Of undistinguishable sympathies,
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere’s happy Vale.

ELEGIAE VERSES

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH,
COMMANDER OF THE R. I. COMPANY’S SHIP THE EARL OF ABERGAVENNY, IN WHICH HE PERISHED BY CALAMITOUS SHIPWRECK, FEB. 6, 1805

1805. 1845

Composed near the Mountain track that leads from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards Patterdale.

“Here did we stop; and here looked round,
While each into himself descends.”

The point is two or three yards below the outlet of Grisdale tarn, on a foot-road by which a horse may pass to Patterdale — a ridge of Helvellyn on the left, and the summit of Fairfield on the right.

I

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow:
Lord of the air, he took his flight;
Oh! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment’s space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near.

II

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power
That meets me in this unknown Flower.
Affecting type of him I mourn!
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

III

Here did we stop; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting
Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home and his, his heart’s delight,
His quiet heart’s selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

IV

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep!
All vanished in a single word,
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard:
Sea — Ship — drowned — Shipwreck — so
it came,
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;
He who had been our living John
Was nothing but a name.

V

That was indeed a parting! oh,
Glad am I, glad that it is past;
For there were some on whom it cast
Unutterable woe.
But they as well as I have gains; —
From many a humble source, to pains
Like these, there comes a mild release;
Even here I feel it, even this Plant
Is in its beauty ministrant
To comfort and to peace.

VI

He would have loved thy modest grace,
Meek Flower! To Him I would have said,
“It grows upon its native bed
Beside our Parting-place;
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling to the ground, it lies
But we will see it, joyful tide!
Some day, to see it in its pride,
The mountain will we cross.”

VII

— Brother and Friend, if verse of mine
Have power to make thy virtues known,
Here let a monumental Stone
Stand — sacred as a Shrine;
and to the few who pass this way,
'traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
Long as these mighty rocks endure,
Thou dost not Thou too fondly brood,
Although deserving of all good,
In any earthly hope, however pure!

TO THE DAISY
1805. 1815

Sweet Flower! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
Welcome thee once more;
But He, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he bent his way,
To govern and to guide:
His wish was gained; a little time
Would bring him back in manhood's prime
And free for life, these hills to climb;
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight;
The May had then made all things green;
And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen,
His pride and his delight!

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought:
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers!
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers
A starry multitude.

But hark the word! — the ship is gone;
Returns from her long course: — anon
Sets sail: — in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand:
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel! — ghastly shock!
— At length delivered from the rock,
The deep she hath regained;
And through the stormy night they steer;
Labouring for life, in hope and fear,

To reach a safer shore — how near,
Yet not to be attained!

"Silence!" the brave Commander cried:
To that calm word a shriek replied,
It was the last death-shriek.
— A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
Survive upon the tall mast's height;
But one dear remnant of the night —
For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea
He lay in slumber quietly;
Unforced by wind or wave
To quit the Ship for which he died,
(All claims of duty satisfied;)
And there they found him at her side;
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done
For this, if other end were none,
That He, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last —

That neighbourhood of grove and field
To Him a resting-place should yield,
A meek man and a brave!
The birds shall sing and ocean make
A mournful murmur for his sake;
And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and wake
Upon his senseless grave.

ELEGIA STANZAS
SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT
1805. 1807

Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs. Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it; but Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it.

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.
So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!  
So like, so very like, was day to day!  
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
there;  
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no  
sleep;  
No mood, which season takes away, or  
brings:  
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep  
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! then, if mine had been the Painter's  
hand,  
To express what then I saw; and add the  
gleam,

The light that never was, on sea or land,  
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;  
I would have planted thee, thou hoary  
Pile  
Amid a world how different from this!

A sea that could not cease to smile;  
A tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.  
Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house  
divine  
Peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —  
the sunbeams that did ever shine  
sweetest had to thee been given.

The fond illusion of my heart,  
A Picture would I at that time have  
de:  
A peace of truth in every part,  
peace that might not be betrayed.

Would I have been, — 't is so no  

in the moving tide, a breeze, a  
No motley, silent Nature's breathing life.

I could now behold  
be what I have been:  
I speak with mind  

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have  
been the Friend,  
If he had lived, of Him whom I deprecate,  
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;  
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore:

O! 't is a passionate Work! — yet wise is  
well,  
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;  
That Hulk which labours in the deep swell,  
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here on  
lime,  
I love to see the look with which it braved  
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,  
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trum-  
pling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lived  
alone,  
Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
Kind!  
Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
Is to be pitied; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer.  
And frequent sights of what is to be borne  
Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
here.—  
Not without hope we suffer and we mount.

LOUISA

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A  
MOUNTAIN EXCURSION  
1805. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grassmere.

I met Louisa in the shade,
And, having seen that lovely Maid,
Why should I fear to say
That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,
And down the rocks can leap along
Like rivulets in May?

She loves her fire, her cottage-home;
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
In weather rough and bleak;
And, when against the wind she strains,
Oh! might I kiss the mountain rains
That sparkle on her cheek.
O happy time of youthful lovers (thus
My story may begin) O balmy time,
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven!
To such inheritance of blessed fancy
(Fancy that sports more desperately with minds
Than ever fortune hath been known to do)
The high-born Vaudracour was brought,
by years
Whose progress had a little overstepped
His stripling prime. A town of small repute,
Among the vine-clad mountains of Au-
vergne,
Was the Youth's birth-place. There he
wooed a Maid
Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit
With answering vows. Plebeian was the stock,
Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,
From which her graces and her honours sprung:
And hence the father of the enamoured Youth,
With haughty indignation, spurned the thought
Of such alliance. — From their cradles up,
With but a step between their several homes,
Twins had they been in pleasure; after strife
And petty quarrels, had grown fond again;
Each other's advocate, each other's stay;
And, in their happiest moments, not content,
If more divided than a sportive pair
Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are hovering
Within the eddy of a common blast,
Or hidden only by the concave depth
Of neighbouring billows from each other's sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age
Unknown to memory, was an earnest given
By ready nature for a life of love,
For endless constancy, and placid truth;
But whatso'ever of such rare treasure lay
Reserved, had fate permitted, for support
Of their maturer years, his present mind
Was under fascination; — he beheld
A vision, and adored the thing he saw.
Arabian fiction never filled the world
With half the wonders that were wrought for him.
Earth breathed in one great presence of the
spring;
Life turned the meanest of her implements,
Before his eyes, to price above all gold;
The house she dwelt in was a sainted
shrine;
Her chamber-window did surpass in glory
The portals of the dawn; all paradise
Could, by the simple opening of a door,
Let itself in upon him: — pathways, walks,
Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit
sank,
Surcharged, within him, overblest to move
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world 51
To its dull round of ordinary cares;
A man too happy for mortality!
So passed the time, till whether through
effect
Of some unguarded moment that dissolved
Virtuous restraint — ah, speak it, think it, not!
Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who
saw
So many bars between his present state
And the dear haven where he wished to be
In honourable wedlock with his Love, 60
Was in his judgment tempted to decline
To perilous weakness, and entrust his cause
To nature for a happy end of all;
Deem that by such fond hope the Youth
was swayed,
And bear with their transgression, when I
add
That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,
Carried about her for a secret grief
The promise of a mother.
To conceal
The threatened shame, the parents of the
Maid
Found means to hurry her away by night,
And unforewarned, that in some distant
spot
She might remain shrouded in privacy,
Until the babe was born. When morning
came
The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,
And all uncertain whither he should turn,
Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but soon
Discovering traces of the fugitives,
Their steps he followed to the Maid’s re-
treat.
Easily may the sequel be divined —
Walks to and fro — watchings at every
hour;
And the fair Captive, who, whence’er she
may,
Is busy at her casement as the swallow
Fluttering its pinions, almost within reach
About the pendent nest, did thus espy
Her Lover! — thence a stolen interview,
Accomplished under friendly shade of
night.
I pass the raptures of the pair; — such
theme
Is, by innumerable poets, touched
In more delightful verse than skill of mine
Could fashion; chiefly by that darling bard
Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,
And of the lark’s note heard before its
time,
And of the streaks that laced the severing
clouds
In the unrelenting east. — Through all her
courts
The vacant city slept; the busy winds,
That keep no certain intervals of rest,
Moved not; meanwhile the galaxy dis-
played
Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat
Aloft — momentous but uneasy bliss!
To their full hearts the universe seemed
hung
On that brief meeting’s slender filament!
They parted; and the generous Vaudr-
cour
Reached speedily the native threshold, best
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)
A sacrifice of birthright to attain
A final portion from his father’s hand;
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom then
would flee
To some remote and solitary place,
Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,
Where they may live, with no one to be-
hold
Their happiness, or to disturb their love.
But now of this no whisper; not the less,
If ever an obtrusive word were dropped
Touching the matter of his passion, still,
In his stern father’s hearing, Vaudracour
Persisted openly that death alone
Should abrogate his human privilege
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.
“You shall be baffled in your mad in-
tent
If there be justice in the court of France,”
Muttered the Father. — From these words
the Youth
Conceived a terror; and, by night or day,
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that full
soon
Found dreadful provocation: for at night
When to his chamber he retired, attempt
Was made to seize him by three armed
men,
Acting, in furtherance of the father's will,
Under a private signet of the State.
One the rash Youth's ungovernable hand
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave 131
A perilous wound—be shuddered to be
bold
The breathless corse; then peacefully re
signed
His person to the law, was lodged in prison,
And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you observed a tuft of winged seed
That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use
Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to and fro
Through the wide element? or have you
marked
The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,
Tormented? by such aid you may con
ceive
The perturbation that ensued;—ah, no!
Desperate the Maid—the Youth is stained
with blood;
Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet!
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured
bough
Is Man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the
Court,
Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;
But not without exaction of a pledge,
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.
He flew to her from whom they would divide him—
He clove to her who could not give him peace—
Yea, his first word of greeting was,—"All
right
Is gone from me; my lately-towering hopes,
To the least fibre of their lowest root,
Are withered; thou no longer canst be mine,
I thine—the conscience-stricken must not
woo
The unruffled Innocent,—I see thy face,
Behold thee, and my misery is complete!"

"One, are we not?" exclaimed the
Maiden—"One,
For innocence and youth, for weal and
woe?"
Then with the father's name she coupled
words
Of vehement indignation; but the Youth
Checked her with filial meekness; for no
thought
Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense
Of hasty anger rising in the eclipse
Of true domestic loyalty, did e'er 170
Find place within his bosom.—Once again
The persevering wedge of tyranny
Achieved their separation: and once more
Were they united,—to be yet again
Dissipated, pitiable lot! But here
A portion of the tale may well be left
In silence, though my memory could add
Much how the Youth, in scanty space of
time,
Was traversed from without; much, too,
of thoughts
That occupied his days in solitude
Under privation and restraint; and what,
Through dark and shapeless fear of things
to come,
And what, through strong compunction for
the past,
He suffered—breaking down in heart and
mind!
Doomed to a third and last captivity,
His freedom he recovered on the eve
Of Julia's travails. When the babe was
born,
Its presence tempted him to cherish schemes
Of future happiness. "You shall return,
Julia," said he, "and to your father's
house 190
Go with the child.—You have been
wretched; yet
The silver shower, whose reckless burthen
weighs
Too heavily upon the lily's head,
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.
Malice, beholding you, will melt away.
Go I—'t is a town where both of us were
born;
None will reproach you, for our truth is
known;
And if, amid those once-bright bowers, our
fate
Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.
With ornaments—the prettiest, nature yields
With that sole charge he passed the city-gates,
For the last time, attendant by the side
Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan,
In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,
That rose a brief league distant from the town,
The dwellers in that house where he had lodged
Accompanied his steps, by anxious love
Impelled; — they parted from him there,
And stood
Watching below till he had disappeared
On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely took,
Throughout that journey, from the vehicle
(Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!) that veiled
The tender infant: and, at every inn,
And under every hospitable tree
At which the bearers halted or reposed,
Laid him with timid care upon his knees,
And looked, as mothers ne'er were known

to look,
Upon the nursling which his arms embraced.

These gleams
This was the manner in which Vaudracour Departed with his infant; and thus reached
His father's house, where to the innocent child
Admittance was denied. The young man spake
No word of indignation or reproof,
But of his father begged, a last request,
That a retreat might be assigned to him
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,
With such allowance as his wants required;
For wishes he had none. To a lodge that stood
Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the age
Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew;
And thither took with him his motherless Babe,
And one domestic for their common needs,
An aged woman. It consol'd him here
To attend upon the orphan, and perform
Obsequious service to the precious child.
Which, after a short time, by some mistake
Or indiscretion of the Father, died. —
The Tale I follow to its last recess
Of suffering or of peace, I know not which:
Their's be the blame who caused the woe,
not mine!
From this time forth he never shared a smile
With mortal creature. An Inhabitant
Of that same town, in which the pair had left
A lively remembrance of their griefs,
By chance of business, coming within reach
Of his retirement, to the forest lodge repaired, but only found the matron there,
Who told him that his pains were thrown away,
For that her Master never uttered word.
A living thing—not even to her.— Behold!
While they were speaking, Vaudracour approached;
But, seeing some one near, as on the latch
Of the garden-gate his hand was laid, he shrunk—
And, like a shadow, glided out of view.
Shocked at his savage aspect, from the place
The visitor retired. Thus lived the Youth
Cut off from all intelligence with man, 300
And shunning even the light of common day;
Nor could the voice of Freedom, which through France
Full speedily resounded, public hope,
Or personal memory of his own deep wrongs,
Rouse him: but in those solitary shades
His days he wasted, an imbecile mind!

THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT
BY MY SISTER
1805. 1815

Suggested to her while beside my sleeping children.
The days are cold, the nights are long,
The north-wind sings a doleful song;
Then hush again upon my breast;
All merry things are now at rest,
Save thee, my pretty Love!
The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;
There’s nothing stirring in the house
Save one woe, hungry, nibbling mouse,
Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;
’Tis but the moon that shines so bright
On the window pane bedrope with rain:
Then, little Darling! sleep again,
And wake when it is day.

THE WAGGONER
1805. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The characters and story from fact.

In Cairo’s crowded streets
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddened at the long delay.

THOMSON

TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,
When I sent you, a few weeks ago, the tale of Peter Bell, you asked “why ’The Waggoner’ was not added?”—To say the truth—from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended this little Piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken. “The Waggoner” was read to you in manuscript, and, as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope, that, since the localities on which the Poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being therefore in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you; in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your Writings, and of the high esteem with which

I am very truly yours,
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

RYDAL MOUNT, MAY 20, 1819.

CANTO FIRST
’Tis spent—this burning day of June!
Soft darkness o’er its latest gleams is stealing;
The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round,
is wheeling—
That solitary bird
Is all that can be heard
In silence deeper far than that of deepest noon!
Confiding Glow-worms, ’tis a night
Propitious to your earth-born light.
But, where the scattered stars are seen
In hazy straits the clouds between,
Each, in his station twinkling not,
Seems changed into a pallid spot.
The mountains against heaven's grave
weight
Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.
The air, as in a lion's den,
Is close and hot; — and now and then
Comes a tired and sultry breeze
With a haunting and a panting,
Like the stifling of disease;
But the dews allay the heat,
And the silence makes it sweet.
Hush, there is some one on the stir!
'Tis Benjamin the Waggoner;
Who long hath trod this toi'some way,
Companion of the night and day.
That far-off tinkling of drowsy cheer,
Mixed with a faint yet grating sound
In a moment lost and found,
The Wain announces — by whose side
Along the banks of Rydal Mere
He paces, on a trusty Guide, —
Listen! you can scarcely hear!
Hither he his course is bending; —
Now he leaves the lower ground,
And up the craggy hill ascending
Many a stop and stay he makes,
Many a breathing-fit he takes; —
Steep the way and wearisome,
Yet all the while his whip is dumb!
The Horses have worked with right
good-will,
And so have gained the top of the hill;
He was patient, they were strong,
And now they smoothly glide along,
Recovering breath, and pleased to win
The praises of mild Benjamin.
Heaven shield him from mishap and snare!
But why so early with this prayer? —
Is it for threatenings in the sky?
Or for some other danger nigh?
No; none is near him yet, though he
Be one of much infirmity;
For at the bottom of the brow,
Where once the Dove and Olive-bough
Offered a greeting of good ale
To all who entered Grasmere Vale;
And called on him who must depart
To leave it with a jovial heart;
There, where the Dove and Olive-bough
Once hung, a Poet harbours now,
A simple water-drinking Bard;
Why need our Hero then (though frail
His best resolves) be on his guard?
He marches by, secure and bold;
Yet while he thinks on times of old,
It seems that all looks wondrous cold;
He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,
And, for the honest folk within,
It is a doubt with Benjamin
Whether they be alive or dead!
Here is no danger, — none at all!
Beyond his wish he walks secure;
But pass a mile — and then for trial,—
Then for the pride of self-denial;
If he resist that tempting door,
Which with such friendly voice will call;
If he resist those casement panes,
And that bright gleam which thence will fall
Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,
Inviting him with cheerful lure:
For still, though all be dark elsewhere,
Some shining notice will be there,
Of open house and ready fare.
The place to Benjamin right well
Is known, and by as strong a spell
As used to be that sign of love
And hope — the Olive-bough and Dove;
He knows it to his cost, good Man!
Who does not know the famous Swan?
Object uncouth! and yet our boast,
For it was painted by the Host;
His own conceit the figure planned,
'Twas coloured all by his own hand;
And that frail Child of thirsty clay,
Of whom I sing this rustic lay,
Could tell with self-dissatisfaction
Quaint stories of the bird's attraction!
Well! that is past — and in despite
Of open door and shining light.
And now the conqueror essays
The long ascent of Dunmail-raise;
And with his team is gentle here
As when he clomb from Rydal Mere;
His whip they do not dread — his voice
They only hear it to rejoice.
To stand or go is at their pleasure;
Their efforts and their time they measure
By generous pride within the breast;
And, while they strain, and while they rest,
He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.
Now am I fairly safe to-night —
And with proud cause my heart is light:
I trespassed lately worse than ever—
But Heaven has blest a good endeavour;
And, to my soul's content, I find
The evil One is left behind.
The Astrologer, sage Sidrophel,
Where at his desk and book he sits,
Puzzling aloft his curious wits;
He whose domain is held in common
With no one but the ancient woman,
Cowering beside her rifted cell,
As if intent on magic spell; —
Dread pair, that, spite of wind and weather,
Still sit upon Helm-crag together!
The Astrologer was not unseen
By solitary Benjamin;
But total darkness came anon,
And he and everything was gone:
And suddenly a ruffling breeze,
(That would have rocked the sounding trees
Had aught of sylvan growth been there)
Swept through the Hollow long and bare:
The rain rushed down — the road was battered,
As with the force of billows shattered;
The horses are dismayed, nor know
Whether they should stand or go;
And Benjamin is grooping near them,
Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.
He is astounded, — wonder not, —
With such a charge in such a spot;
Astonished in the mountain gap
With thunder-peals, clap after clap,
Close-treading on the silent flashes —
And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes
Among the rocks; with weight of rain,
And sullen motions long and slow,
That to a dreary distance go —
Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,
A rending o'er his head begins the fray again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do,
And oftentimes compelled to halt,
The horses cautiously pursue
Their way, without mishap or fault;
And now have reached that pile of stones,
Heaped over brave Dunmail's bones;
His who had once supreme command,
Last king of rocky Cumberland;
His bones, and those of all his Power
Slain here in a disastrous hour!

When, passing through this narrow strait,
Stony, and dark, and desolate,
Benjamin can faintly hear
A voice that comes from some one near,
A female voice: — "Who'er you be,
Stop," it exclaimed, "and pity me!"
And, less in pity than in wonder,
Amid the darkness and the thunder,
The Waggoner, with prompt command,
Summons his horses to a stand.
While, with increasing agitation,
The Woman urged her supplication,
In rueful words, with sobs between—
The voice of tears that fell unseen;
There came a flash—a startling glare,
And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare!
"Tis not a time for nice suggestion,
And Benjamin, without a question,
Taking her for some way-worn rover,
Said, "Mount, and get you under cover!"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse
As a swollen brook with rugged course,
Cried out, "Good brother, why so fast?
I've had a glimpse of you—avast!
Or, since it suits you to be civil,
Take her at once—for good and evil!"

"It is my Husband," softly said
The Woman, as if half afraid;
By this time she was snug within,
Through help of honest Benjamin;
She and her Babe, which to her breast
With thankfulness the Mother pressed;
And now the same strong voice more near
Said cordially, "My Friend, what cheer?
Rough doings these! as God's my judge
The sky owes somebody a grudge!
We've had in half an hour or less
A twelve-month's terror and distress!"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man
Would mount, too, quickly as he can:
The Sailor—Sailor now no more,
But such he had been heretofore—
To courteous Benjamin replied,
"Go you your way, and mind not me;
For I must have, whate'er betide,
My Ass and fifty things beside,—
Go, and I'll follow speedily!"

The Waggoner moves—and with its load
Descends along the sloping road;
And the rough Sailor instantly
Turns to a little tent hard by:
For when, at closing-in of day,
The family had come that way,
Green pasture and the soft warm air
Tempted them to settle there.—

"Green is the grass for beast to graze,
Around the stones of Dunnmail-raise!"

The Sailor gathers up his bed,
Takes down the canvas overhead;
And, after farewell to the place,
A parting word—though not of grace,
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,
The way the Waggoner went before.

CANTO SECOND

If Wytheburn's modest House of prayer,
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,
Had, with its belfry's humble stock,
A little pair that hang in air,
Been mistress also of a clock,
(And one, too, not in crazy plight)
Twelve strokes that clock would have been
telling
Under the brow of old Helvellyn—
Its bead-roll of midnight,
Then, when the Hero of my tale
Was passing by, and, down the vale
(The vale now silent, hushed I ween
As if a storm had never been)
Proceeding with a mind at ease;
While the old Familiar of the seas,
Intent to use his utmost haste,
Gained ground upon the Waggoner fast,
And gives another lusty cheer;
For spite of rumbling of the wheels,
A welcome greeting he can hear;—
It is a fiddle in its glee
Dinning from the Cherry Tree!

Thence the sound—the light is there—
As Benjamin is now aware,
Who, to his inward thoughts confined,
Had almost reached the festive door,
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,
He hears a sound and sees a light,
And in a moment calls to mind
That 'tis the village MERRY-NIGHT!

Although before in no dejection,
At this insidious recollection
His heart with sudden joy is filled,—
His ears are by the music thrilled,
His eyes take pleasure in the road
Glittering before him bright and broad;
And Benjamin is wet and cold,
And there are reasons manifold
That make the good, tow'rds which he's yearning,
Look fairly like a lawful earning.

Nor has thought time to come and go,
To vibrate between yes and no;
For, cries the Sailor, "Glorious chance
That blew us hither! — let him dance,
Who can or will! — my honest soul,
Our treat shall be a friendly bowl!"
He draws him to the door—"Come in,
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin!
And Benjamin—ah, woe is me!
Gave the word—the horses heard
And halted, though reluctantly.
"Blithe souls and lightsome hearts have we,
Feasting at the Cherry Tree!"
This was the outside proclamation,
This was the inside salutation;
What bustling — jostling — high and low!
A universal overflow!
What tankards foaming from the tap!
What store of cakes in every lap!
What thumping — stumping — overhead!
The thunder had not been more busy:
With such a stir you would have said,
This little place may well be dizzy!
'Tis who can dance with greatest vigour —
'Tis what can be most prompt and eager;
As if it heard the fiddle's call,
The pewter clatters on the wall,
The very bacon shows its feeling,
Swinging from the smoky ceiling!
A steaming bowl, a blazing fire,
What greater good can heart desire?
'Twere worth a wise man's while to try
The utmost anger of the sky:
To seek for thoughts of a gloomy cast,
If such the bright amends at last.
Now should you say I judge amiss,
The Cherry Tree shows proof of this;
For soon of all the happy there,
Our Travellers are the happiest pair;
All care with Benjamin is gone —
A Cæsar past the Rubicon!
He thinks not of his long, long strife; —
The Sailor, Man by nature gay,
Hath no resolves to throw away;
And he hath now forgot his Wife,
Hath quite forgotten her — or may be
Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,
Within that warm and peaceful berth,
Under cover,
Terror over,
Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.
With bowl that sped from hand to hand,
The gladdest of the gladsome band,
Amid their own delight and fun,
They hear — when every dance is done,
When every whirling bout is o'er —
The fiddle's squeak — that call to bliss,
Ever followed by a kiss;
They envy not the happy lot,
But enjoy their own the more!
While thus our jovial Travellers fare,
Up springs the Sailor from his chair —
Limps (for I might have told before
That he was lame) across the floor —
Is gone — returns — and with a prize;
With what? — a Ship of lusty size;
A gallant stately Man-of-war,
Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.
Surprise to all, but most surprise
To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes,
Not knowing that he had befriended
A Man so gloriously attended!
"This," cries the Sailor, "a Third-rate is —
Stand back, and you shall see her gratis!
This was the Flag-ship at the Nile,
The Vangoard — you may smirk and smile,
But, pretty Maid, if you look near,
You'll find you've much in little here!
A nobler ship did never swim,
And you shall see her in full trim:
I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,
Set every inch of sail upon her."
So said, so done; and masts, sails, yards,
He names them all; and interlards
His speech with uncouth terms of art,
Accomplished in the showman's part;
And then, as from a sudden check,
Cries out — "'Tis there, the quarter-deck
On which brave Admiral Nelson stood —
A sight that would have roused your blood!
One eye he had, which, bright as ten,
Burned like a fire among his men;
Let this be land, and that be sea,
Here lay the French — and thus came we!"
Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,
The dancers all were gathered round,
And, such the stillness of the house,
You might have heard a nibbling mouse;
While, borrowing helps where'er he may,
The Sailor through the story runs
Of ships to ships and guns to guns;
And does his utmost to display
The dismal conflict, and the might
And terror of that marvellous night!
"A bowl, a bowl of double measure,"
Cries Benjamin, "a draught of length,
To Nelson, England's pride and treasure
Her bulwark and her tower of strength!"
When Benjamin had seized the bowl,
The mastiff, from beneath the waggon,
Rattled his chain; — 't was all in vain,
For Benjamin, triumphant soul!
He heard the monitory growl;
Heard — and in opposition quaffed
A deep, determined, desperate draught!
Nor did the battered Tar forget,
Or flinch from what he deemed his debt:
Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,
Back to her place the ship he led;
Wheeled her back in full apparel;
And so, flag flying at mast head,
Re-yoked her to the Ass: — anon,
Cries Benjamin, "We must be gone."
Thus, after two hours’ hearty stay,
Again behold them on their way!

CANTO THIRD

RIGHT gladly had the horses stirred,
When they the wished-for greeting heard,
The whip’s loud notice from the door,
That they were free to move once more.
You think, those doings must have bred
In them disheartening doubts and dread;
No, not a horse of all the eight,
Although it be a moonless night,
Fears either for himself or freight;
For this they know (and let it hide)
In part, the offences of their guide.
That Benjamin, with clouded brains,
Is worth the best with all their pains;
And, if they had a prayer to make,
The prayer would be that they may take
With him whatever comes in course,
The better fortune or the worse;
That no one else may have business near them,
And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.

So, forth in dauntless mood they fare,
And with them goes the guardian pair.
Now, heroes, for the true commotion,
The triumph of your late devotion
Can aught on earth impede delight,
Still mounting to a higher height;
And higher still — a greedy flight!
Can any low-born care pursue her?
Can any mortal clom come to her?
No notion have they — not a thought,
That is from joyless regions brought!
And, while they coast the silent lake,
Their inspiration I partake;
Share their empyreal spirits — yea,
With their enraptured vision, see —
O fancy — what a jubilee!
What shifting pictures — clad in gleams
Of colour bright as feverish dreams!
Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,
Involved and restless all — a scene
Pregnant with mutual exaltation,
Rich change, and multiplied creation!
This sight to me the Muse imparts; —
And then, what kindness in their hearts!
What tears of rapture, what vow-making,

Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking!
What solemn, vacant, interlacing,
As if they’d fall asleep embracing!
Then, in the turbulence of glee,
And in the excess of amity,
Says Benjamin, "That Ass of thine,
He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine:
If he were tethered to the waggons,
He’d drag as well what he is dragging,
And we, as brother should with brother,
Might trudge it alongside each other!"
Forthwith, obedient to command,
The horses made a quiet stand;
And to the waggons’ skirts was tied
The Creature, by the Mastiff’s side,
The Mastiff wondering, and perplexed
With dread of what will happen next;
And thinking it but sorry cheer,
To have such company so near!
This new arrangement made, the Wain
Through the still night proceeds again;
No Moon hath risen her light to lend;
But indistinctly may be kenned
The Vanguard, following close behind,
Sails spread, as if to catch the wind!
"Thy wife and child are snug and warm,
Thy ship will travel without harm;"
I like," said Benjamin, "her shape and stature:
And this of mine — this bulky creature
Of which I have the steering — this,
Seen fairly, is not much amiss!
We want your streamers, friend, you know;
But, altogether as we go,
We make a kind of handsome show!
Among these hills, from first to last,
We’ve weathered many a furious blast;
Hard passage forcing on, with head
Against the storm, and canvas spread.
I hate a boaster; but to thee
Will say ‘t, who know’st both land and sea,
The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine
Is hardly worse beset than mine,
When cross-winds on her quarter beat;
And, fairly lifted from my feet,
I stagger onward — heaven knows bow;
But not so pleasantly as now:
Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,
And many a foundrous pit surrounded!
Yet here we are, by night and day
Grinding through rough and smooth our way;
Through foul and fair our task fulfilling;
And long shall be so yet — God willing!"
"Ay," said the Tar, "through fair and foul—
but save us from yon screeching owl!"
That instant was begun a fray,
Which called their thoughts another way:
'He mastiff, ill-conditioned earl!
What must he do but growl and snarl,
till more and more dissatisfied
With the meek comrade at his side!
'Till, not incensed though put to proof,
he Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,
Alutes the Mastiff on the head;
And so were better manners bred,
And all was calmed and quieted.
"Yon screech-owl," says the Sailor, turning
Back to his former cause of mourning.
"Yon owl!—pray God that all be well!
'Tis worse than any funeral bell;
As sure as I've the gift of sight,
We shall be meeting ghosts to-night!"
—said Benjamin, "This whip shall lay
A thousand, if they cross our way.
I know that Wanton's noisy station,
I know him and his occupation;
The jolly bird hath learned his cheer
Upon the banks of Windermere;
Where a tribe of them make merry,
Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry;
Hallooing from an open throat,
Like travellers shouting for a boat.
—The tricks he learned at Windermere
This vagrant owl is playing here—
That is the worst of his employment:
He's at the top of his enjoyment!"

This explanation stilled the alarm,
Cured the foreboder like a charm;
This, and the manner, and the voice,
Summoned the Sailor to rejoice;
His heart is up—he fears no evil
From life or death, from man or devil;
He wheels—and, making many stops,
Brandished his crutch against the mountain tops;
And, while he talked of blows and tears,
Benjamin, among the stars,
Beheld a dancing—and a glancing;
Such retreating and advancing
As, I ween, was never seen
In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars!

CANTO FOURTH
Thus they, with freaks of proud delight,
Beguile the remnant of the night;
And many a snatch of jovial song
Regales them as they wind along;
While to the music, from on high,
The echoes make a glad reply. —
But the sage Muse the revel heeds
No farther than her story needs;
Nor will she servilely attend
The loitering journey to its end.
—Blithe spirits of her own impel
The Muse, who scents the morning air,
To take of this transported pair
A brief and unproved farewell;
To quit the slow-paced waggon's side,
And wander down yon hawthorn dell,
With murmuring Greta for her guide.
—There doth she ken the awful form
Of Raven-crag—black as a storm—
Glimmering through the twilight pale;
And Glimmer-crag, his tall twin brother,
Each peering forth to meet the other:
—And, while she roves through St. John's Vale,
Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,
By sheep-track or through cottage lane,
Where no disturbance comes to intrude
Upon the pensive solitude,
Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,
With the rude shepherd's favoured glance,
Beholds the faeries in array,
Whose party-coloured garments gay
The silent company betray:
Red, green, and blue; a moment's sight!
For Skiddaw-top with rosy light
Is touched—and all the band take flight.
—Fly also, Muse! and from the dell
Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell;
Thence, look thou forth o'er wood and lawn
Hear with the frost-like dews of dawn;
Across yon meadowy bottom look,
Where close fogs hide their parent brook;
And see, beyond that hamlet small,
The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,
Lurking in a double shade,
By trees and lingering twilight made!
There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat
To noble Clifford; from annoy
Concealed the persecuted boy,
Well pleased in rustic garb to feed
His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed
Among this multitude of hills,
Crags, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills;
Which soon the morning shall enfold,
From east to west, in ample vest
Of massy gloom and radiance bold.
The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed
Hung low, begin to rise and spread;
Even while I speak, their skirts of grey
Are smitten by a silver ray;
And lo! — up Castrigg's naked steep
(Where, smoothly urged, the vapours sweep
Along — and scatter and divide,
Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)
The stately wagggon is ascending,
With faithful Benjamin attending,
Apparent now beside his team —
Now lost amid a glittering steam:
And with him goes his Sailor-friend,
By this time near their journey's end;
And, after their high-minded riot,
Sickening into thoughtful quiet;
As if the morning's pleasant hour
Had for their joys a killing power.
And, sooth, for Benjamin a vein
Is opened of still deeper pain
As if his heart by notes were stung
From out the lowly hedge-rows flung;
As if the Warbler lost in light
Reprieved his soarsings of the night,
In strains of rapture pure and holy
Upbraided his distempered folly.
Drooping is he, his step is dull;
But the horses stretch and pull;
With increasing vigour climb,
Eager to repair lost time;
Whether, by their own desert,
Knowing what cause there is for shame,
They are labouring to avert
As much as may be of the blame,
Which, they foresee, must soon alight
Upon his head, whom, in despite
Of all his failings, they love best;
Whether for him they are distrest,
Or, by length of fasting roused,
Are impatient to be housed:
Up against the hill they strain
Tugging at the iron chain,
Tugging all with might and main,
Last and foremost, every horse
To the utmost of his force!
And the smoke and respiration,
Rising like an exhalation,
Blend with the mist — a moving shroud —
To form an undissolving cloud;
Which, with slant ray, the merry sun
Takes delight to play upon.
Never golden-haired Apollo,
Pleased some favourite chief to follow
Through accidents of peace or war,
In a perilous moment threw
Around the object of his care
Veil of such celestial hue;
Interposed so bright a screen —
Him and his enemies between!
Alas! what boots it? — who can his
When the malicious Fates are bent
On working out an ill intent?
Can destiny be turned aside?
No — sad progress of my story!
Benjamin, this outward glory
Cannot shield thee from thy Master,
Who from Keswick has pricked forth,
Sour and surly as the north;
And, in fear of some disaster,
Comes to give what help he may,
And to hear what thou canst say;
If, as needs he must forebode,
Thou hast been loitering on the road!
His fears, his doubts, may now a
flight —
The wished-for object is in sight;
Yet, trust the Muse, it rather hath
Stirred him up to livelier wrath;
Which he stifles, moody man!
With all the patience that he can;
To the end that, at your meeting,
He may give thee decent greeting.
There he is — resolved to stop,
Till the wagggon gains the top;
But stop he cannot — must advance:
Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,
Espies — and instantly is ready,
Self-collected, poised, and steady:
And, to be the better seen,
Issues from his radiant shroud,
From his close-attending cloud,
With careless air and open mien.
Erect his port, and firm his going;
So struts you cock that now is crowing;
And the morning light in grace
Strikes upon his lifted face,
Hurrying the pallid hue away
That might his trepasses betray.
But what can all avail to clear him,
Or what need of explanation,
Parley or interrogation?
For the Master sees, alas!
That unhappy Figure near him,
Limping o'er the dewy grass,
Where the road it fringes, sweet,
Soft and cool to way-worn feet;
And, O indignity! an Aas,
By his noble Mastiff's side,
Tethered to the wagggon's tail:
And the ship, in all her pride,
Following after in full sail!
Not to speak of babe and mother;
Who, contented with each other,
And snug as birds in leafy arbour,
Find, within, a blessed harbour!

With eager eyes the Master pries;
Looks in and out, and through and through;
Says nothing—till at last he spies
A wound upon the Mastiff's head,
A wound, where plainly might be read
What feats an Ass's hoof can do!
But drop the rest:—this aggravation,
This complicated provocation,
A hoard of grievances unsealed;
All past forgiveness it repealed;
And thus, and through distempered blood
On both sides, Benjamin the good,
The patient, and the tender-hearted,
Was from his team and waggon parted;
When duty of that day was o'er,
Laid down his whip—and served no more.—
Nor could the waggon long survive,
Which Benjamin had ceased to drive:
It lingered on;—guide after guide
Ambitiously the office tried;
But each unmanageable hill
Called for his patience and his skill;—
And sure it is, that through this night,
And what the morning brought to light,
Two losses we had to sustain,
We lost both Waggoner and Wain!

On friendly terms with this Machine:
In him, while he was wont to trace
Our roads, through many a long year's space,
A living almanack had we;
We had a speaking diary,
That in this uneventful place
Gave to the days a mark and name
By which we knew them when they came.
—Yes, I, and all about me here,
Through all the changes of the year,
Had seen him through the mountains go,
In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,
Majestically huge and slow:
Or, with a milder grace adorning
The landscape of a summer's morning;
While Grasmere smoothed her liquid plain
The moving image to detain;
And mighty Fairfield, with a chime
Of echoes, to his march kept time;
When little other business stirred,
And little other sound was heard;
In that delicious hour of balm,
Stillness, solitude, and calm,
While yet the valley is arrayed,
On this side with a sober shade;
On that is prodigally bright—
Crag, lawn, and wood— with rosy light.
—But most of all, thou Lordly Wain!
I wish to have thee here again,
When windows flap and chimney roars,
All and all is dismal out of doors;
And, sitting by my fire, I see
Eight sorry carts, no less a train;
Unworthy successors of thee,
Come straggling through the wind and rain!

And oft, as they pass slowly on,
Beneath my windows, one by one,
See, perched upon the naked height
The summit of a cumbersome freight,
A single traveller—and there
Another; then perhaps a pair—
The lame, the sickly, and the old;
Men, women, heartless with the cold;
And babes in wet and starveling plight;
Which once, be weather as it might,
Had still a nest within a nest,
Thy shelter—and their mother's breast!
Then most of all, then far the most,
Do I regret what we have lost;
Am grieved for that unhappy sin
Which robbed us of good Benjamin;
And of his stately Charge, which none
Could keep alive when He was gone!
FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS COMMENCEMENT. REPRINTED FROM THE FRIEND

1805. 1810

An extract from the long poem on my own poetical education. It was first published by Coleridge in his Friend, which is the reason of its having had a place in every edition of my poems since.

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!—Oh! times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,
The beauty wore of promise, that which sets
(As at some moment might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
The playfellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it;—they, too, who, of gentle mood,
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
And in the region of their peaceful selves;—
Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty
Did both find, helpers to their heart’s desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish;
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all!

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

1806. 1807

The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one’s attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vice. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of some of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company’s service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound.
Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he that every man in arms should wish to be?
- It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
that makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
but makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature’s highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable — because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skillful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
- Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
- Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
- He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, whereasoe’er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love:—
- Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation’s eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering,
draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven’s applause:
This is the happy Warrior; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to be.
And where'er their strokes alighted, There the Saracens were tamed. Whence, then, could it come — the thought — By what evil spirit brought? Oh! can a brave Man wish to take His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's sake?

"Sir!" the Ruffians said to Hubert, "Deep he lies in Jordan flood." Stricken by this ill assurance, Pale and trembling Hubert stood. "Take your earnings." — Oh! that I Could have seen my Brother die! It was a pang that vexed him then; And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace! Nor of him were tidings heard; Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer Back again to England steered. To his Castle Hubert sped; Nothing has he now to dread. But silent and by stealth he came, And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time, Night or day, at even or morn; No one's eye had seen him enter, No one's ear had heard the Horn. But bold Hubert lives in glee; Months and years went smilingly; With plenty was his table spread; And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters; And, as good men do, he sate At his board by these surrounded, Flourishing in fair estate. And while thus in open day Once he sate, as old books say, A blast was uttered from the Horn, Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

"Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace! He is come to claim his right: Ancient castle, woods, and mountains Hear the challenge with delight. Hubert! though the blast be blown He is helpless and alone: Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word! And there he may be lodged, and thou be Lord.

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE
1806. 1807

A tradition transferred from the ancient mansion of Hutton John, the seat of the Hud- lestons, to Egremont Castle.

ERE the Brothers through the gateway Issued forth with old and young, To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed Which for ages there had hung. Horn it was which none could sound, No one upon living ground, Save He who came as rightful Heir To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record Had the House of Lucie born, 10 Who of right had held the Lordship Claimed by proof upon the Horn: Each at the appointed hour Tried the Horn,—it owned his power; He was acknowledged: and the blast, Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed, And to Hubert thus said he, "What I speak this Horn shall witness For thy better memory. 20 Hear, then, and neglect me not! At this time, and on this spot, The words are uttered from my heart, As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going Life to risk by sea and land, In which course if Christ our Saviour Do my sinful soul demand, Hither come thou back straightway, Hubert, if alive that day; Return, and sound the Horn, that we May have a living House still left in thee!"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert; "As I am thy Father's son, What thou askest, noble Brother, With God's favour shall be done." So were both right well content: Forth they from the Castle went, And at the head of their Array To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies Were a line for valour famed),
stray pleasures

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A COMPLAINT

1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by a change in the manner of a friend.

There is a change — and I am poor;
Your love hath been, not long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart’s door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did: not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!
Blest was I then all bliss above!
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I? shall I dare to tell?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love — it may be deep —
I trust it is, — and never dry:
What matter? if the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity.
— Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

stray pleasures

1806. 1807

" — Pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find."

Suggested on the Thames by the sight of one of those floating mills that used to be seen there. This I noticed on the Surrey side between Somerset House and Blackfriars Bridge. Charles Lamb was with me at the time; and I thought it remarkable that I should have to point out to him, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight so interesting as the happy group dancing on the platform. Mills of this kind used to be, and perhaps still are, not uncommon on the Continent. I noticed several upon the river Saone in the year 1799, particularly near the town of Chalons, where my friend Jones and I halted a day when we crossed France; so far on foot: there we embarked, and floated down to Lyons.

By their floating mill,
That lies dead and still,
Behold yon Prisoners three,
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the Thames!
The platform is small, but gives room for them all;
And they’re dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
To their mill where it floats,
To their house and their mill tethered fast;
To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile,
They from morning to even take whatever is given; —
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,
All alive with the fires
Of the sun going down to his rest,
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
They dance, — there are three, as jocund as free,
While they dance on the calm river’s breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,
They themselves make the reel,
And their music’s a prey which they seize;
It plays not for them, — what matter? ’tis theirs;
And if they had care, it has scattered their cares,
While they dance, crying, “Long as ye please!”
They dance not for me,
Yet mine is their glee!
Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find;
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth. 30

The showers of the spring
Rouse the birds, and they sing;
If the wind do but stir for his proper de-light,
Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss;
Each wave, one and t’other, speeds after his brother:
They are happy, for that is their right!

POWER OF MUSIC
1806. 1807
Taken from life.
An Orpheus! an Orpheus! yes, Faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old;—
Near the stately Pantheon you’ll meet with the same
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him?

What an eager assembly! what an empire is this!
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss;
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest;
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer opprest.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light;

It gleams on the face, there, of durbrowed Jack,
And the pale-visaged Baker’s, with bash on back.
That errand-bound ’Prentice was passing haste—
What matter! he’s caught — his time runs to waste;
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret;
And the half-breathless Lamplighter he’s in the net!
The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore;
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither and store;—
If a thief could be here he might pilfer in ease;
She sees the Musician, ’t is all that she sees.
He stands, backed by the wall; — he abides not his din;
His hat gives him vigour, with boonies dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the poorest; and there!
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spend.
O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so that a full a band;
I am glad for him, blind as he is! — all the while
If they speak ’t is to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight.
Can he keep himself still, if he would? or not he?
The music stirs in him like wind through the tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch like a tower
That long has leaned forward, leans he after hour! —
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters bound,
While she dandles the Babe in her arms the sound.
Or is it, that when human Souls a journey long have had
And are returned into themselves, they cannot but be sad?

Or must we be constrained to think that these Spectators rude,
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,
Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore prostrate lie?
No, no, this cannot be; — men thirst for power and majesty!

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful mind employ
Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave and steady joy,
That doth reject all show of pride, admits no outward sign,
Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine!

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who pry and pore
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than before:
One after One they take their turn, nor have I one espied
That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

"YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO"
1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The echo came from Nab-scar, when I was walking on the opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here mention, for my dear Sister's sake, that, while she was sitting alone one day high up on this part of Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by the voice of the Cuckoo heard from the crags at some distance that she could not suppress a wish to have a stone inscribed with her name among the rocks from which the sound proceeded. On my return from my walk I recited these verses to Mrs. Wordsworth.

Yes, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply
To a babbling wanderer sent;
Like her ordinary cry,
Like— but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures?
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—
Voices of two different natures?

Have not we too?—yes, we have Answers, and we know not whence;
Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognised intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear
Catches sometimes from afar—
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;
For of God,—of God they are.

Who have felt the weight of too much servitude,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

PERSONAL TALK
1806. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The line but two stood, at first, better and more characteristically, thus:

"By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire."

My Sister and I were in the habit of having our tea-kettle in our little sitting-room; and we toasted the bread ourselves, which reminds me of a little circumstance not unworthy of being set down among these minutes. Happened both of us to be engaged a few minutes one morning when we had a young prig of a Scots lawyer to breakfast with us, my dear Sister, with her usual simplicity, put the toasting-fork with a slice of bread into the hands of this Edinburgh genius. Our little book-case stood on one side of the fire. To prevent loss of time he took down a book, and fell to reading till the neglect of the toast, which was burnt a cinder. Many a time have we laughed at this circumstance, and other cottage simplicities of that day. By the bye, I have a spike of corn of this series of Sonnets (I will leave the reader to discover which) as having been the meal of nearly putting off for ever our acquaintance with dear Miss Fenwick, who has alwayspacified one line of it as vulgar, and worth only of having been composed by a country squire.

I

I am not One who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk.—
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight;
And, for my chance-acquaintance, lads' bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one best night.
Better than such discourse doth silex long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
and listen to the flapping of the flame, 
A kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II
Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen 
and with a living pleasure we describe; 
and fits of sprightly malice do but brieve 
the languid mind into activity. 
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee 
re fostered by the comment and the gibe." 
ven be it so; yet still among your tribe, 21 
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me! 

Children are blest, and powerful; their 
world lies 
lore justly balanced; partly at their feet, 
and part far from them: sweetest melodies 
are those that are by distance made more sweet; 
Whose mind is but the mind of his own 
eyes, 
Le is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

III
Vings have we, — and as far as we can go, 
Ve may find pleasure: wilderness and wood, 
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood 
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low. 
Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we know, 
Are a substantial world, both pure and good: 
Bound these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood, 
Our pastime and our happiness will grow. 
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store, 
Matter wherein right voluble I am, 
To which I listen with a ready ear; 
Two shall be named, pre-eminentiy dear, — 
The gentle Lady married to the Moor; 
And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

IV
For can I not believe that hereby 
Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote 
From evil-speaking; rancour, never sought, 
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie. 
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I

Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joy-
ous thought:
And thus from day to day my little boat 
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably. 50 
Blessings be with them — and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares —
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs 
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays! 
Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

ADMONITION
1806. 1807

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who may have happened to be enamoured of some beautiful Place of Retreat, in the Country of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt — and gaze with 
brightening eye!
The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook 
Hath stirred thee deeply; with its own dear brook,
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky! 
But covet not the Abode; — forbear to sigh,
As many do, repining while they look;
Intruders — who would tear from Nature's book
This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.
Think what the home must be if it were thine,
Even thine, though few thy wants! — Roof, 
Window, door, 
The very flowers are sacred to the Poor, 
The roses to the porch which they entwine: 
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day
On which it should be touched, would melt away.

"BELOVED VALE!" I SAID, 
"WHEN I SHALL CON"
1806. 1807

"Beloved Vale!" I said, "when I shall con 
Those many records of my childish years, 
Remembrance of myself and of my peers 
Will press me down: to think of what is gone
Will be an awful thought, if life have one."
But, when into the Vale I came, no fears
Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped no
tears;
Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had I none.
By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost
I stood, of simple shame the blushing
Thral;
So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so
small!
A Juggler's balls old Time about him
tossed;
I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed; and
all
The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

"HOW SWEET IT IS, WHEN MOTHER FANCY ROCKS"

1806. 1807

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks
The wayward brain, to saunter through a
wood!
An old place, full of many a lovely brood,
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground
flowers in flocks;
And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,
Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks
At Wakes and Fairs with wandering
Mountebanks,—
When she stands cresting the Clown’s head,
and mocks
The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,
Such place to me is sometimes like a dream
Or map of the whole world: thoughts, link
by link,
Enter through ears and eyesight, with such
gleam
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,
And leap at once from the delicious stream.

"THOSE WORDS WERE UTTERED AS IN PENSIVE MOOD"

1806. 1807

"— they are of the sky,
And from our earthly memory fade away."

Those words were uttered as in pensive mood
We turned, departing from that solemn
sight:
A contrast and reproach to gross delight,
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily
wooded!
But now upon this thought I cannot brood;
It is unstable as a dream of night;
Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.
Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built
dome,
Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,
Find in the heart of man no natural home:
The immortal Mind craves objects that
endure:
These cleave to it; from these it cannot
roam,
Nor they from it: their fellowship is secure.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE

1806. 1820

Clouds, lingering yet, extend in solid bar
Through the grey west; and lo! these
waters, steeled
By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
A vivid repetition of the stars;
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars
Amid his fellows beauteously revealed
At happy distance from earth's groaning
field,
Where ruthless mortals wage incessant
wars.
Is it a mirror? — or the nether Sphere
Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds
Her own calm fires? — But list! a voice in
near;
Great Pan himself low-whispering through
the reeds,
"Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy deeds
Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!"

"WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON
THOU CLIMB’ST THE SKY"

1806. 1807

"WITH how sad steps, O Moon, the
climb'st the sky,
How silently, and with how wan a face!"
Where art thou? Thou so often seen so
high
Running among the clouds a Wood-symph
race!
TO SLEEP

Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a sigh
Which they would stifle, move at such a pace!
The northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,
Dust blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I
The power of Merlin, Goddess! this should be:
And all the stars, fast as the clouds were riven,
Should sally forth, to keep thee company,
Furrying and sparkling through the clear blue heaven.
But, Cynthia! should to thee the palm be given,
Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

"THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US; LATE AND SOON"

1806. 1807

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his watred horn.

"WITH SHIPS THE SEA WAS SPRINKLED FAR AND NIGHT"

1806. 1807

With Ships the sea was sprinkled far and night,
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed;
Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
Some veering up and down, one knew not why.
A goodly Vessel did I then espy
Come like a giant from a haven broad;
And lustily along the bay she strode,
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.
This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,
Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look;
This Ship to all the rest did I prefer:
When will she turn, and whither? She will brook
No tarrying; where She comes the winds must stir:
On went She, and due north her journey took.

"WHERE LIES THE LAND TO WHICH YON SHIP MUST GO?"

1806. 1807

Where lies the Land to which yon Ship must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
What boots the inquiry? — Neither friend nor foe
She cares for; let her travel where she may,
She finds familiar names, a beaten way
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark?
And, almost as it was when ships were rare,
(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there
Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark!

TO SLEEP

1806. 1807

O GENTLE Sleep! do they belong to thee,
These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost love
To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
A captive never wishing to be free.
This tiresome night, O Sleep! thou art to me
A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove
Upon a fretful rivulet, now above
Now on the water vexed with mockery.
I have no pain that calls for patience, no;
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child:
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
Yet ever willing to be reconciled:
O gentle Creature! do not use me so,
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

TO SLEEP
1806. 1807

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by,
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless! and soon the small birds’ melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees;
And the first cuckoo’s melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear too-night away:
Without Thee what is all the morning’s wealth?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

TO SLEEP
1806. 1807

Fond words have oft been spoken to thee,
Sleep!
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names;
The very sweetest, Fancy calls or frames,
When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep!
Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep
In rich reward all suffering; Balm that tames
All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and aims
Takest away, and into souls dost creep,

Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,
I surely not a man ungently made,
Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is cross?
Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,
Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,
Still last to come where thou art wanted most!

TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM
MICHAEL ANGELO, AND A
TRANSLATION FROM THE
LATIN OF THOMAS WARTON
(?). 1882

Night speaks

GRATEFUL is Sleep, my life in stone bound fast;
More grateful still: while wrong and shame shall last,
On me can Time no happier state bestow
Than to be left unconscious of the woe.
Ah then, lest you awaken me, speak low.

GRATEFUL is Sleep, more grateful still to be
Of marble; for while shameless wrong and woe
Prevail, 'tis best to neither hear nor see.
Then wake me not, I pray you. Hush, speak low.

COME, gentle Sleep, Death’s image thou art,
Come share my couch, nor speedily depart;
How sweet thus living without life to lie,
Thus without death how sweet it is to die.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO
1806. 1807

Translations from Michael Angelo, done at the request of Mr. Duppa, whose acquaintance I made through Mr. Southey. Mr. Duppa was engaged in writing the life of Michael Angelo, and applied to Mr. Southey and myself to furnish some specimens of his poetic genius.

I

Yes! hope may with my strong desire
keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;
or if of our affections none finds grace
a sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath
God made
the world which we inhabit? Better plea
slove cannot have, than that in loving thee
lory to that eternal Peace is paid,
whosuch divinity to thee imparts
s hallows and makes pure all gentle
hearts.
is hope is treacherous only whose love
dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour;
ut, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the
power
f outward change, there blooms a death-
less flower,
hat breathes on earth the air of paradise.

FROM THE SAME

1806. 1807
II

O mortal object did these eyes behold
When first they met the placid light of
thine,
and my Soul felt her destiny divine,
and hope of endless peace in me grew bold:
heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward
course must hold;
and thevisible world she soars to seek
For what delights the sense is false and weak
deal Form, the universal mould.
he wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
that which perishes: nor will he lend
his heart to aught which doth on time de-
pend.
(is sense, unbridled will, and not true
love,
hat kills the soul: love betters what is best
even here below, but more in heaven above.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT

1806. 1807

This young man, Raisley Calvert, to whom I
was so much indebted, died at Penrith, 1795.

CALVERT! it must not be unheard by them
Tho my respect my name, that I to thee
Owed many years of early liberty.
This care was thine when sickness did con-
demn
Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—
That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
Where'er I liked; and finally array
My temples with the Muse's diadem.
Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth;
If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,
In my past verse; or shall be, in the lays
Of higher mood, which now I meditate;—
It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived,
Youth!
To think how much of this will be thy
praise.

"METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOT-
STEPS OF A THRONE"

1806. 1807

The latter part of this Sonnet was a great
favourite with my sister S. H. When I saw
her lying in death, I could not resist the im-
pulse to compose the Sonnet that follows it.

[See the editor's note.]

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a
throne
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes
did shroud—
Nor view of who might sit thereon al-
lowed;
But all the steps and ground about were
strown
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and
bone
Ever put on; a miserable crowd,
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before
that cloud,
"Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we
groan."
Those steps I clomb; the mists before me
gave
Smooth way; and I beheld the face of one
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,
With her face up to heaven; that seemed
to have
Pleasing remembrance of a thought fore-
gone;
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!
LINES
1806. 1807

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one
Evening, after a stormy day, the Author hav-
ing just read in a Newspaper that the dissolu-
tion of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

LOUD is the Vale! the Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are
gone,
A mighty union of streams!
Of all her Voices, One!

Loud is the Vale;—this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
Importunate and heavy load!
The Comforter hath found me here.
Upon this lonely road;

And many thousands now are sad—
Wait the fulfilment of their fear;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature’s dark abyss;
But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return?—
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

ADDRESS TO A CHILD
DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING
BY MY SISTER
1806. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

WHAT way does the wind come? What
way does he go?

He rides over the water, and over the snow,
Through wood, and through vale; and, on
rocky height
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his
sounding flight;

He tosses about in every bare tree,
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;
But how he will come, and whither he goes,
There’s never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook
And ring a sharp larum;—but, if you
should look,

There’s nothing to see but a cushion of snow
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,
And softer than if it were covered with silks
Sometimes he’ll hide in the cave of a rock;
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard calls
—Yet seek him, — and what shall you find
in the place?

Nothing but silence and empty space;
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,
That he’s left, for a bed, to beggars
thieves!

As soon as ‘tis daylight to-morrow, with my
You shall go to the orchard, and then you
will see

That he has been there, and made a great
rout,
And cracked the branches, and strewn them
about;

Heaven grant that he spare but that one
upright twig
That looked up at the sky so proud and big.
All last summer, as well you know,
Studded with apples, a beautiful show!
I aark! over the roof he makes a pause,
and growls as if he would fix his claws
tight in the slates, and with a huge rattle
Drive them down, like men in a battle: 31
— But let him range round; he does us no
harm,
Ve build up the fire, we’re snug and warm;
Untouched by his breath see the candle
shines bright,
And burns with a clear and steady light;
Books have we to read, — but that half-
stifled knell,
Alas! ’tis the sound of the eight o’clock bell.
— Come, now we’ll to bed! and when we
are there
He may work his own will, and what shall
we care?
He may knock at the door, — we’ll not let
him in; 40
May drive at the windows, — we’ll laugh at
his din;
Let him seek his own home wherever it
be;
Here’s a cosset warm house for Edward and
me.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY,
FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD

1803–6. 1807

This was composed during my residence at
Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least
passed between the writing of the four first
stanzas and the remaining part. To the atten-
tive and competent reader the whole suf-
ciently explains itself; but there may be no
harm in adverting here to particular feelings or
experiences of my own mind on which the struc-
ture of the poem partly rests. Nothing was
more difficult for me in childhood than to ad-
mit the notion of death as a state applicable to
my own being. I have said elsewhere —

“A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?”

But it was not so much from feelings of ani-
mal vivacity that my difficulty came as from
a sense of the indestructibility of the Spirit
within me. I used to brood over the stories of
Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade my-
self that, whatever might become of others, I
should be translated, in something of the same
way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to
this, I was often unable to think of external
things as having external existence, and I com-
muned with all that I saw as something not
apart from, but inherent in, my own immate-
rial nature. Many times while going to school
have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself
from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At
that time I was afraid of such processes. In
later periods of life I have deplored, as we have
all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite
character, and have rejoiced over the remem-
brances, as is expressed in the lines —

“Obstinate questioning
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;” etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendour
which invest objects of sight in childhood,
every one, I believe, if he would look back,
could bear testimony, and I need not dwell
upon it here: but having in the poem regard-
et it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of
existence, I think it right to protest against a
conclusion, which has given pain to some good
and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate
such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to
be recommended to faith, as more than an
element in our instincts of immortality. But
let us bear in mind that, though the idea is
not advanced in revelation, there is nothing
there to contradict it, and the fall of Man pre-
sents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly,
a pre-existent state has entered into the popular
creeds of many nations; and, among all per-
sons acquainted with classic literature, is known
as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy.
Archimedes said that he could move the world
if he had a point whereon to rest his machine.
Who has not felt the same aspirations as re-
gards the world of his own mind? Having to
wield some of its elements when I was im-
pelled to write this poem on the “Immortality
of the Soul,” I took hold of the notion of pre-
existence as having sufficient foundation in
humanity for authorising me to make for my
purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.

“The Child is Father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.”

I

There was a time when meadow, grove,
and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —
Turn wheresoe’er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can
see no more.

II
The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where’er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III
Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor’s sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong;
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

IV
Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother’s arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
But there’s a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that gone:
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life’s Star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the sea
Must travel, still to Nature’s Priest
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own,
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind;
And, even with something of a Mother’s mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child her inmate
—Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years’ Darling of a pigny size!
See, where ‘mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother’s kisses.
With light upon him from his father’s eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his “humorous stage”
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation Were endless imitation.

VIII
Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul’s immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
Thou, deaf and silent, read’st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o’er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being’s height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX
O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest—
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor’s sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

All power was given her in the dreadful trance;
Those new-born Kings he withered like a flame;" — Woe to them all! but heaviest woe and shame
To that Bavarian who could first advance
His banner in accursed league with France.
First open traitor to the German name!

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal Farm-house of the Estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months. I will here mention that the Song on the Restoration of Lord Clifford, as well as that on the Feast of Brougham Castle, were produced on the same ground.

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven:

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Whereat not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:

Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

TO THOMAS CLARKSON

ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

Clarkson! it was an obstinate hill to climb:
How toilsome — nay, how dire — it was, by thee
Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly:
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
First roused thee. — O true yoke-fellow of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn!
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind!

THE MOTHER'S RETURN
BY MY SISTER
1807. 1815

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

A month, sweet Little-ones, is past
Since your dear Mother went away, —
And she to-morrow will return;
To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings! thought of joy!
The eldest heard with steady glee;
Silent he stood; then laughed amain,—
And shouted, “Mother, come to me.”

Louder and louder did he shout,
With witless hope to bring her near;
“Nay, patience! patience, little boy!
Your tender mother cannot hear.”

I told of hills, and far-off towns,
And long, long vales to travel through; —
He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,
But he submits; what can he do?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast;
She wars not with the mystery
Of time and distance, night and day;
The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy
Of kitten, bird, or summer fly;

She dances, runs without an aim,
She chatter's in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,
And echoes back his sister's glee;
They hug the infant in my arms,
As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,
We rested in the garden bower;
While sweetly shone the evening sun
In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done,—
Our rambles by the swift brook's side
Far as the willow-skirted pool,
Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,
Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,
Of birds that build their nests and sing,
And all "since Mother went away!"

To her these tales they will repeat,
To her our new-born tribes will show,
The goslings green, the ass's colt,
The lambs that in the meadow go.

— But, see, the evening star comes forth!
To bed the children must depart;
A moment's heaviness they feel,
A sadness at the heart;

'T is gone — and in a merry fit
They run upstairs in gamesome race;
I, too, infected by their mood,
I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past — and, O the change!
Asleep upon their beds they lie;
Their busy limbs in perfect rest,
And closed the sparkling eye.

GIPSIES
1807. 1807

Composed at Coleorton. I had observed
them, as here described, near Castle Donning-
ton, on my way to and from Derby.

Yet are they here the same unbroken knot
Of human Beings, in the self-same spot!
Men, women, children, yea the frame
Of the whole spectacle the same!
Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,
Now deep and red, the colouring of night;
"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU SURELY ART"

That on their Gipsy-faces falls,
Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.
—Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours
are gone, while I
Have been a traveller under open sky,
Much witnessing of change and cheer,
Yet as I left I find them here!
The weary Sun betook himself to rest; —
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,
Outshining like a visible God
The glorious path in which he trod.
And now, ascending, after one dark hour
And one night’s diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty Moon! this way
She looks as if at them— but they
Regard not her: — oh better wrong and
strife
(By nature transient) than this torpid life;
Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move!
Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth!
In scorn I speak not; — they are what their
birth
And breeding suffer them to be;
Wild outcasts of society!

"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU SURELY ART"

1807. 1807

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. (Mrs. W.
says in a note — "At Coleorton.")

O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art
A creature of a "fiery heart": —
These notes of thine — they pierce and
pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!
Thou sing’st as if the God of wine
Had helped thee to a Valentine;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze:
He did not cease; but cooed — and cooed;
And somewhat pensively he wooed:
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending;
Of serious faith, and inward glee;
That was the song — the song for me!

TO LADY BEAUMONT

1807. 1807

The winter garden of Coleorton, fashioned
out of an old quarry under the superintendence
and direction of Mrs. Wordsworth and my sis-
ter Dorothy, during the winter and spring we
resided there.

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the
grove
While I was shaping beds for winter
flowers;
While I was planting green unfading
bowers,
And shrubs — to hang upon the warm al-
cove,
And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy
wove
The dream, to time and nature’s blended
powers
I gave this paradise for winter hours,
A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall
rove.
Yes! when the sun of life more feebly
shines,
Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn
gloom
Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;
And these perennial bowers and murmuring
pines
Be gracious as the music and the bloom
And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

"THOUGH NARROW BE THAT
OLD MAN’S CARES"

1807. 1807

"— gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

Written at Coleorton. This old man’s name
was Mitchell. He was, in all his ways and con-
versation, a great curiosity, both individually
and as a representative of past times. His chief
employment was keeping watch at night by
pacing round the house, at that time building
to keep off predators. He has often told me
gravely of having seen the Seven Whistlers and
the Hounds as here described. Among the
groves of Coleorton, where I became familiar
with the habits and notions of old Mitchell,
there was also a labourer of whom, I regret, I
had no personal knowledge; for, more than
forty years after, when he was become an old
man, I learnt that while I was composing
verses, which I usually did aloud, he took
Such pleasure, unknown to me, in following
my steps that he might catch the words I ut-
ered; and, what is not a little remarkable,
sveral lines caught in this way kept their place
in his memory. My volumes have lately been
given to him by my informant, and surely he
must have been gratified to meet in print his
old acquaintances.

Though narrow be that old Man's cares,
and near,
The poor old Man is greater than he seems:
For he hath waking empire, wide as
dreams;
An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.
Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer;
The region of his inner spirit teems
With vital sounds and monitory gleams
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.
He the seven birds hath seen, that never
part,
Seen the Seven Whistlers in their nightly
rounds,
And counted them: and oftentimes will
start—
For overhead are sweeping Gabriel's
Hounds
Doomed, with their impious Lord, the
flying Hart
To chase for ever, on aerial grounds!

SONG AT THE
FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIF-
FORD, THE SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES
AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS

1807. 1807

This poem was composed at Coleorton while
I was walking to and fro along the path that
led from Sir George Beaumont's Farm-house,
where we resided, to the Hall which was building
at that time.

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel
sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the
Song.—
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent
long:—
"From town to town, from tower to tower,
The red rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming:
Both roses flourish, red and white:
In love and sisterly delight
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended.—
Joy! joy to both! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster!
Behold her how she smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array!
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall;
But chiefly from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
A Clifford to his own restored!
They came with banner, spear, and shield,
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.
Not long the Avenger was withstood—
Earth helped him with the cry of blood:
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
We loudest in the faithful north:
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty.
How glad is Skipton at this hour—
Though lonely, a deserted Tower;
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and
groom:
We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep
Of years be on her!—She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream;
And she that kethesp watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower:—
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair House by Emont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer
To see her Master and to cheer—
Him, and his Lady-mother dear!
Oh! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born—
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die!
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child.
Who will take them from the light?
—Yonder is a man in sight—
Yonder is a house—but where?  
No, they must not enter there.  
To the caves, and to the brooks,  
To the clouds of heaven she looks;  
She is speechless, but her eyes  
Pray in ghostly agonies.  
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
Maid and Mother undefiled,  
Save a Mother and her Child!  
Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?  
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass  
Light as the wind along the grass.  
Can this be He who hither came  
In secret, like a smothered flame?  
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
For shelter, and a poor man's bread!  
God loves the Child; and God hath willed  
That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
The Lady's words, when forced away,  
The last she to her Babe did say:  
'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
I may not be; but rest thee, rest,  
For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong  
No life is good, no pleasure long;  
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,  
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,  
And quit the flowers that summer brings  
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;  
Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
—Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise!  
Hear it, good man, old in days!  
Thou tree of covert and of rest  
For this young Bird that is distrest;  
Among thy branches safe he lay,  
And he was free to sport and play,  
When falcons were abroad for prey.  
A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
And heaviness in Clifford's ear!  
I said, when evil men are strong,  
No life is good, no pleasure long,  
A weak and cowardly untruth!  
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
And thankful through a weary time,  
That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
—Again he wanders forth at will,  
And tends a flock from hill to hill:  
His garb is humble; ne'er was seen  
Such garb with such a noble mien;  
Among the shepherd grooms no mate  
Hath he, a Child of strength and state!  
Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
in him the savage virtue of the Race, 
revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were 
dead:
For did he change; but kept in lofty 
place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth;
The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and 
more;
And, ages after he was laid in earth,
"The good Lord Clifford" was the name 
he bore.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTON

OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS

1807. 1815

The earlier half of this Poem was composed at Stockton-upon-Tees, when Mrs. Wordsworth and 
were on a visit to her eldest Brother, Mr. Hutchinson, at the close of the year 1807. The coun-
try is flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under 
his shelter of a row of stacks in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured 
forth my verses aloud as freely as they would come. Mrs. Wordsworth reminds me that her 
rother stood upon the punctilio of not sitting down to dinner till I joined the party; and it 
frequently happened that I did not make my appearance till too late, so that she was made uncom-
fortable. I here beg her pardon for this and similar transgressions during the whole course of 
our wedded life. To my beloved Sister the same apology is due.

When, from the visit just mentioned, we returned to Town-end, Grasmere, I proceeded with 
the Poem; and it may be worth while to note, as a caution to others who may cast their eye on 
these memoranda, that the skin having been rubbed off my heel by my wearing too tight a shoe, 
ought I desisted from walking I found that the irritation of the wounded part was kept up, by 
the act of composition, to a degree that made it necessary to give my constitution a holiday. A 
rapid cure was the consequence. Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in 
composition, has throughout my life brought on more or less bodily derangement. Nevertheless, 
I am, at the close of my seventy-third year, in what may be called excellent health; so that intelle-
ctual labour is not necessarily unfavourable to longevity. But perhaps I ought here to add 
that mine has been generally carried on out of doors.

Let me here say a few words of this Poem in the way of criticism. The subject being taken 
from feudal times has led to its being compared to some of Walter Scott's poems that belong 
to the same age and state of society. The comparison is inconsiderate. Sir Walter pursued the 
customary and very natural course of conducting an action, presenting various turns of fortune, 
to some outstanding point on which the mind might rest as a termination or catastrophe. The 
course I attempted to pursue is entirely different. Everything that is attempted by the prin-
cipal personages in "The White Doe" fails, so far as its object is external and substantial. So 
far as it is moral and spiritual it succeeds. The Heroine of the Poem knows that her duty is 
not to interfere with the current of events, either to forward or delay them, but

"To abide
The shock, and finally secure
O'er pain and grief a triumph pure."

This she does in obedience to her brother's injunction, as most suitable to a mind and character 
that, under previous trials, had been proved to accord with his. She achieves this not without 
and from the communication with the inferior Creature, which often leads her thoughts to revolve 
upon the past with a tender and humanising influence that exalts rather than depresses her. 
The anticipated beatification, if I may so say, of her mind, and the apotheosis of the companion 
of her solitude, are the points at which the Poem aims, and constitute its legitimate catastrophe, 
far too spiritual a one for instant or widely-spread sympathy, but not therefore the less fitted to 
make a deep and permanent impression upon that class of minds who think and feel more inde-
pendently, than the many do, of the surfaces of things and interests transitory because belonging 
more to the outward and social forms of life than to its internal spirit. How insignificant a 
thing, for example, does personal prowess appear, compared with the fortitude of patience and 
heroic martyrdom; in other words, with struggles for the sake of principle, in preference to vic-
tory gloried in for its own sake.
ADVERTISEMENT

During the Summer of 1807 I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of "The White Doe," founded upon a tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

DEDICATION

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay, And, Mary! oft beside our blaz'nig fire, When years of wedded life were as a day, Whose current answers to the heart's desire, Did we together read in Spenser's Lay How Una, and of soul — in sad attire, The gentle Una, of celestial birth, To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Beloved! pleasing was the smart, And the tear precious in compassion shed For her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart, Did meekly bear the pang unmerited; Mock as that emblem of her lowly heart The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led, — And faithful, loyal in her innocence, Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a saxy shell Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught; Free Fancy purest each specious miracle, And all its finer inspiration caught; Till in the bosom of our rustick Cell, We by a lamentable change were taught That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide:" How nearby joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow, For us the voice of melody was mute. — But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow, And give the timid herbage leave to shoot, Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit, Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us — it beguiled us — then, to hear Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell; And griefs whose sery motion comes not near The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel: Then, with mild Una in her sover cheer, High over hill and low adown the dell Again we wandered, willing to endure All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song of mine once more could please, Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep, Is tempered and allayed by sympathies A loft ascending, and descending deep. Even to the Inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep Of the sharp winds; — fair Creatures! — to whom Heaven A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks Of female patience winning firm repose: And, of the recompense that conscience seeks, A bright, a great, a holy show, example shone; Neaful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks, Neaful amid life's ordinary woes: — Hence, not for them unvisited who would bless A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muse erringly and ill, Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive: Oh, that my mind were to this end true! The comprehensive mandate which they give —

Vain aspiration of an earnest will! Yet in this moral Brian a power may live, Beloved Wife! such solace to impart As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

BYRDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND, April 20, 1815.

"Action is transitory — a step, a blow, The motion of a muscle — this way or that — 'T is done; and in the after-vacancy We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed: Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark, And has the nature of infinity. Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem) And irremovable gracious openings lie, By which the soul — with patient steps of thought Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds Yet unsecured, rise with sure ascent Even to the fountain-head of peace divine."

"They that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility: for certainly Man is of kine to the Beast by his Body; and if he be not of kiss to God by his Spirit, he is a base, ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature: for take as example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

CANTO FIRST

From Bolton's old monastic tower The bells ring loud with gladsome power; The sun shines bright; the fields are gay With people in their best array Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf, Along the banks of crystal Wharf, Through the Vale retired and lowly, Trooping to that summons holy. And, up among the moorlands, see What sprinklings of blithe company! Of lasses and of shepherd grooms, That down the steep hills force their way, Like cattle through the bidden brooks; Path, or no path, what care they? And thus in joyous mood they hie To Bolton's mouldering Priory.
What would they there? — Full fifty years
That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste
The bitterness of wrong and waste:
Its courts are ravaged; but the tower
Is standing with a voice of power,
That ancient voice which wont to call
To mass or some high festival;
And in the shattered fabric's heart
Remaineth one protected part;
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,
Closely embowered and trimly drest;
And thither young and old repair,
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the churchyard fills; — anon
Look again, and they all are gone;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard: —
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!
They sing a service which they feel:
For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal;
Of a pure faith the vernal prime —
In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
— When soft! — the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through you gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the churchyard ground —
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary Doe!

White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven
And she is left alone in heaven;
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away,
A glittering ship, that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead!
Lie quiet in your churchyard bed!
Ye living, tend your holy cares;
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers;
And blame not me if my heart and sight
Are occupied with one delight!
'T is a work for sabbath hours
If with this bright Creature go:
Whether she be of forest bowers,
From the bowers of earth below;
Or a Spirit for one day given,
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this Pile of state
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Leads through space of open day,
Where the enamoured sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright;
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath,
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath:
Now some gloomy nook partakes
Of the glory that she makes, —
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,
With perfect cunning framed as well
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
Of the elder's bushy head;
Some jealous and forbidding cell,
That doth the living stars repel,
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe
Fills many a damp obscure recess
With lustre of a saintly show;
And, reappearing, she no less
Sheds on the flowers that round her blow
A more than sunny liveliness.
But say, among these holy places,
Which thus assiduously she paces,
Comes she with a votary's task,
Rite to perform, or boon to ask?
Fair Pilgrim! harbours she a sense
Of sorrow, or of reverence?
Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,
Crushed as if by wrath divine?
For what survives of house where God
Was worshipped, or where Man abode;
For old magnificence undone;
Or for the gentler work begun
By Nature, softening and concealing,
And busy with a hand of healing?
Mourns she for lordly chamber's heart?
That to the sapling ash gives birth;
For dormitory's length laid bare
Where the wild rose blossoms fair;
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,
Now rich with mossy ornament?
She means no harm;"—but still the 
Boy,
To whom the words were softly said,
Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for 
joy,
A shame-faced blush of glowing red!
Again the Mother whispered low,
"Now you have seen the famous Doe;
From Rylstone she hath found her way
Over the hills this sabbath day;
Her work, whate’er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone;
Thus doth she keep, from year to year,
Her sabbath morning, foul or fair."

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams
The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;
But is she truly what she seems?
He asks with insecure delight,
Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still
The doubt returns against his will:
Though he, and all the standers-by,
Could tell a tragic history
Of facts divulged, wherein appear
Substantial motive, reason clear,
Why thus the milk-white Doe is found
Couchant beside that lonely mound;
And why she duly loves to pace
The circuit of this hallowed place.
Nor to the Child’s inquiring mind
Is such perplexity confined:
For, spite of sober Truth that sees
A world of fixed remembrances
Which to this mystery belong,
If, undeceived, my skill can trace
The characters of every face,
There lack not strange delusion here,
Conjecture vague, and idle fear,
And superstitious fancies strong,
Which do the gentle Creature wrong.
That bearded, staff-supported Sire—who
In his boyhood often fed
Full cheerily on convent-bread
And heard old tales by the convent-fire,
And to his grave will go with scars,
Relics of long and distant wars—
That Old Man, studious to expound
The spectacle, is mounting high
To days of dim antiquity;
When Lady Ailiza mourned
Her Son, and felt in her despair
The pang of unavailing prayer;
Her Son in Wharf’s abysses drowned,
The noble Boy of Egremound.
From which affliction—when the grace
Of God had in her heart found place—
pious structure, fair to see,
Rise up, this stately Priory!
the Lady's work;—but now laid low;
the grief of her soul that doth come
and go,

1 the beautiful form of this innocent
Doe:

2 Thrice, though seemingly doomed in its
breast to sustain

3 softened remembrance of sorrow and
pain,

4 spotless, and holy, and gentle, and

5 bright;

6 and glides o'er the earth like an angel of
light.

7 Pass, pass who will, by chantry door;

And, through the chink in the fractured
floor

Look down, and see a ghastly sight;

1 a vault where the bodies are buried up-
right!

There, face by face, and hand by hand,
The Claphams and Malaweers stand;

and, in his place, among son and sire,

5 John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,

7 a valiant man, and a name of dread

then ruthless wars of the White and Red;

6 Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Ban-
bury church

And smote off his head on the stones of
the porch!

Look down among them, if you dare;

Oft does the White Doe loiter there,

Prying into the darksome rent;

Nor can it be with good intent:

So thinks that Dame of haughty Air,

Who hath a Page her book to hold,
And wears a frontlet edged with gold.

6 Harsh thoughts with her high mood
agree—

Who counts among her ancestry
Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously!

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,
From Oxford came to his native vale,
He also hath his own conceit:
It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,
Who loved the Shepherd-Lord to meet
In his wanderings solitary:

Wild notes she in his hearing sang,

A song of Nature's hidden powers;

That whistled like the wind, and rang

Among the rocks and holly bowers.

7 was said that She all shapes could wear;

And oftentimes before him stood,

Amid the trees of some thick wood,

In semblance of a lady fair;

And taught him signs, and showed him

sights,

In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights;

When under cloud of fear he lay,

280 A shepherd clad in homely grey;

Nor left him at his later day.

And hence, when he, with spear and shield,

Rode full of years to Faddon-field,

His eye could see the hidden spring,

And how the current was to flow;

The fatal end of Scotland's King,

And all that hopeless overthrew.

But not in wars did he delight,

This Clifford wished for worthier might;

Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state;

291 Him his own thoughts did elevate,—

Most happy in the shy recess
Of Barden's lowly quietness.

And choice of studious friends had he

Of Bolton's dear fraternity;

Who, standing on this old church tower,

In many a calm propitious hour,

Perused, with him, the starry sky;

300 Or, in their cells, with him did pry
For other lore,—by keen desire

Urged to close toil with chemic fire;

In quest belike of transmutations
Rich as the mine's most bright creations.

But they and their good works are fled,

And all is now disquieted—

And peace is none, for living or dead!

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,

But look again at the radiant Doe!

What quiet watch she seems to keep,

310 Alone, beside that grassy heap!

Why mention other thoughts unmeet

For vision so composed and sweet?

While stand the people in a ring,

Gazing, doubting; questioning;

Yea, many overcome in spite

Of recollections clear and bright;

Which yet do unto some impart

An undisturbed repose of heart.

And all the assembly own a law

320 Of orderly respect and awe;

But see—they vanish one by one,

And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp! we have been full long beguiled

By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild;

To which, with no reluctant strings,

Thou hast attuned thy murmurings;

And now before this Pile we stand

In solitude, and utter peace:

But, Harp! thy murmurs may not cease—
A Spirit, with his angelic wings,
In soft and breeze-like visitings,
Has touched thee — and a Spirit's hand:
A voice is with us — a command
To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,
A tale of tears, a mortal story!

CANTO SECOND

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed;
And first we sang of the Greenwood shade
And a solitary Maid;
Beginning, where the song must end,
With her, and with her sylvan Friend;
The Friend who stood before her sight,
Her only unextinguished light;
Her last companion in a death
Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was — this Maid, who wrought
Weekly, with foreboding thought,
In vermeil colours and in gold
An unblest work; which, standing by,
Her Father did with joy behold, —
Exulting in its imagery;
A Banner, fashioned to fulfill
Too perfectly his headstrong will:
For on this Banner had her hand
Embroidered (such her Sire's command)
The sacred Cross; and figured there
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear;
Full soon to be uplifted high,
And float in rueful company!

It was the time when England's Queen
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign dread;
Nor yet the restless crown had been
Disturbed upon her virgin head;
But now the inly-working North
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,
A potent vassalage, to fight
In Percy's, and in Neville's right,
Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent;
And boldly urged a general plea,
The rites of ancient piety
To be triumphantly restored,
By the stern justice of the sword!
And that same Banner, on whose breast
The blameless Lady had express
Memorials chosen to give life
And sunshine to a dangerous strife;
That Banner, waiting for the Call,
Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came; and Francis Norton said,
"O Father! rise not in this fray —

The hairs are white upon your head;
Dear Father, hear me when I say
It is for you too late a day!
Bethink you of your own good name:
A just and gracious Queen have we,
A pure religion, and the claim
Of peace on our humanity. —
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn;
I am your son, your eldest born;
But not for lordship or for land,
My Father, do I clasp your knees;
The Banner touch not, stay your hand,
This multitude of men disband,
And live at home in blameless ease;
For these my brethren's sake, for me;
And, most of all, for Emily!"

Tumultuous noises filled the hall;
And scarcely could the Father hear
That name — pronounced with a dying fall —

The name of his only Daughter dear,
As on the banner which stood near
He glanced a look of holy pride,
And his moist eyes were glorified;
Then did he seize the staff, and say:
"Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name
Keep thou this ensign till the day
When I of thee require the same:
Thy place be on my better hand; —
And seven as true as thou, I see,
Will cleave to this good cause and me."
He spake, and eight brave sons straight
All followed him, a gallant band!

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came
The sight was hailed with loud acclaim
And din of arms and minstrelsy,
From all his warlike tenantry,
All horsed and harnessed with him ride, —

A voice to which the hills replied!
But Francis, in the vacant hall,
Stood silent under dreary weight, —
A phantasm, in which roof and wall
Shook, tottered, swam before his sight;
A phantasm like a dream of night!
Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,
He found his way to a postern-gate;
And, when he waked, his languid eye
Was on the calm and silent sky;
With air about him breathing sweet,
And earth's green grass beneath his feet;
Nor did he fail ere long to hear
A sound of military cheer,
Faint — but it reached that sheltered spot;
He heard, and it disturbed him not.
There stood he, leaning on a lance  
Which he had grasped unknowingly,  
Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,  
That dimness of heart-agony;  
There stood he, cleansed from the despair  
And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.  
The past he calmly hath reviewed:  
But where will be the fortitude  
Of this brave man, when he shall see  
That form beneath the spreading tree,  
And know that it is Emily?  
He saw her where in open view  
She sat beneath the spreading yew —  
Her head upon her lap, concealing  
In solitude her bitter feeling:  "Might ever son command a sire,  
The act were justified to-day."  
This to himself — and to the Maid,  
Whom now he had approached, he said —  "Gone are they, — they have their desire;  
And I with thee one hour will stay,  
To give thee comfort if I may."  
She heard, but looked not up, nor spake;  
And sorrow moved him to partake  
Her silence; then his thoughts turned  
Round,  
And fervent words a passage found.  "Gone are they, bravely, though misled;  
With a dear Father at their head!  
The Sons obey a natural lord;  
The Father had given solemn word  
To noble Percy; and a force  
Still stronger, bends him to his course.  
This said, our tears to-day may fall  
As at an innocent funeral.  In deep and awful channel runs  
This sympathy of Sire and Sons;  
Untried our Brothers have been loved  
With heart by simple nature moved;  
And now their faithfulness is proved:  
For faithful we must call them, bearing  
That soul of conscientious daring.  
— There were they all in circle — there  
Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,  
Jolm with a sword that will not fail,  
And Marmaduke in fearless mail,  
And those bright Twins were side by side;  
And there, by fresh hopes beautified,  
Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power  
Of man, our youngest, fairest flower!  
I, by the right of eldest born,  
And in a second father’s place,  
Presumed to grapple with their scorn,  
And meet their pity face to face;  
Yea, trusting in God’s holy aid,  
I to my Father knelt and prayed;  
And one, the pensive Marmaduke,  
Methought, was yielding inwardly,  
And would have laid his purpose by,  
But for a glance of his Father’s eye,  
Which I myself could scarcely brook.  
Then be we, each and all, forgiven!  
Thou, chieflly thou, my Sister dear,  
Whose pangs are registered in heaven —  
The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,  
And smiles, that dared to take their place,  
Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,  
As that unshadowed Banner grew  
Beneath a loving old Man’s view.  
Thy part is done — thy painful part;  
Be thou then satisfied in heart!  
A further, though far easier, task  
Than thine hath been, my duties ask;  
With theirs my efforts cannot blend,  
I cannot for such cause contend;  
Their aims I utterly forswear;  
But I in body will be there.  
Unarmed and naked will I go,  
Be at their side, come weal or woe:  
On kind occasions I may wait,  
See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.  
Bare breast I take and an empty hand."  
Therewith he threw away the lance,  
Which he had grasped in that strong trance,  
Spurned it, like something that would stand  
Between him and the pure intent  
Of love on which his soul was bent.  
“For thee, for thee, is left the sense  
Of trial past without offence  
To God or man; such innocence,  
Such consolation, and the excess  
Of an unmerited distress;  
In that thy very strength must lie.  
— O Sister, I could prophesy!  
The time is come that rings the knell  
Of all we loved, and loved so well:  
Hope nothing, if I thus may speak  
To thee, a woman, and thence weak:  
Hope nothing, I repeat; for we are doomed to perish utterly:  
’Tis meet that thou with me divide  
The thought while I am by thy side,  
Acknowledging a grace in this,  
A comfort in the dark abyss.  
But look not for me when I am gone,  
And be no farther wrought upon:  
Farewell all wishes, all debate,
All prayers for this cause, or for that!  
Weep, if that aid thee; but depend  
Upon no help of outward friend;  
Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave  
To fortitude without reprieve.  
For we must fall, both we and ours —  
This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead, hall —  
Our fate is theirs, will reach them all;  
The young horse must forsake his manger,  
And learn to glory in a Stranger;  
The hawk forget his perch; the hound  
Be parted from his ancient ground:  
The blast will sweep us all away —  
One desolation, one decay!  
And even this Creature!" which words say-  
•  
•  
He pointed to a lovely Doe,  
A few steps distant, feeding, straying;  
Fair creature, and more white than snow!  
"Even she will to her peaceful woods  
Return, and to her murmuring floods,  
And be in heart and soul the same  
She was before she hither came;  
Yet she had learned to love us all,  
Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.  
— But thou, my Sister, doomed to be  
The last leaf on a blasted tree;  
If not in vain we breathed the breath  
Together of a purer faith;  
If hand in hand we have been led,  
And thou, (O happy thought this day!)  
Not seldom foremost in the way;  
If on one thought our minds have fed,  
And we have in one meaning read;  
If, when at home our private weal  
Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,  
Together we have learned to prize  
Forbearance and self-sacrifice;  
If we like combatants have fared,  
And for this issue been prepared;  
If thou art beautiful, and youth  
And thought endue thee with all truth —  
Be strong; — be worthy of the grace  
Of God, and fill thy destined place:  
A Soul, by force of sorrows high,  
Uplifted to the purest sky  
Of undisturbed humanity!"  
•  
•  
He ended, — or she heard no more;  
He led her from the yew-tree shade,  
And at the mansion's silent door,  
He kissed the consecrated Maid;  
And down the valley then pursued,  
Alone, the armed Multitude.

CANTO THIRD

Now joy for you who from the towers  
Of Brancethew look in doubt and fear,  
Telling melancholy hours!  
Proclaim it, let your Masters hear  
That Norton with his band is near!  
The watchmen from their station high  
Pronounced the word, — and the Earls de-  
scry,  
Well-pleased, the armed Company  
Marching down the banks of Were.  
Said fearless Norton to the pair  
Gone forth to greet him on the plain —  
"This meeting, noble Lords! looks fair,  
I bring with me a goodly train;  
Their hearts are with you: hill and dale  
Have helped us: Ure we crossed, and Swale,  
And horse and harness followed — see  
The best part of their Yeomanry!  
— Stand forth, my Sons! — these eight are  
mine,  
Whom to this service I commend;  
Which way soe'er our fate incline,  
These will be faithful to the end;  
They are my all" — voice failed him  
here —  
"My all save one, a Daughter dear!  
Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,  
The meekest Child on this blessed earth.  
I had — but these are by my side,  
These Eight, and this is a day of pride!  
The time is ripe. With festive din  
Lo! how the people are flocking in, —  
Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand  
When snow lies heavy upon the land."  
He spoke bare truth; for far and near  
From every side came noisy swarms  
Of Peasants in their homely gear;  
And, mixed with these, to Brancethew came  
Grave Gentry of estate and name,  
And Captains known for worth in arms  
And prayed the Earls in self-defence  
To rise, and prove their innocence. —  
"Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might  
For holy Church, and the People's right!"  
The Norton fixed, at this demand,  
His eye upon Northumberland,  
And said; "The Minds of Men will own  
No loyal rest while England's Crown  
Remains without an Heir, the bait  
Of strife and factions desperate;  
Who, paying deadly hate in kind  
Through all things else, in this can find  
A mutual hope, a common mind;
And plot, and pant to overwhelm
All ancient honour in the realm.
— Brave Earls! to whose heroic veins
Our noblest blood is given in trust,
To you a suffering State complains,
And ye must raise her from the dust.
With wishes of still bolder scope
On you we look, with dearest hope;
Even for our Altars — for the prize,
In Heaven, of life that never dies;
For the old and holy Church we mourn,
And must in joy to her return.
Behold! — and from his Son whose stand
Was on his right, from that guardian hand
He took the Banner, and unfurled
The precious folds — " beheld," said he,
"The ransom of a sinful world;
Let this your preservation be;
The wounds of hands and feet and side,
And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died.
— This bring I from an ancient hearth,
These Records wrought in pledge of love
By hands of no ignoble birth,
A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove
Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood
While she the holy work pursued."
"Uplift the Standard!" was the cry
From all the listeners that stood round,
"Plant it,— by this we live or die."
The Norton ceased not for that sound,
But said; "The prayer which ye have heard,
Much-injured Earls! by these preferred,
Is offered to the Saints, the siby"
Of tens of thousands, secretly."
"Uplift it!" cried once more the Band,
And then a thoughtful pause ensued:
"Uplift it!" said Northumberland —
Whereat, from all the multitude
Who saw the Banner reared on high
In all its dread emblazonry,
A voice of uttermost joy brake out:
The transport was rolled down the river of
And Durham, the time-honoured Durham,
did hear,
And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were
stirred by the shout! Now was the North in arms: — they shine
In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees
His Followers gathering in from Tees,
From Were, and all the little rills
Concealed among the forked hills —
Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all
Of Neville, at their Master's call
Had sate together in Raby Hall!
Such strength that Earldom held of yore;
Nor wanted at this time rich store
Of well-appointed chivalry.
— Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,
And greet the old paternal shield,
They heard the summons; — and, furthermore,
Horsemen and Foot of each degree,
Unbound by pledge of fealty,
Appeared, with free and open hate
Of novelties in Church and State;
Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;
And Romish priest, in priest's attire.
And thus, in arms, a zealous Band
Proceeding under joint command,
To Durham first their course they bear;
And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat
Sang mass, — and tore the book of prayer, —
And trod the bible beneath their feet.
Thence marching southward smooth and free
"They mustered their host at Wetherby,
Full sixteen thousand fair to see,"
The Choicest Warriors of the North! But none for beauty and for worth
Like those eight Sons — who, in a ring,
(Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)
Each with a lance, erect and tall,
A falchion, and a buckler small,
Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,
To guard the Standard which he bore.
On foot they girt their Father round;
And so will keep the appointed ground
Where'er their march: no steed will he
Henceforth bestride; — triumphantly,
He stands upon the grassy sod,
Trusting himself to the earth, and God.
Rare sight to embolden and inspire!
Proud was the field of Sons and Sire;
Of him the most; and, sooth to say,
No shape of man in all the array
So graced the sunshine of that day.
The monumental pomp of age
Was with this goodly Personage;
A stature undepressed in size,
Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,
In open victory o'er the weight
Of seventy years, to loftier height;
Magnific limbs of withered state;
A face to fear and venerate;
Eyes dark and strong; and on his head
Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,
Which a brown morion half-concealed,
From Naworth come; and Howard's aid
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to man,
A rumour of this purpose ran,
The Standard trusting to the care
Of him who heretofore did bear
That charge, impatient Norton sought
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,
And thus abruptly spake; — "We yield
(And can it be ?) an unfought field! —
How oft has strength, the strength of heaven,
To few triumphantly been given!
Still do our very children boast
Of mitred Thurston — what a Host
He conquered! — Saw we not the Plain
(And flying shall behold again)
Where faith was proved? — while to battle moved
The Standard, on the Sacred Wain
That bore it, compassed round by a bold
Fraternity of Barons old;
And with those grey-haired champions stood,
Under the saintly ensigns three,
The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood —
All confident of victory ! —
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name?
Must Westmoreland be asked with shame
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,
In that other day of Neville's Cross?
When the Prior of Durham with holy hand
Risen, as the Vision gave command,
Saint Cuthbert's Relic — far and near
Kenned on the point of a lofty spear;
While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower
To God descending in his power.
Less would not at our need be due
To us, who war against the Untrue; —
The delegates of Heaven we rise,
Convoked the impious to chastise:
We, we, the sanctities of old
Would re-establish and uphold:
Be warned" — His seal the Chieftains con
founded,
But word was given, and the trumpet sounded:
Back through the melancholy Host
Went Norton, and resumed his post.
Alas! thought he, and have I borne
This Banner raised with joyful pride,
This hope of all posterity,
By those dread symbols sanctified;
Thus to become at once the scorn of babbling winds as they go by, A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye, To the light clouds of mockery! — "Even these poor eight of mine would stem —"

Half to himself, and half to himself He spake — "would stem, or quell, a force Ten times their number, man and horse: This by their own unaided might, Without their father in their sight, Without the Cause for which they fight; A Cause, which on a needful day Would breed us thousands brave as they." — So speaking, he his reverend raised towards that Imagery once more: But the familiar prospect despised Unfelt before: A shock of intimations vain, Dismay, and superstitious pain, Fell on him, with the sudden thought Of her by whom the work was wrought: — Oh wherefore was her countenance bright With love divine and gentle light? She would not, could not, disobey, But her Faith leaned another way. Ill tears she wept; I saw them fall, I overheard as she spake Sad words to that mute Animal, The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake; She stooped, but not for Jesus's sake, This Cross in tears: by her, and One Unworthier far we are undone — Her recreant Brother — he prevailed Over that tender Spirit — assailed Too oft, alas! by her whose head In the cold grave hath long been laid: She first, in reason's dawn beguiled Her docile, unsuspecting Child: Far back — far back my mind must go To reach the well-spring of this woe! While thus he brooded, music sweet Of border tunes was played to cheer The footsteps of a quick retreat; But Norton lingered in the rear, Stung with sharp thoughts; and ere the last From his distracted brain was cast, Before his Father, Francis stood, And spake in firm and earnest mood. "Though here I bend a suppliant knee In reverence, and unarmed, I bear In your indignant thoughts my share; Am grieved this backward march to see So careless and disorderly.

I scorn your Chiefs — men who would lead, And yet want courage at their need: Then look at them with open eyes! Deserve they further sacrifice? — If — when they shrink, nor dare oppose In open field their gathering foes, (And fast, from this decisive day, You multitude must melt away;) If now I ask a grace not claimed While ground was left for hope; unblamed Be an endeavour that can do No injury to them or you. My Father! I would help to find A place of shelter, till the rage Of cruel men do like the wind Exhaust itself and sink to rest; Be Brother now to Brother joined! Admit me in the equipage Of your misfortunes, that at least, Whatever fate remain behind, I may bear witness in my breast To your nobility of mind!"

"Thou Enemy, my bane and blight! Oh! bold to fight the Coward's fight Against all good" — but why declare, At length, the issue of a prayer Which love had prompted, yielding scope Too free to one bright moment's hope? Suffice it that the Son, who strove With fruitless effort to allay That passion, prudently gave way; Nor did he turn aside to prove His Brothers' wisdom or their love — But calmly from the spot withdrew; His best endeavours to renew, Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

CANTO FOURTH

'Tis night: in silence looking down, The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees A Camp, and a beleaguered Town, And Castle, like a stately crown On the steep rocks of winding Tees; — And southward far, with moor between, Hill-top, and flood, and forest green, The bright Moon sees that valley small Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall A venerable image yields Of quiet to the neighbouring fields; While from one pillared chimney breathes The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths. — The courts are hushed; — for timely sleep The greyhounds to their kennel creep;
The peacock in the broad ash tree
Aloft is roosted for the night,
He who in proud prosperity
Of colours manifold and bright
Walked round, affronting the daylight; 20
And higher still, above the bower
Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower
The hall-clock in the clear moonshine
With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah! who could think that sadness here
Hath any sway? or pain, or fear?
A soft and lulling sound is heard
Of streams inaudible by day;
The garden pool's dark surface, stirred
By the night insects in their play, 30
Breaks into dimples small and bright;
A thousand, thousand rings of light
That shape themselves and disappear
Almost as soon as seen: — and lo!
Not distant far, the milk-white Doe —
The same who quietly was feeding
On the green herb, and nothing heeding,
When Francis, uttering to the Maid
His last words in the yew-tree shade,
Involved whate'er by love was brought 40
Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,
Or chance presented to his eye,
In one sad sweep of destiny —
The same fair Creature, who hath found
Her way into forbidden ground;
Where now — within this spacious plot
For pleasure made, a goodly spot,
With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades
Of trellis-work in long arcades,
And cirque and crescent framed by wall 50
Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,
Converging walks, and fountains gay,
And terraces in trim array —
Beneath yon cypress spiring high,
With pine and cedar spreading wide
Their darksome boughs on either side,
In open moonlight doth she lie;
Happy as others of her kind,
That, far from human neighbourhood,
Range unrestricted as the wind, 60
Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid
Emerging from a cedar shade
To open moonshine, where the Doe
Beneath the cypress-spire is laid;
Like a patch of April snow —
Upon a bed of herbage green,
Linger ing in a woody glade
Or behind a rocky screen —
Lonely relic! which, if seen
By the shepherd, is passed by
With an inattentive eye.
Nor more regard doth She bestow
Upon the uncomplaining Doe
Now couched at ease, though oft this day
Not unperplexed nor free from pain,
When she had tried, and tried in vain,
Approaching in her gentle way,
To win some look of love, or gain
Encouragement to sport or play —
Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid
Rejected, or with slight repaid.
Yet Emily is soothed; — the breeze
Came fraught with kindly sympathies.
As she approached you rustic Shed
Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread
Along the walls and overhead,
The fragrance of the breathing flowers
Revived a memory of those hours
When here, in this remote alcove,
(While from the pendent woodbine came
Like odours, sweet as if the same)
A fondly-anxious Mother strove
To teach her salutary fears
And mysteries above her years.
Yes, she is soothed: an Image faint,
And yet not faint — a presence bright
Returns to her — that blessed Saint
Who with mild looks and language mild
Instructed here her darling Child,
While yet a prattler on the knee,
To worship in simplicity
The invisible God, and take for guide
The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown — the Vision, and the sense
Of that beguiling influence,
"But oh! thou Angel from above,
Mute Spirit of maternal love,
That stood'st before my eyes, more clear
Than ghosts are fabled to appear
Sent upon embassies of fear;
As thou thy presence hast to me
Vouchedsafed, in radiant ministry
Descend on Francis; nor forbear
To greet him with a voice, and say; —
'If hope be a rejected stay,
'Do thou, my christian Son, beware
'Of that most lamentable snare,
'The self-reliance of despair!'"

Then from within the embowered retreat
Where she had found a grateful seat
Perturbed she issues. She will go!
Herself will follow to the war,
And clasp her Father's knees; — ah, no!
She meets the insuperable bar,
CANTO V

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

Are now besieging Barnard’s Towers, —

"Grant that the Moon which shines this
night
May guide them in a prudent flight!"

But quick the turns of chance and change,
And knowledge has a narrow range;
Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
And wishes blind, and efforts vain. —
The Moon may shine, but cannot be
Their guide in flight — already she
Hath witnessed their captivity.
She saw the desperate assault
Upon that hostile castle made; —
But dark and dismal is the vault
Where Norton and his sons are laid!
Disastrous issue! — he had said
"This night you faithless Towers must
yield,
Or we for ever quit the field.
— Neville is utterly dismayed,
For promise fails of Howard’s aid;
And Dacre to our call replies
That he is unprepared to rise.
My heart is sick; — this weary pause
Must needs be fatal to our cause.
The breach is open — on the wall,
This night, the Banner shall be planted!"
"'T was done: his Sons were with him —
all;
They belt him round with hearts undaunted
And others follow; — Sire and Son
Leap down into the court; — "'Tis won” —
They shout aloud — but Heaven decreed
That with their joyful shout should close
The triumph of a desperate deed
Which struck with terror friends and foes!
The friend shrinks back — the foe recoils
From Norton and his filial band;
But they, now caught within the toils,
Against a thousand cannot stand; —
The foe from numbers courage drew,
And overpowered that gallant few.
"A rescue for the Standard!” cried
The Father from within the walls;
But, see, the sacred Standard falls! —
Confusion through the Camp spread wide:
Some fled; and some their fears detained:
But ere the Moon had sunk to rest
In her pale chambers of the west,
Of that rash levy nought remained.

CANTO FIFTH

High on a point of rugged ground
Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell

The injunction by her Brother laid;
His parting charge — but ill obeyed —
That interdicted all debate,
All prayer for this cause or for that;
All efforts that would turn aside
The headstrong current of their fate:
For duty is to stand and wait;
A resignation to abide
The shock, and finally secure
D’er pain and grief a triumph pure.
— She feels it, and her pangs are checked.
But now, as silently she paced
The turf, and thought by thought was chased,
Came One who, with sedate respect,
Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake;
"An old man’s privilege I take:
Dark is the time — a woeful day!
Dear daughter of affliction, say
How can I serve you? point the way.”
"Rights have you, and may well be bold;
You with my Father have grown old
In friendship — strive — for his sake go —
Turn from us all the coming woe:
This would I beg; but on my mind
A passive stillness is enjoined.
On you, if room for mortal aid
Be left, is no restriction laid;
You not forbidden to recline
With hope upon the Will divine.”
"Hope,” said the old Man, “must abide
With all of us, whate’er betide.
In Craven’s Wilds is many a den,
To shelter persecuted men:
Far under ground is many a cave,
Where they might lie as in the grave,
Until this storm hath ceased to rave:
Or let them cross the River Tweed,
And be at once from peril freed!”
"Ah tempt me not!” she faintly sighed;
"I will not counsel nor exhort,
With my condition satisfied;
But you, at least, may make report
Of what befalls; — be this your task —
This may be done; — ’t is all I ask!”
She spake — and from the Lady’s sight
The Sire, unconscious of his age,
Departed promptly as a Page
Bound on some errand of delight.
— The noble Francis — wise as brave,
Thought he, may want not skill to save.
With hopes in tenderness concealed,
Unarmed he followed to the field;
Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers
Above the loftiest ridge or mound  
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single — Norton Tower its name —  
It fronts all quarters, and looks round  
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,  
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,  
Upon a prospect without bound.  

The summit of this bold ascent —  
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free  
As Pendle-hill or Pennygent  
From wind, or frost, or vapours wet —  
Had often heard the sound of glee  
When there the youthful Nortons met,  
To practise games and archery:  
How proud and happy they! the crowd  
Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud!  
And from the scorching noon-tide sun,  
From showers, or when the prize was won,  
They to the Tower withdrew, and there  
Would mirth run round, with generous fare;  
And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall  
Was happiest, proudest, of them all!  

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,  
Upon the height walks to and fro;  
'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,  
Received the bitterness of woe:  
For she had hoped, had hoped and feared,  
Such rights did feeble nature claim;  
And oft her steps had hither steered,  
Though not unconscious of self-blame;  
For she her brother's charge revered,  
His farewell words; and by the same,  
Yea by her brother's very name,  
Had, in her solitude, been cheered.  

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood  
That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,  
Who with her Father had grown old  
In friendship; rival hunters they,  
And fellow warriors in their day;  
To Rylstone he the tidings brought;  
Then on this height the Maid had sought,  
And, gently as she could, had told  
The end of that dire Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.  

To him the Lady turned; “You said  
That Francis lives, he is not dead?”  
“Your noble brother hath been spared;  
To take his life they have not dared;  
On him and on his high endeavour  
The light of praise shall shine for ever!  
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain  
His solitary course maintain;  
Not vainly struggled in the might  
Of duty, seeing with clear sight;  
He was their comfort to the last,  
Their joy till every pang was past.  

I witnessed when to York they came—  
What, Lady, if their feet were tied;  
They might deserve a good Man's blame;  
But marks of infamy and shame —  
These were their triumph, these their pride  
Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd  
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud.  
‘Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried  
‘A Prisoner once, but now set free!  
'Tis well, for he the worst defied  
Through force of natural piety;  
He rose not in this quarrel; he,  
For concord's sake and England's good,  
Suit to his Brothers often made  
With tears, and of his Father prayed —  
And when he had in vain withstood  
Their purpose — then did he divide,  
He parted from them; but at their side  
Now walks in unanimity.  
Then peace to cruelty and scorn,  
While to the prison they are borne,  
Peace, peace to all indignity!”  

And so in Prison were they laid —  
Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid,  
For I am come with power to bless,  
By scattering gleams, through your distress,  
Of a redeeming happiness.  
Me did a reverent pity move  
And privilege of ancient love;  
And, in your service, making bold,  
Enterance I gained to that stronghold.  
Your Father gave me cordial greeting;  
But to his purposes, that burned  
Within him, instantly returned:  
He was commanding and entertaining,  
And said — 'We need not stop, my Son!  
Thoughts press, and time is hurry on,'  

And so to Francis he renewed  
His words, more calmly thus pursued.  
‘Might this our enterprise have sped,  
Change wide and deep the Land had seen;  
A renovation from the dead,  
A spring-tide of immortal green:  
The darksome altars would have blazed  
Like stars when clouds are rolled away;  
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,  
Once more the Rood had been upraised  
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.  
Then, then — had I survived to see  
New life in Bolton Priory;
he voice restored, the eye of Truth -
- opened that inspired my youth;
- 'tis Banner (for such vow I made)^
- hould on the consecrated breast
- that same Temple have found rest:
- would myself have hung it high,
- 'tis offering of glad victory!
- A shadow of such thought remains
- to cheer this sad and pensive time;
- solemn fancy yet sustains
- me feeble Being — bids me climb
- to the last — one effort more
- to attest my Faith, if not restore.
- Hear then," said he, "while I impart,
- my Son, the last wish of my heart.
- The Banner strive thou to regain;
- And, if the endeavour prove not vain,
- Bear it — to whom if not to thee
- Shall I this lonely thought consign? —
- Bear it to Bolton Priory,
- And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine;
- To wither in the sun and breeze
- Mid those decaying sanctuaries.
- There let at least the gift be laid,
- The testimony there displayed;
- Bold proof that with no selfish aim,
- But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,
- I helmeted a brow though white,
- And took a place in all men's sight;
- Ye offered up this noble Brood,
- This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,
- And turned away from thee, my Son!
- And left — but be the rest unsaid,
- The name untouched, the tear unshed; —
- My wish is known, and I have done:
- Now promise, grant this one request,
- This dying prayer, and be thou blest!'
- Then Francis answered — 'Trust thy Son,
- For, with God's will, it shall be done!'
- The pledge obtained, the solemn word
- Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,
- And Officers appeared in state
- To lead the prisoners to their fate.
- They rose, oh! wherefore should I fear
- To tell, or, Lady, you to hear?
- They rose — embraces none were given —
- They stood like trees when earth and heaven
- Are calm; they knew each other's worth,
- And reverently the Band went forth.
- They met, when they had reached the door,
- One with profane and harsh intent
- Placed there — that he might go before
- And, with that rueful Banner borne
- Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,
- Conduct them to their punishment:
- So cruel Sussex, unrestrained
- By human feeling, had ordained.
- The unhappy Banner Francis saw,
- And, with a look of calm command
- Inspiring universal awe,
- He took it from the soldier's hand;
- And all the people that stood round
- Confirmed the deed in peace profound.
- — High transport did the Father shed
- Upon his Son — and they were led,
- Led on, and yielded up their breath;
- Together died, a happy death! —
- But Francis, soon as he had braved
- That insult, and the Banner saved,
- Athis the unresisting tide
- Of the spectators occupied
- In admiration or dismay,
- Bore instantly his Charge away."
- These things, which thus had in the sight
- And hearing passed of Him who stood
- With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,
- In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,
- He told; and oftentimes with voice
- Of power to comfort or rejoice;
- For deepest sorrows that aspire,
- Go high, no transport ever higher.
- "Yes — God is rich in mercy," said
- The old Man to the silent Maid,
- "Yet, Lady! shines, through this black night,
- One star of aspect heavenly bright;
- Your Brother lives — he lives — is come
- Perhaps already to his home;
- Then let us leave this dreary place."
- She yielded, and with gentle pace,
- Though without one uplifted look,
- To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

CANTO SIXTH

WHY comes not Francis? — From the doleful City
He fled, — and, in his flight, could hear
The death-sounds of the Minster-bell:
That sullen stroke pronounced farewell
To Marmaduke, cut off from pity!
To Ambrose that! and then a knell
For him, the sweet half-open Flower!
For all — all dying in one hour!
— Why comes not Francis? Thoughts of love
Should bear him to his Sister dear
With the fleet motion of a dove;
Yea, like a heavenly messenger
Of speediest wing, should he appear.
Why comes he not? — for westward fast
Along the plain of York he past;
Reckless of what impels or leads,
Unchecked he hurries on; — nor heed's
The sorrow, through the Villages,
Spread by triumphant cruelties
Of vengeful military force,
And punishment without remorse.
He marked not, heard not, as he fled,
All but the suffering heart was dead
For him abandoned to blank awe,
To vacancy, and horror strong;
And the first object which he saw
With conscious sight, as he swept along —
It was the Banner in his hand!
He felt — and made a sudden stand.
He looked about like one betrayed:
What hath he done? what promise made?
Oh weak, weak moment! to what end
Can such a vain oblation tend,
And he the Bearer? — Can he go
Carrying this instrument of woe,
And find, find anywhere, a right
To excuse him in his Country's sight?
No; will not all men deem the change
A downward course, perverse and strange?
Here is it; — but how? when? must she,
The unoffending Emily,
Again this piteous object see?
Such conflict long did he maintain,
Nor liberty nor rest could gain:
His own life into danger brought
By this sad burden — even that thought,
Exciting self-suspicion strong
Swayed the brave man to his wrong.
And how — unless it were the sense
Of all-disposing Providence,
Its will unquestionably shown —
How has the Banner clung so fast
To a palsied, and unconscious hand;
Clung to the hand to which it passed
Without impediment? And why,
But that Heaven's purpose might be known,
Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,
No intervention, to withstand
Fulfilment of a Father's prayer
Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest
When all resentments were at rest,
And life in death laid the heart bare? —
Then, like a spectre sweeping by,
Rushed through his mind the prophecy
Of utter desolation made
To Emily in the yew-tree shade:
He sighed, submitting will and power
To the stern embrace of that grasping bow
“No choice is left, the deed is mine —
Dead are they, dead! — and I will go,
And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,
Will lay the Relic on the shrine.”
So forward with a steady will
He went, and traversed plain and hill;
And up the vale of Wharf his way
Pursued; — and, at the dawn of day,
Attained a summit whence his eyes
Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.
There Francis for a moment's space
Made halt — but hark! a noise behind
Of horsemen at an eager pace!
He heard, and with misgiving mind.
— "Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the Band:
They come, by cruel Sussex sent;
Who, when the Nortons from the hand
Of death had drunk their punishment,
Bethought him, angry and ashamed,
How Francis, with the Banner claimed
As his own charge, had disappeared,
By all the standers-by revered.
His whole bold carriage (which had quelled
Thus far the Opposer, and repelled
All censure, enterprise so bright
That even bad men had vainly striven
Against that overlooming light)
Was then reviewed, and prompt word gave
That to what place soever fled
He should be seized, alive or dead.
The troop of horse have gained the height
Where Francis stood in open sight.
They hem him round — "Behold the proof," They cried, "the Ensign in his hand!
He did not arm, he walked aloof!
For why? — to save his Father's land; —
Worst Traitor of them all is he,
A Traitor dark and cowardly!"
"I am no Traitor," Francis said,
"Though this unhappy freight I bear;
And must not part with. But beware; —
Err not by hasty zeal misled,
Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"
At this he from the beaten road
Retreated towards a brake of thorn,
That like a place of vantage showed;
And there stood bravely, though forlorn
In self-defence with warlike brow
He stood, — nor weaponless was now;
He from a Soldier's hand had snatched
She must behold!—so many gone,
Where is the solitary One?
And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped she,—
To seek her Brother forth she went,
And tremblingly her course she bent
Toward Bolton’s ruined Priory.
She comes, and in the vale hath heard
The funeral dirge;—she sees the knot
Of people, sees them in one spot—
And darting like a wounded bird
She reached the grave, and with her breast
Upon the ground received the rest,—
The consummation, the whole ruth
And sorrow of this final truth!

CANTO SEVENTH

"Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick—in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of."

THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand
Was to the harp a strong command,
Called the submissive strings to wake
In glory for this Maiden’s sake,
Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled
To hide her poor afflicted head?
What mighty forest in its gloom
Enfolds her?—is a rifted tomb
Within the wilderness her seat?
Some island which the wild waves beat—
Is that the Sufferer’s last retreat?
Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds
Its perilous front in mists and clouds?
High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,
Sea, desert, what do these avail?
Oh take her anguish and her fears
Into a deep recess of years!
’Tis done;—despoil and desolation
O’er Rylstone’s fair domain have blown;
Pools, terraces, and walks are sown
With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,
Or have given way to slow mutation,
While, in their ancient habitation
The Norton name hath been unknown.
The lordly Mansion of its pride
Is stripped; the ravage hath spread wide
Through park and field, a perishing
That mocks the gladness of the Spring!
And, with this silent gloom agreeing,
Appears a joyless human Being,
Of aspect such as if the waste
Were under her dominion placed.
Upon a primrose bank, her throne
Of quietness, she sits alone;
Among the ruins of a wood,
Erewhile a covert bright and green,
And where full many a brave tree stood,
That used to spread its boughs, and ring
With the sweet bird's carolling.
Behold her, like a virgin Queen,
Neglecting in imperial state
These outward images of fate,
And carrying inward a serene
And perfect sway, through many a thought
Of chance and change, that hath been
brought
To the subjection of a holy,
Though stern and rigorous, melancholy!
The like authority, with grace
Of awfulness, is in her face,—
There hath she fixed it; yet it seems
To o’ershadow by no native right
That face, which cannot lose the gleams,
Lose utterly the tender gleams,
Of gentleness and meek delight,
And loving-kindness ever bright:
Such is her sovereign mien:—her dress
(A vest with woollen cincture tied,
A hood of mountain-wool undyed)
Is homely,—fashioned to express
A wandering Pilgrim’s humbleness.
And she hath wandered, long and far,
Beneath the light of sun and star;
Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,
Driven forward like a withered leaf,
Yea like a ship at random blown
To distant places and unknown.
But now she dares to seek a haven
Among her native wilds of Craven;
Hath seen again her Father’s roof,
And put her fortitude to proof;
The mighty sorrow hath been borne,
And she is thoroughly forlorn:
Her soul doth in itself stand fast,
Sustained by memory of the past
And strength of Reason; held above
The infirmities of mortal love;
Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,
And awfully impenetrable.
And so—beneath a mouldered tree,
A self-surviving leafless oak
By unregarded age from stroke
Of ravage saved—sate Emily.
There did she rest, with head reclined,
Herself most like a stately flower,
(Such have I seen) whom chance of birth
Hath separated from its kind,
To live and die in a shady bower,
Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,
A troop of deer came sweeping by;
And, suddenly, behold a wonder!
For One, among those rushing deer,
A single One, in mid career
Hath stopped, and fixed her large fall
Upon the Lady Emily;
A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,
A radiant creature, silver-bright!
Thus checked, a little while it stayed;
A little thoughtful pause it made;
And then advanced with stealth-like pace.
Drew softly near her, and more near—
Looked round—but saw no cause for
fear;
So to her feet the Creature came,
And laid its head upon her knee,
And looked into the Lady’s face,
A look of pure benignity,
And fond unclouded memory.
It is, thought Emily, the same,
The very Doe of other years!—
The pleading look the Lady viewed,
And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,
She melted into tears—
A flood of tears, that flowed apace,
Upon the happy Creature’s face.
Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair
Beloved of Heaven, Heaven’s chosen care,
This was for you a precious greeting;
And may it prove a fruitful meeting!
Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe
Can she depart? can she forego
The Lady, once her playful peer,
And now her sainted Mistress dear?
And will not Emily receive
This lovely chronicler of things
Long past, delights and sorrowings?
Lone Sufferer! will not she believe
The promise in that speaking face;
And welcome, as a gift of grace,
The saddest thought the Creature brings?
That day, the first of a re-union
Which was to teem with high communion,
That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together.
And when, ere fall of evening dew,
She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,
The White Doe tracked with faithful pace
The Lady to her dwelling-place;
That nook where, on paternal ground,
A habitation she had found,
The Master of whose humble board
Once owned her Father for his Lord;
While they, side by side, were straying,
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,
Did now a very gladness yield
At morning to the dewy field,
And with a deeper peace endued
The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her Companion, in such frame
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came;
And, ranging through the wasted groves,
Received the memory of old loves,
Undisturbed and undistrest,
Into a soul which now was blest
With a soft spring-day of holy,
Mild, and grateful, melancholy:
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,
But by tender fancies brightened.

When the bells of Rylstone played
Their sabbath music — "God us aye!" That was the sound they seemed to speak;
Inscriptive legend which I ween
May on those holy bells be seen,
That legend and her Grandsire's name;
And oftentimes the Lady meek
Had in her childhood read the same;
Words which she slighted at that day;
But now, when such sad change was wrought,
And of that lonely name she thought —
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,
While she sat listening in the shade,
With vocal music, "God us aye!"
And all the hills were glad to bear
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power;
But with the White Doe at her side
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,
And thence look round her far and wide,
Her fate there measuring; — all is stilled, —
The weak One hath subdued her heart;
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part!
But here her Brother's words have failed;
Here hath a milder doom prevailed;
That she, of him and all bereft,
Hath yet this faithful Partner left;
This one Associate, that disproves
His words, remains for her, and loves.
If tears are shed, they do not fall
For loss of him — for one, or all;
Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep;
A few tears down her cheek descend
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,
And bless for both this savage spot;
Which Emily doth sacred hold
For reasons dear and manifold —
Here hath she, here before her sight,
Close to the summit of this height,
The grassy rock-encircled Pound
In which the Creature first was found.
So beautiful the timid Thrall
(A spotless Youngling white as foam)
Her youngest Brother brought it home;
The youngest, then a lusty boy,
Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall
With heart brimful of pride and joy!

But most to Bolton’s sacred Pile,
On favouring nights, she loved to go;
There ranged through cloister, court, and aisle,
Attended by the soft-paced Doe;
Nor feared she in the still moonshine
To look upon Saint Mary’s shrine;
Nor on the lonely turf that showed
Where Francis slept in his last abode.
For that she came; there oft she sate
Forlorn, but not disconsolate:
And, when she from the abyss returned
Of thought, she neither shrunk nor mourned;
Was happy that she lived to greet
Her mute Companion as it lay
In love and pity at her feet;
How happy in its turn to meet
The recognition! the mild glance
Beamed from that gracious countenance;
Communication, like the ray
Of a new morning, to the nature
And prospects of the inferior Creature!
A mortal Song we sing, by dower
Encouraged of celestial power;
Power which the viewless Spirit shed
By whom we were first visited;
Whose voice we heard, whose hand and wings
Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,
When, left in solitude, erewhile
We stood before this ruined Pile,
And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,
Sang in this Presence kindred themes;
Distress and desolation spread
Through human hearts, and pleasure dead,—
Dead — but to live again on earth,
A second and yet nobler birth;
Dire overthrow, and yet how high
The re-ascent in sanctity!
From fair to fairer; day by day
A more divine and loftier way!

Even such this blessed Pilgrim trod,
By sorrow lifted towards her God;
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed mortality.
Her own thoughts loved she; and cool bend
A dear look to her lowly Friend;
There stopped; her thirst was satisfied
With what this innocent spring supplied:
Her sanction inwardly she bore,
And stood apart from human cares:
But to the world returned no more,
Although with no unwilling mind
Help did she give at need, and joined
The Wharfdale peasants in their prayers.
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied
To earth, she was set free, and died.
Thy soul, exalted Emily,
Maid of the blasted family,
Rose to the God from whom it came!
In Rylstone Church her mortal frame
Was buried by her Mother’s side.

Most glorious sunset! and a ray
Survives — the twilight of this day—
In that fair Creature whom the fields
Support, and whom the forest shields;
Who, having filled a holy place,
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven’s grace;
And bears a memory and a mind
Raised far above the law of kind;
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
Which her dear Mistress once held dear.
Love most what Emily loved most —
The enclosure of this churchyard ground;
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,
And every sabbath here is found;
Comes with the people when the bells
Are heard among the moorland dells,
Finds entrance through you arch, where way
Lies open on the sabbath-day;
Here walks amid the mournful waste
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,
And floors encumbered with rich show
Of fret-work imagery laid low;
Paces softly, or makes halt,
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault;
By plate of monumental brass
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,
And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave:
But chiefly by that single grave,
That one sequestered hillock green,
The pensive visitant is seen.
There doth the gentle Creature lie
With those adversities unmoved;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
in their benignity approved!
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
subdued by outraged and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say—
"Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime!"

THE FORCE OF PRAYER

DR. THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY

A TRADITION

1807. 1815

An Appendage to the "White Doe." My friend, Mr. Rogers, has also written on the subject. The story is preserved in Dr. Whitter's History of Craven—a topographical writer of first-rate merit in all that concerns the past; but such was his aversion from the modern spirit, as shown in the spread of manufactories in those districts of which he treats, that his readers are left entirely ignorant both of the progress of these arts and their real bearing upon the comfort, virtues, and happiness of the inhabitants. While wandering on foot through the fertile valleys and over the moorlands of the Pennine that divides Yorkshire from Lancashire, I used to be delighted with observing the number of substantial cottages that had sprung up on every side, each having its little plot of fertile ground won from the surrounding waste. A bright and warm fire, if needed, was always to be found in these dwellings. The father was at his loom; the children looked healthy and happy. Is it not to be feared that the increase of mechanic power has done away with many of these blessings, and substituted many evils? Also! if these evils grow, how are they to be checked, and where is the remedy to be found? Political economy will not supply it; that is certain, we must look to something deeper, purer, and higher.

"What is good for a bootless bane?"
With these dark words begins my Tale;
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
When Prayer is of no avail?

"What is good for a bootless bane?"
The Falconer to the Lady said;
And she made answer "ENDLESS SORROW!"
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer’s words,
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

— Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called The Strid,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across The Strid?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep?—
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking, sorrow:
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death;—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow:
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother’s sorrow.
CONVENTION OF CINTRA

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave!

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately Priory!"

The stately Priory was reared;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at evensong.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief!
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our friend!

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME
AND ON THE SAME OCCASION

1808. 1815

I dropped my pen; and listened to the
Wind
That sang of trees upturned and vessel's
tost—
A midnight harmony; and wholly lost
To the general sense of men by chains
confined
Of business, care, or pleasure; or resigned
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impassioned
strain,
Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,
Like acceptance from the World will find,
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drain
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows
past;
And to the attendant promise will give
heed—
The prophecy, — like that of this wild blast,
Which, while it makes the heart with sadness
shrink,
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN

1808. 1839

Who weeps for strangers? Many wept
For George and Sarah Green;
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,
Whose grave may here be seen.

By night, upon these stormy fells,
Did wife and husband roam;
Six little ones at home had left,
And could not find that home.

For any dwelling-place of man
As vainly did they seek.
He perish'd; and a voice was heard—
The widow's lonely shriek.

Not many steps, and she was left
A body without life—
A few short steps were the chain that bound
The husband to the wife.

Now do those sternly-featured hills
Look gently on this grave;
And quiet now are the depths of air,
As a sea without a wave.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR
WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A
TRACT OCCASIONED BY THE
CONVENTION OF CINTRA

1808. 1815

Nor 'mid the world's vain objects that enslave
The free-born Soul — that World whose vaunted skill
In selfish interest perverts the will,
Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave —
Not there; but in dark wood and rocky cave,
And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill
With omnipresent murmur as they rave
Down their steep beds, that never shall be still:
Here, mighty Nature! in this school sublime
I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain;
For her consult the auguries of time,
And through the human heart explore my way;
And look and listen — gathering, whence I may,
Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.
"ALAS! WHAT BOOTS THE LONG LABORIOUS QUEST" 383

But deeper lies the heart of peace
In quiet more profound;
The heart of quietness is here
Within this churchyard bound.

And from all agony of mind
It keeps them safe, and far
From fear and grief, and from all need
Of sun or guiding star.

O darkness of the grave! how deep,
After that living night —
That last and dreary living one
Of sorrow and affright?

O sacred marriage-bed of death,
That keeps them side by side
In bond of peace, in bond of love,
That may not be untied!

HOFFER
1809. 1815

Of mortal parents is the Hero born
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led?
Or is it Tell’s great Spirit, from the dead
Returned to animate an age forlorn?
He comes like Phoebus through the gates
Of morn
When dreary darkness is dispelled,
Yet mark his modest state! upon his head,
That simple crest, a heron’s plume, is worn.
O Liberty! they stagger at the shock
From van to rear — and with one mind
Would flee,
But half their host is buried: — rock on rock
Descends: — beneath this godlike Warrior,
see!
Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemoak
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

"ADVANCE — COME FORTH FROM THY TYROLEAN GROUND"

1809. 1815

ADVANCE — come forth from thy Tyrolean
ground,
Dear Liberty! stern Nymph of soul un-
tamed;
Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains
named!
Through the long chain of Alps from mound
to mound

And o’er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound;
Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn
Have roused her from her sleep: and for-
est-lawn,
Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps
resound
And babble of her pastime! — On, dread Power!
With such invisible motion speed thy flight,
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height
to height,
Through the green vales and through the
herdsman’s bower —
That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE

1809. 1815

The Land we from our fathers had in trust,
And to our children will transmit, or die:
This is our maxim, this our piety;
And God and Nature say that it is just.
That which we would perform in arms — we
must!
We read the dictate in the infant’s eye;
In the wife’s smile; and in the placid sky;
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
Of them that were before us. — Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the heart!
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the
wind!
While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to
assert
Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

"ALAS! WHAT BOOTS THE LONG LABORIOUS QUEST"

1809. 1815

ALAS! what boots the long laborious quest
Of moral prudence, sought through good
and ill;
Or pains abstruse — to elevate the will,
And lead us on to that transcendent rest
Where every passion shall the sway attest
Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill;
What is it but a vain and curious skill,
If sapient Germany must lie depreat,
Beneath the brutal sword? — Her haughty
Schools
Shall blush; and may not we with sorrow say—
A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought
More for mankind at this unhappy day
Than all the pride of intellect and thought?

"AND IS IT AMONG RUDE UNTUTORED DALES"

1809. 1815

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,
There, and there only, that the heart is true?
And, rising to repel or to subdue,
Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails?
Ah no! though Nature’s dread protection fails,
There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew
Iberian Burgheers when the sword they drew
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was felt
By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,
Like him of noble birth and noble mind;
By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear;
And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt
The bread which without industry they find.

"O’ER THE WIDE EARTH. ON MOUNTAIN AND ON PLAIN"

1809. 1815

O’er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
Dwells in the affections and the soul of man
A Godhead, like the universal Pan;
But more exalted, with a brighter train:
And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
Showered equally on city and on field,
And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
In these usurping times of fear and pain?
Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it Heaven!
We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws
To which the triumph of all good is given,
High sacrifice, and labour without pause,

Even to the death: — else wherefore should the eye
Of man converse with immortality?

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE

1809. 1815

It was a moral end for which they fought;
Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,
Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,
A resolution, or enlivening thought?
Nor hath that moral good been vainly sought;
For in their magnanimity and fame
Powers have they left, an impulse, and a claim
Which neither can be overturned nor bought.
Sleep, Warriors, sleep! among your hills repose!
We know that ye, beneath the stern control
Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul:
And when, impatient of her guilt and woes
Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds! shall ye rise
For perfect triumph o’er your Enemies.

"HAIL, ZARAGOZA! IF WITH UNWET EYE"

1809. 1815

Hail, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
These desolate remains are trophies high
Of more than martial courage in the breast
Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
Blood flowed before thy sight without remorse;
Disease consumed thy vitals; War upheaved
The ground beneath thee with volcanic force:
Dread trials! yet encountered and sustained
Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,
And law was from necessity received.
"SAY, WHAT IS HONOUR? — 'T IS THE FINEST SENSE"

1809. 1815

SAY, what is Honour? — 'T is the finest sense
Of justice which the human mind can frame,
Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
And guard the way of life from all offence
Suffered or done. When lawless violence
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the scale
Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,
Honour is hopeful elevation, — whence
Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill
Endangered States may yield to terms unjust;
Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the dust —
A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil:
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
Are forfeited; but infamy doth kill.

"THE MARTIAL COURAGE OF A DAY IS VAIN"

1809. 1815

The martial courage of a day is vain,
An empty noise of death the battle's roar,
If vital hope be wanting to restore,
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain
Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore
A weight of hostile corpses; drenched with gore
Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped with slain.
Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)
Austria a daughter of her Throne hath sold!
And her Tyrolean Champion we behold
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,
Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as bold,
To think that such assurance can stand fast!

"BRAVE SCHILL! BY DEATH DELIVERED"

1809. 1815

Brave Schill! by death delivered, take thy flight
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,
Or in the fields of empyrean light.
A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night:
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,
Stand in the spacious firmament of time,
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.
Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there lives
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit,
gives;
To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed;
In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

"CALL NOT THE ROYAL SWEDEN UNFORTUNATE"

1809. 1815

Call not the royal Swede unfortunate,
Who never did to Fortune bend the knee;
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly
Temptation; and whose kingly name and state
Have "perished by his choice, and not his fate!"
Hence lives He, to his inner self endear'd;
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
He sits a more exalted Potentate,
Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven ordain
That this great Servant of a righteous cause
Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to endure,
Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,
Admonished by these truths, and quench all pain
In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

"LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVENTURER WHO HATH PAID"

1809. 1815

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid
His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel sight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made
By the blind Goddess, — ruthless, undismayed;
And so hath gained at length a prosperous height,
Round which the elements of worldly
might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are
laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless
force!
Curses are his dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred
course,
Him from that height shall Heaven pre-
cipitate
By violent and ignominious death.

“IS THERE A POWER THAT CAN
SUSTAIN AND CHEER”

1809. 1815
Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant’s doom,
Forced to descend into his destined tomb —
A dungeon dark! where he must waste the
year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds
dear;
What time his injured country is a stage
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage
Of righteous Vengeance side by side ap-
pear,
Filling from morn to night the heroic scene
With deeds of hope and everlasting praise:
—
Say can he think of this with mind serene
And silent fetters? Yes, if visions bright
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days
When he himself was tried in open light.

“AH! WHERE IS PALAFOX? NOR
TONGUE NOR PEN”

1810. 1815
Ah! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen
Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave!
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the
wave?
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken
Of pitying human nature? Once again
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion
brave,
Redeemed to battle that imperial Slave,
And through all Europe cheer desponding
men

With new-born hope. Unbounded is the
might
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
Hark, how thy Country triumphs! — Smil-
ingly
The Eternal looks upon her sword that
gleams,
Like his own lightning, over mountains
high,
On rampart, and the banks of all her
streams.

“IN DUE OBSERVANCE OF AN
ANCIENT RITE”

1810. 1815
In due observance of an ancient rite,
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments
white;
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph’s
bright,
They bind the unoffending creature’s brows
With happy garlands of the pure white
rose:
Then do a festal company unite
In choral song; and, while the uplifted
cross
Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
Uncovered to his grave: ’tis closed, — her
loss
The Mother then mourns, as she needs
must mourn;
But soon, through Christian faith, is grief
subdued;
And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BIS-
cayan at one of those
funerals

1810. 1815
Yet, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our
Foes
With firmer soul, yet labour to regain
Our ancient freedom; else ‘twere worse
than vain
To gather round the bier these festal shows.
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose
Becomes not one whose father is a slave:
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave!
These venerable mountains now enclose
A people sunk in apathy and fear.
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good!
The awful light of heavenly innocence
Will fail to illuminate the infant’s bier;
And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,
Descend on all that issues from our blood.

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY
1810. 1815

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian ground,
And to the people at the Isthmian Games
Assembled, He, by a herald’s voice, proclaims
THE LIBERTY OF GREECE: — the words rebound
Until all voices in one voice are drowned;
Glad acclamation by which air was rent!
And birds, high-flying in the element,
Dropped to the earth, astonished at the sound!
Yet were the thoughtful grieved; and still that voice
Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy’s ear:
Ah! that a Conqueror’s words should be so dear:
Ah! that a boon could shed such rapturous joys!
A gift of that which is not to be given
By all the blended powers of Earth and Heaven.

UPON THE SAME EVENT
1810. 1815

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn
The tidings past of servitude repealed,
And of that joy which shook the Isthmian Field,
The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.
“Tis known,” cried they, “that he, who would adorn
His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,
Must either win, through effort of his own,
The prize, or be content to see it worn

By more deserving brows. — Yet so ye prop,
Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
Your feeble spirits! Greece her head hath bowed,
As if the wreath of liberty thereon
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,
Which, at Jove’s will, descends on Pelion’s top.”

THE OAK OF GUERNICA
1810. 1815

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde
In his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella,
In the year 1470, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired
to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their fueros (privileges).
What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME

Oak of Guernica! Tree of holier power
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine
Heard from the depths of its aerial bower —
How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour?
What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to thee,
Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,
The dews of morn, or April’s tender shower?
Stroke merciful and welcome would that be
Which should extend thy branches on the ground,
If never more within their shady round
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,
Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,
Guardians of Biscay’s ancient liberty.

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD
1810. 1815

We can endure that He should waste our lands,
Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame
Return us to the dust from which we came;
Such food a Tyrant’s appetite demands:
And we can brook the thought that by his hands
Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
For his delight, a solemn wilderness
Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of Bands
Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
Of benefits, and of a future day
When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway;
Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak;
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
That he has power to inflict what we lack strength to bear.

“AVAUNT ALL SPECIOUS PLIANCY OF MIND”

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence! I better like a blunt indifference,
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined
To win me at first sight: and be there joined
Patience and temperance with this high reserve,
Honour that knows the path and will not swerve;
Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind;
And piety towards God. Such men of old Were England’s native growth; and, throughout Spain
(Thanks to high God) forests of such remain:
Then for that Country let our hopes be bold;
For matched with these shall policy prove vain,
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

“O’ERWEENING STATESMEN HAVE FULL LONG RELIED”

O’ERWEENING Statesmen have full long relied
On fleets and armies, and external wealth:
But from within proceeds a Nation’s health;
Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride
To the paternal floor; or turn aside,
In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,
As being all unworthy to detain
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.
There are who cannot languish in this strife,
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the God Of such high course was felt and understood;
Who to their Country’s cause have bound a life
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given
To labour and to prayer, to nature, and to heaven.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERILLAS

1810. 1815

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast—
From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height—
These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,
The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,
Charged, and dispersed like foam: but as a flight
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,
So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased
With combinations of long-practised art
And newly-kindled hope; but they are fied—
Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead:
Where now? — Their sword is at the Foman’s heart;
And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,
And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA

1810

Those from Chiabrera were chiefly translated when Mr. Coleridge was writing his Friend, in which periodical my “Essay on Epitaphs,” written about that time, was first
EPITAPHS

To the perpetual silence of the grave.
Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
A Champion steadfast and invincible,
To quell the rage of literary War!

III

1810. 1810

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste!
’T will be no fruitless moment. I was born
Within Savona’s walls, of gentle blood.
On Tiber’s banks my youth was dedicate
To sacred studies; and the Roman Shepherd
Gave to my charge Urbino’s numerous flock.
Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had power
To escape from many and strange indigni-
ties;
Was smitten by the great ones of the world,
But did not fall; for Virtue braves all shocks,
Upon herself resting immovable.
Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,
And in his hands I saw a high reward
Stretched out for my acceptance,— but Death came.
Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false,
How treacherous to her promise, is the world;
And trust in God — to whose eternal doom
Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

IV

1810. 1815

THERE never breathed a man who, when his life
Was closing, might not of that life relate
Toils long and hard. — The warrior will report
Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,
And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed
To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
Envy and heart-inquietude, derived
EPITAPHS

From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.
I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,
Could represent the countenance horrible
Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage
Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years
Over the well-steered galleys did I rule:
—From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,
Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown;
And the broad gulls I traversed oft and oft:
Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir
I knew the force; and hence the rough sea’s pride
Availed not to my Vessel’s overthrow.
What noble pomp and frequent have not I
On regal decks beheld! yet in the end
I learned that one poor moment can suffice
To equalise the lofty and the low.
We sail the sea of life — a Caim One finds,
And One a Tempest — and, the voyage o’er,
Death is the quiet haven of us all.
If more of my condition ye would know,
Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang
Of noble parents; seventy years and three
Lived I — then yielded to a slow disease.

No — he was One whose memory ought to spread
Where’er Permessus bears an honoured name,
And live as long as its pure stream shall flow.

VI
1810. 1815

DESTINED to war from very infancy
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross:
Nor in life’s vigorous season did I shun
Hazard or toil; among the sands was seen
Of Libya; and not seldom, on the banks
Of wide Hungarian Danube, ’twas my lot
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sound.
So lived I, and repined not at such fate:
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
That stripped of arms I to my end am brought
On the soft down of my paternal home.
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
How fleeting and how frail is human life!

V
1810. 1837

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero
With an untoward fate was long involved
In odious litigation; and full long,
Fate harder still! had he to endure assaults
Of racks, malady. And true it is
That not the less a frank courageous heart
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain;
And he was strong to follow in the steps
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest’s shade,
That might from him be hidden; not a track
Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he
Had traced its windings. — This Savona
knows,
Yet no sepulchral honours to her Son
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled
Only by gold. And now a simple stone
Inscribed with this memorial here is raised
By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.
Think not, O Passenger! who readst the lines,
That an exceeding love hath dazzled me;

O flower of all that springs from gentle blood,
And all that generous nurture breeds to make
Youth amiable; O friend so true of soul
To fair Aglaia; by what envy moved,
Lelius! has death cut short thy brilliant day
In its sweet opening? and what dire mishap
Has from Savona torn her best delight?
For thee she mourns, nor e’er will cease to mourn;
And, should the out-pourings of her eyes
suffice not
For her heart’s grief, she will entreat Sebeto
Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to death,
In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love!
What profit riches? what does youth avail!
Dust are our hopes; — I, weeping bitterly,
And all the wisdom of the Stagyrite,
Enriched and beautified his studious mind:
With Archimedes also he conversed
As with a chosen friend; nor did he leave
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which
the Nymphs
Twine near their loved Permessus.—
Finally,
Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
His ears he closed to listen to the songs
Which Sion’s Kings did consecrate of old;
And his Permessus found on Lebanon.
A blessed Man! who of protracted days
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep;
But truly did He live his life. Urbino,
Take pride in him! — O Passenger, farewell!

MATERNAL GRIEF

1810. 1842

This was in part an overflow from the Soli-
tary’s description of his own and his wife’s feel-
ings upon the decease of their children. (See
“Excursion,” book III.)

DEPARTED Child! I could forget thee once
Though at my bosom nursed; this woeful gain
Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul
Is present and perpetually abides
A shadow, never, never to be displaced
By the returning substance, seen or touched,
Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my embrace.
Absence and death how differ they! and how
Shall I admit that nothing can restore
What one short sigh so easily removed? —
Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,
Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,
O teach me calm submission to thy Will!
The Child she mourned had overstepped the pale
Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air
That sanctifies its confines, and partook
Reflected beams of that celestial light
To all the Little-ones on sinful earth
Not unvouchsafed — a light that warmed
and cheered
Those several qualities of heart and mind.
CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD

Which, in her own blest nature, rooted deep,
Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,
And not hers only, their peculiar charms
Unfolded, — beauty, for its present self,
And for its promises to future years,
With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.
Have you espied upon a dewy lawn
A pair of Leverets each provoking each
To a continuance of their fearless sport,
Two separate Creatures in their several gifts
Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all
That Nature prompts them to display, their looks,
Their starts of motion and their fits of rest,
An undistinguishable style appears
And character of gladness, as if Spring
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the spirit
Of the rejoicing morning were their own?
Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained
And her twin Brother, had the parent seen,
Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey,
Death in a moment parted them, and left
The Mother, in her turns of anguish, worse
Than desolate; for oft-times from the sound
Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear child,
He knew it not) and from his happiest looks,
Did she extract the food of self-reproach,
As one that lived ungrateful for the stay
By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed
And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,
Now first acquainted with distress and grief,
Shrank from his Mother's presence, shunned with fear
Her sad approach, and stole away to find,
In his known haunts of joy where'er he might,
A more congenial object. But, as time
Softened her pangs and reconciled the child
To what he saw, he gradually returned,
Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew
A broken intercourse; and, while his eyes
Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe
Turned upon her who bore him, she would stoop
To imprint a kiss that lacked not power to spread

Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,
And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they were calmed
And cheered; and now together breathe fresh air
In open fields; and when the glare of day
Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish
Befriends the observance, readily they join
In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,
Which he with flowers hath planted, finding there
Amusement, where the Mother does not miss
Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf
In prayer, yet blending with that solemn rite
Of pious faith the vanities of grief;
For such, by pitying Angels and by Spirit
Transferred to regions upon which the clouds
Of our weak nature rest not, must be deemed
Those willing tears, and unbidden sighs,
And all those tokens of a cherished sorrow,
Which, soothed and sweetened by the grace of Heaven
As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,
Immortal as the love that gave it being.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD
1811. 1815

Written at Allanbank, Grasmere. Picture of my Daughter Catharine, who died the year after.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;
And Innocence hath privilege in her
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;
And feats of cunning; and the pretty round
Of trespasses, affected to provoke
Mock-chastisement and partnership in play
And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
Not less if unattended and alone
Than when both young and old sit gathered round
And take delight in its activity;
Even so this happy Creature of herself
Is all-sufficient, solitude to her
Is blithe society, who fills the air
With gladness and involuntary songs.
Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn...
Forth-startled from the fern where she lay crouched;
Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
Or from before it chasing wantonly
The many-coloured images imprest
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

SPANISH GUERILLAS

1811. 1815

They seek, are sought; to daily battle led,
Shrink not, though far outnumbered by their foes,
For they have learnt to open and to close
The ridges of grim war; and at their head
Are captains such as erst their country bred
Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like those
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose;
Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.
In One who lived unknown a shepherd’s life
Redoubted Viriatus breathes again;
And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,
With that great Leader vies, who, sick of strife
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid
In some green island of the western main.

“THE POWER OF ARMIES IS A VISIBLE THING”

1811. 1815

The power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to year

Springs this indigenous produce far and near;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

“HERE PAUSE: THE POET CLAIMS AT LEAST THIS PRAISE”

1811. 1815

Here pause: the poet claims at least this praise,
That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
In the worst moment of these evil days;
From hope, the paramount duty that Heaven lays,
For its own honour, on man’s suffering heart.
Never may from our souls one truth depart
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye;
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of their guilt
For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
And justice labours in extremity—
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

See Harper

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,
BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND

1811. 1842

This poem opened, when first written, with a paragraph that has been transferred as an introduction to the first series of my Scotch Memorials. The journey, of which the first part is here described, was from Grasmere to Bootle on the south-west coast of Cumberland, the whole among mountain roads through a beautiful country; and we had fine weather. The verses end with our breakfast at the head of Yewdale in a yeoman’s house, which, like all the other property in that sequestered vale, has passed or is passing into the hands of Mr. James Marshall of Monk Coniston,—in Mr. Knott’s, the late owner’s, time called Waterhead. Our hostess married a Mr. Oldfield, a lieutenant in the Navy: they lived together for some time at Hacket, where she still resides as
his widow. It was in front of that house, on the mountain side, near which stood the peasant who, while we were passing at a distance, saluted us, waving a kerchief in her hand as described in the poem. (This matron and her husband were then residing at the Hacket. The house and its inmates are referred to in the fifth book of the "Excursion," in the passage beginning —

"You behold,  
High on the breast of you dark mountain, dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck." — J. C.)

The dog which we met with soon after our starting belonged to Mr. Rowlandson, who for forty years was curate of Grasmere in place of the rector, who lived to extreme old age in a state of insanity. Of this Mr. R. much might be said both with reference to his character, and the way in which he was regarded by his parishioners. He was a man of robust frame, had a firm voice and authoritative manner, of strong natural talents, of which he was himself conscious, for he has been heard to say (it grieves me to add) with an oath — "If I had been brought up at college I should have been a bishop." Two vices used to struggle in him for mastery, avarice and the love of strong drink: but avarice, as is common in like cases, always got the better of its opponent; for, though he was often intoxicated, it was never, I believe, at his own expense. As has been said of one in a more exalted station, he would take any given quantity. I have heard a story of him which is worth the telling. One summer's morning, our Grasmere curate, after a night's carouse in the vale of Langdale, on his return home, having reached a point near which the whole of the vale of Grasmere might be seen with the lake immediately below him, stepped aside and sat down on the turf. After looking for some time at the landscape, then in the perfection of its morning beauty, he exclaimed — "Good God, that I should have led so long such a life in such a place!" — This no doubt was deeply felt by him at the time, but I am not authorised to say that any noticeable amendment followed. Penuriousness strengthened upon him as his body grew feebler with age. He had purchased property and kept some land in his own hands, but he could not find in his heart to lay out the necessary hire for labourers at the proper season, and consequently he has often been seen in half-dogate working his hay in the month of November by moonlight, a melancholy sight which I myself have witnessed. Notwithstanding all that has been said, this man, on account of his talents and superior education, was looked up to by his parishioners, who, without a single exception, lived at that time (and most of them upon their own small inheritances) in a state of republican equality, a condition favourable to the growth of kindly feelings among them, and is a striking degree exclusive to temptations to gross vice and scandalous behaviour. As a pastor their curate did little or nothing for them; but what could more strikingly forth the efficacy of the Church of England through its Ordinances and Liturgy than this, in spite of the unworthiness of the minister, his church was regularly attended; and, though there was not much appearance in his flock of what might be called animated piety, intoxication was rare, and dissolute morals unknown! With the Bible they were for the most part well acquainted; and, as was strikingly shown when they were under affliction, must have been supported and comforted by habitual belief in those truths which it is the aim of the Church to inculcate. — Loughrigg Tarn. This beautiful pool and the surrounding scene minutely described in my little Book on the Lakes. Sir G. H. Beaumont, in the earlier part of his life, was induced, by his love of nature and the art of painting, to take up his abode at Old Brathay, about three miles from this spot, so that he must have seen it under many aspects; and he was so much pleased with it that he purchased the Tarn with a view to build, near it, such a residence as is alluded to in this Epistle. Baronets and knights were not so common in that day as now, and Sir Michael le Fleming, not liking to have a rival in that kind of distinction so near him, claimed a sort of lordship over the territory, and showed dispositions little in union with those of Sir G. Beaumont, who was eminently a lover of peace. The project of building was in consequence given up, Sir George retaining possession of the Tarn. Many years afterwards a Kendal tradesman born upon his banks applied to me for the purchase of it, and accordingly it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money was laid out under my direction upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew trees to be planted in Grasmere churchyard; two were planted in each enclosure, with a view to remove, after a certain time, the one which threw the least. After several years, the stouter plant being left, the others were taken up and placed in other parts of the same churchyard, and were adequately fenced at the expense and under the care of the late Mr. Barber, Mr. Greenwood, and myself: the whole eight are now thriving, and are already an ornament to a place which, during late years, has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of
them in very bad taste; from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free. See the lines in the sixth book of the "Excruction" beginning — "Green is the churchyard, beautiful and green." The "Epistle" to which these notes refer, though written so far back as 1804, was carefully revised so late as 1842, previous to its publication. I am loth to add, that it was never seen by the person to whom it is addressed. So sensible am I of the deficiencies in all that I write, and so far does everything that I attempt fall short of what I wish it to be, that even private publication, if such a term may be allowed, requires more resolution than I can command. I have written to give vent to my own mind, and not without hope that; some time or other, kindred minds might benefit by my labours: but I am inclined to believe I should never have ventured to send forth any verses of mine to the world if it had not been done on the pressure of personal occasions. Had I been a rich man, my productions, like this "Epistle," the tragedy of the "Borderers," etc., would most likely have been confined to manuscript.

Far from our home by Grasmere's quiet Lake,
From the Vale's peace which all her fields partake,
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's shore
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless roar;
While, day by day, grim neighbour! huge Black Comb
Frowns deepening visibly his native gloom,
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite
What on the Plain we have of warmth and light,
In his own storms he hides himself from sight.
Rough is the time; and thoughts, that would be free
From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to thee;
Turn from a spot where neither sheltered road
Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps abroad;
Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it might
Attained a stature twice a tall man's height, Hopeless of further growth, and brown and sere
Through half the summer, stands with top cut sheer,

Like an unshifting weathercock which proves
How cold the quarter that the wind best loves,
Or like a Centinel that, evermore
Darkening the window, ill defends the door
Of this unfinished house — a Fortress bare,
Where strength has been the Builder's only care;
Whose rugged walls may still for years demand
The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.
— This Dwelling's Inmate more than three weeks space
And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,
I,— of whose touch the fiddle would complain,
Whose breath would labour at the flute in vain,
In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill
A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,
Tired of my books, a scanty company!
And tired of listening to the boisterous sea
Face between door and window muttering rhyme,
An old resource to cheat a froward muttering time!
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their shame?)
Would tempt me to renounce that humble aim.
— But if there be a Muse who, free to take
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake
Those heights (like Phoebus when his golden locks
He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)
And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail
Trips down the pathways of some winding dale;
Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores
To fishers mending nets beside their doors;
Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,
Or listens to its play among the boughs
Above her head and so forgets her vows —
If such a Visitant of Earth there be
And she would deign this day to smile on me
And aid my verse, content with local bounds
Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which we tell
Without reserve to those whom we love well —
Then haphly, Beaumont ! words in current clear
Will flow, and on a welcome page appear
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish here.
What shall I treat of ? News from Mona's Isle ?
Such have we, but unvaried in its style; No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence And wherfore fugitive or on what pretence;
Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind Most restlessly alive when most confined. Ask not of me, whose tongue can best appease
The mighty tumults of the House of Keys;
The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer gained,
What slopes are planted, or what mosses drained:
An eye of fancy only can I cast
On that proud pageant now at hand or past,
When full five hundred boats in trim array,
With nets and sails outspread and streamers gay,
And chanted hymns and stiller voice of prayer,
For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep repair,
Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine. Mona from our Abode is daily seen, But with a wilderness of waves between; And by conjecture only can we speak Of aught transacted there in bay or creek; No tidings reach us thence from town or field,
Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield, And some we gather from the misty air, And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph declare.
But these poetic mysteries I withhold; For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold, And should the colder fit with You be on When You might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,
And nearer interests culled from the opening stage
Of our migration. — Ere the welcome dawn Had from the east her silver star withdrawn,
The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-doar, Thoughtfully freighted with a various store; And long or ere the uprising of the Sun O'er dew-damped dust our journey was begun,
A needful journey, under favouring skies. Through peopled Vales; yet something in the guise
Of those old Patriarchs when from well to well
They roamed through Wastes where now the tented Arabs dwell. Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,
Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide Up many a sharply-twining road and down And over many a wide hill's craggy crown Through the quick turns of many a hollow nook, And the rough bed of many an unbridged brook?
A blooming Lass — who in her better hour Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command. When, yet a slender Girl, she often led, Skilful and bold, the horse and burthen sled
From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowda's head.
What could go wrong with such a Charioteer For goods and chattels, or those Infants dear,
A Pair who smilingly sat e side by side, Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide Whose free embraces we were bound to seek Would their lost strength restore and refresh the pale cheek?
Such hope did either Parent entertain Pacing behind along the silent lane. Blithe hopes and happy musings soon took flight,
For lo ! an uncouth melancholy sight — On a green bank a creature stood forlorn Just half protruded to the light of morn, Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row thorn
The Figure called to mind a beast of prey Stript of its frightful powers by slow decay, And, though no longer upon rapine bent, Dim memory keeping of its old intent. We started, looked again with anxious eye, And in that grisly object recognise
The Curate's Dog — his long-tried friend, for they,
As well we knew, together had grown grey.
Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in the road
Stopped me at once by charm of what it showed,
The encircling region vividly exprest
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest —
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy
field,
And the smooth green of many a pendent field,
And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,
A little daring would-be waterfall,
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam —
What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and sleep,
When Nature's self, amid such blending, seems
To render visible her own soft dreams,
If, mixed with what appeared of rock, lawn, wood,
Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,
A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by Thee
Designed to rise in humble privacy,
A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,
Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head
Half hid in native trees. Alas 'tis not,
Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,
And thought in silence, with regret too keen,
Of unexperienced joys that might have been;
Of neighbours and intermingling arts,
And golden summer days uniting cheerful hearts.
But time, irrevocable time, is flown. And let us utter thanks for blessings own
And reaped — what hath been, and what is, our own.
Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,
Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;
Such shout as many a sportive echo meeting
Oft-times from Alpine chalets sends a greeting.
Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant stand
On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!
Not unexpectant that by early day
Our little Band would thrid this mountain way,
Before her cottage on the bright hill side
She hath advanced with hope to be descried,
Right gladly answering signals we displayed,
Moving along a tract of morning shade,
And vocal wishes sent of like good will
To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill —
Luminous region, fair as if the prime
Were tempting all astr in look aloft or climb;
Only the centre of the shining cot
With door left open makes a gloomy spot,
Emblem of those dark corners sometimes found
Within the happiest breast on earthly ground.
Rich prospect left behind of stream and vale,
And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we scale;
Descend, and reach, in Yewdale’s depths,
a plain
With haycocks studded, striped with yellowing grain —
An area level as a Lake and spread
Under a rock too steep for man to tread,
Where sheltered from the north and bleak northwest
Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest, —
Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest.
Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but hark,
At our approach, a jealous watch-dog’s bark,
Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of state,
But the whole household, that our coming wait.
With Young and Old warm greetings we exchange,
And joyful smiles, and toward the lowly Grange
Press forward by the teasing dogs unsca red.
Entering, we find the morning meal prepared:
So down we sit, though not till each had cast
Pleased looks around the delicate repast —
Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from the nest,
With amber honey from the mountain’s breast;
Strawberries from lane or woodland, offering wild
Of children’s industry, in hillocks piled;
Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie
Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality
Where simple art with bounteous nature vied,
And cottage comfort shunned not seemly pride.
Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the feast,
If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,
Words by thy presence unrestrained may speak
Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek
Instinct with light whose sweetest promises
Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes,
Dark but to every gentle feeling true,
As if their lustre flowed from ether’s purest blue.
Let me not ask what tears may have been wept
By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept
Beside that hearth what sighs may have been heaved
For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved
By fortitude and patience, and the grace
Of heaven in pity visiting the place.
Not unadvisedly those secret springs
I leave unsearched: enough that memory clings,
Here as elsewhere, to notices that make
Their own significance for hearts awake,
To rural incidents, whose genial powers
Filled with delight three summer morn ing hours.
More could my pen report of grave or gay
That through our gipsy travel cheered the way;
But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun
Laughs at my pains, and seems to say, “Be done.”
Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, rep rove
This humble offering made by Truth to Love,
Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break a spell
Which might have else been on me yet: —

FAREWELL

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPIS TLE THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COM Position

1841. 1842

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest
Take those dear young Ones to a fearless nest;
And in Death’s arms has long reposed the
Friend
For whom this simple Register was penned.
Thanks to the moth that spared it for our
eyes;
And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may
prize,
Moved by the touch of kindred sympathies.
For — save the calm, repentance sheds o’er
strife
Raised by remembrances of misused life,
The light from past endeavours purely willed
And by Heaven’s favour happily fulfilled;
Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may
share
The joys of the Departed — what so fair
As blameless pleasure, not without some
tears,
Reviewed through Love’s transparent veil
of years?

Soul-soothing Art! whom Morning, Noontide, Even,
Do serve with all their changeful pageantry;
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,
Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast
given
To one brief moment caught from fleeting
time
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

INSCRIPTIONS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE
SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.,
LEICESTERSHIRE

1808. 1815

In the grounds of Coleorton these verses are
engraved on a stone placed near the Tree,
which was thriving and spreading when I saw
it in the summer of 1841.

The embowering rose, the acacia, and the
pine,
Will not unwillingly their place resign;
If but the Cedar thrive that near them
stands,
Planted by Beaumont’s and by Wordsworth’s hands.

One wooed the silent Art with studious
pains:
These groves have heard the Other’s pen-
sive strains;
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
By interchange of knowledge and delight.
May Nature’s kindliest powers sustain the
Tree,
And Love protect it from all injury!
And when its potent branches, wide out-
thrown,
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,
Here may some Painter sit in future
days,
Some future Poet meditate his lays;
Not mindless of that distant age renowned
When Inspiration hovered o’er this ground,
The haunt of him who sang how spear and
shield
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;
And of that famous Youth, full soon re-
moved
From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare’s self
approved,
Fletcher’s Associate, Jonson’s Friend be-
loved.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAU-
TIFUL PICTURE

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.
1811. 1815

This was written when we dwelt in the Par-
sonage at Grasmere. The principal features of
the picture are Bredon Hill and Cloud Hill near
Coleorton. I shall never forget the happy feel-
ing with which my heart was filled when I was
impelled to compose this Sonnet. We resided
only two years in this house; and during the
last half of the time, which was after this
poem had been written, we lost our two chil-
dren, Thomas and Catharine. Our sorrow upon
these events often brought it to my mind, and
caused me upon the support to which the last line
of it gives expression —

"The appropriate calm of blest eternity."

It is scarcely necessary to add that we still
possess the Picture.

RAISED be the Art whose subtle power
could stay
Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape;
Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the
day;
Which stopped that band of travellers on
their way,
Ere they were lost within the shady wood;
And showed the Bark upon the glazy flood
For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.
IN A GARDEN OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.

1811. 1815

This Niche is in the sandstone-rock in the winter-garden at Coleorton, which garden, as has been elsewhere said, was made under our direction out of an old unsightly quarry. While the labourers were at work, Mrs. Wordsworth, my Sister, and I used to amuse ourselves occasionally in scooping this seat out of the soft stone. It is of the size, with something of the appearance, of a Stall in a Cathedral. This inscription is not engraven, as the former and the two following are, in the grounds.

Oft is the medal faithful to its trust
When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust;
And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
That things obscure and small outlive the great:
Hence, when you mansion and the flowery trim
Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
And all its stately trees, are passed away,
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
Perchance may still survive. And be it known
That it was scooped within the living stone,—
Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,
But by an industry that wrought in love;
With help from female hands, that proudly strove
To aid the work, what time these walks and bowers
Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS

1808. 1815

Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle;—
That may recall to mind that awful lie
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's nobles dead,
In the last sanctity of fame is laid.
— There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear:
Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;
From youth a zealous follower of the Art
That he professed; attached to him is heart;
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON

1811. 1815

BENEATH you eastern ridge, the cragg bound,
Rugged and high, of Charnwood’s forest ground
Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from thy view,
The ivied Ruins of forlorn Grace Die;
Erst a religious House, which day and night
With hymns resounded, and the chantled rite:
And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth
To honourable Men of various worth:
There, on the margin of a streamlet wild
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child;
There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks;
Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams
Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
With which his genius shook the baskined stage.
Communities are lost, and Empires die,  
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;  
They perish; — but the Intellect can raise,  
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL

ounded upon a belief prevalent  
among the pastoral vaules of westmoreland  
1812. 1820

The belief on which this is founded I have  
often heard expressed by an old neighbour of  
Grasmere.

Swiftly turn the murmuring wheel!  
Night has brought the welcome hour,  
When the weary fingers feel  
Help, as if from fairy power;  
Dewy night o’ershades the ground;  
Turn the swift wheel round and round!

Now, beneath the starry sky,  
Couch the widely-scattered sheep; —  
Ply the pleasant labour, ply!  
For the spindle, while they sleep,  
Runs with speed more smooth and fine,  
Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred  
By a glance from fickle eyes;  
But true love is like the thread  
Which the kindly wool supplies,  
When the flocks are all at rest  
Sleeping on the mountain’s breast.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE  
MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND IN  
THE VALE OF GRASMERE  
1812. 1815

What need of clamorous bells, or ribands gay,  
These humble nuptials to proclaim or grace?  
Angels of love, look down upon the place;  
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day!  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride display  
Even for such promise: — serious is her face,

Modest her mien; and she, whose thoughts keep pace  
With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid appear;  
No disproportion in her soul, no strife:  
But, when the closer-view of wedded life  
Hath shown that nothing human can be clear  
From frailty, for that insight may the Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

WATER-FOWL

OBSERVED FREQUENTLY OVER THE  
LAKES OF RYDAL AND GRASMERE  
1812. 1827

"Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions which these visitants sometimes perform, on a fine day towards the close of winter." — Extract from the Author’s Book on the Lakes.

Mark how the feathered tenants of the flood,  
With grace of motion that might scarcely seem  
 Inferior to angelical, prolong  
Their curious pastime! shaping in mid air  
(And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars  
High as the level of the mountain-tops)  
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath —  
Their own domain; but ever, while intent  
On tracing and retracing that large round,  
Their jubilant activity evolves  
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
Upward and downward, progress intricate  
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
Their indefatigable flight. ’tis done —  
Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased;  
But lo! the vanished company again  
Ascending; they approach — I hear their wings,  
Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound,  
Past in a moment — and as faint again!  
They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes;  
They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
To show them a fair image; ’tis themselves,  
Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,
Painted more soft and fair as they descend
Almost to touch; — then up again aloft,
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,
As if they scorned both resting-place and rest!

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB

1813. 1815

Mrs. Wordsworth and I, as mentioned in the "Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont," lived some time
under its shadow.

This Height a ministering Angel might
select:
For from the summit of BLACK COMB
(dread name)
Derived from clouds and storms! the
amnest range
Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
That British ground commands: — low
dusty tracts,
Where Trent is nursed, far southward!
Cambrian hills
To the south-west, a multitudinous show;
And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,
The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth
To Tivoli's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and
Clyde: —
Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth
Gigantic mountains rough with crape; be-
neath,
Hight at the imperial station's western base
Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched
Far into silent regions blue and pale; —
And visibly engringing Mona's Isle
That, as we left the plain, before our sight
stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly
(Above the convex of the watery globe)
Into clear view the cultivated fields that
streak
Hey habitable shores, but now appears
A dashed sheet object, and submits to lie
As at the spectator's feet. — You sure ridge,
Is a permanent cloud? Or there
Is not beneath the base of Erin's coast?
Land navigated by the roving shepherd,

In depth, in height, in circuit.
The spectacle, how pure!
— Of Narr

In earth, and air, and earth-en
A revelation infinite it seems;
Display august of man's inher
Of Britain's calm felicity and

WRITTEN WITH A SALT CIL ON A STONE, ON THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB

1813. 1815

The circumstance alluded to at the
ception of these verses was told me
terthwaite, who was Incumbent of a
small town at the foot of Black Comb;
the particulars from one of the engi
was employed in making trigonome
vey of that region.

STAY, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy
limbs
On this commodious Seat! for much re
mains
Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
Of this huge Eminence, — from black
named,
And, to far-travelled storms of sea and
land,
A favourite spot of tournament and war!
But thee may no such boisterous visitants
Molest; may gentle breezes fan thy
brow;
And neither cloud conceal, nor misty
Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectac
From centre to circumference, unvel
ed!
Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy
rest,
That on the summit whither thou art bound,
A geographic Labourer pitched his tent;
With books supplied and instruments of
art,
To measure height and distance; lonely
ask,

Week after week pursued! — To him was
even

Full mar
stor
On timid it
That once, lighted
work
rage
Within than
which

stage
And the whole surface of the out-spread map,
Became invisible: for all around
Had darkness fallen — unthreatened, un-proclaimed —
As if the golden day itself had been
Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,
In which he sat alone, with unclosed eyes,
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

NOVEMBER 1813
1813. 1815
Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,
Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow

Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,
And lamentedly wrapt in twofold night,
Whom no weak hopes deceived; whose mind ensued,
Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
Peace that should claim respect from law-less Might.
Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray divine
To his forlorn condition! let thy grace
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine;
Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace
(Though it were only for a moment's space)
The triumphs of this hour; for they are
Thine!

THE EXCURSION
1795-1814. 1814

Something must now be said of this poem, but chiefly, as has been done through the whole of these notes, with reference to my personal friends, and especially to her who has perseveringly taken them down from my dictation. Towards the close of the first book stand the lines that were first written, beginning, "Nine tedious years," and ending, "Last human tenant of these ruined walls." These were composed in '95 at Racedown; and for several passages describing the employment and demeanour of Margaret during her affliction, I was indebted to observations made in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Alfoxden in Somersetshire, where I resided in '97 and '98. The lines towards the conclusion of the fourth book — beginning, "For, the man, who, in his spirit," to the words "intellectual soul" — were in order of time composed the next, either at Racedown or Alfoxden. I do not remember which. The rest of the poem was written in the vale of Grasmere, chiefly during our residence at Allan Bank. The long poem on my own education was, together with many minor poems, composed while we lived at the cottage at Townend. Perhaps my purpose of giving an additional interest to these my poems in the eyes of my nearest and dearest friends may be promoted by saying a few words upon the character of the Wanderer, the Solitary, and the Pastor, and some other of the persons introduced. And first, of the principal one, the Wanderer. My lamented friend Southey (for this is written a month after his decease) used to say that he had been born a papist, the course of life which would in all probability have been his was the one for which he was most fitted and most to his mind. — that of a Benedictine monk in a convent, furnished, as many once were and some still are, with an inexhaustible library. Books, as appears from many passages in his writings, and as was evident to those who had opportunities of observing his daily life, were in fact his passion; and wandering, I can with truth affirm, was mine; but this propensity in me was happily counteracted by the faculty from want of fortune to fulfil my wishes. But, had I been born in a class which would have deprived me of what is called a liberal education, it is not unlikely that, being strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my Pedlar passed the greater part of his days. At all events, I am here called upon freely to acknowledge that the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances. Nevertheless, much of what he says and does had an external existence that fell under my own youthful and subsequent observation. An individual named Patrick, by birth and education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years, and afterwards settled in the town of Kendal. He married a kinswoman of my wife's, and her sister Sarah was brought up from her ninth year under this good man's roof. My own imaginations I was happy to find clothed in reality, and fresh ones suggested, by what she reported of his man's tenderness of heart, his strong and pure imagination, and his solid attainments in literature, chiefly religious whether in prose or verse. At Hawkshead also, while I was a schoolboy, there occasionally resided a Packman (the name then generally given to persons of this calling)
with whom I had frequent conversations upon what had befallen him, and what he had observed during his wandering life; and, as was natural, we took much to each other: and, upon the subject of Pedlarism in general, as then followed, and its favourableness to an intimate knowledge of human concerns, not merely among the humbler classes of society, I need say nothing here in addition to what is to be found in the “Excursion,” and a note attached to it. Now for the Solitary. Of him I have much less to say. Not long after we took up our abode at Grassmere, came to reside there, from what motive I either never knew or have forgotten, a Scotchman little past the middle of life, who had for many years been chaplain to a Highland regiment. It was in no respect, as far as I know, an interesting character, though in his appearance there was a good deal that attracted attention, as if he had been shattered in fortune and not happy in mind. Of his quondam position I availed myself, to connect with the Wanderer, also a Scotchman, a character suitable to my purpose, the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may now say, Mr. Fawcett, a preacher at a dissenting meeting-house at the Old Jewry. It happened to me seven times to be one of his congregation through my connection with Mr. Nicholson of Cataton Street, who at that time, when I had not many acquaintances in London, used often to invite me to dine with him on Sundays; and I took that opportunity (Mr. N. being a dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man. He published a poem on war, which had a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I should otherwise have done. But Christianity was probably never very deeply rooted; and, like many others in those times of like showy talents, he had not strength of character to withstand the effects of the French Revolution, and of the wild and lax opinions which had done so much towards producing it, and far more in carrying it forward in its extremes. Poor Fawcett, I have been told, became very much such a person as I have described; and early disappeared from the stage, having fallen into habits of intemperance, which I have heard (though I will not answer for the fact) hastened his death. Of him I need say no more: there were many like him at that time, which the world will never be without, but which were more numerous then for reasons too obvious to be dwelt upon.

To what is said of the Pastor in the poem I have little to add, but what may be deemed superfluous. It has ever appeared to me highly favourable to the beneficial influence of the Church of England upon all gradations and classes of society, that the patronage of its benefices is in numerous instances attached to the estates of noble families of ancient gentry; and accordingly I am gratified by the opportunity afforded me in the “Excursion,” to portray the character of a country clergyman of more than ordinary talents, born and bred in the upper ranks of society so as to partake of their refinements, and at the same time brought by his pastoral office and his love of rural life into intimate connection with the peasantry of his native district. To illustrate the relation which in my mind this Pastor bore to the Wanderer, and the resemblance between them, or rather the points of community in their nature, I likened one to an oak and the other to a sycamore; and, having here referred to this comparison, I need only add, I had no one individual in my mind, wishing rather to embody this idea than to break in upon the simplicity of it, by traits of individual character or of any peculiarity of opinion.

And now for a few words upon the scene where these interviews and conversations are supposed to occur. The scene of the first book of the poem is, I must own, laid in a tract of country not sufficiently near to that which soon comes into view in the second book, to agree with the fact. All that relates to Margaret and the ruined cottage, etc., was taken from observations made in the south-west of England, and certainly it would require more than seven-leagued boots to stretch in one morning from a common in Somersetshire or Dorsetshire to the heights of Furness Fells and the deep valleys they embosom. For thus dealing with space I need make no apology, my friends may be amused by the truth. In the poem, I suppose that the Pedlar and I ascended from a plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the vale. We ascended the hill and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea-Tarn, chosen by the Solitary for his retreat. After we quit his cottage, passing over a low ridge we descend into another vale, that of Little Langdale, towards the head of which stands, embowered or partly shaded by yews and other trees, something between a cottage and a mansion or gentleman’s house such as they once were in this country. This I convert into the Parsonage, and at the same time, and as by the waving of a magic wand, I turn the comparatively confined vale of Langdale, its Tarn, and the rude chapel which once adorned the valley, into the stately and comparatively spacious vale of Grassmere, its Lake, and its ancient Parish Church; and upon the side of Loughrigg Fell, at the foot
of the Lake, and looking down upon it and the whole vale and its encompassing mountains, the Pastor is supposed by me to stand, when at sunset he addresses his companions in words which I hope my readers will remember, or I should not have taken the trouble of giving so much in detail the materials on which my mind actually worked. Now for a few particulars of fact respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters are described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here, that the lines beginning, “She was a woman of a steady mind,” faithfully delineate, as far as they go, the character possessed in common by many women whom it has been my happiness to know in humble life; and that several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying and doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses and trials under which different persons were suffering, some of them strangers to me, and others daily under my notice. I was born too late to have a distinct remembrance of the origin of the American war, but the state in which I represent Robert’s mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in ’93, opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the Female Vagrant as old in the poem on “Guilt and Sorrow.” The account given by the Solitary towards the close of the second book, in all that belongs to the character of the Old Man, was taken from a Grasmere pauper, who was boarded in the last house quitting the vale on the road to Ambleside: the character of his hostess, and all that befell the poor man upon the mountain, belong to Paterdale: the woman I knew well; her name was —— J ——, and she was exactly such a person as I describe. The ruins of the old chapel, among which the man was found lying, may yet be traced, and stood upon the ridge that divides Paterdale from Boardale and Martin-dale, having been placed there for the convenience of both districts. The glorious appearance disclosed above and among the mountains was described partly from what my friend Mr. Luff, who then lived in Paterdale, witnessed upon that melancholy occasion, and partly from what Mrs. Wordsworth and I had seen in company with Sir George and Lady Beaumont above Harts-hope Hall on our way from Paterdale to Ambleside.

And now for a few words upon the Church, its Monuments, and the Deceased who are spoken of as lying in the surrounding churchyard. But first for the one picture, given by the Pastor and the Wanderer, of the Living. In this nothing is introduced but what was taken from nature and real life. The cottage is called Hacket, and stands as described on the southern extremity of the ridge which separates the two Langdales: the pair who inhabited it were called Jonathan and Betty Yewdale. Once when our children were ill, of whooping-cough I think, we took them for change of air to this cottage, and were in the habit of going there to drink tea upon fine summer afternoons, so that we became intimately acquainted with the characters, habits, and lives of these good, and, let me say, in the main, wise people. The matron had, in her early youth, been a servant in a house at Hawkshead, where several boys boarded, while I was a schoolboy there. I did not remember her as having served in that capacity; but we had many little anecdotes to tell to each other of remarkable boys, incidents and adventures which had made a noise in their day in that small town. These two persons afterwards settled at Rydal, where they both died.

The church, as already noticed, is that of Grasmere. The interior of it has been improved lately — made warmer by under-drawing the roof and raising the floor — but the rude and antique majesty of its former appearance has been impaired by painting the rafters; and the oak benches, with a simple rail at the back dividing them from each other, have given way to seats that have more the appearance of pews. It is remarkable that, excepting only the pew belonging to Rydal Hall, that to Rydal Mount, the one to the Parsonage, and I believe another, the men and women still continue, as used to be the custom in Wales, to sit separate from each other. Is this practice as old as the Reformation? and when and how did it originate? In the Jewish synagogues and in Lady Huntingdon’s chapels the sexes are divided in the same way. In the adjoining churchyard greater changes have taken place. It is now not a little crowded with tombstones; and near the school-house which stands in the churchyard is an ugly structure, built to receive the hearse, which is recently come into use. It would not be worth while to alude to this building or the hearse-vehicle it contains, but that the latter has been the means of introducing a change much to be lamented in the mode of conducting funerals among the mountains. Now, the coffin is lodged in the hearse at the door of the house of the deceased, and the corpse is so conveyed to the churchyard gate: all the solemnity which formerly attended its progress, as described in the poem, is put an end to. So much do I regret this, that I beg to be excused for giving utterance here to a wish that, should it befall me to die at Rydal Mount, my own body may be carried to Grasmere church after the manner in which, till lately, that of every one was borne to that place of sepulture, namely, on the shoulders of neighbours, no
house being passed without some words of a funeral psalm being sung at the time by the attendants. When I put into the mouth of the Wanderer, "Many precious rites and customs of our rural ancestry are gone or stealing from us; this I hope will last for ever," and what follows, little did I foresee that the observance and mode of proceeding, which had often affected me so much, would so soon be superseded. Having said much of the injury done to this churchyard, let me add that one is at liberty to look forward to a time when, by the growth of the yew-trees, thriving there, a solemnity will be spread over the place that will in some degree make amends for the old simple character which has already been so much encroached upon, and will be still more every year. I will here set down, more at length, what has been mentioned in a previous note, that my friend Sir George Beaumont, having long ago purchased the beautiful piece of water called Loughrigg Tarn, on the Banks of which he intended to build, I told him that a person in Kendal who was attached to the place wished to purchase it. Sir George, finding the possession of no use to him, consented to part with it, and placed the purchase-money—twenty pounds—at my disposal for any local use which I thought proper. Accordingly I resolved to plant yew-trees in the churchyard, and had four pretty strong large oak enclosures made, in each of which was planted, under my own eye, and principally if not entirely by my own hand, two young trees, with the intention of leaving one that thrives best to stand. Many years after Mr. Barber, who will long be remembered in Grasmere; Mr. Greenwood, the chief landed proprietor; and myself, had four other enclosures made in the churchyard at our own expense, in each of which was planted a tree taken from its neighbour, and they all stand thriving admirably; the fences having been removed as no longer necessary. May the trees be taken care of hereafter when we are all gone, and some of them will perhaps at some far distant time rival in majesty the yew of Lorton and those which I have described as growing in Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage.

And now for the persons that are selected as lying in the churchyard. But first for the individual whose grave is prepared to receive him. His story is here truly related: he was a schoolfellow of mine for some years. He came to us when he was at least seventeen years of age, very tall, robust, and full-grown. This prevented him from falling into the amusements and games of the school; consequently he gave more time to books. He was not remarkably bright or quick, but by industry he made a progress more than respectable. His parents not being wealthy enough to send him to college, when he left Hawkshead he became a schoolmaster, with a view to prepare himself for holy orders. About this time he fell in love as related in the poem, and everything followed as there described, except that I do not know when and where he died. The number of youths that came to Hawkshead school, from the families of the humble yeomanry, to be educated to a certain degree of scholarship as a preparation for the church, was considerable, and the fortunes of these persons in after life various of course, and of some not a little remarkable. I have now one of this class in my eye who became an usher in a preparatory school and ended in making a large fortune. His manners when he came to Hawkshead were as uncounted as well could be; but he had good abilities, with skill to turn them to account; and when the master of the school, to which he was usher, died, he stepped into his place and became proprietor of the establishment. He contrived to manage it with such address, and so much to the taste of what is called high society and the fashionable world, that no school of the kind, even till he retired, was in such high request. Ministers of state, the wealthiest gentry, and nobility of the first rank, vied with each other in bespeaking a place for their sons in the seminary of this fortunate teacher. In the solitude of Grasmere, while living as a married man in a cottage of eight pounds per annum rent, I often used to smile at the tales which reached me of his brilliant career. Not two hundred yards from the cottage in Grasmere, just mentioned, to which I retired, this gentleman, who many years afterwards purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, is now erecting a boat-house, with an upper story, to be resorted to as an entertaining room when he and his associates may feel inclined to take their pastime on the lake. Every passenger will be disgruntled with the sight of this edifice, not merely as a tasteless thing in itself, but as utterly out of place, and peculiarly fitted, as far as it is observed (and it detrudes itself on notice at every point of view), to mar the beauty and destroy the pastoral simplicity of the vale. For my own part and that of my household it is our utter detestation standing by a shore to which, before the highroad was made to pass that way, we used daily and hourly to repair for seclusion and for the shelter of a grove under which I composed many of my poems, the "Brothers" especially, and for this reason we gave the grove that name.

"That which each man loved
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him, or is changed."
too much for my old school-fellow and his exploits. I will only add that the foundation has failed, from the lake no doubt being intolerant of the intrusion.

The Miner, next described, having found his treasure after twice ten years of labour, lived at Waterdale, and the story is true to the letter. It seems to me, however, rather remarkable that strength of mind which had supported him through this long unrewarded labour did not enable him to bear its successful issue. Several times in the course of my life I have heard of sudden infusions of great wealth being followed by derangement, and in one instance the shock good fortune was so great as to produce absolute idiozy: but these all happened where there had been little or no previous effort to acquire the riches, and therefore such a consequence right the more naturally be expected than in the case of the solitary Miner. In reviewing his story, one cannot but regret that such perseverance was not sustained by a worthier object. 

The next character, to whom the Priest is led by contrast with the resoluteness displayed by the going, is taken from a person born and bred in Grasmere, by name Dawson; and whose merits, disposition, and way of life were such as are here delineated. I did not know him, but I was fresh in memory when we settled at Grasmere in the beginning of the century. From this point, the conversation leads to the mention of two individuals who, by their several antipathies, were at different times, driven to take refuge at the small and obscure town of Hawkshead on the skirt of these mountains. Their stories I had from the dear old dame with whom, as a schoolboy and afterwards, I lodged for nearly the space of ten years. The elder, the cobite, was named Drummond, and was of a high family in Scotland: the Hanoverian Whig was the name of Vapentude, and might perhaps be a descendant of some Dutchman who had come over in the train of King William. At all events his zeal was such that he ruined himself in a contest for the representation of London or Westminster, undertaken to support his party; and retired to this corner of the world, selected, as it had been by Drummond, for that obscurity, since the Lakes became fashionable, it has no longer retained. So much was this region considered out of the way till a late period, that persons who had fled from justice used to resort hither for concealment; and some were so bold as to, not infrequently, make excursions from the place of their retreat, for the purpose of committing fresh offences. Such, particularly the case with two brothers of the name of Weston who took up their abode at Ambleside, I think about seventy years ago. They were highwaymen, and lived there sometime without being discovered, though it was known that they often disappeared in a way and for errands which could not be accounted for. Their horses were noticed as being of a choice breed, and I have heard from the Relph family, one of whom was a saddler in the town of Kendal, that they were curious in their saddles and housings and accoutrements of their horses. They, as I have heard, and as was universally believed, were in the end both taken and hanged.

"Tall was her stature; her complexion dark
And saturnine."

This person lived at Town-end, and was almost our next neighbour. I have little to notice concerning her beyond what is said in the poem. She was a most striking instance how far a woman may surpass in talent, in knowledge, and culture of mind, those with whom she lives, and yet fall below them in Christian virtues of the heart and spirit. It seemed almost, and I say it with grief, that in proportion as she excelled in the one, she failed in the other. How frequently has one to observe in both sexes the same thing, and how mortifying is the reflection!

"As, on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March."

The story that follows was told to Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister by the sister of this unhappy young woman; and every particular was exactly as I have related. The party was not known to me, though she lived at Hawkshead, but it was after I left school. The clergyman, who administered comfort to her in her distress, I knew well. Her sister who told the story was the wife of a leading yeoman in the vale of Grasmere, and they were an affectionate pair and greatly respected by every one who knew them. Neither lived to be old; and their estate — which was perhaps the most considerable then in the vale, and was endeared to them by many remembrances of a salutary character not easily understood, or sympathised with, by those who are born to great affluence — passed to their eldest son, according to the practice of these vales, who died soon after he came into possession. He was an amiable and promising youth, but was succeeded by an only brother, a good-natured man, who fell into habits of drinking, by which he gradually reduced his property; and the other day the last acre of it was sold, and his wife and children
and he himself, still surviving, have very little left to live upon, which it would not perhaps have been worth while to record here but that, through all trials, this woman has proved a model of patience, meekness, affectionate forbearance, and forgiveness. Their eldest son, who, through the vicissitudes of his life, has thus been robbed of an ancient family inheritance, was never heard to murmur or complain against the cause of their distress, and is now (1843) deservedly the object of his mother’s hopes.

The clergyman and his family described at the beginning of the seventh book were, don many years, our principal associates in the vale of Grasmere, unless I were to except our nearest neighbours. I have entered so particularly into the main points of their history, that will barely testify in prose that—with the single exception of the particulars of their joint to Grasmere, which, however, was exactly copied from in another instance—the whole that have said of them is as faithful to the truth as words can make it. There was much talent in the family: the eldest son was distinguished for poetical talent, of which a specimen is given in my notes to the sonnets to the Duddon. Once, when in our cottage at Town-end I was talking with him about poetry, in the course of conversation I presumed to find fault with the version of Pope, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer: he defended him with a warmth that indicated much irritation: nevertheless I would not abandon my point, and said, “In scope and variety of sound your own versification surpasses his.” Never shall I forget the change he put on my countenance and tone of voice: the storm was laid in a moment; he no longer disputed my judgment, and I passed immediately in his mind, no doubt, for as great a critic as ever lived. I sought to add, he was a clergyman and a well-educated man, and his verbal memory was most remarkable of any individual I have known, except a Mr. Archer, an Irishman, who had several years in this neighbourhood, and who, in this faculty, was a prodigy; he afterwards came deranged, and I fear continues so, if alive. Then follows the character of Robert Walra for which see notes to the Duddon. Then that of the deaf man, whose epitaph may be seen in the churchyard at the head of Haweswater, and whose qualifications of mind and heart, and the benign influence in conjunction with his privation, I had from his relatives on the spot. The blind man, next commemorated, was John Gough, of Kendal, a man known, far beyond his neighbourhood, for his talents and attainments in natural history and science. Of the last grave, next noticed, I will only say, it is an exact picture of what fell under my own observation; and all persons who are intimately acquainted with cottage life must often have observed like instances of the working of the domestic affections.

“A volley thrice repeated o’er the corpse
Let down into the hollow of that grave.”

This young volunteer bore the name of Dawson, and was younger brother, if I am not mistaken, to the prodigal of whose character and fortunes an account is given towards the beginning of the preceding book. The father of the family I knew well; he was a man of literary education and experience in society much beyond what was common among the inhabitants of the vale. He had lived a good while in the Highlands of Scotland, as a manager of iron-works at Bunaw. He had acted as clerk to one of my predecessors in the office of Distributor of Stamps, when he used to travel round the country collecting and bringing home the money due to Government. His gold, which, it may be worth while to mention for the sake of my friends, was deposited in a cell or iron closet under the west window of the long room at Rydal Mount, which still exists, with the iron doors that guarded the property. This of course was before the time of Bills of Notes. The two sons of this person had no doubt been led by the knowledge of their father’s to take more delight in scholarship, and had been accustomed in their own minds to take a wide view of social interests than was usual among their associates. The premature death of the gallant young man was much lamented, and, as an attendant at the funeral, I myself witnessed the ceremony and the effect of it as described in the poem.

“Tradition tells
That in Eliza’s golden days, a Knight
Came on a war-horse.”

“The house is gone.”

The pillars of the gateway in front of the mansion remained when we first took up our abode in Grasmere. Two or three cottages still remain, which are called Knott-houses from the name of the gentleman (I have called him a knight) concerning whom these traditions survive. He was the ancestor of the Knott family, formerly considerable proprietors in the district. What follows in the discourse of the Wanderer upon the changes he had witnessed in rural life, by the introduction of machinery, is truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth, and from what was often told me by persons of this humble calling. Happily, most hap
THE EXCURSION

for these mountains, the mischief was diverted from the banks of their beautiful streams, transferred to open and flat countries abounding in coal, where the agency of steam was much more effectual for carrying on those demoralising works. Had it not been for this opinion, long before the present time every torrent and river in this district would have had a commanded. Parliament has interfered to prevent the night-work which was once carried on in these mills as actively as during the daytime, and by necessity still more perriciously—a disgrace to the proprietors, and to the nation which could so long tolerate such unnatural seedings. Reviewing at this late period, 1843, what I put into the mouths of my interlocutors a few years after the commencement of the century, I grieve that so little progress has been made in diminishing the evils deplored, or promoting the benefits of education which the Wandering anticipates. The results of Lord Ashley's labours to defer the time when children might be allowed to work in factories, and his endeavours to limit still farther the hours of peace labour, have fallen far short of his own humane wishes, and those of every benevolent right-minded man who has carefully attended to this subject: and in the present session of Parliament (1843) Sir James Graham's attempt to establish a course of religious education among children employed in factories has been abandoned, in consequence of what might easily have been foreseen, the vehement and turbulent opposition of the Dissenters: so that, for many years, it may be thought expedient to leave the religious instruction of children entirely in the hands of the several denominations of Christians in the island, each body to work according to own means and in its own way. Such is my own confidence, a confidence I share with many others of my most valued friends, in the superior advantages, both religious and social, which are derived from their instruction presided over and guided by the clergy of the Church of England, but I have no doubt that, if but once its members, lay and clerical, were duly sensible of those advices, their church would daily gain ground, and rapidly, upon every shape and fashion of present, and in that case, a great majority in Parliament being sensible of these benefits, the interests of the country might be emboldened, were it necessary, to apply funds of the State to support of education on Church principles. Before I conclude, I cannot forbear noticing the generous efforts made at this time in Parliament, by so many persons, to extend manufacturing and commercial industry at the expense of agricultural, though we have recently had abundant proofs that the apprehensions expressed by the Wanderer were not groundless.

"I spoke of mischief by the wise diffused With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads The healthier, the securer, we become — Delusion which a moment may destroy!"

The Chartists are well aware of this possibility, and cling to it with an ardour and perseverance which nothing but wiser and more brotherly dealing towards the many, on the part of the wealthy few, can moderate or remove.

"While, from the grassey mountain's open side, We gazed, in silence hushed."

The point here fixed upon in my imagination is half-way up the northern side of Loughrigg Fell, from which the Pastor and his companions were supposed to look upwards to the sky and mountains-tops, and round the vale, with the lake lying immediately beneath them.

"But turned not without welcome promises made, That he would share the pleasures and pursuits Of yet another summer's day, consumed In wandering with us."

When I reported this promise of the Solitary, and long after, it was my wish, and I might say intention, that we should resume our wanderings, and pass the Borders into his native country, here, as I hoped, he might witness, in the society of the Wanderer, some religious ceremony—a sacrament, say, in the open fields, or a preaching among the mountains—which, by recalling to his mind the days of his early childhood, when he had been present on such occasions in company with his parents and nearest kindred, might have dissolved his heart into tenderness, and so have done more towards restoring the Christian faith in which he had been educated, and, with that, contentedness and even cheerfulness of mind, than all that the Wanderer and Pastor, by their several effusions and addresses, had been able to effect. An issue like this was in my intentions. But, alas!

"Mid the wreck of is and was, Things incomplete and purposes betrayed Make sadder transit o'er thought's optic glass Than noblest objects utterly decayed!"
To the Right Hon.
William, Earl of Lonsdale, K. G.
Etc. Etc.

Oft, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer!
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent;
And muse in rocky cell or sylvan tent,
Beside swift-flowing Lount's current clear.
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear
Before thee, Lonsdale, and this Work present,
A token (may it prove a monument!)
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.
Gladly would I have waited till my task
Had reached its close; but Life is insecure,
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream:
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask
Thy favour; trusting that thou wilt not deem
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

William Wordsworth.

Rydal Mount, Westmoreland,
July 20, 1814.

Preface to the Edition of 1814
The Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts. — The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which "The Excursion" is a part, derives its Title of "The Recluse." — Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intelect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society; and is entitled, "The Recluse"; as having for principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement. — The preparation of the poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, it may be permitted to add, that his two Pieces, which have been long before the Public when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have a connection with the main Work as may of them claim to be likened to the little oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarly included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed him justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labours bestowed upon either part of the whole Works entitles his candid attention for such a statement as thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to be fit his countrymen. — Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of "The Recluse" will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person; and in the intermediate part ("The Excursion") the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system; it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if it shall succeed in conveying to the mind the thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings of the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the means the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of "The Recluse," may be acceptable as a kind of Prospectus of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

[See "The Recluse," page 231, lines 7580, for the Prospectus.]

Book First
The Wanderer

Argument
A summer forenoon — The Author rests a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer.
But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.
There was he seen upon the cottage-bench,
Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep;
An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before—alone
And stationed in the public way, with face
Turned toward the sun then setting, while
that staff
Afforded, to the figure of the man
Detained for contemplation or repose,
Graceful support; his countenance as he stood
Was hidden from my view, and he reained
Unrecognised; but, stricken by the sight,
With slackened footsteps I advanced, and soon
A glad congratulation we exchanged
At such unthought-of meeting.—For the night
We parted, nothing willingly; and now
He by appointment waited for me here,
Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends: amid a pleasant vale,
In the antique market-village where was passed
My school-time, an apartment he had owned,
To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,
And found a kind of home or harbour there.

He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys
Singled out me, as he in sport would say,
For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years.
As I grew up, it was my best delight
To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,
On holidays, we rambled through the woods:
We sate—wes walked; he pleased me with report
Of things which he had seen; and often touched
Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind
Turned inward; or at my request would sing
Old songs, the product of his native hills;
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
As cool refreshing water, by the care
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused
Through a parched meadow-ground, in
time of drought.
Still deeper welcome found his pure dis-
course;
How precious, when in riper days I learned
To weigh with care his words, and to re-
joice
In the plain presence of his dignity!

Oh! many are the Poets that are sown
By Nature; men endowed with highest
gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine;
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
(Which, in the docile season of their youth,
It was denied them to acquire, through
lack
Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,
Or haphazard by a temper too severe,
Or a backwardness afraid of shame)
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led
By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these favoured
Beings,
All but a scattered few, live out their time,
Husbanding that which they possess within,
And go to the grave, unhought of. Strong-
est minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least; else surely this Man had not
left
His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.
But, as the mind was filled with inward
light,
So not without distinction had he lived,
Beloved and honoured — far as he was
known.
And some small portion of his eloquent
speech,
And something that may serve to set in
view
The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
His observations, and the thoughts his
mind
Had dealt with — I will here record in verse;
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink
Or rise as venerable Nature leads,
The high and tender Muses shall accept
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
And listening Time reward with sacred
praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born;
Where, on a small hereditary farm,
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
His Parents, with their numerous off-
dwell;
A virtuous household, though excep-
poor!
Pure livers were they all, austere and gra-
And fearing God; the very children bar
Stern self-respect, a reverence for God
word,
And an habitual piety, maintained
With strictness scarcely known on Eng-
ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom
speak,
In summer, tended cattle on the hills;
But, through the inclement and the peril-
days
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,
Equipped with satchel, to a school, stood
Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge
Remote from view of city spire, or son
Of minster clock! From that bleak ten-
ment
He, many an evening, to his distant hom
In solitude returning, saw the hills
Grow larger in the darkness; all alone
Beheld the stars come out above his head
And travelled through the wood, with
one near
To whom he might confess the things
saw.

So the foundations of his mind were li
In such communion, not from terror free
While yet a child, and long before his tis
Had he perceived the presence and
power
Of greatness; and deep feelings had en
pressed
So vividly great objects that they lay
Upon his mind like substances, what
presence
Perplexed the bodily sense. He had re
ceived
A precious gift; for, as he grew in year
With these impressions would he be
compare
All his remembrances, thoughts, shap
and forms;
And, being still unsatisfied with aught
Of dimmer character, he then attaine
An active power to fasten images
Upon his brain; and on their pictured li
Intensely brooded, even till they acquir
he liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail, 150
while yet a child, with a child's eagerness
necessarily to turn his ear and eye in all things which the moving seasons brought.

Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power
Of Nature, and already was prepared,
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he, Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught
To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy — but for the growing Youth
What soul was his, when, from the naked top
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked —
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay Beneath him: — Far and wide the clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces could he read Unutterable love. Sound needed none, Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank
The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form, All melted into him; they swallowed up His animal being; in them did he live, 209
And by them did he live; they were his life. In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God, Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;

Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power That made him; it was blessedness and love!

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain tops, 219
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence oftentimes possessed. O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared
The written promise! Early had he learned To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die; But in the mountains did he feel his faith.
All things, responsive to the writing, there Breathed immortality, revolving life, And greatness still revolving; infinite:
There littleness was not; the least of things Seemed infinite; and there his spirit shaped Her prospects, nor did he believe, — he saw. What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place; yet was
his heart
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,
And whence they flowed; and from them
he acquired
Wisdom, which works through patience;
thence he learned
In oft-recurring hours of sober thought 240
To look on Nature with a humble heart.
Self-questioned where it did not understand,
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time; yet to the nearest
town
He duly went with what small overplus
His earnings might supply, and brought
away
The book that most had tempted his desires
While at the stall he read. Among the hills
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,
The annual savings of a toilsome life, 251
His Schoolmaster supplied; books that
explain
The purer elements of truth involved
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,
(Especially perceived where nature droops
And feeling is suppressed) preserve the
mind
Busy in solitude and poverty.
These occupations oftentimes deceived
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf
In pensive idleness. What could he do, 261
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,
With blind endeavours? Yet, still upper-
most,
Nature was at his heart as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting
power
In all things that from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with
her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he lingered in the rudiments 270
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His triangles — they were the stars of
heaven,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure the altitude of some tall crag
That is the eagle’s birth-place, or some
peak
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows,
Inscribed upon its visionary sides,
The history of many a winter storm,
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year we
told,
Accumulated feelings pressed his heart
With still increasing weight; he was o’er-
powered
By Nature; by the turbulence subdued
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
And the first virgin passion of a soul
Communing with the glorious universe.
Full often wished he that the winds might
rage
When they were silent: far more fondly
now
Than in his earlier season did he love
Tempestuous nights — the conflict and the
sounds
That live in darkness. From his intellect
And from the stillness of abstracted thought
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win
The peace required, he scanned the laws of
light
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist that, smitten by the sun,
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent
thought,
Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,
And every moral feeling of his soul
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in
content
The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,
And drinking from the well of homely life.
— But, from past liberty, and tried re-
straints,
He now was summoned to select the course
Of humble industry that promised best 310
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.
Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach
A village-school — but wandering thoughts
were then
A misery to him; and the Youth resigned
A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who con-
strains
The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,
No piteous revolutions had he felt,
No wild varieties of joy and grief.
Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
His heart lay open; and, by nature tuned
And constant disposition of his thoughts
To sympathy with man, he was alive
To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,
And all that was endured; for, in himself
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
He had no painful pressure from without
That made him turn aside from wretchedness
With coward fears. He could afford to suffer
With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came
That in our best experience he was rich,
And in the wisdom of our daily life.
For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,
He had observed the progress and decay
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too;
The history of many families;
How they had prospered; how they were o'erthrown
By passion or mischance, or such misrule
Among the unthinking masters of the earth
As makes the nations groan.
This active course
He followed till provision for his wants
Had been obtained; — the Wanderer then resolved
To pass the remnant of his days, untasked
With needless services, from hardship free.
His calling laid aside, he lived at ease:
But still he loved to pace the public roads
And the wild paths; and, by the summer's warmth
Invited, often would he leave his home
And journey far, revisiting the scenes
That to his memory were most endeared.
— Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits, undampfed
By worldly-mindedness or anxious care;
Observant, studious, thoughtful, and refreshed
By knowledge gathered up from day to day;
Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself and those
With whom from childhood he grew up,
had held
The strong hand of her purity; and still
Had watched him with an unrelenting eye.
This he remembered in his riper age
With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.
But by the native vigour of his mind,
By his habitual wanderings out of doors,
By loneliness, and goodness, and kind
works,
Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,
He had imbied of fear or darker thought
Was melted all away; so true was this,
That sometimes his religion seemed to me
Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods;
Who to the model of his own pure heart
Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,
And human reason dictated with awe.
— And surely never did there live on earth
A man of kindlier nature. The rough
sports
And teasing ways of children vexed not
him;
Indulgent listener was he to the tongue
Of garrulous age; nor did the sick man's
tale,
To his fraternal sympathy addressed,
Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb;
Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared
For sabbath duties; yet he was a man
Whom no one could have passed without
remark.
Active and nervous was his gait; his limbs
And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
Time had compressed the freshness of his
cheek
Into a narrower circle of deep red,
But had not tamed his eye; that, under
brows
Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it
brought
From years of youth; which, like a Being
made
Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill
To blend with knowledge of the years to
come,
Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed; and such his course
of life
Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
The prized memorial of relinquished toils,
Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,
Screened from the sun. Supine the Wan-
derer lay,
His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,
The shadows of the breezy elms above
Dapping his face. He had not heard a
sound
Of my approaching steps, and in the shade
Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' span.
At length I hailed him, seeing that his

Was moist with water-drops, as if the

Had newly scooped a running stream. I
rose,
And ere our lively greeting into peace
Had settled, "'Twis," said I, "a burnish
day:
My lips are parched with thirst, but you
seems
Have somewhere found relief." He, at the
word,
Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me
climb
The fence where that aspiring shrub looks
out
Upon the public way. It was a plot
Of garden ground run wild, its main
weeds
Marked with the steps of those, whom, as
they passed,
The gooseberry trees that shot in long lar
alips,
Or currants, hanging from their leafy
stems,
In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erlap
The broken wall. I looked around, as
there,
Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder
boughs
Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a wel
Shrouded with willow-flowers and plus
fern.
My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerful
spot
Withdrawing, straightway to the shade re
turned
Where sate the old Man on the cottage
bench;
And, while, beside him, with uncovered
head,
I yet was standing, freely to respire,
And cool my temples in the fanning air,
Thus did he speak. "I see around here
Things which you cannot see: we die, s
Friend,
Nor we alone, but that which each we
loved
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him, or is changed; and we
soon
I speak," continued he, "of One whose stock
Of virtues bloomed beneath this lonely roof.
She was a Woman of a steady mind,
Tender and deep in her excess of love;
Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy
Of her own thoughts: by some especial care
Her temper had been framed, as if to make
A Being, who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness.
Her wedded Partner lacked not on his side
The humble worth that satisfied her heart:
Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
Keenly industrious. She with pride would tell
That he was often seated at his loom,
In summer, ere the mower was abroad
Among the dewy grass,— in early spring,
Ere the last star had vanished. — They who passed
At evening, from behind the garden fence
Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,
After his daily work, until the light
Had failed, and every leaf and flower were lost
In the dark hedges. So their days were spent
In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy
Was their best hope, next to the God in heaven.

Not twenty years ago, but you I think
Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came
Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left
With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add
A worse affliction in the plague of war:
This happy Land was stricken to the heart!
A Wandering then among the cottages,
I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
The hardships of that season: many rich
Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor;
And of the poor did many cease to be,
And their place knew them not. Meanwhile, abridged
Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
To numerous self-denials, Margaret
Went struggling on through those calamitous years  
With cheerful hope, until the second autumn,  
When her life’s Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,  
Smitten with perilous fever. In disease  
He lingered long; and, when his strength returned,  
He found the little he had stored, to meet  
The hour of accident or crippling age,  
Was all consumed. A second infant now  
Was added to the troubles of a time  
Laden, for them and all of their degree,  
With care and sorrow; shoals of artisans  
From ill-requited labour turned adrift  
Sought daily bread from public charity,  
They, and their wives and children — happier far  
Could they have lived as do the little birds  
That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite  
That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks!

A sad reverse it was for him who long  
Had filled with plenty, and possessed in peace,  
This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,  
And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes  
That had no mirth in them; or with his knife  
Carved uncouth figures on the beads of sticks—  
Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook  
In house or garden, any casual work  
Of use or ornament; and with a strange,  
Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty,  
He mingled, where he might, the various tasks  
Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring. But this endured not; his good humour  
Soon became a weight in which no pleasure was:  
And poverty brought on a petted mood  
And a sore temper: day by day he drooped,  
And he would leave his work — and to the town  
Would turn without an errand his slack stepes;  
Or wander here and there among the fields.  
One while he would speak lightly of his babes,  
And with a cruel tongue: at other times  
He tossed them with a false unnatural jest  
And ’t was a rueful thing to see the look  
Of the poor innocent children. ‘Ew smile,’  
Said Margaret to me, here beneath the trees,  
‘Made my heart bleed.’  
At this the Wanderer paused  
And, looking up to those enormous elms,  
He said, “’Tis now the hour of deep noon.  
At this still season of repose and peace,  
This hour when all things which are not rest  
Are cheerful; while this multitude of the  
With tuneful hum is filling all the air;  
Why should a tear be on an old Man’s cheek?  
Why should we thus, with an untamed mind,  
And in the weakness of humanity,  
From natural wisdom turn our hearts away  
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears  
And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb  
The calm of nature with our restless thoughts?”

HE spake with somewhat of a solemn tone;  
But, when he ended, there was in his face  
Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,  
That for a little time it stole away  
All recollection; and that simple tale  
Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound.  
A while on trivial things we held discourse  
To me soon tasteless. In my own despairs  
I thought of that poor Woman as of one  
Whom I had known and loved. He rehearsed  
Her homely tale with such familiar power  
With such an active countenance, an eye  
So busy, that the things of which he spake  
Seemed present; and, attention now relaxed,  
A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins:  
I rose; and, having left the breezy shade,  
Stood drinking comfort from the warm sun;  
That had not cheered me long — ere, loitering round  
Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,  
And begged of the old Man that, for my sake,  
He would resume his story.
He replied,
It were a wantonness, and would demand
were reproach, if we were men whose
hearts
could hold vain dalliance with the misery
ven of the dead; contented thence to
draw
momentary pleasure, never marked 630
y reason, barren of all future good.
but we have known that there is often
found
a mournful thoughts, and always might
be found,
poetry to virtue friendly; were 't not so,
an idle dreamer! 'T is a common tale,
an ordinary sorrow of man's life,
tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
bodily form. — But without further
bidding 639
will proceed.
While thus it fared with them,
whom this cottage, till those hapless
years,
I had been a blessed home, it was my chance
travel in a country far remote;
And when these lofty elms once more appeared,
What pleasant expectations lured me on
O'er the flat Common! — With quick step
I reached
the threshold, lifted with light hand the
latch;
But, when I entered, Margaret looked at
me
A little while; then turned her head away
Speechless, — and, sitting down upon a
chair,
Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch!
at last
She rose from off her seat, and then, — O
Sir!
I cannot tell how she pronounced my
name: —
With fervent love, and with a face of grief
Utterably helpless, and a look
That seemed to cling upon me, she en-
quired
If I had seen her husband. As she spoke
A strange surprise and fear came to my
heart,
Nor had I power to answer ere she told 650
That he had disappeared — not two months
gone.

He left his house: two wretched days had
past,
And on the third, as wistfully she raised
Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,
Like one in trouble, for returning light,
Within her chamber-casement she espied
A folded paper, lying as if placed
To meet her waking eyes. This trem-
blingly
She opened — found no writing, but beheld
Pieces of money carefully enclosed, 670
Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the
ight,'

Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand
That must have placed it there; and ere
that day
Was ended, that long anxious day, I
learned,
From one who by my husband had been
sent
With the sad news, that he had joined a
troop
Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
— He left me thus — he could not gather
heart
To take a farewell of me; for he feared
That I should follow with my babes, and
sink 680
Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

This tale did Margaret tell with many
tears:
And, when she ended, I had little power
To give her comfort, and was glad to take
Such words of hope from her own mouth
as served
To cheer us both. But long we had not
talked
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
And with a brighter eye she looked around
As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
We parted. — 'T was the time of early
spring;
690
I left her busy with her garden tools;
And well remember, o'er that fence she
looked,
And, while I paced along the foot-way path,
Called out, and sent a blessing after me,
With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice
That seemed the very sound of happy
thoughts.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,
With my accustomed load; in heat and
cold,
Through many a wood and many an open ground,
In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall;
My best companions now the driving winds,
And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,
And now the music of my own sad steps,
With many a short-lived thought that passed between,
And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,
When, in the warmth of midsummer, the wheat
Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass,
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field spread
Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,
I found that she was absent. In the shade,
Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
Its customary look, — only, it seemed,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
Hung down in heavier tufts; and that bright weed,
The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take root
Along the window's edge, profusely grew,
Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,
And strolled into her garden. It appeared
To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and thistles,
Had broken their trim border-lines, and straggled
O'er paths they used to deck: carnations, once
Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less
For the peculiar pains they had required,
Declined their languid heads, wanting support.
The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells,
Had twined about her two small rows of peas,
And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour
Was wasted. — Back I turned my restless steps;
A stranger passed; and, guessing whom I sought,
He said that she was used to ramble far. —
The sun was sinking in the west; and now

I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary infant cried aloud;
Then, like a blast that dies away self-stilled,
The voice was silent. From the bench I rose;
But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.
The spot, though fair, was very desolate —
The longer I remained, more desolate: 74
And, looking round me, now I first observed
The corner stones, on either side the porch,
With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck o'er
With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep,
That fed upon the Common, thither came
Familiarly, and found a couching-place.
Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell
From these tall elms; the cottage-clock struck eight; —
I turned, and saw her distant a few steps.
Her face was pale and thin — her figure, too,
Was changed. As she unlocked the door,
she said,
'It grieves me you have waited here so long,
But, in good truth, I've wandered much of late;
And sometimes — to my shame I speak — have need
Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'
While on the board she spread our evening meal,
She told me — interrupting not the work
Which gave employment to her listless hands —
That she had parted with her elder child,
To a kind master on a distant farm 76
Now happily apprenticed. — 'I perceive,
You look at me, and you have cause; to-day
I have been travelling far; and many days
About the fields I wander, knowing this
Only, that what I seek I cannot find;
And so I waste my time: for I am changed;
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong
And to this helpless infant. I have slept
Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my tears
Have flowed as if my body were not such
As others are; and I could never die.
I returned, and took my rounds along this road again
When on its sunny bank the primrose flower
Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the Spring.
I found her sad and drooping: she had learned
No tidings of her husband; if he lived,
She knew not that he lived; if he were dead,
She knew not he was dead. She seemed the same
In person and appearance; but her house
Bespeake a sleepy hand of negligence;
The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth
Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,
Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore
Had been piled up against the corner panes
In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves
Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,
As they had chanced to fall. Her infant Babe
Had from his Mother caught the trick of grief,
And sighed among its playthings. I withdrew,
And once again entering the garden saw,
More plainly still, that poverty and grief
Were now come nearer to her: weeds defaced
The hardened soil, and knots of withered grass:
No ridges there appeared of clear black mould,
No winter greenness; of her herbs and flowers,
It seemed the better part was gnawed away
Or trampled into earth; a chain of straw,
Which had been twined about the slender stem
Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root;
The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
—Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
And, noting that my eye was on the tree,
She said, ‘I fear it will be dead and gone.
Ere Robert come again.’ When to the House
We had returned together, she enquired
If I had any hope: — but for her babe
And for her little orphan boy, she said,
She had no wish to live, that she must die
Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
Still in its place; his Sunday garments
hung
Upon the self-same nail; his very staff
Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,
In bleak December, I retraced this way,
She told me that her little babe was dead,
And she was left alone. She now, released
From her maternal cares, had taken up
The employment common through these
wills, and gained,
By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself;
And for this end had hired a neighbour's
boy
To give her needful help. That very
time
Most willingly she put her work aside,
And walked with me along the miry road,
Needless how far; and, in such piteous
sort
That any heart had ached to hear her,
begged
That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
For him whom she had lost. We parted
then —
Our final parting; for from that time forth
Did many seasons pass ere I returned
Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years;
From their first separation, nine long years,
She lingered in unquiet widowhood;
A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have been
A sore heart-wasting! I have heard, my
Friend,
That in your arbour oftentimes she sat
Alone, through half the vacant sabbath
day;
And, if a dog passed by, she still would quit
The shade, and look abroad. On this old
bench
For hours she sat; and evermore her eye
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick. You see
that path,
Now faint, — the grass has crept o'er its
grey line;
There, to and fro, she paced through many
a day
Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp

That girt her waist, spinning the
drawn thread
With backward steps. Yet ever as she passed
A man whose garments showed the
red,
Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
The little child who sate to turn the wheel
Ceased from his task; and she with
issing voice
Made many a fond enquiry; and when
Whose presence gave no comfort, she
went by,
Her heart was still more sad. And by
gate,
That bars the traveller's road, she stood,
And when a stranger horseman came,
latch
Would lift, and in his face look wistful
Most happy, if, from aught discern
there
Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
The same sad question. Meanwhile
poor Hut
Sank to decay; for he was gone, in
hand,
At the first nipping of October frost,
Closed up each chink, and with fresh
straw
Chequered the green-grown thatch. A
so she lived
Through the long winter, reckless
alone;
Until her house by frost, and that
rain,
Was sapped; and while she slept,
nightly damps
Did chill her breast; and in the star
day
Her tattered clothes were ruffled by
wind,
Even at the side of her own fire,
still
She loved this wretched spot, nor would
worlds
Have parted hence; and still that length
road,
And this rude bench, one torturing
enfeared,
Fast rooted at her heart: and here,
Friend, —
In sickness she remained; and here
died;
Last human tenant of these ruined walls
The old Man ceased: he saw that I was moved;  
and low bench, rising instinctively 
and aside in weakness, nor had power 
thank him for the tale which he had 
told. 930  
Tood, and leaning o’er the garden wall, 
viewed that Woman’s sufferings; and it 
seemed 
comfort me while with a brother’s love 
dressed her in the impotence of grief. 
Towards the cottage I returned; and 
traced  
ndly, though with an interest more mild, 
at secret spirit of humanity, 
chich, ’mid the calm oblivious tendencies 
nature, ’mid her plants, and weeds, and 
flowers, 
ld silent overgrowings, still survived. 935  
le old Man, noting this, resumed, and 
said, 
My Friend! enough to sorrow you have 
given, 
se purposes of wisdom ask no more;  
or more would she have craved as due to 
One  
bo, in her worst distress, had oft times 
be unbounded might of prayer; and 
learned, with soul 
ixed on the Cross, that consolation springs, 
rom sources deeper far than deepest pain, 
or the meek Sufferer. Why then should 
we read 
he forms of things with an unworthy eye?  
be sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is 
here. 941  
well remember that those very plumes, 
bose weeds, and the high spear-grass on 
that wall, 
y mist and silent rain-drops silvered o’er, 
sonce I passed, into my heart conveyed 
still an image of tranquillity, 
alm and still, and looked so beautiful 
mid the uneasy thoughts which filled my 
mind, 
hat what we feel of sorrow and despair 
rom ruin and from change, and all the 
grief 950  
hat passing shows of Being leave behind, 
appeared an idle dream, that could main- 
tain, 
ewhere, dominion o’er the enlightened 
spirit  
Those meditative sympathies repose  

Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away, 
And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining 
shot 
A slant and mellow radiance, which began 
To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees, 
We sate on that low bench: and now we 
felt, 960  
Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming 
on. 
A linnet warbled from those lofty elms, 
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies, 
At distance heard, peopled the milder air. 
The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly 
mien 
Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff; 
Together casting then a farewell look 
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade; 
And, ere the stars were visible, had reached 
A village-inn, — our evening resting-place.

BOOK SECOND  
THE SOLITARY  
ARGUMENT

The Author describes his travels with the 
Wanderer, whose character is further illus- 
trated — Morning scene, and View of a Village 
Wake — Wanderer’s account of a Friend whom 
he purposes to visit — View, from an eminence, 
of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for 
his retreat — Sound of singing from below — A 
funeral procession — Descent into the Valley — 
Observations drawn from the Wanderer 
at sight of a book accidentally discovered in 
a recess in the Valley — Meeting with the 
Wanderer’s friend, the Solitary — Wanderer’s 
description of the mode of burial in this moun- 
tainous district — Solitary contrasts with this, 
that of the individual carried a few minutes be- 
fore from the cottage — The cottage entered — 
Description of the Solitary’s apartment — Re- 
past there — View, from the window, of two 
mountain summits; and the Solitary’s descrip- 
tion of the companionship they afford him — 
Account of the departed inmate of the cottage — 
Description of a grand spectacle upon the 
mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary’s 
mind — Leave the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared  
The Minstrel wandering on from hall to 
hall, 
Baronial court or royal; cheered with gifts
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;
Now meeting on his road an armed knight,
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's roof
One evening sumptuously lodged; the next,
Humbly in a religious hospital;
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.

Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;
He walked — protected from the sword of war
By virtue of that sacred instrument
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side;
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went,
Opening from land to land an easy way
By melody, and by the charm of verse.
Yet not the noblest of that honoured Race
Drew happier, loftier, more empassioned thoughts
From his long journeyings and eventful life,
Than this obscure Itinerant had skill
To gather, ranging through the tamer ground
Of these our unimaginative days;
Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise
Accoutred with his burthen and his staff;
And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school
Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,
Looked on this guide with reverential love?
Each with the other pleased, we now pursued
Our journey, under favourable skies.

Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light
Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him
Remembrances; or from his tongue call forth
Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard
Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,
Which nature's various objects might inspire;
And in the silence of his face I read
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,
And the mute fish that glances in the stream,
And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,
The fowl domestic, and the household dog —

Their rights acknowledging he felt for:
Oft was occasion given me to perceive
How the calm pleasures of the pastoral herd
To happy contemplation soothed his way;
How the poor brute's condition, forced run
Its course of suffering in the public road
Sad contrast! all too often smote his he.
With unwavailing pity. Rich in love
And sweet humanity, he was, himself,
To the degree that he desired, beloved.
Smiles of good-will from faces that he knew
Greeted us all day long; we took our seat
By many a cottage-hearth, where he received
The welcome of an Inmate from afar,
And I at once forgot, I was a Stranger.
— Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,
Huts where his charity was blest; his voice
Heard as the voice of an experienced frie.
And, sometimes — where the poor may dispute
With his own mind, unable to subdue
Impatience through inaptness to perceive
General distress in his particular lot;
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain
Struggling against it; with a soul perplexed
And finding in herself no steady power
To draw the line of comfort that divides
Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,
From the injustice of our brother men—
To him appeal was made as to a judge;
Who, with an understanding heart, ally
The perturbation; listened to the plea;
Resolved the dubious point; and sent gave
So grounded, so applied, that it was seen
With softened spirit, even when it was denied.

Such intercourse I witnessed, while roved,
Now as his choice directed, now as mine;
Or both, with equal readiness of will,
Our course submitting to the changed breeze
Of accident. But when the rising sun
Had three times called us to renew our
My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,
As if the thought were but a moment old
Claimed absolute dominion for the day.
We started — and he led me toward the hills,
Up through an ample vale, with higher
here us, mountains stern and desolate; 0
in the majesty of distance, now
off, and to our ken appearing fair
aspect, with aerial softness clad,
beautified with morning's purple beams.

he wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress
business roused, or pleasure, are their
time,
roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise
in earth the dust of morning, slow to
rise; 101
they, if blest with health and hearts at
ease,
ll lack not their enjoyment: — but how
faint
pared with ours! who, pacing side by
side,
uld, with an eye of leisure, look on all
ust we beheld; and lend the listening
sense
every grateful sound of earth and air;
using at will — our spirits braced, our
thoughts
asant as roses in the thickets blown,
0 pure as dew bathing their crimson
leaves. 110

Mount slowly, sun! that we may journey
long,
this dark hill protected from thy beams!
h is the summer pilgrim's frequent
wish;
t quickly from among our morning
thoughts
was chased away: for, toward the west-
ern side
the broad vale, casting a casual glance,
se saw a throng of people; wherefore met?
the notes of music, suddenly let loose
the thrilled ear, and flags uprising, yield
empt answer; they proclaim the annual
Wake,
hich the bright season favours. — Tabor
and pipe
purpose join to hasten or reprove
laggard Rustic; and repay with boons
merriment a party-coloured knot,
ready formed upon the village-green.
Beyond the limits of the shadow cast
the broad hill, glistened upon our sight
hat gay assemblage. Round them and
above,
litter, with dark recesses interposed,

Caseinent, and cottage-roof, and stems of
trees
Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver
steam
Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a
mast
Of gold, the Maypole abines; as if the rays
Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,
With gladsome influence could re-animate
The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly
scene
Invite us; shall we quit our road, and join
These festive matins?" — He replied, "Not
loth
To linger I would here with you partake,
Not one hour merely, but till evening's
close,
The simple pastimes of the day and place.
By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,
The turf of you large pasture will be
skimmed;
There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall con-
tend:
But know we not that he, who intermits
The appointed task and duties of the day,
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day;
Checking the finer spirits that refuse
To flow when purposes are lightly changed?
A length of journey yet remains untraced:
Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his
staff
Raised toward those craggy summits, his
intent
He thus imparted: —

"In a spot that lies
Among you mountain fastnesses concealed,
You will receive, before the hour of noon,
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil,
From sight of One who lives secluded there,
Lonesome and lost: of whom, and whose
past life,
(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be
More faithfully collected from himself)
This brief communication shall suffice.

Though now sojourning there, he, like
myself,
Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage
Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract
Where many a sheltered and well-tended
plant,
Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,
Blossoms of piety and innocence. Such grateful promises his youth displayed:
And, having shown in study forward zeal,
He to the Ministry was duly called;
And straight, incited by a curious mind
Filled with vague hopes, he undertook the
charge
Of Chaplain to a military troop
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they
marched
In plaided vest, — his fellow-countrymen.
This office filling, yet by native power
And force of native inclination made
An intellectual ruler in the haunts
Of social vanity, he walked the world,
Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety;
Lax, buoyant — less a pastor with his flock
Than a soldier among soldiers — lived and
roamed
Where Fortune led: — and Fortune, who
oft proves
The careless wanderer’s friend, to him
made known
A blooming Lady — a conspicuous flower,
Admired for beauty, for her sweetness
praised;
Whom he had sensibility to love,
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.

For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts of
mind,
Nor sparingly endowed with worldly wealth,
His office he relinquished; and retired
From the world’s notice to a rural home.
Youth’s season yet with him was scarcely
past,
And she was in youth’s prime. How free
their love,
How full their joy! Till, pitiable doom!
In the short course of one undreaded year
Death blasted all. Death suddenly o’er-
threw
Two lovely Children — all that they pos-
sessed!
The Mother followed: — miserably bare
The one Survivor stood; he wept, he
prayed
For his dismissal, day and night, compelled
To hold communion with the grave, and
face
With pain the regions of eternity.
An uncomplaining apathy displaced
This anguish; and, indifferent to delight,
To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,
To private interest dead, and public care.

So lived he; so he might have died.
But not
To the wide world’s astonishment, appeared
A glorious opening, the unlooked-for dawn
That promised everlasting joy to France!
Her voice of social transport reached even
him!
He broke from his contracted bounds, paired
To the great City, an emporium then
Of golden expectations, and receiving
Freights every day from a new world
hope.
Thither his popular talents he transferred
And, from the pulpit, zealously main-
tained
The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
As one, and moving to one glorious end.
Intoxicating service! I might say
A happy service; for he was sincere
As vanity and fondness for applause,
And new and shapeless wishes, would allow
That righteous cause (such power had
freedom) bound,
For one hostility, in friendly league,
Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves;
Was served by rival advocates that came
From regions opposite as heaven and hell.
One courage seemed to animate them all:
And, from the dazzling conquests daily
gained
By their united efforts, there arose
A proud and most presumptuous confi-
dence.
In the transcendent wisdom of the age,
And her discernment; not alone in rights,
And in the origin and bounds of power
Social and temporal; but in laws divine.
Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed.
An overweening trust was raised; and for
Cast out, alike of person and of thing.
Plague from this union spread, whose
little bane
The strongest did not easily escape;
And He, what wonder! took a mortal
saint.
How shall I trace the change, how bear a
tell
That he broke faith with them whom he
had laid
In earth’s dark chambers, with a Christian
hope!
An infidel contempt of holy writ
Stole by degrees upon his mind; and here
Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced
The glory of the times fading away —
The splendour, which had given a festal air
To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled
From his own sight — this gone, he forfeited
All joy in human nature; was consumed,
And vexed, and chafed, by levity and scorn,
And fruitless indignation; galled by pride;
Made desperate by contempt of men who threw
Before his sight in power or fame, and won,
Without desert, what he desired; weak men,
Too weak even for his envy or his hate!
Tormented thus, after a wandering course
Of discontent, and inwardly opprest
With malady — in part, I fear, provoked
By weariness of life — he fixed his home,
Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,
Among these rugged hills; where now he dwells,
And wastes the sad remainder of his hours,
Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that wants not
Its own voluptuousness; — on this resolved,
With this content, that he will live and die
Forgotten, — at safe distance from ‘a world
Not moving to his mind.’"

These serious words
Closed the preparatory notices
That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile
The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.
Diverging now (as if his quest had been
Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall
Of water, or some lofty eminence,
Renowned for splendid prospect far and wide)
We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,
A steep ascent; and reached a dreary plain,
With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops
Before us; savage region! which I paced
Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high
Among the mountains; even as if the spot
Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs
So placed, to be shut out from all the world!
Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;
With rocks encompassed, save that to the south
Was one small opening, where a heath-clad
ridge
Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close;
A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,
And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more!
It seemed the home of poverty and toil,
Though not of want: the little fields, made
green
By husbandry of many thrifty years,
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland
house.
—There crows the cock, single in his
domain:
The small birds find in spring no thicket
there
To shroud them; only from the neighbour-
ing vales
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder
place.

Ah! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is
here!
Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
Upon a bed of heath; — full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chance to espy
Among the mountains; never one like this;
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure;
Not melancholy — no, for it is green,
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself
With the few needful things that life re-
quires.
— In rugged arms how softly does it lie,
How tenderly protected! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth,
The planet in its nakedness: were this
Man’s only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single, in the breathing
world,
It could not be more quiet; peace is here
Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale
Of public news or private; years that pass
Forgetfully; uncalled upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent I
lay
In silence musing by my Comrade’s side,
He also silent; when from out the heart
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,
Or several voices in one solemn sound,
Was heard ascending; mournful, deep, and slow
The cadence, as of psalms — a funer-
dirge!
We listened, looking down upon the bun-
Ber traffic: but seeing no one: meanwhile from below
The strain continued, spiritual as before:
And now distinctly could I recognise
These words: — “Shall in the grave
love be known,
In death thy faithfulness?” — “God re-
his soul!”

Said the old man, abruptly breaking
ence, —
“He is departed, and finds peace at last!
This scarcely spoken, and those last
strains
Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a
Of rustic persons, from behind the hut
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which
They shaped their course along the slopes
side
Of that small valley, singing as they moved.
A sober company and few, the men
Bare-headed, and all decently attired!
Some steps when they had thus advanced
the dirge
Ended; and, from the stillness that ensued
Recovering, to my Friend I said, “Yes
spake,
Methought, with apprehension that these
rites
Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat
This day we purposed to intrude.” — “I did
so,
But let us hence, that we may learn the
truth:
Perhaps it is not he but some one else,
For whom this pious service is performed:
Some other tenant of the solitude.”

So, to a steep and difficult descent
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to
crag.
Where passage could be won; and, as the last
Of the mute train, behind the heathy top
Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,
I, more impatient in my downward course,
Had landed upon easy ground; and there
Stood waiting for my Comrade. When

On the slope above me a few rude
buildings
Twere the habitation of a few industrious
men,
Working, as we found, at the manufacture
of wool.

An object that enticed my steps aside!
A narrow, winding entry opened out
Into a platform — that lay, sheepsfold-wise,
Enclosed between an upright mass of rock
nd one old moss-grown wall; — a cool recess, 
nd fanciful! For where the rock and wall
let in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed
y thrusting two rude staves into the wall 
nd overlying them with mountain sods;
o weather-fend a little turf-built seat
hereon a full-grown man might rest, nor
he burning sunshine, or a transient shower; ut
the whole plainly wrought by children’s hands!
those skill had thronged the floor with a
proud show
of baby-houses, curiously arranged;
or wanting ornament of walks between,
ith mimic trees inserted in the turf,
nd gardens interposed. Pleased with the
ight,
could not choose but beckon to my Guide,
ho, entering, round him threw a careless
ance, impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,
Lo! what is here?” and, stooping down,
drew forth
a book, that, in the midst of stones and moss
and wreck of party-coloured earthen-ware,
ptly disposed, had lent its help to raise
he of those petty structures. “His it
must be!”
xclaimed the Wanderer, “cannot but be
his,
nd he is gone!” The book, which in my
hand
ad opened of itself (for it was swollen
With searching damp, and seemingly had lain
o the injurious elements exposed
rom week to week,) I found to be a
work in the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,
his famous Optimist. “Unhappy Man!”
xclaimed my Friend: “here then has been
to him
retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place
Within how deep a shelter! He hadfits,
even to the last, of genuine tenderness,
nd loved the haunts of children: here, no
doubt,
pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple
sports,
or sole companionless; and here the book,
left and forgotten in his careless way,
Must by the cottage-children have been found:
Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work!
To what odd purpose have the darlings turned
This sad memorial of their hapless friend!”

“Me,” said I, “most doth it surprise, to find
Such book in such a place!” — “A book it is,”
He answered, “to the Person suited well,
Though little suited to surrounding things:
’T is strange, I grant; and stranger still had been
To see the Man who owned it, dwelling here,
With one poor shepherd, far from all the world! —
Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,
As from these intimations I forebode,
Grieved shall I be — less for my sake than yours,
And least of all for him who is no more.”

By this, the book was in the old Man’s hand;
And he continued, glancing on the leaves
An eye of scorn: — “The lover,” said he,
“doomed.
To love when hope hath failed him — whom
no depth
Of privacy is deep enough to hide,
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,
And that is joy to him. When change of times
Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but
give
The faithful servant, who must hide his head
Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,
A kerchief sprinkled with his master’s
blood,
And to he too hath his comforter. How poor,
Beyond all poverty how destitute,
Must that Man have been left, who, hither
Driven,
Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him
No dearer relique, and no better stay,
Than this dull product of a scoffer’s pen,
Impure conceits discharging from a heart
Hardened by impious pride! — I did not fear
To tax you with this journey;” — mildly said
My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped
Into the presence of the cheerful light—
"For I have knowledge that you do not
shrink
From moving spectacles; — but let us on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the word
I followed, till he made a sudden stand;
For full in view, approaching through a
gate
That opened from the enclosure of green
fields
Into the rough uncultivated ground,
Behold the Man whom he had fancied dead!
I knew from his deportment, mien, and
dress,
That it could be no other; a pale face,
A meagre person, tall, and in a garb
Not rustic — dull and faded like himself!
He saw us not, though distant but few
steps;
For he was busy, dealing, from a store
Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings
Of red ripe currants; gift by which he
strove,
With intermixture of endearing words,
To soothe a Child, who walked beside him,
weeping
As if disconsolate. — "They to the grave
Are bearing him, my Little-one," he said,
"To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain;
His body is at rest, his soul in heaven." 511

More might have followed — but my
honoured Friend
Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank
And cordial greeting. — Vivid was the light
That flashed and sparkled from the other’s
eyes;
He was all fire: no shadow on his brow
Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.
Hands joined he with his Visitant, — a grasp,
An eager grasp; and many moments’
space —
When the first glow of pleasure was no
more; 530
And, of the sad appearance which at once
Had vanished, much was come and
coming back —
An amicable smile retained the life
Which it had unexpectedly received,
Upon his hollow cheek. "How kind," he
said,
"Nor could your coming have been better
timed;
Dr clustered dwellings, where again they raise
The monitory voice? But most of all
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,
Then, when the body, soon to be consigned
Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,
Is raised from the church-aisle, and forward borne

Upon the shoulders of the next in love,
The nearest in affection or in blood;
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid
In silent grief their unuplifted heads,
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's mournful plaint,
And that most awful scripture which declares
We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed!
— Have I not seen — ye likewise may have seen —
Son, husband, brothers — brothers side by side,
And son and father also side by side,
Rise from that posture: — and in concert move,
On the green turf following the vested Priest,
Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,
From which they do not shrink, and under which
They faint not, but advance towards the open grave
Step after step — together, with their firm
Unhidden faces: he that suffers most,
He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,
The most serene, with most undaunted eye! —
Oh! blest are they who live and die like these,
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourned!

"That poor Man taken hence to-day," replied
The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile
Which did not please me, "must be deemed, I fear,
Of the unbluest; for he will surely sink
Into his mother earth without such pomp
Of grief, depart without occasion given
By him for such array of fortitude.
Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark!

This simple Child will mourn his one short hour,
And I shall miss him: scanty tribute! yet,
This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,
If love were his sole claim upon their care,
Like a ripe date which in the desert falls
Without a hand to gather it."

At this I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,
"Can it be thus among so small a band
As ye must needs be here? in such a place
I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight
Of a departing cloud." — "I was not for love" —
Answered the sick Man with a careless voice —
"That I came hither; neither have I found
Among associates who have power of speech,
Nor in such other converse as is here,
Temptation so prevailing as to change
That mood, or undermine my first resolve."
Then, speaking in like careless sort, he said
To my benign Companion, — "Pity 'tis
That fortune did not guide you to this house
A few days earlier; then would you have seen
What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,
That seems by Nature hollowed out to be
The seat and bosom of pure innocence,
Are made of; an ungracious matter this!
Which, for truth's sake, yet in remembrance too
Of past discussions with this zealous friend
And advocate of humble life, I now
Will force upon his notice; undeterred
By the example of his own pure course,
And that respect and deference which a soul
May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched
In what she most doth value, love of God
And his frail creature Man; — but ye shall hear.
I talk — and ye are standing in the sun
Without refreshment!"

Quickly had he spoken,
And, with light steps still quicker than his words,
Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the spot;
And, to my feeling, ere we reached the door,
| Had almost a forbidding nakedness; | And cakes of butter curiously embossed, |
| Had fair, I grant, even painfully less fair, | Butter that had imbibed from meadow- |
| Than it appeared when from the beetling | flowers |
| rock | A golden hue, delicate as their own |
| We had looked down upon it. All within, | Faintly reflected in a lingering stream. |
| As left by the departed company, | Nor laced, for more delight on that war |
| Was silent; save the solitary clock | day, |
| That on mine ear ticked with a mournful | Our table, small parade of garden fruits, |
| sound. — | And whortle-berries from the mountain |
| Following our Guide we clomb the cottage- | side. |
| stairs And reached a small apartment dark and | The Child, who long ere this had stilled |
| low, | his sobs, |
| Which was no sooner entered than our Host | Was now a help to his late comforter, |
| Said gaily, “This is my domain, my cell, | And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid, |
| My hermitage, my cabin, what you will — | Ministering to our need. |
| I love it better than a snail his house. | In genial mood, |
| But now ye shall be feasted with our best.” | While at our pastoral banquet thus we sat: |
| So, with more ardour than an unripe girl | Fronting the window of that little cell, |
| Left one day mistress of her mother’s stores, | I could not, ever and anon, forbear |
| He went about his hospitable task. | To glance an upward look on two huge |
| My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no | Peaks |
| less, | That from some other vale peered into this |
| And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired Friend, | “Those lusty twins,” exclaimed our host, |
| As if to thank him; he returned that look, | “if here |
| Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck | It were your lot to dwell, would soon be |
| Had we about us! scattered was the floor, | come |
| And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf, | Your prized companions. — Many are the |
| With books, maps, fossils, withered plants and flowers, | notes |
| And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic tools | Which, in his tuneful course, the wind |
| Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some Scribbled with verse: a broken angling- |
| And shattered telescope, together linked By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook; | rod |
| And instruments of music, some half-made, | And shattered telescope, together linked |
| Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls. | By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook; |
| But speedily the promise was fulfilled; | And instruments of music, some half-made, |
| A feast before us, and a courteous Host Inviting us in glee to sit and eat. | Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the |
| A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook | walls. |
| By which it had been bleached, o’erspread the board; | But speedily the promise was fulfilled; |
| And was itself half-covered with a store Of dainties, — eaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream; | A feast before us, and a courteous Host |
| Inviting us in glee to sit and eat. | And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon, |
| And the promise was fulfilled; | Methinks that I have heard them echo back |
| A feast before us, and a courteous Host Inviting us in glee to sit and eat. | The thunder’s greeting. Nor have nature’s |
| A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook | laws |
| By which it had been bleached, o’erspread the board; | Left them ungifted with a power to yield |
| And was itself half-covered with a store Of dainties, — eaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream; | Music of finer tone; a harmony, |
| And the promise was fulfilled; | So do I call it, though it be the hand |
| A feast before us, and a courteous Host Inviting us in glee to sit and eat. | Of silence, though there be no voice; — the |
| A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook | clouds, |
| By which it had been bleached, o’erspread the board; | The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns, |
| And was itself half-covered with a store Of dainties, — eaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream; | Motions of moonlight, all come thither— touch,
And have an answer—thither come, and
shape
A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
And idle spirits:—there the sun himself,
At the calm close of summer’s longest day,
Rests his substantial orb;—between those
heights
And on the top of either pinnacle,
More keenly than elsewhere in night’s blue
vault,
Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
Than the mute agents stirring there:—
alone
Here do I sit and watch—"

A fall of voice,
Regretted like the nightingale’s last note,
Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain
of rapture
Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer
said:
"Now for the tale with which you threat-
ened us!"
"In truth the threat escaped me unawares:
Should the tale tire you, let this challenge
stand
For my excuse. Dissevered from mankind,
As to your eyes and thoughts we must have
seemed
When ye looked down upon us from the
crag,
Islanders’ mid a stormy mountain sea,
We are not so;—perpetually we touch
Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world;
And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day
Relinquished, lived dependent for his bread
Upon the laws of public charity.
The Housewife, tempted by such slender

As might from that occasion be distilled,
Opened, as she before had done for me,
Her doors to admit this homeless Pen-
sioner;
The portion gave of coarse but wholesome
fare
Which appetite required—a blind dull
nook,
Such as she had, the kennel of his rest!
This, in itself not ill, would yet have been
ill borne in earlier life; but his was now
The still contentedness of seventy years.
Calm did he sit under the wide-spread
tree
Of his old age: and yet less calm and
meek,
W inningsly meek or venerably calm,
Than slow and torpid; paying in this wise
A penalty, if penalty it were,
For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.
I loved the old man, for I pitied him!
A task it was, I own, to hold discourse
With one so slow in gathering up his
thoughts,
But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes;

And helpful to his utmost power: and there
Our housewife knew full well what she
possessed!
He was her vassal of all labour, tilled
Her garden, from the pasture fetched her
kine;
And, one among the orderly array
Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun
Maintained his place; or heedfully pur-
sued
His course, on errands bound, to other
vales,
Leading sometimes an inexperienced child
Too young for any profitable task.
So moved he like a shadow that performed
Substantial service. Mark me now, and
learn
For what reward!—The moon her monthly
round
Hath not completed since our dame, the
queen
Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,
Into my little sanctuary rushed—
Voice to a rueful treble humanized,
And features in deplorable dismay.
I treat the matter lightly, but, alas!
It is most serious: persevering rain
Had fallen in torrents; all the mountain
tops
Were hidden, and black vapours coursed
their sides;
This had I seen, and saw; but, till she
spake,
Was wholly ignorant that my ancient
Friend—
Who at her bidding, early and alone,
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf
For winter fuel—to his noontide meal
Returned not, and now, haply, on the
heights
Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.
‘Inhuman!’—said I, ‘was an old Man’s
life
Not worth the trouble of a thought?—
 alas!
This notice comes too late.' With joy I saw 
Her husband enter — from a distant vale. 
We sallied forth together; found the tools 
Which the neglected veteran had dropped, 
But through all quarters looked for him in 
vain. 
We shouted — but no answer! Darkness 
fell 
Without remission of the blast or shower, 
And fears for our own safety drove us 
home. 800

I, who weep little, did, I will confess, 
The moment I was seated here alone, 
Honour my little cell with some few tears 
Which anger and resentment could not dry.
All night the storm endured; and, soon as 
help 
Had been collected from the neighbouring 
valle, 
With morning we renewed our quest: the 
wind 
Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills 
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist; 809 
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain: 
Till chancing on that lofty ridge to pass 
A heap of ruin — almost without walls 
And wholly without roof (the bleached re-

Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time, 
The peasants of these lonely valleys used 
To meet for worship on that central 
height) — 
We there espied the object of our search, 
Lying full three parts buried among tufts 
Of heath-plant, under and above him 
strewn, 
To baffle, as he might, the watery storm: 
And there we found him breathing peace-
ably, 
Snug as a child that hides itself in sport 
'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field. 
We spake — he made reply, but would not 
stir 
At our entreaty; less from want of power 
Than apprehension and bewildering thoughts. 

So was he lifted gently from the ground, 
And with their freight homeward the 
shepherds moved 
Through the dull mist, I following — when 
a step, 
A single step, that freed me from the skirts 
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view 831

Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul; 
The appearance, instantaneously disclosed 
Was of a mighty city — boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far 
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth
Far sinking into splendour — without end!
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
 With alabaster domes, and silver spires,
 And blazing terrace upon terrace, high up
 Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,
 In avenues disposed; there, towers begin
 With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars — illumination of all gems!
By earthly nature had the effect been
 wrought

Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves
And mountain-steps and summits, whereunto

The vapours had receded, taking there

Their station under a cerulean sky.
Oh, 't was an unimaginable sight!
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and

emerald turf,

Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire

sky,

Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge

Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped.
Right in the midst, where interspace appeared

Of open court, an object like a throne
Under a shining canopy of state
Stood fixed; and fixed resemblances were seen
To implements of ordinary use,
But vast in size, in substance glorified;
Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld
In vision — forms uncouth of mightiest power
For admiration and mysterious awe. 89

This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,
Lay low beneath my feet; 't was visible —
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.
That which I saw was the revealed abode
Of Spirits in beatitude: my heart
Swelled in my breast — 'I have been dead,'
I cried,

'And now I live! Oh! wherefore do I
live?'
and with that pang I prayed to be no more! —
But I forget our Charge, as utterly then forgot him: — there I stood and gazed:
The apparition faded not away, and I descended.

Having reached the house, found its rescued inmate safely lodged,
and in serene possession of himself, beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed met
by a faint shining from the heart, a gleam, of comfort, spread over his pallid face.
Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly
Was glad to find her conscience set at ease;
And not less glad, for sake of her good name,
That the poor Sufferer had escaped with life. But, though he seemed at first to have received
No harm, and uncomplaining as before
Went through his usual tasks, a silent change
Soon showed itself: he lingered three short weeks;
And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.

So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am
That it is ended.” At these words he turned —
And, with blithe air of open fellowship,
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this,
My grey-haired Friend said courteously —
“Nay, nay,
You have regaled us as a hermit ought;
Now let us forth into the sun!” — Our Host
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

BOOK THIRD

DESpondency

ARGUMENT

Images in the Valley — Another Recess in it entered and described — Wanderer’s sensations — Solitary’s excited by the same objects

— Contrast between these — Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved — Conversation exhibiting the Solitary’s past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length — His domestic felicity — Afflictions — Dejection — Roused by the French Revolution — Disappointment and disgust — Voyage to America — Disappointment and disgust pursue him — His return — His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind.

A HUMMING BEE — a little tinkling rill —
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,
In clamorous agitation, round the crest
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel —
By each and all of these the pensive ear
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,
When through the cottage-threshold we had passed,
And, deep within that lonesome valley, stood
Once more beneath the concave of a blue
And cloudless sky. — Anon exclaimed our Host —
Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt
The shade of discontent which on his brow
Had gathered, — “Ye have left my cell, —
but see
How Nature hems you in with friendly arms!
And by her help ye are my prisoners still.
But which way shall I lead you? — how contrive,
In spot so parsimoniously endowed,
That the brief hours, which yet remain,
may reap
Some recompense of knowledge or delight?”
So saying, round he looked, as if perplexed;
And, to remove those doubts, my grey-haired Friend
Said — “Shall we take this pathway for our guide? —
Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,
Its line had first been fashioned by the flock
Seeking a place of refuge at the root
Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded boughs
Darken the silver bosom of the crag,
From which she draws her meagre sustenance.
There in commodious shelter may we rest.
Or let us trace this streamlet to its source;
Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,
And a few steps may bring us to the spot
Where, haply, crowned with flowerets and green herbs,
The mountain infant to the sun comes forth,
Like human life from darkness."—A quick turn
Through a strait passage of encumbered ground,
Proved that such hope was vain:—for now we stood
Shut out from prospect of the open vale,
And saw the water, that composed this rill,
Descending, disembodied, and diffused
O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.
All further progress here was barred;—And who,
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,
Here would not linger, willingly detained?
Whether to such wild objects he were led
When copious rains have magnified the stream
Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,
Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,
The hidden nook discovered to our view
A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay
Rigt at the foot of that moist precipice,
A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that rests
Fearless of winds and waves. Three several stones
Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike
To monumental pillars: and, from these
Some little space disjoined a pair were seen,
That with united shoulders bore aloft
A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth:
Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared 61
A tall and shining holly, that had found
A hospitable chink, and stood upright,
As if inserted by some human hand
In mockery, to wither in the sun,
Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,
The first that entered. But no breeze did now
Find entrance;—high or low appeared no trace

Of motion, save the water that descended,
Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,
And softly creeping, like a breath of air,
Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen.
To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

"Behold a cabinet for sage built,
Which kings might envy!"—Praise this effect
Broke from the happy old Man's reverent lip;
Who to the Solitary turned, and said,
"In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,
You have decreed the wealth which is your own.
Among these rocks and stones, methinks I see
More than the heedless impress that belongs
To lonely nature's casual work: they bear
A semblance strange of power intelligent,
And of design not wholly worn away.
Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,
How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth
From its fantastic birth-place! And I own,
Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,
That in these shows a chronicle survives
Of purposes akin to those of Man,
But wrought with mightier arm than now prevails.

—Voiceless the stream descends into the gulf
With timid lapse;—and lo! while in this strait
I stand,—the chasm of sky above my head
Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain
For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,
Or to pass through; but rather an abyss
In which the everlasting stars abide;
And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth
might tempt
The curious eye to look for them by day.

—Hail Contemplation! from the stately towers,
Reared by the industrious hand of human art
To lift thee high above the misty air
And turbulence of murmuring cities vast;
From academic groves, that have thee been planted, hither come and find a lodge
To which thou mayst resort for holier peace,—
From whose calm centre thou, through height or depth,
yst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead; 
assuring through all degrees, until the 
scale 
time and conscious nature disappear, 
it in unsearchable eternity!

A pause ensued; and with minuter care
scanned the various features of the scene:

do the Tenant of that lonely vale
the courteous voice thus spake —
"I should have grieved
reafter, not escaping self-reproach,
from my poor retirement ye had gone
aving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,
y unexpected presence had so roused
spirits, that they were bent on enterprise;
like an ardent hunter, I forgot,
shall I say? — disdained, the game that
lurks
my own door. The shapes before our eyes
and their arrangement, doubtless must be
deemed
the sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance
idly to mock the works of toiling Man.
and hence, this upright shaft of unheown
stone,
rom Fancy, willing to set off her stores
y sounding titles, hath acquired the name
Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style
Theban obelisk; and, there, behold
Druid cromlech! — thus I entertain
he antiquarian humour, and am pleased
skim along the surfaces of things,
eguilting harmless the listless hours.
if the spirit be oppressed by sense
instability, revolt, decay,
nd change, and emptiness, these freaks of
Nature
nd her blind helper Chance, do then
suffice
:o quicken, and to aggravate — to feed
ity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
less than that huge Pile (from some
abyss
f mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round
and round
iddying within its vast circumference,
Sarum's naked plain — that pyramid
f Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved —
Syria's marble ruins towering high

Above the sandy desert, in the light
Of sun or moon. — Forgive me, if I say
That an appearance which hath raised your minds
To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause
Different effect producing) is for me
Fraught rather with depression than delight,
Though shame it were, could I not look around,
By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.
Yet happier in my judgment, even than you
With your bright transports fairly may be deemed,
The wandering Herbalist, — who, clear alike
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing thoughts,
Casta, if he ever chance to enter here,
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight regard
Of transitory interest, and peeps round
For some rare floweret of the hills, or plant
Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for wins,
Or learns, at least, that 't is not to be won:
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound,
By soul-engrossing instinct driven along
Through wood or open field, the harmless Man
Departs, intent upon his onward quest! —
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft
By scars which his activity has left
Beside our roads and pathways, though, thank Heaven!
This covert nook reports not of his hand)
He who with pocket-hammer smites the edge
Of luckless rock or prominent stone, disguised
In weather-stains or crusted over by Nature
With her first growths, detaching by the stroke
A chip or splinter — to resolve his doubts;
And, with that ready answer satisfied,
The substance classes by some barbarous name,
And hurries on; or from the fragments picks
His specimen, if but haply intervened
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal cube
Lurk in its cells — and thinks himself enriched,
Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before!
Intrusted safely each to his pursuit, Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill Range; if it please them, speed from clime to clime;
The mind is full — and free from pain their pastime."

"Then," said I, interposing, "One is near, Who cannot but possess in your esteem Place worthier still of envy. May I name, Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-boy?
Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form, Youngest apprentice in the school of art! Him, as we entered from the open glen, You might have noticed, busily engaged, Heart, soul, and hands, — in mending the defects Left in the fabric of a leaky dam Raised for enabling this penurious stream To turn a slender mill (that new-made plaything) For his delight — the happiest he of all!"

"Far happiest," answered the responding Man,
"If, such as now he is, he might remain! Ah! what avails imagination high Or question deep? what profits all that earth, Or heaven's blue vault, is suffered to put forth Of impulse or allurement, for the Soul To quit the beaten track of life, and soar Far as she finds a yielding element In past or future; far as she can go Through time or space — if neither in the one,
Nor in the other region, nor in aught That Fancy, dreaming o'er the map of things, Hath placed beyond these penetrable bounds, Words of assurance can be heard; if nowhere A habitation, for consummate good, Or for progressive virtue, by the search Can be attained, — a better sanctuary From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless grave?"

"Is this," the grey-haired Wanderer mildly said,
"The voice, which we so lately overheard,
To that same child, addressing tender
The consolations of a hopeful mind?
'His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.'
These were your words; and, verily, it thinks
Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we see
Than when we soar." —

The Other, not dissembling
Promptly replied — "My notion is the same.
And I, without reluctance, could decline All act of inquisition whence we rise, And what, when breath hath ceased, may become.
Here are we, in a bright and breathing world.
Our origin, what matters it? In lack Of worthier explanation, say at once With the American (a thought which The place where now we stand) that men
Leapt out together from a rocky cave;
And these were the first parents of our kind:
Or, if a different image be recalled
By the warm sunshine, and the joy voice
Of insects chirping out their careless life
On these soft beds of thyme-bespinked turf,
Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conest As sound — blithe race! whose mant were bedecked
With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they Had sprung, like those bright creepers from the soil
Whereon their endless generations dwell But stop! — these theoretic fancies jar On serious minds: then, as the Hind draw Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount, Even so deduce the stream of human life From seats of power divine; and hope, trust,
That our existence winds her stately course Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make Of a living ocean; or, to sink engulfed, Like Niger, in impenetrable sands And utter darkness: thought which may faced.
Though comfortless! — Not of myself I speak
Such acquisitiveness neither doth imply, In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed By natural piety; nor a lofty mind,
And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse

The gentle brooks! — Your desolating sway,

Sheds," I exclaimed, "no sadness upon me,

And no disorder in your rage I find.

What dignity, what beauty, in this change
From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,

Alternate and revolving! How benign,

How rich in animation and delight,

How bountiful these elements — compared

With aught, as more desirable and fair,

Devised by fancy for the golden age;

Or the perpetual warbling that prevails

In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,

Through the long year in constant quiet bound,

Night hushed as night, the day serene as day!

— But why this tedious record? — Age, we know

Is garrulous; and solitude is apt
To anticipate the privilege of Age,
From far ye come; and surely with a hope
Of better entertainment: — let us hence!

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more loth

To be diverted from our present theme,
I said, "My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with yours,
Would push this censure farther; — for, if smiles
Of scornful pity be the just reward

Of Poesy thus courteously employed

In framing models to improve the scheme
Of Man's existence, and recast the world,

Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,

Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,

A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull?

Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts

Establish sounder titles of esteem
For her, who (all too timid and reserved
For onset, for resistance too inert,
Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame)

Placed, among flowery gardens curtained round

With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood

Of soft Epicureans, taught — if they

The ends of being would secure, and win

The crown of wisdom — to yield up their souls

To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring
Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,
I cried, "more worthy of regard, the
Power,
Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed
The Stoic's heart against the vain approach
Of admiration, and all sense of joy?"

His countenance gave notice that my zeal
Accorded little with his present mind;
I ceased, and he resumed. — "Ah! gentle
Sir,
Slight, if you will, the means; but spare to slight
The end of those, who did, by system, rank,
As the prime object of a wise man's aim,
Security from shock of accident,
Release from fear; and cherished peaceful days
For their own sake, as mortal life's chief good,
And only reasonable felicity.
What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,
Through a long course of later ages, drove,
The hermit to his cell in forest wide;
Or what detained him, till his closing eyes
Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,
Fast anchored in the desert? — Not alone
Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,
Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged
And unavengable, defeated pride,
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,
Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,
Love with despair, or grief in agony; —
Not always from intolerable pangs
He fled; but, compassed round by pleasure, sighed

For independent happiness; craving peace,
The central feeling of all happiness,
Not as a refuge from distress or pain,
A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,
But for its absolute self; a life of peace,
Stability without regret or fear;
That hath been, is, and shall be evermore! —
Such the reward he sought; and wore out life,
There, where on few external things his heart
Was set, and those his own; or, if not his,
Subsisting under nature's steadfast law.

What other yearning was the master tie
Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock
Aerial, or in green secluded vale,
One after one, collected from afar,
An undissolving fellowship? — What is this,
The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirmed tranquillity,
Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime.
The life where hope and memory are one;
Where earth is quiet and her face unchanged
Save by the simplest toil of human hand: Or seasons' difference; the immortal Soul Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed
To meditation in that quietness! —
Such was their scheme: and though the wished-for end
By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained
By none, they for the attempt, and pain employed,
Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed
From the unqualified disdain, that once Would have been cast upon them by my voice
Delivering her decisions from the seat
Of forward youth — that scruples not to solve
Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules
Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone
To overweening faith; and is inflamed,
By courage, to demand from real life
The test of act and suffering, to provoke
Hostility — how dreadful when it comes,
Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt?

A child of earth, I rested, in that stage
Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,
Upon earth's native energies; forgetting
That mine was a condition which required
Nor energy, nor fortitude — a calm
Without vicissitude; which, if the like
Had been presented to my view elsewhere, I might have even been tempted to despise.
But no — for the serene was always bright;
Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing.
With joy, and — oh! that memory should survive
To speak the word — with rapture! Nature's boon,
Life's genuine inspiration, happiness
Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign:
Abused, as all possessions are abused
That are not prized according to their worth.
nd yet, what worth? what good is given
to men,
more solid than the gilded clouds of
heaven?
That joy more lasting than a vernal
flower? —
one! 'tis the general plaint of human kind
in solitude: and mutually addressed
from each to all, for wisdom's sake: —
This truth
he priest announces from his holy seat:
and, crowned with garlands in the summer
grove,
he poet fits it to his pensive lyre.
et, ere that final resting-place be gained,
reap contradictions may arise, by doom
this same life, compelling us to grieve
hat the prospeiries of love and joy
would be permitted, oft-times, to endure
long, and be at once cast down for ever.
h! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned
a course of days composite happy months,
and they as happy years; the present still
like the past, and both so firm a pledge
of a congenial future, that the wheels
of pleasure move without the aid of hope:
Mutability is Nature's bane;
and slighted Hope will be avenged; and,
when
be need her favours, ye shall find her not;
but in her stead — fear — doubt — and
agony!"  

This was the bitter language of the heart:
but, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of
voice,
though discomposed and vehement, were
such
as skill and graceful nature might suggest.
To a proficient of the tragic scene
standing before the multitude, beset
With dark events. Desirous to divert
Or stem the current of the speaker's
thoughts,
We signified a wish to leave that place
Of stillness and close privacy, a nook
That seemed for self-examination made;
Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,
Hidden from all men's view. To our at-
tempt
He yielded not; but, pointing to a slope
Of mossy turf defended from the sun,
And on that couch inviting us to rest,
Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned
A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

"You never saw, your eyes did never look
On the bright form of Her whom once I
loved: —
Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
A sound unknown to you; else, honoured
Friend!
Your heart had borne a pitiable share
Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,
And suffer now, not seldom, from the
thought
That I remember, and can weep no more.
Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit
Of self-esteem; and by the cutting blasts
Of self-reproach familiarly assailed;
Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness
But that some leaf of your regard should
hang
Upon my naked branches: — lively thoughts
Give birth, full often, to unguarded words;
I grieve that, in your presence, from my
tongue
Too much of frailty hath already dropped;
But that too much demands still more.
You know,
Revered Compatriot — and to you, kind Sir,
(Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come
Following the guidance of these welcome
feet
To our secluded vale) it may be told —
That my demerits did not sue in vain
To One on whose mild radiance many gazed
With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair
Bride —
In the devotedness of youthful love,
Preferring me to parents, and the choir
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
And all known places and familiar sights
(Resigned with sadness gently weighing
down
Her trembling expectations, but no more
Than did to her due honour, and to me
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
In what I had to build upon) — this Bride,
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
To a low cottage in a sunny bay,
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,
On Devon's leafy shores; — a sheltered hold,
In a soft clime encouraging the soil
To a luxuriant bounty! — As our steps
Approach the embowered abode — our
chosen seat
See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,
The unendangered myrtle, decked with
flowers,
Before the threshold stands to welcome us!
While, in the flowering myrtle’s neighbour-
hood,
Not overlooked but courting no regard,
Those native plants, the holly and the yew,
Gave modest intimation to the mind
How willingly their aid they would unite
With the green myrtle, to endear the hours
Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.
— Wild were the walks upon those lonely
Downs,
Track leading into track; how marked, how
worn
Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse
Winding away its never-ending line
On their smooth surface, evidence was none;
But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,
A range of unappropriated earth,
Where youth’s ambitious feet might move
at large;
Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld
The shining giver of the day diffuse
His brightness o’er a tract of sea and land
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires;
As our enjoyments, boundless. — From
those heights
We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan
combs;
Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
And mossy seats, detained us side by side,
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our
hearts
‘That all the grove and all the day was
ours.’

O happy time! still happier was at hand;
For Nature called my Partner to resign
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,
Enjoyed by us in common. — To my hope,
To my heart’s wish, my tender Mate be-
came
The thankful captive of maternal bonds;
And those wild paths were left to me alone.
There could I meditate on follies past;
And, like a weary voyager escaped
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace
A course of vain delights and thoughtless
guilt,
And self-indulgence — without shame pur-
sued.
There, undisturbed, could think of and
could thank
Her whose submissive spirit was to me
Rule and restraint — my guardian — shall I
say
That earthly Providence, whose guiding
love
Within a port of rest had lodged me safe:
Safe from temptation, and from danger far;
Strains followed of acknowledgment ad-
dressed
To an authority enthroned above
The reach of sight; from whom, as from
their source
Proceed all visible ministers of good
That walk the earth — Father of heaven
and earth,
Father, and king, and judge, adored and
feared!
These acts of mind, and memory, and
heart,
And spirit — interrupted and relieved
By observations transient as the glance
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form
Cleaving with power inherent and intense.
As the mute insect fixed upon the plant
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from
whose cup
It draws its nourishment imperceptibly —
Endeared my wanderings; and the moth-
ner’s kiss
And infant’s smile awaited my return.

In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,
Companions daily, often all day long;
Not placed by fortune within easy reach
Of various intercourse, nor wishing augst
Beyond the allowance of our own fire-side,
The twain within our happy cottage born.
Inmates, and heirs of our united love;
Graced mutually by difference of sex,
And with no wider interval of time
Between their several births than served
for one
To establish something of a leader’s sway;
Yet left them joined by sympathy in age;
Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.
On these two pillars rested as in air
Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,
Your courtesy withholds not from my
words
Attentive audience. But, oh! gentle
Friends,
As times of quiet and unbroken peace,
Though, for a nation, times of blessedness
Give back faint echoes from the historian’s
page;
So, in the imperfect sounds of this dis-
course,
pressed I hear, how faithless is the voice
ich those most blissful days reverberate.
at especial record can, or need, be given
rules and habits, whereby much was
done,
all within the sphere of little things;
smallest, though, to us, important cares,
precious interests? Smoothly did our
life
ance, swerving not from the path pre-
scribed;
annual, her diurnal, round alike
ntained with faithful care. And you
divine
worst effects that our condition saw
ou imagine changes slowly wrought,
in their progress unperceivable;
wished for; sometimes noticed with a
sigh,
hate'er of good or lovely they might
bring)
ns of regret, for the familiar good
loveliness endeared which they re-
move.
seven years of occupation undisturbed
absoluted seemingly a right to hold
happiness; and use and habit gave,
what an alien spirit had acquired,
matrimonial sanctity. And thus,
th thoughts and wishes bounded to this
world,
ved and breathed; most grateful — if to
enjoy
thout repining or desire for more,

different lot, or change to higher sphere,
ly except some impulses of pride
th no determined object, though upheld
theories with suitable support) —
and grateful, if in such wise to enjoy
proof of gratitude for what we have;
re, I allow, most thankless. — But, at
once,
me dark seat of fatal power was
nged
claim that shattered all. — Our bloom-
ing girl,
ght in the grip of death, with such
brief time
struggle in as scarcely would allow
or cheek to change its colour, was con-
veyed
m us to inaccessible worlds, to regions
here height, or depth, admits not the
approach
Of living man, though longing to pursue.
— With even as brief a warning — and how
soon,
With what short interval of time between,
I tremble yet to think of — our last prop,
Our happy life's only remaining stay —
The brother followed; and was seen no
more!

Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless
winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The Mother now remained; as if in her,
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,
This second visitation had no power
To shake; but only to bind up and seal;
And to establish thankfulness of heart
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.
The eminence whereon her spirit stood,
Mine was unable to attain. Immense
The space that severed us! But, as the
sight
Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs
Incalculably distant; so, I felt
That consolation may descend from far
(And that is intercourse, and union, too,)\nWhile, overcome with speechless gratitude,
And, with a holier love inspired, I looked
On her — at once superior to my woes
And partner of my loss. — O heavy change,
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept
Insensibly; — the immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart-anguish — of itself ashamed,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:
And, so consumed, she melted from my
arms;
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

What followed cannot be reviewed in
thought;
Much less, retracted in words. If she, of
life
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
And all the tender motions of the soul,
Had been supplanted, could I hope to
stand —
Infirm, dependent, and now destitute?
I called on dreams and visions, to disclose
That which is veiled from waking thought; conjured
Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
To appear and answer; to the grave I spake
Imploringly;—looked up, and asked the
Heavens

If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,
If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield
Of the departed spirit — what abode
It occupies — what consciousness retains
Of former loves and interests. Then my
soul
Turned inward, — to examine of what stuff
Time's fetters are composed; and life was put
To inquisition, long and profitless!
By pain of heart — now checked — and now
impelled —
The intellectual power, through words and things,
Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!
And from those transports, and these toils
abstruse,
Some trace am I enabled to retain
Of time, else lost; — existing unto me
Only by records in myself not found.

From that abstraction I was roused, —
and how?
Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave
Of these wild hills. For, lo! the dread
Bastile,
With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
Fell to the ground: — by violence overthrown
Of indignation; and with shouts that
drowned
The crash it made in falling! From the wreck
A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,
The appointed seat of equitable law
And mild paternal sway. The potent shock
I felt; the transformation I perceived,
As marvellously seized as in that moment
When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
Glory — beyond all glory ever seen,
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic
harps
In every grove were ringing, 'War shall cease;
'Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?
'Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers,
to deck
'The tree of Liberty.' — My heart re-
bounded;

My melancholy voice the chorus joined;
— 'Be joyful all ye nations; in all lands,
'Ye that are capable of joy be glad!
'Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to your selves
'In others ye shall promptly find; — and
'Enriched by mutual and reflected well
'Shall with one heart honour their common
kind.'

Thus was I reconverted to the world;
Society became my glittering bride,
And airy hopes my children. From depths
Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace
Of institutions, and the forms of things;
As they exist, in mutable array,
Upon life's surface. What, though in veins
There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had breathed
The air of France, not less than Gallic
Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs
Of my exhausted heart. If busy men
In sober conclave met, to weave a web
Of amity, whose living threads shall stretch
Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise
And acclamation, crowds in open air
Expressed the tumult of their minds with
voice
There mingled, heard or not. The power
of song
I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive
Of thanks and expectation, in accord
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule
Returned, — a progeny of golden years
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind
— With promises the Hebrew Scriptures
teem:
I felt their invitation; and resumed
A long-suspended office in the House
Of public worship, where, the glories
phrase
Of ancient inspiration serving me,
I promised also, — with undaunted trust
Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy;
The admiration winning of the crowd;
The help desiring of the pure devout.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed
But History, time's slavish scribe, will...
The nature of the dissolute; but thee, O fostering Nature! I rejected — smiled
At others’ tears in pity; and in scorn At those, which thy soft influence sometimes drew
From my unguarded heart. — The tranquil shores
Of Britain circumscribed me; else, perhaps I might have been entangled among deeds, Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor — Despise, as senseless: for my spirit relished
Strangely the exasperation of that Land, Which turned an angry beak against the down
Of her own breast; confounded into hope Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

But all was quieted by iron bonds Of military sway. The shifting aims, The moral interests, the creative might, The varied functions and high attributes Of civil action, yielded to a power Formal, and odious, and contemptible. — In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;
The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced;
And, from the impulse of a just disdain, Once more did I retire into myself. There feeling no contentment, I resolved To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore, Remote from Europe; from her blasted hopes; Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

Fresh blew the wind, when o’er the Atlantic Main
The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew;
And who among them but an Exile, freed From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit Among the busily-employed, not more With obligation charged, with service taxed, Than the loose pendant — to the idle wind Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye Powers
Of soul and sense mysteriously allied, Oh, never let the Wretched, if a choice
Be left him, trust the freight of his distress
To a long voyage on the silent deep! For, like a plague, will memory break out; And, in the blank and solitude of things, Upon his spirit, with a fever’s strength, Will conscience prey. — Feebly must they have felt
Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turned on me — the face of her I loved;
The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!
Where now that boasted liberty? No welcome
From unknown objects I received; and those,
Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky
Did, in the placid clearness of the night,
Disclose, had accusations to prefer.
Against my peace. Within the cabin stood
That volume — as a compass for the soul —
Revered among the nations. I implored
Its guidance; but the infallible support
Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused
To One by storms annoyed and adverse winds;
Perplexed with currents; of his weakness sick;
Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,
And by his nature's, ignorance, dismayed!

Long-wished-for sight, the Western World appeared;
And, when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore
Indignantly — resolved to be a man,
Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
No longer in subjection to the past,
With abject mind — from a tyrannic lord
Inviting penance, fruitlessly endur'd:
So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared
Some boundary, which his followers may not cross
In prosecution of their deadly chase,
Respiring I looked round. — How bright the sun,
The breeze how soft! Can anything produced
In the old World compare, thought I, for power
And majesty with this gigantic stream,
Sprung from the desert? And behold a city
Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are these
To me, or I to them? As much at least As he desires that they should be, whom winds

And waves have wafted to this distant shore,
In the condition of a damaged seed,
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take root.
Here may I roam at large; — my business is,
Roaming at large, to observe, and not to feel.
And, therefore, not to act — convinced that all
Which bears the name of action, however'starting,
Beginning ends in servitude — still painful
And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say, On nearer view, a motley spectacle
Appeared, of high pretensions, — unproved
But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;
Big passions strutting on a petty stage; —
Which a detached spectator may regard
Not unamused. — But ridicule demands
Quick change of objects; and, to laugh alone,
At a composing distance from the haunts Of strife and folly, though it be a treat
As choice as musing Leisure can bestow;
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn, Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit
For the gross spirit of mankind, — the one That soonest fails to please, and quickest turns
Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said, Leave this unknot Republic to the scourge Of her own passions; and to regions base, Whose shades have never felt the encroaching axe, Or soil endured a transfer in the mart Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides, Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak In combination, (wherefore else drives back So far, and of his old inheritance So easily deprived?) but, for that cause, More dignified, and stronger in himself; Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy. True, the intelligence of social art Hath overpower'd his forefathers, and so Will sweep the remnant of his line away; But contemplations, worthier, nobler far Than her destructive energies, attend His independence, when along the side
f Mississippi, or that northern stream
that spreads into successive seas, he walks;
 leased to perceive his own unshackled life,
and his innate capacities of soul,
here imaged: or when, having gained the top
of some commanding eminence, which yet
struder ne'er beheld, he hence surveys
regions of wood and wide savannah, vast
expanse of unappropriated earth,
With mind that sheds a light on what he sees;
ree as the sun, and lonely as the sun,
or'ing above his head its radiance down
upon a living and rejoicing world!

So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated woods
bent my way; and, roaming far and wide,
ailed not to greet the merry Mocking-bird;
and, while the melancholy Muccawiss
The sportive bird's companion in the grove
repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,
sympathised at leisure with the sound;
but that pure archetype of human greatness,
found him not. There, in his stead, ap
appeared
A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;
Remorseless, and submissive to no law
But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told! Here am I — ye have heard
What evidence I seek, and vainly seek;
What from my fellow-beings I require,
And either they have not to give, or I
Lack virtue to receive; what I myself, 960
Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost
Nor can regain. How languidly I look
Upon this visible fabric of the world,
May be divined — perhaps it hath been said:
But spare your pity, if there be in me
Aught that deserves respect: for I exist,
Within myself, not comfortless. — The
tenor
Which my life holds, he readily may con
ceive
Who'er hath stood to watch a mountain
brook
In some still passage of its course, and
seen,
Within the depths of its capacious breast,
Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure sky;
And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,
And conglobated bubbles undissolved.
Numerous as stars; that, by their onward
lapse,
Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard
A softened roar, or murmur; and the sound
Though soothing, and the little floating isles
Though beautiful, are both by Nature charged
With the same pensive office; and make known
Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
Precipitations and untoward straits,
The earth-born wanderer hath passed; and
quickly,
That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
Must be again encounter. — Such a stream
Is human Life; and so the Spirit toils
In the best quiet to her course allowed;
And such is mine, — save only for a hope
That my particular current soon will reach
The unfathomable gulf, where all is still!"

BOOK FOURTH
DESPONDENCY CORRECTED

ARGUMENT

State of feeling produced by the foregoing Narrative — A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction — Wanderer's exclamation — Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith — Hence immo
erate sorrow — Exhortations — How received — Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind — Dis
appointment from the French Revolution — States grounds of hope, and insists on the ne
cessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions — Knowledge the source of tranquillity — Rural Solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended; exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with Nature — Morbid Solitude pitiable — Superstition better than apathy — Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society — The various modes of Religion prevented it — Illustrated in the Jewish, Per
sian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief — Solitary interposes — Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imagin
ative feeling in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times — These principles tend to recall exploded super-
sitions and popery — Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers — Recommends other lights and guides — Asserts the power of the soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how — Reply — Personal appeal — Exhortation to activity of body renewed — How to commune with Nature — Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason — Effect of his discourse — Evening; Return to the Cottage.

Here closed the Tenant of that lonely vale
His mournful narrative — commenced in pain,
In pain commenced, and ended without peace:
Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with strains
Of native feeling, grateful to our minds,
And yielding surely some relief to his,
While we sate listening with compassion due.
A pause of silence followed; then, with voice
That did not falter though the heart was moved,
The Wanderer said: —
"One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists — one only; an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.
— The darts of anguish fix not where the seat
Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the Will supreme
For time and for eternity; by faith,
Faith absolute in God, including hope,
And the defence that lies in boundless love
Of his perfections; with habitual dread
Of aught unworthy conceived, endured
Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,
To the dishonour of his holy name.
Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the world!
Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart;
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto thee and thine!"

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,
He thus continued, lifting up his eyes
To heaven: — "How beautiful this dome of sky;
And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed
At thy command, how awful! Shall the Soul,
Human and rational, report of thee
Even less than these? — Be mute who will, who can,
Yet I will praise thee with impassioned voice:
My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd,
Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast built,
For thy own glory, in the wilderness!
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine.
In such a temple as we now behold
Reared for thy presence: therefore, am I bound
To worship, here, and everywhere — as one
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to tread,
From childhood up, the ways of poverty;
From unrevealing ignorance preserved.
And from debasement rescued. — By thy grace
The particle divine remained unquenched;
And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged sea,
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless flowers,
From paradise transplanted: wintry age
Impends; the frost will gather round my heart;
If the flowers wither, I am worse than dead!
— Come, labour, when the worn-out frame
requires
Perpetual sabbath; come, disease and want;
And sad exclusion through decay of sense:
But leave me unabated trust in thee —
And let thy favour, to the end of life,
Inspire me with ability to seek
Repose and hope among eternal things —
Father of heaven and earth! and I am rich
And will possess my portion in content!

And what are things eternal? — powers depart,"
The grey-haired Wanderer stedfastly replied,
Answering the question which himself had asked,
Possessions vanish, and opinions change.
And passions hold a fluctuating seat:
But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
uty exists; — immutably survive,
or our support, the measures and the forms,
which an abstract intelligence supplies;
whose kingdom is, where time and space
are not.

Other converse which mind, soul, and
heart,
and, with united urgency, require,
that more that may not perish? — Thou,
dread source,
time, self-existing cause and end of all so
that in the scale of being fill their place;
bove our human region, or below,
and sustained; — thou, who didst wrap
the cloud
of infancy around us, that thyself,
herein, with our simplicity awhile
ight'st hold, on earth, communion undis-
turbed;
who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,
that from its death-like void, with punctual
care,
and touch as gentle as the morning light,
eter'nus, daily, to the powers of sense
and reason's steadfast rule — thou, thou
alone
et everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,
Which thou includest, as the sea her waves:
'or adoration thou endure'st; endure
'or consciousness the motions of thy will;
'or apprehension those transcendent truths
of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
Submission constituting strength and
power)
even to thy Being's infinite majesty!
This universe shall pass away — a work
lorious! because the shadow of thy might,
step, or link, for intercourse with thee.
Ah! if the time must come, in which my feet
no more shall stray where meditation leads,
flowing stream, through wood, or craggy
wild,
loved haunts like these; the unimprisoned
Mind
May yet have scope to range among her own,
her thoughts, her images, her high desires.
If the dear faculty of sight should fail,
Still, it may be allowed me to remember
What visionary powers of eye and soul
In youth were mine; when, stationed on the
top
Of some huge hill — expectant, I beheld
The sun rise up, from distant climes returned
Darkness to chase, and sleep; and bring the
day

His bounteous gift! or saw him toward the
deep
Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
Attended; then, my spirit was entranced
With joy exalted to beatitude;
The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,
And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with
light,
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!

Those fervent raptures are for ever flown;
And, since their date, my soul hath under-
gone
Change manifold, for better or for worse:
Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire
Heavenward; and chide the part of me that
flags,
Through sinful choice; or dread necessity
On human nature from above imposed.
'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise; but, to converse with
heaven —
This is not easy: — to relinquish all
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,
And stand in freedom loosened from this
world,
I deem not arduous; but must needs confess
That 't is a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires;
And the most difficult of tasks to keep
Heights which the soul is competent to
gain.

— Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves
aloft,
Want due consistence; like a pillar of smoke,
That with majestic energy from earth
Rises; but, having reached the thinner air,
Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not; at
least,
If grief be something hallowed and ordained,
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
Yet, through this weakness of the general
heart,
Is it enabled to maintain its hold
In that excess which conscience disapproves.
For who could sink and settle to that point
Of self-flavishness; so senseless who could be
As long and perseveringly to mourn
For any object of his love, removed
From this unstable world, if he could fix
A satisfying view upon that state
Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,
Which reason promises, and holy writ ensures to all believers? — Yet mistrust
Is of such incapacity, methinks,
No natural branch; despondency far less;
And, least of all, is absolute despair.
— And, if there be whose tender frames have drooped
Even to the dust; apparently, through weight
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
An agonizing sorrow to transmute;
Deem not that proof is here of hope withstanded
When wanted most; a confidence impaired
So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
Oh! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the vision, with intense
And over-constant yearning; — there there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endowed, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
to ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.
I, speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace,
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In mercy, carried infinite degrees
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
That finds no limits but her own pure will.

Here then we rest; not fearing for our creed
The worst that human reasoning can achieve,
To unsettle or perplex it: yet with pain
Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,
That, though immovably convinced, we want
Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith
As soldiers live by courage; as, by strength
Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring sea.
Alas! the endowment of immortal power
Is matched unequally with custom, time,
And domineering faculties of sense
In all; in most, with superadded foes,
Idle temptations; open vanities,
Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing world;
And, in the private regions of the mind,
Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despite,
Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,
Distress and care. What then remains? —
To seek
Those helps for his occasions ever near
Who lacks not will to use them; vows renewed
On the first motion of a holy thought;
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and prayer —
A stream, which, from the fountain of the heart
Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience — conscience reverenced and obeyed,
As God’s most intimate presence in the soul,
And his most perfect image in the world.
— Endeavour thus to live; these rules regard;
These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning. For your noble part,
Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased away;
With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire;
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave."

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage
Poured forth his aspirations, and announced
His judgments, near that lonely house paced
A plot of greensward, seemingly preserved.
nature's care from wreck of scattered
stones,
and from encroachment of encircling heath:
all space! but, for reiterated steps,
oomph and commodious; as a stately deck
'tich to and fro the mariner is used
tread for pastime, talking with his
mates,
haply thinking of far-distant friends.
while the ship glides before a steady breeze.
ilness prevailed round us: and the voice
hat spake was capable to lift the soul
ward regions yet more tranquil. But,
metheought,
hat he, whose fixed despondency had
given
n pulse and motive to that strong dis-
course,
as less upraised in spirit than abashed;
trinking from admonition, like a man
he feels that to exhort is to reproach.
et not to be diverted from his aim,
he Sage continued:

"For that other loss,
the loss of confidence in social man,
ythe unexpected transports of our age
ried so high, that every thought, which
looked
beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,
many seemed superfluous — as, no cause
ould e'er for such exalted confidence
exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:
The two extremes are equally disowned
by reason: if, with sharp recoil, from one
you have been driven far as its opposite,
between them seek the point whereon to
build
ound expectations. So doth he advise
Who shared at first the illusion; but was
soon
ast from the pedestal of pride by shocks
Which Nature gently gave, in woods and
fields;
Nor unproved by Providence, thus speak-
ing
to the inattentive children of the world:
Vainglorious Generation! what new powers
On you have been conferred? what gifts,
withheld

'What all the slowly-moving years of time,
'With their united force, have left undone?
'By nature's gradual processes be taught;
'By story be confounded! Ye aspire
' Rashly, to fall once more; and that false
fruit,
'Which, to your overweening spirits, yields
'Hope of a flight celestial, will produce
'Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her
sons
'Shall not the less, though late, be justified.'

Such timely warning," said the Wanderer,
"gave
That visionary voice; and, at this day,
When a Tartaroe darkness overspreads
The groaning nations; when the impious
rule,
By will or by established ordinance,
Their own dire agents, and constrain the
good
To acts which they abhor; though I bewail
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart
Prevents me not from owning, that the
law,
By which mankind now suffers, is most
just.
For by superior energies; most strict
Affiance in each other; faith more firm
In their unhallowed principles; the bad
Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,
The vacillating, inconsistent good.
Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait — in hope
To see the moment, when the righteous
cause
 Shall gain defenders zealous and devout
As they who have opposed her; in which
Virtue
Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds
That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring
By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.
That spirit only can redeem mankind;
And when that sacred spirit shall appear,
Then shall our triumph be complete as
theirs.
Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the
wise
Have still the keeping of their proper
peace;
Are guardians of their own tranquillity.
They act, or they recede, observe, and
feel;
'Knowing the heart of man is set to be
The centre of this world, about the which
Those revolutions of disturbances
Still roll; where all the aspects of misery
Predominate; whose strong effects are such
As he must bear, being powerless to re-
dress;
And that unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man!" 330

Happy is he who lives to understand,
Not human nature only, but explores
All natures,—to the end that he may find
The law that governs each; and where be-
gins
The union, the partition where, that makes
Kind and degree, among all visible Beings;
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,
Which they inherit,—cannot step be-
yond,—
And cannot fall beneath; that do assign 340
To every class its station and its office,
Through all the mighty commonwealth of
things
Up from the creeping plant to sovereign
Man.
Such converse, if directed by a meek,
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:
For knowledge is delightful; and such delight
Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is
To thought and to the climbing intellect,
It teaches less to love, than to adore;
If that be not indeed the highest love!" 350

"Yes," said the Sage, resuming the dis-
course
Again directed to his downcast Friend,
"If, with the froward will and grovelling
soul
Of man, offended, liberty is here,
And invitation every hour renewed,
To mark their placid state, who never heed
Of a command which they have power to
break,
Or rule which they are tempted to tran-
gress:
These, with a soothed or elevated heart,
May we behold; their knowledge register;
Observe their ways; and, free from envy
find
Complacency there:—but wherefore this
in you?
I guess that, welcome to your lonely heart,
The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold
Into a 'feathery bunch,' feeds at your hand:
A box, perchance, is from your casement
hung
For the small wren to build in;—not in
vain,
The barriers disregarding that surround
This deep abiding place, before your sight
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly; and
soars,
Small creature as she is, from earth's bright
flowers,
Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns
In the waste wilderness: the Soul ascends
Drawn towards her native firmament of
heaven,
When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,
Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing.
This shaded valley leaves; and leaves the
dark
Empurpled hills, conspicuous renewed
A proud communication with the sun
Low sunk beneath the horizon!—List!—
I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent
forth
As if the visible mountain made the cry.
Again!"—The effect upon the soul was
such
As he expressed: from out the mountain's
heart
The solemn voice appeared to issue, start-
ing
The blank air—for the region all around
Stood empty of all shape of life, and sil-
ent."
For that single cry, the unanswered
bleat
A poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,
the plaintive spirit of the solitude!
He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,
through consciousness that silence in such
place
Was best, the most affecting eloquence.
At once his thoughts returned upon them-
selves,
and, in soft tone of speech, thus he re-
sumed.

"Ah! if the heart, too confidently raised,
before too lightly occupied, or lulled
oo easily, despire or overlook
the vassalage that binds her to the earth,
her sad dependence upon time, and all
her trepidations of mortality,
That place so destitute and void—but there
he little flower her vanity shall check;
he trailing worm reprove her thoughtless
pride?

These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds,
these that benignity pervade, that warms
the mole contented with her darksome
walk
in the cold ground; and to the emmet gives
her foresight, and intelligence that makes
the tiny creatures strong by social league;
supports the generations, multiplies
their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain
or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—
their labour, covered, as a lake with waves;
thousands of cities, in the desert place
built up of life, and food, and means of
life!
Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,
creatures that in communities exist,

Nor through dependence upon mutual aid,
That by participation of delight
And a strict love of fellowship, combined.
What other spirit can it be that prompts
The gilded summer flies to mix and weave
Their sports together in the solar beam,
Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy?
More obviously the selfsame influence rules
The feathered kinds; the fieldfare's pensive
flock,
The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,
Hovering above these inland solitudes,

By the rough wind unscattered, at whose
call
Up through the trenches of the long-drawn
vales
Their voyage was begun: nor is its power
Unfelt among the sedentary fowl
That seek you pool, and there prolong their
stay
In silent congress; or together roused
Take flight; while with their clang the air
resounds:
And, over all, in that ethereal vault,
Is the mute company of changeful clouds;
Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,
The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;
The mild assemblage of the starry heavens;
And the great sun, earth's universal lord!

How bountiful is Nature! he shall find
Who seeks not; and to him, who hath not
asked,
Large measure shall be dealt. Three sabb-
bath-days
Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent
Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights;
And what a marvellous and heavenly show
Was suddenly revealed!—the swains
moved on,
And heeded not: you lingered, you per-
ceived
And felt, deeply as living man could feel.
There is a luxury in self-dispraise;
And inward self-disparagement affords
To meditative spleen a grateful feast.
Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,
You judge unthankfully: distempered
nerves
Inflict the thoughts: the languor of the
frame
Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your
couch—
Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;
Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed
from heaven
Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye
Look down upon your taper, through a
watch
Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling
In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star
Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.
Take courage, and withdraw yourself from
ways
That run not parallel to nature's course.
Rise with the lark! your matins shall obtain
Grace, be their composition what it may,
If but with hers performed; climb once again,
Climb every day, those ramparts; meet the breeze
Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee
That from your garden thither soars, to feed
On new-blown heath; let yes commanding rock
Be your frequented watch-tower; roll the stone
In thunder down the mountains; with all your might
Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red deer
Fly to those harbours, driven by hound and horn
Loud echoing, add your speed to the pursuit;
So, wearied to your hut shall you return,
And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills
A kindling eye: — accordant feelings rushed
Into my bosom, whence these words broke forth:
"Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,
To have a body (this our vital frame
With shrinking sensibility endued,
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
And to the elements surrender it
As if it were a spirit! — How divine,
The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man
To roam at large among unpeopled glens
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
Be as a presence or a motion — one
Among the many there; and while the mists
Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
And phantoms from the crags and solid earth
As fast as a musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument; and while the streams
(As at a first creation and in haste
To exercise their untired faculties)
Descending from the region of the clouds,
And starting from the hollows of the earth
More multitudinous every moment, rend
Their way before them — what a joy to roam
An equal among mightiest energies;
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,
' Rape on ye elements! let moon and stars
Their aspects lend, and mingle in their
With this commotion (ruinous though it
From day to night, from night to day, prolonged!')"

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking in
The strain of transport, "whoseoe'er in you
Has, through ambition of his soul, given
To such desires, and grasped at such a light,
Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long
In spite of all the weakness that life brings
Its cares and sorrows; he, though taught
own
The tranquillizing power of time, shall
Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness
Loving the sports which once he loved
in.

Compatriot, Friend, remote are Gargi
hills,
The streams far distant of your native glade
Yet is their form and image here expressed
With brotherly resemblance. Turn ye
steps
Wherever fancy leads; by day, by night.
Are various engines working, not the same
As those with which your soul in youth
moved,
But by the great Artificer endowed
With no inferior power. You dwell slow
You walk, you live, you speculate alone;
Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign
prince,
For you a stately gallery maintain
Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen
Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed
With no incurious eye; and books are your
Within whose silent chambers treasure lies
Preserved from age to age; more precious
far
Than that accumulated store of gold
And orient gems, which, for a day of need
The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.
These hoards of truth you can unlock at
will:
And music waits upon your skilful touch,
Sounds which the wandering shepherd from
these heights
Hears, and forgets his purpose; — furnished
thus,
How can you droop, if willing to be up
raised?
The repetitions wearisome of sense, 630
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place;
Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
On outward things, with formal inference ends;
Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils
At once — or, not recoiling, is perplexed —
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research;
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the seat
Where peace and happy consciousness should dwell,
On its own axis restlessly revolving,
Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of truth. 636

Upon the breast of new-created earth
Man walked; and when and whereso'er he moved,
Alone or mated, solitude was not.
He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate voice
Of God; and Angels to his sight appeared
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise;
Or through the groves gliding like morning mist
Enkindled by the sun. He sate — and talked
With winged Messengers; who daily brought
To his small island in the ethereal deep 640
Tidings of joy and love. — From those pure heights
(Whether of actual vision, sensible
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
Have condescendingly been shadowed forth
Communications spiritually maintained,
And intuitions moral and divine)
Fell Human-kind — to banishment con-
demned
That flowing years repealed not: and distress
And grief spread wide; but Man escaped
The doom
Of destitution; — solitude was not. 650
— Jehovah — shapeless Power above all Powers,
Single and one, the omnipresent God,
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,
Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven;
On earth, enshrined in the wandering ark;
Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne
Between the Cherubim — on the chosen Race
Showered miracles, and ceased not to disperse
Judgments, that filled the land from age to age
With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear;
And with amazement smote; — thereby to assert
His scorned, or unacknowledged, sovereignty.
And when the One, ineffable of name,
Of nature indivisible, withdrew
From mortal adoration or regard,
Not then was Deity engulfed; nor Man,
The rational creature, left, to feel the weight
Of his own reason, without sense or thought
Of higher reason and a purer will,
To benefit and bless, through mightier power; —
Whether the Persian — zealous to reject
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
And roofs of temples built by human hands —
To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,
With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,
And to the winds and mother elements,
And the whole circle of the heavens, for him
A sensitive existence, and a God,
With lifted hands invoked, and songs of praise:
Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense
Yielding his soul, and Babylonian framed
For influence undefined a personal shape;
And, from the plain, with toil immense, upreared
Tower eight times planted on the top of tower,
That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch Descending, there might rest; upon that height
Pure and serene, diffused — to overlook
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast
Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,
With grove and field and garden interspersed;
Their town, and foodful region for support
Against the pressure of beleaguer ing war.

Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide
And guardian of their course, that new closed
His stedfast eye. The planetary Five
With a submissive reverence they beheld;
Watched, from the centre of their sleeping flocks,
Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to move
Carrying through ether, in perpetual round.
Decrees and resolutions of the Gods;
And, by their aspects, signifying works
Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.
— The imaginative faculty was lord
Of observations natural; and, thus
Led on, those shepherds made report of stars
In set rotation passing to and fro,
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
And its invisible counterpart, adorned
With answering constellations, under earth
Removed from all approach of living sight
But present to the dead; who, so they deemed,
Like those celestial messengers beheld
All accidents, and judges were of all.

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding shores,—
Under a cope of sky more variable,
Could find commodious place for every God
Promptly received, as prodigiously brought,
From the surrounding countries, at its choice
Of all adventurers. With unrivalled skill
As nicest observation furnished hints
For studious fancy, his quick hand bestowed
On fluent operations a fixed shape;
Metal or stone, idolatrously served.
And yet — triumphant o'er this pompous show
Of art, this palpable array of sense,
On every side encountered; in despite
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
By wandering Rhapsodists; and in contempt
Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged
Amid the wrangling schools—a storm hung,
Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;
And emanations were perceived; and acts
Of immortality, in Nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
"Methinks," persuasively the Sage replied,

"That for this arduous office you possess
Some rare advantages. Your early days
A grateful recollection must supply
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouchsafed
To dignify the humblest state. — Your voice
Hath, in my hearing, often testified
That poor men's children, they, and they alone,
By their condition taught, can understand
The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks
For daily bread. A consciousness is yours
How feelingly religion may be learned
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue —
Heard where the dwelling vibrates to the din
Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength
At every moment — and, with strength, increase
Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,
A sightless labourer, whistles at his work —
Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,
And piety is sweet to infant minds.
— The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine carves,

On the green turf, a dial — to divide
The silent hours; and who to that report
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,
Throughout a long and lonely summer's day
His round of pastoral duties, is not left
With less intelligence for moral things
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,
Within himself, a measure and a rule,
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,
That shines for him, and shines for all mankind.

Experience daily fixing his regards
On nature's wants, he knows how few they are,
And where they lie, how answered and appeased.

This knowledge ample recompense affords
For manifold privations; he refers
His notions to this standard; on this rock
Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,
Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime content.

Imagination — not permitted here
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's mind,
On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,
And trivial ostentation — is left free
And puissant to range the solemn walks
Of time and nature, girded by a zone
That, while it binds, invigorates and supports.

Acknowledge, then, that whether by the side
Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,
Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred
(Take from him what you will upon the score
Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes
For noble purposes of mind: his heart
Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.
And those illusions, which excite the scorn
Or move the pity of unthinking minds,
Are they not mainly outward ministers
Of inward conscience? with whose service charged
They came and go, appeared and disappear,
Diverting evil purposes, remorse
Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
Or pride of heart abating: and, when ‘er
For less important ends those phantoms move,
Who would forbid them, if their presence serve —
On thinly-peopled mountains and wild heaths,
Filling a space, else vacant — to exalt
The forms of Nature, and enlarge her powers?

Once more to distant ages of the world
Let us revert, and place before our thoughts
The face which rural solitude might wear
To the unenlightened swains of pagan Greece.

— In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretched
On the soft grass through half a summer’s day,
With music lulled his indolent repose:
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched,
Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with rapture;
The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye
Up towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed
That timely light, to share his joyous sport
And hence, a beaming Goddess with Nymphs,
Across the lawn and through the dark grove,
Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
By echo multiplied from rock or care,
Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and stars
Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven.
When winds are blowing strong. The turtle slaked
His thirst from rill or gushing fountain thanked
The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train
Might, with small help from fancy, transformed
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, the wings,
Lacked not, for love, fair objects who they wooed
With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,
Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoar frostage,
From depth of shaggy covert peeping fed
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side.
And, sometimes, intermixed with stinking horns
Of the live deer, or goat’s dependant beard,—
These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood
Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself.
The simple shepherd’s awe-inspiring God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and could mark
Its kindly influence, o’er the yielding brow
Of our Companion, gradually diffused;
While listening, he had paced the noiseless turf,
Like one whose untired ear a murmuring stream
Detains; but tempted now to interpose,
Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,
Were those bewildered Pagans of old time.
Beyond their own poor natures and above
They looked; were humbly thankful for the good
Which the warm sun solicited, and earth
Bestowed; were gladsome,—and their moral sense
They fortified with reverence for the Gods;
And they had hopes that overstepped the Grave.

Now, shall our great Discoverers," he exclaimed,
Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain
From sense and reason, less than these obtained,
Though far misled? Shall men for whom our age
Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
To explore the world without and world within,
Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious spirits—
Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced
To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh
The planets in the hollow of their hand;
And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains
Have solved the elements, or analysed
The thinking principle—shall they in fact
Prove a degraded Race? and what avails
Renown, if their presumption make them such?
Oh! there is laughter at their work in heaven!

Inquire of ancient Wisdom; go, demand
Of mighty Nature, if 't was ever meant
That we should pry far off yet be unraised;
That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
Viewing all objects unremittingly
In disconnection dead and spiritless;
And still dividing, and dividing still,
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
With the perverse attempt, while littleness
May yet become more little; waging thus
An impious warfare with the very life
Of our own souls!

And if indeed there be
An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
Our dark foundations rest, could he design
That this magnificent effect of power,
The earth we tread, the sky that we behold
By day, and all the pomp which night reveals;
That these — and that superior mystery,
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
And the dread soul within it — should exist
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
Probed, vexed, and criticised? Accuse me
not
Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,
⁄If, having walked with Nature threescore years,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men
Swayed by such motives, to such ends employed;
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe,
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence;
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly
Nor higher place can be assigned to him
And his compers — the laughing Sage of France.—
Crowned was he, if my memory do not err,
With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved
And benefits his wisdom had conferred;
His stooping body tottered with wreaths of flowers
Opprest, far less becoming ornaments
Than Spring oft twines about a mouldering tree;
Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,
And a most frivolous people. Him I mean
Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,
This sorry Legend; which by chance we found
Piled in a nook, through malice, as might seem,
Among more innocent rubbish.” — Speaking thus,
With a brief notice when, and how, and where,
We had espied the book, he drew it forth;
And courteously, as if the act removed,
With some impatience in his mien, he spake:
Back to my mind rushed all that had been urged
To calm the Sufferer when his story closed;
I looked for counsel as unbending now;
But a discriminating sympathy
Stood to this apt reply:
"As men from men
Do, in the constitution of their souls,
Differ, by mystery not to be explained;
And as we fall by various ways, and sink
One deeper than another, self-condemned,
Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame;
So manifold and various are the ways
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps
Of all infirmity, and tending all
To the same point, attainable by all —
Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.
For you, assuredly, a hopeful road
Lies open: we have heard from you a voice
At every moment softened in its course
By tenderness of heart; have seen your eye,
Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,
Kindle before us. — Your discourse this day,
That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to flow
In creeping sadness, through oblivious shades
Of death and night, has caught at every turn
The colours of the sun. Access for you
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative Will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior Faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative pains,
Opinion, ever changing!
I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely; and his countenance
Soon
Brightened with joy; for from within were heard
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;

th floating dreams, black and disconsolate,
evapoury phantoms of futurity?
Within the soul a faculty abides,
at with interpositions, which would hide
cl darken, so can deal that they become
mningencies of pomp; and serve to exalt
x native brightness. "As the ample moon,
the deep stillness of a summer even
sing behind a thick and lofty grove,
rm, like an unceasing fire of light,
the green trees; and, kindling on all sides
eir leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
x a substance glorious as her own,
a, with her own incorporated, by power
acious and serene. Like power abides
man's celestial spirit; virtue thus
st forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
om the encumbrances of mortal life,
om error, disappointment — nay, from
guilt;
ol sometimes, so relenting justice wills,
on palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was touched
ith manifest emotion, and exclaimed;
but how begin? and whence? — 'The
Mind is free —
olve,' the haughty Moralist would say,
his single act is all that we demand.'
as! such wisdom bids a creature fly
hose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn
atural wings! — To friendship let
him turn
r succour; but perhaps he sits alone
stormy waters, tossed in a little boat
at holds but him, and can contain no
more!
religion tells of amity sublime
hich no condition can preclude; of One
ho sees all suffering, comprehends all
wants,
ll weakness fathoms, can supply all needs:
at is that bounty absolute? — His gifts,
re they not, still, in some degree, rewards
or acts of service? Can his love extend
o hearts that own not him? Will showers
of grace,
hen in the sky no promise may be seen,
ll to refresh a parched and withered
land?
'll shall the groaning Spirit cast her load
at the Redeemer's feet?"
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
Devout above the meaning of your will. 1150
— Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to
feel.

The estate of man would be indeed for-
lorn
If false conclusions of the reasoning power
Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
Through which the ear converses with the
heart.

Has not the soul, the being of your life,
Received a shock of awful consciousness,
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
At night's approach bring down the un-
clouded sky,
To rest upon their circumambient walls;
A temple framing of dimensions vast, 1161
And yet not too enormous for the sound
Of human anthems, — choral song, or burst
Sublime of instrumental harmony,
To glorify the Eternal! What if these
Did never break the stillness that prevails
Here, — if the solemn nightingale be
mute,
And the soft woodlark here did never chant
Her vespers, — Nature fails not to provide
Impulse and utterance. The whispering
air
Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
With the loud streams; and often, at the
hour
When issue forth the first pale stars, is
heard,
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice — the solitary raven, flying
Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
Unseen, perchance above all power of
sight —
An iron knell! with echoes from afar
Faint — and still fainter — as the cry, with
which
The wanderer accompanies her flight
Through the calm region, fades upon the
ear,
Diminishing by distance till it seemed
To expire; yet from the abyss is caught
again,
And yet again recovered!

But descend,
From these imaginative heights, that rise
Far-stretching views into eternity,
Acknowledge that to Nature's humble
power
Your cherished sullenness is forced to bow.
Even here, where her amenities are seen
With sparing hand. Then trust your own
abroad
To range her blooming bowers, and spa-
cious fields,
Where on the labours of the happy three
She smiles, including in her wide embrace
City, and town, and tower, — and sea
ships
Sprinkled; — be our Companion while
track
Her rivers populous with gliding life;
While, free as air, o'er printless sands
march,
Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade
In peace and meditative cheerfulness;
Where living things, and things insensible
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye
and ear,
And speak to social reason's inner sense
With inarticulate language.

Who, in this spirit, communes with the
Forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Both knows and loves such objects as exalt
No morbid passions, no disquietude;
No vengeance, and no hatred — needs no
feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives
His feelings of aversion softened down;
A holy tenderness pervades his frame;
His sanity of reason not impaired,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flow clear,
From a clear fountain flowing, he looks
round
And seeks for good; and finds the good
seeks:
Until abhorrence and contempt are things
He only knows by name; and, if he bear,
From other mouths, the language which
they speak,
is compassionate; and has no thought,
feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further; by contemplating these
Forms
the relations which they bear to man,
shall discern, how, through the various
means
which silently they yield, are multiplied
spiritual presences of absent things.
trust me, that for the instructed, time will
then they shall meet no object but may
teach
me acceptable lesson to their minds
human suffering, or of human joy.
shall they learn, while all things speak
of man,
his duties from all forms; and general
laws,
local accidents, shall tend alike
' o rouse, to urge; and, with the will,
confer
his ability to spread the blessings wide
of true philanthropy. The light of love
not failing, perseverance from their steps
departing not, for them shall be con-
formed
the glorious habit by which sense is made
subservient still to moral purposes,
auxiliar to divine. That change shall
clothe
The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
The burthen of existence. Science then
shall be a precious visitant; and then,
And only then, be worthy of her name:
for then her heart shall kindle; her dull
eye,
Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
Chained to its object in brute slavery;
But taught with patient interest to watch
The processes of things, and serve the cause
Of order and distinctness, not for this
Shall it forget that its most noble use,
Its most illustrious province, must be found
In furnishing clear guidance, a support
Not treacherous, to the mind's excursive
power.
— So build we up the Being that we are;
Thus deeply drinking—in the soul of things
We shall be wise perforce; and, while in-
spired
By choice, and conscious that the Will is
free,
Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled
By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see,
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine;
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,
Earthly desires; and raise, to loftier heights
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the Sage that eloquent ha-
rangue,
Poured forth with fervour in continuous
stream,
Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,
An Indian Chief discharges from his breast
Into the hearing of assembled tribes,
In open circle seated round, and hushed
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf
Stirs in the mighty woods. — So did he
speak:
The words he uttered shall not pass away
Dispersed, like music that the wind takes up
By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgotten;
No — they sank into me, the bounteous gift
Of one whom time and nature had made
wise,
Gracing his doctrine with authority
Which hostile spirits silently allow;
Of one accustomed to desires that feed
On fruitage gathered from the tree of life;
To hopes on knowledge and experience
built;
Of one in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripened into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition; whence the Soul,
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and
love,
From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were
reached,
Had yet to travel far, but unto us,
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,
He had become invisible,— a pomp
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread
Over the mountain sides, in contrast bold
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less
Than those resplendent lights, his rich be-
quest;
A dispensation of his evening power.
— Adown the path that from the glen had
led
The funeral train, the Shepherd and his
Mate
Were seen descending: — forth to greet
them ran
Our little Page: the rustic pair approach;
And in the Matron's countenance may be read
Plain indication that the words, which told
How that neglected Pensioner was sent
Before his time into a quiet grave,
Had done to her humanity no wrong:
But we are kindly welcomed — promptly served
With ostentatious zeal. — Along the floor
Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell
A grateful couch was spread for our repose;
Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we lay,
Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled
by sound
Of far-off torrents charming the still night,
And, to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

BOOK FIFTH
THE PASTOR
ARGUMENT

Farewell to the Valley — Reflections — A large and populous Vale described — The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him — Church and Monuments — The Solitary musing, and where — Roused — In the Churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind — Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to — Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life — Apology for the Rite — Inconsistency of the best men — Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind — General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth — Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive — Pastor approaches — Appeal made to him — His answer — Wanderer in sympathy with him — Suggestion that the least ambitious enquirers may be most free from error — The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these Mountains — And for what purpose — Pastor consents — Mountain cottage — Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants — Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind — Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the Churchyard — Graves of unbaptized Infants — Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence — Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived — Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.
book v  the excursion 465

through his acquaintance with the ways of
truth,

with lucid order; so that, when his course
ran, some faithful eulogist may say,
he sought not praise, and praise did over-
look
his unobtrusive merit; but his life,
weet to himself, was exercised in good
hat shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere 49
accompanied these musings; fervent thanks
for my own peaceful lot and happy choice;
choice that from the passions of the world
Withdraw, and fixed me in a still retreat;
sheltered, but not to social duties lost,
cluded, but not buried; and with song
heering my days, and with industrious
though;
with the ever-welcome company of books;
with virtuous friendship’s soul-sustaining
aid,
and with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along, 50
following the rugged road, by sledge or
wheel
Worn in the moorland, till I overtook
My two Associates, in the morning sunshine
Halting together on a rocky knoll,
Whence the bare road descended rapidly
To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his
hand
In sign of farewell. “Nay,” the old Man
said,
“The fragrant air its coolness still retains;
The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop
The dewy grass; you cannot leave us now, 51
We must not part at this inviting hour.”
He yielded, though reluctant; for his mind
Instinctively disposed him to retire
To his own covert; as a billow, heaved
Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.
—So we descend: and winding round a
rock
Attain a point that showed the valley —
stretched
In length before us; and, not distant far,
Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower,
Whose battlements were screened by tufted
trees.
And towards a crystal Mere, that lay beyond

among steep hills and woods embosomed,
flowed
A copious stream with boldly-winding
course;
Here traceable, there hidden — there again
To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.
On the stream’s bank, and everywhere, ap-
peared
Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots;
Some scattered o’er the level, others perched
On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene, 90
Now in its morning purity arrayed.

“As ’mid some happy valley of the
Alps,”

Said I, “once happy, ere tyrannic power,
Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,
Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth,
A popular equality reigns here,
Save for ye stately House beneath whose
roof
A rural lord might dwell.” — “No feudal
pomp,
Or power,” replied the Wanderer, “to that
House
Belongs, but there in his allotted Home 100
Abides, from year to year, a genuine
Priest,
The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king
Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
The father of his people. Such is he;
And rich and poor, and young and old, and
rejoice
Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouch-
safed
To me some portion of a kind regard;
And something also of his inner mind
Hath he imparted — but I speak of him
As he is known to all.

The calm delights
Of unambitious piety he chose,
And learning’s solid dignity; though born
Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful
friends.
Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew
From academic bowers. He loved the spot—
Who does not love his native soil? — he
prized
The ancient rural character, composed
Of simple manners, feelings unsubpress
And undisguised, and strong and serious
thought,
A character reflected in himself, 130
With such embellishment as well be-
seems
His rank and sacred function. This deep vale
Winds far in reaches hidden from our sight,
And one a turreted manorial hall
Adorns, in which the good Man's ancestors
Have dwelt through ages, Patrons of this Cure.
To them, and to his own judicious pains,
The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole domain,
Owes that presiding aspect which might well
Attract your notice; statelier than could else
Have been bestowed, through course of common chance,
On an unworthy mountain Benefice."

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our way;
Nor reached the village-churchyard till the sun
Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen
Above the summits of the highest hills,
And round our path darted oppressive beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred Pile
Stood open; and we entered. On my frame,
At such transition from the fervid air,
A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike
The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
And natural reverence which the place inspired.
Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,
But large and massy; for duration built;
With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
By naked rafters intricately crossed,
Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood,
All withered by the depth of shade above.
Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed;
Each also crowned with winged heads—a pair
Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpertaining guise,
Was occupied by oaken benches ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only showed
Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly state
By immemorial privilege allowed;
Though with the Encirclement's special sanctity
But ill according. An heraldic shield, as
Varying its tincture with the changing light,
Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft
A faded hatchment hung, and one by one
Yet undiscoloured. A spacious pew
Of sculptured oak stood here, with draperies lined;
And marble monuments were here displayed
Thronging the walls; and on the floor beneath
Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven
And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
And shining effigies of brass inlaid.

The tribute by these various records claimed,
Duly we paid, each after each, and read
The ordinary chronicle of birth,
Office, alliance, and promotion—all
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-church,
And uncorrupted senators, alike
To king and people true. A brazen plate
Not easily deciphered, told of one
Whose course of earthly honour was begun
In quality of page among the train
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the seas
His royal state to show, and prove his strength
In tournament, upon the fields of France.
Another tablet registered the death,
And praised the gallant bearing, of a Knight
Tried in the sea-fights of the second Charles.

Near this brave Knight his Father lay entombed;
And, to the silent language giving voice, I read,—how in his manhood's earlier day
He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war
And rightful government subverted, found
One only solace—that he had espoused
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved
For her benign perfections; and yet more
Endeared to him, for this, that, in her state
Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's regard,
She with a numerous issue filled his house.
of throve, like plants, uninjured by the storm
at laid their country waste. No need to speak
less particular notices assigned
Youth or Maiden gone before their time,
Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;
Charity and goodness were rewarshed modest panegyric.

"These dim lines, what would they tell?" said I,—but, from the task
puzzling out that faded narrative,
whisper soft my venerable Friend,
me, and, looking down the dark some aisle,
the Tenant of the lonely vale
and apart; with eurvéd arm reclined
the baptismal font; his pallid face
turned, as if his mind were rapt, or lost
some abstraction;—gracefully he stood,
semblance bearing of a sculptured form
hat leans upon a monumental urn
peace, from morn to night, from year to year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton rouse;
Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,
continuation hapy of the notes
hat had beguiled the work from which he came,
With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder hung;
be deposited, for future need,
in their appointed place. The pale Recluse
Withdrew; and straight we followed,—to a spot
Where sun and shade were intermixed; for there
A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms
From an adjoining pasture, overhung
Small space of that green churchyard with a light
And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown wall
My ancient Friend and I together took
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,
Standing before us:—
"Did you note the mien
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,
Death's hireling, who scoops out his neighbour's grave,
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,
All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,
Or plant a tree? And did you hear his voice?
I was abruptly summoned by the sound
From some affecting images and thoughts,
Which then were silent; but crave utter ance now.

Much," he continued, with dejected look,
"Much, yesterday, was said in glowing phrase,
Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes
For future states of being; and the wings
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,
Hovered above our destiny on earth:
But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul
In sober contrast with reality,
And man's substantial life. If this mute earth
Of what it holds could speak, and every grave
Were as a volume, shut, yet capable
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame,
To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill
That which is done accords with what is known
To reason, and by conscience is enjoined;
How idly, how perversely, life's whole course,
To this conclusion, deviates from the line,
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all
At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe
Not long accustomed to this breathing world;
One that hath barely learned to shape a smile,
Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp
With tiny finger—to let fall a tear;
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,
To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,
The outward functions of intelligent man;
A grave proficient in amusive feats
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare
His expectations, and announce his claims
To that inheritance which millions rue
That they were ever born to! In due time
A day of solemn ceremonial comes;
When they, who for this Minor hold in trust
Rights that transcend the loftiest heritage
Of mere humanity, present their Charge,
For this occasion daintily adorned,
At the baptismal font. And when the pure
And consecrating element hath cleansed
The original stain, the child is there re-
ceived
Into the second ark, Christ's church, with
trust
That he, from wrath redeemed, therein
shall float
Over the billows of this troublesome world
To the fair land of everlasting life.
Corrupt affections, covetous desires,
Are all renounced; high as the thought of
man
Can carry virtue, virtue is professed;
A dedication made, a promise given
For due provision to control and guide,
And unremitting progress to ensure
In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"
Here interposing fervently I said,
"Rites which attest that Man by nature lies
Bedded for good and evil in a gulf
Fearfully low; nor will your judgment scorn
Those services, whereby attempt is made
To lift the creature toward that eminence
On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty
He stood; or if not so, whose top serene
At least he feels 't is given him to de-
sery;
Not without aspirations, evermore
Returning, and injunctions from within
Doubt to cast off and weariness; in trust
That what the Soul perceives, if glory lost,
May be, through pains and persevering
hope,
Recovered; or, if hitherto unknown,
Lies within reach, and one day shall be
 gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answered
"no;
The outward ritual and established forms
With which communities of men invest
These inward feelings, and the aspiring vows
To which the lips give public utterance
Are both a natural process; and by me
Shall pass uncensured; though the issue
prove,
Bringing from age to age its own reproach,
Incongruous, impotent, and blank. — But, oh!
If to be weak is to be wretched — miserable,

As the lost Angel by a human voice
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my
mind,
Far better not to move at all than move
By impulse sent from such illusive power,—
That finds and cannot fasten down; that
grasps
And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasp;
That tempts, emboldens — for a time sur-
tains,
And then betrays; accuses and inflicts
Remorseless punishment; and so retreads
The inevitable circle: better far
Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless
peace,
By foresight or remembrance, undisturbed!

Philosophy! and thou more vanted
name
Religion! with thy statelier retinue,
Faith, Hope, and Charity — from the visible
world
Choose for your emblems whatso'er ye find
Of safest guidance or of firmest trust—
The torch, the star, the anchor; nor except
The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet
The generations of mankind have kneel
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears.
And through that conflict seeking rest — of
you,
High-titled Powers, am I constrained to
ask,
Here standing, with the unvoyageable sky
In faint reflection of infinitude
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive feet
A subterraneous magazine of bones,
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be
laid,
Where are your triumphs? your dominion
whence?

And in what age admitted and confirmed?
— Not for a happy land do I enquire,
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few
Who, with obedience willing and sincere, 111
To your serene authorities conform;
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked
ways,
Inspired, and thoroughly fortified? — If the
heart
Could be inspected to its inmost folds
By sight undazzled with the glare of praise.
Who shall be named — in the resplendent
line
Of sages, martyrs, confessors — the man
hom the best might of faith, wherever
fixed,

x one day's little compass, has pre-

served

om painful and discreditable shocks

contradiction, from some vague desire
tipably cherished, or corrupt relapse

some unsanctioned fear?"

"If this be so, 360

nd Man," said I, "be in his noblest shape

us pitifully infirm; then, he who made,

nd who shall judge the creature, will for-
give.

Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint
all too true; and surely not misplaced:

x, from this pregnant spot of ground,

such thoughts 371

ise to the notice of a serious mind

y natural exhalation. With the dead

their repose, the living in their mirth,

how can reflect, unmoved, upon the round

smooth and solemnized complacencies,

y which, on Christian lands, from age to

age

rofession mocks performance. Earth is

ick, and Heaven is weary, of the hollow words

ich States and Kingdoms utter when

they talk 380

f truth and justice. Turn to private life

nd social neighbourhood; look we to our-

elves;

light of duty shines on every day

or all; and yet how few are warmed or

cheered!

low few who mingle with their fellow-men

nd still remain self-governed, and apart,

d this our honoured Friend; and thence

acquire

light to expect his vigorous decline,

at promises to the end a blest old age!"

"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus

exclaimed 390

The Solitary, "in the life of man,

f to the poetry of common speech

Faith may be given, we see as in a glass

A true reflection of the circling year,

With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is

here,

In spite of many a rough untoward blast,

Hopeful and promising with buds and

flowers;

Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich
day,

That ought to follow faithfully expressed?

And mellow Autumn, charged with boun-
teous fruit,

Where is she imaged? in what favoured

cime

Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?

— Yet, while the better part is missed, the

worse

In man's autumnal season is set forth

With a resemblance not to be denied. .

And that contents him; bowers that hear

no more

The voice of gladness, less and less supply

Of outward sunshine and internal warmth;

And, with this change, sharp air and falling

leaves,

Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

How gay the habitations that bedeck 411

This fertile valley! Not a house but seems

To give assurance of content within;

Embosomed happiness, and placid love;

As if the sunshine of the day were met

With answering brightness in the hearts of

all

Who walk this favoured ground. But

chance-regards,

And notice forced upon incurious ears;

These, if these only, acting in despite

Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced

On humble life, forbid the judging mind 421

To trust the smiling aspect of this fair

And noiseless commonwealth. The simple

race

Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed

From foul temptations, and by constant

care

Of a good shepherd tended as themselves

Do tend their flocks) partake man's general

lot

With little mitigation. They escape,

Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt; feel

not

The tedium of fantastic idleness:

Yet life, as with the multitude, with them

Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;

That on the outset wastes its gay desires,

Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,

And pleasant interests—for the sequel

leaving

Old things repeated with diminished grace;

And all the laboured novelties at best

Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power

Evince the want and weakness whence they

spring.”
While in this serious mood we held discourse,
The reverend Pastor toward the churchyard gate
Approached; and, with a mild respectful air
Of native cordiality, our Friend advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien
Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed.
Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess
That he, who now upon the mossy wall
Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish
Could have transferred him to the flying clouds,
Or the least penetrable hiding-place
In his own valley's rocky guardianship.
—For me, I looked upon the pair, well pleased:
Nature had framed them both, and both were marked
By circumstance, with intermixture fine
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,
Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,
One might be likened: flourishing appeared,
Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,
The other—like a stately sycamore,
That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged; and soon
The Pastor learned that his approach had given
A welcome interruption to discourse
Grave, and in truth too often sad.—"Is Man
A child of hope? Do generations press
On generations, without progress made?
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,
Perforce? Are we a creature in whom good
Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will
Acknowledge reason's law? A living power
Is virtue, or no better than a name,
Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound?
So that the only substance which remains,
(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run)
Among so many shadows, are the pains
And penalties of miserable life,
Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust?
—Our cogitations, this way have been drawn,

These are the points," the Wanderer said
"on which
Our inquest turns.—Accord, good light
Of your experience to dispel this gloom:
By your persuasive wisdom shall the best that frets, or languishes, be stilled and cheered."

"Our nature," said the Priest, in reply,
"Angels may weigh and fathom: they perceive,
With undistempered and unclouded spirit.
The object as it is; but, for ourselves, That speculative height we may not reach.
The good and evil are our own; and we are that which we would contemplate for far.
Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—
As virtue's self; like virtue is beset
With snares; tried, tempted, subject to decay.
Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate.
Blind were we without these: through the alone
Are capable to notice or discern
Or to record; we judge, but cannot be indifferent judges. 'Spite of proud boast,
Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man
An effort only, and a noble aim;
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,
Still to be courted—never to be won.
—Look forth, or each man dive into himself;
What sees he but a creature too perturbed
That is transported to excess; that years
Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much:
Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils:
Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair.
Thy comprehension fails, and truth is missed;
Thus darkness and delusion round our path
Spread, from disease, whose subtle influence lurks
Within the very faculty of sight.

Yet for the general purposes of faith
In Providence, for solace and support,
We may not doubt that who can best subject
The will to reason's law, can strictest law
And act in that obedience, he shall gain
With a complacent animation spake, 560
"And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's repose
On evidence is not to be ensured
By act of naked reason. Moral truth
Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;
And which, once built, retains a stedfast shape
And undisturbed proportions; but a thing
Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;
And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose head
Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sincere
I re-salute these sentiments confirmed
By your authority. But how acquire
The inward principle that gives effect
To outward argument; the passive will
Meek to admit; the active energy,
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm
To keep and cherish? how shall man unite
With self-forgetting tenderness of heart
An earth-despising dignity of soul?
Wise in that union, and without it blind!"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not obtain
The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright;
This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you
Declared at large; and by what exercise
From visible nature, or the inner self
Power may be trained, and renovation brought

To those who need the gift. But, after all,
Is sought so certain as that man is doomed
To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance?
The natural roof of that dark house in which
His soul is pent! How little can be known —
This is the wise man's sigh; how far we err —
This is the good man's not unfrequent pang!
And they perhaps err least, the lowly class
Whom a benign necessity compels
To follow reason's least ambitious course;
Such do I mean who, unperplexed by doubt,
And unincited by a wish to look
Into high objects farther than they may,
Face to and fro, from morn till eventide,
The narrow avenue of daily toil
For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed
The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy plough,  
And patient spade; praise to the simple crook,  
And ponderous loom—resounding while it holds  
Body and mind in one captivity;  
And let the light mechanic tool be hailed  
With honour; which, enclosing by the power  
Of long companionship, the artist’s hand,  
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,  
From a too busy commerce with the heart!  
—Inglorious implements of craft and toil,  
Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,  
By slow solicitation, earth to yield  
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth  
With wise reluctance; you would I extol,  
Not for gross good alone which ye produce,  
But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife  
Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those  
Who to your dull society are born,  
And with their humble birthright rest content.  

—Would I had ne’er renounced it!"  
A slight flush  
Of moral anger previously had tinged  
The old Man’s cheek; but, at this closing turn  
Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,  
"That which we feel we utter; as we think  
So have we argued; reaping for our pains  
No visible recompense. For our relief  
You,” to the Pastor turning thus he spake,  
"Have kindly interposed. May I entreat  
Your further help? The mine of real life  
Dig for us; and present us, in the shape  
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains  
Fruitless as those of aery alchemists,  
Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies  
Around us a domain where you have long  
Watched both the outward course and inner heart:  
Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts;  
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what man  
He is who cultivates you hanging field;  
What qualities of mind she bears, who comes,  
For morn and evening service, with her pail,  
To that green pasture; place before our sight  
The family who dwell within your house  
Fenced round with glittering laurel; or that  
Below, from which the curling smoke ascends.  
Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,  
And have the dead around us, take in them  
Your instances; for they are both known,  
And by frail man most equitably judged.  
Epitomise the life; pronounce, you can,  
Authentic epitaphs on some of these  
Who, from their lowly mansions hitherto brought,  
Beneath this turf lie mouldering at feet:  
So, by your records, may our doubts solved;  
And so, not searching higher we may leap  
To prize the breath we share with human kind;  
And look upon the dust of man with ease."

The Priest replied—"An office you impose  
For which peculiar requisites are mine;  
Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task  
Would be most grateful. True indeed it is  
That they whom death has hidden from our sight  
Are worthiest of the mind’s regard; with these  
The future cannot contradict the past:  
Mortality’s last exercise and proof  
Is undergone; the transit made that show  
The very Soul, revealed as she departs.  
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,  
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,  
One picture from the living.  
You behold  
High on the breast of you dark mountain  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck  
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower  
Brush it away, or cloud pass over it;  
And such it might be deemed—a sleeping sunbeam;  
But ‘tis a plot of cultivated ground,  
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste:  
And that attractive brightness is its own  
The lofty site, by nature framed to temp
A tiller's hand, a hermit might have chosen,
opportunity presented, thence
forth to send his wandering eye o'er
land
ocean, and look down upon the works,
habitations, and the ways of men,
unseen! But no tradition tells
at ever hermit dipped his maple dish
the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon
green fields;
no such visionary views belong
those who occupy and till the ground,
gh on that mountain where they long
have dwelt
wedded pair in childless solitude.
house of stones collected on the spot,
rude hands built, with rocky knolls in
front,
oked also by a ledge of rock, whose
crest
birch-trees waves over the chimney top;
rough abode — in colour, shape, and size,
or as in unsafe times of border-war
ight have been wished for and contrived,
to elude
ne eye of roving plunderer — for their
need
ices; and unshaken bears the assault
their most dreaded foe, the strong
west
anger blowing from the distant sea.
alone within her solitary hut;
here, or within the compass of her fields,
t any moment may the Dame be found,
ue as the stock-dove to her shallow nest
ud to the grove that holds it. She be-
guiles
y intermingled work of house and field
be summer's day, and winter's; with suc-
vestment, equal, but sufficient to maintain,
ven at the worst, a smooth stream of con-
ent,
ill the expected hour at which her Mate
rom the far-distant quarry's vault re-
turns;
nd by his converse crowns a silent
day
ith evening cheerfulness. In powers of
mind,
a scale of culture, few among my flock
old lower rank than this sequestered pair:
ture humility descends from heaven;
nd that best gift of heaven hath fallen on
hem;
Abundant recompense for every want.
— Stoop from your height, ye proud, and
opy these!
Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can
ear
The voice of wisdom whispering scripture
texts
For the mind's government, or tempter's
peace;
And recommending for their mutual need,
 Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity!"

"Much was I pleased," the grey-haired
Wanderer said,
"When to those shining fields our notice
first
You turned; and yet more pleased have
from your lips
Gathered this fair report of them who
dwell
In that retirement; whither, by such course
Of evil hap and good as oft awaits
A tired way-faring man, once I was brought
While traversing alone yon mountain pass.
Dar on my road the autumnal evening fell,
And night succeeded with unusual gloom,
So hazardous that feet and hands became
Guides better than mine eyes — until a
light
High in the gloom appeared, too high,
methought,
For human habitation; but I longed
To reach it, destitute of other hope.
I looked with steadiness as sailors look
On the north star, or watch-tower's distant
lamp,
And saw the light — now fixed — and shift-
ing now —
Not like a dancing meteor, but in line
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.
It is no night-fire of the naked hills,
Thought I — some friendly covert must be
near.
With this persuasion thitherward my steps
I turn, and reach at last the guiding
light;
Joy to myself! but to the heart of her
Who there was standing on the open hill,
(The same kind Matron whom your tongue
hath praised)
Alarm and disappointment! The alarm
Ceased, when she learned through what
mishap I came,
And by what help had gained those distant
fields.
Drawn from her cottage, on that aëry height,
Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,
Or paced the ground — to guide her Husband home,
By that unwearyed signal, kenned afar;
An anxious duty! which the lofty site,
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,
Imposes, whensoe’er untoward chance
Detains him after his accustomed hour
Till night lies black upon the ground. ‘But come,
Come,’ said the Matron, ‘to our poor abode;
Those dark rocks hide it!’ Entering, I beheld
A blazing fire — beside a cleanly hearth
Sate down; and to her office, with leave asked,
The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile
Of mountain turf required the builder’s hand
Its wasted splendour to repair, the door
Opened, and she re-entered with glad looks,
Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare,
Frank conversation, made the evening’s treat:
Need a bewildered traveller wish for more?
But more was given; I studied as we sate
By the bright fire, the good Man’s form, and face
Not less than beautiful; an open brow
Of undisturbed humanity; a cheek
Suffused with something of a feminine hue;
Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard;
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,
Expression slowly varying, that evinced
A tardy apprehension. From a fount
Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,
But honoured once, those features and that mien
May have descended, though I see them here.

In such a man, so gentle and subdued,
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.
This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld
By sundry recollections of such fall
From high to low, ascent from low to high,
As books record, and even the careless mind
Cannot but notice among men and things)
Went with me to the place of my repose.

Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of day,
I yet had risen too late to interchange
A morning salutation with my Host,
Gone forth already to the far-off seat
Of his day’s work. ‘Three dark mid-winter months
Pass,’ said the Matron, ‘and I never see
Save when the sabbath brings its kind release,
My Helpmate’s face by light of day. It quits
His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.
And, through Heaven’s blessing, thus we gain the bread
For which we pray; and for the wants provide
Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.
Companions have I many; many friends.
Dependants, comforters — my wheel, my fire,
All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,
The cackling hen, the tender chick brood,
And the wild birds that gather round the porch.
This honest sheep-dog’s countenance I read;
With him can talk; nor blush to waste a word
On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.
And if the blustering wind that drives in clouds
Care not for me, he lingers round the door,
And makes me pastime when our temper suit; —
But, above all, my thoughts are my support,
My comfort: — would that they were oftener fixed
On what, for guidance in the way they leads
To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer taught.’

The Matron ended — nor could I forbear
To exclaim — ‘O happy! yielding to the law
Of these privations, richer in the main!—
While thankless thousands are oppressed and clogged
By ease and leisure; by the very wealth
And pride of opportunity made poor;
While tens of thousands falter in their path...
I sink, through utter want of cheering light; you the hours of labour do not flag; you each evening hath its shining star, I every sabbath-day its golden sun.'"

"Yes!" said the Solitary with a smile, it seemed to break from an expanding heart, he untutored bird may found, and so construct, with such soft materials line, her nest ed in the centre of a prickly brake, at the thorns wound her not; they only guard were not unjustly likened to those gifts happy instinct which the woodland birds with her species, nature's grace sometimes on the individual doth confer, song her higher creatures born and trained use of reason. And, I own that, tired the ostentatious world — a swelling stage ith empty actions and vain passions stuffed, id from the private struggles of mankind ping far less than I could wish to hope, r less than once I trusted and believed ove to hear of those, who, not contending or summoned to contend for virtue's prize, iss not the humbler good at which they aim, est with a kindly faculty to blunt se edge of adverse circumstance, and turn to their contraries the petty plagues nd hindrances with which they stand beset.

ey early youth, among my native hills, knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed few small crofts of stone-encumbered ground; asses of every shape and size, that lay attered about under the moulder ing walls f a rough precipice; and some, apart, quarters unobnoxious to such chance, if the moon had showered them down in spite.
at he repined not. Though the plough was scared y these obstructions, 'round the shady stones

'A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain, 'Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding dews 'And damps, through all the droughty summer day 'From out their substance issuing, maintain 'Herbage that never fails; no grass springs up 'So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!' But thinly sown these natures; rare, at least, The mutual aptitude of seed and soil That yields such kindly product. He, whose bed Perhaps you loose sods cover, the poor Pensioner Brought yesterday from our sequestered dell Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he, If living now, could otherwise report Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired Orphan —

So call him, for humanity to him No parent was — feelingly could have told, In life, in death, what solitude can breed Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice; Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure. — But your compliance, Sir! with our re quest My words too long have hindered."

Undeterred, Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks, In no ungracious opposition, given To the confiding spirit of his own Experienced faith, the Reverend Pastor said, Around him looking; "Where shall I begin? Who shall be first selected from my flock Gathered together in their peaceful fold?" He paused — and having lifted up his eyes To the pure heaven, he cast them down again Upon the earth beneath his feet; and spake:

"To a mysteriously-united pair This place is consecrate; to Death and Life, And to the best affections that proceed From their conjunction; consecrate to faith In him who bled for man upon the cross; Hallowed to revelation; and no less To reason's mandates: and the hopes divine Of pure imagination; — above all,
That privilege, did yet expire too soon,
Or with too brief a warning, to admit
Administration of the holy rite
That lovingly consigns the babe to it's
arms
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.
These that in trembling hope are laid
And the besprinkled nursling, unrequ'd
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him; and the tottering little
Taken from air and sunshine when its rose
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;
The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy; its bold youth
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are opening round her; those of mid age,
Cast down while confident in strength is stand,
Like pillars fixed more firmly, as they seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them; the cay'd
And burdensome; and lastly, that poor
Whose light of reason is with age extinct:
The hopeful and the hopeless, first last,
The earliest summoned and the last spared
Are here deposited, with tribute paid
Various, but unto each some tribute paid;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and grove
Society were touched with kind concern.
And gentle 'Nature grieved, that should die,'
Or, if the change demanded no regret,
Observed the liberating stroke — blessed.

And whence that tribute? where these regards?
Not from the naked Heart alone of Man
(Though claiming high distinction on earth
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness) — No, "the philosophic Fri
Continued, "'t is not in the vital seat
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublime pure;
Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here — Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life — The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where — Solitary hints at an overpowering Futility — Answer of the Pastor — What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives — Conversation upon this — Instance of an unamiable character, a Female, and why given — Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love — Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender — With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widow, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped —

An English Sovereign’s brow! and to the throne

Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations lie

In veneration and the people’s love;
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
 — Hail to the State of England! And conjoin

With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church;
Founded in truth; by blood of Martyrdom cemented; by the hands of Wisdom reared

In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,
Decent and unreproved. The voice, that greets

The majesty of both, shall pray for both;
That, mutually protected and sustained,
They may endure long as the sea surrounds
This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains
Bespreat from shore to shore with steeple-towers,
And spires whose ‘silent finger points to heaven;’

Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk of ancient minster lifted above the cloud
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds
To intercept the sun’s glad beams — may never
That true succession fail of English hearts,
Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive
What in those holy structures ye possess
Of ornamental interest, and the charm
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
And human charity, and social love.
—Thus never shall the indignities of time
Approach their reverend graces, unopposed;
Nor shall the elements be free to hurt
Their fair proportions; nor the blinder rage
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn;
And, if the desolating hand of war
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow
Upon the thronged abodes of busy men
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind
Exclusively with transitory things)
An air and mien of dignified pursuit;
Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
Of those pure altars worthy; ministers
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturbed;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them; whose least distinguished day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
—And, as on earth it is the doom of truth
To be perpetually attacked by foes
Open or covert, be that priesthood still,
For her defence, replenished with a band
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts
Thoroughly disciplined; nor (if in course
Of the revolving world’s disturbances
Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven avert!
To meet such trial) from their spiritual sires
Degenerate; who, constrained to wield the sword
Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed
With hostile din, and combating in sight
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust;
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,
So to declare the conscience satisfied:
Nor for their bodies would accept release;

But, blessing God and praising him, besoughted
With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame,
The faith which they by diligence had earned,
Or, through illuminating grace, received,
For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
O high example, constancy divine!

Even such a Man (inheriting the seal
And from the sanctity of elder times
Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom
If multiplied, and in their stations set,
Would o’er the bosom of a joyful land
Spread true religion and her genuine fruits)
Before me stood that day; on holy ground
Fraught with the relics of mortality,
Exalting tender themes, by just degrees
To lofty raised; and to the highest, last;
The head and mighty paramount of truths,—
Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,
For mortal creatures, conquered and secured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith
Announced, as a preparatory act
Of reverence done to the spirit of the place.
The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground;
Not, as before, like one oppressed with awe
But with a mild and social cheerfulness;
Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

“At morn or eve, in your retired domain
Perchance you not unfrequently have marked
A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers;
Too delicate employ, as would appear,
For one, who, though of drooping mind, had yet
From nature’s kindliness received a frame
Robust as ever rural labour bred.”

The Solitary answered: “Such a Form
Full well I recollect. We often crossed
Each other’s path; but, as the Intruder seemed
Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,
And as I willingly did cherish mine,
We met, and passed, like shadows. I have heard,
From my good Host, that being crazed is brain
The steadfast quiet natural to a mind
Of composition gentle and sedate,
And, in its movements, circumseep and slow.
To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,
O'er which enchained by science he had loved
To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for truth
With keener appetite (if that might be)
And closer industry. Of what ensued
Within the heart no outward sign appeared
Till a betraying sickness was seen
To tinge his cheek; and through his frame
it crept
With slow mutation unconcealable;
Such universal change as autumn makes
In the fair body of a leafy grove,
Discoloured, then divested.
'Tis affirmed
By poets skilled in nature's secret ways
That Love will not submit to be controlled
By mastery: — and the good Man lacked not friends
Who strove to instil this truth into his mind,
A mind in all heart-mysteries universal.
'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while'
'This baneful diligence: — at early morn
'Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and woods,'
'And, leaving it to others to foretell,
By calculations sage, the ebb and flow
'Of tides, and when the moon will be eclipsed,
'Do you, for your own benefit, construct
'Apalendar of flowers, plucked as they blow
'Where health abides, and cheerfulness, and peace.'
The attempt was made; — 'tis needless to report
How hopelessly; but innocence is strong,
And an entire simplicity of mind,
A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven;
That opens, for such sufferers, relief
Within the soul, fountains of grace divine;
And doth commend their weakness and disease
To Nature's care, assisted in her office
By all the elements that round her wait
To generate, to preserve, and to restore;
And by her beautiful array of forms
Shedding sweet influence from above; or pure
Delight exhalings from the ground they tread."

"Impute it not to impatience, if," exclaimed
The Wanderer, "I infer that he was healed
By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err: the powers, that had been lost
By slow degrees, were gradually regained;
The fluttering nerves composed; the beating heart
In rest established; and the jarring thoughts
To harmony restored. — But you dark mould
Will cover him, in the fulness of his strength,
Hastily smitten by a fever's force;
Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused
Time to look back with tenderness on her
Whom he had loved in passion; and to send
Some farewell words — with one, but one, request;
That, from his dying hand, she would accept
Of his possessions that which most he prized;
A book, upon whose leaves some chosen plants,
By his own hand disposed with nicest care,
In undecaying beauty were preserved;
Mute register, to him, of time and place,
And various fluctuations in the breast;
To her, a monument of faithful love
Conquered, and in tranquillity retained!

Close to his destined habitation, lies
One who achieved a humbler victory,
Though marvellous in its kind. A place there is
High in these mountains, that allured a band
Of keen adventurers to unite their pains
In search of precious ore: they tried, were foiled —
And all desisted, all, save him alone.
He, taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,
And trusting only to his own weak hands,
Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,
Unseconded, uncountenanced; then, a time
Passed on, while still his lonely efforts found
No recompense, derided; and at length,
By many pitted, as insane of mind;
By others dreaded as the luckless thrall
Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope
By various mockery of sight and sound;
Hope after hope, encouraged and destroyed
— But when the lord of seasons had matured
The fruits of earth through space of twenty years,
The mountain's entrails offered to his view,
And trembling grasp the long-deferred reward.
Not with more transport did Columbus greet
A world, his rich discovery! But oh Swain,
A very hero till his point was gained,
Proved all unable to support the weight
Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he looked
With an unsettled liberty of thought,
Wishes and endless schemes; by day's light walked
Giddy and restless; ever and anon
Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate cups;
And truly might he said to die of joy!
He vanished; but conspicuous to this day
The path remains that linked his cottage door
To the mine's mouth; a long and shining track,
Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
Worn by his daily visits to and from
The darksome centre of a constant hope.
This vestige, neither force of beating rain,
Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw
Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;
And it is named, in memory of the event.
The Path of Perseverance."

"Thou from whose Man has his strength," exclaimed the Wanderer, "oh!
Do thou direct it! To the virtuous grant
The penetrative eye which can perceive
In this blind world the guiding vein of hope;
That, like this Labourer, such may dig their way
'Unshaken, unceduced, unterrified.'
Grant to the wise his firmness of resolve!"
“That prayer were not superfluous,”
said the Priest,
Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,
that Westminster, for Britain’s glory,
holds
Within the bosom of her awful pile,
imbition collected. Yet the sigh,
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due
to all,
Wherever laid, who living fell below
their virtue’s humbler mark; a sigh of

Pain

f to the opposite extreme they sank. 270
low would you pity her who yonder rests;
lim, farther off; the pair, who here are
laid;
but, above all, that mixture of, earth’s
mould
Whom sight of this green hillock to my
mind
Recalls

He lived not till his locks were nipped
by seasonable frost of age; nor died
Before his temples, prematurely forced
To mix the manly brown with silver grey,
Save obvious instance of the sad effect
Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath
usurped

The natural crown that sage Experience
wears.
Say, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,
And prompt to exhibit all that he possessed
Or could perform; a zealous actor, hired
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn
Into the lists of giddy enterprise —
Such was he; yet, as if within his frame
Two several souls alternately had lodged,
Two sets of manners could the Youth put
on;
And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird
That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth
and still
As the mute swan that floats adown the
stream,
Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,
That flutters on the bough, lighter than he;
And not a flower, that droops in the green
shade,
More winningly reserved! If ye enquire
How such consummate elegance was bred
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice;
’Twas Nature’s will; who sometimes un-
dertakes,

For the reproof of human vanity,
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.
Hence, for this Favourite — lavishly en-
dowed
With personal gifts, and bright instinctive
wit,
While both, embellishing each other, stood
Yet farther recommended by the charm
Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,
And skill in letters — every fancy shaped
Fair expectations; nor, when to the world’s
Capacious field forth went the Adventurer,
there
Were he and his attainments overlooked,
Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,
Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,
Like blighted buds; or clouds that mim-
icked land
Before the sailor’s eye; or diamond drops
That sparkling decked the morning grass;
or aught
That was attractive, and hath ceased to be!

Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the
rites
Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,
Who, by humiliation undeterred,
Sought for his weariness a place of rest
Within his Father’s gates. — Whence came
he? — clothed
In tattered garb, from hovels where abides
Necessity, the stationary host
Of vagrant poverty; from rifled barns
Where no one dwells but the wide-staring
owl
And the owl’s prey; from these bare haunts,
to which
He had descended from the proud saloon,
He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,
The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived
In strength, in power refitted, he renewed
His suit to Fortune; and she smiled again
Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,
Thrice sank as willingly. For he — whose
nerves
Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his
voice
Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,
By the nice finger of fair ladies touched
In glittering halls — was able to derive
No less enjoyment from an abject choice.
Who happier for the moment — who more
blithe
Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary
holds
His talents lending to exalt the freaks
Of merry-making beggars,—nor provoked
To laughter multiplied in louder peals
By his malicious wit; then, all enchained
With mute astonishment, themselves to see
In their own arts outdone, their fame
eclipsed,
As by the very presence of the Fiend
Who dictates and inspires illusive feats, 350
For knavish purposes! The city, too,
(With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers
Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect
As there to linger, there to eat his bread,
Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment;
Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,
Listen who would, be wrought upon who
might,
Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.
—Such the too frequent tenor of his boast
In ears that relished the report; — but all
Was from his Parents happily concealed; 361
Who saw enough for blame and pitying
love.
They also were permitted to receive
His last repentant breath; and closed his
eyes,
No more to open on that irksome world
Where he had long existed in the state
Of a young fowl beneath one mother
hatched,
Though from another spring, different in
kind:
Where he had lived, and could not cease to
live,
Distracted in propensity; content 370
With neither element of good or ill;
And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;
Of contradictions infinite the slave,
Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him
One with himself, and one with them that
sleep.”

“Tis strange,” observed the Solitary,
“strange
It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,
That in a land where charity provides
For all that can no longer feed themselves,
A man like this should choose to bring his
shame
To the parental door; and with his sighs
Infest the air which he had freely breathed
In happy infancy. He could not pine,
Through lack of converse; no—he must
have found
Abundant exercise for thought and speech,

In his dividual being, self-reviewed,
Self-catechised, self-punished. — Some
there are
Who, drawing near their final home, and
much
And daily longing that the same were
reached,
Would rather shun than seek the fellowship
Of kindred mould. — Such haply here are
laid?”

“Yes,” said the Priest, “the Genius of
our hills —
Who seems, by these stupendous barriers cast.
Round his domain, desirous not alone
To keep his own, but also to exclude
All other progeny — doth sometimes love,
Even by his studied depth of privacy,
The unhappy alien hoping to obtain
Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,
In place from outward molestation free, 40
Helps to internal ease. Of many such
Could I discourse; but as their stay was
brief,
So their departure only left behind
Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace
Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair
Who, from the pressure of their several
fates,
Meeting as strangers, in a petty town
Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach
Of this far-winding vale, remained as friends
True to their choice; and gave their bosom
in trust
To this loved cemetery, here to lodge
With unescutcheoned privacy interred
Far from the family vault. — A Chief
one
By right of birth; within whose spotless
breast
The fire of ancient Caledonia burned:
He, with the foremost whose impatience
hailed
The Stuart, landing to resume, by force
Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost.
Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their
head,
With his brave sword endeavoured to pre-
vent
Culloden’s fatal overthrow. Escaped
From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores
He fled; and when the lenient hand of time
Those troubles had appeased, he sought
and gained,
for his obscured condition, an obscure
retreat, within this nook of English ground.

The other, born in Britain’s southern
tract,
Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed
His gentler sentiments of love and hate,
There, where they placed them who in con-
science prized
The new succession, as a line of kings
Whose oath had virtue to protect the land
Against the dire assaults of papacy
And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark
On the distempered flood of public life,
And cause for most rare triumph will be
thine
If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,
The stream, that bears thee forward, prove
not, soon
Or late, a perilous master. He—who oft,
Beneath the battlements and stately trees
That round his mansion cast a sober gnom,
Had moralised on this, and other truths 443
Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied—
Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh
Heaved from the heart in fortune’s bitter-
ness,
When he had crushed a plentiful estate
By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat
In Britain’s senate. Fruitless was the at-
tempt:
And while the uproar of that desperate strife
Continued yet to vibrate on his ear, 430
The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed
name,
(For the mere sound and echo of his own
Haunted him with sensations of disgust
That he was glad to lose) slunk from the
world
To the deep shade of those untravelled
Wilds;
In which the Scottish Laird had long pos-
sessed
An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they
met,
Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite
And sullen Hanoverian! You might think
That losses and vexations, less severe
Than those which they had severally sus-
tained,
Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have heard
My reverend Father tell that, ’mid the calm

Of that small town encountering thus, they
filled,
Daily, its bowling-green with harmless
strife;
Plagged with uncharitable thoughts the
church;
And vexed the market-place. But in the
breasts
Of these opponents gradually was wrought,
With little change of general sentiment,
Such leaning towards each other, that their
days
By choice were spent in constant fellowship;
And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,
Those very bickerings made them love it
more.

A favourite boundary to their lengthened
walks
This Churchyard was. And, whether they
had come
Treading their path in sympathy and linked
In social converse, or by some short space
Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway
Over both minds, when they awhile had
marked
The visible quiet of this holy ground,
And breathed its soothing air:—the spirit
of hope
And saintly magnanimity; that—spurning
The field of selfish difference and dispute,
And every care which transitory things,
Earth and the kingdoms of the earth, create—
Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise de-
barred,
Which else the Christian virtue might have
claimed. 490

There live who yet remember here to
have seen
Their courtly figures, seated on the stump
Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.
But as the remnant of the long-lived tree
Was disappearing by a swift decay,
They, with joint care, determined to erect,
Upon its site, a dial, that might stand
For public use preserved, and thus survive
As their own private monument: for this
Was the particular spot, in which they
wished
(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish
the desire)
That, undivided, their remains should lie.
So, where the mouldered tree had stood,
was raised
Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of
steps
That to the decorated pillar lead,
A work of art more sumptuous than might seem
To suit this place; yet built in no proud scorn
Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.
Around the margin of the plate, whereon
The shadow falls to note the stealthy hours,
Winds an inscriptive legend."—At these words
Thither we turned; and gathered, as we read,
The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couched:
"Time flies; it is his melancholy task,
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning Mortals! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed!"

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unlettered Muse,"
Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain of thought
Accords with nature's language;—the soft voice
Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks
Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.
If, then, their blended influence be not lost
Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,
Even upon mine, the more are we required
To feel for those among our fellow-men,
Who, offering no obeisance to the world,
Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a sense
Of constant infelicity,' cut off
From peace like exiles on some barren rock,
Their life's appointed prison; not more free
Than sentinels, between two armies, set,
With nothing better, in the chill night air,
Than their own thoughts to comfort them.
Say why
That ancient story of Prometheus chained
To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus;
The vulture, the inexhaustible repast

Drawn from his vitals? Say what meet the woes
By Tantalus entailed upon his race,
And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes:
Fictions in form, but in their substance truths,
Tremendous truths! familiar to the men
Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.
Exchange the shepherd's flock of milk grey
For robes with regal purple tinged; crown
The crook into a sceptre; give the pomp of circumstance; and here the true Muse
Shall find apt subjects for her highest art
Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills.
The generations are prepared; the page
The internal pangs, are ready; the dread strife
Of poor humanity's afflicted will
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer,
"these be terms
Which a divine philosophy rejects,
We, whose established and unfailling trust
Is in controlling Providence, admit
That, through all stations, human life abounds
With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left untried,
How could the might, that lurks within her, then
Be shown? her glorious excellence—the ranks
Among the first of Powers and Virtues—proved?
Our system is not fashioned to preclude
That sympathy which you for others ask;
And I could tell, not travelling for my theme
Beyond these humble graves, of grievous crimes
And strange disasters; but I pass them by,
Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed in peace.
—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight
By the deformities of brutish vice:
For, in such portraits, though a vulgar fact
And a coarse outside of repulsive life
And uneffecting manners might at once
Be recognised by all"—"Ah! do not think,"
he Wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaimed,
Wish could be ours that you, for such
poor gain,
what? for whom?)
ould breathe a word tending to violate
our own pure spirit. Not a step we look
for
sight of that forbearance and reserve
which common human-heartedness inspires,
and mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
pon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far
from us to infringe the laws of charity. "590
et judgment here in mercy. be pro-
nounced;
this
Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek
be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind
low, from his lofty throne, the sun can
fling
colours as bright on exhalations bred
by weedy pool or pestilential swamp,
is by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,
the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,
'Of such illusion do we here incur; 600
Temptation here is none to exceed the
truth;
no evidence appears that they who rest
Within this ground, were covetous of praise,
or of remembrance even, deserved or not.
Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and
green,
ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,
A heaving surface, almost wholly free
from interruption of sepulchral stones,
and mantled o'er with aboriginal turf
And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen
trust 610
The lingering gleam of their departed
lives
To oral record, and the silent heart;
Depositories faithful and more kind
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,
What boots the sculptured tomb? And
who can blame,
Who rather would not envy, men that feel
This mutual confidence; if, from such
source,
The practice flow,—if thence, or from a
depth
And general humility in death?
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring
From disregard of time's destructive
power,
As only capable to prey on things
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

Yet—in less simple districts, where we
see
Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone
In courting notice; and the ground all
paved
With commendations of departed worth;
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent
lives,
Of each domestic charity fulfilled,
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my
part, 630
Though with the silence pleased that here
prevails,
Among those fair recitals also range,
Soothed by the natural spirit which they
breathe.
And, in the centre of a world whose soil
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed
round
With such memorials, I have sometimes
felt,
It was no momentary happiness
To have one Enclosure where the voice that
speaks
In envy or detraction is not heard;
Which malice may not enter; where the
traces 640
Of evil inclinations are unknown;
Where love and pity tenderly unite
With resignation; and no jarring tone
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned,"
The Pastor said, "I willingly confine
My narratives to subjects that excite
Feelings with these accordant; love, es-
teeem,
And admiration; lifting up a veil,
A sunbeam introducing among hearts 650
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have
Clear images before your gladdened eyes
Of nature's unambitious underwood,
And flowers that prosper in the shade.
And when
I speak of such among my flock as swerved
Or fell, those only shall be singled out
Upon whose lapse, or error, something
more
Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;
To such will we restrict our notice, else
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,
I feel, good reasons why we should not
leave

Wholly un traced a more forbidding way.
For, strength to persevere and to support,
And energy to conquer and repel —
These elements of virtue, that declare
The native grandeur of the human soul —
Are oft -times not unprofitably shown
In the perverseness of a selfish course:
Truth every day exemplified, no less
In the grey cottage by the murmuring
stream

Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,
Or 'mid the factious senate, unappalled
Whoe'er may sink, or rise — to sink again,
As merciless proscription ebb and flows.

There," said the Vicar, pointing as he
spake,
"A woman rests in peace; surpassed by few
In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.
Tall was her stature; her complexion dark
And saturnine; her head not raised to hold
Converse with heaven, nor yet depolest to-
wards earth,
But in projection carried, as she walked
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes;
Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual
thought
Was her broad forehead; like the brow of
one
Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful
glare
Of overpowering light. — While yet a child,
She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,
Towered like the imperial thistle, not un-
furnished
With its appropriate grace, yet rather
seeking
To be admired, than coveted and loved. 650
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign
queen,
Over her comrades; else their simple sports,
Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,
Had crossed her only to be shunned with
scorn.
— Oh ! pang of sorrowful regret for those
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has
enthralled,
That they have lived for harsher servitude,
Whether in soul, in body, or estate!

Such doom was hers; yet nothing can
subdue
Her keen desire of knowledge, nor ef
Those brighter images by books impress
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars
That occupy their places, and, though of
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed
haze,
Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

Two passions, both degenerate, for the
both
Began in honour, gradually obtained
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life;
An unremitting, avaricious thirst;
And a strange thraldom of maternal love.
That held her spirit, in its own despite,
Bound — by vexation, and regret, and sea
Constrained forgiveness, and relenting bow
And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame
concealed —
To a poor dissolute Son, her only child
— Her wedded days had opened with unhap.

Whence dire dependence. What could a
perform
To shake the burthen off ? Ah! there we
felt,
Indignantly, the weakness of her sex
She mused, resolved, adhered to her reso
The hand grew slack in alma-giving, her
heart
Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's
blessing
Not seeking from that source, she place
her trust
In ceaseless pains — and strictest parsimo
Which sternly hoarded all that could b
spared,
From each day's need, out of each day's
least gain.

Thus all was re-established, and a pie
Constructed, that sufficed for every end,
Save the contentment of the builder's mind
A mind by nature indisposed to aught so
placid, so inactive, as content;
A mind intolerant of lasting peace,
And cherishing the pang her heart deplor
Dread of conflict ! which I oft compare
To the agitation of a brook that runs
Down a rocky mountain, buried now and then
In silent pools, now in strong eddy
chained;
t never to be charmed to gentleness:
best attainment fits of such repose
timid eyes might shrink from fathoming.

A sudden illness seized her in the
strength
life's autumnal season. — Shall I tell
now on her bed of death the Matron lay,
providence submissive, so she thought;
it fretted, vexed, and wrought upon,
amost
anger, by the malady that gripped
her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power
the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?
the prayed, she moaned; — her husband's
sister watched
her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;
and yet the very sound of that kind foot
as anguish to her ears! 'And must she
rule,'
is was the death-doomed Woman heard
to say
bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign,
sole Mistress of this house, when I am gone?
end what I tended, calling it her own!
'nough; — I fear too much. — One vernal
evening,
while she was yet in prime of health and
strength,
well remember, while I passed her door
alone, with loitering step, and upward eye
'urned towards the planet Jupiter that
hung
above the centre of the Vale, a voice
housed me, her voice; it said, 'That glori-
ous star
in its untroubled element will shine
as now it shines, when we are laid in
earth
and safe from all our sorrows.' With a
sigh
he spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained
by faith in glory that shall far transcend
ught by these perishable heavens disclosed
to sight or mind. Nor less than care

The Vicar paused; and toward a seat ad-
anced,
A long stone-seat, fixed in the Churchyard
wall;
Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part
Offering a sunny resting-place to them
Who seek the House of worship, while the
bells
Yet ring with all their voices, or before
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.
Beneath the shade we all sate down; and
there,
His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of
March,
Screened by its parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small
heap
Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth
rest;
The sheltering hillock is the Mother's
grave.
If mild discourse, and manners that con-
ferred
A natural dignity on humblest rank;
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,
That for a face not beautiful did more
Than beauty for the fairest face can do;
And if religious tenderness of heart,
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears
Shed when the clouds had gathered and
distained

The spotless ether of a maiden life;
If these may make a hallowed spot of
earth
More holy in the sight of God or Man;
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall
brood
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless
man,
Could field or grove, could any spot of
earth,
Show to his eye an image of the pangs
Which it hath witnessed; render back an

Of the sad steps by which it hath been
trod!
There, by her innocent Baby's precious
grave,
And on the very turf that roofs her own,
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not; the swelling turf reports
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's
tears
Is silent; nor is any vestige left
Of the path worn by mournful tread of
her
Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had
moved
In virgin fearlessness, with step that
seemed 320
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains gemmed with morning
dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and
airs.
— Serious and thoughtful was her mind;
and yet,
By reconciliation exquisite and rare,
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-
girl
Were such as might have quickened and
inspired
A Titian's hand, address to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade
What time the hunter's earliest horn is
heard 330
Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm
Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL
Tree;
From dateless usage which our peasants
hold
Of giving welcome to the first of May
By dances round its trunk. — And if the
sky
Permit, like honours, dance and song, are
paid
To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty
stars
Or the clear moon. The queen of these
gay sports,
If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,
Was hapless Ellen. — No one touched the
ground 340
So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided; — but this
praise,
Methinks, would better suit another place.

She loved, and fondly deemed herself
beloved.
— The road is dim, the current unper-
cceived,
The weakness painful and most pitiful,

By which a virtuous woman, in pure yes
May be delivered to distress and shame.
Such fate was hers. — The last time El-
danced,
Among her equals, round THE JOY-
Tree,
She bore a secret burthen; and full soon
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow.
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,
Alone, within her widowed Mother's home
It was the season of unfolding leaves,
Of days advancing toward their utmost
length,
And small birds singing happily to mass
Happy as they. With spirit-saddened
power
Winds pipe through fading woods; to
those blithe notes
Strike the deserted to the heart; I speak
Of what I know, and what we feel within
— Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt
Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost
twig
A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
At morn and evening from that same
perch,
While all the undergrove is thick with
leaves,
A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.
— 'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and solen-
pledge;
And nature that is kind in woman's
breast,
And reason that in man is wise and good.
And fear of him who is a righteous judge;
Why do not these prevail for human life,
To keep two hearts together, that began
Their spring-time with one love, and to
have need
Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
To grant, or be received; while that poor
bird —
O come and hear him! Thou who hast
me
Been faithless, hear him, though a low
creature,
One of God's simple children that yet know-
not
The universal Parent, how he sings
As if he wished the firmament of heaven
Should listen, and give back to him the
voice
Of his triumphant constancy and love;
Who bore me; and hath prayed for me in vain;—
Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.'
She spake, nor was the assurance unfilled;
And if heart-rending thoughts would oft return,
They stayed not long.—The blameless Infant grew;
The Child whom Ellen and her Mother loved
They soon were proud of; tended it and nursed;
A soothing comforter, although forlorn;
Like a poor singing-bird from distant lands;
Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by
With vacant mind, not seldom may observe
Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

Through four months' space the Infant drew its food
From the maternal breast; then scruples rose;
Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and crossed
The fond affection. She no more could bear
By her offence to lay a twofold weight
On a kind parent willing to forget
Their slender means: so, to that parent's care
Trusting her child, she left their common home,
And undertook with dutiful content
A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,
Unknown to you that in these simple vales
The natural feeling of equality
Is by domestic service unimpaired;
Yet, though such service be, with us, removed
From sense of degradation, not the less
The ungentle mind can easily find means
To impose severe restraints and laws unjust,
Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to feel:
For (blinded by an over-anxious dread
Of such excitement and divided thought
As with her office would but ill accord)
The pair, whose infant she was bound to nurse,
THE EXCURSION

Book VI

Forbade her all communion with her own.
Week after week, the mandate they enforced.
— So near! yet not allowed, upon that sight
To fix her eyes — alas! 't was hard to bear!
But worse affliction must be borne — far worse;
For 't is Heaven's will — that, after a disease
Begun and ended within three days' space,
Her child should die; as Ellen now exclaimed,
Her own — deserted child! — Once, only once,
She saw it in that mortal malady; And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain
Permission to attend its obsequies.
She reached the house, last of the funeral train;
And some one, as she entered, having chanced
To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay, ye must wait my time!' and down she sate,
And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping.

Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,
Until at length her soul was satisfied.

You see the Infant's Grave; and to this spot,
The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
On whatsoever errand, urged her steps;
Hither she came; here stood, and sometimes knelt
In the broad day, a rueful Magdalen!
So call her; for not only she bewailed
A mother's loss, but mourned in bitterness
Her own transgression; penitent sincere
As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye.
— At length the parents of the foster-child,
Noting that in despite of their commands
She still renewed and could not but renew
Those visitations, ceased to send her forth;
Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, confined.
I failed not to remind them that they erred;
For holy Nature might not thus be crossed,

Thus wronged in woman's breast: in me
I pleaded —
But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapped,
And the flower drooped; as every eye could see,
It hung its head in mortal anguish.
— Aided by this appearance, I at length Prevailed; and, from those bonds released,
she went
Home to her mother's house.
The Youth was fed;
The rash betrayer could not face the shame
Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused;
And little would his presence, or proof given
Of a relenting soul, have now availed;
For, like a shadow, he was passed away
From Ellen's thoughts; had perished in her mind
For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love, Save only those which to their common shame,
And to his moral being appertained:
Hope from that quarter would, I knew, have brought
A heavenly comfort; there she recognised
An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need;
There, and, as seemed, there only.
She had built
Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge;
That work a summer flood with lusty swell
Had swept away; and now her Spirit longed
For its last flight to heaven's security.
— The bodily frame wasted from day to day;
Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares.
Her mind she strictly tutored to find
And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought, .
And much she read; and brooded feelingly
Upon her own unworthiness. To me,
As to a spiritual comforter and friend,
Her heart she opened; and no pains were spared
To mitigate, as gently as I could,
The sting of self-reproach, with healing words.
Meek Saint! through patience glorified on earth!
In whom, as by her lonely heart she saw
ne ghastly face of cold decay put on
sun-like beauty, and appeared divine!
ay I not mention—that, within those
calls,
due observance of her pious wish,
he congregation joined with me in prayer
or her soul's good? Nor was that office
vain.

Much did she suffer: but, if any friend,
holding her condition, at the sight
ave way to words of pity or complaint,
he stilled them with a prompt reproof,
and said,
He who afflicts me knows what I can
bear;
nd, when I fail, and can endure no more,
'll mercifully take me to himself.'
o, through the cloud of death, her Spirit
passed
sto that pure and unknown world of love
Where injury cannot come:—and here is
laid
he mortal Body by her Infant's side.'

The Vicar ceased; and downcast looks
made known
that each had listened with his inmost
heart.
for me, the emotion scarcely was less
strong
or less benign than that which I had felt
When seated near my venerable Friend,
nder those shady elms, from him I heard
The story that retraced the slow decline
Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath
With the neglected house to which she
clung.

— I noted that the Solitary's cheek
confessed the power of nature.—Pleased
though sad,
More pleased than sad, the grey-haired
Wanderer sate;
Thanks to his pure imaginative soul
spacious and serene; his blameless life,
His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and
love
Of human kind! He was it who first broke
The pensive silence, saying:—
"Blest are they
Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong
Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have
erred.
This tale gives proof that Heaven most
gently deals
With such, in their affliction.—Ellen's fate,

Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,
Call to my mind dark hints which I have
heard
Of one who died within this vale, by doom
Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.
Where, Sir, I pray you, where are the
bones
Of Wilfrid Armathwaite?"

The Vicar answered,
"In that green nook, close by the Church-
yard wall,
Beneath you hawthorn, planted by myself
In memory and for warning, and in sign
Of sweetness where dire anguish had been
known,
Of reconciliation after deep offence—
There doth he rest. No theme his fate
supplies
For the smooth glozings of the indulgent
world;
Nor need the windings of his devions course
Be here retraced;—enough that, by mishap
And venial error, robbed of competence,
And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,
He craved a substitute in troubled joy;
Against his conscience rose in arms, and, brav ing
Divine displeasure, broke the marriage
vow.
That which he had been weak enough to do
Was misery in remembrance; he was stung,
Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the
smiles
Of wife and children stung to agony.
Wretched at home, he gained no peace
abroad;
Ranged through the mountains, slept upon
the earth,
Asked comfort of the open air, and found
No quiet in the darkness of the night,
No pleasure in the beauty of the day.
His flock he slighted: his paternal fields
Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished
To fly—but whither! And this gracious
Church,
That wears a look so full of peace and hope
And love, benignant mother of the vale,
How fair amid her brood of cottages!
She was to him a sickness and reproach.
Much to the last remained unknown: but this
Is sure, that through remorse and grief he
died;
Though pitied among men, absolved by
God,
He could not find forgiveness in himself;
Nor could endure the weight of his own shame.

Here rests a Mother. But from her I turn
And from her grave. — Behold — upon that ridge,
That, stretching boldly from the mountain side,
Carries into the centre of the vale
Its rocks and woods — the Cottage where she dwelt
And where yet dwells her faithful Partner, left

(Full eight years past) the solitary prop
Of many helpless Children. I began
With words that might be prelude to a tale
Of sorrow and dejection; but I feel
No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes
See daily in that happy family.
— Bright garland form they for the pensive brow
Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,
Those six fair Daughters, budding yet — not one,
Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower.
Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once
That Father was, and filled with anxious fear,
Now, by experience taught, he stands assured,
That God, who takes away, yet takes not half
Of what he seems to take; or gives it back,
Not to our prayer, but far beyond our prayer;
He gives it — the boon produce of a soil
Which our endeavours have refused to till,
And hope hath never watered. The Abode,
Whose grateful owner can attest these truths,
Even were the object nearer to our sight,
Would seem in no distinction to surpass
The rudest habitations. Ye might think
That it had sprung self-raised from earth,
or grown
Out of the living rock, to be adorned
By nature only; but, if thither led,
Ye would discover, then, a studious work
Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

Brought from the woods the honeysuckle twines
Around the porch, and seems, in that trim place,
A plant no longer wild; the cultured rose
There blossoms, strong in health, and shall be soon
Roof-high; the wild pink crowns the garden-wall,
And with the flowers are intermingled stones
Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of the hills.
These ornaments, that fade not with the year,
A hardy Girl continues to provide;
Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky height
Her Father's prompt attendant, does for him
All that a boy could do, but with delight.
More keen and prouder daring; yet last she,
Within the garden, like the rest, a bed
For her own flowers and favourite herbs
a space,
By sacred charter, holden for her use.
— These, and whatever else the garden bears
Of fruit or flower, permission asked or as,
I freely gather; and my leisure draws
A not unfrequent pastime from the hum
Of bees around their range of abode.
Hives
Busy in that enclosure; while the rill,
That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes his voice
To the pure course of human life when there
Flows on in solitude. But, when the glow
Of night is falling round my steps, the most
This Dwelling charms me; often I stay
short,
(Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth
my sight
With prospect of the company within,
Laid open through the blazing window: there
I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel
Spinning amain, as if to overtake
The never-halting time; or, in her turn,
Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood
That skill in this or other household work.
Which, from her Father's honoured hand,
While she was yet a little-one, had learned.
Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are gay;
And the whole house seems filled with gaiety.
THE EXCURSION

BOOK SEVENTH
THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS — (continued)

ARGUMENT

Impression of these Narratives upon the thor’s mind — Pastor invited to give account certain Graves that lie apart — Clergyman his Family — Fortunate influence of change situation — Activity in extreme old age other Clergyman, a character of resolute virtue — Lamentations over misdirected aspirations — Instance of less exalted excellence in leaf man — Elevated character of a blind man — Reflection upon Blindness — Interposed by a Peasant who passes — His animal servility and careless vivacity — He occa
sions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting Trees — A female Infant’s Grave — at her Birth — Sorrow at her Departure — A useful Peasant — His patriotic enthusiasm distinguished qualities — His untimely death — Exultation of the Wanderer, as a poet, in this Picture — Solitary how affected — ornament of a Knight — Traditions concerning him — Peroration of the Wanderer on the insignificance of things and the revolutions of society — Hints at his own past Calling — thanks the Pastor.

While thus from theme to theme the Historian passed, he words he uttered, and the scene that lay before our eyes, awakened in my mind a vivid remembrance of those long-past hours, then, in the hollow of some shadowy vale, What time the splendour of the setting sun ay beautiful on Snowdon’s sovereign brow, (in Cadair Idris, or huge Penmanmawr)
A wandering Youth, I listened with delight to pastoral melody or warlike air, drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp
by some accomplished Master, while he sat amid the quiet of the green recess, and there did inexhaustibly dispense in interchange of soft or solemn tunes,

Tender or blithe; now, as the varying mood
Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice
From youth or maiden, or some honoured chief
Of his compatriot villagers (that hung
Around him, drinking in the impassioned notes
Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required
For their heart’s ease or pleasure. Strains of power
Were they, to seize and occupy the sense;
But to a higher mark than song can reach
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream
Which overflowed the soul was passed away,
A consciousness remained that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

“These grassy heaps lie amicably close,”
Said I, “like surges heaving in the wind
Along the surface of a mountain pool:
Whence comes it, then, that yonder we behold
Five graves, and only five, that rise together
Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching
On the smooth playground of the village school?”

The Vicar answered, — “No disdainful pride
In them who rest beneath, nor any course
Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped
To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.
— Once more look forth, and follow with your sight
The length of road that from you mountain’s base
Through bare enclosures stretches, till its line
Is lost within a little tuft of trees;
Then, reappearing in a moment, quits
The cultivated fields; and up the heathy waste,
Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,
Led towards an easy outlet of the vale,
That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,
By which the road is hidden, also hides
A cottage from our view; though I discern
( Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees
The smokeless chimney-top.—
All unembowered
And naked stood that lowly Parsonage
(For such in truth it is, and appertains
To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)
When hither came its last Inhabitant.
Rough and forbidding were the choicest
roads
By which our northern wilds could then be
crossed; 60
And into most of these secluded vales
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
So, at his dwelling-place the Priest arrived
With store of household goods, in panniers
slung
On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,
And on the back of more ignoble beast;
That, with like burthen of effects most
prized
Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.
Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight
years;
But still, methinks, I see them as they
passed 70
In order, drawing toward their wished-for
home.
— Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass
Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised
freight,
Each in his basket nodding drowsily;
Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with
flowers,
Which told it was the pleasant month of
June;
And, close behind, the comely Matron rode,
A woman of soft speech and gracious
smile,
And with a lady's mien.— From far they
came,
Even from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs
had been 80
A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered
By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest;
And freak put on, and arch word dropped
— to swell
The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
That gathered round the slowly-moving
train.
— 'Whence do they come? and with what
errand charged?
Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
Who pitch their tents under the greenwood
tree?
Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact
Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the
Wood, 90
And, by that whiskered tabby's aid, at
forth
The lucky venture of sage Whittington.
When the next village hears the show an-
nounced
By blast of trumpet?' Plenteous was the
growth
Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen
On many a staring countenance portrayed
Of boor or burgher, as they marched ajar.
And more than once their steadiness of foot
Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
To their inventive humour, by stern looks.
And questions in authoritative tone,
From some staid guardian of the patsim's
peace,
Checking the sober steed on which he rode,
In his suspicious wisdom; oftener still,
By notice indirect, or blunt demand
From traveller halting in his own despite,
A simple curiosity to ease:
Of which adventures, that beguiled and
cheered
Their grave migration, the good pair would
tell,
With undiminished glee, in hoary age.

A Priest he was by function; but to his
course
From his youth up, and high as manhood's
noon,
(The hour of life to which he then was
brought)
Had been irregular, I might say, wild;
By books unstrengthened, by his pastoral car
Too little checked. An active, ardent mind:
A fancy pregnant with resources and scheme
To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games;
A generous spirit, and a body strong
— To cope with stoutest champions of the
bowl
Had earned for him sure welcome, and the
rights
Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall
Of country 'squire; or at the statelier board
Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly
pomp
Withdrawn,— to while away the summer
hours
In condescension among rural guests.

With these high comrades he had revelled
long,
Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk
y hopes of coming patronage beguiled 130
ill the heart sickened. So, each loftier aim
abandoning all his showy friends, or a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)
turned to this secluded chapelry; he had been offered to his doubtful choice
by an unthought-of patron. Bleak and bare
they found the cottage, their allotted home;
taken without, and rude within; a spot
With which the Cure not long had been en-dow-ed:
and far remote the chapel stood, — remote,
and, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,
ave through a gap high in the hills, an opening
shadeless and shelterless, by driving showers
requented, and beset with howling winds.
Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might hang
In his own mind, to quarrel with the choice
Or the necessity that fixed him here;
Apart from old temptations, and con-strained
To punctual labour in his sacred charge.
See him a constant preacher to the poor!
And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,
Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,
The sick in body, or distrest in mind;
And, by a salutary change, compelled
To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day
With no engagement, in his thoughts, more proud
Or splendid than his garden could afford,
His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock ranged
Or the wild brooks; from which he now returned
Contented to partake the quiet meal
Of his own board, where sat his gentle Mate
And three fair Children, plentifully fed
Though simply, from their little household farm;
Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl
By nature yielded to his practised hand; —
To help the small but certain comings-in
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less
Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs
A charitable door.

Those pleasing works the Housewife's skill produced:
Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand
Was busier with his task — to rid, to plant,
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight;
A thriving covert! And when wishes, formed
In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,
Restored me to my native valley, here
To end my days; well pleased was I to see
The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-side,
Screened from assault of every bitter blast;
While the dark shadows of the summer leaves
Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy roof.
Time, which had thus afforded willing help

So days and years
Passed on; — the inside of that rugged house
Was trimmed and brightened by the Matron's care,
And gradually enriched with things of price,
Which might be lacked for use or ornament.
What, though no soft and costly sofa there
Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,
And no vain mirror glittered upon the walls,
Yet were the windows of the low abode
By shutters weather-fended, which at once
Repelled the storm and deadened its loud roar.
There snow-white curtains hung in decent folds;
Tough moes, and long-enduring mountain plants,
That creep along the ground with sinuous trail,
Were nicely braided; and composed a work
Like Indian mats, that with appropriate grace
Lay at the threshold and the inner doors;
And a fair carpet, woven of homespun wool
But tinctured daintily with florid hues,
For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,
Covered the smooth blue slabs of mountain-stone
With which the parlour-floor, in simplest guise
Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid.

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand
Was busier with his task — to rid, to plant,
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight;
A thriving covert! And when wishes, formed
In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,
Restored me to my native valley, here
To end my days; well pleased was I to see
The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-side,
Screened from assault of every bitter blast;
While the dark shadows of the summer leaves
Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy roof.
Time, which had thus afforded willing help
To beautify with nature’s fairest growths
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,
Upon its Master’s frame, a wintry grace;
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

But how could I say, gently? for he still
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm, 310
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures
lost;
Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;
And still his harsher passions kept their
hold —
Anger and indignation. Still he loved
The sound of titled names, and talked in
glee
Of long-past banquetings with high-born
friends:
Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight
Uproused by recollected injury, railed 320
At their false ways disdainfully, — and oft
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye
Of fire, incensed beneath his hoary brow.
— Those transports, with staid looks of
pure good-will,
And with soft smile, his consort would re-
prove.
She, far behind him in the race of years,
Yet keeping her first mildness, was ad-
vanced
Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,
To that still region whither all are bound;
Him might we liken to the setting sun 330
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,
Struggling and bold, and shining from the
west
With an inconstant and unmellowed light;
She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung
As if with wish to veil the restless orb;
From which it did itself imbibe a ray
Of pleasing lustre.— But no more of this;
I better love to sprinkle on the sod
That now divides the pair, or rather say,
That still unites them, praises, like heaven’s
dew,
Without reserve descending upon both.

Our very first in eminence of years
This old Man stood, the patriarch of the
Vale!
And, to his unmolested mansion, death
Had never come, through space of forty
years;
Sparing both old and young in that abode.

Suddenly then they disappeared: not twice
Had summer scorched the fields; not twice
had fallen,
On those high peaks, the first autumnal
snow,
Before the greedy visiting was closed, —
And the long-privileged house left empty
— swept
As by a plague. Yet no rapacious place
Had been among them; all was gentle
death,
One after one, with intervals of peace.
A happy consummation! an accord
Sweet, perfect, to be wished for! save that
here
Was something which to mortal sense
might sound
Like harshness, — that the old grey-headed
Sire,
The oldest, he was taken last; survived
When the meek Partner of his age, his son,
His Daughter, and that late and high-priced
gift,
His little smiling Grandchild, were as
more.

‘All gone; all vanished! he deprived us
barest,
How will he face the remnant of his life?
What will become of him?’ we said, and
mused
In sad conjectures — ‘Shall we meet him
now
Haunting with rod and line the craggy
brooks?
Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
Striving to entertain the lonely hours
With music?’ (for he had not ceased to
touch
The harp or viol which himself had framed,
For their sweet purposes, with perfect
skill.)

‘What titles will he keep? will he remain
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
A planter, and a reaper from the seed?
A man of hope and forward-looking mind
Even to the last!’ — Such was he, unsub-
dued.
But Heaven was gracious; yet a little while,
And this Survivor, with his cheerful three
Of open projects, and his inward hoard
Of unsunned griefs, too many and too keen.
Was overcome by unexpected sleep,
In one blest moment. Like a shadow
thrown
ftly and lightly from a passing cloud,

And constant as the motion of the day;

Stern self-denial round him spread, with

That might be deemed forbidding, did not

All generous feelings flourish and rejoice;

And resolution competent to take

Out of the bosom of simplicity

All that her holy customs recommend,

And the best ages of the world prescribe.

— Preaching, administering, in every work

Of his sublime vocation, in the walks

Of worldly intercourse between man and

And in his humble dwelling, he appears

A labourer, with moral virtue gilt,

With spiritual graces, like a glory,

crowned.”

“Doubt can be none,” the Pastor said,

This portraiture is sketched. The great,

The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise,—

These titles emperors and chiefs have borne,

Honour assumed or given: and him, the

Wonderful,

Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart,

Deservedly have styled. — From his abode

In a dependent chapelry that lies

Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,

Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,

And, having once espoused, would never

quit;

Into its graveyard will ere long be borne

That lowly, great, good Man. A simple

stone

May cover him; and by its help, perchance,

A century shall hear his name pronounced,

With images attendant on the sound;

Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight

Close

In utter night; and of his course remain

No cognizable vestiges, no more

Than of this breath, which shapes itself in

words

To speak of him, and instantly dissolves.”

The Pastor, pressed by thoughts which

round his theme

Still lingered, after a brief pause, resumed;

Against all trials; industry severe

 Ere gathered to each other.”

Calm of mind

and silence waited on these closing words;

until the Wanderer (whether moved by

fear

est in those passages of life were some

hat might have touched the sick heart of

his Friend

too nearly, or intent to reinforce

his own firm spirit in degree deprest

by tender sorrow for our mortal state)

thus silence broke: — “Behold a thoughtless

Man

from vice and premature decay preserved

by useful habits, to a fitter soil

Transplanted ere too late. — The hermit,

lodged

Midst the untrodden desert, tells his beads,

With each repeating its allotted prayer,

And thus divides and thus relieves the

time;

Smooth task, with his compared, whose

mind could string,

Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread

Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile

A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed;

Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us

Be the desire — too curiously to ask

How much of this is but the blind result

Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,

And what to higher powers is justly due.

But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring

vale

A Priest abides before whose life such

doubts

Fall to the ground; whose gifts of nature

lie

Retired from notice, lost in attributes

Of reason, honourably effaced by debts

Which her poor treasure-house is content to

owe,

And conquest over her dominion gained,

To which her frowardness must needs submit.

In this one Man is shown a temperance —

proof
"Noise is there not enough in doleful war,
But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,
And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,
To multiply and aggravate the din?
Pangs are there not enough in hopeless love—
And, in requited passion, all too much
Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—
But that the minstrel of the rural shade
Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse
The perturbation in the suffering breast,
And propagate its kind, far as he may?
—Ah who (and with such rapture as befits
The hallowed theme) will rise and celebrate
The good man's purposes and deeds; retrace
His struggles, his discomfits deplore,
His triumphs hail, and glorify his end;
That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury clouds
Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain,
And like the soft infections of the heart,
By charm of measured words may spread o'er field,
Hamlet, and town; and piety survive
Upon the lips of men in ball or bower;
Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,
And grave encouragement, by song inspired?
—Vain thought! but wherefore murmur or repine?
The memory of the just survives in heaven:
And, without sorrow, will the ground receive
That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best
Of what lies here confines us to degrees
In excellence less difficult to reach,
And milder worth: nor need we travel far
From those to whom our last regards were paid,
For such example.

Almost at the root
Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare
And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,
Oft stretches towards me, like a long straight path
Traced faintly in the greensward; there, beneath
A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman lies,
From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn
The precious gift of hearing. He grew up
From year to year in loneliness of soul;
And this deep mountain-valley was to his
Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn
Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep
With startling summons; not for his delight
The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him
Murmured the labouring bee. When stormy winds
Were working the broad bosom of the lake
Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves
Rocking the trees, or driving cloud above cloud
Along the sharp edge of you lofty crags,
The agitated scene before his eye
Was silent as a picture: evermore
Were all things silent, where so'er he moved.
Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts
Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side
Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog;
The plough he guided, and the scythe he swayed;
And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
Among the jocund reapers. For himself,
All watchful and industrious as he was,
He wrought not: neither field nor flock was owned:
No wish for wealth had place within his mind;
Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.

Though born a younger brother, need was none
That from the floor of his paternal home
He should depart, to plant himself anew.
And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued
Of rights to him; but he remained well pleased,
By the pure bond of independent love,
An inmate of a second family;
The fellow-labourer and friend of him
To whom the small inheritance had fallen
— Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight
That pressed upon his brother's house; for books
Were ready comrades whom he could not tire;
Of whose society the blameless Man
Was never satiated. Their familiar voice,
Even to old age, with unabated charm
guiled his leisure hours; refreshed his thoughts; yond its natural elevation raised s introverted spirit; and bestowed on his life an outward dignity hich all acknowledged. The dark winter night, ne stormy day, each had its own re- source; ng of the muses, sage historic tale, ience severe, or word of holy Writ announcing immortality and joy e the assembled spirits of just men ade perfect, and from injury secure. Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field, o no perverse suspicion he gave way, o languor, peevishness, nor vain com- plaint: nd they, who were about him, did not fail reverence, or in courtesy; they prized his gentle manners: and his peaceful smiles, he gleams of his slow-varying counte- nance, Were met with answering sympathy and love.

At length, when sixty years and five were told, A slow disease insensibly consumed The powers of nature; and a few short steps Of friends and kindred bore him from his home Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags) I'o the profounder stillness of the grave. — Nor was his funeral denied the grace Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief; Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude. And now that monumental stone preserves His name, and unambitiously relates How long, and by what kindly outward aids, And in what pure contentedness of mind, The sad privation was by him endured. — And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing sound Was wasted on the good Man’s living ear, Hath now its own peculiar sanctity; And, at the touch of every wandering breeze, Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of things! Guide of our way, mysterious comforter! Whose sacred influence, spread through earth and heaven, We all too thanklessly participate, Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch, Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he com- plained; Ask of the channelled rivers if they held A safer, easier, more determined course. What terror doth it strike into the mind To think of one, blind and alone, advancing Straight toward some precipice’s airy brink! But, timely warned, He would have stayed his steps, Protected, say enlightened, by his ear; And on the very edge of vacancy Not more endangered than a man whose eye Beholds the gulf beneath. — No floweret blooms Throughout the lofty range of these rough hills, Nor in the woods, that could from him conceal Its birth-place; none whose figure did not live Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth Enriched with knowledge his industrious mind; The ocean paid him tribute from the stores Lodged in her bosom; and, by science led, His genius mounted to the plains of heaven. — Methinks I see him — how his eye-balls rolled, Beneath his ample brow, in darkness paired,— But each instinct with spirit; and the frame Of the whole countenance alive with thought, Fancy, and understanding; while the voice Discoursed of natural or moral truth With eloquence, and such authentic power, That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood Abashed, and tender pity overawed."

“A noble — and, to unreflecting minds, A marvellous spectacle,” the Wanderer said, “Beings like these present!” But proof abounds Upon the earth that faculties, which seem
Extinguished, do not, therefore, cease to be.
And to the mind among her powers of sense
This transfer is permitted, — not alone
That the bereft their recompense may win;
But for remoter purposes of love
And charity; nor last nor least for this,
That to the imagination may be given
A type and shadow of an awful truth;
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,
Darkness is banished from the realms of death,
By man’s imperishable spirit quelled.
Unto the men who see not as we see
Futurity was thought, in ancient times,
To be laid open, and they prophesied.
And know we not that from the blind have flowed
The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre;
And wisdom married to immortal verse?"

Among the humber Worshies, at our feet
Lying insensible to human praise,
Love, or regret, — whose lineaments would next
Have been portrayed, I guess not; but it chanced
That, near the quiet churchyard where we sate,
A team of horses, with a ponderous freight
Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,
Whose sharp descent confounded their array,
Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse,
and mourn
The waste of death; and lo! the giant oak
Stretched on his bier — that massy timber wain;
Nor fail to note the Man who guides the team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class: 550
Grey locks profusely round his temples hung
In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite
Of winter cannot thin; the fresh air lodged
Within his cheek, as light within a cloud;
And he returned our greeting with a smile.
When he had passed, the Solitary spake;
"A Man he seems of cheerful yesterday;
And confident to-morrows; with a face
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much
Of Nature’s impress, — gaiety and health,
Freedom and hope; but keen, withal, and shrewd.
His gestures note, — and hark! his tones of voice
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered: "You have read him well.
Year after year is added to his store
With silent increase: summers, winters — past,
Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,
Ten summers and ten winters of a space
That lies beyond life’s ordinary bounds.
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix
The obligation of an anxious mind,
A pride in having, or a fear to lose;
Possessed like outskirts of some large domain,
By any one more thought of than by him
Who holds the land in fee, its careless lord!
Yet is the creature rational, endowed
With foresight; hears, too, every sabbath day,
The Christian promise with attentive ear;
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven
Reject the incense offered up by him,
Though of the kind which beasts and birds present
In grove or pasture; cheerfulness of soul,
From trepidation and repining free.
How many scrupulous worshippers fall down
Upon their knees, and daily homage pay
Less worthy, less religious even, than his:

This qualified respect, the old Man’s due,
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth."
(Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)
"I feel at times a motion of despite
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and skill,
As you have seen, bear such conspicuous part
In works of havoc; taking from these vailes
One after one, their proudest ornaments.
Full oft his doings leave me to deplore
Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapors nursed,
In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon’s edge,
A veil of glory for the ascending moon;
And oak whose roots by noontide dew were damped,
And on whose forehead inaccessible
Was given, the crowning bounty of the whole;
And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy
Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm
With which by nature every mother's soul
Is stricken in the moment when her throes
Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry
Which tells her that a living child is born;
And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,
That the dread storm is weathered by them both.

The Father — him at this unlooked-for gift
A bolder transport seizes. From the side
Of his bright hearth, and from his open door,
Day after day the gladness is diffused
To all that come, almost to all that pass;
Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer
Spread on the never-empty board, and drink
Health and good wishes to his new-born girl,
From cups replenished by his joyous hand.
— Those seven fair brothers variously were moved
Each by the thoughts best suited to his years:
But most of all and with most thankful mind
The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched;
A happiness that ebbed not, but remained
To fill the total measure of his soul!
— From the low tenement, his own abode,
Whither, as to a little private cell,
He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise,
To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,
Once every day he duteously repaired
To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe:
For in that female infant's name he heard
The silent name of his departed wife;
Heart-stirring music! hourly heard that name;
Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret Green,'
Oft did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill side.'

Oh! pang unthought of, as the precious boon
Itself had been unlooked-for; oh! dire stroke
Of desolating anguish for them all!
— Just as the Child could totter on the floor,
And, by some friendly finger’s help up-stayed,
Range round the garden walk, while she per chance
Was catching at some novelty of spring, &c.
Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its cell
Drawn by the sunshine — at that hopeful season
The winds of March, smiting insidiously,
Raised in the tender passage of the throat
Viewless obstruction; whence, all unforewarned,
The household lost their pride and soul’s delight.
— But time hath power to soften all regrets,
And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress
Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears Fail not to spring from either Parent’s eye
Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,
Yet this departed Little-one, too long
The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps
In what may now be called a peaceful bed.

On a bright day — so calm and bright, it seemed
To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-fair —
These mountains echoed to an unknown sound;
A valley, thrice repeated o’er the Corse
Lost down into the hollow of that grave,
Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould.
Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth!
Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these souls,
That they may knit together, and therewith
Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness!
Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss.
Dear Youth, by young and old alike beloved,
To me as precious as my own! — Green herbs
May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)
Over thy last abode, and we may pass
Reminded less imperiously of thee; —
The ridge itself may sink into the breast
Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;
Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,
Thy image disappear!

The Mountain
No eye can overlook, when ’mid a growth
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head
Decked with autumnal berries, that will shine
Spring’s richest blossoms; and ye may be marked,
By a brook-side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn: the peal
Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy re
Are brightened round her. In his new vale
Such and so glorious did this Youth appear
A sight that kindled pleasure in all heart.
By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which nature’s hand
Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bard
Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods
Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form:
Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet in shade
Discovered in their own despite to sense
Of mortals (if such fables without blame
May find chance-mention on this sacred ground)
So, through a simple rustic garb’s disguise
And through the impediment of rural ease
In him revealed a scholar’s genius above;
And so, not wholly hidden from men’s sight
In him the spirit of a hero walked
Our unpretending valley. — How the quk
Whizzed from the Stripling’s arm! I touched by him,
The inglorious foot-ball mounted to its pitch
Of the lark’s flight, — or shaped a rain’s curve,
Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!
The indefatigable fox had learned
To dread his perseverance in the chase;
With admiration would he lift his eyes
To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand
Was loth to assault the majesty he loved;
Else had the strongest fastnesses prove weak.
To guard the royal brood. The sail glead,
The wheeling swallow, and the darting snipe;
The sportive sea-gull dancing with its waves,
And cautious water-fowl, from distant climes,
Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mar
A mightier river, winds from realm to realm;
And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back
Bespotted— with innumerable isles:
Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk; observe
His capital city! Thence, along a tract
Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,
His finger moved, distinguishing the spots
Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged;
Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields
On which the sons of mighty Germany
Were taught a base submission.— ‘Here behold
A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,
Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods,
And mountains white with everlasting snow!’
— And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,
Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best
Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,
Have fought and perished for Helvetia’s rights—
Ah, not in vain!— or those who, in old time,
For work of happier issue, to the side
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,
When he had risen alone! No braver Youth
Descended from Judean heights, to march
With righteous Joshua; nor appeared in arms
When grove was felled, and altar was cast down,
And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-inflamed,
And strong in hatred of idolatry.”

The Pastor, even as if by these last words
Raised from his seat within the chosen shade,
Moved toward the grave; — instinctively his steps
We followed; and my voice with joy exclaimed:
“Power to the Oppressors of the world is given,
A might of which they dream not. Oh! the curse,
To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,
Father and founder of exalted deeds;
And, to whole nations bound in servile
straits,
The liberal donor of capacities
More than heroic! this to be, nor yet
Have sense of one connatural wish, nor
yet
Deserve the least return of human thanks;
Winning no recompense but deadly hate "830
With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn!"

When this involuntary strain had ceased,
The Pastor said: “So Providence is served;
The forkèd weapon of the skies can send
Illumination into deep, dark holds,
Which the mild sunbeam hath not power
to pierce.
Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and
cast
Pity away, soon shall ye quake with fear!
For, not unconscious of the mighty debt
Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer
owes,
840
Europe, through all her habitable bounds,
Is thirsting for their overthrow, who yet
Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,
By horror of their impious rites, preserved;
Are still permitted to extend their pride,
Like cedars on the top of Lebanon
Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,
And love ‘all hoping and expecting all,’
This hallowed grave demands, where rests
in peace
A humble champion of the better cause, 850
A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he asked
No higher name; in whom our country
showed,
As in a favourite son, most beautiful.
In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy
arts,
England, the ancient and the free, appeared
In him to stand before my swimming eyes,
Unconquerably virtuous and secure.
— No more of this, lest I offend his dust:
Short was his life, and a brief tale re-

860
mains.

One day — a summer’s day of annual
pomp
And solemn chase — from morn to sultry
noon
His steps had followed, fleetest of the fleet,
The red-deer driven along its native heath
With cry of hound and horn; and, in
that toil
Returned with sinews weakened and lax-
ed,
This generous Youth, too negligent of
Plunged — ’mid a gay and busy throng o-
vened
To wash the fleeces of his Father’s flock
Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dir-
Seized him, that self-same night;
through the space
Of twelve ensuing days his frame
wrenched,
Till nature rested from her work in death.
To him, thus snatched away, his com-
paid
A soldier’s honours. At his funeral bow-
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless
blue —
A golden lustre slept upon the hills;
And if by chance a stranger, wandered
there,
From some commanding eminence he
looked
Down on this spot, well pleased would
have seen
A glittering spectacle; but every face
Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been
moist
With tears, that wept not then; nor wet
the few,
Who from their dwellings came not for
to join
In this sad service, less disturbed than we.
They started at the tributary peal
Of instantaneous thunder, which announced
Through the still air, the closing of the
Grave;
And distant mountains echoed with a sound
Of lamentation, never heard before!”

The Pastor ceased.— My venerable
Friend
Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;
And, when that eloqy was ended, stood
Eurapt, as if his inward sense perceived
The prolongation of some still response.
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land.
The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power.
Its rights and virtues — by that Deity
Descending, and supporting his pure
heart
With patriotic confidence and joy.
at the last of those memorial words, pinning Solitary turned aside; their through manly instinct to conceal her emotions spreading from the heart is worn cheek; or with uneasy shame those cold humours of habitual spleen, fondly seeking in dispraise of manne and self-excuse, had sometimes urged self-abuse a not inelegant tongue. 910 right toward the sacred Edifice his steps been directed; and we saw him now it upon a monumental stone, ne uncouth form was grafted on the wall, ather seemed to have grown into the side the rude pile; as oft-times trunks of trees, are nature works in wild and craggy spots, seen incorporate with the living rock endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note his employment, with a courteous smile claimed — "The saggest Antiquarian’s eye task would foil;" then, letting fall his voice he advanced, thus spake: "Tradition tells t, in Eliza’s golden days, a Knight se on a war-horse sumptuously attired, fixed his home in this sequestered vale. left untold if here he first drew breath, as a stranger reached this deep recess, mowing and unknown. A pleasing thought metimes entertain, that haply bound 920 Scotland’s court in service of his Queen, sent on mission to some northern Chief England’s realm, this vale he might have seen th transient observation; and thence caught image fair, which, brightening in his soul hen joy of war and pride of chivalry extinguished beneath accumulated years, d power to draw him from the world; resolved make that paradise his chosen home which his peaceful fancy oft had turned. Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief may rest Upon unwritten story fondly traced From sire to son, in this obscure retreat The Knight arrived, with spear and shield, and borne Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked With brodered housings. And the lofty Steed — His sole companion, and his faithful friend, Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range In fertile pastures — was beheld with eyes Of admiration and delightful awe, 950 By those untravelled Dalemen. With less pride, Yet free from touch of envious discontent, They saw a mansion at his bidding rise, Like a bright star, amid the lowly band Of their rude homesteads. Here the Warrior dwelt; And, in that mansion, children of his own, Or kindred, gathered round him. As a tree That falls and disappears, the house is gone; And, through improvidence or want of love For ancient worth and honourable things, 960 The spear and shield are vanished, which the Knight Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains Of that foundation in domestic care Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this stone, Faithless memorial! and his family name Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang From out the ruins of his stately lodge: These, and the name and title at full length,— 970 Sir Alfred Irving, with appropriate words Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath Or posy, girding round the several fronts Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells, That in the steeple hang, his pious gift.” "So falls, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,” The grey-haired Wanderer pensively exclaimed, “All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
The stars of human glory are cast down;
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and
palms

Of all the mighty, withered and consumed!
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
Long to protect her own. The man him-
self
Departs; and soon is spent the line of
those
Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,
Did most resemble him. Degrees and
ranks,
Fraternities and orders— heaping high
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,
And placing trust in privilege confirmed
And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a
smile
Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
Of Desolation, aimed: to slow decline
These yield, and these to sudden over-
throw:
Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of
green,
Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps
Their monuments and their memory. The
vast Frame
Of social nature changes evermore
Her organs and her members, with decay
Restless, and restless generation, powers
And functions dying and produced at
need,—
And by this law the mighty whole subsists:
With an ascent and progress in the main;
Yet, oh! how disproportioned to the hopes
And expectations of self-flattering minds!

The courteous Knight, whose bones are
here interred,
Lived in an age conspicuous as our own
For strife and ferment in the minds of
men;
Whence alteration in the forms of things,
Various and vast. A memorable age!
Which did to him assign a pensive lot—
To linger 'mid the last of those bright
clouds
That, on the steady breeze of honour,
sailed
In long procession calm and beautiful.
He who had seen his own bright order
fade,
And its devotion gradually decline,
(While war, relinquishing the lance
shield,
Her temper changed, and bowed to
laws)
Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,
That violent commotion, which o'erthrew
In town and city and sequestered gles,
Altar, and cross, and church of
roof,
And old religious house— pile after pile,
And shook their tenants out into the fast
Like wild beasts without home! Their
came;
But why no softening thought of
gratitude,
No just remembrance, scruple, or
doubt?
Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help.
Save at worst need, from bold impetus
force,
Fitliest allied to anger and revenge.
But Human-kind rejoices in the might
Of mutability; and airy hopes,
Dancing around, hinder and disturb
Those meditations of the soul that feel
The retrospective virtues. Festive song
Breaks from the maddened nations at
sight
Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

Even," said the Wanderer, "as the
courteous Knight,
Bound by his vow to labour for redress
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact
By sword and lance the law of gentlemen
(If I may venture of myself to speak,
Trusting that not incongruously I blend
Low things with lofty) I too shall
doomed
To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem
Of the poor calling which my youth en-
braced
With no unworthy prospect. But enough
—Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twas
seemlier now
To stop, and yield our gracious Teach-
thanks
For the pathetic records which his voice
Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt
truth,
Tending to patience when affliction stirs
To hope and love; to confident repose
In God; and reverence for the dust
Man."
BOOK EIGHTH

THE PARSONAGE

ARGUMENT

To the apology and apprehensions that he has detained his Auditors too long, with Pastor's invitation to his house — Solitary lined to comply — Rally the Wanderer — playfully draws a comparison between his apostle profession and that of the Knight — Which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the facturing spirit — Favourable effects — other side of the picture, and chiefly as it affects the humbler classes — Wanderer's holiness of all national grandeur if supported by moral worth — Physical science to support itself — Lamentations over excess of manufacturing industry among the Classes — Picture of a employed in a Cotton-mill — Ignorance of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed — Conversation on off by a renewed Invitation from the path leading to his House — Its apartment described — His Daughter — His Son (a Boy) enters with his Com — Their happy appearance — The Wanhaw affected by the sight of them.

Pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale those acknowledgments subscribed his

own,

a sedate compliance, which the Priest did not to notice, inly pleased, and said:

ye, by whom invited I began

the narratives of calm and humble life, satisfied, 't is well, — the end is gained;

in return for sympathy bestowed patient listening, thanks accept from me.

life, death, eternity! momentous themes they — and might demand a seraph's tongue,

they not equal to their own support; therefore no incompetence of mine

ld do them wrong. The universal forms

human nature, in a spot like this,
sent themselves at once to all men's view:

wished for act and circumstance, that make

individual known and understood;

such as my best judgment could select

From what the place afforded, have been given;

Though apprehensions crossed that my zeal

To his might well be likened, who unlocks

A cabinet stored with gems and pictures — draws

His treasures forth, soliciting regard

To this, and this, as worthier than the last,

Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased

More than the exhibitor himself, becomes

Weary and faint, and longs to be released.

— But let us hence! my dwelling is in sight,

And there — "

At this the Solitary shrunk

With backward will; but, wanting not address

That inward motion to disguise, he said

To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;

— "The peaceable remains of this good Knight

Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful scorn,

If consciousness could reach him where he lies

That one, albeit of these degenerate times,

Deploring changes past, or dreading change

Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in thought,

The fine vocation of the sword and lance

With the gross aims and body-bending toil

Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth

Pitied, and, where they are not known, despised.

Yet, by the good Knight’s leave, the two estates

Are graced with some resemblance. Errant those,

Exiles and wanderers — and the like are these;

Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and dale,

Carrying relief for nature’s simple wants.

— What though no higher recompense be sought

Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil.

Full oft procured, yet may they claim respect,

Among the intelligent, for what this course Enables them to be and to perform.

Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,

While solitude permits the mind to feel;

Instructs, and prompts her to supply defects
By the division of her inward self
For grateful converse: and to these poor

men
Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)
Is bountiful — go wheresoe’er they may; 60
Kind nature’s various wealth is all their own.
Versed in the characters of men; and bound,
By ties of daily interest, to maintain
Conciliatory manners and smooth speech;
Such have been, and still are in their degree,
Examples efficacious to refine
Rude intercourse; apt agents to expel,
By importation of unlooked-for arts,
Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;
Raising, through just gradation, savage life
To rustic, and the rustic to urbane. 70
— Within their moving magazines is lodged
Power that comes forth to quicken and ex-
alt
Affections seated in the mother’s breast,
And in the lover’s fancy; and to feed
The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.
— By these Itinerants, as experienced men,
Counsel is given; contention they appease
With gentle language; in remotest wilds,
Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings
bring; 80
Could the proud quest of chivalry do more?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer, "they
who gain
A panegyric from your generous tongue!
But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained
Aught of romantic interest, it is gone.
Their purer service, in this realm at least,
Is past for ever. — An inventive Age
Has wrought, if not with speed of magic,
yet
To most strange issues. I have lived to
mark
A new and unforeseen creation rise
90
From out the labours of a peaceful Land
Wielding her potent enginery to frame
And to produce, with appetite as keen
As that of war, which rests not night or day,
Industrious to destroy! With fruitless
pains
Might one like me now visit many a tract
Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,
A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,
Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe’er he
came —
Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill; 100
Or struggling burgh, of ancient charter
proud,
And dignified by battlements and towers
Of some stern castle, mouldering on a
brow
Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.
The foot-path faintly marked, the boat
track wild,
And formidable length of placid lane,
(Prized avenues ere others had been shed)
Or easier links connecting place with place,
Have vanished — swallowed up by side
roads
Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom
Of Britain’s farthest glens. The Earth
lent
Her waters, Air her breezes; and the sea
Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse.
Glistening along the low and woody dale,
Or, in its progress, on the lofty side,
Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned far.

Meanwhile, at social Industry’s com-
mand,
How quick, how vast an increase! From
the germ
Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced
Here a huge town, continuous and compact,
Hiding the face of earth for leagues —
there,
Where not a habitation stood before,
Abodes of men irregularly massed
Like trees in forests, — spread through
spacious tracts,
O’er which the smoke of unremitting fires
Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreath
Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.
And, wheresoe’er the traveller turns his
steps,
He sees the barren wilderness erased,
Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims
How much the mild Directress of the plow
Owes to alliance with these new-born arts
— Hence is the wide sea populated, —
the shores
Of Britain are resorted to by ships
Freighted from every climate of the world
With the world’s choicest produce. Hes
that sum
Of keels that rest within her crowded port
Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays,
That animating spectacle of sails
That, through her inland regions, to the
fro
Pass with the respirations of the tide,
Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,
Our ancestors, within the still domain
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,
Their vigils kept; where tapers day and
night
On the dim altar burned continually,
In token that the House was evermore
Watching to God. Religious men were
they;
Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire
Above this transitory world, allow
That there should pass a moment of the
year,
When in their land the Almighty's service
ceased.

Triumph who will in these profane rites
Which we, a generation self-extolled,
As zealously perform! I cannot share
His proud complacency: — yet do I exult,
Casting reserve away, exult to see
An intellectual mastery exercised
O'er the blind elements; a purpose given,
A perseverance fed; almost a soul
Imparted — to brute matter. I rejoice,
Measuring the force of those gigantic
powers
That, by the thinking mind, have been com-
pelled
To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.
For with the sense of admiration blends
The animating hope that time may come
When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by the
might
Of this dominion over nature gained,
Men of all lands shall exercise the same
In due proportion to their country's need;
Learning, though late, that all true glory
rests,
All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,
Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,
Palmyra, central in the desert, fell;
And the Arts died by which they had been
raised.
— Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,
And feelingly the Sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is the Philosophy whose sway depends
On mere material instruments; — how weak
Those arts, and high inventions, if un-
propped
By virtue. — He, sighing with pensive
grief,
Amid his calm abstractions, would admit
That not the slender privilege is theirs
To save themselves from blank forgetfulness!"

When from the Wanderer's lips these words had fallen,
I said, "And, did in truth those vaunted Arts
Possess such privilege, how could we escape
Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,
And would preserve as things above all price,
The old domestic morals of the land,
Her simple manners, and the stable worth
That dignified and cheered a low estate?
Oh! where is now the character of peace,
Sobriety, and order, and chaste love,
And honest dealing, and untainted speech,
And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer;
That made the very thought of country-life
A thought of refuge, for a mind detained
Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd?
Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept
With conscientious reverence, as a day
By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced
Holy and blest; and where the winning grace
Of all the lighter ornaments attached
To time and season, as the year rolled round?"

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passionate response,
"Fled utterly! or only to be traced
In a few fortunate retreats like this;
Which I behold with trembling, when I think
What lamentable change, a year—a month—
May bring; that brook converting as it runs
Into an instrument of deadly bane
For those, who, yet untempted to forsake
The simple occupations of their sires,
Drink the pure water of its innocent stream
With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)
How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart!
Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
The habitations empty! or perchance
The Mother left alone,—no helping hand
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
Or in dispatch of each day's little grovel
Of household occupation; no nice arts
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
Nothing to praise, to teach, or command!

The Father, if perchance he still exists
His old employments, goes to field and wood,
No longer led or followed by the Sons;
Idlers perchance they were,—but is it sight;
Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth:
'Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,
Ne'er to return! That birthright now is lost.
Economists will tell you that the State
Thrives by the forfeiture—unfelt thought,
And false as monstrous! Can the most thrive
By the destruction of her innocent sons
In whom a premature necessity
Blocks out the forms of nature, prevails
The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up
The infant Being in itself, and makes—
Its very spring a season of decay!
The lot is wretched, the condition sad,
Whether a pining discontent survive,
And thirst for change; or habit is no more dued
The soul deprest, dejected—even to low
Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

Oh, banish fair such wisdom as condemns
A native Briton to these inward chains,
Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;
Without his own consent, or knowledge, fixed!
He is a slave to whom release comes not,
And cannot come. The boy, where'er he turns,
Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up
Among the clouds, and roars through the ancient woods;
Or when the sun is shining in the east,
As abject, as degraded? At this day,
Who shall enumerate the crazy huts,
And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth
A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair
Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear;
Or wearing, (shall we say?) in that white
growth
An ill-adjusted turban, for defence
Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-
burnt brows;
By savage Nature? Shrivelled are their
lips,
Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet
On which they stand; as if thereby they
drew
Some nourishment, as trees do by their
roots,
From earth, the common mother of us all.
Figure and mien, complexion and attire,
Are leagued to strike dismay; but out-
stretched hand
And whining voice denote them supplicants
For the least boon that pity can bestow.
Such on the breast of darksome heaths
are found;
And with their parents occupy the skirts
Of furze-clad commons; such are born and
reared
At the mine’s mouth under impending
rocks;
Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave;
Or where their ancestors erected huts,
For the convenience of unlawful gain,
In forest purlieus; and the like are bred,
All England through, where nooks and
slips of ground
Purloined, in times less jealous than our
own,
From the green margin of the public way,
A residence afford them, ’mid the bloom
And gaiety of cultivated fields.
Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)
Do I remember oft-times to have seen
’Mid Buxton’s dreary heights. In earnest
watch,
Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand;
Then, following closely with the cloud of
dust,
An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.
— Up from the ground they snatch the
copper coin,
And, on the freight of merry passengers
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;
And spin — and pant — and overhead again,
Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost,
Or bounty tires — and every face, that
smiled
Encouragement, hath ceased to look that
way.
— But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,
These, bred to little pleasure in them-
selves,
Are profitless to others.

Turn we then
To Britons born and bred within the pale
Of civil polity, and early trained
To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,
The bread they eat. A sample should I
give
Of what this stock hath long produced to
enrich
The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,
'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose
shrill notes
Impart new gladness to the morning air!'
Forgive me if I venture to suspect
That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,
Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints;
Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees
Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,
Fellows to those that lustily upheld
The wooden stools for everlasting use,
Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his
brow
Under whose shaggy canopy are set
Two eyes — not dim, but of a healthy
stare —
Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and
strange —
Proclaiming boldly that they never drew
A look or motion of intelligence
From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-
row,
Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,
Till perfect mastery crown the pains at
last.
— What kindly warmth from touch of
fostering hand,
What penetrating power of sun or breeze,
Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his
soul
Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice?
This torpor is no pitiable work
Of modern ingenuity; no town
Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught
Of sottish vice or desperate breach of
law,
To which (and who can tell where or how
soon?)

He may be roused. This Boy the fields
produce:
His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering
scythe,
The carter's whip that on his shoulder rest,
In air high-towering with a boorish pomp.
The sceptre of his sway; his country's
name,
Her equal rights, her churches and her
schools —
What have they done for him? And let
me ask,
For tens of thousands uninformed as he?
In brief, what liberty of mind is here?"

This ardent sally pleased the mild god
Man,
To whom the appeal couched in its closing
words
Was pointedly addressed; and to his
thoughts
That, in assent or opposition, rose
Within his mind, he seemed prepared to
give
Prompt utterance; but the Vicar interposed
With invitation urgently renewed.
— We followed, taking as he led, a path
Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,
Whose flexible boughs low bending with a
weight
Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and
roots
That gave them nourishment. Where frozy
winds
Howl from the north, what kindly warmth
methought,
Is here — how grateful this imperious
screen!
— Not shaped by simple wearing of the
foot
On rural business passing to and fro
Was the commodious walk: a careful
hand
Had marked the line, and strewn its sur-
face o'er
With pure cerulean gravel, from the height
Fetched by a neighbouring brook. — Across
the vale
The stately fence accompanied our steps:
And thus the pathway, by perennial green
Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to
unite,
As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,
The Pastor's solemn chain, with the house of
prayer.
like image of solemnity, conjoined
th feminine allurements soft and fair, — a reverend
mansion's self displayed; — a reverend
pile
th bold projections and recesses deep;
adorned, yet gay and lightsome as it stood
shading the noontide sun. We paused to
admire
a pillared porch, elaborately embossed;
low wide windows with their millions
old;
ornamented, richly fretted, of grey stone;
that smooth slope from which the
dwelling rose,
beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers
decorated shrubs, protected and
adorned:
fusion bright! and every flower assum-
ing
more than natural vividness of hue,
unaffected contrast with the gloom
sober cypress, and the darker foil
were, in which survived some traces, here
untouched, of grotesque device
and uncouth fancy. From behind the roof
we see the slim ash and massy sycamore,
ending their diverse foliage with the
ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped
the huge round chimneys, harbour of
delight
or wren and redbreast, — where they sit
and sing
heir slender ditties when the trees are bare.
or must I leave untouched (the picture
else
'tere incomplete) a relic of old times
appily spared, a little Gothic niche
fanciful workmanship; that once had held
the sculptured image of some patron-saint,
the blessed Virgin, looking down
all who entered those religious doors. 490

But lo! where from the rocky garden-
mount
rown by its antique summer-house —
descends,
light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;
or she hath recognised her honoured
friend,
the Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt
kiss
the gladsome Child bestows at his request;
and, up the flowery lawn as we advance,
Hanges on the old Man with a happy look,
And with a pretty restless hand of love.
— We enter — by the Lady of the place
Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:
A lofty stature undepressed by time,
Whose visitation had not wholly spared
The finer lineaments of form and face;
To that complexion brought which prudence
trusts in
And wisdom loves. — But when a stately
ship
Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast
On homeward voyage, what — if wind and
wave,
And hardship undergone in various climes,
Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,
And that full trim of inexperienced hope
With which she left her haven — not for this,
Should the sun strike her, and the impartial
breeze
Play on her streamers, fails she to assume
Brightness and touching beauty of her own,
That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair,
appeared
This goodly Matron, shining in the beams
Of unexpected pleasure. — Soon the board
Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we be-
guiled
The mid-day hours with desultory talk;
From trivial themes to general argument
Passing, as accident or fancy led,
Or courtesy prescribed. While question
rose
And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve
Dropping from every mind, the Solitary
Resumed the manners of his happier days;
And in the various conversation bore
A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;
Yet with the grace of one who in the
world
Had learned the art of pleasing, and had
now
Occasion given him to display his skill,
Upon the steadfast 'vantage-ground of truth.
He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,
Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale,
Seen, from the shady room in which we
sat,
In softened perspective; and more than
once
Praised the consummate harmony serene
Of gravity and elegance, diffused
Parted and re-united: his compeer
To the still lake, whose stillness is to
As beautiful — as grateful to the mind.
But to what object shall the lovely C:
Be likened? She whose countenance as
Unite the graceful qualities of both,
Even as she shares the pride and joy of
both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved; a
vivid eye
Glistened with tenderness; his mind
knew,
Was full; and had, I doubted not, turned,
Upon this impulse, to the theme — ere
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boy
Withdrew, on summons to their well-cared
meal;
And He — to whom all tongues resign
their rights
With willingness, to whom the general
Listened with reader patience than
strain
Of music, lute or harp, a long delight
That ceased not when his voice had ceased
— as One
Who from truth's central point surveyed
views
The compass of his argument — began
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

BOOK NINTH

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AN
AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE

ARGUMENT

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat in the human soul — How lively this principle is in Childhood — Hence the delight in old Age looking back upon Childhood — The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted — The not to be looked for generally but under a Just government — Right of a Human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a political Instrument — The condition of multitudes explored — Former conversation recalled to, as the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light: — Truth placed within reach of the humble — Equality — Happy state of the two By again adverted to — Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established.
versally by Government — Glorious effects this foretold — Walk to the Lake — Grand cataract from the side of a hill — Address of est to the Supreme Being — In the course which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism present appearance of the scene before him. The change ascribed to Christianity — ometrope to his flock, living and dead — titude to the Almighty — Return over the ke — Parting with the Solitary — Under at circumstances.

"o every Form of being is assigned," as calmly speak the venerable Sage, in active Principle: — howe'er removed on sense and observation, it subsists all things, in all natures; in the stars azure heaven, the unenduring clouds, flower and tree, in every pebbly stone at paves the brooks, the stationary rocks, e moving waters, and the invisible air. hater's exists hath properties that spread yond itself, communicating good, simple blessing, or with evil mixed; irit that knows no insulated spot, chasm, no solitude; from link to link circulating, the Soul of all the worlds. is is the freedom of the universe; ielded still the more, more visible, we more we know; and yet is reverenced least, least respected in the human Mind, most apparent home. The food of hope meditated action; robbed of this er sole support, she languishes and dies. erish also; for we live by hope d by desire; we see by the glad light d breathe the sweet air of futurity; d so live, or else we have no life. morrow — nay perchance this very hour e every moment hath its own to-mor-morrow !

those blooming Boys, whose hearts are almost sick ith present triumph, will be sure to find 30 field before them freshened with the dew their expectations; — in which course heir happy year spins round. The youth obeys like glad impulse; and so moves the man lid all his apprehensions, cares, and fears, —

so he ought to move. Ah! why in age we revert so fondly to the walks f childhood — but that there the Soul dis-}

The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired Of her own native vigour; thence can hear Reverberations; and a choral song, Commingling with the incense that ascends, Undaunted, toward the imperishable heavens,

From her own lonely altar? Do not think

That good and wise ever will be allowed, Though strength decay, to breathe in such estate As shall divide them wholly from the stir Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said That Man descends into the VALE of years; Yet have I thought that we might also speak,

And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age, As of a final EMINENCE; though bare In aspect and forbidding, yet a point On which 't is not impossible to sit In awful sovereignty; a place of power, A throne, that may be likened unto his, Who, in some placid day of summer, looks Down from a mountain-top, — say one of those

High peaks, that bound the vale where now we are. Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye, Forest and field, and hill and dale appear, With all the shapes over their surface spread:

But, while the gross and visible frame of things Relinquishes its hold upon the sense, Yea almost on the Mind herself, and seems All unsubstantialized, — how loud the voice

Of waters, with invigorated peal From the full river in the vale below, Ascending! For on that superior height Who sits, is disencumbered from the press Of near obstructions, and is privileged To breathe in solitude, above the host Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air That suits not them. The murmur of the leaves Many and idle, visits not his ear: This he is freed from, and from thousand notes (Not less unceasing, not less vain than these,) By which the finer passages of sense Are occupied; and the Soul, that would incline

To listen, is prevented or deterred. 80
And may it not be hoped, that, placed by
age
In like removal, tranquil though severe,
We are not so removed for utter loss;
But for some favour, suited to our need?
What more than that the severing should confer
Fresh power to commune with the invisible
world,
And hear the mighty stream of tendency
Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
A clear sonorous, voice, inaudible
To the vast multitude; whose doom it is 90
To run the giddy round of vain delight,
Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes
Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close
And termination of his mortal course;
Them only can such hope inspire whose minds
Have not been starved by absolute neglect;
Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil;
To whom kind Nature, therefore, may afford
Proof of the sacred love she bears for all;
Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may ensure.

For me, consulting what I feel within
In times when most existence with herself
Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,
That, far as kindly Nature hath free
scope
And Reason's sway predominates; even so far,
Country, society, and time itself,
That saps the individual's bodily frame,
And lays the generations low in dust,
Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, partake

Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth
And cherishing with ever-constant love,
That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is turned
Out of her course, wherever man is made
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
Or implement, a passive thing employed
As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
Of common right or interest in the end;
Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt,
Say, what can follow for a rational soul 110
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
And strength in evil? Hence an after-call
For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,
And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,
And the sole guardian in whose hands dare
Entrust the future. Not for these sad
sues
Was Man created; but to obey the law
Of life, and hope, and action. And it is known
That when we stand upon our native soil,
Unelbowed by such objects as oppress.
Our active powers, those powers themselve become
Strong to subvert our noxious qualities,
They sweep distemper from the busy day,
And make the chalice of the big year
Run o'er with gladness; whence the beam moves
In beauty through the world; and all we see
Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood.

"Then," said the Solitary, "by wise
force
Of language shall a feeling heart express
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom
We look for health from seeds that have
been sown
In sickness, and for increase in a power
That works but by extinction? On them¬
seleves
They cannot lean, nor turn to their own
hearts.
To know what they must do; their wish is
To look into the eyes of others, these
To be instructed what they must avoid.
Or rather, let us say, how least observed.
How with most quiet and most sick
death,
With the least taint and injury to the air.
The oppressor breathes, their human form
divine,
And their immortal soul, may waste away.

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—ye
have spared
My voice the utterance of a keen regret,
A wide compassion which with you I share.
When, heretofore, I placed before your
sight
A Little-one, subjected to the arts
Of modern ingenuity, and made
The senseless member of a vast machine.
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel;
Think not, that, pitying him, I could forg

THE EXCURSION

Lastly, I mourned for those whom I had seen
Corrupted and cast down, on favoured ground,
Where circumstance and nature had combined
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;
Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,
Possessed of health, and strength, and peace of mind;
Thus would have lived, or never have been born.

Alas! what differs more than man from man!
And whence that difference? whence but from himself?
For see the universal Race endowed
With the same upright form! — The sun is fixed,
And the infinite magnificence of heaven.Fixed, within reach of every human eye;
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;
The vernal field infuses fresh delight
Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,
Even as an object is sublime or fair,
That object is laid open to the view
Without reserve or veil; and as a power
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
Are each and all enabled to perceive
That power, that influence, by impartial law.

Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;
Reasen, and, with that reason, smiles and tears;
Imagination, freedom in the will;
Conscience to guide and check; and death to be
Foretasted, immortality conceived
By all, — a blissful immortality,
To them whose holiness on earth shall make
The Spirit capable of heaven, assured
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be deemed
The failure, if the Almighty, to this point Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
The excellence of moral qualities
From common understanding; leaving truth
And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;
Hard to be won, and only by a few;
Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,
And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:  
The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;  
The charities that soothe, and heal, and  
bless,  
Are scattered at the feet of Man—like  
flowers.  

The generous inclination, the just rule,  
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure  
thoughts—  
No mystery is here! Here is no boon  
For high—yet not for low; for proudly  
graced—  
Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke  
ascends  
To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth  
As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose  
soul  
Ponders this true equality, may walk  
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;  
Yet, in that meditation, will he find  
Motive to sadder grief, as we have found;  
Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,  
And for the injustice grieving, that hath  
made  
So wide a difference between man and man.

Then let us rather fix our gladdened  
thoughts  
Upon the brighter scene. How bless that  
pair  
Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even  
now)  
Blest in their several and their common  
lot!  
A few short hours of each returning day  
The thriving prisoners of their village  
school:  
And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant  
homes  
Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy:  
To breathe and to be happy, run and shout,  
Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss;  
For every genial power of heaven and  
earth,  
Through all the seasons of the changeful  
year,  
Obsequiously doth take upon herself  
To labour for them; bringing each in turn  
The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge,  
health,  
Beauty, or strength! Such privilege is  
theirs,  
Granted alike in the outset of their course  
To both; and, if that partnership must  

cease,

I grieve not," to the Pastor here he  
turned  
"Much as I glory in that child of yours,  
Repine not for his cottage-comrade, who  
Belike no higher destiny awaits  
Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled;  
The wish for liberty to live—content  
With what Heaven grants, and die—peace of mind,  
Within the bosom of his native vale.  
At least, whatever fate the moon of life  
Reserves for either, sure it is that both  
Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn:  
Whether regarded as a jocund time,  
That in itself may terminate, or lead  
In course of nature to a sober eve.  
Both have been fairly dealt with; look  
back  
They will allow that justice has in the  
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind."

He paused, as if revolving in his soul:  
Some weighty matter; then, with firm  
voice  
And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

"O for the coming of that glorious  
When, prizeing knowledge as her soul's  
wealth  
And best protection, this imperial Real,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation, on her part, to teach  
Them who are born to serve her and obey;  
Binding herself by statute to secure  
For all the children whom her soil maintains  
The rudiments of letters, and inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth,  
Both understood and practised,—so the  
none,  
However destitute, be left to droop  
By timely culture unsustained; or run  
Into a wild disorder; or be forced  
To drudge through a weary life without  
help  
Of intellectual implements and tools;  
A savage horde among the civilised,  
A servile band among the lordly free!  
This sacred right, the lisping babe proclaims  
To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,  
For the protection of his innocence;  
And the rude boy—who, having overpass  
The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled  
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,  
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief best  
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech
impious use — by process indirect
claims his due, while he makes known
his need.
This sacred right is fruitlessly an-
nounced,
his universal plea in vain addressed,
eyes and ears of parents who themselves
ed, in the time of their necessity,
ge it in vain; and, therefore, like a prayer
vat from the humblest floor ascends to
heaven,
mounts to meet the State’s parental ear;
ho, if indeed she own a mother’s heart,
nd be not most unfeelingly devoid
f gratitude to Providence, will grant
be unquestionable good — which, England,
safe
rom interference of external force,
y grant at leisure; without risk incurred
hat what in wisdom for herself she doth,
thers shall e’er be able to undo.

Look! and behold, from Calpe’s sun-
burnt cliffs
o the flat margin of the Baltic sea,
on-gerenred titles cast away as weeds;
aws overturned; and territory split,
ike fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
and forced to join in less obnoxious shapes
Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust
of the same breath are shattered and de-
stroyed.

time the sovereignty of these fair
Isles
remains entire and indivisible:
nd, if that ignorance were removed, which
breeds
Within the compass of their several shores
Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each
ight still preserve the beautiful repose
Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.
— The discipline of slavery is unknown
Among us, — hence the more do we require
The discipline of virtue; order else
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.
Thus, duties rising out of good posset,
and prudent caution needful to avert
Impending evil, equally require
That the whole people should be taught and
trained.
So shall licentiousness and black resolve
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take
Their place; and genuine piety descend,
Like an inheritance, from age to age.

With such foundations laid, avaut the fear
Of numbers crowded on their native soil,
To the prevention of all healthful growth
Through mutual injury! Rather in the law
Of increase and the mandate from above
Rejoice! — and ye have special cause for
joy.
— For, as the element of air affords
An easy passage to the industrious bees
Fraught with their burthens; and a way as
smooth
For those ordained to take their sounding
flight
From the thronged hive, and settle where
they list
In fresh abodes — their labour to renew;
So the wide waters, open to the power,
The will, the instincts, and appointed needs
Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
Her swarms, and in succession send them
forth;
Bound to establish new communities
On every shore whose aspect favours hope
Or bold adventure; promising to skill
And perseverance their deserved reward.

Yes,” he continued, kindling as he
spoke,
“Change wide, and deep, and silently per-
formed,
This Land shall witness; and as days roll
on,
Earth’s universal frame shall feel the effect;
Even till the smallest habitable rock,
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
Of humanised society; and bloom
With civil arts, that shall breathe forth
their fragrance,
A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.
From culture, unexclusively bestowed
On Albion’s noble Race in freedom born,
Expect these mighty issues: from the pains
And faithful care of unambitious schools
Instructing simple childhood’s ready ear:
Thence look for these magnificent results!
— Vast the circumference of hope — and
ye
Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;
Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall
Wisdom’s voice
From out the bosom of these troubled times
Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,
And shall the venerable halls ye fill
Refuse to echo the sublime decree?
Trust not to partial care a general good;
Transfer not to futurity a work
Of urgent need. — Your Country must complete
Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,
Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian plague
Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe, makes
The brightness more conspicuous that invests
The happy Island where ye think and act;
Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,
Show to the wretched nations for what end
The powers of civil polity were given.”

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,
The Sage broke off. No sooner, had he ceased
Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,
“Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen
Upon this flowery slope; and see — beyond —
The silvery lake is streaked with placid blue;
As if preparing for the peace of evening.
How temptingly the landscape shines!
The air
Breathes invitation; easy is the walk
To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moored
Under a sheltering tree.” — Upon this hint
We rose together; all were pleased; but most
The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed with joy.
Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
She vanished — eager to impart the scheme
To her loved brother and his shy compeer.
— Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house
And earnest preparation. — Forth we went,
And down the vale along the streamlet's edge
Pursued our way, a broken company,
Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.
Thus having reached a bridge, that overarched
The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
A twofold image; on a grassy bank
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
Another and the same! Most beautiful,
On the green turf, with his imperial front

Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
The breathing creature stood; as beautiful Beneath him, showed his shadowy counterpart.
Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
And each seemed centre of his own fair world:
Antipodes unconscious of each other, yet
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight:

“Ah! what a pity were it to disperse,
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,
And yet a breath can do it!”

These few words
The Lady whispered, while we stood and gazed
Gathered together, all in still delight,
Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said
In like low voice to my particular ear,
“I love to hear that eloquent old Man
Pour forth his meditations, and descant
On human life from infancy to age.
How pure his spirit! in what vivid hue
His mind gives back the various forms of things,
Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude!
While he is speaking, I have power to see
Even as he sees; but when his voice but ceased,
Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,
That combinations so serene and bright
Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is, like
That reflected in yon quiet pool,
Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose peace,
The sufferance only of a breath of air!”

More had she said — but sportive shots were heard
Sent from the jocund hearts of those two Boys,
Who, bearing each a basket on his arm
Down the green field came tripping after us.
With caution we embarked; and now the pair
For prouder service were address; but each
Wishful to leave an opening for my choice.
Dropped the light oar his eager hand had seized.
anks given for that becoming courtesy, 
eir place I took — and for a grateful
office
regnant with recollections of the time
en, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere!
Youth, I practised this delightful art;
ssed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew
joysome comrades. Soon as the reedy
marriage
as cleared, I dipped, with arms accord-
ant, oars
ee from obstruction; and the boat ad-
anced
rough crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,
at, disentangled from the shady boughs
ome thick wood, her place of covert,
leaves
ith correspondent wings the abyss of air.
“Observe,” the Vicar said, “yon rocky
isle
ith birch-trees fringed; my hand shall
guide the helm,
hile thitherward we shape our course; or
while
‘e seek that other, on the western shore;
here the bare columns of those lofty firs,
porting gracefully a massy dome
ombre foliage, seem to imitate
Grecian temple rising from the Deep.”

“Turn where we may,” said I, “we can-
not err
this delicious region.”—Cultured slopes,
ild tracts of forest-ground, and scattered
groves,
nd mountains bare, or clothed with an-
cient woods,
surrounded us; and, as we held our way
long the level of the glassy flood,
hey ceased not to surround us; change of
place
rom kindred features diversely combined,
ucing change of beauty ever new.
Ah! that such beauty, varying in the
ight
living nature, cannot be portrayed
words, nor by the pencil’s silent skill;
but is the property of him alone
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
nd in his mind recorded it with love!
office it, therefore, if the rural Muse
ouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet
peaks
trivial occupations well devised,

And unsought pleasures springing up by
chance;
As if some friendly Genius had ordained
That, as the day thus far had been enriched
By acquisition of sincere delight,
The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,
A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore
Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed —
and there,
Merrily seated in a ring, partook
A choice repast — served by our young
companions
With rival earnestness and kindred glee.
Launched from our hands the smooth stone
skimmed the lake;
With shouts we raised the echoes: — stiller
sounds
The lovely Girl supplied — a simple song,
Whose low tones reached not to the distant
rocks
To be repeated thence, but gently sank
Into our hearts; and charmed the peaceful
flood.
Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils
From land and water; lilies of each hue —
Golden and white, that float upon the
waves,
And court the wind; and leaves of that shy
plant,
(her flowers were shed) the lily of the
vale,
That loves the ground, and from the sun
withholds
Her pensive beauty; from the breeze her
sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did the
place
And season yield; but, as we re-embarked,
Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said
In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,
“The fire, that burned so brightly to our
wish,
Where is it now? — Deserted on the
beach —
Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning
breeze
Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
Whose ends are gained? Behold an em-
blem here
Of one day’s pleasure, and all mortal joys!
And, in this unpremeditated slight
Of that which is no longer needed, see
The common course of human gratitude!

This plaintive note disturbed not the re-
pose
Of the still evening. Right across the
lake
Our pinnace moves; then, coasting creek
and bay,
Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised
our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless
goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls;
And thus the bark, meandering with the
shore,
Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,
We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we
clomb,
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen: —
far off,
And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-
tower,
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations seemingly preserved
From all intrusion of the restless world
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon
we couched
Or sate reclined; admiring quietly
The general aspect of the scene; but each
Not seldom over anxious to make known
His own discoveries; or to favourite points
Directing notice, merely from a wish
To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.
That rapturous moment never shall I forget
When these particular interests were ef-
faced
From every mind! — Already had the sun,
Sinking with less than ordinary state,
Attained his western bound; but rays of
light —
Now suddenly diverging from the orb
Retired behind the mountain tops or veiled
By the dense air — shot upwards to the
crown

Of the blue firmament — aloft, and wide;
And multitudes of little floating clouds
Through their ethereal texture pierced
ere we,
Who saw, of change were conscious — im-
become
Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised,
Innumerable multitude of forms
Scattered through half the circle of the
sky;
And giving back, and shedding each a
each,
With prodigal communion, the bright
Which from the unapparent fount of given
They had imbibed, and ceased not to
receive.
That which the heavens displayed, as
liquid deep
Repeated; but with unity sublime!

While from the grassy mountain's side
We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes:
ent
On the refulgent spectacle, diffused
Through earth, sky, water, and all 

space,
The Priest in holy transport thus o-
claimed:
"Eternal Spirit! universal God!
Power inaccessible to human thought,
Save by degrees and steps which those had
designed
To furnish; for this effulgence of thyself,
To the infirmity of mortal sense
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp
Of those who fill thy courts in highest
heaven,
The radiant Cherubim; — accept the thanks
Which we, thy humble Creatures, here con-
vened,
Presume to offer; we, who — from thy
breast
Of the frail earth, permitted to behold
The faint reflections only of thy face —
Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!
Such as they are who in thy presence stand
Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink
Imperishable majesty streamed forth
From thy empyreal throne, the elect of
earth
Shall be — divested at the appointed hour
Of all dishonour, cleansed from morta-
stain.
Accomplish, then, their number; and conclude

me's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,
a consummation that will come by stealth
yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,
1 let thy Word prevail, to take away e sting of human nature. Spread the law, it is written in thy holy book, 640 roughedout all lands; let every nation hear e high behest, and every heart obey; th for the love of purity, and hope nch it affords, to such as do thy will ed persevere in good, that they shall rise, have a nearer view of thee, in heaven. Father of good! this prayer in bounty grant,
mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.
en, not till then, shall persecution cease, nd cruel wars expire. The way is marked, 650 ie guide appointed, and the ransom paid. as! the nations, who of yore received ese tides, and in Christian temples meet ie sacred truth to knowledge, linger still; referring bonds and darkness to a state f holy freedom, by redeeming love offered to all, while yet on earth detained.

So fare the many; and the thoughtful few, Who in the anguish of their souls bewail his dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask, 660 shall it endure? — Shall enmity and strife, ailehood and guile, be left to sow their seed; and the kind never perish? Is the hope allacious, or shall righteousness obtain a peaceable dominion, wide as earth, and ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day arrive
When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell in crowded cities, without fear shall live studious of mutual benefit; and he, Whom Morn awakens, among dews and flowers 670 of every clime, to till the lonely field, be happy in himself? — The law of faith Working through love, such conquest shall it gain, such triumph over sin and guilt achieve? Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart! And with that help the wonder shall be seen

Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy praise
Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

Once," and with mild demeanour, as he spoke,
On us the venerable Pastor turned 680 His beaming eye that had been raised to Heaven, "Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a sound
Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle Unheard, the savage nations bowed the head
To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds; Gods which themselves had fashioned, to promote Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires. Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove, To those inventions of corrupted man Mysterious rites were solemnised; and there — 690 Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods — Of those terrific Idols some received Such dismal service, that the loudest voice Of the swoln cataracts (which now are heard
Soft murmuring) was too weak to over

come,
Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks Of human victims, offered up to appease Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes Had visionary faculties to see The thing that hath been as the thing that is, 700 Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths voluminous, Flung from the body of devouring fires, To Taranis erected on the heights By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed Exultingly, in view of open day And full assemblage of a barbarous host; Or to Andates, female Power! who gave (For so they fancied) glorious victory. — A few rude monuments of mountain stone
Survive; all else is swept away. — How bright
The appearances of things! From such, how changed
The existing worship; and with those com paired,
The worshippers how innocent and blest!
So wide the difference, a willing mind
Might almost think, at this affecting hour,
That paradise, the lost abode of man,
Was raised again: and to a happy few,
In its original beauty, here restored.

Whence but from thee, the true and only
God,
And from the faith derived through Him
who bled
Upon the cross, this marvellous advance
Of good from evil; as if one extreme
Were left, the other gained.—O ye, who
come
To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,
Called to such office by the peaceful sound
Of sabbath bells; and ye, who sleep in
earth,
All cares forgotten, round its hallowed
walls!
For you, in presence of this little band
Gathered together on the green hill-side, 730
Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer
Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King;
Whose love, whose counsel, whose com-
mands, have made
Your very poorest rich in peace of thought
And in good works; and him, who is en-
dowed
With scantiest knowledge, master of all
truth
Which the salvation of his soul requires.
Conscious of that abundant favour showered
On you, the children of my humble care,
And this dear land, our country, while on
earth
We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,
Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.
These barren rocks, your stern inheritance;
These fertile fields, that recompense your
pains;
The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-top;
Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,
Or hushed; the roaring waters and the
still—
They see the offering of my lifted hands,
They hear my lips present their sacrifice,
They know if I be silent, morn or even: 750
For, though in whispers speaking, the full
heart
Will find a vent; and thought is praise to
him,
Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings
flow"
LAODAMIA

1814. 1815

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of trees growing and withering put the subject of my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, been given to it by any of the Ancients. It cost me more than almost anything of equal length I ever written.

11th sacrifice before the rising morn, a wood I made by fruitless hope inspired; from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn, night, my slaughtered Lord have I required: estial pity I again implore; — store him to my sight — great Jove, restore!"

Speaking, and by fervent love endowed th faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands; nile, like the sun emerging from a cloud, r countenance brightens — and her eye expands; r bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows; d she expects the issue in repose. terror! what hath she perceived? — O joy! at doth she look on? — whom doth she behold? r Hero slain upon the beach of Troy? vital presence? his corporeal mould? is — if sense deceive her not — 't is He! d a God leads him, wingèd Mercury!

Id Hermes spake — and touched her with his wand at calms all fear; "Such grace hath crowned thy prayer, odamia! that at Jove's command Husband walks the paths of upper air; comes to tarry with thee three hours' space; kept the gift, behold him face to face!" th sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp; gain that consummation she essayed; but unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp As often as that eager grasp was made. The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite, And re-assume his place before her sight. 30 "Protesilaus, lo! thy guide is gone! Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice: This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne; Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice. Not to appal me have the gods bestowed This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be, I am not sent to scare thee or deceive; But in reward of thy fidelity. 40 And something also did my worth obtain; For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain. "Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand Should die; but me the threat could not withhold: A generous cause a victim did demand; And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain; A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best! Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50 Which then, when tens of thousands were destrept By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore; Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here thou art — A nobler counsellor than my poor heart. "But thou, though capable of sternest deed, Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave; And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave: Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair As when their breath enriched Thessalian air. 60 "No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow this; Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side! Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious
Parce threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if
the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains: 7
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic
pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;
A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate; and meekly
mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn — "

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by
force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the
tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corpse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Ἑσὸν stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they
Yet further may relent: for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the
sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favourite seat be feeble
woman's breast. 90

"But if thou goest, I follow — " " Peace! "
he said, —
She looked upon him and was calmed and
cheered;
The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged the
In happier beauty; more pellucid stream
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleam:
Climes which the sun, who sheds the
brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which has
earned
That privilege by virtue. — " Ill, " said
"The end of man's existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, 

While tears were thy best pastime, day
and night;

"And while my youthful peers before
eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise;
By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent
Chieftains and kings in council were
attended;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchanted.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I the
revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should
The foremost prow in pressing to
strand, —
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wi
On thee too fondly did my memory hang;
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,
The paths which we had trod — these fon-
tains, flowers,
My new-planned cities, and unfinished
towers.

"But should suspense permit the For
cry,
'Behold they tremble! — haughty thin
array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die.'
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty
thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought—
and Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak;
reason, in self-government too slow;
 counsel thee by fortitude to seek
rest, re-union in the shades below.
invisible world with thee hath sympatheised;
thy affections raised and solemnised.

earn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
aching a higher object. Love was given,
couraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
this the passion to excess was driven—
at self might be annulled: her bondage
prove
fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”—

oud she shrieked! for Hermes re-ap-
ppears!
und the dear Shade she would have clung
‘tis vain:
hours are past—too brief had they
been years;
nd him no mortal effort can detain:
ift, toward the realms that know not
earthly day,
through the portal takes his silent way,
and on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She lay.

us, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
nd perished; and, as for a wilful crime,
the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,
as doomed to wear out her appointed
time,
part from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

Yet tears to human suffering are due;
nd mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
nd mourned by man, and not by man alone,
n fondly he believes. — Upon the side
f Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
not of spiry trees for ages grew
rom out the tomb of him for whom she
died;
nd ever, when such stature they had gained
hat Ilium's walls were subject to their
view,
be trees' tall summits withered at the
sight;
constant interchange of growth and
blight!

This poem was first introduced by a stanza
that I have since transferred to the Notes, for
reasons there given, and I cannot comply with
the request expressed by some of my friends
that the rejected stanza should be restored. I
hope they will be content if it be, hereafter, im-
mEDIATELY attached to the poem, instead of its
being degraded to a place in the Notes.

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,
Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace
Of haughtiness without pretence,
And to unfold a still magnificence,
Was princely Dion, in the power
And beauty of his happier hour.
And what pure homage then did wait
On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
Fell round him in the grove of Academe, to
Softening their inbred dignity austere —
That he, not too elate
With self-sufficing solitude,
But with majestic lowliness endured,
Might in the universal bosom reign,
And from affectionate observance gain
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

Five thousand warriors — O the rapturous
day!
Each crowned with flowers, and armed
with spear and shield,
Or ruder weapon which their course might
yield,
To Syracuse advance in bright array.
Who leads them on? — The anxious people
see
Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,
He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
And in a white, far-beaming, corselet clad!
Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear
The gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,
Salute those strangers as a holy train
Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)
That brought their precious liberty again.
Lo! when the gates are entered, on each
hand,
Down the long street, rich goblets filled
with wine
In seemly order stand,
On tables set, as if for rites divine; —
And, as the great Deliverer marches by,
He looks on festal ground with fruits bestrown;
And flowers are on his person thrown
In boundless prodigality;
Nor doth the general voice abstain from prayer,
Invoking Dion’s tutelary care,
As if a very Deity he were!

III

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and mourn
Ilissus, bending o’er thy classic urn!
Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads
Your once sweet memory, studious walks and shades!
For him who to divinity aspired,
Not on the breath of popular applause,
But through dependence on the sacred laws
Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt retired,
Intent to trace the ideal path of right
(More fair than heaven’s broad causeway paved with stars)
Which Dion learned to measure with sublime delight; —

But He hath overleaped the eternal bars;
And, following guides whose craft holds no consent
With aught that breathes the ethereal element,
Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood,
Unjustly shed, though for the public good.
Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,
Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain;
And oft his cogitations sink as low
As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,
The heaviest plummet of despair can go —
But whence that sudden check? that fearful start!

He hears an uncouth sound —
Anon his lifted eyes
Saw, at a long-drawn gallery’s dusky bound,
A Shape of more than mortal size
And hideous aspect, stalking round and round!
A woman’s garb the Phantom wore,
And fiercely swept the marble floor,—
Like Auster whirling to and fro,

His force on Caspian foam to try;
Or Boreas when he scourcs the snow
That skins the plains of Thessaly,
Or when aloft on Meaulus he stops
His flight, ’mid eddying pine-tree tops.

IV

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
The sullen Speer to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping — vehemently sweeping —
No pause admitted, no design avowed!
“Avaunt, inexplicable Guest! — avaunt,”
Exclaimed the Chieftain — “let me rather see
The coronal that coiling vipers make;
The torch that flames with many a lurid flame,
And the long train of doleful pageantry
Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies haunt;
Who, while they struggle from the scours to flee,
Move where the blasted soil is not unwearyed,
And, in their anguish, hear what other minds have borne!”

V

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call.
Will not depart when mortal voices bid;
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,
Once raised, remains aghast, and will not fall!
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement
Obey a mystical intent!
Your Minister would brush away
The spots that to my soul adhere;
But should she labour night and day,
They will not, cannot disappear;
Whence angry perturbations,—and that look
Which no Philosophy can brook!

VI

Ill-fated Chief! there are whose hopes are built
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name;
Who, through the portal of one moment’s guilt,
Pursue thee with their deadly aim!
O matchless perfidy! portentous lust
Of monstrous crime! — that horror-striking blade,
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
The noble Syracusan low in dust!
Shuddered the walls — the marble city wept —
cl sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh;
t in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,
he had fallen in magnanimity;
spirit too capacious to require
at Destiny her course should change;
too just
his own native greatness to desire
at wretched boon, days lengthened by
mistrust.

So were the hopeless troubles, that involved
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
Released from life and cares of princely
state,
He left this moral grafted on his Fate;
“Him only pleasure leads, and peace at-
tends,
Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,
Whose means are fair and spotless as his
ends.”

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

1814

In this tour, my wife and her sister Sara were my companions. The account of the “Brownie’s
ll” and the Brownies was given me by a man we met with on the banks of Loch Lomond, a
lle above Tarbert, and in front of a huge mass of rock, by the side of which, we were told,
teachings were often held in the open air. The place is quite a solitude, and the surrounding
enery very striking. How much is it to be regretted that, instead of writing such Poems as
a “Holy Fair” and others, in which the religious observances of his country are treated with so
uch levity and too often with indecency, Burns had not employed his genius in describing reli-
ion under the serious and affecting aspects it must so frequently take.

I
SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON
ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND,
A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT
OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM
WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED
THE NAME OF
THE BROWNIE’S CELL.

1814. 1820

1
'o barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking
feit,
't depth of labyrinthine glen;
't into trackless forest set
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met,
World-weared Men withdrew of yore;
Penance their trust, and prayer their
store;
And in the wilderness were bound
'o such apartments as they found,
't with a new ambition raised;
That God might suitably be praised.

II
High lodged the Warrior, like a bird of prey;
Or where broad waters round him lay;
But this wild Ruin is no ghost
Of his devices — buried, lost!

Within this little lonely isle
There stood a consecrated Pile;
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,
For them whose timid Spirits clung
To mortal succour, though the tomb
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom!

III
Upon those servants of another world
When madding Power her bolts had hurled,
Their habitation shook — it fell,
And perished, save one narrow cell;
Whither, at length, a Wretch retired
Who neither grovelled nor aspired;
He, struggling in the net of pride,
The future scorned, the past defied;
Still tempering, from the unguilful forge
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge!

IV
Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,
Who stood and flourished face to face
With their perennial hills; — but Crime,
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,
Brought low a Power, which from its home
Burst, when repose grew wearisome;
And, taking impulse from the sword,
And, mocking its own plighted word,
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt!
V

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose smile
Shot lightning through this lonely Isle!
No right had he but what he made
To this small spot, his leafy shade;
But the ground lay within that ring
To which he only dared to cling;
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,
The craven few who bowed the head
Beneath the change; who heard a claim
How loud! yet lived in peace with shame. 50

VI

From year to year this shaggy Mortal went
(So seemed it) down a strange descent:
Till they, who saw his outward frame,
Fixed on him an unallowed name;
Him, free from all malicious taint,
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,
A pen unwearied — to indite,
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night;
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span
The faded glories of his Clan! 60

VII

Suns that through blood their western harbour sough;
And stars that in their courses fought;
Towers rent, winds combating with woods,
Lands deluged by unbridled floods;
And beast and bird that from the spell
Of sleep took import terrible; —
These types mysterious (if the show
Of battle and the routed foe
Had failed) would furnish an array
Of matter for the dawning day! 70

VIII

How disappeared He? — ask the newt and toad,
Inheritors of his abode;
The otter crouching undisturbed,
In her dank cleft; — but be thou curbed,
O froward Fancy! 'mid a scene
Of aspect winning and serene;
For those offensive creatures shun
The inquisition of the sun!
And in this region flowers delight,
And all is lovely to the sight. 80

IX

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,
When she applies her annual test
To dead and living; when her breath
Quickens, as now, the withered heath; —
Nor haunting Summer — when he throws
His soul into the brier-rose;
Or calls the lily from her sleep
Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;
Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren
Is warbling near the Brownie’s Den.

x

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chear spot
In Nysa’s isle, the embellished grot;
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,
(‘High Servant of paternal Love’)
Young Bacchus was conveyed — to lie
Safe from his step-dame Rhea’s eyes;
Where bud, and bloom, and fruits glowed,
Close-crowding round the infant-god;
All colours, — and the liveliest streak
A foil to his celestial check!

II

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN.
IN SIGHT OF WALLACE’S TOWER

1814. 1820

I had seen this celebrated Waterfall twice before; but the feelings, to which it had given birth, were not expressed till they recurred on the presence of the object on this occasion: —

"— How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear Country; left the deeds
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,
To people the steep rocks and river banks,
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
Of independence and stern liberty." — See p. 127.

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;
The dullest leaf in this thick wood
Quakes — conscious of thy power;
The caves reply with hollow moan;
And vibrates, to its central stone,
Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene! —
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been
Beneficent as strong;
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep
The little trembling flowers that peep
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love
To look on thee — delight to rove...
Where they thy voice can hear;
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,
Lord of the vale! to Heroes laid
In dust, that voice is dear!

Along thy banks, at dead of night
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight; 30
Or stands, in warlike vest,
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,
A Champion worthy of the stream,
Yeom grey tower's living crest!

But clouds and envious darkness hide
A Form not doubtfully descried: —
Their transient mission o'er,
O say to what blind region flee
These Shapes of awful phantasy?
To what untrodden shore?

Less than divine command they spurn;
But this we from the mountains learn,
And this the valleys show;
That never will they deign to hold
Communion where the heart is cold
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain
Shall walk the Marathonian plain;
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,
That still invests the guardian Pass,
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,
Or kneel, before the votive shrine
By Uri's lake, where Tell
Leapt, from his storm-veert boat, to land,
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand
That day the Tyrant fell.

III
EFFUSION
IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE BANKS OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD

1814. 1827

I am not aware that this condemnatatory effusion was ever seen by the owner of the place. He might be disposed to pay little attention to it; but were it to prove otherwise I should be glad, for the whole exhibition is distressingly paean.
And Names that moulder not away,  
Had wakened some redeeming thought  
More worthy of this favoured Spot;  
Recalled some feeling — to set free  
The Bard from such indignity!  

The Effigies of a valiant Wight  
I once beheld, a Templar Knight;  
Not prostrate, not like those that rest  
On tombs, with palms together prest,  
But sculptured out of living stone,  
And standing upright and alone,  
Both hands with rivial energy  
Employed in setting his sword free  
From its dull sheath — stern sentinel  
Intent to guard St. Robert’s cell;  
As if with memory of the affray  
Far distant, when, as legends say,  
The Monks of Fountain’s thronged to force  
From its dear home the Hermits’ corse,  
That in their keeping it might lie,  
To crown their abbey’s sanctity.  
So had they rushed into the grot  
Of sense despised, a world forgot,  
And torn him from his loved retreat,  
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat  
Still hint that quiet best is found,  
Even by the Living, under ground;  
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim  
Defeating, put the monks to shame,  
There where you see his Image stand  
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand  
Which lingering NID is proud to show  
Reflected in the pool below.  

Thus, like the men of earliest days,  
Our sires set forth their grateful praise:  
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!  
But, nursed in mountain solitude,  
Might some aspiring artist dare  
To seize whate’er, through misty air,  
A ghost, by glimpses, may present  
Of imitable lineament,  
And give the phantom an array  
That less should scorn the abandoned clay;  
Then let him hew with patient stroke  
An Ossian out of mural rock,  
And leave the figurative Man —  
Upon thy margin, roaring Bran! —  
Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,  
An everlasting watch to keep;  
With local sanctities in trust,  
More precious than a hermit’s dust;  
And virtues through the mass infused,  
Which old idolatry abused.  

What though the Granite would deny  
All fervour to the sightless eye;  

And touch from rising suns in vain  
Solicit a Memnonian strain;  
Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,  
The wind might force the deep-grounded harp  
To utter melancholy moans  
Not unconnected with the tones  
Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;  
While grove and river notes would lead,  
Less deeply sad, with these to blend!  
Vain pleasures of luxurious life,  
For ever with yourselves at strife;  
Through town and country both desolate  
By affectations interchanged,  
And all the perishable gauds  
That heaven-deserted man applauds;  
When will your hapless patrons learn  
To watch and ponder — to discern  
The freshness, the everlasting youth,  
Of admiration sprung from truth;  
From beauty infinitely growing  
Upon a mind with love o’erflowing —  
To sound the depths of every Art  
That seeks its wisdom through the hear.  

Thus (where the intrusive File, ill-graced  
With baubles of theatric taste,  
O’erlooks the torrent breathing showers  
On motley banks of alien flowers  
In stiff confusion set or sown,  
Till Nature cannot find her own,  
Or keep a remnant of the sod  
Which Caledonian Heroes trod)  
I mused; and, thirsting for redress,  
Recoiled into the wilderness.

IV

YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER 1814

1814. 1815

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquair, where Hogg had joined us and also Dr. Anderson, the Editor of the British Poets, who was on a visit at the Manor. Dr. A. walked with us till we came in view of the Vale of Yarrow, and, being advanced in life, he then turned back. The old Man was passionately fond of poetry, though with a much of a discriminating judgment, as the Volumes he edited sufficiently show, but was much pleased to meet with him, and acknowledge my obligation to his collection.
which had been my brother John's companion
more than one voyage to India, and which
gave me before his departure from Gras-
se, never to return. Through these Volumes
became first familiar with Chaucer, and so
tle money had I then to spare for books,
at, in all probability, but for this same work,
should have known little of Drayton, Daniel,
d other distinguished poets of the Eliza-
than age, and their immediate successors,
a much later period of my life. I am glad
record this, not from any importance of its
rn, but as a tribute of gratitude to this sim-
a-hearted old man, whom I never again had
pleasure of meeting. I seldom read or think
this poem without regretting that my dear
ster was not of the party, as she would have
so much delight in recalling the time when,
avelling together in Scotland, we declined
sing in search of this celebrated stream, not
together, I will frankly confess, for the rea-
s assigned in the poem on the occasion.

... is this — Yarrow? — This the Stream
of which my fancy cherished,
o faithfully, a waking dream?
image that hath perished!
that some Minstrel's harp were near,
o utter notes of gladness,
and chase this silence from the air,
that fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why? — a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
For have these eyes by greener hills
been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's
Lake
is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The vapours linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine —
Sad thought which I would banish,

But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me — to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

"FROM THE DARK CHAMBERS OF DEJECTION FREED"

1814. 1815

Composed in Edinburgh, during my Scotch tour with Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister Miss Hutchinson, in the year 1814. Poor Gillies never rose above that course of extravagance in which he was at that time living, and which soon reduced him to poverty and all its degrading shifts, mendicity being far from the worst. I grieve whenever I think of him, for he was far from being without genius, and had a generous heart, not always to be found in men given up to profusion. He was nephew of Lord Gillies the Scotch judge, and also of the historian of Greece. He was cousin to Miss Margaret Gillies, who painted so many portraits with success in our house.

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,
Rise, GILLIES, rise; the gales of youth shall bear
Thy genius forward like a winged steed.
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of air,
Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,
If aught be in them of immortal seed,
And reason govern that audacious flight
Which heavenward they direct. — Then droop not thou,
Erroneously renewing a sad vow
In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded grove:
A cheerful life is what the Muses love,
A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY
OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH
OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL

1814. 1815

TO public notice, with reluctance strong,
Did I deliver this unfinished Song;

Yet for one happy issue; — and I look
With self-congratulation on the Book
Which piious, learned, MURFITT saw us read; —
Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed:
He conned the new-born Lay with grateful heart —
Foreboding not how soon he must depart:
Unweeting that to him the joy was given
Which good men take with them from earth to heaven.

TO B. R. HAYDON

1815. 1816

HIGH is our calling, Friend! — Create
Art
(Whether the instrument of words she is
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)
Demands the service of a mind and heart
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part
Heroically fashioned — to infuse
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,
While the whole world seems adverse in desert.
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,
Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,
Still to be strenuous for the bright reward
And in the soul admit of no decay,
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness —
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard.

ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE

1815. 1820

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF
MONMOUTH AND MILTON'S HISTORY
OF ENGLAND)

This was written at Rydal Mount, as a token of affectionate respect for the memory of Milton. "I have determined," says he, in his preface to his History of England, "to be at the telling over even of those repeated lines..."
Sabrina,—vowing that the stream should bear
That name through every age, her hatred to declare.

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear
By his ungrateful daughters turned adrift.
Ye lightnings, hear his voice!—they cannot hear,
Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.
But One there is, a Child of nature meek,
Who comes her Sire to seek;
And he, recovering sense, upon her breast
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy themes,
And those that Milton loved in youthful years;
The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes;
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers;
Of Arthur,—who, to upper light restored,
With that terrific sword
Which yet he brandishes for future war,
Shall lift his country's fame above the polar star!

What wonder, then, if in such ample field
Of old tradition, one particular flower
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,
And bloom unnoticed even to this late hour?
Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,
While I this flower transplant
Into a garden stored with Poesy;
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haphazardly some weeds be,
That, wanting not wild grace, are from all mischief free!

A King more worthy of respect and love
Than wise Gorbonian ruled not in his day;
And grateful Britain prospered far above
All neighbouring countries through his righteous sway;
He poured rewards and honours on the good;
The oppressor he withstood:
And while he served the Gods with reverence due
Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns and cities grew.

He died, whom Artega1 succeeds—his son;
But how unworthy of that sire was he!
Behold the hunter train!  
He bids his little company advance  
With seeming unconcern and steady tenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase  
Hath checked his foaming courser: — is it be!  
Methinks that I should recognise that  
Though much disguised by long adverse.  
He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed.  
Confounded and amazed —  
"It is the king, my brother!" and I sound  
Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps up the ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embr he gave,  
Feebly returned by daunted Artegaal;  
Whose natural affection doubts enslave  
And apprehensions dark and criminal.  
Loth to restrain the moving interview,  
The attendant lords withdrew;  
And, while they stood upon the plain,  
Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his struggling heart.

"By heavenly Powers conducted, we met;  
— O Brother! to my knowledge lost long,  
But neither lost to love, nor to regret,  
Nor to my wishes lost; — forgive the wrong  
(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have borne,  
Thy royal mantle worn:  
I was their natural guardian; and 'tis just  
That now I should restore what hath been held in trust."

A while the astonished Artegaal stood  
Then thus exclaimed: "To me, of title shorn,  
And stripped of power! me, feeble, atstitute,  
To me a kingdom! spare the bitter scorn.  
If justice ruled the breast of foreign king  
Then, on the wide-spread wings  
Of war, had I returned to claim my right.  
This will I here avow, not dreading thy spite."

"I do not blame thee," Elidure replied;  
"But, if my looks did with my words agree..."
Believe it not," said Eldure; "respect Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most Attends on goodness with dominion decked, Which stands the universal empire's boast; This can thy own experience testify: Nor shall thy foes deny That, in the gracious opening of thy reign, Our father's spirit seemed in thee to breathe again.

"And what if o'er thy bright unbosoming Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune past! Have we not seen the glories of the spring By veil of noontide darkness overcast? The frith that glittered like a warrior's shield, The sky, the gay green field, Are vanished; gladness ceases in the groves, And trepidation strikes the blackened mountain-coves.

"But is that gloom dissolved? how passing clear Seems the wide world, far brighter than before! Even so thy latent worth will re-appear, Gladdening the people's heart from shore to shore; For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone; Re-seated on thy throne, Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune, pain, And sorrow, have confirmed thy native right to reign.

"But, not to overlook what thou may'st know, Thy enemies are neither weak nor few; And circumspect must be our course, and slow, Or from my purpose ruin may ensue. Dismiss thy followers; — let them calmly wait Such change in thy estate As I already have in thought devised; And which, with caution due, may soon be realised."

The Story tells what courses were pursued, Until king Eldure, with full consent Of all his peers, before the multitude, Rose, — and, to consummate this just inten-
And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,
Approached this glory of the firmament;
Who meekly yields, and is obscured — content
With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

"EVEN AS A DRAGON'S EYE THAT FEELS THE STRESS"
1810-15. 1815

Even as a dragon's eye that feels the stress
Of a bedimming sleep, or as a lamp
Suddenly glaring through sepulchral damp,
So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess
Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless:
The lake below reflects it not; the sky,
Muffled in clouds, affords no company
To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.
Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing
Which sends so far its melancholy light,
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring
A gay society with faces bright,
Conversing, reading, laughing; — or they sing,
While hearts and voices in the song unite.

"MARK THE CONCENTRED HAZELS THAT ENCLOSE"
1810-15. 1815

Suggested in the wild hazel wood at the foot
of Helm-crag, where the stone still lies, with
others of like form and character, though much
of the wood that veiled it from the glare of day
has been felled. This beautiful ground was
lately purchased by our friend Mrs. Fletcher,
the ancient owners, most respected persons,
being obliged to part with it in consequence of
the imprudence of a son. It is gratifying to
mention that, instead of murmuring and repining
at this change of fortune, they offered their
services to Mrs. Fletcher, the husband as an outdoor labourer, and the wife as a domestic servant.
I have witnessed the pride and pleasure
with which the man worked at improvements
of the ground round the house. Indeed he expressed those feelings to me himself, and the countenance and manner of his wife always denoted feelings of the same character. I believe a similar disposition to contentment under change of fortune is common among the class to which these good people belong. Yet, in proof that to part with their patrimony is most painful to them, I may refer to those who
entitled "Repentance," no inconsiderable
of which was taken verbatim from the letters
of the speaker herself.

MARK the concentrated hazels that stand
Yon old gray Stone, protected from a ray
Of noontide suns: — and even the little
That play
And glance, while wantonly the wind blows,
Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows
Upon that roof, amid embowering trees.
The very image framing of a Tomb
In which some ancient Chieftain finds a pose
Among the lonely mountains. — Live, trees!
And thou, grey Stone, the pensive like keep
Of a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep For more than Fancy to the influence best
When solitary Nature condescends
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

TO THE POET, JOHN DYER
1810-15. 1815

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful gem made
That work a living landscape fair as bright;
Nor hallowed less with musical delight
Than those soft scenes through which a childhood strayed,
Those southern tracts of Cambria, “de embayed,
With green hills fenced, with ocean’s murmur lulled;”
Though hasty Fame hath many a chap
For worthless brows, while in the pens shade
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head a graced,
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts mes and still,
A grateful few, shall love thy modest Le Long as the shepherd’s bleating flock a stray
O’er naked Snowdon’s wide aerial waste: Long as the thrush shall pipe on Great

Hill!
OD E

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING. JANUARY 18, 1816

1816. 1816

The first stanza of this Ode was composed almost extempore, in front of Rydal Mount, before church-time, and on such a morning and precisely with such objects before my eyes as are here described. The view taken of Napoleon’s character and proceedings is little in accordance with that taken by some historians and critical philosophers. I am glad and proud of the difference, and trust that this series of poems, infinitely below the subject as they are, will survive to counteract, in unsophisticated minds, the pernicious and degrading tendency of those views and doctrines that lead to the idolatry of power, as power, and, in that false splendour to lose sight of its real nature and constitution as it often acts for the gratification of its possessor without reference to a beneficial end— an infirmity that has characterised men of all ages, classes, and employments, since Nimrod became a mighty hunter before the Lord.

I

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night! Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude
On hearts howe’er insensible or rude;
Whether thy punctual visitations smite
The haughty towers where monarchs dwell;
Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright
Cheer’st the low threshold of the peasant’s cell!

Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky
In naked splendour, clear from mist or haze,
Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,
Which even in deepest winter testify
Thy power and majesty,
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.
—Well does thine aspect usher in this Day;
As aptly suits therewith that modest pace
Submitted to the chains
That bind thee to the path which God ordains

That thou shalt trace,
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass away!
Nor less, the stillness of these frosty plains,
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace:
Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,
(Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity
Report of storms gone by
To us who tread below)
Do with the service of this Day accord.
— Divinest Object which the uplifted eye
Of mortal man is suffered to behold;
Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights
has poured
Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble
Vale;
Thou who dost warm Earth’s universal
mould,
And for thy bounty wert not adored
By pious men of old;
Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee
hail!
Bright be thy course to-day, let not this
promise fail!

II
'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,
By feelings urged that do not vainly seek
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
That stream in blithe succession from the
throats
Of birds, in leafy bower,
Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.
— There is a radiant though a short-lived
flame,
That burns for Poets in the dawning east;
And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,
When the captivity of sleep had ceased;
But He who fixed immoveably the frame
Of the round world, and built, by laws as
strong,
A solid refuge for distress —
The towers of righteousness;
He knows that from a holier altar came
The quickening spark of this day’s sacrifice;
Knows that the source is nobler whence
doth rise
The current of this matin song;
That deeper far it lies
Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

III
Have we not conquered? — by the venge-
ful sword?
Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity;
That curbed the baser passions, and left free
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord
Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Com-
peers,
Along a track of most unnatural years;
In execution of heroic deeds
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal
beads
Of morning dew upon the unstirred meads,
Shall live enrolled above the starry sphere
He, who in concert with an earthly string
Of Britain’s acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of one whose spirit no reverse could
quell;
Of one that ‘mid the failing never failed —
Who paints how Britain struggled and pre-
vailed
Shall represent her labouring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity;
Shall show her clothed with strength and
skill,
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary fight;
In motion rapid as the lightning’s gleam;
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at midnight
To rouse the wicked from their giddy
dream —
Woe, woe to all that face her in the field!
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

IV
And thus is missed the sole true glory
That can belong to human story!
At which they only shall arrive
Who through the abyss of weakness dive
The very humblest are too proud of heart;
And one brief day is rightly set apart
For Him who lifteth up and layeth low;
For that Almighty God to whom we owe.
Say not that we have vanquished — but that
we survive.

V
How dreadful the dominion of the im-
pure!
Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim
That less than power unbounded could not
tame
That soul of Evil — which, from hell let
loose,
Had filled the astonished world with sick
abuse
As boundless patience only could endure?
— Wide-wasted regions — cities wrapt in
flame —
Who sees, may lift a streaming eye
To Heaven; — who never saw, may have a
sigh;
But the foundation of our nature shakes,
And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,
hen desolated countries, towns on fire,
Are but the avowed attire
warfare waged with desperate mind
against the life of virtue in mankind;
Assaulting without ruth
The citadels of truth;
while the fair gardens of civility,
By ignorance defaced,
By violence laid waste,
rish without reprieve for flower or
tree!

VI
A crouching purpose—a distracted will—
posed to hopes that battened upon scorn,
110
to desires whose ever-waxing horn
not all the light of earthly power could
fill;
posed to dark, deep plots of patient
skill,
posed to celerities of lawless force;
high, spurning God, had flung away re-
morse—
hat could they gain but shadows of re-
dress?
So bad proceeded propagating worse;
120
discipline was passion’s dire excess.
Idens the fatal web, its lines extend,
and deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.
hen will your trials teach you to be
wise?
O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies!

VII
No more—the guilt is banished,
And, with the guilt, the shame is fled;
with the guilt and shame, the Woe
hath vanished,
aeking the dust and ashes from her
head!
0 more—these lingerings of distress
ily the limpid stream of thankfulness.
That robe can Gratitude employ
seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?
That steps so suitable as those that move
prompt obedience to spontaneous mea-
sures
f glory, and felicity, and love,
rendering the whole heart to sacred
pleasures?

VIII
O Britain! dearer far than life is dear,
If one there be
140
Of all thy progeny

Who can forget thy prowess, never more
Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear
Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents
roar.

As springs the lion from his den,
As from a forest-brake
Upstarts a glistening snake,

The bold Arch-despot re-appeared;— again
Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,
With all her armed Powers, 150
On that offensive soil, like waves upon
a thousand shores.
The trumpet blew a universal blast!
But Thou art foremost in the field:— there
stand:
Receive the triumph destined to thy hand!
All States have glorified themselves;—their
claims
Are weighed by Providence, in balance
even;
And now, in preference to the mightiest
names,
To Thee the exterminating sword is given.
Dread mark of approbation, justly gained!
Exalted office, worthily sustained!

IX
Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts
The memory of thy favour,
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savour!
Lodge it within us!—as the power of
light
Lives inextricably in precious gems,
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!
What offering, what transcendent monu-
ment
Shall our sincerity to Thee present?
170
— Not work of hands; but trophies that
may reach
To highest Heaven—the labour of the
Soul;
That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,
Upon the internal conquests made by each,
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth gain-
say
The outward service of this day;
Whether the worshippers entreat
Forgiveness from God’s mercy-seat;
Or thanks and praises to His throne ascend
That He has brought our warfare to an
end,
181
And that we need no second victory!—
But in the bosom, with devout respect
The banner of our joy we will erect,
And strength of love our souls shall elevate:
For to a few collected in his name,
Their heavenly Father will incline an ear
Gracious to service hallowed by its aim;
Awake! the majesty of God revere!
Go — and with forehead meekly bowed
Present your prayers — go — and rejoice aloud —
The Holy One will hear!
And what, ’mid silence deep, with faith sincere,
Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate —
Of warnings — from the unparalleled might,
Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed;
And of more arduous duties thence imposed
Upon the future advocates of right;
Of mysteries revealed,
And judgments unreeled,
Of earthly revolution,
And final retribution —
To his omniscience will appear
An offering not unworthy to find place,
On this high Day of Thanks, before the Throne of Grace!

ODE

1816. 1816

IMAGINATION — be’er before content,
But aye ascending, restless in her pride
From all that martial feats could yield
To her desires, or to her hopes present —
Stooped to the Victory, on that Belgic field
Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,
And with the embrace was satisfied:
— Fly, ministers of Fame,
With every help that ye from earth and heaven may claim!
Bear through the world these tidings of delight!
— Hours, Days, and Months, have borne them in the sight
Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower
That landward stretches from the sea
The morning’s splendours to devour;
But this swift travel scorns the company
The peaceful guest advancing from afar.
Bright be the Fabric, as a star
Fresh risen, and beautiful within! — there
meet
Dependence infinite, proportion just;
A Pile that Grace approves, and Time can trust
With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

III
But if the valiant of this land
In reverential modesty demand,
That all observance, due to them, be paid
Where their serene progenitors are laid; 60
Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-like sages,
England's illustrious sons of long, long ages;
Be it not unordained that solemn rites,
Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,
Shall be performed at pregnant intervals;
Commemoration holy that unites
The living generations with the dead;
By the deep soul-moving sense
Of religious eloquence, —
By visual pomp, and by the tie
Of sweet and threatening harmony;
Soft notes, awful as the omen
Of destructive tempests coming,
And escaping from that sadness
Into elevated gladness;
While the white-robed choir attendant,
Under mouldering banners pendant,
Provoke all potent symphonies to raise
Songs of victory and praise,
For them who bravely stood unhurt, or bled
With medicable wounds, or found their graves
Upon the battle field, or under ocean's waves;
Or were conducted home in single state,
And long procession — there to lie,
Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,
Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

IV
Nor will the God of peace and love
Such martial service disapprove.
He guides the Pestilence — the cloud
Of locusts travels on his breath;
The region that in hope was ploughed.

Irksome change, or threats from saddening power.
— The shock is given — the Adversaries bleed —
Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!
Joyful annunciation! — it went forth —
pierced the caverns of the sluggish North —
It found no barrier on the ridge
f Andes — frozen gulphs became its bridge —
be vast Pacific gladdens with the freight —
pon the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed —
be Arabian desert shapes a willing road
Across her burning breast,
or this refreshing incense from the West! —
- Where snakes and lions breed,
there towns and cities thick as stars appear,
therever fruits are gathered, and where'er
he upturned soil receives the hopeful seed —
while the Sun rules, and cross the shades of night —
he unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!
he eyes of good men thankfully give heed,
And in its sparkling progress read
If virtue crowned with glory's deathless meed:
Yrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,
and slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats are done;
ven the proud Realm, from whose distracted borders
his messenger of good was launched in air,
rance, humbled France, amid her wild disorders,
eels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,
hat she too lacks not reason to rejoice,
and utter England's name with sadly-plausible voice.

II
Genuine glory, pure renown!
and well might it be seem that mighty Town
nto whose bosom earth's best treasures flow,
o whom all persecuted men retreat;
f a new Temple lift her votive brow
igh on the shore of silver Thames — to greet
INVOCATION TO THE EARTH

FEBRUARY 1816

1816. 1816

Composed immediately after the "Thanksgiving Ode," to which it may be considered as a second part.

I

"Rest, rest, perturbed Earth!
O rest, thou doleful Mother of Mankind!"

A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than the wind:

"From regions where no evil thing hath birth
I come—thy stains to wash away,
Thy cherished fetters to unbind,
And open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.
The Heavens are thronged with mariners
That have risen
From out thy noisome prison;
The penal caverns groan
With tens of thousands rent from off the tree
Of hopeful life,—by battle’s whirlwind blown
Into the deserts of Eternity.
Unpitied havoc! Victims un lamented!
But not on high, where madness is repressed
And murder causes some sad tears to flow.
Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly augmented.

II

"False Parent of Mankind!
Obscure, proud, and blind,
I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!
Scattering this far-fetched moisture from my wings,
Upon the act a blessing I implore,
Of which the rivers in their secret springs
The rivers stained so oft with human gore.
Are conscious;—may the like return no more!
May Discord— for a Seraph’s care
Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—
May she, who once disturbed the seats of bliss
These mortal spheres above,
Be chained for ever to the black abyss.
And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and love,

His drought consumes, his mildew taints
with death;
He springs the hushed Volcano’s mine,
He puts the Earthquake on her still design,
Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,
And, drinking towns and cities, still can drink
Cities and towns—’tis Thou—the work is Thine!—
The fierce tornado sleeps within thy courts—
He hears the word—he flies—
And navies perish in their ports;—
For Thou art angry with thine enemies!
For these, and mourning for our errors,
And sins, that point their terrors,
We bow our heads before Thee, and we laud
And magnify thy name, Almighty God!
But Man is thy most awful instrument,
In working out a pure intent;
Thou cloth’st the wicked in their dazzling mail,
And for thy righteous purpose they prevail;
Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
Of them who in thy laws delight:—
Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful fight,
Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts!

v

Forbear:—to Thee—
Father and Judge of all, with fervent tongue
But in a gentler strain
Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong,
(Too quick and keen) incited to disdain
Of pity pleading from the heart in vain—
To Thee—To Thee—
Just God of christianised Humanity,
Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks ascend,
That thou hast brought our warfare to an end,
And that we need no second victory!
Blest, above measure blest,
If on thy love our Land her hopes shall rest,
And all the Nations labour to fulfil
Thy law, and live henceforth in peace, in pure good will.
merciful desires, thy sanctity approve!"

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,
And the pure vision closed in darkness infinite.

ODE

1816. 1816

— Carmina posse mus
Domum, et pratum dicere muneri.
Non inclas notis marmora publicis,
Per qua spiritus et vita redivis bonus
Post mortem ductus
clarus indicat
Landes, quam — Pleride; neque,
Si chartae silicat quod bene feceras,
Mercedem tuleras. — Hor. Car. 8, Lib. 4.

I

Then the soft hand of sleep had closed
The tired household of corporeal sense,
And Fancy, keeping reluctant watch,
Was free her choicest favours to dispense;
Saw, in wondrous perspective displayed,
A landscape more august than happiest skill
Of pencil ever cloathed with light and shade;
An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,
And stately forest where the wild deer rove;
Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,
And scattered rural farms of aspect bright;
And, here and there, between the pastoral downs,
The azure sea upswepted upon the sight.
Fair prospect, such as Britain only shows!
But not a living creature could be seen
Through its wide circuit, that, in deep repose,
And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,
Stayed hushed; till — through a portal in the sky
Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a storm,
Opening before the sun's triumphant eye
Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form!
Earthward it glided with a swift descent:
Saint George himself this Visitant must be;
And, ere a thought could ask on what intent
He sought the regions of Humanity,
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified
City and field and flood; — aloud it cried —
"Though from my celestial home,
Like a Champion, armed I come;
On my helm the dragon crest,
And the red cross on my breast;
I, the Guardian of this Land,
Speak not now of toilsome duty;
Well obeyed was that command —
Whence bright days of festive beauty;
Haste, Virgins, haste! — the flowers which summer gave
Have perished in the field;
But the green thickets plenteously shall yield
Fit garlands for the brave,
That will be welcome, if by you entwined;
Haste, Virgins, haste; and you, ye Matrons grave,
Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,
And gather what ye find
Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs —
To deck your stern Defenders' modest brows!
Such simple gifts prepare,
Though they have gained a worthier meed;
And in due time shall share
Those palms and amaranthine wreaths
Unto their martyred Countrymen decreed,
In realms where everlasting freshness breathes!"

II

And lo! with crimson banners proudly streaming,
And upright weapons innocently gleaming,
Along the surface of a spacious plain
Advance in order the redoubted Bands,
And there receive green chaplets from the hands
Of a fair female train —
Maids and Matrons, dight
In robes of dazzling white;
While from the crowd bursts forth a rap turous noise
By the cloud-capt hills retorted;
And a throng of rosy boys
In loose fashion tell their joys;
And grey-haired sires, on staffs supported,
Look round, and by their smiling seem to say,
Thus strives a grateful Country to display
The mighty debt which nothing can repay!

III

Anon before my sight a palace rose
Built of all precious substances,— so pure
And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows
Ability like splendour to endure:
Entered, with streaming thousands, through the gate,
I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome of state,
A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate
The heaven of sable night
With starry lustre; yet had power to throw
Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,
Upon a princely company below,
While the vault rang with choral harmony,
Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath the roaring sea.

— No sooner ceased that peal, than on the verge
Of exultation hung a dirge
Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,
That kindled recollections
Of agonised affections;
And, though some tears the strain attended,
The mournful passion ended
In peace of spirit, and sublime content!

IV
But garlands wither; festal shows depart,
Like dreams themselves; and sweetest sound —
(Albeit of effect profound)
It was — and it is gone!
Victorious England! bid the silent Art
Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,
Those high achievements; even as she arrayed
With second life the deed of Marathon
Upon Athenian walls;
So may she labour for thy civic halls:
And be the guardian spaces
Of consecrated places,
As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient toil;
And let imperishable Columns rise
Fixed in the depths of this courageous soil;
Expressive signals of a glorious strife,
And competent to shed a spark divine
Into the torpid breast of daily life; —
Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,
The morning sun may shine
With gratulation thoroughly benign!

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from Jove
And sage Mnemosyne, — full long debared
From your first mansions, exiled all too long
From many a hallowed stream and grove,
Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,
Chanting for patriot heroes the reward
Of never-dying song!

Now (for, though Truth descending from above
The Olympian summit hath destroyed for aye
Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move, as
Spared for obeisance from perpetual love
For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)
Now, on the margin of some spotless fountain,
Or top serene of unmolested mountain,
Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,
And for a moment meet the soul's desires:
That I, or some more favoured Bard, may hear
What ye, celestial Maids! have often sung
Of Britain's acts, — may catch it with my ear,
And give the treasure to our British tongue!
So shall the characters of that proud page
Support their mighty theme from age to age;
And, in the desert places of the earth,
When they to future empires have given birth,
So shall the people gather and believe
The bold report, transferred to every clime;
And the whole world, not envious but admiring,
And to the like aspiring,
Own — that the progeny of this fair Isle
Had power as lofty actions to achieve
As were performed in man's heroic prime;
Nor wanted, when their fortitude had been
Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,
A corresponding virtue to beguile
The hostile purpose of wide-wasting Time —
That not in vain they laboured to secure,
For their great deeds, perpetual memory,
And fame as largely spread as land and sea,
By Works of spirit high and passion pure!

ODE
1816. 1816

Who rises on the banks of Seine,
And binds her temples with the civic wreath?
What joy to read the promise of her mind!
How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings
beneath!
But they are ever playing,
And twinkling in the light,
And, if a breeze be straying,
That breeze she will invite;
and stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,
and calls a look of love into her face,
and spreads her arms, as if the general air
alone could satisfy her wide embrace.
Melt, Principalities, before her melt!
er love ye hailed — her wrath have felt!
She through many a change of form
hath gone,
and stands amidst you now an armèd crea-
ture,
those panoply is not a thing put on,
at the live scales of a portentous nature;
hast, having forced its way from birth to birth,
walks round — abhorred by Heaven, a ter-
ror to the Earth!

II
I marked the breathings of her dragon crest;
by Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,
much a midnight vision bowed
efore the ominous aspect of her spear;
whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,
threatened her foes, — or, pompously at rest,
seemed to bisect her orbèd shield,
stratches a blue bar of solid cloud
cross the setting sun and all the fiery west.

III
So did she dam the Earth, and God defy!
and, wheresoe'er she spread her sove-
regnity,
ollution tainted all that was most pure.
Have we not known — and live we not to tell —
hat Justice seemed to hear her final knell?
ath buried deeper in her own deep breast
for stores, and sighed to find them insecure!
and Hope was maddened by the drops that fell
from shades, her chosen place of short-
lived rest.
name followed shame, and woe supplanted woe —
is this the only change that time can show?

How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye pa-
tient Heavens, how long?
— Infirm ejaculation! from the tongue
Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong
Up to the measure of accorded might,
And daring not to feel the majesty of right!

IV
Weak Spirits are there — who would ask,
Upon the pressure of a painful thing,
The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;
Or let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,
Among the lurking powers
Of herbs and lowly flowers,
Or seek, from saints above, miraculous aid —
That Man may be accomplished for a task
Which his own nature hath enjoined; —
and why?
If, when that interference hath relieved him,
He must sink down to languish
In worse than former helplessness — and lie
Till the caves roar, — and, imbecility
Again engendering anguish,
The same weak wish returns, that had be-
fore deceived him.

V
But Thou, supreme Disposer! may'st not speed
The course of things, and change the creed
Which hath been held aloft before men's sight
Since the first framing of societies,
Whether, as bards have told in ancient song,
Built up by soft seducing harmonies;
Or prest together by the appetite,
And by the power, of wrong.

THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA
1812–13
1816. 1816

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
A fond reflection of her own decay,
Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,
Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen day,
In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,
As though his weakness were disturbed by pain:
Or, if a juster fancy should allow
An undisputed symbol of command,
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,
Infirnly grasped within a palsied hand.
These emblems suit the helpless and forlorn;
But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was — dread Winter! who beset,
Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,
That host, when from the regions of the Pole
They shrunk, insane ambition’s barren goal —
That host, as huge and strong as e’er defied
Their God, and placed their trust in human pride.
As fathers persecute rebellious sons,
He smote the blossoms of their warrior youth;
He called on Frost’s inexorable tooth
Life to consume in Manhood’s firmest hold;
Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs;
For why — unless for liberty enrolled
And sacred home — ah! why should hoary
Age be bold?

Fleet the Tartar’s reining steed,
But fleeter far the pinions of the Wind,
Which from Siberian caves the Monarch freed,
And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,
And bade the Snow their ample backs besride,
And to the battle ride.
No pitying voice commands a halt,
No courage can repel the dire assault;
Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and blind,
Whole legions sink, and, in one instant, find
Burial and death: look for them — and descry,
When morn returns, beneath the clear blue sky,
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!

"BY MOSCOW SELF-DEVOTED TO A BLAZE"
1816. 1832

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze
Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood
Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood
The unfeeling Elements no claim shall as
To rob our Human nature of just praise
For what she did and suffered. Pleasure
Of a deliverance absolute and pure
She gave, if Faith might tread the less ways
Of Providence. But now did the
High
Exalt his still small voice; — to quell the
Host
Gathered his power, a manifest ally;
He, whose heaped waves confounded a
proud boast
Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, a
Frost,
"Finish the strife by deadliest victory!"

THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHT OF HOCHHEIM
1816. 1827

Abruptly paused the strife; — the foe throughout
Resting upon his arms each warrior stood
Checked in the very act and deed of the
With breath suspended, like a listening.
O Silence! thou wert mother of a shout
Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of birth,
So many objects to which love is due:
Ye slight not life — to God and Nature true;
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
When duty bids you bleed in open war:
Hence hath your prowess quelled that impious crew.
Heroes! — for instant sacrifice prepared;
Yet filled with ardour and on triumph bent
'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident —
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter spared,
To guard the fallen, and consummate the event,
Your Country rears this sacred Monument!

IEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY
JOHN SOBIESKIP

FEBRUARY 1816
1816. 1816

l, for a kindling touch from that pure flame
Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice
gratitude, beneath Italian skies,
Words like these: "Up, Voice of song! proclaim
By saintly rapture with celestial aim:
Lo! the Imperial City stands released from bondage threatened by the embattled East,
And Christendom respires; from guilt and shame
Deemed, from miserable fear set free
One day's feat, one mighty victory.
Chant the Deliverer's praise in every tongue!
The cross shall spread, the crescent hath waxed dim;
As conquering, as in joyful Heaven is sung,
Conquering through God, and God by Him."

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

FEBRUARY 1816
1816. 1816

The Bard — whose soul is meek as dawning day,
Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,
Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,
As recognising one Almighty sway:
He — whose experienced eye can pierce the array
Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,
The aspiring heads of future things appear,
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled away —
Assoiled from all encumbrance of our time,
He only, if such breathe, in strains devout
Shall comprehend this victory sublime;
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,
The triumph hail, which from their peaceful clime
Angels might welcome with a choral shout!

"EMPERORS AND KINGS, HOW OFT HAVE TEMPLES RUNG"

1816. 1827

Emperors and Kings, how oft have temples rung
With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's scorn!
How oft above their altars have been hung
Trophies that led the good and wise to mourn

STREPID sons of Albion! not by you
Life despised; ah no, the spacious earth...
Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,
And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!
Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory,
Peace is sprung;
In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.
Glory to arms! But, conscious that the nerve
Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed
Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear
to swerve!
Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor’s creed
Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve
Than ever forced unpity’d hearts to bleed.

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST, ON THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE DUKE D’ENGHIEI

1816. 1816

DEAR Reliques! from a pit of vilest mould
Uprisen — to lodge among ancestral kings;
And to inflict shame’s salutary stings
On the remorseless hearts of men grown old
In a blind worship; men perversely bold
Even to this hour,—yet, some shall now forsake
Their monstrous Idol if the dead e’re spake,
To warn the living; if truth were ever told
By aught redeemed out of the hollow grave:
O’ murdered Prince! meek, loyal, pious, brave!
The power of retribution once was given:
But’t is a rueful thought that willow bands
So often tie the thunder-wielding hands
Of Justice sent to earth from highest Heaven!

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE FIRST BOOK OF THE AENEID

1816. 1832

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PHILOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Your letter, reminding me of an expectation
I some time since held out to you of allowing some specimens of my translation from the Æneid to be printed in the Philological Museum, was not very acceptable; for I had abandoned the thought of ever sending into the world any part of that experiment — for it was nothing more — an experiment beguiled by amusement, and I now think, a less form one than when I first named it to you. I have been displeased in modern transla- tion with the additions of incongruous matter. I began to translate with a resolve to keep clear of that fault, by adding nothing; but I was convinced that a spirited translation scarcely be accomplished in the English language without admitting a principle of compensation. On this point, however, I do wish to insist, and merely send the folio passage, taken at random, from a wish to comply with your request.

But Cytherea, studious to invent
Arts yet untried, upon new counsels best
Resolves that Cupid, changed in form a face
To young Ascanius, should assume its place;
Present the maddening gifts, and kind heat
Of passion at the bosom’s most strict seat.
She dreads the treacherous house, the double tongue;
She burns, she frets — by Juno’s most stung;
The calm of night is powerless to remove
These cares, and thus she speaks to wis Love:

“O son, my strength, my power! dost despise
(What, save thyself, none dares thee earth and skies)
The giant-quelling bolts of Jove, I see,
O son, a suppliant to thy deity!
The perils meet Æneas in his course,
How Juno’s hate with unrelenting force
Pursues thy brother — this to thee known;
And oft-times hast thou made my girt thine own.

Him now the generous Dido by soft arts
Of bland entreaty at her court detain;
Junoian hospitalities prepare
Such apt occasion that I dread a scare.
Hence, ere some hostile God can interve
Would I, by previous wiles, inflame queen

With passion for Æneas, such strong love
That at my beck, mine only, she a move.
Hear, and assist; — the father’s mind calls
Their painted couches seek, obedient to command,
They look with wonder on the gifts — they gaze
Upon Iulus, dazzled with the rays
That from his ardent countenance are flung,
And charmed to hear his simulating tongue;
Nor pass unpraised the robe and veil divine,
Round which the yellow flowers and wandering foliage twine.

But chiefly Dido, to the coming ill
Devoted, strives in vain her vast desires tofill;
She views the gifts; upon the child then turns
Insatiable looks, and gazing burns.
To ease a father’s cheated love he hung
Upon Æneas, and around him clung;
Then seeks the queen; with her his arts he tries;
She fastens on the boy enamoured eyes,
Clasps in her arms, nor weans (O lot unblest!)
How great a God, incumbent o’er her breast,
Would fill it with his spirit. He, to please
His Acidalian mother, by degrees
Blots out Sichaeus, studious to remove
The dead, by influx of a living love,
By stealthy entrance of a perilous guest.
Troubling a heart that had been long at rest.

Now when the viands were withdrawn, and ceased
The first division of the splendid feast,
While round a vacant board the chiefs recline,
Huge goblets are brought forth; they crown the wine;
Voices of gladness roll the walls around;
Those gladsome voices from the courts rebound;
From gilded rafters many a blazing light
Depends, and torches overcome the night.
The minutes fly — till, at the queen’s command,
A bowl of state is offered to her hand:
Then she, as Belus went, and all the line
From Belus, filled it to the brim with wine;
Silence ensued. "O Jupiter, whose care
Is hospitable dealing, grant my prayer!
Productive day be this of lasting joy
To Tyrians, and these exiles driven from
Troy;
A day to future generations dear!
Let Bacchus, donor of soul-quick'ning cheer,
Be present; kindly Juno, be thou near!
And, Tyrians, may your choicest favours wait
Upon this hour, the bond to celebrate!"
She spake and shed an offering on the board;
Then sipped the bowl whence she the wine had poured
And gave to Bitias, urging the prompt lord;
He raised the bowl, and took a long deep draught;
Then every chief in turn the beverage quaffed.

Graced with redundant hair, Iopas sings
The lore of Atlas, to resounding strings,
The labours of the Sun, the lunar wanderings;
Whence human kind, and brute; what natural powers
Engender lightning, whence are falling showers.
He haunts Arcturus, — that fraternal twain,
The glittering Bears, — the Pleiads fraught with rain;
— Why suns in winter, shunning heaven's steep heights
Post seaward, — what impedes the tardy nights.
The learned song from Tyrian bearers draws
Loud shouts, — the Trojans echo the applause.
— But, lengthening out the night with converse new,
Large draughts of love unhappy Dido drew;
Of Priam asked, of Hector — o'er and o'er —
What arms the son of bright Aurora wore; —
What steeds the car of Diomed could boast;
Among the leaders of the Grecian host.
How looked Achilles, their dread paramount —
"But may — the fatal wiles, O guest, re-count,
Retrace the Grecian cunning from its source,
Your own grief and your friends —
wandering course;
For now, till this seventh summer ranged
The sea, or trod the earth, to peace tranged."

A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION
OR, CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEASHORE
1816. 1820

The first and last fourteen lines of this poet each make a sonnet, and were composed as one; but I thought that by intermediate lines 1 2 3 might be connected so as to make a whole. One or two expressions are taken from Mr. History of England.

The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair
Mustered a face of haughty sovereigns.
To aid a covert purpose, cried — "O ye Approaching Waters of the deep, share
With this green isle my fortunes, come where
Your Master's throne is set." — Deaf the Sea;
Her waves rolled on, respecting his decree.
Less than they heed a breath of wind air.
— Then Canute, rising from the invalid throne,
Said to his servile Courtiers, — "Pox to reach,
The undisguised extent, of mortal sway!
He only is a King, and he alone
Deserves the name (this truth the Bibles preach)
Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, or heaven, obey."
This just reproof the prosperous Dane
Drew, from the influx of the main,
For some whose rugged northern mood would strain
At oriental flattery;
And Canute (fact more worthy to be known)
From that time forth did for his brow disown
The ostentations symbol of a crown;
Esteeming earthly royalty
Contemptible as vain.
Now hear what one of elder days,


Planting his favourite silver diadem,
Nor he, nor minister of his—intent
To run before him—hath enrolled me yet,
Though not unmenaced, among those who
lean

Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight. 30
—O my own Dora, my beloved child!
Should that day come—but hark! the
birds salute
The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the
east;
For me, thy natural leader, once again
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst
A tottering infant, with compliant stoop
From flower to flower supported; but to
curb
Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o’er
the lawn,
Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge
Of foaming torrents.—From thy orisons 30
Come forth; and, while the morning air is
yet
Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,
Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy
way,
And now precede thee, winding to and fro,
Till we by perseverance gain the top
Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous
Kindles intense desire for powers withheld
From this corporeal frame; whereon who
stands,
Is seized with strong incitements to push
forth
His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge—
dread thought,
For pastime plunge—into the “abrupt
abyss,”—
Where ravens spread their plumpy vans, at
ease!
And yet more gladly thee would I con-
duct
Through woods and spacious forests,—to
behold
There, how the Original of human art,
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and
erects
Her temples, fearless for the stately work,
Though waves, to every breeze, its high-
arched roof,
And storms the pillars rock. But we such
schools
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek 40
In the still summer noon, while beams of
light,
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond
Traceably gliding through the dusk, re-
call
To mind the living presences of nuns;
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they
serve,
To Christ, the Sun of righteousness, es-
poused.
Now also shall the page of classic lore,
To these glad eyes from bondage freed, again
Lie open; and the book of Holy Writ,
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield
To heights more glorious still, and into
shades
More awful, where, advancing hand in
hand,
We may be taught, O Darling of my care!
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,
And consecrate our lives to truth and love.

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT
OF HELVELLYN
1816. 1820

Written at Rydal Mount. The lady was
Miss Blackett, then residing with Mr. Montagu
Burgoyne at Fox-Ghyll. We were tempted to
remain too long upon the mountain; and I, im-
prudently, with the hope of shortening the way,
led her among the crags and down a steep
slope which entangled us in difficulties that
were met by her with much spirit and courage.

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee,
Not unwilling to obey;
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;
What a vast abyss is there!
Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
And the glistenings — heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion
Which a thousand ridges yield;
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
Gleaming like a silver shield!
Maiden! now take flight; — inherit
Alps or Andes — they are thine!
With the morning's rosate Spirit,
Sweep their length of snowy line;
Or survey their bright dominions
In the gorgeous colours drest,
Flung from off the purple pinions,
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the coral fountains
Warbling in each sparry vault
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;
Listen to their songs! — or halt,
To Niphates' top invited,
Whither spiteful Satan steered;
Or descend where the ark alighted,
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee,
As was witnessed through thine eye
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee
To confess their majesty!

VERNAL ODE
1817. 1820

Composed at Rydal Mount, to place in vie
the immortality of succession where inmen-
tality is denied, as far as we know, to the in-
dividual creature.

Rerum Natura tota est unaquam magis quam
minimis. — PLIN. Nat. Hist.

I
BENEATH the concave of an April sky,
When all the fields with freakest grass
were dight,
Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye,
That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,
The form and rich habiliments of One
Whose countenance bore resemblance to
the sun,
When it reveals, in evening majesty,
Features half lost amid their own part
light.
Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air
He hung; — then floated with angelic grace
(Softening that bright effulgence by degrees)
The melancholy gates of Death
Respond with sympathetic motion;
Though all that feeds on nether air,
Howerer magnificent or fair,
Grows but to perish, and entrust
Its ruins to their kindred dust;
Yet, by the Almighty’s ever-during care,
Her procreant vigils Nature keeps
Amid the unfathomable deeps;
And saves the peopled fields of earth
From dread of emptiness or death.

Thus, in their stations, lifting tow’rd the sky
The foliaged head in cloud-like majesty,
The shadow-casting race of trees survive:
Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive
Sweet flowers; — what living eye hath viewed
Their myriads? — endlessly renewed,
Wherever strikes the sun’s glad ray;
Where’er the subtle waters stray;
Wherever sportive breezes bend
Their course, or genial showers descend!
Mortals, rejoice! the very Angels quit
Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,
And through your sweet vicissitudes to range!”

IV
Oh, nursed at happy distance from the cares
Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral Muse!
That, to the sparkling crown Urania wears,
And to her sister Clio’s laurel wreath,
Prefer’d a garland culled from purple heath,
Or blooming thicket moist with morning dews;
Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to me?
And was it granted to the simple ear
Of thy contented Votary
Such melody to hear!
Him rather suits it, side by side with thee,
Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,
While thy tired eye hangs on the hawthorn-tree,
To lie and listen — till o’er-drowsed sense
Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence —
To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.

— A slender sound! yet hoary Time
Doth to the Soul exalt it with the chime
Of all his years; — a company
Of ages coming, ages gone;

ill he had reached a summit sharp and bare,
O’er the venturous heifer drinks the noontide breeze.
Upon the apex of that lofty cone
Lighted, there the Stranger stood alone;
As a gorgeous Fabric of the east
Suddenly raised by some enchanter’s power,
Where nothing was; and firm as some old Tower
Of Britain’s realm, whose leafy crest
Vases high, embellished by a gleaming shower!

II
Beneath the shadow of his purple wings
Tested a golden harp; — he touched the strings;
And, after prelude of unearthly sound
Poured through the echoing hills around,
He sang —
“No wintry desolations,
Scorching blight or noxious dew,
Affect my native habitations;
Buried in glory, far beyond the scope
Of man’s inquiring gaze, but to his hope
Imaged, though faintly, in the hue
Profound of night’s ethereal blue;
And in the aspect of each radiant orb; —
Some fixed, some wandering with no timid curb:
But wandering star and fixed, to mortal eye,
Blended in absolute serenity,
And free from semblance of decline; —
Fresh as if Evening brought their natal hour,
Her darkness splendour gave, her silence power
To testify of Love and Grace divine.

III
“What if those bright fires
Shine subject to decay,
Sons happy of extinguished sirens,
Themselves to lose their light, or pass away
Like clouds before the wind,
Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand bestowed,
Nightly, on human kind
That vision of endurance and repose.
— And though to every draught of vital
Breath
Renewed throughout the bounds of earth or ocean

VERNAL ODE
(Nations from before them sweeping,
Regions in destruction steeping,)
But every awful note in unison
With that faint utterance, which tells
Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,
For the pure keeping of those waxen
cells; 100
Where She — a statist prudent to confer
Upon the common weal, a warrior bold,
Radiant all over with unburnished gold,
And armed with living spear for mortal
fight;
A cunning forager
That spreads no waste; a social builder; one
In whom all busy offices unite
With all fine functions that afford de-
light —
Safe through the winter storm in quiet
dwells!

And is She brought within the power 110
Of vision? — o’er this tempting flower
Hovering until the petals stay
Her flight, and take its voice away! —
Observe each wing! — a tiny van!
The structure of her laden thigh,
How fragile! yet of ancestry
Mysteriously remote and high;
High as the imperial front of man;
The roseate bloom on woman’s cheek;
The soaring eagle’s curvèd beak; 120
The white plumes of the floating swan;
Old as the tiger’s paw, the lion’s mane,
Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain
At which the desert trembles. — Humming
Bee!
Thy sting was needless then, perchance un-
known,
The seeds of malice were not sown;
All creatures met in peace, from fierceness free,
And no pride blended with their dignity.
— Tears had not broken from their source;
Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean
den;
The golden years maintained a course
Not undiversified though smooth and even;
We were not mocked with glimpse and
shadow then,
Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with
men;
And earth and stars composed a universal
heaven!

An age hath been when Earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed
The front in self-defence.
Who then, if Dian’s crescent gleamed,
Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed,
While on the wing the Urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade?

Enough for one soft vernal day,
If, a bard of ebbing time,
And nurtured in a pickle clime,
A day haunt this horned bay;
Whose amorous waters multiply
The fitful halcyon's vivid dyes;
And smooths her liquid breast—to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow.
White as the pair that slid along the plains
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins!

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owlet's wing;
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,
And Autumn to the Spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect.
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar respect.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)
When Nature marks the year's decline,
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
Of the resplendent miracle.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend,
Lycoris! life requires an art
To which our souls must bend;
A skill—to balance and supply;
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
Then welcome, above all, the Guest
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
Seem to recall the Deity
Of youth into the breast:
May pensive Autumn ne'er present
A claim to her disparagement!
While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay;
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul!

This as well as the preceding and the two
That follow were composed in front of Rydal Mount and during my walks in the neighbourhood. Nine-tenths of my verses have been murmured out in the open air; and here let me repeat what I believe has already appeared in print. One day a stranger having walked round the garden and grounds of Rydal Mount asked one of the female servants, who happened to be at the door, permission to see her master's study. "This," said she, leading him forward, "is my master's library where he keeps his books, but his study is out of doors." After a long absence from home it has more than once happened that some one of my cottage neighbours has said—"Well, there he is; we are glad to hear him booming about again." Once more, in excuse for so much egotism, let me say, these notes are written for my familiar friends, and at their earnest request. Another time a gentleman whom James had conducted through the grounds asked him what kind of plants thrrove best there: after a little consideration he answered—"Laurels." "That is," said the stranger, "as it should be; don't you know that the laurel is the emblem of poetry, and that poets used on public occasions to be crowned with it?" James stared when the question was first put, but was doubtless much pleased with the information.

Enough of climbing toil!—Ambition treads
Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep
And rough,
Or slippery even to peril! and each step,
As we for most uncertain recompense
Mount toward the empire of theickle clouds,
Each weary step, dwarfing the world below,
Induces, for its old familiar sights,
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
With wonder mixed—that Man could e'er
Be tied,
In anxious bondage, to such nice array
And formal fellowship of petty things!
—Oh! 'tis the heart that magnifies this life,
Making a truth and beauty of her own;
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,
And gurgling rills, assist her in the work
More efficaciously than realms outspread,
As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze—
Ocean and Earth contending for regard.
The umbrageous woods are left—how far beneath!
But lo! where darkness seems to guard the mouth
Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are fringed
With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still
And sultry air, depending motionless.
Yet cool the space within, and not uncheered
(As whoso enters shall ere long perceive)
By stealthy influx of the timid day
Mingling with night, such twilight to compose
As Numa loved; when, in the Egerian grot,
From the sage Nymph appearing at his wish,
He gained whate'er a regal mind might ask,
Or need, of counsel breathed through lips divine.

Long as the heat shall rage, let that dim cave
Protect us, there deciphering as we may
Diluvian records; or the signs of Earth
Interpreting; or counting for old Time
His minutes, by reiterated drops,
Audible tears, from some invisible source
That deepens upon fancy — more and more
Drawn toward the centre whence those signs creep forth
To awe the lightness of humanity:
Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,
There let me see thee sink into a mood
Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye
Be calm as water when the winds are gone,
And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend!
We two have known such happy hours together
That, were power granted to replace them
(fetched
From out the pensive shadows where they lie)
In the first warmth of their original sunshine,
Loth should I be to use it; passing sweet
Are the domains of tender memory!

THE LONGEST DAY

ADDRESS TO MY DAUGHTER

1817. 1820

Suggested by the sight of my daughter
(Dora) playing in front of Rydal Mount; and
composed in a great measure the same after-
noon. I have often wished to pair this poem
upon the longest with one upon the shortest, day,
and regret even now that it has not been done.

Let us quit the leafy arbour,
And the torrent murmuring by;
For the sun is in his harbour,
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters
Fashioned by the glowing light;
All that breathe are thankful debtors
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended
Eve renews her calm career:
For the day that now is ended,
Is the longest of the year.

Dora! sport, as now thou sportest,
On this platform, light and free;
Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,
Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling
That inspires the linnet's song?
Who would stop the swallow, wheeling
On her pinions swift and strong?

Yet at this impressive season,
Words which tenderness can speak
From the truths of homely reason,
Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding
Steal the landscape from the sight,
I would urge this moral pleading,
Last forerunner of "Good night!"

SUMMER ebbs; — each day that follows
Is a reflux from on high,
Tending to the darksome hollows
Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,
In his providence, assigned
Such a gradual declination
To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not; — fruits redden,
Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have blown,
And the heart is loth to deaden
Hopes that she so long hath known.

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden! And when thy decline shall come,
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden, Hide the knowledge of thy doom.
low, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,
'thine eyes upon the sea
'that absorbs time, space, and number;
look thou to Eternity!

'tollow thou the flowing river
in whose breast are thither borne
all deceived, and each deceiver,
through the gates of night and morn;
through the year's successive portals;
through the bounds which many a star
darks, not mindless of frail mortals
when his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled
'toward the mighty gulf of things,
and the many stream unravelled
with thy best imaginations;

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,
Think how pitiful that stay,
Did not virtue give the meanest
charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,
sometimes frowns, or seems to frown;
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,
while youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it, if thou shrink and tremble,
Fairest damsel of the green,
Thou wilt lack the only symbol
That proclaims a genuine queen;

And ensures those palms of honour
Which selected spirits wear,
Bending low before the Donor,
Lord of heaven's unchanging year!

Their ability to measure
With great enterprise;
but in man was 'er such daring
as yon Hawk exhibits, pairing
His brave spirit with the war in
The stormy skies!

"Mark him, how his power he uses,
Lays it by, at will resumes!
Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses
Clouds and utter glooms!
There, he wheels in downward mazes;
Sunward now his flight he raises,
Catches fire, as seems, and blazes
With uninjured plumes!"—

ANSWER
"Stranger, 'tis no act of courage
Which aloft thou dost discern;
No bold bird gone forth to forage
'Mid the tempest stern;
But such mockery as the nations
See, when public perturbations
Lift men from their native stations
Like yon Tuft of Fern;

"Such it is; the aspiring creature
Soaring on undaunted wing,
(So you fancied) is by nature
A dull helpless thing;
Dry and withered, light and yellow;—
That to be the tempest's fellow!
Wait—and you shall see how hollow
Its endeavouring!"

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

1817. 1820

Written at Rydal Mount. Thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers, by day and night, over this Pass, alone and with beloved friends.

I

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work.
A deep delight the bosom thrills
Oft as I pass along the fork
Of these fraternal hills:
Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind,
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock
Seem not his handiwork to mock
By something cognizably shaped;
Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn,
Or from the Flood escaped:
Altars for Druid service fit
(But where no fire was ever lit,
Unless the glow-worm to the skies
Thence offer nightly sacrifice);
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed —
On which four thousand years have gazed!

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes!
Ye snow-white lambs that trip
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
Of restless ownership!
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,
All that the fertile valley shields;
Wages of folly — baits of crime,
Of life's uneasy game the stake,
Playthings that keep the eyes awake
Of drowsy, dotard Time; —
O care! O guilt! — O vales and plains,
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,
A Genius dwells, that can subdue
At once all memory of You, —
Most potent when mists veil the sky,
Mists that distort and magnify;
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
Sigh forth their ancient melodies!

List to those shriller notes! — that march
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed!
— They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block — and you, whose church-like frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road! that lov'st to hide
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,
Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide:
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint;

Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow!

IV
My Soul was grateful for delight
That wore a threatening brow;
A veil is lifted — can she slight
The scene that opens now?
Though habitation none appear,
The greenness tells, man must be there;
The shelter — that the perspective
Is of the clime in which we live;
Where Toil pursues his daily round;
Where Pity sheds sweet tears — and Let
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
Inflicts his tender wound.
— Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
How beautiful the world below;
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
The brook adown the rocky steep.
Farewell, thou desolate Domain!
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
Carols like a shepherd-boy;
And who is she? — Can that be Joy?
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
Smoothly skims the meadows wide;
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
"Whate'er the weak may dread, the wise dare,
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion true!"

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR
1817-1820

This arose out of a flash of moonlight
Which struck the ground when I was approaching
The steps that lead from the garden at Kirkstall
Mount to the front of the house. "From a
Sunk eye a stagnant tear stole forth" is taken
With some loss, from a discarded poem, "The Convict," in which occurred, when he was
Covered lying in the cell, these lines:

"But now he upraises the deep-sunken eye,
The motion unsettles a tear;
The silence of sorrow it seems to supply
And asks of me — why I am here."

I
SMILE OF THE MOON! — FOR SO I NAME
That silent greeting from above;
A gentle flash of light that came
From her whom drooping captives love;
Can I be proud that jealous fear
Of what I was remains.

VIII
A Woman rules my prison’s key;
A sister, Queen, against the bent
Of law and holiest sympathy,
Detains me, doubtful of the event;
Great God, who feel’st for my distress,
My thoughts are all that I possess,
O keep them innocent!

IX
Farewell desire of human aid,
Which abject mortals vainly court!
By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,
Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport;
Nought but the world-redeeming Cross
Is able to supply my loss,
My burthen to support.

X
Hark! the death-note of the year
Sounded by the castle-clock!
From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock;
But oft the woods renewed their green,
Ere the tired head of Scotland’s Queen
Reposed upon the block!

SEQUEL TO THE “BEGGARS,” 1802
COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER
1817. 1827

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?
For whose free range the daedal earth
Was filled with animated toys,
And implements of frolic mirth;
With tools for ready wit to guide;
And ornaments of seemlier pride,
More fresh, more bright, than princes wear;
For what one moment flung aside,
Another could repair;
What good or evil have they seen
Since I their pastime witnessed here,
Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?
I ask—but all is dark between!
They met me in a genial hour,
When universal nature breathed
As with the breath of one sweet flower,—
A time to overrule the power
Of discontent, and check the birth
Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,
The most familiar bane of life
Since parting Innocence bequeathed
Mortality to Earth!
Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran clear;
The lambs from rock to rock were bounding;
With songs the bidded groves resounding;
And to my heart are still endear'd
The thoughts with which it then was cheerr'd;
The faith which saw that gladsome pair
Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.
Or, if such faith must needs deceive—
Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
Associates in that eager chase;
Ye, who within the blameless mind
Your favourite seat of empire find—
Kind Spirits! may we not believe
That they, so happy and so fair
Through your sweet influence, and the care
Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
From touch of deadly injury?
Destined whate'er their earthly doom,
For mercy and immortal bloom!

He turned, and watched with kindred eye,
A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,
Apparent at his feet.
The murmur of a neighbouring stream
Induced a soft and slumbrous dream,
A pregnant dream, within whose shade
He recognised the earth-born Star,
And That which glittered from afar;
And (strange to witness!) from the frame
Of the ethereal Orb, there came
Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light
That now, when day was fled, and night
Hushed the dark earth, fast closing weary eyes,
A very reptile could presume
To show her taper in the gloom,
As if in rivalry with One
Who sate a ruler on his throne
Erected in the skies.

"Exalted Star!" the Worm replied,
"Abate this unbecoming pride,
Or with a less uneasy lustre shine;
Thou shrink'st as momently thy rays
Are mastered by the breathing haze;
While neither mist, nor thickest cloud
That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,
Hath power to injure mine.

But not for this do I aspire
To match the spark of local fire,
That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,
With thy acknowledged glories;—No!
Yet, thus upbraided, I may show
What favours do attend me here,
Till, like thyself, I disappear
Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,
Across the welkin seemed to spread
A boding sound—for aught but sleep was!
Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran;
That Star, so proud of late, looked wan;
And reeled with visionary stir
In the blue depth, like Lucifer
Cast headlong to the pit!

Fire raged: and, when the spangled floor
Of ancient ether was no more,
New heavens succeeded, by the.dream
brought forth:
All the happy souls that rode
Anfigured through that fresh abode,
Henceforward, in humble trust,
One meekly 'mid their native dust,
Glow-worms of the earth!

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice.
Him who slept upon the open lea:
Aking at morn he murmured not;
Till life's journey closed, the spot
As to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,
Here by that dream he had been cheered
Beneath the shady tree.

INSPECIONS
OPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR A
HERMIT'S CELL
1818. 1820

I
OPEN, what are they? — Beads of morning
Trung on slender blades of grass;
A spider's web adorning
A strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy?
Whispering harm where harm is not;
Deluding the unwary
'll the fatal bolt is shot!

What is glory? — in the socket
See how dying tapers fare!
What is pride? — a whizzing rocket
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship? — do not trust her,
For the vows which she has made;
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth? — a staff rejected;
Duty? — an unwelcome clog;
Joy? — a moon by fits reflected
In a swamp or watery bog;

Bright, as if through ether steering,
To the Traveller's eye it shone:
He hath hailed it re-appearing —
And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy — as quickly hidden,
Or mis-shapen to the sight,

And by sullen weeds forbidden
To resume its native light.

What is youth? — a dancing billow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before!) Age? — a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace? — when pain is over,
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sigh discover
That precedes the passing knell!

II

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK

The monument of ice here spoken of I observed while ascending the middle road of the three ways that lead from Rydal to Grasmere. It was on my right hand, and my eyes were upon it when it fell, as told in these lines.

Pause, Traveller: whoso'er thou be Whom chance may lead to this retreat, Where silence yields reluctantly Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace, And fear not lest an idle sound Of words unsuited to the place Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air Blew softly o'er the russet heath, Uphold a Monument as fair As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day, Like marble, white, like ether, pure; As if, beneath, some hero lay, Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed; And, ever as the sun shone forth, The flatterd structure glistened, blazed, And seemed the proudest thing on earth,

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile Unsound as those which Fortune builds — To undermine with secret guile, Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock Fell the whole Fabric to the ground; And naked left this dripping Rock, With shapeless ruin spread around!
III
Where the second quarry now is, as you pass
from Rydal to Grasmere, there was formerly
a length of smooth rock that sloped towards
the road, on the right hand. I used to call it
Tadpole Slope, from having frequently ob-
erved there the water-bubbles gliding under
the ice, exactly in the shape of that creature.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts! — A wind-swept mea-
dow
Mimicking a troubled sea,
Such is life; and death a shadow.
From the rock eternity!

IV
NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE
Troubled long with warring notions,
Long impatient of thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this rugged tent,
If my spirit toss and walter
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal Well;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine tranquillity!

V
Not seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;
Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue;
And, if she trust the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread
Full oft, when storms the solkien rend,

Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe to man to die;
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;
And peace was given, — nor peace alone,
But faith sublimed to ecstasy!

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING
OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLEN-
DOUR AND BEAUTY
1818. 1820

Felt, and in a great measure composed on
the little mount in front of our abode at Ryd.
In concluding my notices of this class of poes
it may be as well to observe that among the
"Miscellaneous Sonnets" are a few alluding
to morning impressions which might be
with mutual benefit in connection with the
"Evening Voluntaries." See, for example
that one on Westminster Bridge, that composes
on a May morning, the one on the song of a
Thrush, and that beginning — "While
of orient light shoot wide and high."

I
Had this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of bland astonishment;
But 't is endued with power to stay,
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see —
What is? — ah no, but what can be!
Time was when field and watery cove
With modulated echoes rang,
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vesper in the grove;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sover-
height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth
low,
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy ris
Methinks, if audibly repeated now
From hill or valley, could not move
Sublimers transport, purer love.
Than doth this silent spectacle — its
gleam —
The shadow — and the peace supreme!
For, if a vestige of those gleams
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
Dread Power! whom peace and calmness
serve
No less than Nature's threatening voice, 70
If aught unworthy be my choice,
From Thee if I would swerve;
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth!
—Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;
And night approaches with her shades. 80

COMPOSED DURING A STORM
1819. 1819

Written in Rydal Woods, by the side of a torrent.

One who was suffering tumult in his soul,
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,
Went forth — his course surrendering to the care
Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings prowl
Insidiously, untimely thunders growl;
While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers, tear
The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,
And shivering wolves, surprised with dark-ness, howl
As if the sun were not. He raised his eye
Soul-smitten; for, that instant, did appear
Large space ('mid dreadful clouds) of pur-est sky,
An azure disc — shield of Tranquillity;
Invisible, unlooked-for, minister
Of providential goodness ever nigh!

THIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOWING, WERE SUGGESTED BY MR. W. WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE CAVES, ETC., IN YORKSHIRE
1819. 1819

Pure element of waters! wheresoe'er
Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,
Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-bearing plants,
Rise into life and in thy train appear:
And, through the sunny portion of the year,
Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursuivants:
And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants;
And hart and hind and hunter with his spear,
Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt
In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign;
And, haply, far within the marble belt
Of central earth, where tortured Spirits pine
For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs melt
Their anguish,—and they blend sweet
songs with thine.

MALHAM COVE
1819. 1819

Was the aim frustrated by force or guile,
When giants scooped from out the rocky ground,
Tier under tier, this semicirque profound?
(Giants — the same who built in Erin's isle
That Causeway with incomparable toil !) —
Oh, had this vast theatric structure wound
With finished sweep into a perfect round,
No mightier work had gained the plausive smile
Of all-beholding Phœbus! But, alas,
Vain earth! false world! Foundations must be laid
In Heaven; for, 'mid the wreck of Is and Was,
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic glass
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

GORDALE
1819. 1819

At early dawn, or rather when the air
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy Eve
Is busiest to confer and to bereave;
Then, pensive Votary! let thy feet repair
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair
Where the young lions couch; for so, by leave
Of the propitious hour, thou may'st perceive
The local Deity, with oozy hair
And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn,
Recumbent: him thou may'st behold, who hides
His lineaments by day, yet there presides
Teaching the docile waters how to turn,
Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,
And force their passage to the salt seas tides!

“AÉRIAL ROCK—WHOSE SOLITARY BROW”

1819. 1819

A projecting point of Loughrigg, nearly a
front of Rydal Mount. Thence looking at you
you are struck with the boldness of its aspect.
But walking under it, you admire the beauty of
its details. It is vulgarly called Holme-crag, probably
from the insulated pasture by the wate,
side below it.

AÉRIAL Rock—whose solitary brow
From this low threshold daily meets my sight,
When I step forth to hail the morning light,
Or quit the stars with a lingering farewell
— how
Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow?
How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest?
— By planting on thy naked head the crest
Of an imperial Castle, which the plough
Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme!
That doth presume no more than to supply
A grace the sinuous vale and roaring stream
Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.
Rise, then, ye votive Towers! and catch a
gleam
Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

THE WILD DUCK'S NEST
1819. 1819

I observed this beautiful nest on the largest
island of Rydal Water.

The imperial Consort of the Fairy-king
Owns not a sylvan bower; or gorgeous cell
With emerald floored, and with purpureal shell
Ceilinged and roofed; that is so fair a thing
As this low structure, for the tasks of
Spring,
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant swell
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to dwell;
To fit proportion with my altered state!
Quench those felicities whose light I find
Reflected in my bosom all too late! —
O be my spirit, like my thraldom, strait;
And, like mine eyes that stream with sorrow, blind!"

TO A SNOWDROP
1819. 1819

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they
But harder far, once more I see thee bend
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, waylay
The rising sun, and on the plains descend;
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed May
Shall soon behold this border thickly set
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,
Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of Spring,
And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

ON SEEING A TUFT OF SNOWDROPS IN A STORM
1819. 1820

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,
And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,
Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring
Mature release, in fair society
Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try;
Like these frail snowdrops that together cling,
And nod their helmets, smitten by the wing
Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.
Observe the faithful flowers! if small to great
May lead the thoughts, thus struggling used to stand
The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate;
And so the bright immortal Theban band,
Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's command,
Might overwhelm, but could not separate!
TO THE RIVER DERWENT

1819. 1819

Among the mountains were we nursed, loved Stream,
Thou near the eagle's nest — within brief sail,
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,
Where thy deep voice could lull me! Faint the beam
Of human life when first allowed to gleam
On mortal notice. — Glory of the vale,
Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though frail,
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam
Of thy soft breath! — Less vivid wreath entwined
Nemean victor's brow; less bright was worn,
Mead of some Roman chief — in triumph borne
With captives chained; and shedding from his car
The sunset splendours of a finished war
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind!

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VALLEYS OF WESTMORELAND, ON EASTER SUNDAY

1819. 1819

With each recurrence of this glorious morn
That saw the Saviour in his human frame
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-dame
Put on fresh raiment — till that hour unworn:
Domestic hands the home-bred wool had shorn,
And she who span it culled the daintiest fleece,
In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of Peace,
Whose temples bled beneath the platted thorn.
A blest estate when piety sublime
These humble props disdained not! O green dales!
Sad may I be who heard your sabbath chime
When Art's abused inventions were unknown;

Kind Nature's various wealth was all you own;
And benefits were weighed in Reason's scales!

"GRIEF, THOU HAST LOST AN EVER-READY FRIEND"

1819. 1819

I could write a treatise of lamentation upon
The changes brought about among the cottages of Westmoreland by the silence of the spinning wheel. During long winter nights and vile days, the wheel upon which wool was spun gave employment to a great part of a family. The old man, however infirm, was able to card the wool, as he sat in the corner by the fire; and often, when a boy, have I admired the cylinders of carded wool which were softly laid upon each other by his side. Two wheels were often at work on the same floor; and others of the family, chiefly little children, were occupied in teasing and cleaning the wool to fit it for the hand of the carder. So that all except the smallest infants, were contributing to mutual support. Such was the employment that prevailed in the pastoral vales. Where wool was not at hand, in the small rural town the wheel for spinning flax was almost in constant use, if knitting was not preferred; which latter occupation has the advantage (in some cases disadvantage) that, not being of necessity stationary, it allowed of going about from house to house, which good housewives reckoned an idle thing.

Grief, thou hast lost an ever-ready friend
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel is mute;
And Care — a comforter that best could suit
Her froward mood, and softliest reprehend;
And Love — a charmer's voice, that used to lend,
More efficaciously than ught that flows
From harp or lute, kind influence to compose
The throbbing pulse — else troubled without end:
Even Joy could tell, Joy craving truce and rest
From her own overflow, what power sedate
On those revolving motions did await
Assiduously — to soothe her aching breast;
And, to a point of just relief, abate
The mantling triumphs of a day too blest.
WATCH, AND LONG HAVE WATCHED, WITH CALM REGRET"

1819. 1819

suggest in front of Rydal Mount, the parapet being the summit of Loughrigg opposite. Not once only, but a hundred times, have the feelings of this Sonnet been keened by the same objects seen from the place.

WATCH, and long have watched, with calm regret
a slowly-sinking star — immortal Sire
might he seem) of all the glittering quire!
An ether still surrounds him — yet — and yet;
now the horizon’s rocky parapet reached, where, forfeiting his bright attire,
burns — transmuted to a dusky fire—
en pays submissively the appointed debt
the flying moments, and is seen no more.

HEARD (ALAS! ’T WAS ONLY IN A DREAM)”

1819. 1819

HEARD (alas! ’t was only in a dream)
means — which, as sage Antiquity believed,
awaking ears have sometimes been received
sailed adown the wind from lake or stream;
most melodious requiem, a supreme
perfect harmony of notes, achieved
a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,
or her pinions shed a silver gleam.

is she not the votary of Apollo?

the dull earth partakes not, nor desires?

Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal quires!
She soared — and I awoke, struggling in vain to follow.

THE HAUNTED TREE

to —

1819. 1820

This tree grew in the park of Rydal, and I have often listened to its creaking as described.

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun
His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming less
To overshadethan multiply his beams
By soft reflection — grateful to the sky,
To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our human sense
Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy
More ample than the time-dismantled Oak
Spreads o’er this tuft of heath, which now, attired
In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords
Couch beautiful as e’er for earthly use
Was fashioned; whether, by the hand of Art,
That eastern Sultan, amid flowers enwrought
On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs
In languor; or, by Nature, for repose
Of panting Wood-nymph, weared with the chase.

O Lady! fairer in thy Poet’s sight
Than fairest spiritual creature of the groves,
Approach; — and, thus invited, crown with rest
The noon-tide hour: though truly some there are
Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid
This venerable Tree; for, when the wind Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking sound
(Above the general roar of woods and crags)
Distinctly heard from far — a doeful note!

As if (so Grecian shepherds would have deemed)
The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbelievered,
By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost
Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds of which
The flowery ground is conscious. But no wind
Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;
Not even a zephyr stirs; — the obnoxious Tree
Is mute; and, in his silence, would look down,
O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,
On thy reclining form with more delight
Than his coevals in the sheltered vale
Seem to participate, the while they view
Their own far-stretching arms and leafy heads
Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,
That, for a brief space, checks the hurry-
ing stream!

SEPTEMBER 1819

1819. 1820

The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields
Are hung, as if with golden shields,
Bright trophies of the sun!
Like a fair sister of the sky,
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,
The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,
Albeit uninspired by love,
By love untaught to ring,
May well afford to mortal ear
An impulse more profoundly dear
Than music of the Spring.

For that from turbulence and heat Proceeds, from some uneasy seat
In nature’s struggling frame,
Some region of impatient life:
And jealousy, and quivering strife,
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy; — while I hear
These vespers of another year,
This hymn of thanks and praise,
My spirit seems to mount above
The anxieties of human love,
And earth’s precarious days.

But list! — though winter storms be nigh,
Unchecked is that soft harmony:
There lives Who can provide
For all his creatures; and in Him,
Even like the radiant Seraphim,
These choristers confide.

UPON THE SAME OCCASIONS

1819. 1820

DEPARTING summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of spring;
That calls from yonder leafy abode
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
Such tribute as to winter chill
The lonely redbreast pays!
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
And yellow on the bough: —
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
Around a younger brow!

Yet will I temperately rejoice;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of undiscordant themes;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion’s feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile;
But some their function have disclaimed
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain’s earliest dawn:
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Aescus amote,
Infamed by sense of wrong;
Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
By winged Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit;
ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY (GEORGE THE THIRD) 573

O'er listening while the Lesbian Maid
With finest touch of passion swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

Lo, ye, who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculean lore,
What rapture! could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
The precious, tender-hearted, scroll
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
Of poesy; a bursting forth
Of genius from the dust:
What Horace glori'd to behold,
What Maro loved, shall we enfold?
An haughty Time be just!

THERE IS A LITTLE UNPRETENDING RILL

1820. 1820

This Rill trickles down the hill-side into
Vindermere, near Lowwood. My sister and
I, on our first visit together to this part of the
country, walked from Kendal, and we rested
a refresh ourselves by the side of the lake
where the streamlet falls into it. This sonnet
was written some years after in recollection of
that happy ramble, that most happy day and
hour.

There is a little unpretending Rill
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught
That ever among Men or Naids sought
Notice or name! — It quivers down the
hill,
'Arrowing its shallow way with dubious will;
Iet to my mind this scanty Stream is
brought
Often than Ganges or the Nile; a
thought
Of private recollection sweet and still!
Month's perish with their moons; year
treads on year!
Int, faithful Emma! thou with me canst
say
That, while ten thousand pleasures disappear,
And flies their memory fast almost as they;
The immortal Spirit of one happy day
ingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM

1820. 1820

DOGOMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white
fur!
Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet
hood!
Who, with a keenness not to be withstood,
Press the point home, or falter and demur,
Checked in your course by many a teasing
burr;
These natural council-seats your acrid blood
Might cool; — and, as the Genius of the
flood
Stoops willingly to animate and spur
Each lighter function slumbering in the
brain,
You eddying balls of foam, these arrowy
gleams
That o'er the pavement of the surging
streams
Welter and flash, a synod might detain
With subtle speculations, haply vain,
But surely less so than your far-fetched
themes!

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY
(GEORGE THE THIRD)

1820. 1820

WARD of the Law! — dread Shadow of a
King!
Whose realm had dwindled to one stately
room;
Whose universe was gloom immersed in
gloom,
Darkness as thick as life o'er life could fling,
Save haply for some feeble glimmering
Of Faith and Hope — if thou, by nature's
doom,
Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow
cling,
When thankfulness were best? — Fresh-
flowing tears,
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding
sighs,
Yield to such after-thought the sole reply
Which justly it can claim. The Nation
hears
In this deep knoll, silent for threescore
years,
An unexampled voice of awful memory!
"THE STARS ARE MANSIONS BUILT BY NATURE'S HAND"

1820. 1820

The stars are mansions built by Nature's hand,
And, haply, there the spirits of the blest
Dwell, clothed in radiance, their immortal vest;
Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow strand,
A habitation marvellously planned,
For life to occupy in love and rest;
All that we see — is dome, or vault, or nest,
Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage command.
Glad thought for every season! but the Spring
Gave it while cares were weighing on my heart,
'Mid song of birds, and insects murmuring;
And while the youthful year's prolific art —
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower — was fashioning
Abodes where self-disturbance hath no part.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM

1820. 1820

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning, "A Box was writ of late called Tetrachordon."
A Book came forth of late, called Pynne Bell;
Not negligent the style; — the matter? good
As aught that song records of Robin Hood,
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottis dell;
But some (who brook those hackneyed themes full well,
Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, the blood)
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a harrow brood,
On Bard and Hero clamorously fall.
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath and glen,
Who madst at length the better life by choice,
Heed not such onset! nay, if praise of me
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and rejoice.
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen!

TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER

1820. 1820

With a selection from the Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea; and extracts of similar character from other Writers; transcribed by a female friend.

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;
And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid store
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave
The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave
Her spotless limbs; and ventured to explore
Dim shades — for reliques, upon Lethe's shore,
Cast up at random by the sullen wave.
To female hands the treasures were resigned;
And lo this Work! — a grotto bright and clear
From stain or taint; in which thy blameless mind
May feed on thoughts though pensive not austere;
Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined
To holy musing, it may enter here.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

1820. 1820

Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!
In whose collegiate shelter England's Flowers
Expand, enjoying through their vermal bow
The air of liberty, the light of truth;
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth:
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and towers!
Gardens and groves! your presence overpowers
The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,
Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown
The stream-like windings of that glorious street—
An eager Novice robed in flattering gown!
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

1820. 1820

AME on this faithless heart! that could allow
in transport, though but for a moment’s space;
t while — to aid the spirit of the place —
e crescent moon clove with its glittering prow
e clouds, or night-bird sang from shady bough;
t in plain daylight: — She, too, at my side,
ox, with her heart’s experience satisfied,
tains inviolate its slightest vow!
eet Fancy! other gifts must I receive;
ox of a higher sovereignty I claim;
et from her brow the withering flowers of eve,
d to that brow life’s morning wreath restore;
t her be comprehended in the frame
these illusions, or they please no more.

JUNE 1820

1820. 1820

FAME tells of groves — from England far away —
Groves that inspire the Nightingale to trill
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying lay;
Such bold report I venture to gainsay:
For I have heard the quire of Richmond hill
Chanting, with indefatigable bill,
Strains that recalled to mind a distant day;
When, haply under shade of that same wood,
And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars
Plied steadily between those willowy shores,
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons stood —
Listening, and listening long, in rapturous mood,
Ye heavenly Birds! to your Progenitors.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

1820. 1822

set out in company with my Wife and Sister, and Mr. and Mrs. Monkhouse, then just married,
Miss Horrocks. These two ladies, sisters, we left at Berné, while Mr. Monkhouse took the
opportunity of making an excursion with us among the Alps as far as Milan. Mr. H. C.
benson joined us at Lucerne, and when this ramble was completed we rejoined at Geneva the
ladies we had left at Berné and proceeded to Paris, where Mr. Monkhouse and H. C. R. left
and where we spent five weeks, of which there is not a record in these poems.

DEDICATION

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS.,
TO ———)

1820. 1822

As Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse,
You presenting these memorial Lays,
I hope the general eye thereon would gaze,
as a mirror that gives back the hue
Living Nature; no — though free to choose
greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,
fairest landscapes and the brightest days —
skill she tried with less ambitious views.
You she wrought: Ye only can supply
life, the truth, the beauty: she confines
that enjoyment which with You abides,
ate to your love and vivid memory;
as far contented, that for You her verse
ill lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce!"

W. WORDSWORTH.

VAL SACER, Nov. 1821.

I

FISH-WOMEN — ON LANDING
AT CALAIS

1820. 1822

'Tis said, fantastic ocean doth enfold
The likeness of whate'er on land is seen;
But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,
Above whose heads the tide so long hath rolled,
The Dames resemble whom we here behold,
How fearful were it down through opening waves
To sink, and meet them in their fretted caves,
Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,
And shrill and fierce in accent! — Fear it not:
For they Earth's fairest daughters do excel;  
Pure undecaying beauty is their lot;  
Their voices into liquid music swell,  
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot,  
The undisturbed abodes where Sea-nymphs dwell!

II
BRUGÈS
1820. 1822

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light  
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe of power:  
The splendour fled; and now the sunless hour,  
That, slowly making way for peaceful night,  
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight  
Offers the beauty, the magnificence,  
And sober graces, left her for defence  
Against the injuries of time, the spite  
Of fortune, and the desolating storms  
Of future war. Advance not — spare to hide,  
O gentle Power of darkness! these mild hues;  
Obscure not yet these silent avenues  
Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms  
Of nun-like females, with soft motion, glide!

III
BRUGÈS
1820. 1822

THE Spirit of Antiquity — enshrined  
In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet song,  
In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,  
And with devout solemnities entwined —  
Mounts to the seat of grace within the mind:  
Hence Forms that glide with swan-like ease along,  
Hence motions, even amid the vulgar throng,  
To an harmonious decency confined:  
As if the streets were consecrated ground,  
The city one vast temple, dedicate  
To mutual respect in thought and deed;  
To leisure, to forbearances sedate;  
To social cares from jarring passions freed;  
A deeper peace than that in deserts found!

IV
AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO
1820. 1822

A WINGèD Goddess — clothed in vesta wrought  
Of rainbow colours; One whose port was bold,  
Whose overburtended hand could scarcely hold  
The glittering crowns and garlands which it brought —  
Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.  
She vanished; leaving prospect blank and cold  
Of wind-swept corn that wide around rolled  
In dreary billows; wood, and meagre cot.  
And monuments that soon must disappear:  
Yet a dread local recompence we found:  
While glory seemed betrayed, while patria zeal  
Sank in our hearts, we felt as men should feel  
With such vast hoards of hidden care  
Near,  
And horror breathing from the slain ground!

V
BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE
1820. 1822

The scenery on the Meuse pleases me more upon the whole, than that of the Rhine, though the river itself is much inferior in grandeur. The rocks both in form and colour, especially between Namur and Liege, surpass any on the Rhine, though they are in several places disfigured by quarries, whence stones are taken for the new fortifications. This is to be regretted, for they are useless, and scars will remain perhaps for thousands of years. A like injury to a still greater extent has been inflicted, in my memory, upon the beautiful rocks of Clifton on the banks of the Avon. There is probably in existence a long letter of mine to Sir Uvedale Price, which was given a description of the escapes on the Meuse as compared with those on the Rhine.

Details in the spirit of these sentences given both in Mrs. Wordsworth’s Journal to my Sister’s, and the re-perusal of them
rengthened a wish long entertained that somebody would put together, as in one work, the notices contained in them, omitting particulars that were written down merely to aid our memory, and bringing the whole into as small compass as is consistent with the general interests belonging to the scenes, circumstances, and objects touched on by each writer.

_What lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose?_

This the stream, whose cities, heights, and plains,
Var's favourite playground, are with crimson stains
As the Morn with pearly dews?
He Morn, that now, along the silver Meuse,
Preceding her peaceful ensigns, calls the swans
To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,
To strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrews
The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes
Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,
Low sweet the prospect of yon watery glade,
With its grey rocks clustering in pensive shade—
That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise from the smooth meadow-ground, serene and still!

_VI_

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

1820. 1822

Was it to disenchant, and to undo, what we approached the Seat of Charlemaine?
To sweep from many an old romantic strain that faith which no devotion may renew! Why does this puny Church present to view her feeble columns? and that scanty chair! His sword that one of our weak times might wear! Objects of false pretence, or meanly true! From a traveller's fortune I might claim palpable memorial of that day, when would I seek the Pyrenean Breach that Roland clove with huge two-handed sway, and to the enormous labour left his name, Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent bleach.

_VII_

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE

1810. 1822

O for the help of Angels to complete
This Temple — Angels governed by a plan
Thus far pursued (how gloriously!) by Man,
Studious that He might not disdain the seat
Who dwells in heaven! But that aspiring heat
Hath failed; and now, ye Powers! whose gorgeous wings
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
But faintly picture, 't were an office meet
For you, on these unfinished shafts to try
The midnight virtues of your harmony: —
This vast design might tempt you to repeat
Strains that call forth upon empyreal ground
Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet!

_VIII_

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE

1820. 1822

Amid this dance of objects sadness steals
O'er the defrauded heart — while sweeping by,
As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels:
Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels
The venerable pageantry of Time,
Each beetling rampart, and each tower sublime,
And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees esped
Near the bright River's edge. Yet why repine?
To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze —
Such sweet wayfaring — of life's spring the pride,
Her summer's faithful joy — _that_ still is mine,
And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.
IX
HYMN
FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH
THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF
HEIDELBERG
1820. 1822
Jesu! bless our slender Boat,
By the current swept along;
Loud its threatenings — let them not
Drown the music of a song
Breathed thy mercy to implore,
Where these troubled waters roar!

Saviour, for our warning, seen
Bleeding on that precious Rood;
If, while through the meadows green
Gently wound the peaceful flood,
We forgot Thee, do not Thou
Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like you ancient Tower
Watching o’er the River’s bed,
Fling the shadow of thy power,
Else we sleep among the dead;
Thou who trod’st the billowy sea,
Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;
Through the rocks our passage smooth;
Where the whirlpool frets and raves
Let thy love its anger soothe:
All our hope is placed in Thee;
Miserere Domine!

X
THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE
1820. 1822
Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
Doth DANUBE spring to life! The wandering Stream
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent’s gleam
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy, free
To follow in his track of silver light,
Mounts on rapt wing, and with a moment’s flight
Hath reached the encirclement of that gloomy sea
Whose waves the Orphean lyre forget to meet
In conflict: whose rough winds forgot the jars
To waft the heroic progeny of Greece:
When the first ship sailed for the Gold Fleece —
Argo — exalted for that daring feat
To fix in heaven her shape distinct of stars.

XI
ON APPROACHING THE STAUF
BACH, LAUTERBRUNNEN
1820. 1822
Uttered by whom, or how inspired — is signed
For what strange service, does this verse reach
Our ears, and near the dwellings of kind!
‘Mid fields familiarized to human voice!
No Mermaid’s warble — to allay the wild
Driving some vessel toward a danger’d beach —
More thrilling melodies; Witch answering Witch,
To chant a love-spell, never intertwined
Notes shrill and wild with art more musical:
Alas! that from the lips of abject West
Or Idleness in tatters mendicant
The strain should flow — free Fancy to a thral,
And with regret and useless pity hast
This bold, this bright, this sky-born Waterfall!

XII
THE FALL OF THE AAR—
HANDEC
1820. 1822
From the fierce aspect of this River, throng
His giant body o’er the steep rock’s brink
Bows in astonishment and fear we shrink:
But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,
Flowers we spy beside the torrent growing;
towers that peep forth from many a cleft and chink;
and, from the whirlwind of his anger, drink
ues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:
hey suck — from breath that, threatening to destroy,
more benignant than the dewy eve —
auty, and life, and motions as of joy:
or doubt but Hiz to whom yon Pine-trees nod
heir heads in sign of worship, Nature’s God,
these humbler adorations will receive.

XII
MEMORIAL
NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN

"DENKEN MEINES FREUNDENS ALOYS REDING MDCCCXVIII."

1820. 1822

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was
a captain-General of the Swiss forces, which,
the courage and perseverance worthy of
the cause, opposed the flagitious and too suc-
ful attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate
their country.

A round a wild and woody hill
a gravelled pathway treading,
We reached a votive Stone that bears
the name of Aloys Reding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it
there
for silence and protection;
and happily with a finer care
of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West;
and, while in summer glory
he sets, his sinking yields a type
of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
amid the grove to linger;
ill all is dim, save this bright Stone
touched by his golden finger.

XIV
COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC CANTONS

1820. 1822

DOOMED as we are our native dust
To wet with many a bitter shower,
It ill befits us to disdain
The altar, to deride the fane,
Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust
To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:
Hail to the firm unmoving cross,
Aloft, where pines their branches toss!
And to the chapel far withdrawn,
That lurks by lonely ways!

Where’er we roam — along the brink
Of Rhine — or by the sweeping Po,
Through Alpine vale, or champain wide,
What’er we look on, at our side
Be Charity! — to bid us think,
And feel, if we would know.

XV
AFTER-THOUGHT

1820. 1822

O LIFE! without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong; of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found;
For faith, ’mid ruined hopes, serene?
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach —
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;
Heaven upon earth’s an empty boast;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God’s peace.

XVI
SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ

1820. 1822

"What know we of the Blest above
But that they sing and that they love?"
Yet, if they ever did inspire
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,
Now, where those harvest Damsels float
Homeward in their rugged Boat,
(While all the ruffling winds are fled —
Each slumbering on some mountain's head)
Now, surely, hath that gracious aid
Been felt, that influence is displayed.
Pupils of Heaven, in order stand
The rustic Maidens, every hand
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid, —
To chant, as glides the boat along,
A simple, but a touching, song;
To chant, as Angels do above,
The melodies of Peace in love !

What eye can look upon thy shrine
Untroubled at the sight?
These crowded offerings as they hang
In sign of misery relieved,
Even these, without intent of theirs,
Report of comfortless despair,
Of many a deep and curseless pang
And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this aerial cleft,
As to a common centre, tend
All sufferers that no more rely
On mortal succour — all who sigh
And pine, of human hope bereft,
Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild!
Though plenteous flowers around thee lie
Not only from the dreary strife
Of Winter, but the storms of life,
Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,
Our Lady of the Snow.

Even for the Man who stops not here,
But down the irrigous valley heis,
Thy very name, O Lady ! flings,
O'er blooming fields and gushing springs.
A tender sense of shadowy fear,
And chastening sympathies !

Nor falls that intermingling shade
To summer-gladnessomeness unkind:
It chastens only to requite
With gleams of fresher, purer, light;
While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade
More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on! — a tempting downward way,
A verdant path before us lies;
Clear shines the glorious sun above;
Then give free course to joy and love,
Deeming the evil of the day
Sufficient for the wise.

What eye can look upon thy shrine
Untroubled at the sight?
These crowded offerings as they hang
In sign of misery relieved,
Even these, without intent of theirs,
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Clear shines the glorious sun above;
Then give free course to joy and love,
Deeming the evil of the day
Sufficient for the wise.

XIX

EFFUSION

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF TELL, AT ALTORF

1820. 1822

This Tower stands upon the spot where —
the Linden Tree against which his was a
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

81

0 have been placed, when the Father's archery
was put to proof under circumstances so famous
n Swiss Story.

WAT though the Italian pencil wrought
not here,
Nor such fine skill as did the meed bestow
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,
While narrow cares their limits overflow.
Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, warriors
old,
Infants in arms, and ye, that as ye go
Homeward or schoolward, ape what ye behold!
Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy
bold!

And when that calm Spectatress from on
high
Looks down — the bright and solitary Moon,
Who never gazes but to beautify;
And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of
noon
Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls;
Then might the passing Monk receive a boon
Of saintly pleasure from these pictured
wells,
While, on the warlike groups, the mellow-
ing lustre falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials
come
Yield not to terror or despondency,
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal
doom,
Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while he
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree:
He quakes not like the timid forest game,
But smiles — the hesitating shaft to free;
Assured that Heaven its justice will pro-
claim,
And to his Father give its own unerring aim.

Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead;
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace, serene
As that of the sweet fields and meadows
green
In unambitious compass round thee spread.
Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian steep,
Holding a central station of command,
Might well be styled this noble body's
HEAD;
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrench-
ments deep,
Its HEART; and ever may the heroic Land
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom
keep!

XXI

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES
VACHES" ON THE TOP OF THE
PASS OF ST. GOTHARD

1820. 1822

I LISTEN — but no faculty of mine
Avails those modulations to detect,
Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss
affect
With tenderest passion; leaving him to pine
(So fame reports) and die, — his sweet-
breathed kine
Remembering, and green Alpine pastures
decked
With vernal flowers. Yet may we not re-
ject
The tale as fabulous. — Here while I re-
cline,
Mindful how others by this simple Strain
Are moved, for me — upon this Mountain
named
Of God himself from dread pre-eminence —
Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,
Yield to the Music's touching influence;
And joys of distant home my heart enchain.

XXII

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ

1820. 1822

By antique Faney trimmed — though lowly, bred
To dignity — in thee, O SCHWYTZ! are seen
The genuine features of the golden mean;
Equality by Prudence governed,

FORT FUENTES

1820. 1822

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of
a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at
the head of the Lake of Como, commanding
views up the Valteline, and toward the town of
Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direc-
tion is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We rejoiced at being favoured with a distinct view of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary — scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third; and the Chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his Descendants. Marble pillars of gateways are yet standing, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls: a smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins were some ill tended, but growing willingly; and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink was growing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden!" — Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years. — Extract from Journal.

Dread hour! when, upheaved by war's sulphurous blast,
This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian stone
So far from the holy enclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles alone,
To rest where the lizard may bask in the palm
Of his half-open hand pure from blemish or speck;
And the green, gilded snake, without troubling the calm
Of the beautiful countenance, twine round his neck;
Where haply (kind service to Piety due!) When winter the grove of its mantle bereaves,

Some bird (like our own honoured red-breast) may strew
The desolate Slumberer with mossed with leaves.

Fuentes once harbourd the good and the brave,
Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure unknown;
Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave
While the thrill of her fides thro' the mountains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless ascent;
O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway.
When the whirlwind of human destructiv is spent,
Our tumults appeased, and our strife passed away!

XXIII

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR
SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO
1820. 1822

This Church was almost destroyed by burning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the heights of 2000 feet, and on one side nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dancing waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with seakike extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps — unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity; than perhaps any other point in Europe, of an inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

Thou sacred Pile! whose turrets rise From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage, Guarded by lone San Salvador; Sink (if thou must) as herefore, To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice, But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned To rest the universal Lord:
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

by leap the fountains from their cells
here everlasting Bounty dwells? —
at, while the Creature is sustained,
is God may be adored.

iiffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times —
at all remind the soul of heaven;
ir slack devotion needs them all;
nd Faith — so oft of sense the thrall,
hile she, by aid of Nature, climbs —
y hope to be forgiven.

ory, and patriotic Love,
nd all the Pomp of this frail "spot
ich men call Earth," have yearned to seek,
ssociate with the simply meek,
igion in the sainted grove,
nd in the hallowed grot.

rther, in time of adverse shocks,
fainting hopes and backward wills,
fty mighty Tell repair of old —
Hero cast in Nature’s mould,
eliever of the stedfast rocks
nd of the ancient hills!

e, too, of battle-martyrs chief!
ho, to recall his daunted peers,
ictory shaped an open space,
gathering with a wide embrace,
to his single breast, a sheaf
f fatal Austrian spears.

XXIV
HE ITALIAN ITINERANT AND
THE SWISS GOATHERD
1820. 1822
PART I

ow that the farewell tear is dried,
eaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide,
op be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
be wages of thy travel, joy!
ether for London bound — to trill
by mountain notes with simple skill;
on thy head to poise a show
Images in seemly row;
be graceful form of milk-white Steed,
ird that soared with Ganymede;
through our hamlets thou wilt bear
ightless Milton, with his hair
round his placid temples curled;

And Shakspeare at his side — a freight,
If clay could think and mind were weight,
For him who bore the world!
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
The wages of thy travel, joy!

II
But thou, perhaps, (alert as free
Though serving sage philosophy)
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,
Whose sentient tube instructs to time
A purpose to a fickle clime:
Whether thou choose this useful part,
Or minister to finer art,
Though robbed of many a cherished dream,
And crossed by many a shattered scheme,
What stirring wonders wilt thou see
In the proud Isle of liberty!
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine
With thoughts which no delights can chase,
Recall a Sister’s last embrace,
His Mother’s neck entwine;
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy
That would have loved the bright-haired Boy!

III
My Song, encouraged by the grace
That beams from his ingenuous face,
For this Adventurer scruples not
To prophesy a golden lot;
Due recompense, and safe return
To COMO’s steeps — his happy bourne!
Where he, aloft in garden glade,
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,
The towering maize, and prop the twig
That ill supports the luscious fig;
Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof
With purple of the trellis-roof,
That through the jealous leaves escapes
From Cadenabbia’s pendent grapes.
— Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child
To share his wanderings! him whose look
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,
So touchingly he smiled —
As with a rapture caught from heaven —
For unasked alms in pity given.

PART II

I
WITH nodding plumes, and lightly drest
Like foresters in leaf-green vest,
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground
The love deep-seated in the Saviour's breast
The mercy, goodness, have not failed thee
The Elements; as they do melt and pass
The heart of the Beholder — and erase
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace
Of disobedience to the primal law.
The announcement of the dreadful truth
Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, ear, head, cheek,
And hand reposing on the board in rest,
Of what it utters, while the unguilty see
Unquestionable meanings — still beseech
A labour worthy of eternal youth!

II

But Truth inspired the Bards of old
When of an iron age they told,
Which to unequal laws gave birth,
And drove Astraea from the earth.
— A gentle Boy (perchance with blood
As noble as the best endured,
But seemingly a Thing despised;
Even by the sun and air unprized;
For not a tinge or flowery streak
Appeared upon his tender cheek)
Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes,
Apart, beside his silent goats,
Sate watching in a forest shed,
Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head;
Mute as the snow upon the hill,
And, as the saint he prays to, still.
Ah, what avails heroic deed?
What liberty? if no defence
Be won for feeble Innocence,
Father of all! though wilful Manhood read
His punishment in soul-distress,
Grant to the morn of life its natural blessedness!

XXV

THE LAST SUPPER

BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA DELLA GRAZIA — MILAN

1820. 1822

Tho' searching damps and many an envious flaw
Have marred this Work; the calm ethereal grace,

The high on her speculative tower
Stood Science waiting for the hour
When Sol was destined to endure
That darkening of his radiant face
Which Superstition strove to chase,
Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,
Through regions fair as Paradise
We gaily passed, — till Nature wrought
A silent and unlooked-for change,
That checked the desultory range
Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,
The waves danced round us as before,
As lightly, though of altered hue,
'Mid recent coolness, such as falls
At noontide from unbragious walls
That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud
Cast far or near a murky shroud;
The sky an azure field displayed;
'Twas sunlight sheathed and girt
charmed,
Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
And as in slumber laid, —

Or something night and day between.
Like moonshine — but the hue was grea
Still moonshine, without shadow, spread
On jutting rock, and curved shore,
Where gazed the peasant from his door
And on the mountain's head.
MEmoriaLs of a Tour on the Continent

It tinged the Julian steeps — it lay,
Lugano! on thy ample bay;
The solemnizing veil was drawn
O'er villas, terraces, and towers;
To Albogasio's olive bowers,
Poreleza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire
Hath passed to Milan's loftiest spire,
And there alights 'mid that aerial host
Of Figures human and divine,
Whiter as the snows of Apennine
Indurated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array
That guards the Temple night and day;
Angels she sees — that might from heaven
have flown,
And Virgin-saints, who not in vain
Have striven by purity to gain
The beatific crown —

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings
Each narrowing above each; — the wings,
The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips,
The starry zone of sovereign height —
All steeped in this portentous light!
All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught
These perishable spheres have wrought
Lay with that issue he compared)
Fromages of celestial visages,
Darkening like water in the breeze,
Holy sadness shared.

O! while I speak, the labouring Sun
Is glad deliverance has begun:
He cypress waves her sombre plume
More cheerily; and town and tower,
He vineyard and the olive-bower,
Heir lustre re-assume!

Ye, who guard and grace my home
While in far-distant lands we roam,
That countenance hath this Day put on for
You?
While we looked round with favoured eyes,
Id sullen mists hide lake and skies
And mountains from your view?

Was it given you to behold
The vision, pensive though not cold,
From the smooth breast of gay WINander-
mere?

Saw ye the soft yet awful veil
Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,
Helvellyn's brow severe?

I ask in vain — and know far less
If sickness, sorrow, or distress
Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;
Sad blindness! but ordained to prove
Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love
And all-controlling power.

XXVII

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS

1820. 1822

I

How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free
From Love's uneasy sovereignty —
Beats with a fancy running high,
Her simple cares to magnify;
Whom Labour, never urged to toil,
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;
Whose heaviest sin it is to look
Askance upon her pretty Self
Reflected in some crystal brook;
Whom grief hath spared — who sheds no tear
But in sweet pity; and can hear
Another's praise from envy clear.

II

Such (but O lavish Nature! why
That dark unfathomable eye,
Where lurks a Spirit that replies
To stillest mood of softest skies,
Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,
Another's first, and then her own?)
Such, haply, your ITALIAN Maid,
Our Lady's laggard Votressa,
Halting beneath the chestnut shade
To accomplish there her loveliness:
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;
A Sister serves with slacker hand;
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the
Festal band.

III

How blest (if truth may entertain
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)
The HELVETIAN Girl — who daily braves,
In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
And quits the bosom of the deep
Only to climb the rugged steep!
—Say whence that modulated shout!
From Wood-nymph of Diana’s throng?
Or does the greeting to a rout
Of giddy Bacchanals belong?
Jubilant outcry! rock and glade
Resounded—but the voice obeyed
The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

IV
Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;
Her courage animates the flood;
Her steps the elastic greensward meets
Returning unreluctant sweets;
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
Aloud, saluted by her voice!
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
Be as thou art—for through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race!
And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;
The fetters which the Matron wears;
The patriot Mother’s weight of anxious cares!

V
“Sweet Highland Girl! a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,”
When thou didst flit before mine eyes,
Gay Vision under sullen skies,
While Hope and Love around thee played,
Near the rough falls of Inversneyd!
Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen
No breach of promise in the fruit?
Was joy, in following joy, as keen
As grief can be in grief’s pursuit?
When youth had flown did hope still bless
Thy goings—or the cheerfulness
Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

VI
But from our course why turn—to tread
A way with shadows overspread;
Where what we gladdest would believe
Is feared as what may most deceive?
Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned
But heath-bells from thy native ground,
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,
Nor take one ray of light from Thee;
For in my Fancy thou dost share
The gift of immortality;
And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,
The Votarsess from Lugano’s side;
And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri’s steep
descired!

THE COLUMN INTENDED FOR BUONAPARTE FOR A TRUMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN NOW LYING BY THE WAY-SIDE IN THE SIMPLOHN PASS

1820. 1822

AMBITION—following down this far-fame slope
Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,
While clarions proate of kingdoms to be won—
Perchance, in future ages, here may stop
Taught to mistrust her flattering bosome
By admonition from this prostrate Stone,
Memento uninscribed of Pride o’erthrown
Vanity’s hieroglyphic; a choice trope
In Fortune’s rhetoric. Daughter of a Rock,
Rest where thy course was stayed by few divine
The Soul transported sees, from hist’ry thine,
Crimes which the great Avenger’s hand doth invoke,
Hears combats whistling o’er the guined heath:

XXIX

STANZAS

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLOHN PASS

1820. 1822

VALLOMBROSA! I longed in thy shade
wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-cover floor,
To listen to Ario’s precipitous flood,
When the stillness of evening hath dened its roar;
To range through the Temples of Parnass
To muse
In Pompeii preserved by her burial earth;
On pictures to gaze where they drank their hues;
And murmur sweet songs on the ground their birth.
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of Rome,
Could I leave them unseen, and not yield to regret?
With a hope (and no more) for a season to come,
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent debt?
Thou fortunate Region! whose Greatness inurned
Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;
Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I turned
From your infinite marvels, the sadness was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois retires
From dew-sprinkled grass to heights guarded with snow,
Toward the mists that hang over the land
Of my Sires,
From the climate of myrtles contented I go.
My thoughts become bright like yon edging of Pines
On the steep’s lofty verge: how it blackened the air!
But, touched from behind by the Sun, it now shines
With threads that seem part of his own silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear Friends we divide,
Though by the same zephyr our temples be fam’d
As we rest in the cool orange-bower side by side,
A yearning survives which few hearts shall withstand:
Each step hath its value while homeward we move;—
O joy when the girdle of England appears!
What moment in life is so conscious of love,
Of love in the heart made more happy by tears?

XXX
ECCHO, UPON THE GEMMI
1820. 1822

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from the cover?
Stern Gemmi listens to as full a cry,
As vastuaduous a harmony

Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos over,
When, from the soft couch of her sleeping Lover,
Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the mountain dew
In keen pursuit—and gave, where’er she flew,
Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.
A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on
Through the bleak concave, wakes this wondrous chime
Of airy voices locked in unison,—
Faint—far-off—near—deep—solemn and sublime!—
So, from the body of one guilty deed,
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting thoughts, proceed!

XXXI
PROCESSIONS
SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY
1820. 1822

To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield;
Or to solicit knowledge of events,
Which in her breast Futurity concealed;
And that the past might have its true intents
Feelingly told by living monuments—
Mankind of yore were prompted to devise
Rites such as yet Persepolis presents
Graven on her tankered walls, solemnities
That moved in long array before admiring eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful state
Thick boughs of palm, and willows from the brook,
Marched round the altar—to commemorate
How, when their course they through the desert took,
Guided by signs which ne’er the sky forsook,
They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low;
Green boughs were borne, while, for the blast that shook
Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,
Shouts rise, and storms of sound from lifted trumpets blow!
And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells, 20
The priests and damsels of Ammonian Jove
Provoked responses with shrill canticles;
While, in a ship begirt with silver-bells,
They round his altar bore the horned God,
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells
Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,
When universal sea the mountains over-flowed.

Why speak of Roman Pomp? the haughty
claims
Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars;
The feast of Neptune — and the Cereal
Games, 30
With images, and crowns, and empty cars;
The dancing Salii — on the shields of Mars
Smiting with fury; and a deeper dread
Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars
Of Corybantic cymbals, while the head
Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted!

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft
Appeared — to govern Christian pagean-
tries:
The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft
Moved to the chant of sober litanies. 40
Even such, this day, came wafted on the
breeze
From a long train — in hooded vestments fair
Enwapt — and winding, between Alpine
trees
Spiry and dark, around their House of
prayer,
Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,
The pageant haunts me as it met our
eyes!
Still, with those white-robèd Shapes — a
living Stream,
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise
For the same service, by mysterious ties; 50
Numbers exceeding credible account
Of number, pure and silent Votaries
Issuing or issued from a wintry fount;
The impenetrable heart of that exalted
Mount!

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam
While they the Church engird with motion
slow,
A product of that awful Mountain seem,

Poured from his vaults of everlasting
snow;
Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright roe,
Not swans descending with the staid tide,
A livelier sisterly resemblance shew
Than the fair Forms, that in long or glide,
Bear to the glacier band — those Shop
aloft descried.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs
Of that licentious craving in the mind
To act the God among external things,
To bind, on apt suggestion, or unbind;
And marvel not that antique Faith inclin
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned;
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou
miss,
Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's
dark abyss!

XXXII

ELEGIAIC STANZAS
1820. 1822

The lamented Youth whose untimely deat
grave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Fre-
erick William Goddard, from Boston in North
America. He was in his twentieth year, and
had resided for some time with a clergyman in
the neighbourhood of Geneva for the comple-
tion of his education. Accompanied by a fel-
pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out
on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to
fall in with a Friend of mine who was hasting
to join our party. The travellers, after
spending a day together on the road from
Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other
at night, the young men having intended to
proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the
morning my friend found his new acquaint-
ances, who were informed of the object of his
journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of,
equipped to accompany him. We met at
Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G.
and his fellow-student became in consequence
our travelling companions for a couple of days.
We ascended the Righi together; and, after
contemplating the sunrise from that noble
mountain, we separated at an hour and on a
spot well suited to the parting of those who
were to meet no more. Our party descended
through the valley of our Lady of the Snow,
and our late companions, to Art. We had
hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but
the third succeeding day (on the 21st of gust) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset a boat while crossing the lake of Zurich.

His companion saved himself by swimming,
I was hospitably received in the mansion of a swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the easterly coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the gentleman, who generously performed all rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He used a handsome mural monument to be set in the Church of Künsacht, which ords the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the dweller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

RULLED by the sound of pastoral bells, The dread summit of the Queen
Weide Nature’s Pilgrims did we go, mountains, through a deep ravine, here, in her holy chapel, dwells
and the sky was blue, the air was mild; Our Lady of the Snow.”

The streams and green the bowers;
if, to rough assaults unknown, the genial spot had ever shown a countenance that as sweetly smiled —
her face of summer-hours.

and we were gay, our hearts at ease; With pleasure dancing through the frame we journeyed; all we knew of care —
our path that straggled here and there; of trouble — but the fluttering breeze;
of Winter — but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil of three short days — but hush — no more! Fain is the grave, and calmer none than that to which thy cares are gone, now Victim of the stormy gale;
the silent sleep on Zurich’s shore!

GODDARD! what art thou? — a name — A sunbeam followed by a shade!
for more, for aught that time supplies, The great, the experienced, and the wise: Too much from this frail earth we claim, and therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild, Where, from a deep lake’s mighty urn,

Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave, A sea-green river, proud to live, With current swift and undefiled, The towers of old Lucerne.

We parted upon solemn ground Far-lifted towards the unfading sky; But all our thoughts were then of Earth, That gives to common pleasures birth; And nothing in our hearts we found That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathising Powers of air, Fetch, ye that post o’er seas and lands, Herbs, moistened by Virginian dew, A most untimely grave to strew, Whose turf may never know the care Of kindred human hands!

Beloved by every gentle Muse He left his Transatlantic home: Europe, a realised romance, Had opened on his eager glance; What present bliss! — what golden views! What stores for years to come!

Though lodged within no vigorous frame, His soul her daily tasks renewed, Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings High poised — or as the wren that sings In shady places, to proclaim Her modest gratitude.

Not vain in sadly-uttered praise; The words of truth’s memorial vow Are sweet as morning fragrance shed From flowers ‘mid Goldau’s ruins bred; As evening’s fondly-lingering rays, On Righi’s silent brow.

Lamented Youth! to thy cold clay Fit obsequies the Stranger paid; And piety shall guard the Stone Which hath not left the spot unknown Where the wild waves resigned their prey —
And that which marks thy bed.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee, Lost Youth! a solitary Mother; This tribute from a casual Friend A not unwelcome aid may lend, To feed the tender luxury, The rising pang to smother.
XXXIII
SKY-PROSPECT — FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE
1820. 1822

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape;
There, combats a huge crocodile — agape
A golden spear to swallow! and that brown
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,
Stirs and recedes — destruction to escape!
Yet all is harmless — as the Elysian shades
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose —
Silently disappears, or quickly fades:
Meek Nature's evening comment on the shows
That for oblivion take their daily birth
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

XXXIV
ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE
1820. 1822

Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son
Of England — who in hope her coast had won,
His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?
Well — let him pace this noted beach once more,
That gave the Roman his triumphal shells;
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Conqueror! —
Enough: my Country's cliffs I can behold,
And proudly think, beside the chafing sea,
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,
And folly cursed with endless memory:
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

XXXV
AFTER LANDING — THE VALLEY OF DOVER
Nov. 1820
1820. 1822

Where be the noisy followers of the game
Where faction breeds; the turmoil where?
Through Europe, echoing from the man's blast,
And filled our hearts with grief for land's shame.
Peace greets us; — rambling on without aim
We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate, couch'd on the grassy lea;
And hear far-off the mellow horn claim
The Season's harmless pastime. Es sound
Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange light,
While consciousness, not to be disown
Here only serve a feeling to invite
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,
And makes this rural stillness more found.

XXXVI
AT DOVER
1820. 1822

For the impressions on which this son
turns, I am indebted to the experience of a daughter, during her residence at Dover at our dear friend, Miss Fenwick.

From the Pier's head, musing, and with increase
Of wonder, I have watched this sea-town,
Under the white cliff's battlemented crest
Hushed to a depth of more than Saba's peace:
The streets and quays are throng'd, why disown
Their natural utterance: whose strange release
From social noise — silence elsewhere known? —
A Spirit whispered, "Let all cease;
Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have free
Thy sense from pressure of life's commotion;
As the dread Voice that speaks from the sea
Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of Truth,
Doth deaden, shocks of tumult, shriek crime,
The shouts of folly, and the groans of sin
XXXVII

DESULTORY STANZAS

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS FROM THE PRESS

1820. 1822

Then the final page before me spread,
or rather outlet left to mind or heart?
A resumptuous Book! too forward to be read,
Low can I give thee licence to depart?
My tribute more: unbidden feelings start
Orth from their coverts; slighted objects
Rise;
My spirit is the scene of such wild art
As Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

All that I saw returns upon my view;
All that I heard comes back upon my ear;
All that I felt this moment doth renew;
And where the foot with no unmanly fear recoiled
And wings alone could travel —
There
Move at ease; and meet contending themes
That press upon me, crossing the career
Of recollections vivid as the dreams
Of midnight; — cities, plains, forests, and mighty streams.

Where Mortal never breathed I dare to sit
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew;
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power! —
Yet
What are they but a wreck and residue,
Whose only business is to perish? —
True
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons
Of Time
Labour their proper greatness to subdue;
Speaking of death alone, beneath a cline
Where life and rapture flow in plenteous sublume.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge
Across thy long deep Valley, furious Rhone!
Arch that here rests upon the granite ridge
Of Monte Rosa — there on frailer stone;
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;
And, from that arch, down-looking on the Vale,
The aspect I behold of every zone;
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,
Blisthe Autumn's purple crown, and Winter's icy mail!

Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks,
Down the main avenue my sight can range:
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks
Within them, church, and town, and hut, and grange,
For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;
Snows, torrents; — to the region's utmost bound,
Life, Death, in amicable interchange; —
But list! the avalanche — the hush profound
That follows — yet more awful than that awful sound!

Is not the chamois suited to his place?
The eagle worthy of her ancestry?
— Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall Ye disgrace
Your noble birthright, ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount, there judge of fit and right,
In simple democratic majesty;
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows —
The might
And purity of nature spread before your sight!

From this appropriate Court, renowned Lucerne
Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge —
That cheers
The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and stern,
An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.
Like portraiture, from loftier source, endears
That work of kindred frame, which spans the lake
Just at the point of issue, where it fears
The form and motion of a stream to take;
Where it begins to stir, yet voiceless as a snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral rolled,
This long-roofed Vista penetrate — but see,
One after one, its tablets, that unfold
The whole design of Scripture history;
From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern skies,
Announcing, One was born mankind to free;
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice;
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.
Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.
— Long may these homely Works devised of old,
These simple efforts of Helvetic skill,
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold
The State,—the Country’s destiny to mould;
Turning, for them who pass, the common dust
Of servile opportunity to gold;
Filling the soul with sentiments august —
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just!

No more; Time halts not in his noiseless march —
Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid flood;
Life slips from underneath us, like that arch
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,
Earth stretched below, heaven in our neigh-
bourhood.
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;
Go forth, and please the gentle and the good;
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace some future Lay.

THE RIVER DUDDON
A SERIES OF SONNETS
1820. 1820

It is with the little river Duddon as it is with most other rivers, Ganges and Nile not excepted.
— many springs might claim the honour of being its head. In my own fancy I have fixed its rise near the noted Shire-stones placed at the meeting-point of the counties, Westmorland, Cumberland, and Lancashire. They stand by the wayside on the top of the Wrynose Pass, and it is said to be reckoned a proud thing to say that, by touching them at the same time, fate and fortune, one had been in the three counties at once. At what point of its course the stream takes the name of Duddon I do not know. I first became acquainted with the Duddon, as I have good reason to remember, in early boyhood. Upon the banks of the Derwent I had learnt to be very fond of angling. Fish abound in that large river; not so in the small streams in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead; and I fell into the common delusion that the farther from home the better sport would be had. Accordingly, one day I attached myself to a person living in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead, who was going to try his fortune as an angler near the source of the Duddon. We fished a great part of the day with very sorry success, the rain pouring torrents, and long before we got home I was worn out with fatigue; and, if the good man had not carried me on his back, I must have lain down under the best shelter I could find. Little did I think then it would be my lot to celebrate, in a strain of love and admiration, the stream which for many years I never thought of without recollections of disappointment and distress.

During my college vacation, and two or three years afterwards, before taking my Bachelors degree, I was several times resident in the house of a near relative who lived in the small town of Broughton. I passed many delightful hours upon the banks of this river, which becomes estuary about a mile from that place. The recollections of that period are the subject of the 21st Sonnet. The subject of the 27th is in fact taken from a tradition belonging to Rydal Hall, which once stood, as is believed, upon a rocky and woody hill on the right hand as you go from Rydal to Ambleside, and was deserted from the superstitious fear here described, and the present site fortunately chosen instead. The present Hall was erected by Sir Michael le Fleming, and it may be hoped that at some future time there will be an edifice more worthy of so beautiful a position. With regard to the 30th Sonnet it is odd enough that this imagination was realised in the year 1840, when I made a tour through that district with my wife and daughter, Miss Ferwick and her niece, and Mr. and Miss Quilliman. Before our return from Seathwaite chapel the party separated. Mrs. Wordsworth, while most of us went further up the stream, chose an opposite direction, having told us that we should overtake her on our way to Ullswater. But she was tempted out of the main road to ascend a rocky eminence near it, thinking it impossible we should pass without seeing her. This, however, unfortunately happened, and then ensued vexation and distress, especially to me, which I should be ashamed to have recorded, for I lost my temper entirely. Neither I nor those that were with me saw her again till we reached the Inn at Broughton.
TO

THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON,

AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1820

THE RIVER DUDDON

593

ven miles. This may perhaps in some degree excuse my irritability on the occasion, for I do not but think she had been much to blame. It appeared, however, on explanation, that a had remained on the rock, calling out and waving her handkerchief as we were passing, in fear that we also might ascend and enjoy a prospect which had much charmed her. “But on went, her signals proving vain.” How then could she reach Broughton before us? When she found she had not gone on before to Ulpha Kirk, Mr. Quilliman went back in one of the cargoes in search of her. He met her on the road, took her up, and by a shorter way conveyed her to Broughton, where we were all reunited and spent a happy evening.

I have many affecting remembrances connected with this stream. Those I forbear to mention; peculiar things that occurred on its banks during the later part of that visit to the seaside of which the former part is detailed in my “Epistle to Sir George Beaumont.”

The River Duddon rises upon Wrymose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millom.

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise Of hearts with gladness brimming o’er; And some unbidden tears that rise For names once heard, and heard no more; Tears brightened by the serenade For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone, With ambrosial streams more pure and bright Than fabled Cithares’ zone Glittering before the Thunderer’s sight, Is to my heart of hearts endeared The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence, Where they survive, of wholesome laws; Remnants of love whose modest sense Thus into narrow room withdraws; Hail, Ulysses of pristine mould, And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought That slights this passion, or condemns; If thee fond Fancy ever brought From the proud margin of the Thames, To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fall to find, Short leisure even in busiest days; Moments, to cast a look behind, And profit by those kindly rays That through the clouds do sometimes steal, And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City’s din Beats frequent on thy satiate ear, A pleased attention I may win To agitation less severe, That neither overwhelm nor cloy, But fill the hollow vale with joy!

I

1820. 1820

Not envying Latin shades — if yet they throw A grateful coolness round that crystal Spring, Blandusia, prattling as when long ago The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to sing;

1820. 1820

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait On these expected annual rounds; Whether the rich man’s sumptuous gate Call forth the unelaborate sounds, Or they are offered at the door That guards the lowest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep snow-muffled winds, and all is dark, To hear — and sink again to sleep! Or, at an earlier call, to mark, By blazing fire, the still suspense Of self-complacent innocence;
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains clinging;
Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering
Through ice-built arches radiant as heaven's bow;
I seek the birthplace of a native Stream. —
All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morning light!
Better to breathe at large on this clear height
Than toil in needless sleep from dream to dream:
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright,
For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my theme!

II
1820. 1820
CHILD of the clouds! I remote from every taint
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;
Thine are the honours of the lofty waste
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,
Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue quaint
Thy cradle decks; — to chant thy birth, thou hast
No manner Poet than the whistling Blast,
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!
She guards thee, ruthless Power! who would not spare
Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen,
Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy lair
Through paths and alleys roofed with darkest green;
Thousands of years before the silent air
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen!

III
1820. 1820
How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone
My seat, while I give way to such intent;
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monument,
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.

But as of all those tripping lambs as Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature
To thy beginning nought that doth press
Peculiar ground for hope to build up
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth.
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's care;
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed
gleam
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness rare;
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mate Earth!

IV
1820. 1820
TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountains take
This parting glance, no negligent adieu!
A Protean change seems wrought while I pursue
The curves, a loosely-scattered chain I make;
Or rather thou appear'st a glittering saith
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rocks through
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brae
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted bill
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white foam:
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath clomb
So high, a rival purpose to fulfill;
Else let the dastard backward bend, and roam,
Seeking less bold achievement, where he will!

V
1820. 1820
SOLE listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played
With thy clear voice, I caught the siffl sound
Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound —
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
The sun in heaven! — but now, to form a shade
For Thee, green alders have together wound
Their foliage; ashes flung their arms around;
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
And what the little careless innocent
Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice!
There are whose calmer mind it would content
To be an uncalled floweret of the glen,
Fearless of plough and scythe; or darkling wren
That tunes on Duddon’s banks her slimmer voice.

VIII
1820. 1820
What aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,
First of his tribe, to this dark dell—who first
In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst?
What hopes came with him? what designs were spread
Along his path? His unprotected bed
What dreams encompassed? Was the intruder nursed
In hideous usages, and rites accursed,
That thinned the living and disturbed the dead?
No voice replies;—both air and earth are mute;
And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield’st no more
Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit
Of ignorance thou might’st witness heretofore,
Thy function was to heal and to restore,
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute!

IX
THE STEPPING-STONES
1820. 1820
The struggling Rill insensibly is grown
Into a Brook of loud and stately march,
Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch;
And, for like use, lo! what might seem a zone
Chosen for ornament—stone matched with stone
In studied symmetry, with interspace
For the clear waters to pursue their race
Without restraint. How swiftly have they flown,
Succeeding—still succeeding! Here the Child
Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce and wild,
His budding courage to the proof; and here
Declining Manhood learns to note the sly
And sure encroachments of infirmity,
Thinking how fast time runs, life’s end how near!

X
THE SAME SUBJECT
1820. 1820
Not so that Fair whose youthful spirits dance
With prompt emotion, urging them to pass;
A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass;
Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;
To stop ashamed — too timid to advance;
She ventures once again — another pause!
His outstretched hand He tauntingly withdraws —
She sues for help with piteous utterance!
Chidden she chides again; the thrilling touch
Both feel, when he renew the wished-for aid:
Ah! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,
Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.
The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock, see
The struggle, clap their wings for victory!

XI
THE FAÉRY CHASM
1820. 1820
No fiction was it of the antique age:
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,
Is of the very footmarks unbereft
Which tiny Elves impressed; — on that smooth stage
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
In secret revels — haply after theft
Of some sweet Babe — Flower stolen, and coarse Weed left
For the distracted Mother to assuage
Her grief with, as she might! — But, where, oh! where
Is traceable a vestige of the notes

That ruled those dances wild in character?
Deep underground? Or in the upper air?
On the shrill wind of midnight? Or in the sea?
Floats O’er twilight fields the autumnal gos.

XII
HINTS FOR THE FANCY
1820. 1820
On, loitering Muse — the swift Steed chides us — on!
Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immense portray in miniature.
Wild shapes for many a strange companion!
Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure
When the broad oak drops, a leafy skeleton,
And the solidities of mortal pride,
Palace and tower, are crumbled in dust! —
The Bard who walks with Duddon for a guide,
Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:
Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse — we must;
And, if thou canst, leave them with regret!

XIII
OPEN PROSPECT
1820. 1820
Hail to the fields — with Dwellings sprinkled o’er,
And one small hamlet, under a green hill
Clustering, with barn and byre, and spinning mill!
A glance suffices; — should we wish it more,
Gay June would scorn us. But when brisk winds roar
Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pallas ash,
Dread swell of sound! loud as the gale that lash
The matted forests of Ontario’s shore
By wasteful steel unsmitthen — then would I
turn into port; and, reckless of the gale,
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,
Laugh with the generous household heartily
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

XIV
1806. 1807

Mountian Stream! the Shepherd and
his Cot
are privileged Inmates of deep solitude;
for would the nicest Anchorite exclude
field or two of brighter green, or plot
of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
of stationary sunshine: — thou hast viewed
these only, Duddon! with their paths re-
newed
y fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
see hath some awful Spirit impelled to
leave,
terly to desert, the haunts of men,
ough simple thy companions were and
few;
through this wilderness a passage
cleave
tended but by thy own voice, save when
the clouds and fowls of the air thy way
pursue!

XV
1820. 1820

om this deep chaem, where quivering
sunbeams play
on its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold
gloomy niche, capacious, blank, and
cold;
concave free from shrubs and mosses
grey;
embrace fresh, as if, with dire affray,
the Statue, placed amid these regions old
tutelary service, thence had rolled,
ning the flight of timid Yesterday!
- it by mortals sculptured? — weary
slaves
low endeavours! or abruptly cast
rude shape by fire, with roaring blast
pestuously let loose from central caves?
shioned by the turbulence of waves,
when o’er highest hills the Deluge
passed?

XVI
AMERICAN TRADITION
1820. 1820

Such fruitless questions may not long be-
guile
Or plague the fancy ’mid the sculptured shows
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;
there would the Indian answer with a smile
Aimed at the White Man’s ignorance, the while,
Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they rose,
Covered the plains, and, wandering where
they chose,
Mounted through every intricate defile,
Triumphant — Inundation wide and deep,
O’er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and steep
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;
And carved, on mural cliff’s undreaded side,
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase
or prey;
Whate’er they sought, shunned, loved, or
defied!

XVII
RETURN
1820. 1820

A dark plume fetch me from yon blasted yew,
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven croaks;
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes
Departed ages, shedding where he flew
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that be-
strew
The clouds and thrill the chambers of the rocks;
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,
That, calmly coughing while the nightly dew
Moistened each fleece, beneath the twin-
kling stars
Slept amid that lone Camp on Hardknot’s height,
Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove
and Mars:
Or, near that mystic Round of Druid frame
Tardily sinking by its proper weight
Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth
breast it came!
XVIII
SEATHWAITE CHAPEL
1820. 1820

Sacred Religion! "mother of form and fear,"
Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;
Mother of Love! (that name best suits thee here)
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere
That seeks to stifle it; — as in those days
When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,
Whose good works formed an endless routine:
A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;
And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise!

XX
THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE
1820. 1820

The old inventive Poets, had they seen,
Or rather felt, the entrancement that detain
Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery plains —
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
Transferred to bowers imperishably green
Had beautified Elysium! But these chais
Will soon be broken; — a rough course remains,
Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid mien,
Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many a shock
Given and received in mutual jealousy,
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high!

XIX
TRIBUTARY STREAM
1820. 1820

My frame hath often trembled with delight
When hope presented some far-distant good,
That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood
Of pure waters, from their aëry height
Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;
Who, 'mid a world of images impost
On the calm depth of his transparent breast,
Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!
And seldom hath ear listened to a tune
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
Swolin by that voice — whose murmur musical
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

XXI
WHENCE that low voice? — A whisper from the heart,
That told of days long past, when here I roved
With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;
Some who had early mandates to depart,
Yet are allowed to steal my path at start,
By Duddon's side; once more do we unite.
Once more, beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light;
And smothered joys into new being start.
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall
On gales that breathe too gently to recall
Aught of the fading year's inclemency!

XXII
TRADITION
1820. 1820

A love-lorn Maid, at some far-distant time,
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass
THE RIVER DUDDON

In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from the prime
Derives its name, reflected, as the chime
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:
The starry treasure from the blue profound
She longed to ravish; — shall she plunge, or climb
The humid precipice, and seize the guest
Of April, smiling high in upper air?
Desperate alternative! what fiend could dare
To prompt the thought? — Upon the steep rock's breast
The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

XXIII
SHEEP WASHING
1820. 1820
Sad thoughts, avaunt! — partake we their blithe cheer
Who gathered in betimes the unshorn flock
To wash the fleece, where haply bands of rock,
Checking the stream, make a pool smooth and clear
As this we look on. Distant Mountains hear,
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites
Clamour of boys with innocent despites
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange fear.
And what if Duddon's spotless flood receive
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive
Such wrong; nor need we blame the licensed joys,
Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise:
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

XXIV
THE RESTING-PLACE
1820. 1820
Midnoon is past; — upon the sultry mead
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow throws:
If we advance unstrengthened by repose,
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!
This Nook — with woodbine hung and straggling weed
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,
Half grot, half arbour — proffers to enclose
Body and mind, from molestation freed,
In narrow compass — narrow as itself:
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,
Be loth that we should breathe awhile exempt
From new incitements friendly to our task,
Here wants not stealthy prospect, that may tempt
Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

XXV
1820. 1820
Methinks 't were no unprecedented feat
Should some benignant Minister of air
Lift, and encircle with a cloudsy chair,
The One for whom my heart shall ever beat
With tenderest love; — or, if a safer seat
Atween his downy wings be furnished, there
Would lodge her, and the cherished burden bear
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!
Rough ways my steps have trod; — too rough and long
For her companionship; here dwells soft ease:
With sweets that she partakes not, some distaste
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of wrong;
Languish the flowers; the waters seem to waste
Their vocal charm; their sparklings cease to please.

XXVI
1820. 1820
Return, Content! for fondly I pursued,
Even when a child, the Streams — unheard, unseen;
Through tangled woods, impending rocks between;
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood —
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green—
Poured down the hills, a choral multitude!
Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains;
They taught me random cares and truant joys,
That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys;
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

XXVII
1820. 1820
FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless heap,
Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,
Is that embattled House, whose massy keep,
Flung from you cliff a shadow large and cold.
There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the bold;
Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep
Of winds— though winds were silent— struck a deep
And lasting terror through that ancient hold.
Its line of Warriors fled;— they shrunk when tried
By ghostly power:— but Time's unsparing hand
Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from out the land;
And now, if men with men in peace abide,
All other strength the weakest may withstand,
All worse assaults may safely be defied.

XXVIII
JOURNEY RENEWED
1820. 1820
I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-oppressed,
Crowded together under rustling trees
Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;
And for their sakes, and love of all that rest,

On Duddon's margin, in the shelter nest;
For all the startled scaly tribes that sail
Into his coverts, and each fearless link
Of dancing insects forged upon his breast.
For these, and hopes and recollections vain
Close to the vital seat of human clay;
Glad meetings, tender partings, that we stay
The dropping mind of absence, by vows sworn
In his pure presence near the tryss thorn—
I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

XXIX
1820. 1820
No record tells of lance opposed to lance,
Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired domains;
 Tells that their turf drank purple from the veins
Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance.
Till doubtful combat issued in a trance.
Of victory, that struck through heart and reins
Even to the inmost seat of mortal pain,
And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.
Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie
In the blank earth, neglected and forsaken.
The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;
The Torrents chant their praise, incurring scorn
Of power usurped; with proclamation high
And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

XXX
1820. 1820
WHO swerves from innocence, who make divorce
Of that serene companion—a good name.
Recover not his loss; but walks with shame,
With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse.
And oft-times he—who, yielding to the force
Of chance-temptation, ere his journey's end.
From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend—
In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar;
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,
With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

XXXIII
CONCLUSION
1820. 1820

But here no cannon thunders to the gale;
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast
A crimson splendour lowly is the mast
That rises here, and humbly spread, the sail;
While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale
Through which with strange vicissitudes he passed,
The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
Where all his unambitious functions fail
Ahd may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be free—
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,
And each tumultuous working left behind
At seemly distance — to advance like Thee;
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind
And soul, to mingle with Eternity!

XXXIV
AFTER-THOUGHT
1820. 1820

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away. — Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Dudson, as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish; — be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.
A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE

1820. 1822

This Parsonage was the residence of my friend Jones, and is particularly described in another note.

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line;
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine;
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,
And neighbours rest together, here confound
Their several features, mingled like the sound
Of many waters, or as evening blends
With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave;
And while those lofty poplars gently wave
Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky
Bright as the glimpses of eternity,
To saints accords'd in their mortal hour.

AND OFT in splendour dost appear
Embodied to poetic eyes,
While traversing this nether sphere,
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.
Daughter of Hope! her favourite Child;
Whom she to young Ambition bares,
When hunter's arrow first defiled
The grove, and stained the turf with gore.
Thee wingèd Fancy took, and nursed
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,
And where the mightier Waters burst
From caves of Indian mountains bore!
She wrapped thee in a panther's skin;
And Thou, thy favourite food to win,
The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare;
From her rock-fortress in mid air,
With infant shout; and often sweep
Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain;
Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep.
Upon the couchant lion's mane!
With rolling years thy strength increased
And, far beyond thy native East,
To thee, by varying titles known
As various thy power was shown,
Did incense-bearing altars rise,
Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,
From suppliants panting for the skies!

II

What though this ancient Earth be trad
No more by step of Demi-god
Mounting from glorious deed to deed
As thou from clime to clime dist'd lead;
Yet still, the bosom beating high,
And the hushed farewell of an eye
Where no procrastinating gaze
A last infirmity betrays,
Prove that thy heaven-descended sway
Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.
By thy divinity impelled,
The Stripling seeks the tented field;
The aspiring Virgin kneels; and, pale
With awe, receives the hallowed veil,
A soft and tender Heroine
Vowed to severer discipline;
Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy
Makes of the whistling shreds a toy,
And of the ocean's dismal breast
A play-ground, — or a couch of rest;
'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,
Thou to his dangers doest enchain
The Chamois-chaser swed in vain
By chasm or dizzy precipice;
And hast Thou not with triumph seen
How soaring Mortals glide between

I

KEEP for the Young the impassioned smile
Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee stand
High on that chalky cliff of Britain's Isle,
A slender volume grasping in thy hand —
(Perchance the pages that relate
The various turns of Crusoe's fate) —
Ah, spare the exulting smile,
And drop thy pointing finger bright
As the first flash of beacon light;
But neither veil thy head in shadows dim, to
Nor turn thy face away
From One who, in the evening of his day,
To thee would offer no presumptuous hymn!

Bold Spirit! who art free to rove
Among the starry courts of Jove,
through the clouds, and brave the light
th bolder than Icarian flight? 70
w they, in bells of crystal, dive —
here winds and waters cease to strive —
no unholy visitings,
ong the monsters of the Deep;
d all the sad and precious things —
hich there in ghastly silence sleep?
averse tides and currents headed,
d breathless calms no longer dreaded,
ever-slaeking voyage go
ight as an arrow from the bow;
d, slighting sails and scorning oars,
ep faith with Time on distant shores?
Within our fearless reach are placed
crets of the burning Waste;
yptian tombs unlock their dead,
e trembles at his fountain head;
on speak' st — and lo! the polar Seas
osom their last mysteries.
But oh! what transports, what sublime
ward, on from the world of mind, dost thou
a philosophic Sage; or high-souled Bard
be, for thy service trained in lonely
ods, st fed on pageants floating through the
i, recollected in depth of limpid floods;
"grieves — tho' doomed thro' silent
ight to bear
be domination of his glorious themes,
struggle in the net-work of thy dreams!

III

There be movements in the Patriot's
oul, rom source still deeper, and of higher
orth,
the thine the quickening impulse to con-
trol,
nd in due season send the mandate
orth;
ay call a prostrate Nation can restore,
then but a single Mind resolves to crouch
more.

IV

Woe, Minister of wrath!
Woe to their destined punishment doest
urge
The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of hard-
ened heart!
not unassisted by the flattering stars,

Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path
When they in pomp depart
With trampling horses and refulgent cars —
Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge;
Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown
strands;
Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands —
An Army now, and now a living hill
That a brief while heaves with convulsive
throes —
Then all is still;
Or, to forget their madness and their
woes,
Wraapt in a winding-sheet of spotless snows!

Back flows the willing current of my
Song:
If to provoke such doom the Impious
dare,
Why should it daunt a blameless prayer?
— Bold Goddess! range our Youth among;
Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat
In hearts no longer young;
Still may a veteran Few have pride
In thoughts whose sternness makes them
sweet;
In fixed resolves by Reason justified;
That to their object cleave like sleet
Whitening a pine tree's northern side,
When fields are naked far and wide,
And withered leaves, from earth's cold
breast
Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can find
rest.

VI

But, if such homage thou disdain
As doth with mellowing years agree,
One rarely absent from thy train
More humble favours may obtain
For thy contented Votary.
She, who incites the frolic lambs
In presence of their heedless dams,
And to the solitary fawn
Vouchsafes her Lessons, bounteous Nymph
That wakes the breeze, the sparkling lymph
Doth hurry to the lawn;
She, who inspires that strain of joyance holy
Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the mel-
ancholy,
Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead for
me;
And vernal mornings opening bright
With views of undefined delight,
ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS
IN SERIES
1821. 1822

My purpose in writing this Series was, as much as possible, to confine my view to the introduction, progress, and operation of the Church in England, both previous and subsequent to the Reformation. The Sonnets were written long before ecclesiastical history and points of doctrine had excited interest with which they have been recently enquired into and discussed. The former period is mentioned as an excuse for my having fallen into error in respect to an incident which had been selected as setting forth the height to which the power of the Popedom over temporal sovereignties had attained, and the arrogance with which it was displayed. I allude to the last Sonnet in one of the first series, where Pope Alexander the third at Venice is described as setting his seal on the neck of the Emperor Barbarossa. Though this is related as a fact in history, I am told is a mere legend of no authority. Substitute for it an undeniable truth not less fitted for purpose, namely, the penance inflicted by Gregory the Seventh upon the Emperor Henry Fourth.

Before I conclude my notice of these Sonnets, let me observe that the opinion I pronounced in favour of Laud (long before the Oxford Tract movement) and which had brought censure upon me from several quarters, is not in the least changed. Omitting here to examine into his aims in respect to the persecuting spirit with which he has been charged, I am persuaded that not his aims to restore ritual practices which had been abandoned were good and wise, whatever else he might commit in the manner he sometimes attempted to enforce them. I further believe he had not he, and others who shared his opinions and felt as he did, stood up in opposition to the reformers of that period, it is questionable whether the Church would ever have recovered its ground and become the blessing it now is, and will, I trust, become in a still greater degree, to those of its communion and to those who unfortunately are separated from it.

PART I
FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies Profound Tracts, and by a blist surprise Convert delight into a Sacrifice."

I
INTRODUCTION
1821. 1822

I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace
Of Liberty, and smote the plansive string,
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumphing,
Won for herself a lasting resting-place:
Now seek upon the heights of Time a source
Of a Holy River, on whose banks it found
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels to have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of base force;
And, for delight of him who tracks its course,
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.
II
CONJECTURES
1821. 1822

Here be prophets on whose spirits rest things, revealed like future, they can tell.
Powers, presiding o'er the sacred well
of its first bounty. Wandering through the west,
holy Paul a while in Britain dwell,
call the Fountain forth by miracle,
with dread signs the nascent Stream invest?
He, whose bonds dropped off, whose prison doors
open, by an Angel's voice unbarred?
some of humbler name, to these wild shores
m-driven; who, having seen the cup of woe
from their Master, sojourned here to guard
precious Current they had taught to flow?

III
TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS
1821. 1822

EAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the seamew — white
Menai's foam; and toward the mystic ring
ere Augurs stand, the Future questioning,
why the cormorant aims her heavy flight,
tending ruin to each baleful rite,
in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'eravian truths, and patriarchal lore.
igh the Bard: can these meek doctrines blight
transports? wither his heroic strains?
all shall be fulfilled; — the Julian spear
way first opened; and, with Roman chains,
tidings come of Jesus crucified;
y come — they spread — the weak, the suffering, hear;
the faith, and in the hope abide.

IV
DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION
1821. 1822

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of fire
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that Man bestowed.
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to God,
Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,
These jealous Ministers of law aspire,
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom flowed,
Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,
As if with presence of the coming storm,
That intimation when the stars were shaped;
And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the primal truth
Glimmers through many a superstitious form
That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

V
UNCERTAINTY
1821. 1822

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are lost
On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian coves,
Or where the solitary shepherd roves
Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost
Of Time and shadows of Tradition, crost;
And where the boatman of the Western Isles
Slackens his course — to mark those holy piles
Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.
Nor these, nor monuments of eldest name,
Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays,
Nor characters of Greek or Roman fame,
To an unquestionable Source have led;
Enough — if eyes, that sought the fountain-head
In vain, upon the growing Rill may gase.

VI
PERSECUTION
1821. 1822

LAMENT! for Diocletian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct
Sung for themselves, and those whom they
would free!
Rich conquest waits them: — the tempestu-
ous sea
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high
And heeded not the voice of clashing
swords,
These good men humble by a few bare
words,
And calm with fear of God’s divinity.

XV
PAULINUS
1821. 1822

But, to remote Northumbria’s royal Hall,
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the
school
Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,
Who comes with functions apostolical?
Mark him, of shoulders curved, and stature
tall,
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre
cheek,
His prominent feature like an eagle’s beak;
A man whose aspect doth at once appal
And strike with reverence. The Monarch
leans
Toward the pure truths this Delegate pro-
pounds,
Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
With careful hesitation, — then convenes
A synod of his Councillors: — give ear,
And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear!

XVI
PERSUASION
1821. 1822

“Man’s life is like a Sparrow, mighty
King!
That — while at banquet with your Chiefs
you sit
Housed near a blazing fire — is seen to flit
Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,
Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing,
Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;
But whence it came we know not, nor be-
hold
Whither it goes. Even such, that transient
Thing,
The human Soul; not utterly unknown
While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;

But from what world She came, what we
or weal
On her departure waits, no tongue has
shown;
This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
His be a welcome cordially bestowed!”

XVII
CONVERSION
1821. 1822

PROMPT transformation works the new
Lore;
The Council closed, the Priest in full care
Rides forth, an armed man, and hurl a
spear
To desecrate the Fane which heretofore
He served in folly. Woden falls, and Tyr
Is overturned; the mace, in battle heaved
(So might they dream) till victory was
achieved,
Drops, and the God himself is seen no
more.
Temple and Altar sink, to hide their sham
Amid oblivious weeds. “O come to me.
Ye heavy laden!” such the inviting voice
Heard near fresh streams; and thousand
who rejoice
In the new Rite, the pledge of sanctity,
Shall, by regenerate life, the promise cla

XVIII
APOLOGY
1821. 1822

Nor scorn the aid which Fancy oft de-
lend
The Soul’s eternal interests to promote:
Death, darkness, danger, are our natural
lot;
And evil Spirits may our walk attend
For aught the wisest know or comprehend.
Then be good Spirits free to breathe a
Of elevation; let their odours float
Around these Converts; and their glory
blend,
The midnight stars outshining, or the bliss
Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden
cords
Of good works, mingling with the visible
raise
The Soul to purer worlds: and shall its
line
XIX
PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY
1821. 1822

Now beautiful your presence, how benign,
Servants of God! who not a thought will share
With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
Such Priest, when service worthy of his care
Has called him forth to breathe the common air,
And seem a saintly image from its shrine Descended: — happy are the eyes that meet
The Apparition; evil thoughts are stayed At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
A benediction from his voice or hand;
Whence grace, through which the heart can understand, And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

XX
OTHER INFLUENCES
1821. 1822

Ah, when the Body, round which in love we clung,
Is chilled by death, does mutual service fail?
Is tender pity then of no avail?
Are recompenses of the fervent tongue
A waste of hope? — From this sad source have sprung
Rites that console the Spirit, under grief
Which ill can brook more rational relief:
Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and dirges sung
For Souls whose doom is fixed! The way is smooth
For Power that travels with the human heart:
Confession ministers the pang to soothe
In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.

XXI
SECLUSION
1821. 1822

Lance, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side
A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,
Or staff more harmless than a shepherd’s crook,
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world — to hide
His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
In soft repose he comes: within his cell,
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
At morn, and eve, and midnight’s silent hour,
Do penitential cogitations cling;
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;
Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they bring,
For recompence — their own perennial bower.

XXII
CONTINUED
1821. 1822

Methinks that to some vacant hermitage
My feet would rather turn — to some dry nook
Scooped out of living rock, and near a brook
Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage to stage,
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling rage
In the soft heaven of a translucent pool;
Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage
Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,
A maple dish, my furniture should be;
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting owl
My night-watch: nor should e’er the crested fowl
From thorp or vill his matins sound for me,
Tired of the world and all its industry.
XXIII
REPROOF
1821. 1822
But what if One, through grove or flowery mead,
Indulging thus at will the creeping feet
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet
Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede!
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
Of learning, where thou heard'st the billows beat
On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt
Imposed on human kind, must first forget
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,
The last dear service of thy passing breath!

XXIV
SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND SHADES OF THE RELIGION
1821. 1822
By such examples moved to unbought pains,
The people work like congregated bees;
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
From Heaven a general blessing; timely rains
Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,
Justice and peace: — bold faith! yet also rise
The sacred Structures for less doubtful gains.
The Sensual think with reverence of the palms
Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the grave
If penance be redeemable, thence alms
Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;
And if full oft the Sanctuary save
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV
MISSIONS AND TRAVELS
1821. 1822
Nor sedentary all: there are who roam
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores;
Or quit with zealous step their knee-won floors
To seek the general mart of Christendom:
Whence they, like richly-laden merchandize come
To their beloved cells: — or shall we say
That, like the Red-cross Knight, they use their way,
To lead in memorable triumph home
Truth, their immortal Una? Babylon,
Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,
Nor leaves her Speech one word to make the sigh
That would lament her; — Memphis, Tyre are gone
With all their Arts, — but classic lore glistens on
By these Religious saved for all posterity.

XXVI
ALFRED
1821. 1822
Behold a pupil of the monkish gown,
The pious Alfred, King to Justice dear!
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;
Mirror of Princes! Indigent Rown
Might range the starry ether for a crown
Equal to his deserts, who, like the year,
Pours forth his bounty, like the day did cheer,
And awes like night with mercy-tempered frown.
Ease from this noble miser of his time
No moment steals; pain lowers not his cares.
Though small his kingdom as a spark of gem,
Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,
And Christian India, through her wide-spread clime,
In sacred converse gifts with Alfred share.

XXVII
HIS DESCENDANTS
1821. 1822
When thy great soul was freed from mortal chains,
Darling of England! many a bitter shower
Fell on thy tomb; but emulative power
Flowed in thy line through degenerate veins.
Race of Alfred covet glorious pains
then dangers threaten, dangers ever new!
black tempests bursting, blacker still in view!
Manly sovereignty its hold retains;
sure, sincere, the branches bold to strive
with the fierce tempest, while, within the round
their protection, gentle virtues thrive;
soft, amid some green plot of open ground,
ide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,
fostered hyacinths spread their purple bloom.

XXVIII
INFLUENCE ABUSED
1821. 1822
Aged by Ambition, who with subltest skill
ranges her means, the Enthusiast as a dupe
shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,
and turn the instruments of good to ill,
ouling the credulous people to his will.
Dunstan:—from its Benedictine coo
er the master Mind, at whose fell swoop
he chaste affections tremble to fulfill
their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,
the Spirit of spiritual sway! his thoughts,
his dreams,
in the supernatural world abide:
a throng of Followers, filled with pride
what they see of virtues pushed to extremes,
and sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX
DANISH CONQUESTS
1821. 1822
To the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!
Dissection, checking arms that would restrain
The incessant Rovers of the northern main,
helps to restore and spread a Pagan sway:
Gospel-truth is potent to allay
Fierceness and rage; and soon the cruel Dane
feels, through the influence of her gentle reign,
his native superstitions melt away.

Thus, often, when thick gloom the east
o'er-shrouds,
The full-orbed Moon, slow climbing, doth appear
Silently to consume the heavy clouds;
How no one can resolve; but every eye
Around her sees, while air is hushed, a clear
And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

XXX
CANUTE
1821. 1822
A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,
From Monks in Ely chanting service high,
While as Canute the King is rowing by:
"My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King,
"draw near,
That we the sweet song of the Monks may hear!"
He listens (all past conquests, and all schemes
Of future, vanishing like empty dreams)
Heart-touched, and haply not without a tear.
The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,
While his free Barge skims the smooth
float along,
Gives to that rapture an accordant Rhyme.
O suffering Earth! be thankful: sternest clime
And rudest age are subject to the thrill
Of heaven-descended Pity and Song.

XXXI
THE NORMAN CONQUEST
1821. 1822
The woman-hearted Confessor prepares
The evanescence of the Saxon line.
Hark! 'tis the tolling Curfew!—the stars shine;
But of the lights that cherish household cares
And festive gladness, burns not one that dares
To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,
Emblem and instrument, from Thames to Tyne,
Of force that daunts, and cunning that ensnares!
Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell, 
That quench, from hut to palace, lamps and fires, 
Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires; 
Even so a thralldom, studious to expel 
Old laws, and ancient customs to derange, 
To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

XXXII
1821. 1837
COLDLY we spake. The Saxons, overpowered 
By wrong triumphant through its own excess, 
From fields laid waste, from house and home devour'd 
By flames, look up to heaven and crave redress. 
From God's eternal justice. Pitiless 
Though men be, there are angels that can feel 
For wounds that death alone has power to heal, 
For penitent guilt, and innocent distress. 
And has a Champion risen in arms to try 
His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes no more; 
Him in their hearts the people canonize; 
And far above the mine's most precious ore 
The least small pittance of bare mould they prize 
Scooped from the sacred earth where his dear relics lie.

XXXIII
THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT
1821. 1822
"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profaneness flow 
From Nazareth — source of Christian piety, 
From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of Agony 
And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go, 
With prayers and blessings we your path will sow; 
Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye 
Have chased far off by righteous victory 
These sons of Amalek, or laid them low!" — 
"GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly cry; 
Shout which the enraptured multitude aston'ds!

The Council's roof and Clermont's town reply; — 
"God willeth it," from hill to hill rebooms, 
And, in awe-stricken Countries far and nigh, 
Through "Nature's hollow arch" that voice resounds.

XXXIV
CRUSADES
1821. 1822
The turbaned Race are poured in thickening swarms 
Along the west; though driven from Aquitaine, 
The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain: 
And soft Italia feels renewed alarms; 
The scimitar, that yields not to the champion, 
Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will divide: 
Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian hills detain 
Their tents, and check the current of their arms. 
Then blame not those who, by the might of mercy 
Known to the moral world, Imagination, 
Upheave, so seems it, from her natural station 
All Christendom: — they sweep along (we never 
So huge a host!) — to tear from the unbeliever 
The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

XXXV
RICHARD I
1821. 1822
Redoubted King, of courage lionine, 
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip 
Thy warlike person with the staff and scroll; 
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine, 
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decree: 
Her blushing cheek, love-ovens upon her lip; 
And see love-emblems streaming from thy ship, 
As thence she holds her way to Palestine. 
My Song, a fearless homager, would attend 
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the press 
Of war, but duty summons her away 
To tell — how, finding in the rash distress 
Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend, 
To giddier heights hath clomb the Pope away.
XXXVI
AN INTERDICT
1821. 1822

ALMS quake by turns: proud Arbitress of grace,
e Church, by mandate shadowing forth the power
e arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,
loses the gates of every sacred place.
Right from the sun and tainted air's embrace
Sacred things are covered: cheerful morn
ows sad as night — no seemly garb is worn,
Or is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are dumb;
Churches are graves — funereal rites denied;
And in the churchyard he must take his bride
Who dares be wedded? Fancies thickly come
to the pensive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despair the soul benumb.

XXXVII
PAPAL ABUSES
1821. 1822

As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,
The gross materials of this world present
Marvellous study of wild accident;
Nor south proximities of old and new;
And bold transfigurations, more untrue
As might be deemed) to disciplined intent
Ban aught the sky's fantastic element,
Then most fantastic, offers to the view.

Aw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine?
O! John self-stripped of his insignia: —
Crown, sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down
A proud Legate's feet! The spears that line
Arional hails, the opprobrious insult feel;
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII
SCENE IN VENICE
1821. 1822

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred head,
To Caesar's Successor the Pontiff spake;

“Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy neck
Levelled with earth this foot of mine may tread.”
Then he, who to the altar had been led,
He, whose strong arm the Orient could not check,
He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,
Stoop’d, of all glory disinherited,
And even the common dignity of man —
Amazement strikes the crowd: while many turn
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
From outraged Nature; but the sense of most
In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX
PAPAL DOMINION
1821. 1822

UNLESS to Peter’s Chair the viewless wind
Must come and ask permission when to blow,
What further empire would it have? for now
A ghostly Domination, unconfin’d
As that by dreaming Bards to Love assigned,
Sits there in sober truth — to raise the low,
Perplex the wise, the strong to overthrow;
Through earth and heaven to bind and to unbind! —
Resist — the thunder quails thee! — crouch — rebuff
Shall be thy recompence! from land to land
The ancient Thrones of Christendom are stuff
For occupation of a magic wand,
And ’tis the Pope that wields it: — whether rough
Or smooth his front, our world is in his hand!

PART II

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN
THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

I
1821. 1845

How soon — alas! did Man, created pure —
By Angels guarded, deviate from the line
Prescribed to duty: — woeful forfeiture
He made by wilful breach of law divine.
With like perverseness did the Church
abjure
Obedience to her Lord, and haste to twine,
"Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for aye
endure,
Weeds on whose front the world had fixed
her sign.
O Man, — if with thy trials thus it fares,
If good can smooth the way to evil choice,
From all rash censure be the mind kept free;
He only judges right who weighs, compares,
And in the sternest sentence which his
voice
Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

II
1821. 1845
FROM false assumption rose, and, fondly
hailed
By superstition, spread the Papal power;
Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevailed
Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.
She daunts, forth-thundering from her
spiritual tower,
Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.
Justice and Peace through Her uphold their
claims;
And Chastity finds many a sheltering bower.
Realm there is none that if controlled or
swayed
By her commands partakes not, in degree,
Of good, o'er manners, arts and arms,
diffused:
Yes, to thy domination, Roman See,
Tho' miserably, oft monstrously, abused
By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

III
CISTERCIAN MONASTERY
1821. 1822
"HERE Man more purely lives, less oft
doth fall,
More promptly rises, walks with stricter
heed,
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains
withal
A brighter crown." — On yon Cistercian
wall
That confident assurance may be read;
And, to like shelter, from the world law
fled
Increasing multitudes. The potent call
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's
desires;
Yet, while the rugged Age on plant kneel
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,
A gentler life spreads round the holy spire;
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste re
tires,
And aery harvests crown the fertile lea.

IV
1821. 1835
DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,
His whole life long tills it, with heartless
toil
Of villain-service, passing with the soil
To each new Master, like a steer or bairn,
Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-bonded;
But mark how gladly, through their own
domains,
The Monks relax or break these iron chains:
While Mercy, uttering, through their voice
a sound
Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chast,
abate
These legalized oppressions! Man — whose
name
And nature God disdained not; Man — whose
soul
Christ died for — cannot forfeit his high
claim
To live and move exempt from all control
Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate!"

V
MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN
1821. 1822
RECORD we too, with just and faithful
pen,
That many hooded Cenobites there are,
Who in their private cells have yet a care
Of public quiet; unambitious Men,
Counsellors for the world, of piercing eye;
Whose fervent exhortations from afar
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;
And oft-times in the most forbidding des
solitude, with love of science strong,
\* patient the yoke of thought they bear,
\* subtly glide its finest threads along!
\* fests that crowd the intellectual sphere
\* in many boundaries, as the astronomer
\* orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

VI
OTHER BENEFITS
1821. 1822

\* not in vain embodied to the sight,
\*igion finds even in the stern retreat
\* feudal sway her own appropriate seat;
\*m the collegiate pomp on Windsor's height
\*n to the humbler altar, which the Knight
\*d his retainers of the embattled hall
\*k in domestic oratory small,
\*r prayer in stillness, or the chanted rite;
\*n chiefly dear, when foes are planted round,
\*o teach the intrepid guardians of the place —
\*rly exposed to death, with famine worn,
\*d suffering under many a perilous wound —
\*w sad would be their durance, if forlorn
\*f officers dispensing heavenly grace!

VII
CONTINUED
1821. 1822

\*d what melodious sounds at times prevail!
\*nd, ever and anon, how bright a gleam
\*s on the surface of the turbid Stream!
\*t heart felt fragrance mingles with the gale
\*hat swells the bosom of our passing sail!
\*r, but on this River's margin, blow
\*ose flowers of chivalry, to bind the brow
\*f hardihood with wreaths that shall not fail? —
\*ir Court of Edward! wonder of the world!
\* e a matchless blazonry unfurled
\*f wisdom, magnanimity, and love;
\*d meekness magnanimity honourable pride;
\*he lamb is couching by the lion's side,
\*he flame-eyed eagle sits the dove.

VIII
CRUSADERS
1821. 1822

\* Furl we the sails, and pass with tardy oars
\* through these bright regions, casting many a glance
\* Upon the dream-like issues — the romance
\*f many-coloured life that Fortune pours
\*ound the Crusaders, till on distant shores
\*heir labours end; or they return to lie,
\*he vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,
\*evously stretched upon their chancel floors.
\*m I deceived? Or is their requiem chanted
\* By voices never mute when Heaven unites
\*er inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies;
\*requiem which Earth takes up with voice
\*ndaunted,
\*hen she would tell how Brave, and Good,
\*nd Wise,
\*or their high guardon not in vain have
\*nt!

IX
1842. 1845

\* As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest
\*While from the Papal Unity there came,
\*hat feeble means had failed to give, one aim
\*fused thro' all the regions of the West;
\*o does her Unity its power attest
\*y works of Art, that shed, on the outward frame
\*f worship, glory and grace, which who shall blame
\*hat ever looked to heaven for final rest?
\*ail countless Temples! that so well befit
\*our ministry; that, as ye rise and take
\*rm, spirit and character from holy writ,
\*ive to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,
\*ions of high and higher sweep, and make
\*e unconverted soul with awe submit.

X
1842. 1845

\*here long and deeply hath been fixed
\*e root
\*e blest soil of gospel truth, the Tree
\*ighted or scathed tho' many branches be,
\*put forth to wither, many a hopeful shoot)
Can never cease to bear celestial fruit.
Witness the Church that oft-times, with effect
Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to eject
Her bane, her vital energies recruit.
Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine,
When such good work is doomed to be undone,
The conquests lost that were so hardly won: —
All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will shine
In light confirmed while years their course shall run,
Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

XI
TRANSUBSTANTIATION
1821. 1822

ENOUGH! for see, with dim association
The tapers burn; the odorous incense feeds
A greedy flame; the pompous mass proceeds;
The Priest bestows the appointed consecration;
And, while the Host is raised, its elevation
An awe and supernatural horror breeds;
And all the people bow their heads, like reeds
To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.
This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of Rhone
He taught, till persecution chased him thence,
To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.
Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,
'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy throne,
From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

XII
THE VAUDOIS
1821. 1835

But whence came they who for the Saviour Lord
Have long borne witness as the Scriptures teach? —
Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach
In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,
Their fugitive Progenitors explored
Subalpine vales, in quest of safe retreats
Where that pure Church survives, the summer heats
Open a passage to the Romish sword,
Far as it dares to follow. Herbs self-as, And fruitage gathered from the chest
wood,
Nourish the sufferers then; and mist, as brood
O'er chasms with new-fallen obstacles strown,
Protect them; and the eternal snows daunts
Aliens, is God's good winter for their bane.

XIII
1821. 1835

PRAISED be the Rivers, from their mountain springs
Shouting to Freedom, "Plant thy base here!"
To harassed Piety, "Dismiss thy fear,
And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled wings!"
Nor be unthanked their final lingerings—
Silent, but not to high-souled Passian ear—
'Mid reedy fens wide-spread, and marshy dream,
Their own creation. Such glad welcomings
As Po was heard to give where Veere rose
Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth divine
Who near his fountains sought obscure a pose,
Yet came prepared as glorious lights shine,
Should that be needed for their sacred Charge;
Blest Prisoners They, whose spirits were large!

XIV
WALDENSES
1821. 1822

Those had given earliest notice, as the lark
Springs from the ground the morn to gratulate;
Or rather rose the day to antedate,
By striking out a solitary spark,
When all the world with midnight gloom was dark.—
Then followed the Waldensian bands, whom Hate
In vain endeavours to exterminate,
Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark:
But they desist not; — and the sacred fire,
Rekindled thus, from dens and savage woods
Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,
Through courts, through camps, o'er liminary floods;
Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share
Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

XV
ARCHBISHOP CHICHELY TO HENRY V
1821. 1822

"What beast in wilderness or cultured field
The lively beauty of the leopard shows?
What flower in meadow-ground or garden grows
That to the towering lily doth not yield?
Let both meet only on thy royal shield!
Go forth, great King! claim what thy birth bestows;
Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes Dare to usurp; — thou hast a sword to wield,
And Heaven will crown the right." — The mitred Sire
Thus spake — and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul addrest,
Ploughs her bold course across the wondering seas;
For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast
Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,
But one that leaps to meet the fanning breeze.

XVI
WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER
1821. 1822

Thus is the storm abated by the craft
Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect
The Church, whose power hath recently been checked,
Whose monstrous riches threatened. So the shaft
Of victory mounts high, and blood is quaffed
In fields that rival Cressy and Poictiers —
Pride to be washed away by bitter tears!
For deep as Hell itself, the avenging draught
Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal power
Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual truth
Maintains the else endangered gift of life;
Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;
And, under cover of this woeful strife,
Gathers unblighted strength from hour to hour.

XVII
WICLIFFE
1821. 1822

Once more the Church is seized with sudden fear,
And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumèd:
Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed
And flung into the brook that travels near;
Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams can hear
Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon the wind,
Though seldom heard by busy human kind) —
"As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt bear
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst
An emblem yields to friends and enemies
How the bold Teacher’s Doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread, throughout the world dispersed."

XVIII
CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY
1821. 1822

"Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease
And cumbrous wealth — the shame of your estate;
You, on whose progress dazzling trains await
Of pompous horses; whom vain titles please;
Who will be served by others on their knees,
Yet will yourselves to God no service pay;
Pastors who neither take nor point the way
To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities
Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know
And speak the word — " Alas! of fearful things
'Tis the most fearful when the people's eye
Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;
And taught the general voice to prophesy
Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

XIX
ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER
1821. 1822
AND what is Penance with her knotted thong;
Mortification with the shirt of hair,
Wan cheek, and knees indurated with prayer,
Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;
If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong
The pious, humble, useful Secular,
And rob the people of his daily care,
Scorning that world whose blindness makes her strong?
Inversion strange! that, unto One who lives
For self, and struggles with himself alone,
The ampest share of heavenly favour gives;
That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem
Of God and man, place higher than to him
Who on the good of others builds his own!

XX
MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS
1821. 1822
Yet more,—round many a Convent's blazing fire
Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;
There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—
While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of a Friar,
Pours out his choicest beverage high and higher
Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run
Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won
An instant kiss of masterful desire—
To stay the precious waste. Through every brain
The domination of the sprightly juice

Spreads high conceits to madding Fancy dear,
Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse
Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,
Whose votive burthen is—"OUR KIN-DEM'S HERE!"

XXI
DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES
1821. 1822
THREATS come which no submission may assuage,
No sacrifice avert, no power disputes;
The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries mute,
And, ‘mid their choirs unroofed by self-same rage,
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;
The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit;
And the green lizard and the gilded newt
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.
The owl of evening and the woodland fox
For their abode the shrines of Waltham choose:
Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse
To stoop her head before these desperate shocks—
She whose high pomp displaced, as story tells
Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

XXII
THE SAME SUBJECT
1821. 1822
The lovely Nun (submitting, but more meek
Through saintly habit than from effort due
To unrelenting mandates that pursue
With equal wrath the steps of strong and weak)
Goes forth—unveiling timidly a cheek
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,
While through the Convent's gate to o'er view
Softly she glides, another home to seek.
Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,
An Apparition more divinely bright!
Not more attractive to the dazzled sight.
Those watery glories, on the stormy brine
Poured forth, while summer suns at distance shine,
And the green vales lie heaved in sober light!
XXIII
CONTINUED
1821. 1822
Many a Novice of the cloistered shade, and many chained by vows, with eager glee he warrant hail, exulting to be free; like ships before whose keels, full long embayed,
A polar ice, propitious winds have made
looked-for outlet to an open sea,

eir liquid world, for bold discovery,
a. all her quarters temptingly displayed!
op e guides the young; but when the old
must pass
he threshold, whither shall they turn to find
he hospitality — the aims (alas!
ims may be needed) which that Heuse
bestowed?
an they, in faith and worship, train the
mind
 o keep this new and questionable road?

XXIV
SAINTS
1821. 1822
'z, too, must fly before a chasing hand,
angels and Saints, in every hamlet
mourned!
if the old idolatry be spurned,
et not your radiant Shapes desert the Land:
her adoration was not your demand,
he fend heart proffered it — the servile
heart;
and therefore are ye summoned to depart,
diachel, and thou, St. George, whose flam
ing brand
The Dragon quelled; and valiant Margaret
Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:
and rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen
Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,
Who in the penitential desert met
Sages sweet as those that over Eden blew!

XXV
THE VIRGIN
1821. 1822
Mother! whose virgin bosom was unerost
With the least shade of thought to sin
allied;

Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak
strenw
With fancied roses, than the unblemished
moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue
coast;
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I
ween,
Not unforgiven the supplicant knee might
bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconcile in Thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

XXVI
APOLOGY
1821. 1822
Not utterly unworthy to endure
Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;
Age after age to the arch of Christendom
Aerial keystone haughtily secure;
Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure.
As many hold; and, therefore, to the tomb
Pass, some through fire — and by the scaffold
some —
Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.
"Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit
Upon his throne;" unsnacked, undis-
mayed
By aught that mingled with the tragic scene
Of pity or fear: and More's gay genius
played
With the inoffensive sword of native wit,
Then the bare axe more luminous and keen.

XXVII
IMAGINATIVE REGRETS
1821. 1822
Deep is the lamentation! Not alone
From Sages unjustly honoured by mankind;
But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan
Issues for that dominion overthrown:
Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges, blind
As his own worshippers: and Nile, reclined
Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan
Renews. Through every forest, cave, and
den,
Where frauds were hatched of old, hath
sorrow past —
Hangs o’er the Arabian Prophet’s native
Waste,
Where once his airy helpers schemed and
planned
’Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty men,
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

**XXVIII**

**REFLECTIONS**

1821. 1822

Grant, that by this unsparing hurricane
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn
away,
And goodly fruitage with the mother
spray;
’T were madness — wished we, therefore, to
detain,
With hands stretched forth in mollified dis-
dain,
The “trumpery” that ascends in bare dis-
play —
Bulls, pardons, relics, cowls black, white,
and grey —
Upwhirled, and flying o’er the ethereal plain
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet not
choice
But habit rules the unreflecting herd,
And airy bonds are hardest to disown;
Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty trans-
ferred
Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

**XXIX**

**TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE**

1821. 1822

But, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,
In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,
Assumes the accents of our native tongue;
And he who guides the plough, or wields
the crook,
With understanding spirit now may look
Upon her records, listen to her song,
And sift her laws — much wondering that
the wrong,
Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could
calmly brook.

Transcendent boon! noblest that earth
King
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness!
But passions spread like plagues, and the
sands wild
With bigotry shall tread the Offering
Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

XXX

**THE POINT AT ISSUE**

1821. 1827

For what contend the wise? — for nothing
less
Than that the Soul, freed from the bonds of
Sense,
And to her God restored by evidence
Of things not seen, drawn forth from the
recess,
Root there, and not in forms, her hol-
ness; —
For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did ex-
pense
Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence
Was needful round men thirsting to trans-
gress; —
For Faith, more perfect still, with which the
Lord
Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth
Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill
The temples of their hearts who, with his
word
Informed, were resolute to do his will,
And worship him in spirit and in truth.

XXXI

**EDWARD VI**

1821. 1822

“Sweet is the holiness of Youth” — so felt
Time-honoured Chaucer speaking though
that Lay
By which the Priess beguiled the way,
And many a Pilgrim’s rugged heart did
melt.
Hadst thou, loved Bard! whose spirit of
dwelt
In the clear land of vision, but forseen
King, child, and seraph, blended in the mix
Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt
In meek and simple infancy, what joy
For universal Christendom had thrilled
my heart! what hopes inspired thy genius,
skilled
(great Precursor, genuine morning Star)
the lucid shafts of reason to employ,
serging the Papal darkness from afar!

XXXII

WARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT
1821. 1822

The tears of man in various measure gush
On various sources; gently overflow
On blissful transport some — from clefts
Of woe
Me with ungovernable impulse rush;
And some, coœval with the earliest blush
Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show
Their pearly lustre — coming but to go;
And some break forth when others' sorrows
Crush
The sympathising heart. Nor these, nor yet
The noblest drops to admiration known,
Gratitude, to injuries forgiven — aim
Heaven's regard like waters that have
Wet
The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs
Driven
To pen the mandates nature doth disown.

XXXIII

REVIVAL OF POPERY
1821. 1827

He saintly Youth has ceased to rule, discarded
By unrelenting Death. O People keen
Or change, to whom the new looks always green!
Ejeoicing did they cast upon the ground
Their Gods of wood and stone; and, at the sound
Of counter-proclamation, now are seen
Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen!
Lifting them up, the worship to confound
The Most High. Again do they invoke
Be Creature, to the Creature glory give;
Gain with frankincense the altars smoke
Like those the Heathen served; and mass
Is sung;
And prayer, man's rational prerogative,
Lims through blind channels of an unknown tongue.

XXXIV

LATIMER AND RIDLEY
1821. 1827

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled!
See Latimer and Ridley in the might
Of Faith stand coupled for a common flight!
One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)
Transfigured, from this kindling hath foretold
A torch of inextinguishable light;
The Other gains a confidence as bold;
And thus they foil their enemy's despite.
The penal instruments, the shows of crime,
Are glorified while this once-mitred pair
Of saintly Friends the "murtherer's chain
Partake,
Corded, and burning at the social stake;"
Earth never witnessed object more sublime
In constancy, in fellowship more fair!

XXXV

CRANMER
1821. 1822

OUTSTRETCHING flameward his upbraided hand
(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat
Of judgment such presumptuous doom repeat!)
Amid the shuddering throng doth Cranmer stand;
Firm as the stake to which with iron band
His frame is tied; firm from the naked feet
To the bare head. The victory is complete;
The shrouded Body to the Soul's command
Answers with more than Indian fortitude,
Through all her nerves with finer sense endured,
Till breath departs in blissful aspiration:
Then, 'mid the ghastly ruins of the fire
Behold the unalterable heart entire,
Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous
Attestation!

XXXVI

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF THE REFORMATION
1821. 1822

Amid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light,
Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust
(While we look round) that Heaven's decades are just:
Which few can hold committed to a fight
That shows, ev'n on its better side, the might
Of proud Self-will, Rapsacity, and Lust,
Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,
Which showers of blood seem rather to incite
Than to alloy. Anathemas are hurled
From both sides; veteran thunders (the brute test
Of truth) are met by fulminations new —
Tartarean flags are caught at, and unfurled —
Friends strike at friends — the flying shall pursue —
And Victory sickens, ignorant where to rest!

XXXVII
ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE
1821. 1822

Scattering, like birds escaped the fowler's net,
Some seek with timely flight a foreign strand;
Most happy, re-assembled in a land
By dauntless Luther freed, could they forget
Their Country's woes. But scarcely have they met,
Partners in faith, and brothers in distress,
Free to pour forth their common thankfulness,
Ere hope declines: — their union is beset
With speculative notions rashly sown,
Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poisonous weeds;
Their forms are broken staves; their passions, steeds
That master them. How enviably blest
Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone
The peace of God within his single breast!

XXXVIII
ELIZABETH
1821. 1822

Hail, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious bar
Triumphant, snatched from many a treacherous wile!
All hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle
Hath blest, resuming from that dismal war
Stilled by thy voice! But quickly from afar
Defiance breathes with more malignant air:
And alien storms with home-bred ferment claim
Portentous fellowship. Her silver ear,
By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly on;
Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint
Emerging pure, and seemingly more bright:
Ah! wherefore yields it to a foul constraint
Black as the clouds its beams dispersed, while alone,
By men and angels blest, the glorious light!

XXXIX
EMINENT REFORMERS
1821. 1822

Methinks that I could trip o'er heaviest soil,
Light as a buoyant bark from wave to wave,
Were mine the trusty staff that Jewett gave
To youthful Hooker, in familiar style
The gift exalting, and with playful smile:
For thus equipped, and bearing on his head
The Donor's farewell blessing, can he dread
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of toil? —
More sweet than odours caught by him who sails
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,
The freight of holy feeling which we meet
In thoughtful moments, wasted by the gale
From fields where good men walk, or bowers wherein they rest.

XL
THE SAME
1821. 1822

Holy and heavenly Spirits as they are,
Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,
With what entire affection do they prize
Their Church reformed! labouring with earnest care
To baffling all that may her strength impair:
That Church, the unperturbed Gospel's seat:
In their affections a divine retreat;
Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest prayer! —
The truth exploring with an equal mind,
In doctrine and communion they have sought
XLIII
ILLUSTRATION
THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN
1821. 1822

The Virgin Mountain, wearing like a Queen
A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,
Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
Can link with desolation. Smooth and green,
And seeming, at a little distance, slow,
The waters of the Rhine; but on they go
Fretting and whitening, keener and more keen;
Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils breathe
Blasts of tempestuous smoke — wherewith he tries
To hide himself, but only magnifies;
And doth in more conspicuous torment writhe,
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

XLIV
TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST
1821. 1822

Even such the contrast that, where'er we move,
To the mind's eye Religion doth present;
Now with her own deep quietness content;
Then, like the mountain, thundering from above
Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove
And the Land's humblest comforts. Now her mood
Recalls the transformation of the flood,
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain reprove;
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess
Of headstrong will! Can this be Piety?
No — some fierce Maniac hath usurped her name;
And scourges England struggling to be free:
Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilderness!
Her blessings cursed — her glory turned to shame!
XLV
LAUD
1821. 1822

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to spare,
An old weak Man for vengeance thrown aside,
Laud, "in the painful art of dying" tried,
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare)
Whose heart still fluctuates, though his wings forbear
To stir in useless struggle) hath relied
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,
And in his prison breathes celestial air.
Why tarries then thy chariot? Wherefore stay,
O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,
Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey
(What time a State with maddening faction reels)
The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

XLVI
AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND
1821. 1822

HARP! could'st thou venture, on thy boldest string,
The faintest note to echo which the blast
Caught from the hand of Moses as it passed
O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd king,
Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing
Of dread Jehovah; then, should wood and waste
Hear also of that name, and mercy cast
Off to the mountains, like a covering
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, oh weep,
Weep with the good, beholding King and Priest
Despised by that stern God to whom they raise
Their supplicant hands; but holy is the feast
He keepeth; like the firmament his ways:
His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

PART III
FROM THE RESTORATION TO PRESENT TIMES
1821. 1822

When I came to this part of the serial [sic] in the dream described in this Sonnet. The scene was that of my daughter, and the whole was exactly as here represented. The Sonnet was composed on the middle road leading from Grasmere to Ambleside: it was begun as list the last house of the vale, and finished, ver- for word as it now stands, before I came a view of Rydal. I wish I could say the exact amount of the five or six hundred I have written: most of them were frequently retouched in the course of composition, and, not a few, laboriously.

I have only further to observe that the intended Church which prompted these lines was erected on Coleorton Moor towards the centre of a very populous parish between the town and four miles from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, on the road to Loughborough, and has proved, I believe, a great benefit to the neighbourhood.

I
I saw the figure of a lovely Maid
Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,
Whose fondly-overhanging canopy
Set off her brightness with a pleasing grace.
No Spirit was she; that my heart betrayed
For she was one I loved exceedingly;
But while I gazed in tender reverence
(Or was it sleep that with my feet played?)
The bright corporeal presence — form as face —
Remaining still distinct grew thin and rare.
Like sunny mist; — at length the golden
Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, perishing pace
Each with the other in a lingering race
Of dissolution, melted into air.

II
PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES
1821. 1822

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision spake
Fear to my Soul, and sadness which might seem
Wholly disservered from our present state:
Yet, my beloved Country! I partake
Of kindred agitations for thy sake;
Shines through his soul — “that he may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.”

V
WALTON’S BOOK OF LIVES
1821. 1822

There are no colours in the fairest sky
So fair as these. The feather, whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these good men,
Dropped from an Angel’s wing. With moistened eye
We read of faith and purest charity
In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen:
Oh could we copy their mild virtues, then
What joy to live, what blessedness to die!
Methinks their very names shine still and bright;
Apart — like glow-worms on a summer night;
Or lonely tapers when from far they fling
A guiding ray; or seen — like stars on high,
Satellites burning in a lucid ring
Around meek Walton’s heavenly memory.

VI
CLERICAL INTEGRITY
1821. 1822

Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject
Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous day
Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect.
And some to want — as if by tempests wrecked
On a wild coast — how destitute! did They
Feel not that Conscience never can betray,
That peace of mind is Virtue’s sure effect.
Their altars they forego, their homes they quit,
Fields which they love, and paths they daily trod,
And cast the future upon Providence;
As men the dictate of whose inward sense
Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving wit
Lures not from what they deem the cause of God.
VII

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS
1821. 1827

When Alpine Vales threw forth a supplicant cry,
The Majesty of England interposed
And the sword stopped; the bleeding wounds were closed;
And Faith preserved her ancient purity.
How little boots that precedent of good,
Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,
For England's shame, O Sister Realm!

Mountains, and moor, and crowded street, where lie
The headless martyrs of the Covenant,
Slain by Compatriot-protestants that draw
From councils senseless as intolerant
Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-law;
But who would force the Soul, tilts with a straw
Against a Champion cased in adamant.

VIII

ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS
1821. 1822

A voice, from long-expecting thousands sent,
Shatters the air, and troubles tower and spire;
For Justice hath absolved the innocent,
And Tyranny is balked of her desire:
Up, down, the busy Thames — rapid as fire
Coursing a train of gunpowder — it went,
And transport founds in every street a vent,
Till the whole City rings like one vast quire.
The Fathers urge the People to be still,
With outstretched hands and earnest speech
— in vain!

Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
Small reverence for the mitre's offices,
And to Religion's self no friendly will,
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

IX

WILLIAM THE THIRD
1821. 1822

Calm as an under-current, strong to draw
Millions of waves into itself, and run,
From sea to sea, impervious to the sun
And ploughing storm, the spirit of Naples
Swerves not, (how blest if by religious awe
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend
With the wide world's commotions) from its end
Swerves not — diverted by a casual law.
Hast mortal action e'er a nobler scope?
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy;
And, while he marches on with stedfast hope,
Conqueror beloved! expected anxiously!
The vacillating Bondman of the Pope
Shrinks from the verdict of his stedfast eye.

X

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
1821. 1822

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled:
How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his head,
And Russell's mild blood the scaffold wet;
But these had fallen for profitless regret
Had not thy holy Church her champions bred,
And claims from other worlds inspired
The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet
(Grave this within thy heart !) if spiritual things
Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support.
However hardly won or justly dear:
What came from heaven to heaven by nature clings,
And, if dismembered thence, its course is short.

XI

SACHEVEREL
1821. 1822

A sudden conflict rises from the swell
Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained
In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or feigned,
Spread through all ranks; and lo! the Sentinel
Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,
Stands at the Bar, absolved by female eyes
Mingling their glances with grave flatteries
Lavished on Him—that England may rebel
That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to brook
Ritual restraints, within some sheltering nook
Her Lord might worship and his word obey
In freedom. Men they were who could not bend;
Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for guide
A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified;
Blest while their Spirits from the woods ascend
Along a Galaxy that knows no end,
But in His glory who for Sinners died.

XIV
II. CONTINUED
1842. 1845

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they fled
To Wilds where both were utterly unknown;
But not to them had Providence foreshown
What benefits are missed, what evils bred,
In worship neither raised nor limited
Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant shore,
For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led
Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of yore,
Led by her own free choice. So Truth and Love
By Conscience governed do their steps retrace.—
Fathers! your Virtues, such the power of grace,
Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.
Transcendent over time, unbound by place,
Concord and Charity in circles move.

XV
III. CONCLUDED.—AMERICAN EPISCOPACY
1842. 1845

Patriots informed with Apostolic light
Were they, who, when their Country had been freed,
Bowing with reverence to the ancient creed,
Fixed on the frame of England’s Church their sight,
And strove in filial love to reunite
What force had severed. Thence they fetched the seed
Of Christian unity, and won a meed
Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O
saintly White,
Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,
Remotest lands and unborn times shall turn,
Whether they would restore or build — to
Thee,
As one who rightly taught how zeal should
burn,
As one who drew from out Faith’s holiest
urn
The purest stream of patient Energy.

XVI
1821. 1845

Bishops and Priests, blessed are ye, if deep
(As yours above all offices is high),
Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie;
Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and
keep
From wolves your portion of his chosen
sheep:
Labouring as ever in your Master’s sight,
Making your hardest task your best de-
light,
What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall
reap! —
But, in the solemn Office which ye sought
And undertook premonished, if unsound
Your practice prove, faithless though but in
thought,
Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf pro-
found
Awaits you then, if they were rightly taught
Who framed the Ordinance by your lives
disowned!

XVII
PLACES OF WORSHIP
1821. 1822

As star that shines dependent upon star
Is to the sky while we look up and love;
As to the deep fair ships which though they
move
Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from
afar;
As to the sandy desert fountains are,
With palm-groves shaded at wide inter-
vals,
Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native
falls,

Of roving tired or desultory war —
Such to this British Isle her chris-
tian
Fanes,
Each linked to each for kindred services;
Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glit-
tering vanes
Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among
trees,
Where a few villagers on bended knees
Find solace which a busy world disdains.

XVIII
PASTORAL CHARACTER
1821. 1822

A genial hearth, a hospitable board,
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion, where, his flock amon-
g, The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful
Lord.
Though meek and patient as a sheathed
sword;
Though pride’s least lurking thought ap-
p a wrong
To human kind; though peace be on his
tongue,
Gentleness in his heart — can earth afford
Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,
As when, arrayed in Christ’s authority,
He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;
Conjures, implores, and labours all he
can
For re-subjecting to divine command
The stubborn spirit of rebellious man?

XIX
THE LITURGY
1821. 1822

Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear
Attract us still, and passionate exercise
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
Distinct with signs, through which in set
career,
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual
year
Of England’s Church; stupendous mys-
teries!
Which who so travels in her bosom eyes,
As he approaches them, with solemn
cheer.
Upon that circle traced from sacred story
We only dare to cast a transient glance,
rusting in hope that Others may advance
with mind intent upon the King of Glory,
from his mild advent till his countenance shall dissipate the seas and mountains hoary.

XX
BAPTISM
1821. 1827

EAR be the Church, that, watching o'er the needs
of Infancy, provides a timely shower
whose virtue changes to a Christian Flower.
Growth from sinful Nature's bed of weeds! —
it liest beneath the sacred roof proceeds
the ministration; while parental Love
looks on, and Grace descendeth from above
as the high service pledges now, now
pleads.
There, should vain thoughts outspread their wings and fly
To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,
The tombs — which hear and answer that brief cry,
The Infant's notice of his second birth —
Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy
With what man hopes from Heaven, yet fears from Earth.

XXI
SPONSORS
1821. 1822

FATHER! — to God himself we cannot give
A holier name! then lightly do not bear
Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual care
Be duly mindful: still more sensitive
Do Thou, in truth a second Mother, strive
Against disheartening custom, that by Thee
Watched, and with love and pious industry Tended at need, the adopted Plant may thrive
For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure
This Ordinance, whether loss it would supply,
Prevent omission, help deficiency,
Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.
Shame if the consecrated Vow be found
An idle form, the Word an empty sound!

XXII
CATECHISING
1821. 1832

From Little down to Least, in due degree,
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,
Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!
With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears betrayed;
And some a bold unerring answer made:
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,
Beloved Mother! Thou whose happy hand
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie:
Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible command
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-appear:
O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

XXIII
CONFIRMATION
1821. 1827

The Young-ones gathered in from hill and dale,
With holiday delight on every brow;
'Tis passed away; far other thoughts prevail;
For they are taking the baptismal Vow
Upon their conscious selves; their own lips speak
The solemn promise. Strongest sinews fail,
And many a blooming, many a lovely cheek
Under the holy fear of God turns pale;
While on each head his lawn-robbed Servant lays
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will raise
Their feeble Souls; and bear with his regrets,
Who, looking round the fair assemblage, feels
That ere the Sun goes down their childhood sets.

XXIV
CONFIRMATION CONTINUED
1821. 1827

I saw a Mother's eye intensely bent
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;
In and for whom the pious Mother felt
Things that we judge of by a light too
taint:
Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse,
or Saint!
Tell what rushed in, from what she was re-
ceived,
Then, when her Child the hallowing touch
went
That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams
appear?
Opened a vision of that blissful place
Where dwells a Sister-child? And was
power given
Part of her lost One’s glory back to trace
Even to this Rite? For thus She knelt, and, ere
The summer-leaf had faded, passed to
Heaven.

XXV
SACRAMENT
1821. 1827
By chain yet stronger must the Soul be
tied;
One duty more, last stage of this ascent,
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacrament!
The Offspring, haply, at the Parent’s side;
But not till They, with all that do abide
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to
laud
And magnify the glorious name of God,
Fountain of grace, whose Son for sinners
died.
Ye, who have duly weighed the summons,
No longer; ye, whom to the saving rite
The Altar calls, come early under laws
That can secure for you a path of light
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor dread
its weight)
Armour divine, and conquer in your cause!

XXVI
THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY
1821. 1845
The Vested Priest before the Altar stands;
Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in
sight

Of God and chosen friends, your truth’s
plight
With the symbolic ring, and willing hand
Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the bond
O Father! — to the Espoused thy blessing
give,
That mutually assisted they may live
Obedient, as here taught, to thy command.
So prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow
“The which would endless matrimony
make;”
Union that shadows forth and doth partake
A mystery potent human love to endow
With heavenly, each more prized for the
other’s sake;
Weep not, meek Bride! uplift thy tipt
brow.

XXVII
THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH
1821. 1845
Woman! the Power who left his throne so
high,
And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we
wear,
The Power that thro’ the strait of Infancy
Did pass dependent on maternal care,
His own humanity with Thee will share.
Pleased with the thanks that in his People’s
eye
Thou offerest up for safe Delivery
From Childbirth’s perilous throes. And
should the Heir
Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined
To courses fit to make a mother rue
That ever he was born, a glance of mind
Cast upon this observance may renew
A better will; and, in the imagined view
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find.

XXVIII
VISITATION OF THE SICK
1821. 1845
The Sabbath bells renew the inviting psal;
Glad music! yet there be that, worn with
pain
And sickness, listen where they long to
lain,
In sadness listen. With maternal zeal
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to
kneel
Beside the afflicted; to sustain with prayer.
ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS

I soothe the heart confession hath laid bare—
at pardon, from God’s throne, may set its seal
a true Penitent. When breath departs
on one disburthened so, so comforted,
Spirit Angels greet; and ours be hope
at, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-bed, nce he will gain a firmer mind, to cope
th a bad world, and foil the Tempter’s arts.

XXIX
THE COMMINATION SERVICE
1821. 1845

UN not this Rite, neglected, yea abhorred,
some of unreflecting mind, as calling
an to curse man, (thought monstrous and appalling.)
Thou and hear the threatenings of the Lord;
Stenched within his Temple see his sword
Sheathed in wrath to strike the offender’s head,
Y own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,
Alt unrepentant, pardon unimplor’d.
No aspects bears Truth needful for salvation;
Ho knows not that? — yet would this delicate age
Seek only on the Gospel’s brighter page:
St light and dark duly our thoughts employ;
Shall the fearful words of Commination yield timely fruit of peace and love and joy.

XXX
FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA
1821. 1845

O kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor
Sives holier invitation than the deck
If a storm-shattered Vessel saved from Wreck
When all that Man could do availed no more)
By him who raised the Tempest and restrains:
Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour forth for his mercy, as the Church ordains, solemn thanksgiving. Nor will they implore
In vain who, for a rightful cause, give breath
To words the Church prescribes, aiding the lip
For the heart’s sake, ere ship with hostile ship
Encounters, armed for work of pain and death.
Supplicants! the God to whom your cause ye trust
Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

XXXI
FUNERAL SERVICE
1821. 1845

From the Baptismal hour, thro’ weal and woe,
The Church extends her care to thought and deed;
Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,
The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.
Blest Rite for him who hears in faith, “I know
That my Redeemer liveth,” — hears each word
That follows — striking on some kindred chord
Deep in the thankful heart; — yet tears will flow.
Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,
Grows green, and is cut down and withereth
Ere nightfall — truth that well may claim a sigh,
Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn At Jesu’s bidding. We rejoice, “O Death, Where is thy Sting? — O Grave, where is thy Victory?”

XXXII
RURAL CEREMONY
1821. 1822

Closing the sacred Book which long has fed
Our meditations, give we to a day
Of annual joy one tributary lay;
This day, when, forth by rustic music led,
The village Children, while the sky is red
With evening lights, advance in long array
Through the still churchyard, each with garland gay,
That, carried sceptre-like, o’er tops the head
Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-door,
Charged with these offerings which their fathers bore
For decoration in the Papal time,
The innocent procession softly moves: —
The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's pure clime,
And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves!

XXXIII
REGRETS
1821. 1822

Would that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave
Less scatty measure of those graceful rites
And usages, whose due return invites
A stir of mind too natural to deceive;
Giving to Memory help when she would weave
A crown for Hope! — I dread the boasted lights
That all too often are but fiery blights,
Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.
Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort bring;
The counter Spirit found in some gay church
Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch
In which the linnet or the thrush might sing,
Merry and loud and safe from prying search,
Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XXXIV
MUTABILITY
1821. 1822

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime

Of yesterday, which royally did wear
His crown of weeds, but could not sustain
Some casual shout that broke the air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

XXXV
OLD ABBEYS
1821. 1822
Monastic Domes! following my dear way,
Untouched by due regret I marked the fall!
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all Dispose to judgments temperate and lay
On our past selves in life's declining day:
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,
We learn to tolerate the infirmities And faults of others — gently as he may.
So with our own the mild Instructor deal
Teaching us to forget them or forgive. Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill
Why should we break Time's charmed seals?
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still; Your spirit freely let me drink, and live!

XXXVI
EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY
1821. 1827
Even while I speak, the sacred rocks of France
Are shattered into dust; and self-exiled From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled Wander the Ministers of God, as chance Opens a way for life, or consonance Of faith invites. More welcome to no less The fugitives than to the British strand, Where priest and layman with the vigilant Of true compassion greet them. Creed is test
Vanish before the unreserved embrace Of catholic humanity: — distress
They came, — and, while the moral tempest roars Throughout the Country they have left, or shores Give to their Faith a fearless resting place.
XXXVII
CONGRATULATION
1821. 1822

All things lead to Charity secured
Them who blessed the soft and happy gale
At landward urged the great Deliverer's sail,
In the sunny bay his fleet was moored! — had we, like them, endured
A stress of apprehension, with a mind
Senned by injuries, dreading worse designed,
Month to month trembling and unassured,
Had we then rejoiced! But we have felt,
A loved substance, their futurity:
D, which they dared not hope for, we have seen;
State whose generous will through earth is dealt;
State — which, balancing herself between
Sense and slavish order, dares be free.

XXXVIII
NEW CHURCHES
1821. 1822

T liberty, and triumphs on the Main,
In laureled armies, not to be withstood —
Hast serve they? if, on transitory good
tent, and sedulous of abject gain,
State (ah, surely not preserved in vain!)
Bears to shape due channels which the Flood
Sacred truth may enter — till it brood
Er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian plain
All-sustaining Nile. No more — the time
Conscious of her want; through England's bounds,
Arrival haste, the wished-for Temples rise!
Hear their sabbath bells' harmonious chime
Bat on the breeze — the heavenliest of all
Sounds bat vale or hill prolongs or multiplies!

XXXIX
CHURCH TO BE ERECTED
1821. 1822

Be this the chosen site; the virgin sod,
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,
Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive
The corner-stone from hands that build to God.
You reverend hawthorns, hardened to the rod
Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully;
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid this band
Of daisies, shepherds sate of yore and wove
May-garlands, there let the holy altar stand
For kneeling adoration; — while — above,
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic Dove,
That shall protect from blasphemy the Land.

XL
CONTINUED
1821. 1822

Mine ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued,
Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,
When each pale brow to dread hosannas bowed
While clouds of incense mounting veiled the rood,
That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly viewed
Through Alpine vapours. Such appalling rite
Our Church prepares not, trusting to the might
Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;
Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like men ashamed: the Sun with his first smile
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low Pile:
And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn
Shall wooingly embrace it; and green moss
Creep round its arms through centuries unborn.

XLI
NEW CHURCHYARD
1821. 1822

The encircling ground, in native turf arrayed,
Is now by solemn consecration given
To social interests, and to favouring
Heaven;
And where the rugged colts their gambols
played,
And wild deer bounded through the forest
glade,
Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,
Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and
even;
And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton’s spade
Shall wound the tender sod. Encinture
small,
But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and
flow;—
The spousal trembling, and the “dust to
dust,”
The prayers, the contrite struggle, and the
trust
That to the Almighty Father looks through
all.

XLII
CATHEDRALS, ETC.
1821. 1822

Of white robed Scholars only — this immense
And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
Give all thou canst; high Heaven requi-
the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more;
So deemed the man who fashioned for
sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branchy
roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand
cells,
Where light and shade repose, where
dwell.
Lingering — and wandering on as loth to
die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yields
eth proof
That they were born for immortality.

XLIV
THE SAME
1821. 1822

WHAT awful perspective! while from all
sight
With gradual stealth the lateral window
hide
Their Portraiture, their stone-work glea-
ers, dyed
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremit.
Who e’er ye be, that thus, yourselves
may
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn Shen.
Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night:
But, from the arms of silence — list! O
The music bursteth into second life;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in many strin-
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the
eye
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

XLV
CONTINUED
1821. 1822

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hour
of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here.
Or through the aisles of Westminster’s
room.

XLIII
INSIDE OF KING’S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
CAMBRIDGE
1821. 1822

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who
planned —
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
MEMORY
1823. 1827

A PEN — to register; a key —
That winds through secret wards,
Are well assigned to Memory
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
A Pencil to her hand;
That, softening objects, sometimes even
Outstrip the heart's demand;

That smooths foregone distress, the
lines
Of lingering care subdued,
Long-vanished happiness refining,
And clothes in brighter hue;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.
TO THE LADY FLEMING

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING
FOR THE ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL,
WESTMORELAND

1823. 1827

After thanking Lady Fleming in prose for the service she had done to her neighbourhood
by erecting this Chapel, I have nothing to say
beyond the expression of regret that the architect
did not furnish an elevation better suited
to the site in a narrow mountain-pass, and,
what is of more consequence, better constructed
in the interior for the purposes of worship. It
has no chancel; the altar is unbecomingly con-
 fined; the pews are so narrow as to preclude
the possibility of kneeling with comfort; there
is no vestry; and what ought to have been first
mentioned, the font, instead of standing at its
proper place at the entrance, is thrust into the
farther end of a pew. When these defects shall
be pointed out to the munificent Patroness, they
will, it is hoped, be corrected.

I

BLEST is this Isle — our native Land;
Where battlement and moated gate
Are objects only for the hand
Of hoary Time to decorate;
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,
No rampart's stern defence require,
Nought but the heaven-directed spire,
And steeple tower (with pealing bells
Far-heard) — our only citadels.

II

O Lady! from a noble line
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore
The spear, yet gave to works divine
A bounteous help in days of yore
(As records mouldering in the Dell
Of Nightshade haply yet may tell);
Thee kindred aspirations moved
To build, within a vale beloved,
For Him upon whose high behests
All peace depends, all safety rests.

III

How fondly will the woods embrace
This daughter of thy pious care,
Lifting her front with modest grace
To make a fair recess more fair;
And to exalt the passing hour;
Or soothe it with a healing power

Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,
Before this rugged soil was tilled,
Or human habitation rose
To interrupt the deep repose!

IV

Well may the villagers rejoice!
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,
Will be a hindrance to the voice
That would unite in prayer and praise;
More duly shall wild wandering Youth
Receive the curb of sacred truth,
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, be
The Promise, with uplifted ear;
And all shall welcome the new ray
Imparted to their sabbath-day.

V

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,
His fancy cheated — that can see
A shade upon the future cast,
Of time's pathetic sanctity;
Can hear the monitory clock
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock
At evening, when the ground beneath
Is ruffled o'er with cells of death;
Where happy generations lie,
Here tutored for eternity.

VI

Lives there a man whose sole delights
Are trivial pomp and city noise,
Hardening a heart that loathes or slight
What every natural heart enjoys?
Who never caught a noon-tide dream
From murmurs of a running stream;
Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
To him, their verdure from the fields;
And take the radiance from the clouds
In which the sun his setting shrouds.

VII

A soul so pitially forlorn,
If such do on this earth abide,
May season apathy with scorn,
May turn indifference to pride;
And still be not unblest — compared
With him who grovels, self-debarred
From all that lies within the scope
Of holy faith and christian hope;
Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast
False fires, that others may be lost.
ON THE SAME OCCASION

1823. 1827

Oh! gather when ye safely may
The help which slackening Pity requires;
Nor deem that he whose force must go astray
Who traces upon the footmarks of his sire.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but why is by few persons exactly known; nor, that the degree of deviation from one east often noticeable in the ancient ones as determined, in each particular case, by the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

When in the antique age of bow and spear
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,

ON THE SAME OCCASION

1823. 1827

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The help which slackening Pity requires;
Nor deem that he whose force must go astray
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When in the antique age of bow and spear
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,

Came ministers of peace, intent to rear
The Mother Church in yon sequestered vale;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite
Resounded with deep swell and solemn close,
Through unremitting vigils of the night,
Till from his couch the wished-for Sun uprose.

He rose, and straight—as by divine command,
They, who had waited for that sign to trace
Their work’s foundation, gave with careful hand
To the high altar its determined place;

Mindful of Him who in the Orient born
There lived, and on the cross his life resigned,
And who, from out the regions of the morn,
Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge mankind.

So taught their creed;—nor failed the eastern sky,
'Mid these more awful feelings, to infuse
The sweet and natural hopes that shall not die,
Long as the sun his gladsome course renew.

For us hath such prelusive vigil ceased;
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days,
Our Christian altar faithful to the east,
Whence the tall window drinks the morning rays;

That obvious emblem giving to the eye
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,
That symbol of the dayspring from on high,
Triumphant o’er the darkness of the grave.

“A VOLANT TRIBE OF BARDS ON EARTH ARE FOUND”

1823. 1827

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are found,
Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round them play,
On “coignes of vantage” hang their nests of clay;
How quickly from that aery hold unbound,
Dust for oblivion! To the solid ground
TO THE LADY FLEMING.

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION
FOR THE ERECTION OF KYLIE
WESTMORELAND

1823. 1827

After thanking Lady Fleming, for the service she had done to her by erecting this Chapel, I have found, that beyond the expression of respect did not furnish an idea of the site in a narrow room, what is of more consequence, the interior for the purpose, has no chance; the altar is confined; the pews are so close, the possibility of kneeling is no vestibule; and what can be mentioned, the font, instead of a proper place at the farther end of a pew. We are be pointed out to the mind, as in will, it is hoped, be capable.

BLEST is this Isle——
Where battling men
Are objects only for
Of hoary Time to see;
Where shady hamlet
Its busy smoke in
No rampart's stern
Nought but the sea,
And steeple tow'rs,
Far-heard) — our

O Lady! from
Of chieftains gone
The spear, yet
A bounteous land
(As records say)
Of Nightshade
Thee kindred
To build, with
For Him upon
'All peace and

How fondly
This daughter
Lifting her
To make
And to ever
Or soothe

TO——

1824. 1827

Rydal Mount. To Mrs. W.

far than light and life are dear,
human foresight I deplore;
through my unworthiness, will
by death disjoined, may not more!

3, hard to vanquish or control,
the day, and cross the hour of res
ill the future, for thou purer soul,
sober certainties” of love is blest.

of thine, not meant for human ear,
that these words thy humbleness of
hear me up — else faltering in the
steep march: support me to the end.
peace settles where the intellect is meek,
and Love is dutiful in thought and deed:
through Thee communion with that Love
I seek:
The faith Heaven strengthens where moulds the Creed.

“HOW RICH THAT FOREHEAD'S
CALM EXPANSE”

1824. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. Mrs. Wordsworth's impression is that the Poem was written at Coleorton: it was certainly suggested by a Print at Coleorton Hall.

How rich that forehead's calm expanse!
How bright that heaven-directed glance!
— Waft her to glory, winged Powers,
Ere sorrow be renewed,
And intercourse with mortal hours
Bring back a humbler mood!
So looked Cecilia when she drew
An Angel from his station;
So looked; not ceasing to pursue
Her tuneful adoration!

But hand and voice alike are still;
No sound here sweeps away the will
That gave it birth: in service meek
One upright arm sustains the cheek;
And one across the bosom lies —
That rose, and now forgets to rise,
Subdued by breathless harmonies
TO—
1824. 1827
Written at Rydal Mount. Prompted by the
due importance attached to personal beauty
some dear friends of mine.
Ok at the fate of summer flowers,
which blow at daybreak, droop e'er even-
song;
grieved for their brief date, confess
that ours,
ensured by what we are and ought to be,
ensured by all that, trembling, we foresee,
Is not so long!

human Life do pass away,
rushing yet more swiftly than the flower,
we are creatures of a winter's day;
that space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose
sweets, and triumph e'er the breathing
rose?
Not even an hour!

he deepest grove whose foliage hid
he happiest lovers Arcady might boast,
could not the entrance of this thought for-
bid:
be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid!
or rate too high what must so quickly fade,
So soon be lost.

hen shall love teach some virtuous Youth
To draw, out of the object of his eyes," the
while on thee they gaze in simple truth,
ues more exalted, "a refined Form;"
that dreads not age, nor suffers from the
worm,
And never dies.

A FLOWER GARDEN
IT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE
1824. 1827

Planned by my friend, Lady Beaumont, in
connection with the garden at Coleorton.

Tell me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold,
While fluttering o'er this gay Reoess,

Finions that fanned the teeming mould
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,
Did only softly-stealing hours
There close the peaceful lives of flowers?

Say, when the moving creatures saw
All kinds commingled without fear,
Prevailed a like indulgent law
For the still growths that prosper here? 10
Did wanton fawn and kid forbear
The half-blown rose, the lily spare?

Or peeped they often from their beds
And prematurely disappeared,
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads
A bosom to the sun endeared?
If such their harsh untimely doom,
It falls not here on bud or bloom.

All summer long the happy Eve
Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind,
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,
From the next glance she casts, to find
That love for little things by Fate
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound,
So subtly are our eyes beguiled
We see not nor suspect a bound,
No more than in some forest wild;
The sight is free as air— or crost
Only by art in nature lost.

And, though the jealous turf refuse
By random footsteps to be prest,
And feed on never-sullied dews,
Yet, gentle breezes from the west,
With all the ministers of hope
Are tempted to this sunny slope!

And hither throngs of birds resort;
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,
Some, perched on stems of stately port
That nod to welcome transient guests;
While hare and leveret, seen at play,
Appear not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)
This delicate Enclosure shows
Of modest kindness, that would hide
The firm protection she bestows;
Of manners, like its viewless fence,
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse—her wing
Abruptly spreading to depart,
She left that farewell offering,  
Memento for some docile heart;  
That may respect the good old age  
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page;  
And Truth would skim the flowery glade,  
Though entering but as Fancy's Shade.

TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.  
1824. 1827

Composed in the Grounds of Plas Newidd,  
near Llangollen, 1824.

In this Vale of Meditation my friend Jones resided, having been allowed by his dioceasan to fix himself there without resigning his Living in Oxfordshire. He was with my wife and daughter and me when we visited these celebrated ladies who had retired, as one may say, into notice in this vale. Their cottage lay directly in the road between London and Dublin, and they were of course visited by their Irish friends as well as innumerable strangers. They took much delight in passing jokes on our friend Jones's plumpness, ruddy cheeks, and smiling countenance, as little suited to a hermit living in the Vale of Meditation. We all thought there was ample room for retort on his part, so curiously was the appearance of these ladies, so elaborately sentimental about themselves and their Caro Albergo, as they named it in an inscription on a tree that stood opposite, the endearing epithet being preceded by the word Ecco! calling upon the saunterer to look about him. So oddly was one of these ladies attired that we took her, at a little distance, for a Roman Catholic priest, with a crucifix and relics hung at his neck. They were without caps, their hair bushy and white as snow, which contributed to the mistake.

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite Dee,  
Along the VALE OF MEDITATION flows;  
So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased to see  
In Nature's face the expression of repose;  
Or haply there some pious hermit chose  
To live and die, the peace of heaven his aim;  
To whom the wild sequestered region owes  
At this late day, its sanctifying name.

GLYN CAFAILLGA ROCH, in the Cambrian tongue,  
In ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let this spot  
Be named; where, faithful to a low-roofed Cot,

On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long!  
Sisters in love, a love allowed to clime:  
Even on this earth, above the reach of Time!

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE, NORTH WALES, 1824  
1824. 1827

How art thou named? In search of a strange land,  
From what huge height descending? With such force  
Of waters issue from a British source,  
Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where's thy band  
Of Patriots scoop their freedom out of band  
Desperate as thine? Or come the insatiable shocks  
From that young Stream, that smites the throbbing rocks  
Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,  
As in life's morn; permitted to behold,  
From the dread chasm, woods climb above woods,  
In pomp that fades not; everlasting  
And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose  
Such power possess the family of floods  
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUNS OF A CASTLE IN NORTH WALES  
1824. 1827

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid rock halls,  
Wandering with timid footsteps oft betrayed,  
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid  
Old Time, though he, gentlest among Thralls  
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid  
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls  
From the wan Moon, upon the towers as walls,  
Light deepening the profoundest sleep in shade.  
Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten war  
To winds abandoned and the prying star.  
Time loves Thee! at his call the Seasons twine
Variant wreaths around thy forehead
hoar;
though past pomp no changes can restore,
othing recompence, his gift, is thine!

ELEGIAE STANZAS
DRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE
DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW
1824. 1827

In Mrs. Fermanor. This lady had been a
ow long before I knew her. Her husband
of the family of the lady celebrated in the
kape of the Lock," and was, I believe, a
man Catholic. The sorrow which his death
seed her was fearful in its character as de-
bed in this poem, but was subdued in
orse of time by the strength of her religious
th. I have been, for many weeks at a time,
inmate with her at Coleorton Hall, as were
o Mrs. Wordsworth and my Sister. The
th in the sketch of her character here given
acknowledged with gratitude by her near-
atives. She was eloquent in conversa-
, energetic upon public matters, open in
pect to those, but slow to communicate her
onal feelings; upon those she never touched
her intercourse with me, so that I could not
ger myself as her confidential friend, and
\

But nature to its inmost part
Faith had refined; and to her heart
A peaceful cradle given;
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend
So graciously? — that could descend,
Another's need to suit,
So promptly from her lofty throne? —
In works of love, in these alone,
How restless, how minute!

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
When aught had suffered wrong, —
When aught that breathes had felt a wound;
Such look the Oppressor might confound,
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs
From out the bitterness of things;
Her quiet is secure;
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,
As climbing jasmine, pure —

As snowdrop on an infant’s grave,
Or lily heaving with the wave
That feeds it and defends;
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed
The mountain top, or breathed the mist
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death!
Thou striketh — absence perisheth,
Indifference is no more;
The future brightens on our sight;
For on the past hath fallen a light
That tempts us to adore.

CENOTAPH
1824. 1842

See "Elegiac Stanzae. Addressed to Sir G.
H. B. upon the death of his Sister-in-Law."

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fer-
more, whose remains are deposited in the church
of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected
by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George
Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the
love of a brother for the deceased, commends
this memorial to the care of his heirs and suc-
cessors in the possession of this place.
By vain affections unenthralled,
Though resolute when duty called
To meet the world’s broad eye,
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun
That ever feared the tempting sun,
Did Fermor live and die.
This Tablet, hallowed by her name,
One heart-relieving tear may claim;
But if the pensive gloom
Of fond regret be still thy choice,
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice
Of Jesus from her tomb!

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE"

THE CONTRAST

THE PARROT AND THE WREN
1825. 1827

The Parrot belonged to Mrs. Luff while residing at Fox-Ghyll. The Wren was one that was haunted for many years the summer-homes between the two terraces at Rydal Mount.

1

Within her gilded cage confined,
I saw a dazzling Belle,
A Parrot of that famous kind
Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes;
And, smoothed by Nature’s skill,
With pearl or gleaming agate vies
Her finely-curved bill.

Her plumpy mantle’s living hues
In mass opposed to mass,
Outshine the splendour that imbues
The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate
Did never tempt the choice
Of feathered things, most delicate
In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,
And singleness her lot,
She trills her song with tutored powers,
Or mocks each casual note.

No more of pity for regrets
With which she may have striven!
Now but in wantonness she frets,
Or spite, if cause be given;
Ode

Rock, volatile, a sportive bird
Social glee inspired;
Ambitious to be seen or heard,
And pleased to be admired!

II
His moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry,
Arbours a self-contented Wren,
Oft shunning man's abode, though shy,
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendeared,
He never tried; the very nest
In which this Child of Spring was reared,
Warm'd, thro' winter, by her feathery breast.

O the bleak winds she sometimes gives
Slender unexpected strain;
Roof that the hermitess still lives,
Though she appear not, and be sought in vain.

Ay, Dora! tell me, by yon placid moon,
Called to choose between the favoured pair,
Which would you be,—the bird of the saloon
By lady-fingers tended with nice care,
Caress'd, applauded, upon dainties fed,
Or Nature's DARKLING of this mossy shed?

TO A SKY-LARK
1825. 1827
Written at Rydal Mount.

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still?

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

"ERE WITH COLD BEADS OF
MIDNIGHT DEW"
1826. 1827

Written at Rydal Mount. Suggested by the condition of a friend.

Ere with cold beads of midnight dew
Had mingled tears of thine,
I grieved, fond Youth! that thou shouldst sue
To haughty Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,
She glories in a train
Who drag, beneath our native skies,
An oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,
Forgetting in thy care
How the fast-rooted trees can toss
Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take
Its own wild liberties;
And, every day, the imprisoned lake
Is flowing in the breeze.

Then, crouch no more on suppliant knee,
But scorn with scorn outbrave;
A Briton, even in love, should be
A subject, not a slave!

ODE
COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING
1826. 1835

This and the following poem originated in the lines "How delicate the leafy veil," etc. — My daughter and I left Rydal Mount upon a tour through our mountains with Mr. and Mrs. Carr in the month of May 1826, and as we were going up the vale of Newlands I was struck with the appearance of the little chapel gleaming through the veil of half-opened leaves; and the feeling which was then conveyed to my mind was expressed in the stanza referred to above. As in the case of "Liberty" and "Humanity," my first intention was to write only one poem, but subsequently I broke it into two, making additions to each part so as to produce a consistent and appropriate whole.

While from the purpling east departs
The star that led the dawn,
Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,
For May is on the lawn.
A quickening hope, a freshening glee,
Foreran the expected Power,
Whose first-drawn breath, from bush and tree,
Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway
Tempers the year's extremes;
Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,
Like morning's dewy gleams;
While mellow warble, sprightly trill,
The tremulous heart excite;
And hums the balmy air to still
The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power! when youths and maidens
At peep of dawn would rise,
And wander forth, in forest glades
Thy birth to solemnize.

Though mute the song—to grace the rite
Untouched the hawthorn bough,
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;
Man changes, but not Thou!

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings
In love's disport employ;
Warmed by thy influence, creeping things
Awake to silent joy:
Queen art thou still for each gay plant
Where the slim wild deer roves;
And served in depths where fishes haunt
Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,
Instinctive homage pay;
Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath
To honour thee, sweet May!
Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs
Behold a smokeless sky,
Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this thy natal morn,
The pole, from which thy name
Hath not departed, stands forlorn
Of song and dance and game;
Still from the village-green a vow
Aspires to thee adrest,
Wherever peace is on the brow,
Or love within the breast.

Yes! where Love nestles thou canst tax
The soul to love the more;
Hearts also shall thy lessons reach
That never loved before.
Striped is the haughty one of pride,
The bashful freed from fear,
While rising, like the ocean-tide,
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre! weak words refuse
The service to prolong!
To you exulting thrush the Muse
Entrusts the imperfect song;
His voice shall chant, in accents clear,
Throughout the live-long day,
Till the first silver star appear,
The sovereignty of May.

TO MAY
1826—34. 1835

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn;
There are who to a birthday strain
Confine not harp and voice,
But evermore throughout thy reign
Are grateful and rejoice!

Delicious odours! music sweet,
Too sweet to pass away!
Oh for a deathless song to meet
The soul's desire—a lay
That, when a thousand years are told,
Should praise thee, genial Power!
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—not less,
If you ethereal blue
With its soft smile the truth express,
The heavens have felt it too.
The inmost heart of man if glad
Partakes a livelier cheer;
And eyes that cannot but be sad
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
Of hope that grew by stealth,
How many wan and faded cheeks
Have kindled into health!
The Old, by thee revived, have said,
"Another year is ours;"
"ONCE I COULD HAIL (HOWE'ER SERENE THE SKY)"

"Once I could hail (howe'er serene the sky)

A wayworn Wanderer, poorly fed,
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Ho! tripping lisps a merry song
Amid his playful peers?
O tender Infant who was long
A prisoner of fond fears;
It now, when every sharp-edged blast
Is quiet in its sheath,
A Mother leaves him free to taste
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

My help is with the weed that creeps
Along the humblest ground;
A cliff so bare but on its steeps
Thy favours may be found;
It most on some peculiar nook
That our own hands have drest,
You and thy train are proud to look,
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
When May is whispering, "Come!
Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
The happiest for your home;
Eaven's bounteous love through me is
Spread
From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
Rope on the mouldering turret's head,
And on your turf-clad graves!"

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
For lilies that must fade,
Or "the rathe primrose as it dies"
Forsaken in the shade!
Eternal fruition and desires
Are linked in endless chase;
While, as one kindly growth retires,
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
Mishap by worm and blight;
Expectations newly blown
Have perished in thy sight;
Loves and joys, while up they sprung,
Were caught as in a snare;
Such is the lot of all the young,
However bright and fair.

Lo! Streams that April could not check
Are patient of thy rule;
Jurgling in foamy water-break,
Loitering in glassy pool:
By thee, thee only, could be sent
Such gentle mists as glide,
Curling with unconfirmed intent,
On that green mountain's side.

How delicate the leafy veil
Through which you house of God
Gleams, mid the peace of this deep dale
By few but shepherds trod!
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,
No sooner stand attired
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise
Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,
Permit not for one hour,
A blossom from thy crown to drop,
Nor add to it a flower!
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch
Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much,
Part seen, imagined part!

"ONCE I COULD HAIL (HOWE'ER SERENE THE SKY)"

1826. 1827

"No faculty yet given me to espy
The dusky Shape within her arms inbound."

Afterwards, when I could not avoid seeing it,
I wondered at this, and the more so because,
Like most children, I had been in the habit of
Watching the moon through all her changes,
And had often continued to gaze at it when at
The full, till half blinded.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon
Wil' the suld moones in his arms."

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
Percy's Reliques.

ONCE I could hail (howe'er serene the sky)
The Moon re-entering her monthly round,
No faculty yet given me to espy
The dusky Shape within her arms inbound,
That thin memento of effulgence lost
Which some have named her Predecessor's
ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me shone,
Nought I perceived within it dull or dim;
All that appeared was suitable to One
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to
skim;
To expectations spreading with wild growth,
And hope that kept with me her plighted
truth.
I saw (ambition quickening at the view)  
A silver boat launched on a boundless flood;  
A pearly crest, like Dian’s when it threw  
Its brightest splendour round a leafy wood;  
But not a hint from under-ground, no sign  
Fit for the glimmering brow of Proserpine.

Or was it Dian’s self that seemed to move  
Before me? — nothing blemished the fair  
sight;  
On her I looked whom jocund Fairies love,  
Cynthia, who puts the little stars to flight,  
And by that thinning magnifies the great,  
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral  
Shape  
As each new Moon obeyed the call of Time,  
If gloom fell on me, swift was my course;  
Such happy privilege hath life’s gay Prime,  
To see or not to see, as best may please  
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease.  

Now, dazzling Stranger! when thou meet’st  
my glance,  
Thy dark Associate ever I discern;  
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance  
While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or  
 stern;  
Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to  
gain  
Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years;  
A mournful change, should Reason fail to  
bring  
The timely insight that can temper fears,  
And from vicissitude remove its sting;  
While Faith aspires to seats in that domain  
Where joys are perfect — neither wax nor  
wane.

**"THE MASSY WAYS, CARRIED ACROSS THESE HEIGHTS"**

1826. 1835

The walk is what we call the Far-terrace,  
beyond the summer-house at Rydal Monnt.  
The lines were written when we were afraid of  
being obliged to quit the place to which we  
were so much attached.

**THE MASSY WAYS, carried across these heights**  
By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,  

Or hidden under ground, like sleep  
worms.  
How venture then to hope that Time vi  
spare  
This humble Walk? Yet on the moun  
tain’s side  
A Poet’s hand first shaped it; and  
3 steps  
Of that same Bard — repeated to and  
At morn, at noon, and under moonly  
skies  
Through the vicissitudes of many a year  
Forbidden the weeds to creep o’er its  
line.  
No longer, scattering to the heedless  
world  
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,  
Shall he frequent these precincts; look  
no more  
In earnest converse with beloved Friends  
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss  
As from the beds and borders of a garde  
Choice flowers are gathered! But,  
Power may spring  
Out of a farewell yearning — favoured  
Than kindred wishes mated suitably  
With vain regrets — the Exile would  
sign  
This Walk, his loved possession, to the  
Of those pure Minds that reverence  
Muse.

**THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN**

1826. 1827

These verses perhaps had better be re  erred to the class of "Italian Poems." I was  
observed in the Newspaper, that the Pillar  
of Trajan was given as a subject for a prize-poem  
in English verse. I had a wish perhaps for my son, who was then an undergraduate  
Oxford, should try his fortune, and I told him  
so; but he, not having been accustomed to  
write verse, wisely declined to enter on the  
task; whereon I showed him these lines as  
proof of what might, without difficulty, be  
done on such a subject.  

Where towers are crushed, and once  
bidden weeds  
O’er mutilated arches shed their  
seeds;  
And temples, doomed to milder change  
unfold  
A new magnificence that vie with old;  
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood  
A votive Column, spared by fire and  
flood: —
though the passions of man’s fretful race
never ceased to eddy round its base,
injured more by touch of meddling hands

a lone obelisk, ’mid Nubian sands, 
ught in Syrian deserts left to save
death the memory of the good and brave.
ric figures round the shaft embost
and, with lineaments in air not lost;
as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
winding after group with dream-like ease;
ymphs in sunbright gratitude displayed,
softly stealing into modest shade.
, pleased with purple clusters to en-
twine
lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine;
woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
spreading odours from her flowery wreaths.
borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds’ears
muring but one smooth story for all years,
gladly commune with the mind and heart
him who thus survives by classic art,
actions witness, venerate his mien,
study Trajan as by Pliny seen;
hold how fought the Chief whose conquering sword
retched far as earth might own a single lord;
the delight of moral prudence schooled,
ow feelingly at home the Sovereign ruled;
est of the good — in pagan faith allied
more than Man, by virtue deified.
Memorial Pillar! ’mid the wrecks of Time
reserve thy charge with confidence sublime —
the exultations, poms, and cares of Rome,
whence half the breathing world received its doom;
thingsthat recoil from language; that, if shown
by apter pencil, from the light had flown.
Pontiff, Trajan here the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores;
Lo! he harangues his cohorts — there the storm
Of battle meets him in authentic form!
Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish horse
Sweep to the charge; more high, the Dacian force,
To hoof and finger mailed; — yet, high or low,
None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe.
In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
Is Roman dignity inviolate;
Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,
Supports, adorns, and over all presides;
Distinguished only by inherent state
From honoured Instruments that round him wait;
Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest
On aught by which another is deprest.
— Alas! that One thus disciplined could toil
To enslave whole nations on their native soil;
So emulous of Macedonian fame,
That, when his age was measured with his aim,
He drooped, ’mid else unclouded victories,
And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs:
O weakness of the Great! O folly of the Wise!
Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
With such fond hope? her very speech is dead;
Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
And Trajan still, through various enterprise,
Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies:
Still are we present with the imperial Chief,
Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief
Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.

FAREWELL LINES
1826. 1842

These lines were designed as a farewell to Charles Lamb and his sister, who had retired from the throng of London to comparative solitude in the village of Enfield.

“High bliss is only for a higher state,” But, surely, if severe afflictions borne
With patience merit the reward of peace,
Peace ye deserve; and may the solid good,
Sought by a wise though late exchange, and
here
With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-roof
To you accorded, never be withdrawn,
Nor for the world's best promises re-
nounced.
Most soothing was it for a welcome Friend,
Fresh from the crowded city, to behold
That lonely union, privacy so deep,
Such calm employments, such entire con-
tent.
So when the rain is over, the storm laid,
A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,
Upon a rocky islet, side by side,
Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease;
And so, when night with grateful gloom
had fallen,
Two glow-worms in such nearness that they
shared,
As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,
Each with the other, on the dewy ground,
Where He that made them blesses their
repose.—
When wandering among lakes and hills I
note,
Once more, those creatures thus by nature
paired,
And guarded in their tranquill state of life,
Even, as your happy presence to my mind
Their union brought, will they repay the
debt,
And send a thankful spirit back to you,
With hope that we, dear Friends! shall
meet again.

ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN
THE FORM OF A HARP

THE WORK OF E. M. S.
1827. 1827

Frowns are on every Muse's face,
Reproaches from their lips are sent,
That mimicry should thus disgrace
The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size!
Needles for strings in apt gradation!
Minerva's self would stigmatize
The unclassic profanation.

Even her own needle that subdued
Arachne's rival spirit,

Though wrought in Vulcan's happy mood,
Such honour could not merit.

And this, too, from the Laureate's Chariot:
A living lord of melody!
How will her Sire be reconciled
To the refined indignity?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,
"Bard! moderate your ire;
Spirits of all degrees rejoice
In presence of the lyre.

The Minstrels of Pygmean hands,
Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fairies
Have shells to fit their tiny hands
And suit their slender lays.

Some, still more delicate of ear,
Have lutes (believe my words)
Whose framework is of gossamer,
While sunbeams are the chords.

Gay Sylphs this miniature will court,
Made vocal by their brushing wings
And sullen Gnomes will learn to spot
Around its polished strings;

Wherefore strains to love-sick maidens
While in her lonely bower she tries
To cheat the thought she cannot cheer
By fanciful embroideries.

Trust, angry Bard! a knowing Sprite
Nor think the Harp her lot deplores.
Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shines bright
Love stoops as fondly as he soars."

TO —
1827. 1827

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, that afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me all the Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion by the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them,—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakespeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, and may be allowed to say so, and produced the Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember...
"Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far
From its own country, and forgive the
strings."
A simple answer ! but even so forth springs,
From the Castalian fountain of the heart,
The Poetry of Life, and all that Art
Divine of words quickening insensate things.
From the submissive necks of guiltless men
Stretched on the block, the glittering axe
recoils;
Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the
toils
Of mortal sympathy; what wonder then
That the poor Harp distempered music
yields
To its sad Lord, far from his native fields ?

TO S. H.
1827. 1827

EXCUSE is needless when with love sincere
Of occupation, not by fashion led,
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with
dust o'erspread;
My nerves from no such murmur shrink,—
tho' near,
Soft as the Dorhawk's to a distant ear,
When twilight shades darken the moun-
tain's head.
Even She who toils to spin our vital thread
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so dear
To household virtues. Venerable Art,
Torn from the Poor ! yet shall kind Heaven
protect
Its own; though Rulers, with undue respect,
Trusting to crowded factory and mart
And proud discoveries of the intellect,
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient heart.

DECAY OF PIETY
1827. 1827

Attendance at church on prayer-days,
Wednesdays and Fridays and Holidays, re-
ceived a shock at the Revolution. It is now,
however, happily reviving. The ancient peo-
ple described in this Sonnet were among the
last of that pious class. May we hope that the
practice, now in some degree renewed, will con-
tinue to spread.

Oft have I seen, ere Time had ploughed
my cheek,
Matrons and Sires — who, punctual to the
call

[Text continues with the poems mentioned in the prompts]
Of their loved Church, on fast or festival
Through the long year the house of Prayer
would seek:
By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak
Of Easter winds, unscored, from hut or hall
They came to lowly bench or sculptured stall,
But with one fervour of devotion meek.
I see the places where they once were known,
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling crowds,
Is ancient Piety for ever flown?
Alas! even then they seemed like fleecy clouds
That, struggling through the western sky,
have won
Their pensive light from a departed sun!

"SCORN NOT THE SONNET"
1827. 1827

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk
on the western side of Rydal Lake.

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camoens soothed an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
And in a cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
In obscurity Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when
a lamp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew
Majestic animating strains — alas, too few!

"FAIR PRIME OF LIFE! WERE IT ENOUGH TO GILD"
1827. 1827

Suggested by observation of the way in
which a young friend, whom I do not choose to name,
spent his time and misapplied his talents. He took afterwards a better course,
and became a useful member of society, re-
spected, I believe, wherever he has been known.

FAIR Prime of life! were it enough to
With ready sunbeams every string shower;
And, if an unexpected cloud should be
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to break.
For Fancy's errands, — then, from its half-titled
Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy flower,
Thee might thy Minions crown, and do thy power,
Unpityed by the wise, all censure stilled.
Ah! show that worthier honours are due;
Fair Prime of life! arouse the deeper be
Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue
Some path of steep ascent and lofty lie
And, if there be a joy that slighteth the
Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

RETIREMENT
1827. 1827

If the whole weight of what we think we feel,
Save only far as thought and feeling be
With action, were as nothing, part
Friend!
From thy remonstrance would be no app
But to promote and fortify the weak
Of our own Being is her paramount cat.
A truth which they alone shall comprehend
Who shun the mischief which they cannot heal.
Peace be in these feverish times is sovereign bliss:
Here, with no thirst but what the stress can slake,
And startled only by the rustling brake.
Cool air I breathe; while the unincumbered Mind
By some weak aims at services assigned
To gentle Nature, thanks not Heaven for
Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give vent,
Slackening the pains of ruthless banishment
From his loved home, and from heroic toil.
And trust that spiritual Creatures round us
move,
Grieves to allay which Reason cannot heal;
Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to prove
To fettered wretchedness, that no Bastile
Is deep enough to exclude the light of love,
Though man for brother man has ceased to feel.

"WHILE ANNA'S PEERS AND
EARLY PLAYMATES TREAD"

1827. 1827

This is taken from the account given by
Miss Jewsbury of the pleasure she derived,
when long confined to her bed by sickness, from
the inanimate object on which this Sonnet
turns.

While Anna's peers and early playmates
tread,
In freedom, mountain-turf and river's
marge;
Or float with music in the festal barge;
Rein the proud steed, or through the dance
are led;
Her doom it is to press a weary bed —
Till o'er her guardian Angel, to some charge
More urgent called, will stretch his wings
at large,
And friends too rarely prop the languid
head.
Yet, helped by Genius — untired comforter,
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for her
Can cheat the time; sending her fancy out
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor
shout;
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring eyes.

TO THE CUCKOO

1827. 1827

Not the whole warbling grove in concert
heard
When sunshine follows shower, the breast
can thrill
Like the first summons, Cuckoo! of thy
bill,
With its twin notes inseparably paired.
The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned, unaired,
Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,
That cry can reach; and to the sick man's room
Sends gladness, by no languid smile declared.
The lordly eagle-race through hostile search
May perish; time may come when never more
The wilderness shall hear the lion roar;
But, long as cock shall crow from household perch
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing,
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the Sprung!

THE INFANT M—— M——

1827. 1827

The infant was Mary Monkhouse, the only daughter of my friend and cousin Thomas Monkhouse.

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace
Forgets her nature, opening like a flower
That neither feeds nor wastes its vital power
In painful struggles. Months each other chase,
And nought untunes that Infant's voice; no trace
Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek;
Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek
That one enrapt with gazing on her face
(Which even the placid innocence of death
Could scarcely make more placid, heaven more bright)
Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,
The Virgin, as she shone with kindred light;
A nursing conched upon her mother's knee,
Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

TO ROTH A Q——

1827. 1827

Rotha, the daughter of my son-in-law Mr. Quillian.

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child! this head was grey
When at the sacred font for thee I stood;
Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,
And shalt become thy own sufficient star
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan! was the dir
For stedfast hope the contract to fulfill;
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still
Embodied in the music of this Lay,
Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain Stream
Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear
After her throes, this Stream of nameless dear
Since thou dost bear it, — a memorial theme
For others; for thy future self, a spell
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell

TO ——, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR

1827. 1827

Lady Fitzgerald, as described to me by Lady Beaumont.

SUCH age how beautiful! O Lady bright,
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind
To something purer and more exquisite
Than flesh and blood; when 'er the meet at my sight,
When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,
Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
And head that droops because the soul is meek,
Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare;
That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb
From desolation toward the genial prime;
Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,
And filling more and more with crystal light
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

"IN MY MIND'S EYE A TEMPLE, LIKE A CLOUD"

1827. 1827

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud
Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,
out of darkness: the bright Work stood still: might of its own beauty have been proud, it was fashioned and to God was vowed Virtues that diffused, in every part, it divine through forms of human art: In had her arch — her arch, when winds blow loud, the consciousness of safety thrilled; Love her towers of dread foundation laid Her the grave of things; Hope had her spire —-high, and pointing still to something higher; mbling I gazed, but heard a voice — it said, all-gates are powerless Phantoms when we build.”

O BACK TO ANTIQUE AGES, IF THINE EYES”

1827. 1827

back to antique ages, if thine eyes a genuine mien and character would trace the rash Spirit that still holds her place, upmong the world’s audacious vanities! back, and see the Tower of Babel rise; pyramid extend its monstrous base, some Aspirant of our short-lived race, xious an aery name to immortalize. ere, too, ere wiles and politic dispute ve specious colouring to aim and act, the first mighty Hunter leave the brute— chase mankind, with men in armies packed r his field-pastime high and absolute, hile, to dislodge his game, cities are sacked!

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL

1827. 1827

Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemima’s lip ecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love might say,

A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip Its glistening dews; but hallowed is the clay Which the Muse warms; and I, whose head is grey, Am not unworthy of thy fellowship; Nor could I let one thought — one notion — slip That might thy sylvan confidence betray. For are we not all His without whose care Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the ground? Who gives his Angels wings to speed through air, And rolls the planets through the blue profound; Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer! nor forbear To trust a Poet in still musings bound.

CONCLUSION

TO ——

1827. 1827

If these brief Records, by the Muses’ art Produced as lonely Nature or the strife That animates the scenes of public life Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part; And if these Transcripts of the private heart Have gained a sanction from thy falling tears; Then I repent not. But my soul hath fears Breathed from eternity; for, as a dart Cleaves the blank air, Life flies: now every day Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift wheel Of the revolving week. Away, away, All fitful cares, all transitory zeal! So timely Grace the immortal wing may heal, And honour rest upon the senseless clay.

A MORNING EXERCISE

1828. 1832

Written at Rydal Mount. I could wish the last five stanzas of this to be read with the poem addressed to the skylark.

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the glad, Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to throw;
Selling sad shadows after things not sad,  
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of woe:  
Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry  
Becomes an echo of man’s misery.

Blithe the ravens croak of death; and when the owl  
Tries his two voices for a favourite strain —  
*Tu-whit — Tu-who!* the unsuspecting fowl  
Forebodes mishap or seems but to complain;  
Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,  
Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked Indians stray,  
Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;  
A feathered task-master cries, “Work away!”  
And, in thy iteration, “Whip poor Will!”  
Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,  
Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient lays  
Steeped in dire grief the voice of Philomel;  
And that fleet messenger of summer days,  
The Swallow, twittered subject to like spell;  
But ne’er could Fancy bend the buoyant Lark  
To melancholy service — hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,  
Not lifting yet the head that evening bowed;  
But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,  
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy cloud;  
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;  
The happiest bird that sprang out of the Ark!

Hail, blest above all kinds! — Supremely skilled,  
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,  
Thou leav’st the helion free her hopes to build  
On such forbearance as the deep may show;  
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,  
Leav’st to the wandering bird of paradise.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the meek dove;  
Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;  
So constant with thy downward eye of love,  
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free;  
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice  
In power of wing and never-wearyed voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring warbler! — that love-prompted strain  
(*Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond*!  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain;  
Yet might’st thou seem, proud privilege to sing  
All independent of the leafy spring.

How would it please old Ocean to partake,  
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,  
The harmony thy notes most gladly make  
Where earth resembles most his own domain!  
Urania’s self might welcome with pleased ear  
These matins mounting towards her native sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom to bars  
To day-light known deter from that pursuit.  
’Tis well that some sage instinct, when its stars  
Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still mute;  
For not an eyelid could to sleep incline  
Wert thou among them, singing as they shine!

THE TRIAD

1828. 1829


Show me the noblest Youth of present time,  
Whose trembling fancy would to love give birth;  
Some God or Hero, from the Olympian clime  
Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;  
Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see  
The brightest star of ages yet to be,  
And I will mate and match him blissfully.  
I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood  
Pure as herself — (song lacks not might's power)
Or leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless wood,
Or Sea-nymph glistening from her coral bower;

"Appear! — obey my lyre's command! Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!
Or ye, though not by birth allied, Re Sisters in the bond of love.

And shall the tongue of envious pride Resume those interweavings to reprieve A you, which that fair progeny of Jove, Earned from the tuneful spheres that glide

In endless union, earth and sea above."

— I sing in vain; — the pines have hushed Their waving:

A peerless Youth expectant at my side, Breathless as they, with unabated craving Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air; And, with a wandering eye that seems to chide,

Asks of the clouds what occupants they hide:

But why solicit more than sight could bear, By casting on a moment all we dare? Invoke we those bright Beings one by one; And what was boldly promised, truly shall be done.

"Fear not a constraining measure! — Yielding to this gentle spell, Lucida! from domes of pleasure, Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,

Come to regions solitary, Where the eagle builds her aery, Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!"

— She comes! — behold

That Figure, like a ship with snow-white sail!

Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts her veil; Upon her coming wait
As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale As e'er, on herbage covering earthy mould, Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold His richest splendour — when his veering gait And every motion of his starry train Seem governed by a strain

"O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest throne! Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit Beside an unambitious hearth to sit

Domestic queen, where grandeur is unknown;

What living man could fear
The worst of Fortune's malice, wert Thou near,

Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,
That its fair flowers may from his cheek Brush the too happy tear?

— Queen, and handmaid lowly!

Whose skill can speed the day with lively cares,

And banish melancholy
By all that mind invents or hand prepares;
O Thou, against whose lip, without its smile
And in its silence even, no heart is proof;

Whose goodness, sinking deep, would reconcile

The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof
Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of Wallace

Who that hath seen thy beauty could content

His soul with but a glimpse of heavenly day?

Who that hath loved thee, but would lay
His strong hand on the wind, if it were bent
To take thee in thy majesty away?

Pass onward (even the glancing deer
Till we depart intrude not here);

That mossy slope, o'er which the woodbine throws

A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose!"

— Glad moment is it when the throng

Of warblers in full concert strong

Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout

The lagging shower, and force coy Phoebus out,

Met by the rainbow's form divine,

Issuing from her cloudy shrine; —

So may the thrillings of the lyre

Prevail to further our desire,

While to these shades a sister Nymph I call.

"Come, if the notes thine ear may pierce,

Come, youngest of the lovely Three,

Submissive to the might of verse

And the dear voice of harmony,

By none more deeply felt than Thee!"

— I sang; and lo! from pastimes virginal

She hastens to the tents

Of nature, and the lonely elements.

Air sparkles round her with a dazzling sheen;
But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture green!
And, as if wishful to disarm
Or to repay the potent Charm,
She bears the stringed lute of old romance,
That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,
And soothed war-wearied knights in raftered hall.

How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee!
So tripped the Muse, inventress of the dance;
So, truant in waste woods, the blithe Euphrosyne!
But the ringlets of that head
Why are they ungarlanded?
Why bedeck her temples less
Than the simplest shepherdess?
Is it not a brow inviting
Choicest flowers that ever breathed,
Which the myrtle would delight in
With Idalian rose enwreathed?
But her humility is well content
With one wild floweret (call it not forlorn),
FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her bosom worn—
Yet more for love than ornament.
Open, ye thickets! let her fly,
Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and height!
For She, to all but those who love her, shy,
Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's sight;
Though where she is beloved and loves,
Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves;
Her happy spirit as a bird is free,
That risles blossoms on a tree,
Turning them inside out with arch audacity.
Alas! how little can a moment show
Of an eye where feeling plays
In ten thousand dewy rays;
A face o'er which a thousand shadows go!
— She stops—is fastened to that rivulet's side;
And there (while, with sedater mien,
O'er timid waters that have scarcely left
Their birthplace in the rocky cleft
She bends) at leisure may be seen
Features to old ideal grace allied,
Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—
Fit countenance for the soul of primal truth;
The bland composure of eternal youth!

What more changeful than the sea?
But over his great tides
Fidelity presides;

And this light-hearted Maiden constant as he.
High is her aim as heaven above,
And wide as ether her good-will;
And, like the lowly reed, her love
Can drink its nurture from the scanty rill:
Insight as keen as frosty star
Is to her charity no bar,
Nor interrupts her frolic graces
When she is, far from these wild places,
Encircled by familiar faces.
O the charm that manners draw,
Nature, from thy genuine law!
If from what her hand would do,
Her voice would utter, aught ensued Untoward or unfit;
She, in benign affections pure,
In self-forgetfulness secure,
Sheds round the transient harm or vagrance
A light unknown to tutored elegance:
Here is not a cheek shame-stricken,
But her blushes are joy-flushes;
And the fault (if fault it be)
Only ministers to quicken
Laughter-loving gaiety,
And kindle sportive wit—
Leaving this Daughter of the mountains free
As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery
Had crossed her purpose, with some quaint vagary,
And heard his viewless bands
Over their mirthful triumph clapping hands.
"Last of the Three, though eldest born,"
Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn
Touched by the skylark's earliest note,
Ere humbler gladness be afloat.
But whether in the semblance drest
Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the west.
Come with each anxious hope subdued
By woman's gentle fortitude,
Each grief, through meekness, settling interest.
— Or I would hail thee when some high-wrought page
Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand
Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand
Among the glories of a happier age."
Her brow hath opened on me—see it there.
Brightening the umbrage of her hair;
So gleams the crescent moon, that loves
To be descried through shady groves.
Tenderest bloom is on her cheek;
Wish not for a richer streak;
Not such the land of Wishes — there
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
And thoughts with things at strife;
Yet how forlorn, should ye depart,
Ye superstitions of the heart,
How poor, were human life!

When magic lore abjured its might,
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
One tender claim abate;
Witness this symbol of your sway,
Surviving near the public way,
The rustic Wishing-gate!

Inquire not if the faery race
Shed kindly influence on the place,
Ere northward they retired;
If here a warrior left a spell,
Panting for glory as he fell;
Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
Composed with Nature’s finest care,
And in her fondest love —
Peace to embosom and content —
To overawe the turbulent,
The selfish to reprove.

Yea! even the Stranger from afar,
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
Unknown, and unknown,
The infection of the ground partakes,
Longing for his Beloved — who makes
All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear
The mystic stirrings that are here,
The ancient faith disclaim?
The local Genius ne’er befriends
Desires whose course in folly ends,
Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
Here crave an easier lot;
If some have thirsted to renew
A broken vow, or bind a true,
With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
Upon the irrevocable past,
Some Penitent sincere
May for a worthier future sigh,
While trickles from his downcast eye
No unavailing tear.
The Worldling, pining to be freed
From turmoil, who would turn or speed
The current of his fate,
Might stop before this favoured scene,
At Nature’s call, nor blush to lean
Upon the Wishing-gate.

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
Is man, though loth such help to seek,
Yet, passing, here might pause,
And thirst for insight to allay
Misgiving, while the crimson day
In quietness withdraws;

Or when the church-clock’s knell profound
To Time’s first step across the bound
Of midnight makes reply;
Time pressing on with starry crest,
To filial sleep upon the breast
Of dread eternity.

THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED
1828. 1842

’Tis gone — with old belief and dream
That round it clung, and tempting scheme
Released from fear and doubt;
And the bright landscape too must lie,
By this blank wall, from every eye,
Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed
That opening — but a look ye cast
Upon the lake below,
What spirit-stirring power it gained
From faith which here was entertained,
Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o’er the springs
Of history, Glory claps her wings,
Fame sheds the exulting tear;
Yet earth is wide, and many a nook
Unheard of is, like this, a book
For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought
That grafted, on so fair a spot,
So confident a token
Of coming good; — the charm is fled,
Indulgent centuries spun a thread,
Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas! for him who gave the word;
Could he no sympathy afford,
Derived from earth or heaven,
To hearts so oft by hope betrayed;
Their very wishes wanted aid
Which here was freely given?

Where, for the love-lorn maiden’s woeful
Will now so readily be found
A balm of expectation?
Anxious for far-off children, where
Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air
Of home-felt consolation?

And not unfelt will prove the loss
‘Mid trivial care and petty cross
And each day’s shallow grief;
Though the most easily beguiled
Were oft among the first that smiled
At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,
A reconciling thought may turn
To harm that might lurk here,
Ere judgment prompted from within
Fit aims, with courage to begin,
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune’s slave is Man: our state
Enjoins, while firm resolves await
On wishes just and wise.
That strenuous action follow both,
And life be one perpetual growth
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face
All accidents of time and place;
Whatever props may fail,
Trust in that sovereign law can spread
New glory o’er the mountain’s head,
Fresh beauty through the vale.

That truth informing mind and heart,
The simplest cottager may part,
Ungrieved, with charm and spell;
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee
The voice of grateful memory
Shall bid a kind farewell!

A JEWISH FAMILY
IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR
UPON THE RHINE
1828. 1835

Coleridge, my daughter, and I, in 1828, passed
a fortnight upon the banks of the Rhine, pr-
ly under the hospitable roof of Mr. Adey's
Noteburg, but two days of the time we
spent at St. Goar in rambles among the neigh-
bouring valleys. It was at St. Goar that I saw
Jewish family here described. Though
sedulously poor, and in rags, they were not
beautiful than I have endeavoured to make
appear. We had taken a little dinner
*us in a basket, and invited them to par-
* of it, which the mother refused to do,
* for herself and children, saying it was
* them a fast-day; adding diffidently, that
* such observances were right or wrong,
* felt it her duty to keep them strictly.

Jews, who are numerous on this part of
Rhine, greatly surpass the German peas-
antry in the beauty of their features and in
intelligence of their countenances. But
lower classes of the German peasantry
are, here at least, the air of people grievously
prest. Nursing mothers, at the age of seven
eight and twenty, often look haggard and
more decayed and withered than women
Cumberland and Westmoreland twice their
age. This comes from being underfed and
overworked in their vineyards in a hot and
burning sun.

ENIUS of Raphael! if thy wings
Might bear thee to this glen,
ith faithful memory left of things
To pencil dear and pen,
ou wouldst forego the neighbouring
Rhine,
And all his majesty —
studious forehead to incline
O'er this poor family.

he Mother — her thou must have seen,
In spirit, ere she came
* dwell these rifted rocks between,
Or found on earth a name;
* image, too, of that sweet Boy,
 Thy inspirations give
* playfulness, and love, and joy,
 Predestined here to live.

Downcast, or shooting glances far,
How beautiful his eyes,
That blend the nature of the star
With that of summer skies!
* speak as if of sense beguiled;
Uncounted months are gone,
Yet am I with the Jewish Child,
That exquisit Saint John.

I see the dark-brown curls, the brow,
The smooth transparent skin,

Refined, as with intent to show
The holiness within;
The grace of parting Infancy
By blushes yet untamed;
Age faithful to the mother's knee,
Nor of her arms ashamed.

Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet
As flowers, stand side by side;
Their soul-subduing looks might cheat
The Christian of his pride:
Such beauty hath the Eternal poured
Upon them not forlorn,
Though of a lineage once abhorred,
Nor yet redeemed from scorn.

Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite
Of poverty and wrong,
Doth here preserve a living light,
From Hebrew fountains sprung;
That gives this ragged group to cast
Around the dell a gleam
Of Palestine, of glory past,
And proud Jerusalem!

THE GLEANER
SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE
1828. 1829

This poem was first printed in the Annual
called the Keepsake. The painter's name I am
not sure of, but I think it was Holmes.

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,
Those locks from summer's golden skies,
That o'er thy brow are shed;
That cheek — a kindling of the morn,
That lip — a rose-bud from the thorn.
I saw; and Fancy sped
To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through
soft air,
Of bliss that grows without a care,
And happiness that never flies —
(How can it where love never dies?)
Whispering of promise, where no blight
Can reach the innocent delight;
Where pity, to the mind conveyed
In pleasure, is the darkest shade
That Time, unwhrinkled grand sire, flings
From his smoothly gliding wings.

What mortal form, what earthly face
Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,
And mingle colours, that should breed
Such rapture, nor want power to feed;
ON THE POWER OF SOUND

For had thy charge been idle flowers,
Fair Damself! o'er my captive mind,
To truth and sober reason blind,
'Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,
The sweet illusion might have hung, for hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,
That touchingly bespeaks thee born
Life's daily tasks with them to share
Who, whether from their lowly bed
They rise, or rest the weary head,
Ponder the blessing they entreat
From Heaven, and feel what they repeat,
While they give utterance to the prayer
That asks for daily bread.

ON THE POWER OF SOUND
1828. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. I have often regretted that my tour in Ireland, chiefly performed in the short days of October in a Carriage and four (I was with Mr. Marshall), supplied my memory with so few images that were new, and with so little motive to write. The lines however in this poem, "Thou too be heard, lone eagle!" were suggested near the Giant's Causeway, or rather at the promontory of Fairhead, where a pair of eagles wheeled above our heads and darted off as if to hide themselves in a blaze of sky made by the setting sun.

ARGUMENT

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual functionary, in communion with sounds, individual, or combined in studied harmony — Sources and effects of those sounds (to the close of 6th Stanza) — The power of music, whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiot — Origin of music, and its effect in early ages — How produced (to the middle of 10th Stanza) — The mind recalled to sounds acting casually and severally — Wish uttered (11th Stanza) that these could be united into a scheme or system for moral interests and intellectual contemplation — (Stanza 12th) The Pythagorean theory of numbers and music, with their supposed power over the motions of the universe — Imaginations consonant with such a theory — Wish expressed (in 11th Stanza) realised, in some degree, by the representation of all sounds under the form of thanksgiving to the Creator — (Last Stanza) The destruction of earth and the planetary system — The survival of audible harmony, and its support in the Divine Nature, as revealed in Holy Writ.

I

Thy functions are ethereal,
As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind
Organ of vision! And a Spirit seren;
Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and
Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thee;
To enter than oracular cave;
Strict passage, through which sighs brought,
And whispers for the heart, their slave;
And shrieks, that revel in abuse
Of shivering flesh; and warbled air,
Whose piercing sweetness can unloose
The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile
Into the ambush of despair;
Hosannas, pealing down the long aisle,
And requiem answered by the pulse it beats
Devoutly, in life's last retreats!

II

The headlong streams and fountains
Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with their powers;
Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian tains,
They lull perchance ten thousand those flowers.
That roar, the prowling lion's Here I am,
How fearful to the desert wide!
That bleat, how tender! of the dam
Calling a straggler to her side.
Shout, cuckoo! — let the vernal soul
Go with thee to the frozen zone;
Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-in-toll!

At the still hour to Mercy dear,
Mercy from her twilight throne
Listening to nun's faint throb of holy text
To sailor's prayer breathed from a dashing sea,
Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

III

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows
And Images of voice — to hound and be
From rocky steep and rock-bestudded downs
Flung back, and, in the sky's blue dawn
reborn —
On with your pastime! till the church-bells
A greeting give of measured gleam;
And milder echoes from their cells
ON THE POWER OF SOUND

speak the bridal symphony.
To, or far earlier, let us rove
here mists are breaking up or gone,
and from aloft look down into a cove
sprinkled with a careless quire,
appy milk-maids, one by one
uttering a ditty each to her desire,
liquid concert matchless by nice Art,
stream as if from one full heart.

IV
lest be the song that brightens
he blind man’s gloom, exalts the veteran’s
mirth;
nscorned the peasant’s whistling breath,
that lightens
duteous toil of furrowing the green
earth.
or the tired slave, Song lifts the languid
oar,
nd bids it aptly fall, with chime
hat beautifies the fairest shore,
nd mitigates the harshest clime.
on pilgrims see — in lagging file
hey move; but soon the appointed way.
choral Ave Marie shall beguile,
nd to their hope the distant shrine
listen with a livelier ray:
or friendless he, the prisoner of the
mine,
ho from the well-spring of his own clear
breast
an draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

V
hen civic renovation
hawns on a kingdom, and for needful haste
s eloquence avails not, Inspiration
ounts with a tune, that travels like a
blast
ping through cave and battlemented
tower;
hen starts the sluggard, pleased to meet
that voice of Freedom, in its power

VI
How oft along thy maze,
Regent of sound, have dangerous Passions
rode!
O Thou, through whom the temple rings
with praises,
And blackening clouds in thunder speak of
God,
Betray not by the cozenage of sense
Thy votaries, wooingly resigned
To a voluptuous influence
That taints the purer, better, mind;
But lead sick Fancy to a harp
That hath in noble tasks been tried;
And, if the virtuous feel a pang too sharp,
Soothe it into patience, — stay
The uplifted arm of Suicide;
And let some mood of thine in firm array
Knit every thought the impending issue needs,
Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds!

VII
As Conscience, to the centre
Of being, amites with irresistible pain
So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter
The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot’s brain,
Transmute him to a wretch from quiet
hurled —
Convulsed as by a jarring din;
And then aghast, as at the world
Of reason partially let in
By concords winding with a sway
Terrible for sense and soul!
Or, awed he weeps, struggling to quell
dismay.
Point not these mysteries to an Art
Lodged above the starry pole;
Pure modulations flowing from the heart
Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty,
Truth
With Order dwell, in endless youth?

VIII
Oblivion may not cover
All treasures hoarded by the miser, Time,
Orphean Insight! truth’s undaunted lover,
To the first leagues of tutored passion climb,
When Music deigned within this grosser
sphere
Her subtle essence to enfold,
And voice and shell drew forth a tear
Softer than Nature’s self could mould.
Yet strenuous was the infant Age:
Art, daring because souls could feel.
ON THE POWER OF SOUND

Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage
Of rapt imagination sped her march
Through the realms of woe and weal:
Hell to the lyre bowed low; the upper
arch
Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic
verse
Her wan disasters could disperse.

IX
The Gift to king Amphion
That walled a city with its melody
Was for belief no dream: — thy skill,
Arion!
Could humanise the creatures of the sea,
Where men were monsters. A last grace
he craves,
Leave for one chant; — the dulcet sound
Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,
And listening dolphins gather round.
Self-cast, as with a desperate course,
Mid that strange audience, he bestrides
A proud One docile as a managed horse;
And singing, while the accordant hand
Sweeps his harp, the Master rides;
So shall he touch at length a friendly
strand,
And he, with his preserver, shine star-
bright
In memory, through silent night.

X
The pipe of Pan, to shepherds
Couched in the shadow of Mænalian pines,
Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the
leopards,
That in high triumph drew the Lord of
vines,
How did they sparkle to the cymbal's
clang!
While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground
In cadence, — and Silenus swung
This way and that, with wild-flowers
crowned.
To life, to life give back thine ear:
Ye who are longing to be rid
Of fable, though to truth subservient, hear
The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell
Echoed from the coffin-lid;
The convict's summons in the steeple's
knell;
"The vain distress-gun," from a leeward
shore,
Repeated — heard, and heard no more!

XI
For terror, joy, or pity,
Vast is the compass and the swell of
the city,
Rolling a solemn sea-like base, that
is far as the woodlands — with the
moonlight
Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale
Might tempt an angel to descend,
While hovering o'er the moonlight
Ye wandering Utterances, has ear-
thy scheme,
No scale of moral music — to unite
Powers that survive but in the dream
Of memory? — O that ye might stop
the bear
Chains, such precious chains of sight
As laboured minstrelsies through a
wear!
O for a balance fit the truth to tell
Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well!

XII
By one pervading spirit
Of tones and numbers all things are
trolled,
As sages taught, where faith was fixed
merit
Initiation in that mystery old.
The heavens, whose aspect makes our
as still
As they themselves appear to be,
Innumerable voices fill
With everlasting harmony;
The towering headlands, crowned with
Their feet among the billows, know
That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;
Thy pinions, universal Air,
Ever waving to and fro,
Are delegates of harmony, and bear
Strains that support the Seasons in the
round;
Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

XIII
Break forth into thanksgiving,
Ye banded instruments of wind and
che,
Unite, to magnify the Ever-living,
Your inarticulate notes with the voice
words!
Nor hushed be service from the lawn
mead,
Nor mute the forest hum of noon;
A harp that tuneful prelude made
To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,
Was fit for some gay throng;
Though from the same grim turret fell
The shadow and the song.
When silent were both voice and chords,
The strain seemed doubly dear,
Yet sad as sweet,—for English words
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;
And pinnacle and spire
Quivered and seemed almost to heave,
Clothed with innocuous fire.
But, where we stood, the setting sun
Showed little of his state;
And, if the glory reached the Nun,
’T was through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,
Nor pity idly born,
If even a passing Stranger sighs
For them who do not mourn.
Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,
Captive, who’er thou be!
Oh! what is beauty, what is love,
And opening life to thee?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,
A feeling sanctified
By one soft trickling tear that stole
From the Maiden at my side;
Less tribute could she pay than this,
Borne gaily o’er the sea,
Fresh from the beauty and the bliss
Of English liberty?

INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS
1828. 1835

This occurred at Brugès in 1828. Mr. Codger, my Daughter, and I made a tour together
Flanders, upon the Rhine, and returned byolland. Dora and I, while taking a walk
ong a retired part of the town, heard the noise as here described, and were afterwards
formed it was a Convent in which were many English. We were both much touched, I might
y affected, and Dora moved as appears in 10 verses.

Brugès town is many a street
Whence busy life hath fled;
There, without hurry, noiseless feet
The grass-grown pavement tread.
Here heard we, halting in the shade
Plung from a Convent-tower,
many months they continued to prosper in their
new place of abode; but one night by an un-
usually great flood they were swept out of the
pool, and perished to our great regret.

THE soaring lark is blest as proud
When at heaven's gate she sings;
The roving bee proclaims aloud
Her flight by vocal wings;
While Ye, in lasting durance pent,
Your silent lives employ
For something more than dull content,
Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem
A place where joy is known,
Where golden flash and silver gleam
Have meanings of their own;
While, high and low, and all about,
Your motions, glittering Elves!
Ye weave — no danger from without,
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast
Is your transparent cell;
Where Fear is but a transient guest,
No sullen Humours dwell;
Where, sensitive of every ray
That smites this tiny sea,
Your scaly panoplies repay
The loan with usury.

How beautiful! — Yet none knows why
This ever-graceful change,
Renewed — renewed incessantly —
Within your quiet range.
Is it that ye with conscious skill
For mutual pleasure glide;
And sometimes, not without your will,
Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!
And now, in twilight dim,
Clustering like constellated eyes,
In wings of Cherubim,
When the fierce orbs abate their glare; —
Whate'er your forms express,
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are —
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your human breast, 't is pure;
Your birthright is a fence
From all that haughtier kinds endure
Through tyranny of sense.
Ah! not alone by colours bright
Are ye to heaven allied,

When, like essential Forms of light,
Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled
Day-thoughts while limbs repose;
For moonlight fascinations mild,
Your gift, ere shutters close —
Accept, mute Captives! thanks and praise
And may this tribute prove
That gentle admirations raise
Delight resembling love.

LIBERTY

(SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE)

ADDRESS TO A FRIEND; THE GOLD AND SILVER
FISHES HAVING BEEN REMOVED TO A POOL
THE PLEASURE-GROUND OF RYDAL MOUNT

1829. 1835

"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man is being master of his own time and actions as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse." — COWLEY.

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind regard,
(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is hard;
Not soon does aught to which mild fancy clinging
In lonely spots, become a slighted thing;) Those silent Inmates now no longer share Nor do they need, our hospitable care, Removed in kindness from their glassy cell To the fresh waters of a living Well — An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest No winds disturb; the mirror of whose breast Is smooth as clear, save where with dimples small A fly may settle, or a blossom fall. — There swims, of blazing sun and beating shower Fearless (but how obscured!) the golden Power, That from his bauble prison used to cast Gleams by the richest unsurpass'd And near him, darkling like a pale Gnome, The silver Tenant of the crystal dome; Dissevered both from all the mysteries
How faint their portion of his vital beams! Thus, and unable to complain, they fared, While not one joy of ours by them was shared.  

Is there a cherished bird (I venture now To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend brow) —  

Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage, Though sure of plaudits on his costly stage, Though fed with dainties from the snow-white hand  

Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land, But gladly would escape; and, if need were, Scatter the colours from the plumes that bear  

The emancipated captive through blithe air Into strange woods, where he at large may live  

On best or worst which they and Nature give?  

The beetle loves his unpretending track, The snail the house he carries on his back; The far-fetched worm with pleasure would disown  

The bed we give him, though of softest down; A noble instinct; in all kinds the same, All ranks! What Sovereign, worthy of the name, If doomed to breathe against his lawful will An element that flatters him — to kill, But would rejoice to barter outward show For the least boon that freedom can bestow?  

But most the Bard is true to inborn right, Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night, Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch For the dear blessings of a lowly couch, A natural meal — days, months, from Nature's hand; Time, place, and business, all at his command! —  

Who bents to happier duties, who more wise Than the industrious Poet, taught to prize Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed By cares in which simplicity is lost?  

That life — the flowery path that winds by stealth —  

Which Horace needed for his spirit's health; Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome By noise and strife, and questions wearisome, And the vain splendours of Imperial Rome? —
Let easy mirth his social hours inspire
And fiction animate his sportive lyre,
Attuned to verse that, crowning light Distress
With garlands, cheats her into happiness;
Give me the humblest note of those sad strains
Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded chains,
As a chance-sunbeam from his memory fell
Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well;
Or when the prattle of Blandania's spring Haunted his ear — he only listening —
He, proud to please, above all rivals, fit
To win the palm of gaiety and wit;
He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,
Shrinking from each new favour to be shed,
By the world's Ruler, on his honoured head!

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen
Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade;
A doleful bower for penitential song,
Where Man and Muse complained of mutual wrong;
While Cam's ideal current glided by,
And antique towers nodded their foreheads high,
Citadels dear to studious privacy.
But Fortune, who had long been used to sport
With this tried Servant of a thankless Court,
Relenting met his wishes; and to you
The remnant of his days at least was true;
You, whom, though long deserted, he loved best;
You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest!
Far happier they who, fixing hope and aim
On the humanities of peaceful fame,
Enter betimes with more than martial fire
The generous course, aspire, and still aspire;
Upheld by warnings heeded not too late
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,
And to one purpose cleave, their Being's
godlike mate!

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid brow
That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep thy vow;
With modest scorn reject whate'er would blind
The ethereal eyesight, cramp the winged mind!
Then, with a blessing granted from above
To every act, word, thought, and look of love,
Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till age
Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest page.

HUMANITY
1829. 1835

These verses and those entitled "Liberty"
were composed as one piece, which Mrs. Wordsworth complained of as unwieldy and ill-proportioned; and accordingly it was divided into two on her judicious recommendation.

The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own appeal
To righteous Gods when man has ceased to feel,
Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,
Before the Stone of Power no longer stand —
To take his sentence from the balanced Block,
As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock:
Though, in the depths of sunless groves, no more
The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore:
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering trees
Do still perform mysterious offices!
And functions dwell in beast and bird that sway
The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play.
Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes
To watch for undelusive auguries: —
Not uninspired appear their simplest ways,
Their voices mount symbolical of praise —
To mix with hymns that Spirits make and bear;
And to fallen man their innocence is dear.
Enraptured Art draws from those sacred springs
Streams that reflect the poetry of things!
Where Christian Martyrs stand in history portrayed,
might a wish avail, would never fade;
in their hands the lily and the palm round the altar a celestial calm;
also, too, beheld the lamb and guileless dove
in the tenderness of virgin love
most, so be no!—Glorious is the blending
right affections climbing or descending a scale of light and life, with cares mate; carrying holy thoughts and prayers
the sovereign seat of the Most High;
sending to the worm in charity;
those good Angels whom a dream of night,
in the field of Luz, to Jacob’s sight, while he slept, treading the pendent stairs
ward or heavenward, radiant messengers,
with a perfect will in one accord strict obedience, serve the Almighty Lord;
with untired humility forbore speed their errand by the wings they wore.
That a fair world were ours for verse to paint,
Power could live at ease with self-restraint!
ion bow before the naked sense
the great Vision, — faith in Providence;
reiful over all his creatures, just the least particle of sentient dust:
fixing by immutable decrees, dtime and harvest for his purposes!
would be closed the restless oblique eye
for evil like a treacherous spy; so putes would then relax, like stormy winds it into breezes sink; impetuous minds discipline endeavour to grow meek
Truth herself, whom they profess to seek
Genius, shunning fellowship with Pride,
culd braid his golden locks at Wisdom’s side;
veebb and flow untroubled by caprice;
not alone harsh tyranny would cease,
offending creatures find release unqualified oppression, whose defence sts on a hollow plea of recompence; thought-tempered wrongs, for each humane respect
Oft worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.
Witness those glances of indignant scorn
From some high-minded Slave, impelled to spurn
The kindness that would make him less forlorn;
Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,
His look of pitiable gratitude!
Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,
Whose day departs in pomp, returns with smiles —
To greet the flowers and fruitage of a land,
As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes fanned;
A land whose azure mountain-tops are seats
For Gods in council, whose green vales retreats
Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling there
To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.
Though cold as winter, gloomy as the grave,
Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a slave.
Shall man assume a property in man?
Lay on the moral will a withering ban? so
Shame that our laws at distance still protect Enormities, which they at home reject!
“Slaves cannot breathe in England” — yet that boast
Is but a mockery! when from coast to coast,
Though fettered slave be none, her floors and soil
Groan underneath a weight of slavish toil,
For the poor Many, measured out by rules
Fetched with cupidity from heartless schools,
That to an Idol, falsely called “the Wealth
Of Nations,” sacrifice a People’s health, 90
Body and mind and soul; a thirst so keen
Is ever urging on the vast machine
Of sleepless Labour, ‘mid whose dizzy wheels
The Power least prized is that which thinks and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age,
And all the heavy or light vassalage
Which for their sakes we fasten, as may suit
Our varying moods, on human kind or brute,
T were well in little, as in great, to pause,
Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws.
Not from his fellows only man may learn
Rights to compare and duties to discern!
All creatures and all objects, in degree,
Are friends and patrons of humanity.
There are to whom the garden, grove, and
field,
Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;
Who would not lightly violate the grace
The lowliest flower possesses in its place;
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,
Which nothing less than Infinite Power
could give.

"THIS LAWN, A CARPET ALL
ALIVE"
1829. 1835

This Lawn is the sloping one approaching the
kitchen-garden, and was made out of it. Hun-
dreds of times have I watched the dancing of
shadows amid a press of sunshine, and other
beautiful appearances of light and shade, flow-
er and shrubs. What a contrast between this
and the cabbages and onions and carrots that
used to grow there on a piece of ugly-shaped
unsightly ground! No reflection, however, either
upon cabbages or onions; the latter we
know were worshipped by the Egyptians, and
he must have a poor eye for beauty who has
not observed how much of it there is in the
form and colour which cabbages and plants of
that genus exhibit through the various stages
of their growth and decay. A richer display of
colour in vegetable nature can scarcely be con-
ceived than Coleridge, my Sister, and I saw in a
bed of potato-plants in blossom near a hut upon
the moor between Inversmeyd and Loch Ka-
trine. These blossoms were of such extraordi-
nary beauty and richness that no one could have
passed them without notice. But the sense
must be cultivated through the mind before
we can perceive these inexhaustible treasures of
Nature, for such they really are, without
the least necessary reference to the utility of
her productions, or even to the laws whereupon,
as we learn by research, they are dependent.
Some are of opinion that the habit of analysing,
decomposing, and anatomising is inevitably
unfavourable to the perception of beauty. Peo-
ple are led into this mistake by overlooking
the fact that, such processes being to a certain
extent within the reach of a limited intellect,
we are apt to ascribe to them that insensibility
of which they are in truth the effect and not
the cause. Admiration and love, to which all
knowledge truly vital must tend, are felt by
men of real genius in proportion as their dis-
coveries in natural Philosophy are enlarged;
and the beauty in form of a plant or an animal
is not made less but more apparent as a whole
by more accurate insight into its constituent

properties and powers. A Saint who
also a poet in soul and a religionist is he
e a feeble and unhappy creature.

THIS Lawn, a carpet all alive
With shadows flung from leaves — or
In dance, amid a press
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields
Of strenuous idleness;

Less quick the stir when tide and brez
Encounter, and to narrow seas
Forbid a moment's rest;
The medley less when boreal Lights
Glance to and fro, like airy Sprites
To feats of arms addrest!

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,
This ceaseless play, the genuine life
That serves the stedfast hours,
Is in the grass beneath, that grows
Unheeded, and the mute repose
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

THOUGHT ON THE SEASON
1829. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount

FLATTERED with promise of escape
From every hurtful blast,
Spring takes, O sprightly May! thy
In her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is summer riding high
In fierce solstitial power,
Less fair than when a lenient sky
Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves
The labours of the plough,
And ripening fruits and forest leaves
All brighten on the bough;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,
Before she hears the sound
Of winter rushing in, to close
The emblematic round!

Such be our Spring, our Summer sack;
So may our Autumn blend
With hoary Winter, and Life touch,
Through heaven-born hope, her end!
THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE

Down from the far-seen mount. No blast
Or blight that fond memorial; — the trees
grew,
And now entwine their arms; but ne'er
again
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide
plain;
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew
Until their spirits mingled in the sea
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE

Written at Rydal Mount.
The subject of the following poem is from
the Orlandus of the author's friend, Kenelm
Henry Digby: and the liberty is taken of in-
scribing it to him as an acknowledgment, how-
ever unworthy, of pleasure and instruction
derived from his numerous and valuable writ-
ings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of
the olden time.

I
You have heard "a Spanish Lady
How she wooed an English man;"
Hear now of a fair Armenian,
Daughter of the proud Soldàn;
How she loved a Christian slave, and told
her pain
By word, look, deed, with hope that he
might love again.

II
"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"
Said she, lifting up her veil;
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,
Ere it wither and grow pale."
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may
not take
From twig or bed an humbler flower, even
for your sake!"

III
"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!
To behold thy captive state;
Women, in your land, may pity
(May they not?) the unfortunate."
"Yes, kind Lady! otherwise man could
not bear
Life, which to every one that breathes is
full of care."
"Worse than idle is compassion
If it end in tears and sighs;
Thee from bondage would I rescue
And from vile indignities;
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high
degree,
Look up—and help a hand that longs to
set thee free."

"Lady! dread the wish, nor venture
In such peril to engage;
Think how it would stir against you
Your most loving father's rage:
Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked
with shame,
Should troubles overflow on her from whom
it came."

"Generous Frank! the just in effort
Are of inward peace secure:
Hardships for the brave encountered,
Even the feeblest may endure:
If almighty grace through me thy chains
unbind,
My father for slave's work may seek a slave
in mind."

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,
My long-frozen heart grows warm!"
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,
Me to save from chance of harm:
Leading such companion I that gilded dome,
Yon minarets, would gladly leave for his
worst home."

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair Princess,
And your brow is free from scorn,
Else these words would come like
mockery,
Sharper than the pointed thorn."
"Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too
wide apart
Our faith hath been,—O would that eyes
could see the heart!"

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is
These base implements to wield;
Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,
Ne'er assoil my cobwebbed shield!"

Never see my native land, nor castle

Nor Her who thinking of me there
widowed hours."

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies;
Wedded? If you can, say no!
Blessed is and be your consort,
Hopes I cherished—let them go!
Handmaid's privilege would leave me
purpose free,
Without another link to my felicity."

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,
Lady, is a mystery rare;
Body, heart, and soul in union,
Make one being of a pair."
"Humble love in me would look for no
return,
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but
cannot burn."

"Gracious Allah! by such title
Do I dare to thank the God,
Him who thus exalts thy spirit,
Flower of an unchristian sod!
Or hast thou put off wings which thou in
heaven dost wear?
What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt
where am I? where?"

Here broke off the dangerous converse:
Less impassioned words might tell
How the pair escaped together,
Tears not wanting, nor a knell
Of sorrow in her heart while through her
father's door,
And from her narrow world, she passed for
evermore.

But affections higher, holier,
Urged her steps; she shrunk from
trust
In a sensual creed that trampled
Woman's birthright into dust.
Little be the wonder then, the blame be
none,
If she, a timid Maid, hath put such bold-
ness on.
 XV
ge both Fugitives with knowledge:
1 those old romantic days
ghty were the soul’s commandments
o support, restrain, or raise.
ught hang upon their path, snakes
rustle near,
ting from their inward selves had
they to fear.

XVI
ought infirm ne’er came between
them,
Ither printing desert sands
th accordant steps, or gathering
reet-fruit with social hands;
ispering like two reeds that in the
cold moonbeam
ith the breeze their heads, beside a
crystal stream.

XVII
friendly deck reposing
hey at length for Venice steer;
ere, when they had closed their
voyage
one, who daily on the pier
hed for tidings from the East, beheld
his Lord,
down and clasped his knees for joy,
ot uttering word.

XVIII
ual was the sudden transport;
Breathless questions followed fast,
ears contracting to a moment,
Each word greedier than the last;
thee to the Countess, friend I return
with speed,
of this Stranger speak, by whom her
lord was freed.

XIX
ay that I, who might have languished,
rooped and pined till life was spent,
low before the gates of Stolberg
My Deliverer would present
a crowning recompense, the precious
ace
her who in my heart still holds her an-
cient place.

XX
ake it known that my Companion
is of royal eastern blood,

 XX
Thirsting after all perfection,
Innocent, and meek, and good,
Though with misbelievers bred; but that
dark night
Will holy Church disperse by means of
gospel-light.”

XXI
Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,
Soon returned a trusty Page
Charged with greetings, benedictions,
Thanks and praises, each a gage
For a sunny thought to cheer the Stranger’s
way,
Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears
allay.

XXII
And how blest the Reunited,
While beneath their castle-walls,
Runs a deafening noise of welcome! —
Blest, though every tear that falls
Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,
And makes a meeting seem most like a
dear farewell.

XXIII
Through a haze of human nature,
Glorified by heavenly light,
looked the beautiful Deliverer
On that overpowering sight,
While across her virgin cheek pure blushes
strayed,
For every tender sacrifice her heart had
made.

XXIV
On the ground the weeping Countess
Knelt, and kissed the Stranger’s hand;
Act of soul-devoted homage,
Pledge of an eternal band:
Nor did aught of future days that kiss
belie,
Which, with a generous shout, the crowd
did ratify.

XXV
Constant to the fair Armenian,
Gentle pleasures round her moved,
Like a tutelary spirit
Reverenced, like a sister, loved,
Christian meekness smoothed for all the
path of life,
Who, loving most, should wiseliest love,
their only strife.
XXVI
Mute memento of that union
In a Saxon church survives,
Where a cross-legged Knight lies sculptured
As between two wedded wives —
Figures with armorial signs of race and birth,
And the vain rank the pilgrims bore while yet on earth.

THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE
1830. 1835
Early in life this story had interested me,
And I often thought it would make a pleasing subject for an opera or musical drama.

PART I

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes
Like harebells bathed in dew,
Of cheek that with carination vies,
And veins of violet hue;
Earth wants not beauty that may scorn
A likening to frail flowers;
Yea, to the stars, if they were born
For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold unbarred,
Stepped One at dead of night,
Whom such high beauty could not guard
From meditated blight;
By stealth she passed, and fled as fast
As doth the hunted fawn,
Nor stopped, till in the dappled east
Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,
Seven nights her course renewed,
Sustained by what her scrip might yield,
Or berries of the wood;
At length, in darkness travelling on,
When lowly doors were shut,
The haven of her hope she won,
Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof
I come," said she, "from far;
For I have left my Father's roof,
In terror of the Czar."
No answer did the Matron give,
No second look she cast,

But hung upon the Fugitive,
Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat
Beside the glimmering fire,
Bathed duteously her wayworn feet,
Prevented each desire: —
The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed
And on that simple bed,
Where she in childhood had reposed,
Now rests her weary head.

When she, whose couch had been the earth,
Whose curtain, pine or thorn,
Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,
Who comforts the forlorn;
While over her the Matron bent
Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole
Feeling from limbs with travel spent,
And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,
And soon again was sight;
In those unworthy vestments worn
Through long and perilous flight;
And "O beloved Nurse," she said,
"My thanks with silent tears
Have unto Heaven and You been paid:
Now listen to my fears!"

"Have you forgot" — and here she smiled —
"The babbling flatteries
You lavished on me when a child
Disporting round your knees?
I was your lambkin, and your bird,
Your star, your gem, your flower;
Light words, that were more lightly lit
In many a cloudless hour!

The blossom you so fondly praised
Is come to bitter fruit;
A mighty One upon me gazed;
I spurned his lawless suit,
And must be hidden from his wrath:
You, Foster-father dear,
Will guide me in my forward path;
I may not tarry here!

I cannot bring to utter woe
Your proved fidelity."
"Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so,
For you we both would die."
"Nay, nay, I come with semblance fair
And cheek embrowned by art;
being inwardly unstained,
with courage will depart."

Yet whither would you, could you, flee?
Poor Man’s counsel take;
Holy Virgin gives to me
thought for your dear sake;
Shileded by our Lady’s grace,
and soon shall you be led
th to a safe abiding-place,
there never foot doth tread."

PART II

A dwelling of this faithful pair
in a straggling village stood,
One who breathed unquiet air
in dangerous neighbourhood;
wide around lay forest ground
With thickets rough and blind;
A pine-trees made a heavy shade
impervious to the wind.

There, sequestered from the sight,
Was spread a treacherous swamp,
which the noonday sun shed light
As from a lonely lamp;
midway in the unsafe morass
A single Island rose
firm dry ground, with healthful grass
Adorned, and shady boughs.

A Woodman knew, for such the craft
This Russian vassal plied,
at never fowler’s gun, nor shaft
Of archer, there was tried;
sanctuary seemed the spot
From all intrusion free;
there he planned an artful Cot
For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains uncheck’d by dread
Of Power’s far-stretching hand,
he bold good Man his labour sped
At nature’s pure command;
sart-soothed, and busy as a wren,
While, in a hollow nook,
he moulds her sight-eluding den
Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,
The twain ere break of day
reep forth, and through the forest wind
Their solitary way;

Few words they speak, nor dare to slack
Their pace from mile to mile,
Till they have crossed the quaking marsh
And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed
A bright and cheerful face;
And Ina looked for her abode,
The promised hiding-place;
She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled;
No threshold could be seen,
Nor roof, nor window; — all seemed wild
As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,
The front with such nice care
Is masked, “if house it be or bower,”
But in they entered are;
As shaggy as were wall and roof
With branches intertwined,
So smooth was all within, air-proof,
And delicately lined:

And hearth was there, and maple dish
And cups in seemly rows,
And couch — all ready to a wish
For nurture or repose;
And Heaven doth to her virtue grant
That here she may abide
In solitude, with every want
By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,
Led on in bridal state,
E’er struggled with a heart so proud,
Entering her palace gate:
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,
No saintly anchoress
E’er took possession of her cell
With deeper thankfulness.

“Father of all, upon thy care
And mercy am I thrown;
Be thou my safeguard! ” — such her
prayer
When she was left alone,
Kneeling amid the wilderness
When joy had passed away,
And smiles, fond efforts of distress
To hide what they betray!

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,
Diffused through form and face
Resolves devotedly serene;
That monumental grace
Of Faith, which doth all passions tame
That Reason should control;
And shows in the untrembling frame
A statue of the soul.

PART III

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy
That Phoebus wont to wear
The leaves of any pleasant tree
Around his golden hair;
Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit
Of his imperious love,
At her own prayer transformed, took root,
A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn
His brow with laurel green;
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn
No meaneer leaf was seen;
And poets sage, through every age,
About their temples wound
The bay; and conquerors thanked the Gods,
With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time
So far runs back the praise
Of Beauty, that disdains to climb
Along forbidden ways;
That scorns temptation; power defies
Where mutual love is not;
And to the tomb for rescue flies
When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votessa, a fate
More mild doth Heaven ordain
Upon her Island desolate;
And words, not breathed in vain,
Might tell what intercourse she found,
Her silence to endure;
What birds she tamed, what flowers the ground
Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all,
Her soothed affections clung,
A picture on the cabin wall
By Russian usage hung —
The Mother-maid, whose countenance bright
With love abridged the day;
And, communed with by taper light,
Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,
The joy in that retreat
Might any common friendship shame.
So high their hearts would beat;
And to the lone Recluse, whate'er
They brought, each visiting
Was like the crowding of the year
With a new burst of spring.

But, when she of her Parents thought,
The pang was hard to bear;
And, if with all things not enwrought
That trouble still is near.
Before her flight she had not dared
Their constancy to prove,
Too much the heroic Daughter feared
The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark
The future still must be,
Till pitiful Saints conduct her bark
Into a safer sea —
Or gentle Nature close her eyes,
And set her Spirit free
From the altar of this sacrifice,
In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-gloom
The white swans southward passed,
High as the pitch of their swift pipes
Her fancy rode the blast;
And bore her toward the fields of Fame
Her Father's native land,
To mingle in the rustic dance,
The happiest of the band!

Of those beloved fields she oft
Had heard her Father tell
In praise that now with echoes soft
Haunted her lonely cell;
She saw the hereditary bowers,
She heard the ancestral stream;
The Kremlin and its haughty towers
Forgotten like a dream!

PART IV

The ever-changing Moon had traced
Twelve times her monthly round,
When through the unfrequented Waste
Was heard a startling sound;
A shout thrice sent from one who chased
At speed a wounded deer,
THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE

To end life here like this poor deer,  
Or a lamb on a green hill.”

“Are you the Maid,” the Stranger cried,  
“From Gallic parents sprung,  
Whose vanishing was rumoured wide,  
Sad theme for every tongue;  
Who foiled an Emperor’s eager quest?  
You, Lady, forced to wear,  
These rude habiliments, and rest  
Your head in this dark lair!”

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled;  
And in her face and mien  
The soul’s pure brightness he beheld  
Without a veil between:  
He loved, he hoped,—a holy flame  
Kindled ‘mid rapturous tears;  
The passion of a moment came  
As on the wings of years.

“Such bounty is no gift of chance,”  
Exclaimed he; “righteous Heaven,  
Preparing your deliverance,  
To me the charge hath given.  
The Czar full oft in words and deeds  
Is stormy and self-willed;  
But, when the Lady Catherine pleads,  
His violence is stilled.

Leave open to my wish the course,  
And I to her will go;  
From that humane and heavenly source,  
Good, only good, can flow.”  
Faint sanction given, the Cavalier  
Was eager to depart,  
Though question followed question, dear,  
To the Maiden’s filial heart.

Light was his step,—his hopes, more light,  
Kept pace with his desires;  
And the fifth morning gave him sight  
Of Moscow’s glittering spires.  
He sued:—heart-smitten by the wrong,  
To the lorn Fugitive  
The Emperor sent a pledge as strong  
As sovereign power could give.

O more than mighty change! If e’er  
Amazement rose to pain,  
And joy’s excess produced a fear  
Of something void and vain;  
’T was when the Parents, who had mourned  
So long the lost as dead,
Beheld their only Child returned,  
The household floor to tread.  
Soon gratitude gave way to love  
Within the Maiden’s breast;  
Delivered and Deliverer move  
In bridal garments drest;  
Meek Catherine had her own reward;  
The Czar bestowed a dower;  
And universal Moscow shared  
The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground; the nuptial feast  
Was held with costly state;  
And there, ’mid many a noble guest,  
The Foster-parents sate;  
Encouraged by the imperial eye,  
They shrank not into shade;  
Great was their bliss, the honour high  
To them and nature paid!

THE EGYPTIAN MAID  
OR, THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER LILY  
1830. 1835

For the names and persons in the following poem, see the History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table; for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.

In addition to the short notice prefixed to this poem it may be worth while here to say that it rose out of a few words casually used in conversation by my nephew Henry Hutchinson. He was describing with great spirit the appearance and movement of a vessel which he seemed to admire more than any other he had ever seen, and said her name was the Water Lily. This plant has been my delight from my boyhood, as I have seen it floating on the lake; and that conversation put me upon constructing and composing the poem. Had I not heard those words it would never have been written. The form of the stanza is new, and is nothing but a repetition of the first five lines as they were thrown off, and is not perhaps well suited to narrative, and certainly would not have been trusted to had I thought at the beginning that the poem would have gone such a length.

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish land  
Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scæ;  
The pleased Enchanter was aware  
Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in air,  
Yet was she work of mortal hands,  
And took from men her name—to Water Lily.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew  
And, as the Moon, o’er some dark is ascendant,  
Grows from a little edge of light  
To a full orb, this Pinnacle bright  
Became, as nearer to the coast she drew  
More glorious, with spread sail and streaming pendant.

Upon this wingèd Shape so fair  
Sage Merlin gazed with admiration:  
Her lineaments, thought he, surpass  
Aught that was ever shown in glass;  
Was ever built with patient care;  
Or, at a touch, produced by happiest transformation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill  
Shames the degenerate grasp of modern science,  
Grave Merlin (and belike the more  
For practising occult and perilous lore)  
Was subject to a freakish will  
That sapped good thoughts, or scared the with defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast  
An altered look upon the advancing Stranger  
Whom he had hailed with joy, and cried:  
“My Art shall help to tame her pride—  
Anon the breeze became a blast,  
And the waves rose, and slyly portended danger.

With thrilling word, and potent sign  
Trailed on the beach, his work the Seerer urges;  
The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,  
Like spiteful Fiends that vanish, crossed  
By Fiends of aspect more malign;  
And the winds roused the Deep with fierce scourges.
Though on her prow a sign of heathen power
Was carved—a Goddess with a Lily flower,
The old Egyptian’s emblematic mark
Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

Her course was for the British strand;
Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless; 80
God reigns above, and Spirits strong
May gather to avenge this wrong
Done to the Princess, and her Land
Which she in duty left, sad but not cheerless.

And to Caerleon’s loftiest tower
Soon will the Knights of Arthur’s Table
A cry of lamentation send;
And all will weep who there attend,
To grace that Stranger’s bridal hour,
For whom the sea was made un navigable.

Shame! should a Child of royal line,
Die through the blindness of thy malice?"
Thus to the Necromancer spake
Nina, the Lady of the Lake,
A gentle Sorceress, and benign,
Who ne’er embittered any good man’s chalice.

“What boots,” continued she, “to mourn?
To expiate thy sin endeavour:
From the bleak isle where she is laid,
Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid
May yet to Arthur’s court be borne
Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

My pearly Boat, a shining Light,
That brought me down that sunless river,
Will bear me on from wave to wave,
And back with her to this sea-cave;—
Then Merlin! for a rapid flight
Through air, to thee my Charge will I deliver.

The very swiftest of thy cars
Must, when my part is done, be ready;
Meanwhile, for further guidance, look
Into thy own prophetic book;
And, if that fail, consult the Stars
To learn thy course; farewell! be prompt
and steady.”
This scarcely spoken, she again
Was seated in her gleaming shallop,
That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,
Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,
Or like a steed, without a rein,
Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive
gallop. 120

Soon did the gentle Nina reach
That Isle without a house or haven;
Landing, she found not what she sought,
Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught
But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach
By the fierce waves, a flower in marble
graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while!
For gently each from each retrieving
With backward curve, the leaves revealed
The bosom half, and half concealed, 130
Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile
On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful
meeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,
Of tortured hope and purpose shaken;
Following the margin of a bay,
She spied the lonely Castaway,
Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,
But with closed eyes,—of breath and bloom
forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,
With tenderness and mild emotion, 140
The Damself, in that trance embound;
And, while she raised her from the ground,
And in the pearly shallop placed,
Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs
Of music opened, and there came a
blending
Of fragrance, underived from earth,
With gleams that owed not to the sun
their birth,
And that soft rustling of invisible wings
Which Angels make, on works of love de-
scending. 150

And Nina heard a sweeter voice
Than if the Goddess of the flower had
spoken:
"Thou hast achieved, fair Dame! what

Less pure in spirit could have done;
Go, in thy enterprise rejoice!
Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven,
be\th\"n\'
So cheered, she left that Island bleak
A bare rock of the Scilly cluster;
And, as they traversed the smooth
The self-illumined Brigantine
Shed, on the Slumberer's cold waves
And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when a
came
To the dim cavern, whence the river
Issued into the salt-sea flood,
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,
Was thus accosted by the Dame;
"Behold to thee my Charge I now give;
But where attends thy Christ where?"—
Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden:
So have I done; as trusty as thy serv
My vehicle shall prove—O pros
Charge!
If this be sleep, how soft! if death, how
fair!
Much have my books disclosed, but the
is hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view
Forth from the grotto's dimmest cheer
Came two mute Swans, whose plum
 dusky white
Changed, as the pair approached a
light,
Drawing an ebon car, their hue
(like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift
The Princess, passive to all changes:
The car received her;—then up-went
Into the ethereal element
The Birds with progress smooth and
As thought, when through bright regions
memory ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,
Instructs the Swans their way to travel.
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared;
And notes of minstrelsy were heard
From rich pavilions spreading wide.
For some high day of long-expected plea
sure.
And worship, seemed a recompence
For fifty kingdoms by my sword recovered
Ask not for whom, O Champions true!
She was reserved by me her life’s betrayer;
She who was meant to be a bride
Is now a corpse: then put aside
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with observance due
Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to lay her.”

“The tomb,” said Merlin, “may not close
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;
Not froward to thy sovereign will
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill
Wafted her hither, interpose
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare
The secret thou art bent on keeping:
Here must a high attest be given,
What Bridegroom was for her ordained by Heaven.

And in my glass significants there are
Of things that may to gladness turn this weeping.

For this, approaching, One by One,
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand of the Virgin;
So, for the favoured One, the Flower may bloom
Once more; but, if unchangeable her doom,
If life departed be for ever gone,
Some blest assurance, from this cloud emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss;
Not with a grief that, like a vapour, rises
And melts; but grief devout that shall endure,

And a perpetual growth secure
Of purposes which no false thought shall cross,
A harvest of high hopes and noble enterprises.”

“So be it,” said the King; — “anon,
Here, where the Princess lies, begin the trial;
Knights each in order as ye stand
Step forth.” — To touch the pallid hand
Sir Agravaine advanced; no sign he won
From Heaven or earth; — Sir Kaye had like
denial. 270

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure;
Though he, devourest of all Champions, ere
He reached that ebon car, the bier
Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel lay,
Full thrice had crossed himself in meek
composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints! who can?)
How in still air the balance trembled —
The wishes, peradventure the despites
That overcame some not ungenerous
Knights;
And all the thoughts that lengthened out
a span
Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assem-
bled.

What patient confidence was here!
And there how many bosoms panted!
While drawing toward the car Sir Ga-
waine, mailed
For tournament, his beaver vailed,
And softly touched; but, to his princely
cheer
And high expectancy, no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a
brother,
Came to the proof, nor grieved that there
ensued
No change; — the fair Izonda he had
wooed
With love too true, a love with pangs too
sharp,
From hope too distant, not to dread another.

Not so Sir Launcelot; — from Heaven's
grace
A sign he craved, tired slave of vain con-
trition;
The royal Guinevere looked passing glad
When his touch failed. — Next came Sir
Galahad;
He paused, and stood entranced by that
still face
Whose features he had seen in noontide
vision. 300

For late, as near a murmuring stream
He rested 'mid an armour green and
Nina, the good Enchantress, shed
A light around his mossy bed;
And, at her call, a waking dream
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady

Now, while his bright-haired freckled
bowed,
And stood, far-kenned by mantle fringed
with ermine,
As o'er the insensate Body hung
The enraptured, the beautiful, the young.
Belief sank deep into the crowd
That he the solemn issue would deter-

Nor deem it strange; the Youth had
That very mantle on a day of glory.
The day when he achieved that martial
feat,
The marvel of the Perilous Seat.
Which whoseoe'er approached of stress
was shorn,
 Though King or Knight the most resem-
in story.

He touched with hesitating hand—
And lo! those Birds, far-famed the
Love's dominions,
The Swans, in triumph clap their
wings
And their necks play, involved in rills
Like sinless snakes in Eden's
land;—
"Mine is she," cried the Knight;—
as
they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she—mine she is, the
dead,
And to her name my soul shall cling
sorrow;"
Whereat, a tender twilight streak
Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's
cheek;
And her lips, quickening with sweet
red,
Seemed from each other a faint warm
borrow.

Deep was the awe, the rapture high
Of love emboldened, hope with entwining,
When, to the mouth, relenting Death
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath
Precursor to a timid sigh,
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful sight.
silence did King Arthur gaze on the signs that pass away or tarry; silence watched the gentle strife Nature leading back to life; an eased his soul at length by praise, and, Heaven’s pure Queen — the blissful Mary.

en said he, “Take her to thy heart, Galahad! a treasure, that God giveth, and by indissoluble ties to thee rough mortal change and immortality; happy and unenvied, thou who art oddly Knight that hath no peer that liveth!”

not long the Nuptials were delayed; and sage tradition still rehearses the pomp, the glory of that hour when toward the altar from her bower Arthur led the Egyptian Maid, Angels carolled these far-echoed verses:—

Who shrinks not from alliance Of evil with good Powers, To God proclaims defiance, And mocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted From the Land of Nile did go; Alas! the bright Ship floated, An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination, The Heaven-permitted vent Of purblind mortal passion, Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower the Form within it, What served they in her need? Her port she could not win it, Nor from mishap be freed. 370

The tempest overcame her, And she was seen no more; But gently, gently blame her — She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened, And kept to him her faith, Till sense in death was darkened, Or sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow Kept watch, a viewless band; And, billow favouring billow, She reached the destined strand.

Blest Pair! whate’er befall you, Your faith in Him approve Who from frail earth can call you To bowers of endless love!

THE POET AND THE CAGED TURTLEDOVE

1830. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. This dove was one of a pair that had been given to my daughter by our excellent friend, Miss Jewsbury, who went to India with her husband, Mr. Fletcher, where she died of cholera. The dove survived its mate many years, and was killed, to our great sorrow, by a neighbour’s cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage. These verses were composed extempore, to the letter, in the Terrace Summer-house before spoken of. It was the habit of the bird to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses.

As often as I murmur here My half-formed melodies, Straight from her osier mansion near, The Turtledove replies: Though silent as a leaf before, The captive promptly coos; Is it to teach her own soft lore, Or second my weak Muse?

I rather think, the gentle Dove Is murmuring a reproof, Displeased that I from lays of love Have dared to keep aloof; That I, a Bard of hill and dale, Have carolled, fancy free, As if nor dove nor nightingale, Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear, Sweet Bird! to do me wrong; Love, blessed Love, is everywhere The spirit of my song: ‘Mid grove, and by the calm fireside, Love animates my lyre — That coo again! — ’t is not to chide. I feel, but to inspire.
Presentiments
1830. 1835
Written at Rydal Mount.

Presentiments! they judge not right
Who deem that ye from open light
Retire in fear of shame;
All heaven-born Instincts shun the touch
Of vulgar sense,—and, being such,
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,
The deep sigh that seemed fatherless,
Were mine in early days;
And now, unforced by time to part
With fancy, I obey my heart,
And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,
Too potent over nerve and blood,
Lurk near you—and combine
To taint the health which ye infuse;
This hides not from the moral Muse
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers!
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours
Builds castles, not of air:
Bodings unsanctioned by the will
Flow from your visionary skill,
And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,
That no philosophy can lift,
Shall vanish, if ye please,
Like morning mist: and, where it lay,
The spirits at your bidding play
In gaiety and ease.

Star-guided contemplations move
Through space, though calm, not raised above
Prognostics that ye rule;
The naked Indian of the wild,
And haply, too, the cradled Child,
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,
Number their signs or instruments?
A rainbow, a sunbeam,
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,
An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth
With sighs of self-exhausted mirth
Ye feelingly reprove;

And daily, in the conscious breast,
Your visitations are a test
And exercise of love.

When some great change gives hope
To an exulting Nation’s hope,
Oft, startled and made wise
By your low-breathed interpretations.
The simply-meek foretaste the spring
Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war,
Pervade the lonely ocean far
As sail hath been unfurled;
For dancers in the festive hall
What ghastly partners hath your call
Fetched from the shadowy world.

’T is said, that warnings ye disperse,
Emboldened by a keener sense;
That men have lived for whom,
With dread precision, ye made clear
The hour that in a distant year
Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight! Yet there are,
Blest times when mystery is laid bare.
Truth shows a glorious face,
While on that isthmus which commixes
The councils of both worlds, she stands
Sage Spirits! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent
All changes of the element,
Whose wisdom fixed the scale
Of nature, for our wants provides
By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,
When lights of reason fail.

“IN THESE FAIR VALES HABIT MANY A TREE.”
1830. 1835

Engraven, during my absence in Italy, upon a brass plate inserted in the Stone.

In these fair valess hath many a Tree
At Wordsworth’s suit been spared:
And from the builder’s hand this Stone
For some rude beauty of its own,
Was rescued by the Bard:
So let it rest; and time will come
When here the tender-hearted
May heave a gentle sigh for him,
As one of the departed.
That all the seasons shared with equal
rights;—
Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,
From soul-felt music, and the treasured
tage
Lit by that evening lamp which loved to
shed
Its mellow lustre round thy honoured head;
While Friends beheld thee give with eye, voice, mien,
More than theatric force to Shakspeare's
scene;—
If thou hast heard me — if thy Spirit know
Aught of these bowers and whence their
pleasures flow;
If things in our remembrance held so dear,
And thoughts and projects fondly cherished
here,
To thy exalted nature only seem
Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's
dream —
Rebuke us not! — The mandate is obeyed
That said, "Let praise be mute where I
am laid;"
The holier deprecation, given in trust
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;
Yet have we found how slowly genuine
grief
From silent admiration wins relief.
Too long abashed, thy Name is like a rose
That doth "within itself its sweetness
close;"
A drooping daisy changed into a cup
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.
Within these groves, where still arefitting
by
Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,
Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,
When towers and temples fall, to speak of
Thee!
If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom
Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb,
Green ivy risen from out the cheerful earth,
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs
spring forth,
Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain
unbound,
Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;
While truth and love their purposes fulfill,
Commemorating genius, talent, skill,
That could not lie concealed where Thou
wert known;
Thy virtues He must judge, and He alone,
The God upon whose mercy they are
thrown.
"CHATSWORTH! THY STATELY MANSION, AND THE PRIDE"

1830. 1835

I have reason to remember the day that gave rise to this Sonnet, the 6th of November 1830. Having undertaken, a great feat for me, to ride my daughter's pony from Westmoreland to Cambridge, that she might have the use of it while on a visit to her uncle at Trinity Lodge, on my way from Bakewell to Matlock I turned aside to Chatsworth, and had scarcely gratified my curiosity by the sight of that celebrated place before there came on a severe storm of wind and rain which continued till I reached Derby, both man and pony in a pitiable plight. For myself, I went to bed at noon-day. In the course of that journey I had to encounter a storm, worse if possible, in which the pony could (or would) only make his way slantwise. I mention this merely to add that notwithstanding this battering I composed, on horseback, the lines to the memory of Sir George Beaumont, suggested during my recent visit to Coleorton.

CHATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and the pride
Of thy domain, strange contrast do present
To house and home in many a craggy rent
Of the wild Peak; where new-born waters glide
Through fields whose thrifty occupants abide
As in a dear and chosen banishment,
With every semblance of entire content;
So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave her troth
To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest farms,
May learn, if judgment strengthen with his growth,
That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath charms;
And, strenuous to protect from lawless harms
The extremes of favoured life, may honour both.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

1831. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on the right hand a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as bees were away by the heavy rains.

A Rock there is whose homely form
The passing traveller slightst;
Yet there the glow-worms hang in lamps,
Like stars, at various heights;
And one coy Primrose to that Rock
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged;
What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
And marked it for my own;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
Their fellowship renew;
The stems are faithful to the root,
That worketh out of view;
And to the rock the root adheres
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
Though threatening still to fall;
The earth is constant to her sphere;
And God upholds them all:
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
Her annual funeral.

Here closed the meditative strain;
But air breathed soft that day,
The hoary mountain-heights were cheered
The sunny vale looked gay;
And to the Primrose of the Rock
I gave this after-lay.

I sang — Let myriads of bright flowers,
Like Thee, in field and grove
Revive unenvied; — mightier far,
Than tremblings that reprove
Our vernal tendencies to hope,
Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed — for wan diseases
For sorrow that had bent
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age —
Their moral element,
And turned the thistles of a curse
To types beneficent.
blighted though we are, we too,
the reasoning Sons of Men,
no one oblivious winter called
shall rise, and breathe again;
in eternal summer lose
your threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
This prescience from on high,
The faith that elevates the just,
Before and when they die;
And makes each soul a separate heaven,
A court for Deity.

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

IMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND
AND ON THE ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831

the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott before departure for Italy. This journey had been delayed by an inflammation in my eyes till we were scarcely able to lift up my eyes to the light. How sadly changed did I find him from what I had expected. So healthy, gay, and hopeful, a few years before, when he said at the inn at Lemore, in my presence, his daughter Anne also being there, with Mr. Lockhart, my own wife daughter, and Mr. Quillinan,—"I mean to live till I am eighty, and shall write as long as I live." To return to Abbotsford, the inmates and guests we found there were Sir Walter, Major Scott, Mr. Scott, and Mrs. Lockhart, Mr. Liddell, his Lady and Brother, and Mr. Allan the elder, and Mr. Laidlow, a very old friend of Sir Walter's. One of Burns's sons, an officer in the ian service, had left the house a day or two before, and had kindly expressed his regret that he could not await my arrival, a regret that I may truly say was mutual. In the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Liddell sang, and Mr. Lockhart chanted old ballads to her harp; and Mr. Allan, hanging at the back of a chair, told and acted old stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition and daughter's singing, Sir Walter was much amused, as indeed were we all as far as circumstances would allow. But what is most worthy of mention is the admirable demeanour of Major Scott hanging the following evening, when the Liddells were gone and only ourselves and Mr. Allan were present. He had much to suffer from the sight of his father's infirmities and from the great change that was about to take place at the residence he had built, and where he had long lived in such prosperity and happiness. But what struck me most was the kindliness with which he supported himself under the many fretful expressions that his sister Anne addressed to her or uttered in his hearing. She, poor thing, as mistress of that house, had been subject, after her mother's death, to a heavier load of care and responsibility and greater sacrifices of time than of such a constitution of body and mind was able to bear. Of this, Dora and I were made sensible, that, as soon as we had crossed the Tweed on our departure, we gave vent at the same moment to our apprehensions that her brain would fail and she would go out of her mind, or that she would sink under the trials she had passed and those which awaited her. On Tuesday morning Walter Scott accompanied us and most of the party to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. When we gazed from the carriages he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting those favourite haunts. Of that excursion the verses "Yarrow revisited" are a memorial. Notwithstanding the romance that pervades Sir Walter's works and attaches to many of his habits, there was too much pressure of fact for these verses to harmonise as much as I could wish with other scenes. On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. In the wheels of our carriage grunted upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream, that there flows new what rapidly; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the lion hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet ensuing—"A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain." At noon on Thursday we left Abbotsford, and in the morning of that day Sir Walter and I had a serious conversation tête-à-tête, when spoke with gratitude of the happy life which upon the whole he had led. He had written in my daughter's Album, before he came into the breakfast-room that morning, a few stanzas addressed to her, and, while putting the book into her hand, in his own study, standing by his desk, said to her in my presence—"I should not have done anything of this kind but for your ther's sake: they are probably the last verses I shall ever write." They show how much his had was impaired, not by the strain of thought but by the execution, some of the lines being
imperfect, and one stanza wanting corresponding rhymes: one letter, the initial S., had been omitted in the spelling of his own name. In this interview also it was that, upon my express hope of his health being benefited by the climate of the country to which he was going, and the interest he would take in the classic remembrances of Italy, he made use of the words from "Yarrow unvisited" as recorded by me in the "Musings at Aquapendente" six years the wards. Mr. Lockhart has mentioned in his Life of him what I heard from several quarters abroad, both at Rome and elsewhere, that little seemed to interest him but what he could see or heard of the fugitive Stuarts and their adherents who had followed them into exile. Both "Yarrow revisited" and the "Sonnet" were sent him before his departure from England. See further particulars of the conversations which occurred during this visit I should have set down had they not been already accurately recorded by Mr. Lockhart. I first became acquainted with this great and amiable man — Sir Walter Scott — in the year 1803, when my sister and I went to a tour in Scotland, were hospitably received by him in Lasswade upon the banks of the L, where he was then living. We saw a good deal of him in the course of the following week: particulars are given in my sister's Journal of that tour.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP,
AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS,

THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

Rydal Mount, Dec. 11, 1834.

I
1831. 1835

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title "Yarrow Revisited" will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream.

The gallant Youth, who may have gained,
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"
Was but an Infant in the lap
When first I looked on Yarrow;
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
Their dignity installing
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling;
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed —
The forest to embolden;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on:
In foamy agitation;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation:
No public and no private care
The freeborn mind enthralled,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth,
With freaks of graceful folly, —
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing;
If, then, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment!
The blameless Muse, who trains her S
For hope and calm enjoyment;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded;
and Care waylays their steps — a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

or thee, O Scott! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
or warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot
or mild Sorento's breezy waves;
May classic Fancy, linking
'ith native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

h! while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow Age
With Strength, her venturous brother;
nd Tiber, and each brook and rill,
Renowned in song and story,
'ith unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory!

or Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
f. faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;
nd streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite Thee,
t parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must require Thee.

gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honour
thy own Yarrow gave to me.
When first I gazed upon her;
sheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
reams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender.

nd what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,
'd no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer?
'ea, what were mighty Nature's self?
Her features, could they win us,
'helped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us?

for deem that localized Romance
Plays false with our affections;
insanctifies our tears — made sport
For fanciful dejections:
sh, no! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
life as she is — our changeful Life,
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day
In Yarrow's groves were centred;
Who through the silent portal arch
Of moulderling Newark entered;
And clomb the winding stair that once
Too timidly was mounted
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)
'Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future Bards should chant
For simple hearts thy beauty;
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine,
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine!

II

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR
WALTER SCOTT FROM AB-
BOTSFORO, FOR NAPLES

1831. 1835

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height:
Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
For kindred Power departing from their sight;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a
blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the
might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him
goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror
knows
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!

III

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE
SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

1831. 1835

Similar places for burial are not unfrequent
in Scotland. The one that suggested this Son-
et lies on the banks of a small stream called,
the Wanchepe that flows into the Eak near Langholme. Mickle, who, as it appears from his poem on Sir Martin, was not without genuine poetic feelings, was born and passed his boyhood in this neighbourhood, under his father, who was a minister of the Scotch Kirk. The Eak, both above and below Langholme, flows through a beautiful country, and the two streams of the Wanchepe and the Ewe, which join it near that place, are such as a pastoral poet would delight in.

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged steep
That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-yard lies;
The hare’s best couching-place for fearless sleep;
Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous eyes,
Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath ties,
No vestige now remains; yet thither creep
Bereft Ones, and in lowly anguish weep
Their prayers out to the wind and naked skies.
Proud tomb is none; but rudely-sculptured knights,
By humble choice of plain old times, are seen
Level with earth, among the hillocks green:
Union not sad, when sunny daybreak smites
The spangled turf, and neighbouring thickets ring
With jubilate from the choirs of spring!

IV
ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND
1831. 1835

The manse is in Scotland and the gardens and grounds about them have seldom that attractive appearance which is common about our English personages, even when the clergyman’s income falls below the average of the Scotch minister’s. This is not merely owing to the one country being poor in comparison with the other, but arises rather out of the equality of their benefices, so that no one has enough to spare for decorations that might serve as an example for others; whereas, with us, the taste of the richer incumbent extends its influence more or less to the poorest. After all, in these observations the surface only of the matter is touched. I once heard a conversation in which the Roman Catholic Religion was decried on account of its abuses. “You cannot deny, however,” said a lady of the party, replying to an expression used by Charles II., “that it is the religion of a gentleman.” It may be left to the Scotch themselves to determine how far this observation applies to their Kirk, while it cannot be denied, if it is wanting in that characteristic quality, the aspect of common life so far as concerns its beauty, must suffer. Sore Christian piety may be thought not to stand in need of refinement or studied ornament; but assuredly it is ever ready to adopt them, when they fall within its notice, as means allow; and this observation applies not only to manners, but to everything a Christian (true so in spirit) cultivates and gathers round him, however humble his social condition.

SAY, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing hills —
Among the happiest-looking homes of men
Scattered all Britain over, through deep glen,
On airy upland, and by forest rills,
And o’er wide plains cheered by the lark that trills
His sky-born warblings — does aught meet your ken
More fit to animate the Poet’s pen,
Aught that more surely by its aspect fills Pure minds with sinless envy, than the Abode
Of the good Priest: who, faithful through all hours
To his high charge, and truly serving God, Has yet a heart and hand for trees and flowers,
Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod, Nor covets lineal rights in lands and towers.

V
COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL DURING A STORM
1831. 1835

We were detained by incessant rain and storm at the small inn near Roslin Chapel, and I passed a great part of the day pacing to and fro in this beautiful structure, which, though not used for public service, is not allowed to go to ruin. Here this Sonnet was composed, and I shall be fully satisfied if it has at all done justice to the feeling which the place and the storm raged without inspired. I was as a prisoner: 
inter delineating the interior of the chapel and minute features under such circumstances I had imagined, no doubt, found his time agreeably spent. But the movements of the mind must be more free while dealing with words on with lines and colours; such at least was and has been on many other occasions my life, and, as it is allotted to few to follow the arts with success, I am grateful to my own calling for this and a thousand other commendations which are denied to that of a painter.

The wind is now thy organist;— a clank We know not whence) ministers for a bell o mark some change of service. As the swell of music reached its height, and even when sank the notes, in prelude, ROSSLIN! to a blank of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous roof, i llars, and arches,— not in vain time-proof, though Christian rites be wanting! From what bank came those live herbs? by what hand were they sown Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem unknown? Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche Share with their sculptured fellows, that, green-grown, Copy their beauty more and more, and preach, Though mute, of all things blending into one.

VI
THE TROSACHS
1831. 1835

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were coloured by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going.

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass, But were an apt confessional for One Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone. That Life is but a tale of morning grass Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities, Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy quest, If from a golden perch of aspen spray (October's workmanship to rival May) The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay, Lulling the year, with all its care, to rest!

VII

1831. 1835

The pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute; The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy Of quaint apparel for a half-spoiled boy; The target mouldering like ungathered fruit; The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit, As eagerly pursued; the umbrella spread To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's head— All speak of manners withering to the root, And of old honours, too, and passions high: Then may we ask, though pleased that thought should range Among the conquests of civility, Survives imagination—to the change Superior? Help to virtue does she give? If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

VIII

COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWSPAPER OF THE DAY
1831. 1835

"People! your chains are severing link by link; Soon shall the Rich be levelled down—the Poor Meet them half way." Vain boast! for These, the more They thus would rise, must low and lower sink
Till, by repentance stung, they fear to think;
While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant few
Bent in quick turns each other to undo,
And mix the poison, they themselves must drink.
Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to cry,
"Knowledge will save me from the threatened woe."
For, if than other rash ones more thou know,
Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

IX
COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF LOCH ETIVE
1831. 1835

"That make the Patriot-spirit." It was mortifying to have frequent occasions to observe the bitter hatred of the lower orders of the Highlanders to their superiors; love of country seemed to have passed into its opposite. Emigration was the only relief looked to with hope.

"This Land of Rainbows spanning glens whose walls,
Rock-built, are hung with rainbow-coloured mists—
Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood never rests—
Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls—
Of Mountains varying momently their crests—
Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts are halls
Where Fancy entertains becoming guests;
While native song the heroic Past recalls."
Thus, in the net of her own wishes caught,
The Muse exclaimed; but Story now must hide
Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course of pride
Has been diverted, other lessons taught,
That make the Patriot-spirit bow her head
Where the all-conquering Roman feared to tread.

X
EAGLES
COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIE CASTLE IN THE BAY OF OBA
1831. 1835

"The last I saw was on the wing," off its promontory of Fairhead, county of Antrim. I mention this because, though my tour in Ireland with Mr. Marshall and his son was in many years ago, this allusion to the eagle is the only image supplied by it to the poetry I have since written. We travelled through that country in October, and to the shortness of the day and the speed with which we travelled (in a carriage and four) may be ascribed this want of notice, in my verse, of a country so interesting. The deficiency I am somewhat ashamed of, and it is the more remarkable as contrasted with my Scotch and Continental tours, of which are to be found in this volume so many materials.

DISHONOURED Rock and Ruin! that, by law
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarr'd
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vex'd is he, and screams loud. The last I saw
Was on the wing; stooping, he struck with awe
Man, bird, and beast; then, with a consort paired,
From a bold headland, their loved army guard,
Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
Such was this Prisoner once; and, when his plumes
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,
Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

XI
IN THE SOUND OF MULL
1831. 1835
Touring late in the season in Scotland is uncertain speculation. We were detained a week by rain at Bunaw on Loch Etive in this
hope that the weather would clear up and allow me to show my daughter the beauties of Glencon. Two days we were at the isle of Mull, on a visit to Major Campbell; but it rained incessantly, and we were obliged to give up our intention of going to Staffa. The rain pursued us to Tyndrum, where the Twelfth Sonnet was composed in a storm.

TRADITION, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung
Round strath and mountain, stamped by the ancient tongue
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—
Spots where a word, ghostlike, survives to show
What crimes from hate, or desperate love, have sprung;
From honour misconceived, or fancied wrong,
What feuds, not quenched but fed by mutual woe.
Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, untamed
By civil arts and labours of the pen,
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce Men,
Who, to spread wide the reverence they claimed
For patriarchal occupations, named
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of Etive Glen?"

XII
SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM
1831. 1835

Enough of garlands, of the Arcadian crook,
And all that Greece and Italy have sung
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among!
Our couch on naked rocks,—will cross a brook
Swoln with chill rains, nor ever cast a look
This way or that, or give it even a thought
More than by smoothest pathway may be brought
Into a vacant mind. Can written book
Teach what they learn? Up, hardy Moun-
taineer!
And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art,
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see and hear

To what dread Powers He delegates his part
On earth, who works in the heaven of heavens, alone.

XIII
THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED MANSION AND FAMILY BURIAL-PLACE, NEAR KIL-LIN
1831. 1835

Well sang the Bard who called the grave, in strains
Thoughtful and sad, the "narrow house."
No style
Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile
Grief of her sting; nor cheat, where he detains
The sleeping dust, stern Death. How reconcile
With truth, or with each other, decked re-

Of a once warm Abode, and that new Pile,
For the departed, built with curious pains
And mausolean pomp? Yet here they stand
Together,—'mid trim walks and artful bowers,
To be looked down upon by ancient hills,
That, for the living and the dead, demand
And prompt a harmony of genuine powers;
Concord that elevates the mind, and stills.

XIV
"REST AND BE THANKFUL!"
AT THE HEAD OF GLENCOE
1831. 1835

Doubling and doubling with laborious walk,
Who, that has gained at length the wished-for Height,
This brief, this simple wayside Call can slight,
And rest not thankful? Whether cheered by talk
With some loved friend, or by the unseen hawk
Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams that shine,
At the sun's outbreak, as with light divine,
Ere they descend to nourish root and stalk
Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs repose,
Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep
Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air,  
And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's sweep, —  
So may the Soul, through powers that  
Faith bestows,  
Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss that Angels share.

XV  
HIGHLAND HUT  
1831. 1835  

See what gay wild flowers deck this earth-built Cot,  
Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and how it may,  
Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray  
Like wreaths of vapour without stain or blot;  
The limpid mountain rill avoids it not;  
And why shouldst thou? — If rightly trained and bred,  
Humanity is humble, finds no spot  
Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to tread.  
The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery roof,  
Undressed the pathway leading to the door;  
But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor;  
Search, for their worth, some gentle heart wrong-proof,  
Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials fewer,  
Belike less happy. — Stand no more aloof!

XVI  
THE BROWNIE  
1831. 1835

Upon a small island, not far from the head of Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient building, which was for several years the abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that neighbourhood. Passing along the shore opposite this island in the year 1814, the Author learned these particulars, and that this person then living there had acquired the appellation of "The Brownie." See "The Brownie's Cell," p. 529, to which the following is a sequel.

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt and toad;  
Ask of his fellow-men, and they will tell  
How he was found, cold as an icicle,  
Under an arch of that forlorn abode;  
Where he, unprop'd, and by the gather flood  
Of years hemmed round, had dwelt, prepar'd to try  
Privation's worst extremities, and die.  
With no one near save the omnipresent God,  
Verily so to live was an awful choice —  
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom.  
But in the mould of mercy all is cast  
For Souls familiar with the eternal Void,  
And this forgotten Taper to the last  
Drove from itself, we trust, all frigid gloom.

XVII  
TO THE PLANET VENUS, A EVENING STAR  
COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND  
1831. 1835

Though joy attend Thee, orient at the east  
Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit here;  
To watch thy course when Day-light wanders from earth,  
In the grey sky hath left his lingering Gleam  
Perplexed as if between a splendour be  
And splendour slowly mustering. So  
the Sun,  
The absolute, the world-absorbing One,  
Relinquished half his empire to the last  
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star;  
Holy as princely — who that looks on thee  
Touching, as now, in thy humility  
The mountain borders of this sea of exultation  
Can question that thy countenance is bright  
Celestial Power, as much with love and light?

XVIII  
BOTHWELL CASTLE  
PASSED UNSEEN, ON ACCOUNT OF STORMY WEATHER  
1831. 1835

In my Sister's Journal is an account of Bothwell Castle as it appeared to us at that time.

Immured in Bothwell's towers, at times brave  
Brave (So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to boast.
liberty they lost at Bannockburn.

on those steeps I roamed at large,

and have

ind the landscape, as if still in sight;

river glides, the woods before me wave;

why repine that now in vain I crave

less renewal of an old delight?

er to thank a dear and long-past day

joy its sunny hours were free to give

blame the present, that our wish hath

crest.

ory, like sleep, hath powers which

dreams obey,

ums, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive:

little that she cherishes is lost!

small river in Wales, I believe, bear the name;

Avon being in the ancient tongue the general

name for river.

AVON — a precious, an immortal name!

Yet is it one that other rivulets bear

Like this unheard-of, and their channels wear

Like this contented, though unknown to Fame:

For great and sacred is the modest claim

Of Streams to Nature’s love, where’er they flow;

And ne’er did Genius slight them, as they go,

Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding without blame.

But Praise can waste her voice on work of tears,

Anguish, and death: full oft where innocent blood

Has mixed its current with the limpid flood,

Her heaven-offending trophies Glory rears:

Never for like distinction may the good Shrink from thy name, pure Rill, with unpleased ears.

XIX
TURE OF DANIEL IN THE IONS’ DEN, AT HAMILTON PALACE

1831. 1835

D a fertile region green with wood fresh with rivers, well did it become ducal Owner, in his palace-home naturalise this tawny Lion brood; dren of Art, that claim strange brotherhood ached in their den) with those that roam at large r the burning wilderness, and charge wind with terror while they roar for food.

ate are these; and stilled to eye and ear;

ce, while we gaze, a more enduring fear!

is the Prophet calm, nor would the cave unt him — if his Companions, now bedrowed, stretched and listless, were by hunger roused:

placed him here, and God, he knows, can save.

XX
THE AVON
A FEEDER OF THE ANNAN

1831. 1835

Yet is it one that other rivulets bear.”

re is the Shakspere Avon, the Bristol m; the one that flows by Salisbury, and e

XXI
SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMINENCE IN INGLEWOOD FOREST

1831. 1835

The extensive forest of Inglewood has been enclosed within my memory. I was well acquainted with it in its ancient state. The Hart’s-horn tree mentioned in the next Sonnet was one of its remarkable objects, as well as another tree that grew upon an eminence not far from Penrith: it was single and conspicuous; and being of a round shape, though it was universally known to be a Sycamore, it was always called the “Round Thorn,” so difficult is it to chain fancy down to fact.

The forest huge of ancient Caledon

Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,

That swept from hill to hill, from flood to flood:

On her last thorn the nightly moon has shone;

Yet still, though unappropriate Wild be none,
Fair parks spread wide where Adam Bell
might deign
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive
again,
To kill for merry feast their venison.
Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade
His church with monumental wreck be-
strown;
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost unladen,
Hath still his castle, though a skeleton,
That he may watch by night, and lessons con
Of power that perishes, and rights that
fade.

XXII
HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PEN-
RITH
1831. 1835
Here stood an Oak, that long had borne
affixed
To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle art,
Among its withering topmost branches
mixed,
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued — his
part
Each desperately sustaining, till at last
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the
chased
And chaser bursting here with one dire
smart.
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!
High was the trophy hung with pitiless
pride;
Say, rather, with that generous sympathy
That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a
seat;
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one
chide
Verse that would guard thy memory,
HART'S-HORN TREE!

XXIII
FANCY AND TRADITION
1831. 1835
The Lovers took within this ancient grove
Their last embrace; beside those crystal
springs
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his
wings

For instant flight; the Sage in you
Sate musing; on that hill the Bard
rove,
Not mute, where now the linnet only
Thus everywhere to truth Tradition
Or Fancy localises Powers we love.
Were only History licensed to take up
Of things gone by, her meagre rem-
nants
Would ill suffice for persons and events.
There is an ampler page for man to put
A reader book of manifold contents,
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

XXIV
COUNTESS'S PILLAR
1831. 1835
Suggested by the recollection of John
Bower and other traditions connected with
ancient forest.
On the roadside between Penrith and
Appleby, there stands a pillar with the
following inscription:
"This Pillar was erected, in the year 1753
Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke &c
a memorial of her last parting with her
mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Te
erland, on the 2d of April, 1610; in which
whereof she hath left an annuity of 4l. to be
distributed to the poor of the parish of Bridge
every 2d day of April for ever, upon the table placed hard by. Laus Deo!"

While the Poor gather round, till the
end of time
May this bright flower of Charity display
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed
Flower than the loveliest of the
prime
Lovelier — transplanted from the
purest clime!
"Charity never faileth:" on that creed
More than on written testament or deed.
The pious Lady built with hope sublime
Aims on this stone to be dealt out, for
"LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing
Has with that Parting mixed a filial
Blest its humane Memorial's fond deavour;
And, fastening on those lines an eye to
glazed,
Has ended, though no Clerk, with "O
be praised!"
XXV

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

ON THE ROMAN STATION AT OLD PENRITH

1831. 1835

That from a threshold loved by every Muse
Its impulse took—that sorrow-stricken door,
Whence, as a current from its fountainhead,
Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings flowed,
Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength
From kindred sources; while around us sighed
(Life’s three first seasons having passed away)
Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost sprinklings fell
(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland heights;
And every day brought with it tidings new
Of rash change, ominous for the public weal.
Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached
Upon that sweet and tender melancholy
Which may itself be cherished and caressed
More than enough; a fault so natural
(Even with the young, the hopeful, or the gay)
For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

XXVI

POLOGY FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS

1831. 1835

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt, abrupt—as without preconceived design as the beginning; yet the several Lays have moved in order, to each other bound;
a continuous and acknowledged tie
rough unapparent—like those Shapes distinct
that yet survive ensculptured on the walls
of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck
of famed Persepolis; each following each,
s might beseeem a stately embassy, a set array; these bearing in their hands
signs of civil power, weapon of war, or gift to be presented at the throne of the Great King; and others, as they go
a priestly vest, with holy offerings charged, or leading victims drest for sacrifice.

For will the Power we serve, that sacred Power,
The Spirit of humanity, disdain
administration humble but sincere,
A land where gentle manners ruled  
O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,  
That raised, for centuries, a bar  
Impervious to the tide of war:  
Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain  
Where haughty Force had striven in vain;  
And, 'mid the works of skilful hands,  
By wanderers brought from foreign lands  
And various climes, was not unknown  
The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown;  
The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,  
Still in the Highland Broach is seen,  
The silver Broach of massy frame,  
Worn at the breast of some grave Dame  
On road or path, or at the door  
Of fern-thatched hut on heathy moor:  
But delicate of yore its mould,  
And the material finest gold;  
As might beseeem the fairest Fair,  
Whether she graced a royal chair,  
Or shed, within a vaulted hall,  
No fancied lustre on the wall  
Where shields of mighty heroes hung,  
While Fingal heard what Ossian sung.  

The heroic Age expired — it slept  
Deep in its tomb: — the bramble crept  
O'er Fingal's hearth; the grassy sod  
Grew on the floors his sons had trod:  
Malvina! where art thou? Their state  
The noblest-born must abdicate;  
The fairest, while with fire and sword  
Come Spoilers — horde impelling horde,  
Must walk the sorrowing mountains, drest  
By ruder hands in homelier vest.  
Yet still the female bosom lent,  
And loved to borrow, ornament;  
Still was its inner world a place  
Reached by the dews of heavenly grace;  
Still pity to this last retreat  
Clove fondly; to his favourite seat  
Love wound his way by soft approach,  
Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage  
Yet fiercer, in a darker age;  
And feuds, where, clan encountering clain  
The weaker perished to a man;  
For maid and mother, when despair  
Might else have triumphed, baffling new  
One small possession lacked not power;  
Provided in a calmer hour,  
To meet such need as might befall —  
Roof, raiment, bread, or burial:  
For woman, even of tears bereft,  
The hidden silver Broach was left.  

As generations come and go  
Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow:  
Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers are;  
And feeble, of themselves, decay;  
What poor abodes the heiroom hide,  
In which the castle once took pride!  
Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,  
If saved at all, are saved by stealth.  
Lo! ships, from seas by nature barred.  
Mount along ways by man prepared;  
And in far-stretching vales, whose strem  
Seek other seas, their canvas gleams.  
Lo! busy towns spring up, on coasts  
Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts;  
Soon, like a lingering star forlorn  
Among the novelties of morn,  
While young delights on old encroach  
Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

Devotional Incitations

1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount.

"Not to the earth confined,  
Ascend to heaven."

Where will they stop, those breathing  
Powers,  
The Spirits of the new-born flowers?

They wander with the breeze, they will  
Where'er the streams a passage find;  
Up from their native ground they rise  
In mute aerial harmonies;  
From humble violet — modest thyme —  
Exhaled, the essential odours climb,  
As if no space below the sky  
Their subtle flight could satisfy:  
Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride.  
If like ambition be their guide.
And vapours magnify and spread
The glory of the sun's bright head—
Still constant in her worship, still
Conforming to the eternal Will,
Whether men sow or reap the fields,
Divine monition Nature yields,
That not by bread alone we live,
Or what a hand of flesh can give;
That every day should leave some part
Free for a sabbath of the heart:
So shall the seventh be truly blest,
From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

“CALM IS THE FRAGRANT AIR”

1832. 1835

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose
Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with falling dew.

Look for the stars, you'll say that there are none;
Look up a second time, and, one by one,
You mark them twinkling out with silvery light,
And wonder how they could elude the sight!

The birds, of late so noisy in their bower's
Warbled a while with faint and fainter powers,
But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers:
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron tone

The time's and season's influence disown;
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound
In drowsy sequence — how unlike the sound
That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear
On fireside listeners, doubting what they hear!

The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,
Had closed his door before the day was done,
And now with thankful heart to bed doth creep,
And joins his little children in their sleep.

The bat, lured forth where trees the lane o'ershade,

Flits and refits along the close arcade;
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth
With burring note, which Industry and Sloth
Might both be pleased with, for it suits them both.
A stream is heard — I see it not, but know
By its soft music whence the waters flow:
Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no more;
One boat there was, but it will touch the shore
With the next dipping of its slackened oar;
Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the gay,
Might give to serious thought a moment’s sway,
As a last token of man’s toilsome day!

Through sunshine fritting from the sky
To nestle in the rock.
Transient deception! a gay freak
Of April’s mimeries!
Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy
Among the budding trees,
Proved last year’s leaves, pushed from spray
To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora! show thy face,
And let thy hand be seen,
Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers,
That, as they touch the green,
Take root (so seems it) and look up
In honour of their Queen.
Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,
That not in vain aspired
To be confounded with live growths,
Most dainty, most admired,
Were only blossoms dropt from twigs
Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the World’s illusive shows;
Her wingless flutterings,
Her blossoms which, though shed, cannot
The floweret as it springs,
For the undue deceived, smile as they may,
Are melancholy things:
But gentle Nature plays her part
With ever-varying wiles,
And transient feignings with plain truth
So well she reconciles,
That those fond Idlers most are pleased
Whom oftest she beguiles.

RURAL ILLUSIONS
1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. Observed a hundred times in the grounds there.

SYLPH was it? or a Bird more bright
Than those of fabulous stock?
A second darted by; — and lo!
Another of the flock,

LOVING AND LIKING
IRREGULAR VERSES
ADDRESSED TO A CHILD
(BY MY SISTER)
1832. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. I believe, out of a casual expression of one of his Swinburne’s children.

There’s more in words than I can teach:
Yet listen, Child! — I would not preach;
But only give some plain directions
To guide your speech and your affection.
Say not you love a roasted fowl,
But you may love a screaming owl.
You love your sister, and your friends,
And countless blessings which God sends:
And while these right affections play,
You live each moment of your day;
They lead each on to full content,
And likings fresh and innocent,
That store you to full content,
And prompt to many a gentle deed:
But likings come, and pass away;
'T is love that remains till our latest day:
Our heavenward guide is holy love,
And will be our bliss with saints above.

UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST
MARCH 1832
1832. 1832

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;
And in the Senate some there were who
doffed
The last of their humanity, and scoffed
At providential judgments, undismayed
By their own daring. But the People
prayed
As with one voice; their flinty heart grew
soft
With penitential sorrow, and aloft
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us
aid!"
Oh that with aspirations more intense,
Chastised by self-abasement more pro-
found,
This People, once so happy, so renowned
For liberty, would seek from God defence
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

FILIAL PIETY
ON THE WAYSIDE BETWEEN PRESTON
AND LIVERPOOL
1832(?). 1832

This was communicated to me by a coach-
man at whose side I sat while he was driving.
In the course of my many coach rambles and
journeys, which, during the daytime always
and often in the night, were taken on the out-
side of the coach, I had good and frequent op-
portunities of learning the characteristics of
this class of men. One remark I made that is
worth recording; that whenever I had occasion
especially to notice their well-ordered, respect-
ful, and kind behaviour to women, of whatever age, I found them, I may say almost always, to be married men.

UNTouched through all severity of cold; Inviolate, whate’er the cottage hearth Might need for comfort, or for festal mirth; That Pile of Turf is half a century old: Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been told Since suddenly the dart of death went forth 'Gainst him who raised it,—his last work on earth:
Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a hold
Upon his Father’s memory, that his hands, Through reverence, touch it only to repair Its waste.—Though crumbling with each breath of air, In annual renovation thus it stands — Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle there, And red-breasts warble when sweet sounds are rare.

"IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY LIGHT FROM HEAVEN"

1832. 1836

These verses were written some time after we had become residents at Rydal Mount, and I will take occasion from them to observe upon the beauty of that situation, as being backed and flanked by lofty fells, which bring the heavenly bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the mountain-tops, while the prospect in front lies open to a length of level valley, the extended lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills; so that it gives an opportunity to the inhabitants of the place of noticing the stars in both the positions here alluded to, namely, on the tops of the mountains, and as winter-lamps at a distance among the leafless trees.

If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven, Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light, Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content: — The stars pre-eminent in magnitude, And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth, Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin, No purer essence, than the one that burns,

Like an unvented watch-fire on the rise Of some dark mountain; or that blue Which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling wise lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless tree. All are the undying offspring of one Sire Then, to the measure of the light which was safed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.

TO THE AUTHOR’S PORTRAIT

Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill Esq., for St. John’s College, Cambridge.

1832. 1835

The six last lines of this Sonnet are written for poetical effect, but as a matter of fact, which, in more than one instance, can not escape my notice in the servants of the house.

Go, faithful Portrait! and where long hast knelt Margaret, the Saintly Foundress, take a place;
And, if Time spare the colours for the past Which to the work surpassing skill had dealt,
Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kings and doms melt And states be torn up by the roots, wilt To breathe in rural peace, to hear a stream, And think and feel as once the Poet felt Whate’er thy fate, those features have grown Unrecognised through many a house’s tear
More prompt, more glad, to fall than dew of dew By morning shed around a flower’d blown; Tears of delight, that testified how true To life thou art, and, in thy truth, so dear!

A WREN’S NEST

1833. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. This was built, as described, in a tree that grew the pool in Dora’s field next the Rydal Mount garden.
The treasure proudly did I show
To some whose minds without disdain
Can turn to little things; but once
Looked up for it in vain:

’Tis gone — a ruthless spoiler’s prey,
Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,
’Tis gone! (so seemed it) and we grieved
Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by
In clearer light the moss-built cell
I saw, expiring its shaded mouth;
And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread
The largest of her upright leaves;
And thus, for purposes benign,
A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb
Thy quiet with no ill intent,
Secure from evil eyes and hands
On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird! and when thy young
Take flight, and thou art free to roam,
When withered is the guardian Flower,
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,
Amid the unviolated grove,
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft
In foresight, or in love.

TO ———

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN
CHILD, MARCH 1833

1833. 1835

Written at Moresby near Whitehaven, when
I was on a visit to my son, then Incumbent of
that small living. While I am dictating these
notes to my friend, Miss Fenwick, January 24,
1843, the child upon whose birth these verses
were written is under my roof, and is of a dispo-
sition so promising that the wishes and prayers
and prophecies which I then breathed forth in
verse are, through God’s mercy, likely to be
realised.

"Tum porro paen, ut servis projectus ab undis
Navita, nundis humi jacet, etc." — LUCRETIUS.
LIKE a shipwrecked Sailor tost
By rough waves on a perilous coast,
Lies the Babe, in helplessness
And in tenderest nakedness,
Flung by labouring nature forth
Upon the mercies of the earth.
Can its eyes beseech — no more
Than the hands are free to implore:
Voice but serves for one brief cry;
Plaint was it? or prophecy
Of sorrow that will surely come?
Omen of man's grievous doom!

But, O Mother! by the close
Duly granted to thy throes;
By the silent thanks, now tending
Incense-like to Heaven, descending
Now to mingle and to move
With the gush of earthy love,
As a debt to that frail Creature,
Instrument of struggling Nature
For the blissful calm, the peace
Known but to this one release —
Can the pitying spirit doubt
That for human-kind springs out
From the penalty a sense
Of more than mortal recompence?

As a floating summer cloud,
Though of gorgeous drapery proud,
To the sun-burnt traveller,
Or the stooping labourer,
Oft-times makes its bounty known
By its shadow round him thrown;
So, by chequerings of sad cheer,
Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,
Of their presence tell — too bright
Haply for corporeal sight!
Ministers of grace divine
 Feelingly their brows incline
O'er this seeming Castaway
Breathing, in the light of day,
Something like the faintest breath
That has power to baffle death —
Beautiful, while very weakness
Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother! under warrant
Of the universal Parent,
Who repays in season due
Them who have, like thee, been true
To the filial chain let down
From his everlasting throne,
Angels hovering round thy couch,
With their softest whispers vouch,
That — whatever griefs may fret,
Cares entangle, sins beset,
This thy First-born, and with tears
Stain her cheek in future years —
Heavenly succour, not denied
To the babe, whate'er betide,
Will to the woman be supplied!
Mother! blest be thy calm ease;
Blest the starry promises, —
And the firmament benign
Hallowed be it, where they shine!
Yes, for them whose souls have scope
Ample for a winged hope,
And can earthward bend an ear
For needful listening, pledge is here,
That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread
In thy footsteps, and be led
By that other Guide, whose light
Of manly virtues, mildly bright,
Gave him first the wished-for part
In thy gentle virgin heart;
Then, amid the storms of life
Presignified by that dread strife
Whence ye have escaped together,
She may look for serene weather;
In all trials sure to find
Comfort for a faithful mind;
Kindlier issues, holier rest,
Than even now await her prest,
Conscious Nursling, to thy breast!

THE WARNING

A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING
1833. 1835

These lines were composed during the free
spread through the Nation by the Reform.
As the motives which led to this measure, a
the good or evil which has attended or has re
from it, will be duly appreciated by his
historians, there is no call for dwelling on
this subject in this place. I will content mys
with saying that the then condition of a
people's mind is not, in these verses, en
egerated.

List, the winds of March are blowing;
Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of the
ning
Their meek heads to the nipping air,
Which ye feel not, happy pair!
Sunk into a kindly sleep.
We, meanwhile, our hope will keep;
And if Time leagued with adverse tangles
(Too busy fear!) shall cross its range,
Whatsoever check they bring,
THE WARNING

ions duty hindering, ill
ike hope our prayers will cling
hus, while the ruminating spirit feeds
n the events of home as life proceeds,
ctions pure and holy in their source
a fresh impulse, run a livelier course;
es that within the Father’s heart pre-
vail;
in the experienced Grandsire’s slow to
fail;
if the harp pleased his gay youth, it
rings
his grave touch with no unready strings,
le thoughts press on, and feelings over-
flow,
quick words round him fall like flakes
of snow.
hanks to the Powers that yet maintain
their sway,
I have renewed the tributary Lay.
ths of the heart flock in with eager
pace,
Fancy greets them with a fond em-
brace;
fit as the rising sun his beams extends
shoots the tidings forth to distant
friends;
ir gifts she hails (deemed precious, as
they prove
the unconscious Babe so prompt a
love!).

from this peaceful centre of delight,
ogue sympathies have urged her to take
flight
pt into upper regions, like the bee
it suck from mountain heath her honey
fee;
like the warbling lark intent to shroud
head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,
scars — and here and there her pinions
rest
proud towers, like this humble cottage,
blest
th a new visitant, an infant guest —
ers where red streamers float the breezy
sky
pomp foreseen by her creative eye,
hen feasts shall crowd the hall, and
steeple bells
d proclamation make, and heights and
dells
tch the blithe music as it sinks and
swells,
’d harboured ships, whose pride is on the
sea,

Shall hoist their topmost flags in sign of
glee,
Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.
But who (though neither reckoning ills
assigned
By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind
The track that was, and is, and must be,
worth
With weary feet by all of woman born) —
Shall now by such a gift with joy be moved,
Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved?
Not He, whose last faint memory will
command
The truth that Britain was his native land;
Whose infant soul was tutored to confide
In the cleansed faith for which her martyrs
died;
Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown
With rapture thrilled; whose Youth re-
vered the crown
Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor!
— Not He, who from her mellowed practice
drew
His social sense of just, and fair, and true;
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France
Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,
Foundations broken up, the deeps run wild,
Nor grieved to see (himself not unbe-
guiled) —
Woke from the dream, the dreamer to up-
braid,
And learn how sanguine expectations fade
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed, —
To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain
From further havoc, but repent in vain, —
Good aims lie down, and perish in the road
Where guilt had urged them on with cease-
less goad,
Proofs thickening round her that on public
ends
Domestic virtue vitally depends,
That civic strife can turn the happiest
hearth
Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting
earth.
Can such a One, dear Babe! though
 glad and proud
To welcome thee, repel the fears that crowd
Into his English breast, and spare to quake
Less for his own than for thy innocent sake?
Too late — or, should the providence of
God
Lead, through dark ways by sin and sorrow
trud,
Justice and peace to a secure abode,  
Too soon — thou com'st into this breathing  
world;  
Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.  
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering  
Realm?  
What hand suffice to govern the state-helm?  
If, in the aims of men, the surest test  
Of good or bad (whate'er be sought for or  
profest)  
Lie in the means required, or ways ord- 
ained,  
For compassing the end, else never gained;  
Yet governors and governed both are blind  
To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;  
If to expediency principle must bow;  
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the in-

cumbent Now;  
If cowardly concession still must feed  
The thirst for power in men who ne'er con-
ceed;  
Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way  
For domination at some riper day;  
If generous Loyalty must stand in awe  
Of subtle Treason, in his mask of law,  
Or with bravado insolent and hard,  
Provoking punishment, to win reward;  
If office help the factious to conspire,  
And they who should extinguish, fan the  
fire —  
Then, will the sceptre be a straw, the crown  
Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down;  
To be blown off at will, by Power that  
spares it  
In cunning patience, from the head that  
wears it.  
Lost people, trained to theoretic feud!  
Lost above all, ye labouring multitude!  
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous  
tongues  
Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs;  
And over fancied usurpations brood,  
Oft snarling at revenge in sullen mood;  
Or, from long stress of real injuries, fly  
To desperation for a remedy;  
In bursts of outrage spread your judgments  
wide,  
And to your wrath cry out, "Be thou our  
guide;"  
Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread  
earth's floor  
In marshalled thousands, darkening street  
and moor  
With the worst shape mock-patience ever  
wore;  
Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem  
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream  
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage bent  
Justice shall rule, disorder be supprest,  
And every man sit down as Plenty's Guest.  
— Oh for a bridle bitted with remorse  
To stop your Leaders in their headlong  
course!  
Oh may the Almighty scatter with his grace  
These mists, and lead you to a safer path.  
By paths no human wisdom can foretell!  
May He pour round you, from worlds above  
Man's feverish passions, his pure light of  
love,  
That quietly restores the natural men  
To hope, and makes truth willing to be seen  
Else shall your blood-stained hands a  
frenzy reap  
Fields gaily sown when promises were  
cheap. —  
Why is the Past belied with wicked art?  
The Future made to play so false a part.  
Among a people famed for strength of  
mind,  
Foremost in freedom, noblest of mankind!  
We act as if we joyed in the sad time  
Storms make in rising, valued in the noon  
Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrate-
ful Nation!  
If thou persist, and scorning moderation,  
Spread for thyself the snares of tribulation  
Whom, then, shall meekness guard? What  
saving skill  
Lie in forbearance, strength in steady  
still?  
— Soon shall the widow (for the speed of  
Time  
Nought equals when the hours are spent  
with crime)  
Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous knee  
From him who judged her lord, a like decree;  
The skies will weep o'er old men dejected  
Ye little-ones! Earth shudders at your  
fate,  
Outcasts and homeless orphans —   
But turn, my Soul, and from the sleeping  
pair  
Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care!  
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thought  
lie still;  
Seek for the good and cherish it — the  
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.
The grass-crowned headland that conceals
the shore?
No; 't is the earth-voice of the mighty sea,
Whispering how meek and gentle he can be!
Thou Power supreme! who, arming to
rebuke
Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,
And clothe thyself with terrors like the
flood
Of ocean roused into its fiercest mood,
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain
For the brief course that must for me re-
main;
Teach me with quick-ear'd spirit to rejoice
In admonitions of thy softest voice!
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may
trace,
Breathe through my soul the blessing of
ty grace,
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith sincere
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with
fear,
Glad to expand; and, for a season, free
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee!

The sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to
rest,
And the wild storm hath somewhere found
a nest;
Air slumbers — wave with wave no longer
strives,
Only a heaving of the deep survives,
A tell-tale motion! soon will it be laid,
And by the tide alone the water swayed.
Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings mild
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled —
Such is the prospect far as sight can range,
The soothing recompense, the welcome
change.

Where, now, the ships that drove before
the blast,
Threatened by angry breakers as they
passed;
And by a train of flying clouds bemocked;
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked
As on a bed of death? Some lodge in
peace,
Saved by His care who bade the tempest
cease;
And some, too heedless of past danger,
court
Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port,
But near, or hanging sea and sky between,
Not one of all those wing'd powers is seen,
Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet heard;
Yet oh! how gladly would the air be stirred
By some acknowledgment of thanks and praise,
Soft in its temper as those vesper lays
Sung to the Virgin while accordant cars
Urge the slow bark along Calabrian shores;
A sea-born service through the mountains felt
Till into one loved vision all things melt:

Or like those hymns that soothe with gr sound
The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound:
And, from the wide and open Baltic,
With punctual care, Lutheran harm:
Hush, not a voice is here! but why then
Now when the star of eve comes forth,
shine
On British waters with that look benign
Ye mariners, that plough your onward
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,
May silent thanks at least to God be given
With a full heart; “our thoughts are as
in heaven.”

POEMS

COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR IN THE SUMME
OF 1833

My companions were H. C. Robinson and my son John.

Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and is the author made those the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumbernauld to Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Awe, Inverary, Loch Goil-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, Dumfriesshire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.

I
1833. 1835
ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels! that have grown
And spread as if ye knew that days might come
When ye would shelter in a happy home,
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown
To sue the God; but, haunting your green shade
All seasons through, is humbly pleased to braid
Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship, self-sown.
Farewell! no Minstrels now with harp new-strung
For summer wandering quit their household bowers;
Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

II
1833. 1835
Why should the Enthusiast, journey through this Isle
Repine as if his hour were come too late,
Not unprotected in her mouldering walls.
Antiquity salutes him with a smile,
‘Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocotwil,
And pleasure-grounds where Taste, renews
Co-mate
Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate.
Far as she may, primeval Nature’s style.
Fair land! by Time’s parental love made free,
By Social Order’s watchful arms enbraced;
With unexampled union meet in thee,
For eye and mind, the present and the past;
With golden prospect for futurity,
If that be reverenced which ought to be.
III
1833. 1835

ey called Thee MERRY ENGLAND, in old time;
sappy people won for thee that name
th envy heard in many a distant clime;
I, spite of change, for me thou keep'st at the same
hearing title, a responsive chime
the heart's fond belief; though some there are
ose stern judgments deem that word
a inane
防治 inattentive Fancy, like the lime
ich foolish birds are caught with. Can, I ask,
is face of rural beauty be a mask
r discontent, and poverty, and crime;
ese spreading towns a cloak for lawless will?
bid it, Heaven! — and MERRY ENGLAND still
all be thy rightful name, in prose and rhyme!

IV
O THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK
1833. 1835

greta, what fearful listening! when huge
stones
umble along thy bed, block after block:
r, whirling with reiterated shock,
bomb, while darkness aggravates the groans:
if thou (like Ceyxus from the moans
card on his rueful margin) thence wert named
he Mournor, thy true nature was de-
famed,
nd the habitual murmur that stones
or thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as
Spring
necks, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand
rones
cats of glad instinct and love's carolling,
he concert, for the happy, then may vie
With liveliest peals of birth-day har-
momy:
lo a grieved heart, the notes are beni-
s.

V
IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH
1833. 1835

Where the Author was born, and his Father's remains are laid.

A POINT of life between my Parent's dust,
And yours, my buried Little-ones! am I;
And to those graves looking habitually
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.
Death to the innocent is more than just,
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent;
So may I hope, if truly I repent
And meekly bear the ills which bear I must:
And You, my Offspring! that do still re-
main,
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
We breathed together for a moment's space,
The wrong, by love provoked, let love
arraign,
And only love keep in your hearts a place.

VI
ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE
1833. 1835

"Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,
We, differing once so much, are now Com-
peers,
Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink
Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link
United us; when thou, in boyish play,
Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey
To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink
Of light was there; — and thus did I, thy Tutor,
Make thy young thoughts acquainted with
the grave;
While thou wert chasing the winged but-
terfly
Through my green courts; or climbing, a
bold suitor,
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
Still round my shattered brow in beauty
wave."
VII
NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM
1833. 1835

So named from the religious House which stood close by. I have rather an odd anecdote to relate of the Nun's Well. One day the landlady of a public-house, a field's length from the well, on the road side, said to me — "You have been to see the Nun's Well, Sir?" — "The Nun's Well! what is that?" said the Postman, who in his royal livery stopt his mail-car at the door. The landlady and I explained to him what the name meant, and what sort of people the nuns were. A countryman who was standing by, rather tipsy, stammered out — "Aye, those nuns were good people; they are gone; but we shall soon have them back again." The Reform mania was just then at its height.

The cattle crowding round this beverage clear
To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs have trod
The encircling turf into a barren cload;
Through which the waters creep, then disappear,
Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near;
Yet, o'er the brink, and round the lime-stone cell
Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's Well,"
Name that first struck by chance my startled ear)
A tender Spirit broods — the pensive Shade
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid
By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer;
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild
Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

VIII
TO A FRIEND
ON THE BANKS OF THE DERWENT
1833. 1835

My son John, who was then building a parsonage on his small living at Brigham.

Pastor and Patriot! — at whose bidding rise
These modest walls, amid a flock that need,
For one who comes to watch them and to feed,
A fixed Abode — keep down precausal sighs.
Threats, which the unthinking only can dispute,
Perplex the Church; but be thou firm,— be true
To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,
Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice
Doest Thou prepare, whose sign will be the smoke
Of thy new hearth; and sooner shall its wreaths,
Mounting while earth her morning incense breathes,
From wandering fiends of air receive a yoke,
And straightway cease to aspire, than God disdain
This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

IX
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT, WORKINGTON
1833. 1835

I will mention for the sake of the friend this is writing down these notes, that it was among the fine Scotch firs near Ambleside, and particularly those near Green Bank, that I have ever and over again paused at the sight of this image. Long may they stand to afford a like gratification to others! — This wish is not uncalled for, several of their brethren having already disappeared.

Dear to the Loves, and to the Grace vowed,
The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore;
And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian shore
Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed!
And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darted,
When a soft summer gale at evening part
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)
She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,
Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,
With thy stern aspect better far agrees
Utterance of thanks that we have past with ease,
As millions thus shall do, the Headlands of St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her store,
What boots the gain if Nature should lose more?
And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian place
In man’s intelligence sublimed by grace?

When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian coast,
Tempestuous winds her holy errand crossed:
She knelt in prayer—the waves their wrath appease;
And, from her vow well weighed in Heaven’s decrees,
Rose, where she touched the strand, the Chantry of St. Bees.

"Cruel of heart were they, bloody of hand,"
Who in these Wilds then struggled for command;
The strong were merciless, without hope the weak;
Till this bright Stranger came, fair as daybreak,

And as a crescent true that darts its length
Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength;
Guiding the mariner through troubled seas,
And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,
Like the fixed Light that crowns yon Headland of St. Bees.

To aid the Votaries, miracles believed
Wrought in men’s minds, like miracles achieved;
So piety took root; and Song might tell
What humanizing virtues near her cell
Sprang up, and spread their fragrance wide around;

How savage bosoms melted at the sound
Of gospel-truth enchained in harmonies
Wafted o’er waves, or creeping through close trees,
From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument of love,
Was glorified, and took its place, above
The silent stars, among the angelic quire,  
Her chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,  
And perished utter; but her good deeds  
Had sown the spot, that witnessed them,  
with seeds  
Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze  
With quickening impulse answered their mute pleas,  
And lo! a statelier pile, the Abbey of St. Bees.  

There are the naked clothed, the hungry fed;  
And Charity extendeth to the dead  
Her intercessions made for the soul's rest  
Of tardy penitents; or for the best  
Among the good (when love might else have slept,  
Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.  
Thanks to the austere and simple Devotees,  
Who, to that service bound by venial fees,  
Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.  

Are not, in sooth, their Requiem’s sacred tides  
Woven out of passion’s sharpest agonies,  
Subdued, composed, and formalized by art,  
To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart?  
The prayer for them whose hour is past away  
Says to the Living, profit while ye may!  
A little part, and that the worst, he sees  
Who thinks that priestly cunning holds the keys  
That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.  

Conscience, the timid being’s inmost light,  
Hope of the dawn and solace of the night,  
Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray  
In many an hour when judgment goes astray.  
Ah! scorn not hastily their rule who try  
Earth to despise, and flesh to mortify;  
Consume with zeal, in winged ecstasies  
Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,  
Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees.  

Yet none so prompt to succour and protect  
The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked  

On the bare coast; nor do they grudge a boon  
Which staff and cockle hat and same ahoon  
Claim for the pilgrim: and, though his  
Heart may sometimes greet the strolling as  
Stere’s harp, it is not then, swept with space  
Ease, it charms a feast-day throng of all degrees,  
Brightening the archway of revered St. Bees.  

How did the cliffs and echoing hills a joice  
What time the Benedictine Brethren’s voice,  
Imploring, or commanding with meet prise  
Summoned the Chiefs to lay their fret aside,  
And under one best ensign serve a Lord  
In Palestine. Advance, indignant Swall!  
Flaming till thou from Panym hands a lease  
That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities  
Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.  

But look we now to them whose mind from far  
Follow the fortunes which they may a share.  
While in Judea Fancy loves to roam,  
She helps to make a Holy-land at home:  
The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere invites  
To sound the crystal depth of maidens rights;  
And wedded Life, through scriptural mysteries,  
Heavenward ascends with all her charities,  
Taught by the hooded Celibates of St. Bees.  

Nor be it e’er forgotten how, by skill  
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls at will  
With love of God, throughout the Land were raised  
Churches, on whose symbolic beauty paled  
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with piety awe;
at this day men seeing what they saw,
the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,
die to more than earthly destinies;
messe you File that greets us from St. Bees.

more; around those Churches, gathered

towns from the feudal Castle's haughty
frowns;
peaceful abodes, where Justice might up-
hold
scales with even hand, and culture
mould
heart to pity, train the mind in care
rules of life, sound as the Time could
bear.

dost thou fail, thro' abject love of
ease,
hindrance raised by sordid purposes,
bear thy part in this good work, St.
Bees.

10 with the ploughshare clove the barren
moors,
d to green meadows changed the swampy
shores?
inned the rank woods; and for the cheer-
ful grange
side room, where wolf and boar were used
to range?
ho taught, and showed by deeds, that
gentler chains
could bind the vassal to his lord's do-
ments?—

thoughtful Monks, intent their God to
please,
or Christ's dear sake, by human sympa-
thies
poured from the bosom of thy Church, St.
Bees!

140 it all availed not; by a mandate given
through lawless will the Brotherhood was
driven
forth from their cells; their ancient House
laid low
Reformation's sweeping overthrow.
at now once more the local Heart re-
vives,
the inextinguishable Spirit strives.

may that Power who hushed the stormy
seas,
nd cleared a way for the first Votaries,
rosper the new-born College of St. Bees!

Alas! the Genius of our age, from Schools
Less humble, draws her lessons, aims, and
rules.

To Prowess guided by her insight keen
Matter and Spirit are as one Machine;
Boastful Idolatress of formal skill
She in her own would merge the eternal
will:

Better, if Reason's triumphs match with
these,

Her flight before the bold credulities
That furthered the first teaching of St.
Bees.

XI

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN
THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND
AND THE ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or Black-
comb,
In his lone course the Shepherd oft will
pause,
And strive to fathom the mysterious laws
By which the clouds, arrayed in light or
gloom,
On Mona settle, and the shapes assume
Of all her peaks and ridges. What he
draws
From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the
cause,
He will take with him to the silent tomb.
Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,
Haply the untaught Philosopher may speak
Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory
That satisfies the simple and the meek,
Blest in their pious ignorance, though
weak
To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

XII

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith
was strong
And doubts and scruples seldom teased the
brain,
That no adventurer's bark had power to gain
These shores if he approached them bent
on wrong;
For, suddenly up—conjured from the Main,
Mists rose to hide the Land— that search,
though long
And eager, might be still pursued in vain.
O Fancy, what an age was that for song!
That age, when not by laws inanimate,
As men believed, the waters were impelled,
The air controlled, the stars their courses held;
But element and orb on acts did wait
Of Powers endured with visible form, instinct
With will, and to their work by passion linked.

XIII
1833. 1835

DESIRe we past illusions to recall?
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide
Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn aside?
No,— let this Age, high as she may, instaIn her esteem the thirst that wrought man's fall,
The universe is infinitely wide;
And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith! canst overleap,
In progress toward the fount of Love,— the throne
Of Power whose ministers the records keep
Of periods fixed, and laws established, less Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

XIV
ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN
1833. 1835

"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori."

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,
Even when they rose to check or to repel
Tides of aggressive war, oft served as well
Greedy ambition, armed to treat with scorn
Just limits; but yon Tower, whose smiles adorn
This perilous bay, stands clear of all offence;

XVI
ISLE OF MAN
1833. 1835

My son William is here the person alluded
to as saving the life of the youth, and the circumstance were as mentioned in the Somet

A YOUTH too certain of his power to wait
On the smooth bottom of this clear bright sea,
To sight so shallow, with a bather's ease,
Leapt from this rock, and but for timely He, by the alluring element betrayed,
Had perished. Then might sea—更多的是
(and with sighs

Blest work it is of love and innocence,
A Tower of refuge built for the else forlorn
Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,
Struggling for life, into its saving arms!
Spare, too, the human helpers! Do they stir
'Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to die?
No; their dread service nerve the heart and warms,
And they are led by noble HILLARY.

XV
BY THE SEASHORE, ISLE OF MAN
1833. 1835

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling Brine,
With wonder smite by its transparency,
And all-enraptured with its purity?— Because the unstained, the clear, the crystalline,
Have ever in them something of benign;
Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,
A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye
Of a young maiden, only not divide.
Scarce the hand forbears to dip its palm For beverage drawn as from a mountain well;
Temptation centres in the liquid Calm;
Our daily raiment seems no obstacle
To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea! And revelling in long embrace with the
Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,
And hardships manifold did I endure,
For Fortune on me never deigned to smile;
Yet I at last a resting-place have found,
With just enough life's comforts to procure,
In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,
A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts abound;
Then sure I have no reason to complain,
Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.

XVII

ISLE OF MAN

1833. 1835

To pangs of grief for lenient time too keen,
To grief that devouring waves had caused, or guilt
Which they had witnessed — away the man who built
His Homestead, placed where nothing could be seen,
'Tought heard, of ocean troubled or serene?
Tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,
That o'er the channel holds august command,
Be dwelling raised, — a veteran Marine.
In disgust, turned from the neighbouring sea
Shun the memory of a listless life
Hat hung between two callings. May no strife
Here hurtful here beset him, doomed though free,
Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye
Brink from the daily sight of earth and sky!

XVIII

Y A RETIRED MARINER, H. H.
Mrs. Wordsworth's Brother Henry.

1833. 1835

From early youth I ploughed the restless Main,
By mind as restless and as apt to change;
'Through every clime and ocean did I range;
I hope at length a competence to gain;
Or poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.

XX

TYNWALD HILL

1833. 1835

Mr. Robinson and I walked the greater part
Of the way from Castle-town to Piel, and
Stopped some time at Tynwald Hill. One of
My companions was an elderly man, who in a
Muddy way (for he was tipsy) explained and
Answered, as far as he could, my enquiries
About this place and the ceremonies held here.
I found more agreeable company in some little
Children; one of whom, upon my request, re-
cited the Lord’s Prayer to me, and I helped her to a clearer understanding of it as well as I could; but I was not at all satisfied with my own part; hers was much better done, and I am persuaded that, like other children, she knew more about it than she was able to express, especially to a stranger.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald’s formal mound
(Still marked with green turf circles narrowing
Stage above stage) would sit this Island’s King,
The laws to promulgate, enrobed and crowned:
While, compassing the little mount around,
Degrees and Orders stood, each under each:
Now, like to things within fate’s easiest reach
The power is merged, the pomp a grave has found.
Off with you cloud, old Snafield! that thine eye
Over three Realms may take its widest range;
And let, for them, thy fountains utter strange
Voices, thy winds break forth in prophecy,
If the whole State must suffer mortal change
Like Mona’s miniature of sovereignty.

XXI
1833. 1835

DES POND who will — I heard a voice exclaim,
“Though fierce the assault, and shattered the defence,
It cannot be that Britain’s social frame,
The glorious work of time and providence,
Before a flying season’s rash pretence,
Should fall; that She, whose virtue put to shame,
When Europe prostrate lay, the Conqueror’s aim,
Should perish, self-subverted. Black and dense
The cloud is; but brings that a day of doom
To Liberty? Her sun is up the while,
That orb whose beams round Saxon Alfred shone:
Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye Streams, sweep on,
Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest Isle
Toss in the fanning wind a humbler plume.”

XXII

IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG

DURING AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, JULY 17
1833. 1835

The morning of the eclipse was exquisitely beautiful while we passed the Crag as described in the Sonnet. On the deck of the steamer were several persons of the poor and labouring class, and I could not but be struck by the cheerful talk with each other, while not one of them seemed to notice the magnificent object which we were surrounded; and even the phenomenon of the eclipse attracted but little of their attention. Was it right not to regret this? They appeared to me, however, so much alive in their own minds to their own concerns that I could not look upon it as a misfortune that they had little perception for such pleasures as cannot be cultivated without rest and leisure. Yet if one surveys life in all its duties and relations, such ease and leisure will not be found so enviable a privilege as it may at first appear. Natural Philosophy, Painting, and Poetry, and refined taste, are no small great acquisitions to society; but among those who dedicate themselves to such pursuits it is to be feared that few are as happy, and as consistent in the management of their lives, as the class of persons who at that time led me into this course of reflection. I do not mean by this to be understood to derogate from intellectual pursuits, for that would be monstrous: I say in deep gratitude for this compensation to those whose cares are limited to the necessities of daily life. Among them, self-tormented, as numerous in the higher classes of society, are rare.

SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,
Appeared the crag of Ailsa, ne’er did mor.
With gleaming lights more gracefully did His sides, or wreathes with mist his forehead high:
Now, faintly darkening with the sun’s eclipse,
Still is he seen, in lone sublimity,
Towering above the sea and little ships;
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing by.
Each for her haven; with her freight o’ Care,
Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom looks
Into the secret of to-morrow’s fare;
Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth of books,
An Eagle that could neither wail nor soar. 
Effigy of the Vanished — (shall I dare 
To call thee so?) or symbol of fierce deeds 
And of the towering courage which past 
times 
Rejoiced in — take, what’er thou be, a share, 
Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes 
That animate my way where’er it leads!

THE DUNOLLLY EAGLE
1833. 1835
Nor to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew; 
But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred, 
Came and delivered him, alone he sped 
Into the castle-dungeon’s darkest mew. 
Now, near his master’s house in open view 
He dwells, and hears indignant tempests howl, 
Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic fowl, 
Beware of him! Thou, saucy cockatoo, 
Look to thy plumage and thy life! — The roe, 
Fleet as the west wind, is for him no quarry; 
Balanced in ether he will never tarry, 
Eyeing the sea’s blue depths. Poor Bird! 
even so 
Doth man of brother man a creature make 
That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

WITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MACPHERSON’S OSSIAN
1824. 1827
The verses —
"Or strayed
From hope and promise, self-betrayed,"
were, I am sorry to say, suggested from apprehensions of the fate of my friend, H. C., the subject of the verses addressed to “H. C. when six years old.” The piece to “Memory” arose out of similar feelings.

Off have I caught, upon a fitful breeze, 
Fragments of far-off melodies, 
With ear not coveting the whole, 
A part so charmed the pensive soul. 
While a dark storm before my sight 
Was yielding, on a mountain height
Loose vapours have I watched, that won
Prismatic colours from the sun;
Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
The image of its perfect bow.

What need, then, of these finished Strains?
Away with counterfeit Remains!
An abbey in its lone recess,
A temple of the wilderness,
Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling
The majesty of honest dealing.
Spirit of Ossian! if inbound
In language thou may'st yet be found,
If aught (intrusted to the pen
Or floating on the tongues of men,
Albeit shattered and impaired)
Subsist thy dignity to guard,
In concert with memorial claim
Of old grey stone, and high-born name
That cleaves to rock or pillared cave
Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,
Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
Interpret that Original,
And for presumptuous wrongs stone;—
Authentic words be given, or none!

Time is not blind;— yet He, who spares
Pyramid pointing to the stars,
Hath preyed with ruthless appetite
On all that marked the primal flight
Of the poetic ecstasy
Into the land of mystery.
No tongue is able to rehearse
One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;
Museus, stationed with his lyre
Supreme among the Elysian quire,
Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
Why grieve for these, though past away
The music, and extinct the lay?
When thousands, by severer doom,
Full early to the silent tomb
Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed
From hope and promise, self-betrayed;
The garland withering on their brows;
Stung with remorse for broken vows;—
Frantic — else how might they rejoice?
And friendless, by their own sad choice!
Hail, Bards of mightier grasp! on you
I chiefly call, the chosen Few,
Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
Who faltered not, nor turned aside;
Whose lofty genius could survive
Privation, under sorrow thrive;
In whom the fiery Muse revered
The symbol of a snow-white beard,

Bedewed with meditative tears
Dropped from the lenient cloud of years
Brothers in soul! though distant times
Produced you nursed in various climes,
Ye, when the orb of life had waxed,
A plenitude of love retained:
Hence, while in you each sad regret
By corresponding hope was met,
Ye lingered among human kind,
Sweet voices for the passing wind,
Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,
Though smiling on the last hill top!
Such to the tender-hearted maid
Even ere her joys begin to fade;
Such, haply, to the rugged chief
By fortune crushed, or tam'd by grief;
Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
Dim-gleaming through imperfect b ore,
The Son of Fingal; such was blind
Mesonides of ampler mind;
Such Milton, to the fountain head
Of glory by Urania led!

XXVII
CAVE OF STAFFA
1833. 1835

We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,
Not One of us has felt the far-famed spot
How could we feel it? each the other's mind
Hurried and hurrying, volatile and lost.
O for those motions only that invite
The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave
By the breeze entered, and wave after wave
Softly embosoming the timid light!
And by one Votary who at will might gaze
And take into his mind and heart
With undistracted reverence, the effect
Of those proportions where the almighty hand
That made the worlds, the sovereign Architect,
Has deigned to work as if with human Art.

XXVIII
CAVE OF STAFFA
AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED
1833. 1835

Thanks for the lessons of this Spot —
For the presumptuous thoughts that we assign
anic laws to agency divine;
measuring heaven by earth, would
overwrite
ite Power. The pillared vestibule,
landing yet precise, the roof embowed,
at seem designed to humble man, when
proud
is best workmanship by plan and tool.
-r bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
ide and tempest on the Structure’s base,
flushing to that Structure’s topmost
height,
an has proved its strength, and of its
grace
alms is conscious, finding for his freight
softest music some responsive place.

XXIX
CAVE OF STAFFA
1833. 1835

shadowy Beings, that have rights and
claims
every cell of Fingal’s mystic Grot,
here are ye? Driven or venturing to the
spot,
\: fathers glimpses caught of your thin
Frames,
d, by your mien and bearing knew your
names;
d they could hear his ghostly song who
trod
th, till the flesh lay on him like a load,
hile he struck his desolate harp without
hopes or aims.
anished ye are, but subject to recall;
by keep we else the instincts whose dread
law
uled here of yore, till what men felt they
saw,
\: by black arts but magic natural!
\: eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,
on light shapes forth a Bard, that shade a
Chief.

XXX
LOWER ON THE TOP OF THE
PILLARS AT THE ENTRANCE
OF THE CAVE
1833. 1835

How smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers
that brave

What Summer here escapes not, the fierce
wave,
And whole artillery of the western blast,
Battering the Temple’s front, its long-drawn
nave
Smiting, as if each moment were their last.
But ye, bright Flowers on frieze and archi-
trave
Survive, and once again the Pile stands fast:
Calm as the Universe, from specular towers
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure
With mute astonishment, it stands sus-
tained
Through every part in symmetry, to endure,
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his
hours,
As the supreme Artificer ordained.

XXXI
IONA
1833. 1835

On to Iona! — What can she afford
To us save matter for a thoughtful sigh,
Heaved over ruin with stability
In urgent contrast? To diffuse the WORD
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and
Time’s Lord)
Her Temples rose, mid pagan gloom; but
why,
Even for a moment, has our verse deplored
Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their
destiny?
And when, subjected to a common doom
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,
Iona’s Saints, forgetting not past days,
Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,
While heaven’s vast sea of voices chants
their praise.

XXXII
IONA
UPON LANDING
1833. 1835

How sad a welcome! To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
Of wave-worn Pebbles, pleading on the
shore
Where once came monk and nun with gen-
tle stir,
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.  
Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful speck 
Of novelty amid the sacred wreck 
Strewn far and wide. Think, proud Philosopher! 
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the west, 
Still on her sons the beams of mercy shine; 
And “hopes, perhaps more heavenly bright 
than thine, 
A grace by thee unsought and unpossess 
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine, 
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest.”

XXXIII

THE BLACK STONES OF IONA  
1833. 1835

See Martin’s Voyage among the Western Isles.

Here on their knees men swore: the stones were black,

Black in the people’s minds and words, yet they

Were at that time, as now, in colour grey. 
But what is colour, if upon the rack 
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds 
that lack

Concord with oaths? What differ night and day

Then, when before the Perjured on his way

Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance crack

Above his head uplifted in vain prayer

To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead whom

He had insulted—Peasant, King, or Thane?

Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a doom;

And, from invisible worlds at need laid bare, 

Come links for social order’s awful chain.

XXXIV

1833. 1835

Homeward we turn. Isle of Columba’s Cell, 
Where Christian piesty’s soul-cheering spark

(Kindled from Heaven between the light

and dark

Of time) shone like the morning-star, is—

well! —

And fare thee well, to Fancy visible, 
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved so mark

For many a voyage made in her sunder,

When with more hues than in the skies 
dwell

Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,

Extracting from clear skies and air sesse. 
And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil.

That thickens, spreads, and, mingling is 
with fold,

Makes known, when thou no longer can be seen,

Thy whereabout, to warn the approaching sail.

XXXV

GREENOCK

1833. 1835

Per me at ventis nulla Città dolente.

We have not passed into a doleful City,

We who were led to-day down a grim descent.

By some too boldly named “the jaws of Hell!”

Where be the wretched ones, the sights of pity?

These crowded streets resound no plaintive ditty:—

As from the hive where bees in summer dwell,

Sorrow seems here excluded; and its knell,

It neither damps the gay, nor checks the witty.

Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,

Whose merchants Princes were, whose decks were thrones;

Soon may the punctual sea in vain respite 
To serve thy need, in union with the Clyde

Whose nautical current brawls over mossy stones,

The poor, the lonely, heroes’ man’s joy and pride.

XXXVI

1833. 1835

Mosgiel was thus pointed out to me by a young man on the top of the coach on my way
THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND

1833. 1835

"Nature gives thee flowers that have no rivals among British bowers." This can scarcely be true to the letter; but, without stretching the point at all, I can say that the soil and air appear more congenial with many upon the banks of this river than I have observed in any other parts of Great Britain.

 Eden! till now thy beauty had I viewed
By glimpses only, and confess with shame
That verse of mine, whate'er its varying mood,
Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet name:
Yet fetched from Paradise that honour came,
Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee flowers
That have no rivals among British bowers;
And thy bold rocks are worthy of their fame.
Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at length I pay
To my life's neighbour dues of neighbourhood;
But I have traced thee on thy winding way
With pleasure sometimes by this thought restrained—
For things far off we toil, while many a good
Not sought, because too near, is never gained.

MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD
by Nollekens

IN WETHERAL CHURCH, NEAR CORBY,
ON THE BANKS OF THE EDEN

1833. 1835

Before this monument was put up in the Church at Wetheral, I saw it in the sculptor's studio. Nollekens, who, by the bye, was a strange and grotesque figure that interfered much with one's admiration of his works, showed me at the same time the various models in clay which he had made, one after another, of the Mother and her Infant: the improvement on each was surprising; and how so much grace,
And what of hope Elysium could allow
Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore
Peace to the Mourn. But when He who wore
The crown of thorns around his bleeding brow
Warmed our sad being with celestial light,
Then Arts which still had drawn a softening grace
From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,
Communed with that Idea face to face:
And move around it now as planets ran,
Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

XL
NUNNERY
1833. 1835

I became acquainted with the walks of Nunnery when a boy: they are within easy reach of a day's pleasant excursion from the town of Penrith, where I used to pass my summer holidays under the roof of my maternal Grandfather. The place is well worth visiting; though, within these few years, its privacy, and therefore the pleasure which the scene is so well fitted to give, has been injuriously affected by walks out in the rocks on that side the stream which had been left in its natural state.

The floods are roused, and will not soon be weary;
Down from the Pennine Alps how fiercely sweeps
CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary!
He raves, or through some moody passage creeps
Plotting new mischief — out again he leaps
Into broad light, and sends, through regions airy,
That voice which soothed the Nuns while on the steeps
They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful Mary.
That union ceased: then, cleaving easy walks
Through crags, and smoothing paths best with danger,
Came studious Taste; and many a passive stranger
Dreams on the banks, and to the river talks
What change shall happen next to Nunny Dell?
Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!

XXXIX
ESTED BY THE FOREGOING
1833. 1835

TITY! the sovereign aim were to
a schools of philosophic lore;
then by stern destiny of yore
é Muse thee served with thought and vow;

MONUMENT CALLED LONDAUGHTERS, RIVER EDEN
1833.

A terror of awe, not mild and soothing, rests upon my brow, as the dread bosom swells.

You first I saw that fiend, my soul, whose mance, scoured for years placed itself to overlook the city.

Forecast: 'tis the dispels the storm.

Flights, in hieroglyphic characters, in hieroglyphs, to some have

God, that tan
XLI

TEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS

1833. 1835

OTHIONS and Means, on land and sea at war
With old poetic feeling, not for this,
All ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss!
or shall your presence, howsoever it mar
The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense
Of future change, that point of vision,
Whence may be discovered what in soul ye are.
In spite of all that beauty may disown
Your harsh features, Nature doth embrace
Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and Time,
Leased with your triumphs o'er his brother space,
Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown
Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime.

XLII

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE RIVER EDEN

1833. 1835

A weight of awe, not easy to be borne,
Fell suddenly upon my spirit—cast
From the dread bosom of the unknown past,
When first I saw that family forlorn.
Speak Thou, whose massy strength and stature soorn
The power of years—pre-eminent, and placed
Apart, to overlook the circle vast—
Speak, Giant-mother! tell it to the Morn
While she dispels the cumbrous shades of Night;
Let the Moon hear, emerging from a cloud;
At whose behest uprose on British ground
That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the infinite
The inviolable God, that tames the proud!

XLIII

LOWTHER

1833. 1835

"Cathedral pomp." It may be questioned whether this union was in the contemplation of the artist when he planned the edifice. However this might be, a poet may be excused for taking the view of the subject presented in this Sonnet.

Lowther! in thy majestic Pile are seen Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord With the baronial castle's sterner mien; Union significant of God adored, And charters won and guarded by the sword Of ancient honour; whence that godly state Of polity which wise men venerate, And will maintain, if God his help afford. Hourly the democratic torrent swells; For airy promises and hopes suborned The strength of backward-looking thoughts is scorned. Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles, With what ye symbolise; authentic Story Will say, Ye disappeared with England's Glory!

XLIV

TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE

1833. 1835

"Magistratus indictavit virum"

Lonsdale! it were unworthy of a Guest, Whose heart with gratitude to thee inclines, If he should speak, by fancy touched, of signs On thy Abode harmoniously imprest, Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest How in thy mind and moral frame agree Fortitude, and that Christian Charity Which, filling, consecrates the human breast. And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach With truth, "The Magistracy shows the Man;"

That searching test thy public course has stood; As will be owned alike by bad and good, Soon as the measuring of life's little span Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's reach.
XLV

THE SOMNAMBULIST
1833. 1835

This poem might be dedicated to my friends, Sir G. Beaumont and Mr. Rogers, jointly. While we were making an excursion together in this part of the Lake District we heard that Mr. Glover, the artist, while lodging at Lyulph's Tower, had been disturbed by a loud shriek, and upon rising he had learnt that it had come from a young woman in the house who was in the habit of walking in her sleep. In that state she had gone downstairs, and, while attempting to open the outer door, either from some difficulty or the effect of the cold stone upon her feet, had uttered the cry which alarmed him. It seemed to us all that this might serve as a hint for a poem, and the story here told was constructed and soon after put into verse by me as it now stands.

List, ye who pass by Lyulph's Tower
At eve; how softly then
Doth Aire-force, that torrent hoarse,
Speak from the woody glen!
Fit music for a solemn vale!
And holier seems the ground
To him who catches on the gale
The spirit of a mournful tale,
Embodyed in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon
The Pleasure-house is reared,
As story says, in antique days
A stern-browed house appeared;
Foil to a Jewel rich in light
There set, and guarded well;
Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,
Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight
Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,
To make this Gem their own,
Came Barons bold, with store of gold,
And Knights of high renown;
But one She prized, and only one;
Sir Eglamore was he;
Full happy season, when was known,
Ye Dales and Hills 1 to you alone
Their mutual loyalty —

Known chiefly, Aira 1 to thy glen,
Thy brook, and bowers of holly;
Where Passion caught what Nature taught,
That all but love is folly;

Where Fact with Fancy stooped to pry;
Doubt came not, nor regret—
To trouble hours that winged their way,
As if through an immortal day
Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long
Sequestered with repose;
Best throve the fire of chaste desire,
Fanned by the breath of foes.
"A conquering lance is beauty's test,
And proves the Lover true;"
So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed
The drooping Emma to his breast,
And looked a blind adieu.

They parted. — Well with him it fared
Through wide-spread regions errant;
A knight of proof in love's behoof,
The thirst of fame his warrant:
And She her happiness can build
On woman's quiet hours;
Though faint, compared with spear and shield,
The solace beads and masses yield,
And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard
Her Champion's praise recounted;
Though brain would swim, and eyes grow dim,
And high her blushes mounted;
Or when a bold heroic lay
She warbled from full heart;
Delightful blossoms for the May
Of absence! but they will not stay,
Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills
Whatever path he chooses;
As if his orb, that owns no curb,
Received the light hers looses.
He comes not back; an ample space
Requires for nobler deeds;
He ranges on from place to place,
Till of his doings is no trace,
But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past
Her spirit finds its centre;
Clear sight She has of what he was,
And that would now content her.
"Still is he my devoted Knight?"
The tear in answer flows;
Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew
If Emma’s Ghost it were,
Or boding Shade, or if the Maid
Her very self stood there. 130
He touched; what followed who shall
tell?
The soft touch snapped the thread
Of slumber — shrieking back she fell,
And the Stream whirled her down the
dell
Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight! — when on firm
ground
The rescued Maiden lay,
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,
Confusion passed away;
She heard, ere to the throne of grace 140
Her faithful Spirit flew,
His voice — beheld his speaking face;
And, dying, from his own embrace,
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life:
Brief words may speak the rest;
Within the dell he built a cell,
And there was Sorrow’s guest;
In hermits’ weeds repose he found,
From vain temptations free;
Beside the torrent dwelling — bound
By one deep heart-controlling sound,
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,
Nor fear memorial lays,
Where clouds that spread in solemn shade,
Are edged with golden rays!
Dear art thou to the light of heaven,
Though minister of sorrow;
Sweet is thy voice at pensive even;
And thou, in lovers’ hearts forgiven,
Shall take thy place with Yarrow!

XLVI
TO CORDELIA M—

HALLSTEADS, ULLSWATER

1833. 1835

Not in the mines beyond the western main,
You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,
Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has
wrought
Into this flexible yet faithful Chain;  
Nor is it silver of romantic Spain  
But from our loved Helvellyn's depths was  
brought,  
Our own domestic mountain. Thing and  
thought  
Mix strangely; trifles light, and partly  
vain,  
Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler  
being:  
Yes, Lady, while about your neck is  
wound  
(Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright  
cord,  
What witchery, for pure gifts of inward  
seeing,  
Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's  
Lord,  
For precious tremblings in your bosom  
found!

XLVII
1833. 1835
Most sweet it is with un uplifted eyes  
To pace the ground, if path be there or  
now,  
While a fair region round the traveller lies  
Which he forbears again to look upon;  
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
of meditation, slipping in between  
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
Let us break off all commerce with the  
Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of our  
way,  
What'er the senses take or may refuse,  
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
dews  
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

COMPOSED BY THE SEASHORE
1833. 1845
These lines were suggested during my resi-  
dence under my Son's roof at Moresby, on the  
coast near Whitehaven, at the time when I was  
composing those verses among the "Evening  
Voluntaries" that have reference to the sea. It  
was in that neighbourhood I first became  
aquainted with the ocean and its appearances  
and movements. My infancy and early childhood  
were passed at Cockermouth, about eight miles  
from the coast, and I well remember that mys- 
terious awe with which I used to listen to  
anything said about storms and shipwrecks.  
Sea-shells of many descriptions were common  
in the town; and I was not a little surprised  
when I heard that Mr. Landor had denounced  
me as a plagiarist from himself for having de-  
scribed a boy applying a sea-shell to his ear  
and listening to it for intimations of what was  
going on in its native element. This I had  
done myself scores of times, and it was a belief  
among us that we could know from the sound  
whether the tide was ebbing or flowing.

What mischief cleaves to unsubdued re-  
gret,  
How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset;  
How baffled projects on the spirit prey,  
And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,  
The Sailor knows; he best, whose lot is cast  
On the relentless sea that holds him fast

On chance dependent, and theickle star  
Of power, through long and melancholy  
O said it is, in sight of foreign shores,  
Daily to think on old familiar doors, =  
Hearth's loved in childhood, and ancestral  
floors;  
Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,  
To ruminate on that delightful home  
Which with the dear Betrothed was to  
come;  
Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye  
Never but in the world of memory;  
Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest  
range  
Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread of  
change,  
And if not so, whose perfect joy makes  
sleep  
A thing too bright for breathing man to  
keep.  
Hail to the virtues which that perilous life  
Extracts from Nature's elemental strife;  
And welcome glory won in battles fought  
As bravely as the foe was keenly sought  
But to each gallant Captain and his crew  
A less imperious sympathy is due,  
Such as my verse now yields, while moon-  
beams play  
On the mute sea in this unruffled bay;  
Such as will promptly flow from every  
breast,
NOT IN THE LUCID INTERVALS OF LIFE"  

1834-1835

The lines following "nor do words" were written with Lord Byron's character, as a poet, to me, and that of others, his contemporaries, who wrote under similar influences.

in the lucid intervals of life,  
but come but as a curse to party-strife;  
in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh  
angruor puts his rosy garland by;  
in the breathing-times of that poor slave  
to daily piles up wealth in Mammon's  
cave —  
Nature felt, or can be; nor do words,  
which practised talent readily affords,  
that her hand has touched responsive  
chords;  
that has her gentle beauty power to move  
with genuine rapture and with fervent love  
soul of Genius, if he dare to take  
rule from passion craved for passion's  
place;  
ought that meekness is the cherished  
bent  
all the truly great and all the innocent.  
but who is innocent? By grace divine,  
otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,  
rough good and evil thing, in just degree  
rational and manly sympathy.  
all that Earth from pensive hearts is  
stealing,  
and Heaven is now to gladdened eyes  
reveling,  
ed every charm the Universe can show  
rough every change its aspects undergo —  
we may be respite, but not repealed;  
perfect cure grows on that bounded  
field.  
in is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,  
He, through whom alone our conflicts  
 cease,  
ur virtuous hopes without relapse advance,  
me not to speed the Soul's deliverance;  
the distempered Intellect refuse  
is gracious help, or give what we abuse.

BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE

1834-1835

The linnet's warble, sinking towards a  
close,  
Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their  
pose;  
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and  
again  
The monitor revives his own sweet strain;  
But both will soon be mastered, and the cope  
Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,  
Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest  
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig  
or nest,  
(After a steady flight on home-bound wings,  
And a last game of many hoverings  
Around their ancient grove) with cawing  
noise  
Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.  
O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy  
song  
Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so  
strong  
That listening sense is pardonably cheated  
Where wood or stream by thee was never  
greeted.  
Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,  
Were not some gifts withheld by jealous  
hands,  
This hour of deepening darkness here would  
be  
As a fresh morning for new harmony;  
And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of  
Night:  
A dawn she has both beautiful and bright,  
When the East kindles with the full moon's  
light;  
Not like the rising sun's impatient glow  
Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow  
Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.  
Wanderer by spring with gradual pro-  
gress led,  
For sway profoundly felt as widely spread;  
To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,  
And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear;  
How welcome wouldst thou be to this green  
Vale  
Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Nightingale!  
From the warm breeze that bears thee on,  
slight  
At will, and stay thy migratory flight;  
Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or  
fount,
"SOFT AS A CLOUD IS YON BLUE RIDGE"

1834-1835

Soft as a cloud is yon blue Ridge — the Mere
Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye, Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
Of its vague mountains and unreal sky!
But, from the process in that still retreat, Turn to minuter changes at our feet;
Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn, And has restored to view its tender green, That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath their dazzling sheen.
— An emblem this of what the sober Hour Can do for minds disposed to feel its power! Thus oft, when we in vain have wished away
The petty pleasures of the garish day, Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host
(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post)
And leaves the disencumbered spirit free To resume a staid simplicity.
"Tis well — but what are helps of time and place,
When wisdom stands in need of nature's grace;
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues to befriend;
If yet To-morrow, unbelieied, may say, "I come to open out, for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday"?

"THE LEAVES THAT RUSTLED ON THIS OAK-CROWNED HILL" 1834-1835

Composed by the side of Grasmere lake. The mountains that enclose the vale, especially towards Easedale, are most favourable to the reverberation of sound. There is a passage in the "Excursion," towards the close of the fourth book, where the voice of the raven in flight traced through the modifications it undergoes as I have often heard it in that vale and other of this district.

"Often, at the hour
When issue forth the first pale stars, in beam,
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice — the solitary raven."

The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill,
And sky that danced among those leaves are still;
Rest smooths the way for sleep; in field and bower
Soft shades and dews have shed their blended power
On drooping eyelid and the closing flower,
Sound is there none at which the faintest heart
Might leap, the weakest nerve of superstition start;
Save when the Owlet's unexpected scream
Pierces the ethereal vault; and (mid the gleam
Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,
From the hushed vale's realities, transferred
To the still lake) the imaginative Bird Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not heard.
Grave Creature! — whether, while the moon shines bright
On thy wings opened wide for smooth flight,
Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,
Rising from what may once have been
lady's bower;
Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in the mew
At the dim centre of a churchyard yew;
Or, from a rfted crag or ivy tod
Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,
Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek or shout,
A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts —
May the night never come, nor day be se
When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy mien!
classical ages men perceived a soul
piance in thy aspect, headless Owl!
Athens reverenced in the studious
grove;
neart the golden sceptre grasped by Jove,
Eagle's favourite perch, while round
him sat
Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,
, too, wert present at Minerva's side: —
: to that second larum! — far and wide
elements have heard, and rock and
cave replied.

IE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY
HYMN
1834. 1835
shop Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns
as they deserve to be, familiarly known.
y other hymns have also been written on
same subject; but, not being aware of any
g designed for noon-day, I was induced to
pose these verses. Often one has occasion
beserve cottage children carrying, in their
tests, dinner to their Fathers engaged with
daily labours in the fields and woods. How
dlying would it be to me could I be assured
any portion of these stanzas had been sung
such a domestic concert under such circum-
cstances. A friend of mine has told me that she
oduised this Hymn into a village-school
she superintended, and the stanzas in
session furnished her with texts to comment
in a way which without difficulty was
intelligible to the children, and in which
obviously took delight, and they were
ght to sing it to the tune of the old 100th

Are with a ready heart bestowed
Upon the service of our God!

Each field is then a hallowed spot,
An altar is in each man's cot,
A church in every grove that spreads
Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven! the industrious Sun
Already half his race hath run;
He cannot halt nor go astray,
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord! since his rising in the East,
If we have faltered or transgressed,
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,
What yet remains of this day's course:

Help with thy grace, through life's short
day,
Our upward and our downward way;
And glorify for us the west,
When we shall sink to final rest.

THE REDBREAST
SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND
COTTAGE
1834. 1835

Written at Rydal Mount. All our cats
having been banished the house, it was soon
frequented by redbreasts. Two or three of
them, when the window was open, would come
in, particularly when Mrs. Wordsworth was
breakfasting alone, and hop about the table
picking up the crumbs. My sister being then
confined to her room by sickness, as, dear
creature, she still is, had one that, without be-
eging caged, took up its abode with her, and at
night used to perch upon a nail from which a
picture had hung. It used to sing and fan her
face with its wings in a manner that was very
touching.

Driven in by Autumn's sharpening air
From half-stripped woods and pastures bare,
Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home:
Not like a beggar is he come,
But enters as a looked-for guest,
Confiding in his ruddy breast,
As if it were a natural shield
Charged with a blazon on the field,
Due to that good and pious deed
Of which we in the Ballad read.
But pensive fancies putting by,
And wild-wood sorrows, speedily
He plays the expert ventriloquist;
And, caught by glimpses now—now missed,
Puzzles the listener with a doubt
If the soft voice he throws about
Comes from within doors or without!
Was ever such a sweet confusion,
Sustained by delicate illusion?
He’s at your elbow—to your feeling
The notes are from the floor or ceiling;
And there’s a riddle to be guessed,
’Till you have marked his heaving chest,
And busy throat whose sink and swell,
Betray the Elf that loves to dwell
In Robin’s bosom, as a chosen cell.
Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird
If seen, and with like pleasure stirred
Commend him, when he’s only heard.
But small and fugitive our gain
Compared with hers who long hath lain,
With languid limbs and patient head
Reposing on a lone sick-bed;
Where now, she daily hears a strain
That cheats her of too busy cares,
Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.
And who but this dear Bird beguiled
The fever of that pale-faced Child;
Now cooling, with his passing wing,
Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring:
Recalling now, with descent soft
Shed round her pillow from aloft,
Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,
And the invisible sympathy
Of “Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
Blessing the bed she lies upon”?
And sometimes, just as listening ends
In slumber, with the cadence blends
A dream of that low-warbled hymn
Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim
Lamps of faith, now burning dim,
Say that the Cherubs, carved in stone,
When clouds gave way at dead of night
And the ancient church was filled with light,
Used to sing in heavenly tone,
Above and round the sacred places
They guard, with winged baby-faces.
Thrice happy Creature! in all lands
Nurtured by hospitable hands:
Free entrance to this cot has he,
Entrance and exit both yet free;
And, when the keen unruffled weather
That thus brings man and bird together,
Shall with its pleasantness be past,
And casement closed and door made fast,
To keep at bay the howling blast,
He needs not fear the season’s rage,
For the whole house is Robin’s cage.
Whether the bird flit here or there,
O’er table lilt, or perch on chair,
Though some may frown and make a stir,
To scare him as a trespasser,
And he belike will flinch or start,
Good friends he has to take his part;
One chiefly, who with voice and look
Pleads for him from the chimney-sock,
Where sits the Dame, and wears away
Her long and vacant holiday;
With images about her heart,
Reflected from the years gone by,
On human nature’s second infancy.

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF F. STONE

1834-1835

This Portrait has hung for many years in a principal sitting-room, and represents J.Q. as she was when a girl. The picture, though a somewhat thinly painted, has much merit in tone and general effect: it is chiefly valuable, however, from the sentiment that pervades it. The Anecdote of the saying of the Mosc a sight of Titian’s picture was told in this house by Mr. Wilkie, and was, I believe, first communicated to the public in this poem, the former portion of which I was composing at the time. Southey heard the story from Mrs. Hutchinson, and transferred it to the “Doctor,” but it is not easy to explain how my friend Mr. Rogers, in a note subsequently added to his “Italy,” was led to speak of the same remarkable words having many years before been spoken in his hearing by a monk or priest in front of a picture of the Last Supper, placed over a Refectory-table in a convent at Padua.

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care
Of the day’s unfinished task; of peace
Or book regardless, and of that fair scene
In Nature’s prodigality displayed
Before my window, oftentimes and long
I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild grace
Of beauty never ceases to enrich
The common light; whose stillness charmed
the air,
Or seems to charm it, into like repose;
Whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,
passes sweetest music. There she sits
in emblematic purity attired
a white vest, white as her marble neck
and the pillar of the throat would be
for the shadow of the drooping chin
t into that recess — the tender shade,
shade and light, both there and everywhere,
1 through the very atmosphere she
breathes,
and, clear, and toned harmoniously, with
skill
it might from nature have been learnt
in the hour
20 on the lone shepherd sees the morning
spread on the mountains. Look at her, who’ser
ou be that, kindling with a poet’s soul,
at loved the painter’s true Promethean
30 craft
tensely — from Imagination take
a treasure,—what mine eyes behold,
see thou,
en though the Atlantic ocean roll be-
tween.
A silver line, that runs from brow to
crown
40 in the middle parts the braided hair
st serves to show how delicate a soil
the golden harvest grows in; and those
eyes,
f and capacious as a cloudless sky
hose azure depth their colour emulates,
ust needs be conversant with upward
looks,
50 nayer’s voiceless service; but now, seeking
nought
shunning nought, their own peculiar
life
55 f motion they renounce, and with the head
u take its inclination towards earth
humble grace, and quiet pensiveness
ught at the point where it stops short of
sadness.
Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make
me
60 by confidant! say, whence derived that air
f calm abstraction? Can the ruling
thought
65 e with some lover far away, or one
roosed by misfortune, or of doubted faith?
apt conjecture! Childhood here, a moon
recent in simple loveliness serene,
as but approached the gates of woman-
67 hood,
Not entered them; her heart is yet un-
pierced
By the blind Archer-god; her fancy free:
The font of feeling if unsought elsewhere,
Will not be found.
Her right hand, as it lies
Across the slender wrist of the left arm
Upon her lap reposing, holds — but mark;
How slackly, for the absent mind permits
No firmer grasp — a little wild-flower,
70 joined
As in a posy, with a few pale ears
Of yellowing corn, the same that overtopped
And in their common birthplace sheltered
it
’Till they were plucked together; a blue
flower
Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed;
But Ceres, in her garland, might have worn
That ornament, unblamed. The floweret,
held
In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she
knows,
(Her Father told her so) in youth’s gay
dawn
Her Mother’s favourite; and the orphan
Girl,
75 In her own dawn — a dawn less gay and
bright,
Loves it, while there in solitary peace
She sits, for that departed Mother’s sake.
— Not from a source less sacred is derived
(Surely I do not err) that pensive air
Of calm abstraction through the face dif-
fused
And the whole person.
Words have something told
More than the pencil can, and verily
More than is needed, but the precious Art
Forgives their interference — Art divine,
That both creates and fixes, in despite
Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath
wrought.
Strange contrasts have we in this world
of ours!
That posture, and the look of filial love
Thinking of past and gone, with what is
left
Dearly united, might be swept away
From this fair Portrait’s fleshly Archetype,
Even by an innocent fancy’s slightest freak
Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored
To their lost place, or meet in harmony
So exquisite; but here do they abide,
Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art
Godlike, a humble branch of the divine, 
In visible quest of immortality, 90 
Stretched forth with trembling hope? — In 
every realm, 
From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains, 
Thousands, in each variety of tongue 
That Europe knows, would echo this ap- 
peal; 
One above all, a Monk who waits on God 
In the magnificent Convent built of yore 
To sanctify the Escorial palace. He — 
Guiding, from cell to cell and room to 
room, 
A British Painter (eminent for truth 
In character, and depth of feeling, shown 
By labours that have touched the hearts of 
kings, 101 
And are endeared to simple cottagers — 
Came, in that service, to a glorious work, 
Our Lord’s Last Supper, beautiful as when 
first 
The appropriate Picture, fresh from Titian’s 
hand, 
Graced the Refectory: and there, while 
both 
Stood with eyes fixed upon that master- 
piece, 
The hoary Father in the Stranger’s ear 
Breathed out these words: — “Here daily 
do we sit, 
Thanks given to God for daily bread, and 
here 110 
Pondering the mischiefs of these restless 
times, 
And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dis- 
persed, 
Or changed and changing, I not seldom 
gaze 
Upon this solemn Company unmoved 
By shock of circumstance, or lapse of 
years, 
Until I cannot but believe that they — 
They are in truth the Substance, we the 
Shadows.” 
So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs 
Melting away within him like a dream 
Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to 
speak: 120 
And I, grown old, but in a happier land, 
Domestic Portrait! have to verse consigned 
In thy calm presence those heart-moving 
words: 
Words that can soothe, more than they 
agitare; 
Whose spirit, like the angel that went down 
Into Bethesda’s pool, with healing virtue 
Informs the fountain in the human breast. 
Which by the visitation was disturbed. 
— But why this stealing tear? Com- 
mute, 
On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee 
well, 
My Song’s Inspirer, once again farewell.

THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED 

1834-1835

AMONG a grave fraternity of Monks, 
For One, but surely not for One alone, 
Triumphs, in that great work, the Paint- 
skill, 
Humbling the body, to exalt the soul; 
Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong 
And dissolution and decay, the warm 
And breathing life of flesh, as if already 
Clothed with impassive majesty, and grace 
With no mean earnest of a heritage 
Assigned to it in future worlds. The 
too, 
With thy memorial flower, meek Portia! 
From whose serene companionship I pass 
Pursued by thoughts that haunt me, 
and thou also — 
Though but a simple object, into light 
Called forth by those affections that a 
earnest 
The private hearth; though keeping a 
sole seat 
In singleness, and little tried by time, 
Creation, as it were, of yesterday — 
With a congenial function art endowed 
For each and all of us, together joined 
In course of nature under a low roof 
By charities and duties that proceed 
Out of the bosom of a wiser vow. 
To a like salutary sense of awe 
Or sacred wonder, growing with the pow 
Of meditation that attempts to weigh, 
In faithful scales, things and their oppo- 
sites, 
Can thy enduring quiet gently raise 
A household small and sensitive, — who 
love, 
Dependent as in part its blessings are 
Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved 
On earth, will be revived, we trust, in 
heaven.
TO A CHILD
WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM
1834. 1835
This quatrains was extempore on observing
image, as I had often done, on the lawn of
Mount. It was first written down in the
name of my God-daughter, Rothe Quinnian.

All service is true service while it lasts:
humblest Friends, bright Creature
scorn not one:
Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
tects the lingering dew-drop from the
Sun.

LINES
WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE COUNTESS OF LONSDALE. NOV. 5, 1834
1834. 1835
This is a faithful picture of that amiable
ly, as she then was. The youthfulness of
and demeanour and habits, which she
ined in almost unprecedented degree, de-
ted a very few years after, and she died
bout violent disease by gradual decay before
reached the period of old age.

Dry! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,
ong the Favoured, favoured not the
least)
't, 'mid the Records of this Book in-
scribed,
liberate traces, registers of thought
feeling, suited to the place and time
at gave them birth:—months passed,
and still this hand,
at had not been too timid to imprint
ords which the virtues of thy Lord in-
spired,
as yet not bold enough to write of Thee.
why that scrupulous reserve? In
sooth
he blameless cause lay in the Theme itself.
owers are there many that delight to
rive
th the sharp wind, and seem to court
the shower,
nt are by nature careless of the sun
hether he shine on them or not; and
some,
here'er he moves along the unclouded sky,
un a broad front full on his flattering
beams:

Others do rather from their notice shrink,
Loving the dewy shade,—a humble band,
Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,
Congenial with thy mind and character,
High-born Augusta!

Witness, Towers and Groves!
And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the
honoured name
Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear wit-
ness
From thy most secret haunts; and ye
Parterres,
Which She is pleased and proud to call her
own,
Witness how oft upon my noble Friend
Mute
offerings, tribute from an inward
sense
Of admiration and respectful love,
Have waited—till the affections could no
more
Endure that silence, and broke out in song,
Snatches of music taken up and dropt
Like those self-solacing, those under, notes
Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal
leaves
Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only mine,
The pleasure was, and no one heard the
praise,
Checked, in the moment of its issue,
checked
And reprehended, by a fancied blush
From the pure qualities that called it forth.
Thus Virtue lives debarred from Virtue's
meed;
Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil
That, while it only spreads a softening
charm
O'er features looked at by discerning eyes,
Hides half their beauty from the common
gaze;
And thus, even on the exposed and breezy
hill
Of lofty station, female goodness walks,
When side by side with lunar gentleness,
As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor
(Such the immunities of low estate,
Plain Nature's enviable privilege,
Her sacred recompence for many wants)
Open their hearts before Thee, pouring out
All that they think and feel, with tears of
joy;
And benedictions not unheard in heaven.
And friend in the ear of friend, where
speech is free
To follow truth, is eloquent as they.
Godlike, and
In visible grace
Stretched on
even the
From high
Thousand
That Earth
people
One above
In the might
To sanctify
Guiding
A Britain
In charity
By labour
And a
Came.
Our
Israel
Grace
Stood
The
Breath
The
Peace
A
(Rev. 3:8)
sensitive, a tender, part
unst touch in every human

composure. But, as least
billows ever have confessed
as the whole vast Sea
her lowest depths thy

countenance with especial
urge the keel her plains to
sway right onward. The most
home and country, may have

gazing hath bedimmed his eye,
rapture ended in a sigh —
acquaintance of thy placid cheer,
internal lights to memory dear,
tearing forth to soothe the breast
td daily share of earth’s unrest,
kenings, visitations meek; 
ficence whereby few will speak,
can wet with tears the hardiest

men thy beauty in the shadowy
50 buried in its monthly grave;
de the Sailor, mid an open sea
a favouring wind that leaves
ought free,
deck — no star perhaps in sight,
ing save the moving ship’s own
ight
the long dark hours of vacant
ight —
his musings does thy image blend,
dnd’s eye thy crescent horns ascend,
art still, O Moon, that SAILOR’s

TO THE MOON
RYDAL
1835. 1836

w of the stars! — so gentle, so benign,
ancient Fable did to thee assign,
darkness creeping o’er thy silver brow
ed thee these upper regions to forego,
ate empire in the shades below —
ed, who, lately near the wide-spread sea-
ersed by gleaming ships, looked up
to thee

With grateful thoughts, doth now thy ris-
ing hail
From the close confines of a shadowy vale.
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene,
Nor less attractive when by glimpses seen
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that
fair face,
And all those attributes of modest grace,
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked by
fear,
Down to the green earth fetch thee from
thy sphere,
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!
O still beloved (for thine, meek Power,
are charms
That fascinate the very Babe in arms,
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs
outright,
Spreading his little palms in his glad
Mother’s sight)
O still beloved, once worshipped! Time,
that frowns
In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,
Spare thy mild splendour; still those far-
shot beams
Tremble on dancing waves and rippling
streams
With stainless touch, as chaste as when thy
praise
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;
And through dark trials still dost thou
explore
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,
When teeming Matrons — yielding to rude
faith
In mysteries of birth and life and death
And painful struggle and deliverance —
prayed
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.
What though the rites be swept away, the
fanes
Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot, cease
Love to promote and purity and peace;
And Fancy, unapproved, even yet may trace
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless
face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us — not blind
To worlds unthought of till the searching
mind
Of Science laid them open to mankind —
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens de-
clare
God’s glory; and acknowledging thy share
In that blest charge; let us — without offence
To aught of highest, holiest influence —
Receive whatever good 't is given thee to
dispense.
May sage and simple, catching with one eye
The moral intimations of the sky,
Learn from thy course, where'er their own
be taken,
"To look on tempests, and be never
shaken;"
To keep with faithful step the appointed
way,
Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,
And from example of thy monthly range
Gently to brook decline and fatal change;
Meek, patient, stedfast, and with loftier
scope,
Than thy revival yields, for gladsome hope!

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB
1835. 1836

Light will be thrown upon the tragic circumstance alluded to in this poem when, after the death of Charles Lamb's Sister, his biographer, Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, shall be at liberty to relate particulars which could not, at the time his Memoir was written, be given to the public. Mary Lamb was ten years older than her brother, and has survived him as long a time. Were I to give way to my own feelings, I should dwell not only on her genius and intellectual powers, but upon the delicacy and refinement of manner which she maintained inviolate under most trying circumstances. She was loved and honoured by all her brother's friends; and others, some of them strange characters, whom his philanthropic peculiarities induced him to countenance. The death of C. Lamb himself was doubtless hastened by his sorrow for that of Coleridge, to whom he had been attached from the time of their being school-fellows at Christ's Hospital. Lamb was a good Latin scholar, and probably would have gone to college upon one of the school foundations but for the impediment in his speech. Had such been his lot, he would most likely have been preserved from the indulgences of social humours and fancies which were often injurious to himself, and causes of severe regret to his friends, without really benefiting the object of his misapplied kindness.

To a good Man of most dear memory
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
From the great city where he first drew
breath,

Was reared and taught; and humbly
his bread,
To the strict labours of the merchant's
By duty chained. Not seldom did he
 tasks
Tease, and the thought of time as
depress,
His spirit, but the recompense was
 high:
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful
 Affections, warm as sunshine, free as
 And when the precious hours of his
 came,
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from a
 verse sweet
With books, or while he ranged the cross
 streets
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart.
So genius triumphed over seeming woe
And poured out truth in works by thou-
ful love
Inspired — works potent over smiles a
 tears.
And as round mountain-tops the light
plays,
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and
 The vivid flashes of his spoken words
From the most gentle creature sacred
 fields
Had been derived the name he bore
—name,
Wherever Christian altars have been re
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence.
And if in him meekness at times gave
 Provoked out of herself by troubles snug
Many and strange, that hung about his
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged
A soul by resignation sanctified:
And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
That innocence belongs not to our kind.
A power that never ceased to absolve
him,
Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
That she can cover, left not his exposed
To an unforgiving judgment from a
Heaven.
Oh, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived
 From a reflecting mind and sorrowing
 Those simple lines flowed with an ease
 wish,
 Though but a doubting hope, that he
 might serve
Fitly to guard the precious dust of his
Timidly uttered, for she lives, the meek, so
The self-restraining, and the ever-kind;
In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
Found — for all interests, hopes, and tender
cares,
All softening, humanising, hallowing
powers,
Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought —
More than sufficient recompence!

Her love
(What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here?)
Was as the love of mothers; and when years,
Lifting the boy to man’s estate, had called
The long-protected to assume the part
Of a protector, the first filial tie
Was undissolved; and, in or out of sight,
Remained imperishably interwoven
With life itself. Thus, ’mid a shifting
world,
Did they together testify of time
And season’s difference — a double tree
With two collateral stems sprung from one
root;
Such were they — such thro’ life they might
have been
In union, in partition only such;
Otherwise wrought the will of the Most
High;
Yet, thro’ all visitations and all trials,
Still they were faithful; like two vessels
launched
From the same beach one ocean to explore
With mutual help, and sailing — to their
league
True, as inexorable winds, or bars
Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
With thine, 0 silent and invisible Friend!
To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
When reunited, and by choice withdrawn
From miscellaneous converse, ye were
taught

That the remembrance of foregone distress,
And the worse fear of future ill (which oft
Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
Upon its mother) may be both alike
Disarmed of power to unsettle present good
So prized, and things inward and outward
held
In such an even balance, that the heart
Acknowledges God’s grace, his mercy feels,
And in its depth of gratitude is still.
O gift divine of quiet sequestration!
The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,
And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves
To life-long singleness; but happier far
Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,
A thousand times more beautiful appeared,
Your dual loneliness. The sacred tie
Is broken; yet why grieve? for Time but holds
His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead
To the blest world where parting is unknown.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG
1835. 1836

These verses were written extempore, immediately after reading a notice of the Ettrick Shepherd's death in the Newcastle paper, to the Editor of which I sent a copy for publication. The persons lamented in these verses were all either of my friends or acquaintance. In Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott an account is given of my first meeting with him in 1803. How the Ettrick Shepherd and I became known to each other has already been mentioned in these notes. He was undoubtedly a man of original genius, but of coarse manners and low and offensive opinions. Of Coleridge and Lamb I need not speak here. Crabbe I have met in London at Mr. Rogers's, but more frequently and favourably at Mr. Hoare's upon Hampstead Heath. Every spring he used to pay that family a visit of some length, and was upon terms of intimate friendship with Mrs. Hoare, and still more with her daughter-in-law, who has a large collection of his letters addressed to herself. After the Poet's decease, application was made to her to give up these letters to his biographer, that they, or at least part of them, might be given to the public. She hesitated to comply, and asked my opinion on the subject. "By no means," was my answer, grounded not upon any objection there might be to publishing a selection from these letters, but from an aversion I have always felt to meet idle curiosity by calling back the recently departed to become the object of trivial and familiar gossip. Crabbe obviously for the most part preferred the company of women to that of men, for this among other reasons, that he did not like to be put upon the stretch in general conversation: accordingly in miscel-
Her youth, but her education had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed her spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies, that, one lay while she was under my roof, I purposely directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased Scales, which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present; pointed out their utility (for her special benefit), and said that no ménage ought to be without them. Mrs. Hemans, not in the east suspecting my drift, reported this saying, as a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity. Being disposed to make large allowances for the faults of her education and the circumstances in which she was placed, I felt most kindly disposed towards her, and took her part upon all occasions, and I was not a little affected by learning that after she withdrew to Ireland, a long and severe sickness raised her spirit as it depressed her body. This I heard from her most intimate friends, and there is striking evidence of it in a poem written and published not long before her death. These notices of Mrs. Hemans would be very unsatisfactory to her intimate friends, as indeed they are to myself, not so much for what is said, but what for brevity’s sake is left unsaid. Let it suffice to add, there was much sympathy between us, and, if opportunity had been allowed me to see more of her, I should have loved and valued her accordingly; as it is, I remember her with true affection for her amiable qualities, and, above all, for her delicate and irreproachable conduct during her long separation from an unfeeling husband, whom she had been led to marry from the romantic notions of inexperienced youth. Upon this husband I never heard her cast the least reproach, nor did I ever hear her even name him, though she did not wholly forbear to touch upon her domestic position; but never so that any fault could be found with her manner of adverting to it.

When first, descending from the moun-
lands,
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
Mid mouldering ruins low he lies; 10

And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet’s eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its stedfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth. 20

Like clouds that rake the mountain-sum-
mits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
“Who next will drop and disappear?”

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
Like London with its own black wreath,
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-
looking,
I gazed from Hampstead’s breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before; but why,
O’er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;
For Her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep. 40

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid!
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet dead.

UPON SEEING A COLOURED DRAWING OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE IN AN ALBUM

1835. 1836

I cannot forbear to record that the last seven lines of this Poem were composed in bed during the night of the day on which my sister
Sara Hutchinson died about 6 P.M., and it was
the thought of her innocent and beautiful life
that, through faith, prompted the words —

"On wings that fear no glance of God's pure sight,
No tempest from his breath."

The reader will find two poems on pictures of
this bird among my Poems. I will here observe
that in a far greater number of instances than
have been mentioned in these notes one poem
has, as in this case, grown out of another, either
because I felt the subject had been inadequately
treated, or that the thoughts and images sug-
gested in course of composition have been such
as I found interfered with the unity indispens-
able to every work of art, however humble in
character.

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray?
Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;
How could he think of the live creature —
gay
With a divinity of colours, drest
In all her brightness, from the dancing crest
Far as the last gleam of the filmy train
Extended and extending to sustain
The motions that it graces — and forbear
To drop his pencil! Flowers of every cline
Depicted on these pages smile at time; 10
And gorgeous insects copied with nice care
Are here, and likenesses of many a shell
Tossed ashore by restless waves,
Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from
caves
Where sea-nymphs might be proud to
dwell:
But whose rash hand (again I ask) could
dare,
'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous shows,
To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose;
Could imitate for indolent survey,
Perhaps for touch profane,
Plumes that might catch, but cannot keep,
a stain;
And, with cloud-streaks lightest and loftiest,
share
The sun's first greeting, his last farewell
ray!
Resplendent Wanderer! followed with
glad eyes
Where'er her course; mysterious Bird!
To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,
Eastern Islanders have given
A holy name — the Bird of Heaven!
And even a title higher still,
The Bird of God! whose blessed will
She seems performing as she flies

Over the earth and through the skies
In never-wearied search of Paradise—
Region that crowns her beauty with its
name
She bears for us — for us how blest,
How happy at all seasons, could like six
Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight.
On wings that fear no glance of God's pure
sight,
No tempest from his breath, their promised
rest
Seeking with indefatigable quest
Above a world that deems itself most
When most enslaved by gross realities!

"BY A BLEST HUSBAND GUIDED,
MARY CAME"

1835. 1835

This lady was named Carleton; she, along
with a sister, was brought up in the neighbor-
hood of Ambleside. The epitaph, a part of it
at least, is in the church at Bromsgrove, where
she resided after her marriage.

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came
From nearest kindred, Vernon her own
name;
She came, though meek of soul, in seamy
pride
Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.
O dreaded reverse! if aught be so, which
proves
That God will chasten whom he deeply
loves.
Faith bore her up through pains in many
given,
And troubles that were each a step to
Heaven:
Two Babes were laid in earth before she
died;
A third now slumbers at the Mother's
side;
Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles afford
A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.
Reader! if to thy bosom cling the pain
Of recent sorrow combated in vain;
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to
thwart
Time still intent on his insidious part,
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts
asleep,
Filfering regrets we would, but cannot
keep;
SONNETS

1
1835(?). 1835

RESPONDING Father! mark this altered bough,
So beautiful of late, with sunshine warmed,
Or moist with dews; what more unsightly now,
Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit, if formed,
Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow
Knits not o'er that discolouring and decay
As false to expectation. Nor fret thou
At like unlovely process in the May
Of human life: a Stripling's graces blow,
Fade and are shed, that from their timely fall
(Misdeem it not a cankerous change) may grow
Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks shall call:
In all men, sinful is it to be slow
To hope — in Parents, sinful above all.

II

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT BISHOPSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE
1835(?). 1835

My attention to these antiquities was directed by Mr. Walker, son to the itinerant Eidoumanian Philosopher. The beautiful pavement was discovered within a few yards of the front door of his parsonage, and appeared from the site (in full view of several hills upon which there had formerly been Roman encampments) as if it might have been the villa of the commander of the forces, at least such was Mr. Walker's conjecture.

While poring Antiquarians search the ground
Upturned with curious pains, the Bard, a Seer,
Takes fire: — The men that have been reap-appear;

Romans for travel girl, for business gowned;
And some recline on couches, myrtle-crowned,
In festal glee: why not? For fresh and clear,
As if its hues were of the passing year,
Dawns this time-buried pavement. From that mound
Hoards may come forth of Trajans, Maxims,
Shrank into coins with all their warlike toil:
Or a fierce impress issues with its foil
Of tenderness — the Wolf, whose suckling Twins
The unlettered ploughboy pities when he wins
The casual treasure from the furrowed soil.

III

ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY
1835(?). 1835

Written on a journey from Brinsop Court, Herefordshire.

When human touch (as monkish books attest)
Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury bells
Broke forth in concert flung adown the dells,
And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy crest;
Sweet tones, and caught by a noble Lady blest
To rapture! Mabel listened at the side
Of her loved mistress: soon the music died,
And Catherine said, Here I set up my rest.
Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long had sought
A home that by such miracle of sound
Must be revealed: — she heard it now, or felt
The deep, deep joy of a confiding thought;
And there, a saintly Anchoress, she dwelt
Till she exchanged for heaven that happy ground.

IV

1835(?). 1835

In the month of January, when Dora and I were walking from Town-end, Grasmere, across the vale, snow being on the ground, she espied,
in the thick though leafless hedge, a bird's nest half filled with snow. Out of this comfortless appearance arose this Sonnet, which was, in fact, written without the least reference to any individual object, but merely to prove to myself that I could, if I thought fit, write in a strain that Poets have been fond of. On the 14th of February in the same year, my daughter, in a sportive mood, sent it as a Valentine, under a fictitious name, to her cousin C. W.

WHY art thou silent? Is thy love a plant Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air Of absence withers what was once so fair? Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant? Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant— Bound to thy service with unceasing care, The mind's least generous wish a mendicant For nought but what thy happiness could spare. 

Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine, Be left more desolate, more dreary cold Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow 'Mid its own bush of leafless eglistantine— Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

V

Suggested on the road between Preston and Lancaster where it first gives a view of the Lake country, and composed on the same day, on the roof of the coach.

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath a sky As void of sunshine, when, from that wide plain, Clear tops of far-off mountains we descried, Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain, All light and lustre. Did no heart reply? Yes, there was One;—for One, asunder fly The thousand links of that ethereal chain; And green vales open out, with grove and field, And the fair front of many a happy Home; Such tempting spots as into vision come While Soldiers, weary of the arms they wield And sick at heart of strifeful Christendom, Gaze on the moon by parting clouds revealed.
ed in the transport, echoed back their shout,
rah for——, hugging his Ballot-box!

NOVEMBER 1836
1836. 1837
so for me a Vision sanctified
sway of Death; long ere mine eyes had seen
countenance — the still rapture of thy mien —
shou, dear Sister! wert become
Death’s Bride:
trace of pain or languor could abide
change: — age on thy brow was smoothed — thy cold
n cheek at once was privileged to unfold
veliness to living youth denied.
if within me hope should e’er decline,

The lamp of faith, lost Friend! too faintly burn;
Then may that heaven-revealing smile of thine,
The bright assurance, visibly return:
And let my spirit in that power divine
Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased
to mourn.

“SIX MONTHS TO SIX YEARS
ADDED HE REMAINED”
1836. 1836
Six months to six years added he remained:
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained:
O blessed Lord! whose mercy then removed
A Child whom every eye that looked on loved;
Support us, teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly thine!

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY
1837-42. 1842
During my whole life I had felt a strong desire to visit Rome and the other celebrated cities and regions of Italy, but did not think myself justified in incurring the necessary expense till I received from Mr. Moxon, the publisher of a large edition of my poems, a sum sufficient to enable me to gratify my wish without encroaching upon what I considered due to my family. My dearest friend H. C. Robinson readily consented to accompany me, and in March 1837, we set from London, to which we returned in August, earlier than my companion wished or I should self have desired had I been, like him, a bachelor. These Memorials of that tour touch upon a very few of the places and objects that interested me, and, in what they do advert to, are the most part much slighter than I could wish. More particularly do I regret that there is no notice in them of the South of France, nor of the Roman antiquities abounding in that district, especially of the Pont de Degard, which, together with its situation, impressed me full as much as any remains of Roman architecture to be found in Italy. Then there was Vaucluse, with its Fountain, its Petrarch, its rocks of all seasons, its small plots of lawn in their first verdant freshness, and the blossoms of the peach and other trees embellishing the scene on every side. The beauty of the stream also called forcibly for the expression of sympathy from one who from childhood had studied the brooks and torrents of his native mountains. Between two and three hours did I run about climbing the steep and rugged crags from whose base the water of Vaucluse breaks forth. “Has Laura’s Lover,” often said I to myself, “ever sat down upon a stone? or has his foot ever pressed that turf?” Some, especially of the female sex, would have felt sure of it: my answer was (impute it to my years), “I fear not.” Is it not in fact obvious that many of his love verses must have flowed, I do not say from a wish to display his talent, but from a habit of exercising his intellect in that way rather than from an impulse to his heart? It is otherwise with his Lyrical poems, and particularly with the one upon the degradation of his country: there he pours out his reproaches, lamentations, and aspirations like aardent and sincere patriot. But enough: it is time to turn to my own effusions, such as they are.

TO
HENRY CRABB ROBINSON
Companion! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,
In whose experience trusting, day by day
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,

These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 16th, 1842.

W. WORDSWORTH

These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 16th, 1842.

W. WORDSWORTH
The Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of these lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

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I

MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE

APRIL 1837. 1842

"Not the less
Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
That spoke of bards and minutiae."

His, Sir Walter Scott's eye, did in fact kindle at them, for the lines, "Places forsaken now," and the two that follow were adopted from a poem of mine which nearly forty years ago was in part read to him, and he never forgot them.

"Old Helvellyn's brow,
Where once together, in his day of strength,
We stood rejoicing."

Sir Humphrey Davy was with us at the time. We had ascended from Paterdale, and I could not but admire the vigour with which Scott scrambled along that horn of the mountain called "Striding Edge." Our progress was necessarily slow, and was beguiled by Scott's telling many stories and amusing anecdotes, as was his custom. Sir H. Davy would have probably been better pleased if other topics had occasionally been interspersed, and some discussion entered upon: at all events he did not remain with us long at the top of the mountain, but left us to find our way down its steep side together into the vale of Grasmere, where, at my cottage, Mrs. Scott was to meet us at dinner.

"With faint smile
He said, — 'When I am there, although 't is fair,
'T will be another Yarrow.'"

See among these notes the one on "Yarrow Revisited."

"A few short steps (painful they were)."

This, though introduced here, I did not know till it was told me at Rome by Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, a lady whose friendly attentions during my residence at Rome I have gratefully acknowledged, with expressions of sincerest regret that she is no more. Miss M. told me that she accompanied Sir Walter to the circular Mount, and, after showing him the grave of Tasso in the church upon the top, sent a mortal tumble to his home; they left the church and stood together; the brow of the hill overlooking the city; his daughter Anne was with them; she, naturally desirous, for the sake of Mr. Mackenzie especially, to have some expression of pleasure from her father, half reproved him for showing nothing of that kind since his looks or voice: "How can I," replied "having only one leg to stand upon, and in extreme pain!" so that the prophecy was more than fulfilled.

"Over waves rough and deep."

We took boat near the lighthouse at point of the right horn of the bay which was a sort of natural port for Genoa; but there was high, and the waves long and rough that I did not feel quite recompensed by the view of the city, splendid as it was, for danger apparently incurred. The booms had only one) encouraged me, saying we were quite safe, but I was not a little glad when we gained the shore, though Shelley and Byron one of them at least, who seemed to be courted agitation from any quarter — we have probably rejoiced in such a situation more than once I believe were they both at extreme danger even on the Lake of Genoa. Every man however has his fears of some kind or other; and no doubt they had theirs, all men whom I have ever known, Coleridge the most of passive courage in bodily peril: no one was so easily cowed when moral necessities was required in miscellaneous conversations or in the daily intercourse of social life.

"How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade. Each ministering to each, didst thou appear, Savona."

There is not a single bay along his beach coast that might not raise in a traveller's view to take up his abode there, each as it seems more inviting than the other; but desolate convent on the cliff in the bay of Savona struck my fancy most; and had I the sake of my own health or that of a dearest friend, or any other cause, been destined to residence abroad, I should have let my thoughts loose upon a scheme of turning some part this building into a habitation provided as might be with English comforts. Then close by it a row or avenue, I forget which...
O'er intervenerent waste, through glimmering haze,
Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped hill
With fractured summit, no indifferent sight
To travellers, from such comforts as are thine,
Bleak Radiocifani! I escaped with joy —
These are before me; and the varied scene
May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry heat
Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind
Passive yet pleased. What! with this
Broom in flower
Close at my side! She bids me fly to greet
Her sisters, soon like her to be attired
With golden blossoms opening at the feet
Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting given,
Given with a voice and by a look returned
Of old companionship, Time counts not minutes
Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,
The local Genius hurries me aloft,
Transported over that cloud-wooning hill,
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's top,
There to alight upon crisp moss and range,
Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,
Of visual sovereignty — hills multitudinous,
(Not Apennine can boast of fairer) hills
Pride of two nations, wood and lake and plains,
And prospect right below of deep coves shaped
By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain's trunk
Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual moan
Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
The shepherd struggles with them. Oward thence
And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,
And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glencoign,
Places forsaken now, though loving still
The muses, as they loved them in the days
Of the old minstrels and the border bards. —
But here am I fast bound; and let it pass,
The simple rapture; — who that travels far
To feed his mind with watchful eyes could share
Or wish to share it? — One there surely was,
"The Wizard of the North," with anxious hope
Brought to this genial climate, when disease
Preyed upon body and mind — yet not the less
Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
That spake of bards and minstrels; and his spirit
Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's brow,
Where once together, in his day of strength,
We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.
Years followed years, and when, upon the eve
Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought turned,
Or by another's sympathy was led,
To this bright land, Hope was for him no friend,
Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped
No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep seats,
Survives for me, and cannot but survive
The tone of voice which wedded borrowed words
To sadness not their own, when, with faint smile
Forced by intent to take from speech its edge,
He said, "When I am there, although 't is fair,
'T will be another Yarrow." Prophecy
More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's shores
Soon witnessed, and the city of seven hills,
Her sparkling fountains and her mouldering tombs;
And more than all, that Eminence which showed
Her splendours, seen, not felt, the while he stood
A few short steps (painful they were) apart
From Tasso's Convent-haven, and retired grave.
Peace to their Spirits! why should Poesy
Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover
In gloom on wings with confidence out-spread
To move in sunshine? — Utter thanks, my Soul!
Tempered with awe, and sweetened by compassion

For them who in the shades of earth dwell,
That I — so near the term to human life
Appointed by man's common inheritance.
Frail as the frailest, one withal (if it Deserve a thought) but little known fame —
Am free to rove, where Nature's best looks,
Art's noblest relics, history's rich beams
Failed to reanimate and but feebly does
The whole world's Darling — free as the will
O'er high and low, and if requiring rest
Rest from enjoyment only.

Thanks poured in
For what thus far hath blessed my writings, thanks
Fervent but humble as the lips can feel
Where gladness seems a duty — let it guard
Those seeds of expectation which the past
Already gathered in this favoured land
Enfolds within its core. The faith mine,
That He who guides and governs all proves
When gratitude, though disciplined to's
Beyond these transient spheres, doth as a crown
Of earthly hope put on with tender hand;
Nor is least pleased, we trust, when given beams,
Reflected through the mists of age, but hours
Of innocent delight, remote or recent. Shoot but a little way — 't is all they can
Into the doubtful future. Who would know
Power must resolve to cleave to it the life.
Else it deserts him, surely as he lives
Saints would not grieve nor guardians frown
If one — while tossed, as was my lot to be
In a frail bark urged by two slender oars
Over waves rough and deep, that, when they broke,
Dashed their white foam against the past walls
Of Genoa the superb — should there be life
To meditate upon his own appointed task
However humble in themselves, or thoughts
Raised and sustained by memory of Him
oftentimes within those narrow bounds
led on the surge, there tried his spirit’s
grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his
ship
ay a new world open.

Nor less prized
those impressions which incline the
heart
mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,
that way her desires. The dew, the
storm—
dew whose moisture fell in gentle
drops
the small hyssop destined to become,
Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,
urifying instrument—the storm
shook on Lebanon the cedar’s top,
as it shook, enabling the blind roots
ther to force their way, endowed its
trunk
h magnitude and strength fit to uphold
glorious temple—did alike proceed
in the same gracious will, were both an
offspring
bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim
her to lift their lofty heads, impelled
no profane ambition, Powers that thrive
conflict, and their opposites, that trust
owliness—a midway tract there lies
thoughtful sentiment for every mind
grant with good. Young, Middle-aged,
and Old,
em century on to century, must have
known
emotion—nay, more fitly were it said—
blest tranquillity that sunk so deep
my spirit, when I paced, enclosed
Pisa’s Campo Santo, the smooth floor
its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,
d through each window’s open fretwork
looked
r the blank Area of sacred earth
ched from Mount Calvary, or haply
delved
precincts nearer to the Saviour’s tomb,
hand of men, humble as brave, who
fought
r its deliverance—a capacious field
at to descendants of the dead it holds
d to all living mute memento breathes,
more touching far than aught which on the
walls
pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,

Of the changed City’s long-departed power,
Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they
are,
Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.
And, high above that length of cloistral
roof,
Peering in air and backed by azure sky,
To kindred contemplations ministers
The Baptistery’s dome, and that which
swells
From the Cathedral pile; and with the
twain
Conjoined in prospect mutable or fixed
(As hurry on in eagerness the feet,
Or pause) the summit of the Leaning-
tower.

Nor less remuneration waits on him
Who having left the Cemetery stands
In the Tower’s shadow, of decline and fall
Admonished not without some sense of
fear,
Fear that soon vanishes before the sight
Of splendour unextinguished, pomp un-
scathed,
And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,
And for itself, the assemblage, grand and
fair
To view, and for the mind’s consenting eye
A type of age in man, upon its front
Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence
Of past exploits, nor fondly after more
Struggling against the stream of destiny,
But with its peaceful majesty content.
—Oh what a spectacle at every turn
The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned
with moss
Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest
foot
Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;
Where Solitude with Silence paired stops
short
Of Desolation, and to Ruin’s scythe
Decay submits not.

But where’er my steps
Shall wander, chiefly let me call with care
Those images of genial beauty, oft
Too lovely to be pensive in themselves
But by reflection made so, which do best
And filiest serve to crown with fragrant
wreaths
Life’s cup when almost filled with years,
like mine.
—How lovely robed in forenoon light and
shade,
Each ministering to each, didst thou appear
Savona, Queen of territory fair
As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its length
Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance holds
As a selected treasure thy one cliff,
That, while it wore for melancholy crest
A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have
Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs
And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave proof how kind
The breath of air can be where earth had else
Seemed churlish. And behold, both far and near,
Garden and field all decked with orange bloom,
And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest breeze
Expanding; and, along the smooth shore curved
Into a natural port, a tideless sea,
To that mild breeze with motion and with voice
Softly responsive; and, attuned to all
Those vernal charms of sight and sound, appeared
Smooth space of turf which from the guardian fort
Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April green,
In coolest climes too fugitive, might even here
Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer stay
Than his unmitigated beams allow,
Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve,
From mortal change, aught that is born on earth
Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink
Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,
Modest Savona! over all did brood
A pure poetic Spirit — as the breeze,
Mild — as the verdure, fresh — the sunshine, bright —
Thy gentle Chiabrera! — not a stone,
Mural or level with the trodden floor,
In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest
Missed not the truth, retains a single name
Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,
To whose dear memories his sepulchral verse
Paid simple tribute, such as might have flowed

From the clear spring of a plain English heart,
Say rather, one in native fellowship
With all who want not skill to couple grief
With praise, as genuine admiration prompts
The grief, the praise, are severed from the dust,
Yet in his page the records of that work
Survive, uninjured; — glory then to work
 Honour to word-preserving Arts, and hail
Ye kindred local influences that still,
If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith.
Await my steps when they the breezy height,
Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;
Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish
To meet the shade of Horace by the side
Of his Bandusian fount; or I invoke
His presence to point out the spot where once
He sate, and eulogized with earnest pen
Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate desire.
And all the immunities of rural life
Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling gate
Or let me loiter, soothed with what was given
Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,
Parthenope's Domain — Virgilian bays
Illustrated with never-dying verse,
And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands Endeared.

And who — if not a man as such
In heart as dull in brain — while pace on ground
Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, by minds
Out of her early struggles well inspired
To localize heroic acts — could look
Upon the spots with unlighted eye,
Though even to their last syllable of Lays
And very names of those who gave the birth
Have perished? — Verily, to her death
Imagination feels what Reason fears not
To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged
In those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned
To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race.
And others like in fame, created Power.
With attributes from History derived
By Poesy irradiate, and yet grace,
Through marvellous felicity of skill,
With something more propitious to his aims
Than either, pent within her separate
sphere,
Can oft with justice claim.
And not disdaining
Union with those primeval energies
To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your
height
Christian Traditions! at my Spirit’s call
Descend, and, on the brow of ancient Rome
As she survives in ruin, manifest
Your glories mingled with the brightest
hues
Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,
But never to be extinct while Earth endures.
O come, if undis honoured by the prayer,
From all her Sanctuaries! — Open for my
feet
Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse
Of the Devout, as, ’mid your glooms con-
vened
For safety, they of yore enclasped the
Cross
On knees that ceased from trembling, or
intoned
Their orisons with voices half-suppressed,
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be
heard,
Even at this hour.
And thou Mamertine prison,
Into that vault receive me from whose
depth
Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,
Albeit lifting human to divine,
A Saint, the Church’s Rock, the mystic
Keys
Grasped in his hand; and lo! with upright
sword
Prefiguring his own impenent doom,
The Apostle of the Gentiles; both prepared
To suffer pains with heathen scorn and
hate
Inflicted; — blessed Men, for so to Heaven
They follow their dear Lord!
Time flows — nor winds,
Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,
But many a benefit borne upon his breast
For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,
No one knows how; nor seldom is put forth
An angry arm that snatches good away,
Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream
Has to our generation brought and brings
Innumerable gains; yet we, who now
Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely
To a chilled age, most pitibly shut out
From that which is and actuates, by forms,
Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact
Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,
Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,
By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed
Science, wide-spread and spreading still as
be
Her conquests, in the world of sense made
known,
So with the internal mind it fares; and so
With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear
Of vital principle’s controlling law,
To her purblind guide Expediency; and so
Suffers religious faith. Elate with view
Of what is won, we overlook or scorn
The best that should keep pace with it, and
must,
Else more and more the general mind will
droop,
Even as if bent on perishing. There lives
No faculty within us which the Soul
Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal de-
dmands,
For dignity not placed beyond her reach,
Zealous co-operation of all means
Given or acquired, to raise us from the
mire,
And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.
By gross Utilities enslaved, we need
More of ennobling impulse from the past,
If to the future aught of good must come
Sounder and therefore holier than the ends
Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,
We covet as supreme. O grant the crown
That Wisdom wears, or take his treacher-
ous staff
From Knowledge! — If the Muse, whom I
have served
This day, be mistress of a single pearl
Fit to be placed in that pure diadem;
Then, not in vain, under these chestnut
boughs
Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul
To transports from the secondary founts
Flowing of time and place, and paid to
both
Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have
striven,
By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in
verse
Accordant meditations, which in times
Vexed and disordered, as our own, may
shed
Influence, at least among a scattered few,
To sobriety of mind and peace of heart
Friendly; as here to my repose hath been
This flowering broom’s dear neighbourhood,
the light
And murmur issuing from yon pendent
flood,
And all the varied landscape. Let us now
Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent
Rome.

II

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO
AT ROME
1837. 1842

Sir George Beaumont told me that, when he
first visited Italy, pine-trees of this species
abounded, but that on his return thither, which
was more than thirty years after, they had dis-
appeared from many places where he had been
accustomed to admire them, and had become
rare all over the country, especially in and
about Rome. Several Roman villas have
within those few years passed into the hands of
foreigners, who, I observed with pleasure, have
taken care to plant this tree, which in course
of years will become a great ornament to the
city and to the general landscape. May I ven-
ture to add here, that having ascended the
Monte Mario, I could not resist embracing the
trunk of this interesting monument of my de-
parted friend’s feelings for the beauties of na-
ture, and the power of that art which he loved
so much, and in the practice of which he was
so distinguished.

I saw far off the dark top of a Pine
Look like a cloud — a slender stem the tie
That bound it to its native earth — poised
high
‘Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
Striving in peace each other to outshine.
But when I learned the Tree was living
there,
Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont’s
care,
Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine!
The rescued Pine-Tree, with its sky so
bright
And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of
home,
Death-parted friends, and days too swift in
flight,
Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
(Then first apparent from the Pincian
Height)
Crowned with St. Peter’s everlasting Dome.

III

AT ROME
1837. 1842

Sight is at first a sad enemy to imagination
and to those pleasures belonging to old times
with which some exertions of that power will
always mingle: nothing perhaps brings this
truth home to the feelings more than the city
of Rome; not so much in respect to the impres-
sion made at the moment when it is first seen
and looked at as a whole, for then the imagi-
 nation may be invigorated and the mind’s eye
quickened; but when particular spots or ob-
jects are sought out, disappointment is I believe
invariably felt. Ability to recover from this
disappointment will exist in proportion to know-
l edge, and the power of the mind to reconstruc-
t out of fragments and parts, and to make details
in the present subservient to more adequate
comprehension of the past.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolion Hill?
You petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock
Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still
That name, a local Phantom proud to meet
The Traveller’s expectation? — Could or
Will
Destroy the ideal Power within, ’t were dast
Thro’ what men see and touch,— slaves
wandering on,
Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught
skill.
Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh:
Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn
From that depression raised, to mount so
high
With stronger wing, more clearly to discern
Eternal things; and, if need be, defy
Change, with a brow not insolent, thoug
stern.

IV

AT ROME — REGRETS — IN AL-
LUSION TO NIEBUHR AND
OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS
1837. 1842

Those old creeds, to nature dear,
Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock
Of History, stript naked as a rock
‘Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?
The glory of Infant Rome must disappear.
Her morning splendidours vanish, and this
place
r them no more. If Truth, who veiled
her face
those bright beams yet hid it not,
must steer
eforth a humbler course perplexed and
slow;
solace yet remains for us who came
tis world in days when story lacked
research, that in our hearts we know,
for exciting youth's heroic flame,
nt is power, belief the soul of fact.

V
CONTINUED
1837-42. 1842

PLACENT Fictions were they, yet the same
lved a history of no doubtful sense,
ory that proves by inward evidence
n what a precious source of truth it came.
or could the boldest Eulogist have dared
r deeds to paint, such characters to frame,
for coeval sympathy prepared
greet with instant faith their loftiest claim.
re but a noble people could have loved
tery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded
style:
in like sort the Runic Scald was moved;
nursed 'mid savage passions that defile
nanity, sang feats that well might call
the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's riot-
ous Hall.

VI
'LEA FOR THE HISTORIAN
1837-42. 1842

BEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,
gentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,
lo, gathering up all that Time's envious
tooth
spared of sound and grave realities,
mly rejects those dazzling flatteries,
ar as they are to unsuspecting Youth,
at might have drawn down Clio from the skies
vindicating the majesty of truth.

Such was her office while she walked with
men,
A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire
All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might be,
Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,
And taught her faithful servants how the lyre
Should animate, but not mislead, the pen.

VII
AT ROME
1837-42. 1842

I have a private interest in this Sonnet, for
I doubt whether it would ever have been writ-
ten but for the lively picture given me by
Anna Ricketts of what they had witnessed of
the indignation and sorrow expressed by some
Italian noblemen of their acquaintance upon
the surrender, which circumstances had obliged
them to make, of the best portion of their fam-
ily mansions to strangers.

THEY — who have seen the noble Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down his head,
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn
By feet of purse-proud strangers; they — who have read
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne;
They — who have heard some learned
Patriot treat
Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole theme
From ancient Rome, downwards through
that bright dream
Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat
Of rival glory; they — fallen Italy —
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of Thee!

VIII
NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST.
PETER'S
1837-42. 1842

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and
lawn:
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon
Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant fawn,
Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,
Startling and shrill as that which roused the dawn.
— Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the nerve
Shrinks from the note as from a mistimed thing,
Oft for a holy warning may it serve,
Charged with remembrance of his sudden sting,
His bitter tears, whose name the Papal Chair
And you resplendent Church are proud to bear.

IX
AT ALBANO
1837-42. 1842

This Sonnet is founded on simple fact, and was written to enlarge, if possible, the views of those who can see nothing but evil in the intercessions countenanced by the Church of Rome. That they are in many respects lamentably pernicious must be acknowledged; but, on the other hand, they who reflect, while they see and observe, cannot but be struck with instances which will prove that it is a great error to condemn in all cases such mediation as purely idolatrous. This remark bears with especial force upon addresses to the Virgin.

Days passed — and Monte Calvo would not clear
His head from mist; and, as the wind sobbed through
Albano’s dripping Ilex avenue,
My dull forebodings in a Peasant’s ear
Found casual vent. She said, “Be of good cheer;
Our yesterday’s procession did not sue
In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,
Thanks to our Lady’s grace.” I smiled to hear,
But not in scorn: — the Matron’s Faith may lack
The heavenly sanction needed to ensure
Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward-track
Stops not at this low point, nor wants the lure

Of flowers the Virgin without fear sown,
For by her Son’s blest hand the seed sown.

X
1837-42. 1842
Near Anio’s stream, I spied a gentle
Perched on an olive branch, and heard a cooing
’Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs wooing,
While all things present told of joy and love.
But restless Fancy left that olive guest
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing
Hope for the few, who, at the world’s doing,
On the great flood were spared to live and move.
O bounteous Heaven! signs true as the bough
Brought to the ark are coming evernew.
Given though we seek them not, but as we plough
This sea of life without a visible shore.
Do neither promise ask nor grace implore
In what alone is ours, the living Nest.

XI
FROM THE ALBAN HILLS
LOOKING TOWARDS ROME
1837-42. 1842
Forgive, illustrious Country! these sighs,
Heaved less for thy bright plains and bestrown
With monuments decayed or overthrown.
For all that tottering stands or prostrate lies,
Than for like scenes in moral vision seen
Ruin perceived for keener sympathies,
Faith crushed, yet proud of works, a gaudy crown;
Virtues laid low, and mouldering away.
Yet why prolong this mournful strain?
Fallen Power,
Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might prove
Verse to glad notes prophetic of the last.
When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy iron yoke.
His way to Rome? Ah, no,—round hill and plain
Wandering, he haunts, at fancy’s strong command,
This spot—his shadowy death-cup in his hand.

XIV
THE CUCKOO AT LÀVERNA
MAY 25, 1837
1837. 1842

Among a thousand delightful feelings connected in my mind with the voice of the cuckoo, there is a personal one which is rather melancholy. I was first convinced that age had rather dulled my hearing, by not being able to catch the sound at the same distance as the younger companions of my walks; and of this failure I had a proof upon the occasion that suggested these verses. I did not hear the sound till Mr. Robinson had twice or thrice directed my attention to it.

LIST —'t was the Cuckoo.—O with what delight
Heard I that voice! and catch it now, though faint,
Far off and faint, and melting into air,
Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again!
Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
Although invisible as Echo's self, is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy Creature,
For this unthought-of greeting!

While allured
From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
We have pursued, through various lands, a long
And pleasant course; flower after flower has blown,
Embellishing the ground that gave them birth
With aspects novel to my sight; but still
Most fair, most welcome, when they drank
the dew
In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,
For old remembrance sake. And oft—where Spring
Displayed her richest blossoms among spires
Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing fruit
Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade
Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour, The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy—
Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush
Blending as in a common English grove
Their love-songs; but, where'er my feet
might roam, Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
Strange and familiar, might beguile the way,
A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
Was wanting, and most happily till now.
For see, Lavenna! mark the far-famed Pile,
High on the brink of that precipitous rock,
Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth it is:
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,
By a few Monks, a stern society,
Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.
Nay—though the hopes that drew, the fears that drove.
St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide
Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House,
have ceased
To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live;
His milder Genius (thanks to the good God That made us) over those severe restraints Of mind, that dread heart-freezing discipline,
Doth sometimes here predominate, and works
By unsought means for gracious purposes;
For earth through heaven, for heaven, by changeful earth,
Illustrated, and mutually endea red.
Rapt though He were above the power of sense,
Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart
Of that once sinful Being overflowed On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,
And every shape of creature they sustain,
Divine affections; and with beast and bird (Stilled from afar—such marvel story tells—
By casual outbreak of his passionate words,
And from their own pursuits in field or grove
Drawn to his side by look or act of love Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)
He went to hold companionship so free, So pure, so fraught with knowledge and delight,
As to be likened in his Followers' minds

To that which our first Parents, ere the fall
From their high state darkened the Earth with fear,
Held with all kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the an stern Band,
Who breathe the air he breathed, tread where he trod,
Some true Partakers of his loving spirit
Do still survive, and, with those gentle hearts
Consorted, Others, in the power, the faith.
Of a baptized imagination, prompt
To catch from Nature's humblest monitor Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.
Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though pale
With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by years,
Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see.
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk, Seated alone, with forehead alky-ward raised Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore Appended to his bosom, and lips closed By the joint pressure of his musing mood And habit of his vow. That ancient Man—
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked As we approached the Convent gate, aloft Looking far forth from his aerial cell, A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage, He might have been, Lover belike he was— If they received into a conscious ear The notes whose first faint greeting startled me,
Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy. My heart—may have been moved like me to think.

Ah! not like me who walk in the world's ways,
On the great Prophet, styled the Voice of One
Crying amid the wilderness, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs and flowers Revive, their obstinate winter pass away, That awful name to Thee, thee, simple Cuckoo,
Wandering in solitude, and evermore Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leavest This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies To carry thy glad tidings over heights Still loftier, and to climes more near the Pole.
vice of the Desert, fare-thee-well; sweet
Bird!
at substantial title please thee more,
well!—but go thy way, no need hast
thou
good wish sent after thee; from bower
ower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
g gentle breezes waft—or airs, that
meet
course and sport around thee, softly
fan—
Night, descending upon hill and vale,
ats to thy mission a brief term of
silence,
_folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV
THE CONVENT OF CAMAL-
DOLI
1837-42. 1842

_0ve for the Man who hither came be-
reft,
d seeking consolation from above;
r grieve the less that skill to him was
left
paint this picture of his lady-love:
a she, a blessed saint, the work approve?
d oh, good Brethren of the cowl, a thing
fair, to which with peril he must cling;
stroy in pity, or with care remove.
at bloom — those eyes — can they assist
to bind
oughts that would stray from Heaven?
The dream must cease
be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must
live;
se will the enamoured Monk too surely
find
ow wide a space can part from inward
peace
be most profound repose his cell can
give.

XVI
CONTINUED
1837-42. 1842

‘_he world forsaken, all its busy cares
and stirring interests shunned with desper-
ate flight,
ill trust abandoned in the healing might

Of virtuous action; all that courage dares,
Labour accomplishes, or patience bears —
Those helps rejected, they, whose minds
perceive
How subtly works man’s weakness, sighs
may heave
For such a One beset with cloistral snares.
Father of Mercy! rectify his view,
If with his vows this object ill agree;
Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue
Imperious passion in a heart set free: —
That earthly love may to herself be true,
Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.

XVII
AT THE EREMITE OR UPPER
CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI
1837-42. 1842

_What aim had they, the Pair of Monks,
in size
Enormous, dragged, while side by side
they sate,
By panting steers up to this convent gate?
How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered
eyes,
Dare they confront the lean austerities
Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesus wait
In sackcloth, and God’s anger deprecate
Through all that humbles flesh and morti-
fies?
Strange contrast! — verily the world of
dreams,
Where mingle, as for mockery combined,
Things in their very essences at strife,
Shows not a sight incongruous as the ex-
tremes
That everywhere, before the thoughtful
mind,
Meet on the solid ground of waking life.

XVIII
AT VALLOMBROSA
1837-42. 1842

_Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades
High over-arch’d embower. “

Paradise Lost.

I must confess, though of course I did not
acknowledge it in the few lines I wrote in the
Strangers’ book kept at the convent, that I was
somewhat disappointed at Vallombrosa. I had expected, as the name implies, a deep and narrow valley overshadowed by enclosing hills; but the spot where the convent stands is in fact not a valley at all, but a cove or crescent open to an extensive prospect. In the book before mentioned, I read the notice in the English language that if any one would ascend the steep ground above the convent, and wander over it, he would be abundantly rewarded by magnificent views. I had not time to act upon this recommendation, and only went with my young guide to a point, nearly on a level with the site of the convent, that overlooks the vale of Arno for some leagues. To praise great and good men has ever been deemed one of the worthiest employments of poetry, but the objects of admiration vary so much with time and circumstances, and the noblest of mankind have been found, when intimately known, to be of characters so imperfect, that no eulogist can find a subject which he will venture upon with the animation necessary to create sympathy, unless he confines himself to a particular art or he takes something of a one-sided view of the person he is disposed to celebrate. This is a melancholy truth, and affords a strong reason for the poet's mind being chiefly exercised in works of fiction: the poet can then follow wherever the spirit of admiration leads him, unchecked by such suggestions as will be too apt to cross his way if all that he is prompted to utter is to be tested by fact. Something in this spirit I have written in the note attached to the sonnet on the king of Sweden; and many will think that in this poem and elsewhere I have spoken of the author of “Paradise Lost” in a strain of panegyrical scarcely justifiable by the tenor of some of his opinions, whether theological or political, and by the temper he carried into public affairs in which, unfortunately for his genius, he was so much concerned.

“VALLOMBROSA — I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor!”
Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,
That lulled me asleep bids me listen once more.
Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the steep,
Near that Cell — yon sequestered Retreat high in air —
Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep
For converse with God, sought through study and prayer.

The Monks still repeat the traditions pride,
And its truth who shall doubt? for the Spirit is here;
In the cloud-piercing rocks doth grandeur abide,
In the pines pointing heavenward her austere;
In the flower-bespent meadows his way we trace
Turned to humbler delights, in which we might confide,
That would yield him fit help while figuring that Place
Where, if Sin had not entered, Love had died.

When with life lengthened out came desolate time,
And darkness and danger had compassed him round,
With a thought he would flee to the haunts of his prime
And here once again a kind shelter found.
And let me believe that when nightly
Muse
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,
Here also, on some favoured height he would choose
To wander, and drink inspiration at will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in a page
Of that holiest of Bards, and the same is my mind
Had a musical charm, which the winter age
And the changes it brings had no power to unbind.
And now, ye Miltonian shades! while I repose, nor am forced from sweet fascination to part,
While your leaves I behold and the breeze they will strew,
And the realised vision is clasped to my heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we may
In Forms that must perish, frail objects of sense;
Unblamed — if the Soul be intent on the day
When the Being of Beings shall summate her hence.
MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

For he and he only with wisdom is blest
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever
they grow,
Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,
To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity
flow.

XIX
AT FLORENCE
1837-42. 1842

Upon what evidence the belief rests that this
stone was a favourite seat of Dante, I do not
know; but a man would little consult his own
interest as a traveller, if he should busy himself
with doubts as to the fact. The readiness with
which traditions of this character are received,
and the fidelity with which they are preserved
from generation to generation, are an evidence
of feelings honourable to our nature. I re-
member how, during one of my rambles in the
course of a college vacation, I was pleased on
being shown a seat near a kind of rocky cell
at the source of the river, on which it was said
that Congreve wrote his "Old Bachelor." One
carefully hit on any performance less in
harmony with the scene; but it was a local
tribute paid to intellect by those who had not
troubled themselves to estimate the moral worth
of that author's comedies; and why should
they? He was a man distinguished in his day;
and the sequestered neighbourhood in which he
often resided was perhaps as proud of him as
Florence of her Dante: it is the same feeling,
thought proceeding from persons one cannot
bring together in this way without offering some
apology to the Shade of the great Visionary.

Under the shadow of a stately Pile,
The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,
Nor giving heed to aught that passed the
while,
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,
The laurelled Dante's favourite seat. A
throne,
In just esteem, it rivals; though no style
Be there of decoration to beguile
The mind, depressed by thought of great-
ness flown.
As a true man, who long had served the lyre,
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no more.
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore
A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.
Bold with the thought, in reverence I sate
down,
And, for a moment, filled that empty
Throne.

XX
BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE
BAPTIST, BY RAPHAEL, IN THE
GALLERY AT FLORENCE
1837-42. 1842

It was very hot weather during the week we
stayed at Florence; and, never having been there
before, I went through much hard service, and
am not therefore ashamed to confess I fell asleep
before this picture and sitting with my back to-
wards the Venus de Medicis. Buonaparte —
in answer to one who had spoken of his being
in a sound sleep up to the moment when one of
his great battles was to be fought, as a proof
of the calmness of his mind and command over
anxious thoughts — said frankly, that he slept
because from bodily exhaustion he could not
help it. In like manner it is noticed that
criminals on the night previous to their execu-
tion seldom awake before they are called. a proof
that the body is the master of us far more than
we need be willing to allow. Should this note
by any possible chance be seen by any of my
countrymen who might have been in the gallery
at the time (and several persons were there)
and witnessed such an indecorum, I hope he will
give up the opinion which he might naturally
have formed to my prejudice.

The Baptist might have been ordained to cry
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile, wherein
His Father served Jehovah; but how win
Due audience, how for aught but scorn defy
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin
And folly, if they with united din
Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?
Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert,
thenoe
To Her, as to her opposite in peace,
Silence, and holiness, and innocence,
To Her and to all Lands its warning sent,
Crying with earnestness that might not cease,
"Make straight a highway for the Lord —
repent!"

XXI
AT FLORENCE — FROM MICHAEL
ANGELO
1837-42. 1842

However at first these two sonnets from
Michael Angelo may seem in their spirit some-
what inconsistent with each other, I have not scrupled to place them side by side as characteristic of their great author, and others with whom he lived. I feel nevertheless a wish to know at what periods of his life they were respectively composed. The latter, as it expresses, was written in his advanced years when it was natural that the Platonism that pervades the one should give way to the Christian feeling that inspired the other: between both there is more than poetic affinity.

RAPT above earth by power of one fair face,
Hers in whose sway alone my heart delights,
I mingle with the blest on those pure heights
Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place.
With Him who made the Work that Work accords
So well, that by its help and through his grace
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.
Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot turn,
I feel how in their presence doth abide
Light which to God is both the way and guide;
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,
My noble fire emits the joyful ray
That through the realms of glory shines for aye.

XXII
AT FLORENCE—FROM M. ANGELO
1837-42. 1842

Eternal Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,
And loosened from the world, I turn to Thee;
Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and flee
To thy protection for a safe abode.
The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon the tree,
The meek, benign, and lacerated face,
To a sincere repentance promise grace,
To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.
With justice mark not Thou, O Light divine,
My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;
Neither put forth that way thy arm may bend
Wash with thy blood my sins; there recline.
More readily the more my years repair
Help, and forgiveness speedy and rare.

XXIII
AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN THE APENNINES
1837-42. 1842

The political revolutions of our time is multiplied, on the Continent, objects that unavoidably call forth reflections such as expressed in these verses, but the same countries are too recent to exhibit a thing like an equal degree, the beauty of which time and nature have invested the remains of our Convents and Abbeys. The verses it will be observed take up the less long before it is matured, as one cannot wish it may be among some of the domains of Italy, France, and Germany.

Ye Trees! whose slender roots entwine
Altars that piety neglects;
Whose infant arms enclasped the shrine
Which no devotion now respects;
If not a straggler from the herd
Here runimate, nor shrouded bird,
Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride
In aught that ye would grace or hide—
How sadly is your love misplaced,
Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!

Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one heeds
And ye—full often spurned as weeds;
In beauty clothed, or breathing sweets
From fractured arch and mouldering walls
Do but more touchingly recall
Man's headstrong violence and Time's futility,
Making the precincts ye adorn
Appear to sight still more forlorn.

XXIV
IN LOMBARDY
1837-42. 1842

See, where his difficult way that Old Man wins
Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—not hard
ears his lot, to the small Worm's compared,
whom his toil with early day begins.
knowledging no task-master, at will
if her labour and her ease were twins)
seems to work, at pleasure to lie still;
I softly sleeps within the thread she
spins.
are they—the Man serving as her Slave.
Long their fates do each to each conform:
In pass into new being,—but the Worm
maligner, sinks into a hopeless grave;
volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend
bliss unbounded, glory without end.

XXV
AFTER LEAVING ITALY
1837-42. 1842

had proof in several instances that the
bonari, if I may still call them so, and their
ouers, are opening their eyes to the neces-
ity of patience, and are intent upon spreading
knowledge actively but quietly as they can.
y they have resolution to continue in this rase! for it is the only one by which they
truly benefit their country. We left Italy
the way which is called the "Nuova Strada All'magna," to the east of the high passes of
Alps, which take you at once from Italy
Switzerland. This road leads across sev-
smaller heights, and winds down different
eas in succession, so that it was only by the
residential sound of a few German words that
were aware we had quitted Italy, and hence
unwelcome shock alluded to in the two or
three last lines of the latter sonnet.

Land! Thee all men greet with joy;
how few,
hose souls take pride in freedom, virtue,
fame,

Part from thee without pity dyed in shame:
I could not—while from Venice we with-
drew,
Led on till an Alpine strait confined our
view
Within its depths, and to the shore we came
Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,
Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder colouring
threw.
Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,
(Too aptly emblemed by that torpid lake)
Shall a few partial breezes only creep?—
Be its depths quickened; what thou dost
inherit
Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,
Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like
sleep!

XXV
CONTINUED
1837. 1842

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
Spake bitter words; words that did ill
agree
With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,
And divine Art, that fast to memory
clung—
Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight
How beautiful! how worthy to be sung
In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!
I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock
That followed the first sound of German
speech,
Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among
In that announcement, greeting seemed to
mock
Parting; the casual word had power to
reach
My heart, and filled that heart with conflict
strong.

† BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE
OF THE LATE INSURREC-
TIONS, 1837
1837. 1842

1

Why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit
sudden passion roused shall men attain
true freedom where for ages they have lain
ound in a dark abominable pit,

With life's best sinews more and more un-
knit.
Here, there, a banded few who loathe the
chain
May rise to break it; effort worse than vain
For thee, O great Italian nation, split
Into those jarring frations. — Let thy scope
Be one fixed mind for all; thy rights approve
To thy own conscience gradually renewed;
Learn to make Time the father of wise Hope;
Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,
The light of Knowledge, and the warmth of
Love.

CONTINUED

II

Hard task! exclaim the undisciplined, to
lean
On Patience coupled with such slow en-
deavour,
That long-lived servitude must last for ever.
Perish the grovelling few, who, prest be-
tween
Wrongs and the terror of redress, would
wean
Millions from glorious aims. Our chains to
sever
Let us break forth in tempest now or
never! —
What, is there then no space for golden
mean;
And gradual progress? — Twilight leads to
day,
And, even within the burning zones of earth,
The h hottest sunrise yields a temperate
ray;
The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives
birth:
Think not that Prudence dwells in dark
abodes,
She scans the future with the eye of gods.

CONCLUDED

III

As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow
And wither, every human generation
Is, to the Being of a mighty nation,
Locked in our world’s embrace through
weal and woe;
Thought that should teach the zealot to
forego
Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agitation,
And seek through noiseless pains and mod-
eration
The unblemished good they only can bestow.
Alas! with most, who weigh futurity
Against time present, passion holds the
scales:
Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,
And nations sink; or, struggling to be
free,
Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded
whales
Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

"WHAT IF OUR NUMBERS BARELY COULD DEFY"

1837. 1837

What if our numbers barely could defy
The arithmetic of babes, must forego
Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by word
Striking through English breasts the an-
archy
Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie
Our hands behind our backs with false
cords?
Yields every thing to discipline of sword!
Is man as good as man, none low, now
high?
—
Nor discipline nor valour can withstand
The shock, nor quell the inevitable rest.
When in some great extremity breaks out
A people, on their own beloved Land
Risen, like one man, to combat in the arm
Of a just God for liberty and right.

A NIGHT THOUGHT

1837. 1842

These verses were thrown off extempore
upon leaving Mrs. Luff’s house at Fox-City
one evening. The good woman is not disposed
to look at the bright side of things, and then
happened to be present certain ladies who had
reached the point of life where youth is rare
and who seemed to contend with each other in
expressing their dislike of the country and cli-
nate. One of them had been heard to say she
could not endure a country where there was
“neither sunshine nor cavaliers.”

Lo! where the Moon along the sky
Sails with her happy destiny;
Oft is she hid from mortal eye
Or dimly seen.
But when the clouds asunder fly
How bright her mien!

Far different we — a froward race,
Thousands though rich in Fortune’s grace
With cherished sullenness of pace
Their way pursue,
Ingrates who wear a smileless face
The whole year through.

If kindred humours e’er would make
My spirit droop for drooping’s sake,
Tis the thrush, undaunted, undeprest,
Composed on a May morning,
1838, 1838

"Hark! tis the thrush, undaunted, undeprest,
Composed on a May morning,
1838, 1838

In the sweet light of the morning star,
Nature's aspects brightening clear,
Gleam across the sacred wilds of fear,
Where the thrush is heard singing near.

Thrice fair, my noble heart,
Blest be the morn on which I saw,
Thus I drank my morning draught of joy,
And with my soul I drank of love.

So rich to me in favours,
For my lot was within the famed
It is the thrush who sings softest,
And with its dewy air,

Tis the thrush, undaunted, undeprest,
Composed on a May morning,
1838, 1838
Oh what a Wreck! how changed in mien and speech!
Yet—though dread Powers, that mystery, spin
Entanglements of the brain; though a stretch
O'er the chilled heart—reflect; it is within.
Hers is a holy Being, freed from sin.
She is not what she seems, a forlorn
But delegated Spirits comfort her
To Her from heights that Reason win.
Like Children, She is privileged to the
Divine communion; both do live and
Whate'er to shallow Faith their way in
Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love;
Pitying innocence not long to last.
In them—in Her our sins and sorrows.

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS,
MAY 1838
1838. 1838
Failing impartial measure to dispense
To every suit, Equity is lame;
And social Justice, stript of reverence
For natural rights, a mockery and shame.
Law but a servile dupe of false pretense.
If, guarding grossest things from claim
Now and for ever, She, to works that are
From mind and spirit, grudge a short fence.
"What! lengthened privilege, a lineal
For Books!" Yes, heartless Ones, or I proved
That 'tis a fault in Us to have loved
Like others, with like temporal hope
Die;
No public harm that Genius from her be
Turned; and streams of truth dried
Even at their source!

A POET TO HIS GRANDCH.
SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING
1838. 1838.
"Son of my buried Son, while thus
Is clasping mine, it saddens me to thin
SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH

ow Want may press thee down, and with
thee sink
by children left unfit, through vain demand
f’ culture, even to feel or understand
y simplest Lay that to their memory
ay cling; — hard fate! which haply need
not be
id Justice mould the statutes of the Land.
Book time-cherished and an honoured
name
re high rewards; but bound they Nature’s
claim
r Reason’s? No — hopes spun in timid
line
rom out the bosom of a modest home
xtend through unambitious years to come,
y careless Little-one, for thee and thine!"

BLEST STATESMAN HE, WHOSE
MIND’S UNSELFISH WILL”
1838. 1838

BEST Statesman He, whose Mind’s unself-
fish will
saves him at ease among grand thoughts:
whose eye
es that, apart from magnanimity,
’dom exists not; nor the humbler skill
Prudence, disentangling good and ill
ith patient care. What tho’ assaults run
high,
rey daunt not him who holds his ministry,
olute, at all hazards, to fulfill
duties; — prompt to move, but firm to
wait, —
rowing, things rashly sought are rarely
found;
at, for the functions of an ancient State —
ong by her charters, free because im-
bound,
rvant of Providence, not slave of Fate —
rilous is sweeping change, all chance un-
ound.

VALEDICTORY SONNET
1838. 1838

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in
38.
ving no haughty Muse, my hands have here
spaced some cultured Flowerets (drawn
from spots

Where they bloomed singly, or in scattered
knots),
Each kind in several beds of one parterre;
Both to allure the casual Loiterer,
And that, so placed, my Nurslings may
requite
Studious regard with opportune delight,
Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err.
But metaphor dismissed, and thanks apart;
Reader, farewell! My last words let them
be —
If in this book Fancy and Truth agree;
If simple Nature trained by careful Art
Through It have won a passage to thy heart;
Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee!

PROTEST AGAINST THE
BALLOT
1838. 1838

FORTH rushed from Envy sprung and Self-
conceit,
A Power misnamed the SPIRIT of REFORM,
And through the astonished Island swept
in storm,
Threatening to lay all orders at her feet
That crossed her way. Now stoops she to
entreat
Licence to hide at intervals her head
Where she may work, safe, undisquieted,
In a close Box, covert for Justice meet.
St. George of England, I keep a watchful
eye
Fixed on the Suitor; frustrate her request —
Stifle her hope; for, if the State comply,
From such Pandorian gift may come a Pest
Worse than the Dragon that bowed low his
crest,
Pierced by thy spear in glorious victory.

SONNETS
UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH
IN SERIES
1839-40. 1841

I
SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCAS-
TER CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM
THE SOUTH)

This Spot — at once unfolding sight so fair
Of sea and land, with yon grey towers that still
Rise up as if to lord it over air —
Might soothe in human breasts the sense of ill,
Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill
The heart with joy and gratitude to God
For all his bounties upon man bestowed:
Why bears it then the name of “Weeping Hill”?  
Thousands, as toward you old Lancastrian Towers,
A prison’s crown, along this way they pass
For lingering durance or quick death with shame,
From this bare eminence thereon have cast
Their first look — blinded as tears fell in showers
Shed on their chains; and hence that doleful name.

II
Tenderly do we feel by Nature’s law
For worst offenders: though the heart will heave
With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,
In after thought, for Him who stood in awe.
Neither of God nor man, and only saw,
Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned
On proud temptations, till the victim groaned
Under the steel his hand had dared to draw.
But oh, restrain compassion, if its course,
As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside
Judgments and aims and acts whose higher source
Is sympathy with the unforwarned, who died
Blameless — with them that shuddered o’er his grave,
And all who from the law firm safety crave.

III
The Roman Consul doomed his sons to die
Who had betrayed their country. The stern word
Afforded (may it through all time afford)
A theme for praise and admiration high.
Upon the surface of humanity
He rested not; its depths his mind explored;
He felt; but his parental bosom’s lord
Was Duty, — Duty calmed his agony.
And some, we know, when they by wilful act
A single human life have wrongly taken,
Pass sentence on themselves, confess the fact,
And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken
Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

IV
Is Death, when evil against good has fought
With such fell mastery that a man may die
By deeds the blackest purpose to lay bare;
Is Death, for one to that condition brought.
For him, or any one, the thing that ought
To be most dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,
Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare
The murderer, ye, by sanction to the thought
Seemingly given, debase the general mind;
Tempt the vague will tried standards to disown,
Nor only palpable restraints unbind,
But upon Honour’s head disturb the crown
Whose absolute rule permits not to withstand
In the weak love of life his least command.

V
Not to the object specially designed,
Howe’er momentous in itself it be,
Good to promote or curb depravity,
Is the wise Legislator’s view confined.
His Spirit, when most severe, is oftest kind;
As all Authority in earth depends
On Love and Fear, their several powers blend,
Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.
Uncaught by processes in show humane.
He feels how far the act would derogate
From even the humblest functions of the State;
If she, self-born of Majesty, ordains
That never more shall hang upon her breast
The last alternative of Life or Death.

VI
Ye brood of conscience — Spectres, least frequent
The bad Man’s restless walk, and broods his bed —
Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent
In act, as hovering Angels when they spread
Their wings to guard the unconscious Innocent —
Slow be the Statutes of the land to shew
A laxity that could not but impair
SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH

IX

Though to give timely warning and deter
Is one great aim of penalty, extend
Thy mental vision further and ascend
Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.
What is a State? The wise behold in her
A creature born of time, that keeps one eye
Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,
To which her judgments reverently defer.
Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice the State
Endues her conscience with external life
And being, to preclude or quell the strife
Of individual will, to elevate
The grovelling mind, the erring to recall,
And fortify the moral sense of all.

X

Our bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine
Of an immortal spirit, is a gift
So sacred, so informed with light divine,
That no tribunal, though most wise to sift
Deed and intent, should turn the Being adrift
Into that world where penitential tear
May not avail, nor prayer have for God's ear
A voice — that world whose veil no hand can lift
For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"
They urge, "have interwoven claims and rights
Not to be jeopardised through foulest crime:
The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born lights."
Even so; but measuring not by finite sense
Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

XI

Ah, think how one compelled for life to abide
Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the heart
Out of his own humanity, and part
With every hope that mutual cares provide;
And, should a less unnatural doom confide
In life-long exile on a savage coast,
Soon the relapsing penitent may boast
Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.
Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and pure,
Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,
Leaving the final issue in His hands
Whose goodness knows no change, whose
love is sure,
Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge a miss,
And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

XII
See the Condemned alone within his cell
And prostrate at some moment when remorse
Stings to the quick, and, with resistless force,
Assaults the pride she strove in vain to quell.
Then mark him, who could so long rebel,
The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent
Before the Altar, where the Sacrament
Softens his heart, till from his eyes outwell
Tears of salvation. Welcome death! while Heaven
Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;
While yet the solemn heed the State hath given
Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's voice
In faith, which fresh offences, were he cast
On old temptations, might for ever blast.

XIII
CONCLUSION
Yes, though He well may tremble at the sound
Of his own voice, who from the judgment-seat
Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat
In death; though Listeners shudder all around,
They know the dread requital's source profound;
Nor is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete —
(Would that it were!) the sacrifice unmeet
For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs abound;
The social rights of man breathe purer air,
Religion deepens her preventive care;
Then, moved by needless fear of past abuse,
Strike not from Law's firm hand that awful rod,
But leave it thence to drop for lack of use:
Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty God!

XIV
APOLOGY
The formal World relaxes her cold chain
For One who speaks in numbers; ampler scope
His utterance finds; and, conscious of the gain,
Imagination works with bolder hope
The cause of grateful reason to sustain;
And, serving Truth, the heart more strongly beats
Against all barriers which his labour meets
In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.
Enough; — before us lay a painful road,
And guidance have I sought in due season from Wisdom's heavenly Father. Here hath flowed
Patience, with trust that, whatsoever the day
Each takes in this high matter, all may move
Cheered with the prospect of a brighter day.

ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F,
PAINTED BY MARGARET GIL-LIES
1840. 1851
We gaze — nor grieve to think that we
must die,
But that the precious love this friend hath sown
Within our hearts, the love whose flower hath blown
Bright as if heaven were ever in its eye,
Will pass so soon from human memory;
And not by strangers to our blood alone:
But by our best descendants be unknown.
Unthought of — this may surely claim a sigh.
Yet, blessed Art, we yield not to dejection
Thou against Time so feelingly dost strike
Where'er, preserved in this most true reflection,
An image of her soul is kept alive,
Some lingering fragrance of the pure affection,
Whose flower with us will vanish, and survive.

TO I. F.
1840. 1851
The star which comes at close of day's shine
More heavenly bright than when it leads the morn,
Is friendship's emblem, whether the forest
She visiteth, or, shedding light beaming
ugh shades that solemnize Life’s calm decline,
make the happy happier. This have we
Isabel, from thy society,
how now we too unwillingly resign
gh for brief absence. But farewell
the page
mers before my sight through thankful
tears,
as start forth, not seldom, to approve
truth, when we, old yet unchilled by age,
thee, though known but for a few fleet
years,
heart-affianced sister of our love!

POOR ROBIN
1840. 1842

ften ask myself what will become of Rydal
it after our day. Will the old walls and
remain in front of the house and about
grounds, or will they be swept away with
he beautiful mosses and ferns and wild
aums and other flowers which their rude
uction suffered and encouraged to grow
ng them? — This little wild flower —
or Robin” — is here constantly courting
attention, and exciting what may be called
estic interest with the varying aspects of
talks and leaves and flowers. Strangely
es tastes of men differ according to their
oyment and habits of life. “What a nice
would that be,” said a labouring man to
one day, “if all that rubbish was cleared

The “rubbish” was some of the most
tiful mosses and lichens and ferns and
wild growths that could possibly be seen.
and us from the tyranny of trimness and
ness showing itself in this way! Chatter-
says of freedom — “Upon her head wild
as were spread;” and depend upon it if
e marvellous boy” had undertaken to give
a garland, he would have preferred what
are apt to call weeds to garden-flowers.
e taste has an eye for both. Weeds have
alled flowers out of place. I fear the
most people would assign to them is too
t. Let them come near to our abodes,
early they may without impropriety or dis-

When the primrose makes a splendid
show,
lilies face the March-winds in full blow,
humbler growths as moved with one
desire
t on, to welcome spring, their best attire,
or Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay

With his red stalks upon this sunny day!
And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, con-
tent
With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,
Mixed with the green, some shine not lack-
ing power
To rival summer’s brightest scarlet flower;
And flowers they well might seem to
passers-by
If looked at only with a careless eye;
Flowers — or a richer produce (did it suit
The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry
fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come un-
sought,
Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought?
Is the string touched in prelude to a lay
Of pretty fancies that would round him play
When all the world acknowledged elfin
sway?
Or does it suit our humour to commend
Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,
Whose practice teaches, spite of names, to
show
Bright colours whether they deceive or
no?
—
Nay, we would simply praise the free good-
will
With which, though slighted, he, on naked
hill
Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;
Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,
Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow:
Yet more, we wish that men by men de-
spised,
And such as lift their foreheads over-
prized,
Should sometimes think, where’er they
chance to spy
This child of Nature’s own humility,
What recom pense is kept in store or left
For all that seem neglected or bereft;
With what nice care equivalents are given,
How just, how bountiful, the hand of
Heaven.

ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON UPON THE
FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON
1840. 1842

This was composed while I was ascending
Helvellyn in company with my daughter and
her husband. She was on horseback and rode
to the top of the hill without once dismounting, a feat which it was scarcely possible to perform except during a season of dry weather; and a guide, with whom we fell in on the mountain, told us he believed it had never been accomplished before by any one.

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-horse stand
On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;
Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand
Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;
But by the Chieftain's look, though at his side
Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check
Is given to triumph and all human pride!
Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck
In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed
Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's rest,
As shows that time-worn face, for he such seed
Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of fame
In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy name,
Conqueror, 'mid some sad thoughts, divinely blest!

TO A PAINTER

1841 (?). 1842

The picture which gave occasion to this and the following Sonnet was from the pencil of Miss M. Gillies, who resided for several weeks under our roof at Rydal Mount.

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed;
But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me,
Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,
By the habitual light of memory see
Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,
And smiles that from their birth-place ne'er shall flee
Into the land where ghosts and phantoms be;
And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.
Couldst thou go back into far-distant years,
Or share with me, fond thought! that a
ward eye,
Then, and then only, Painter! could thy
The visual powers of Nature satisfy,
Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,
Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT

1841. 1842

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise
This Work, I now have gazed on it so long
I see its truth with unreluctant eyes;
O, my Beloved! I have done thee wrong!
Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it sprung,
Ever too heedless, as I now perceive:
Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,
And the old day was welcome as the young.
As welcome, and as beautiful — in sooth
More beautiful, as being a thing more bare.
Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal yeast
Of all thy goodness, never melancholy;
To thy large heart and humble mind, the cast
Into one vision, future, present, past.

"WHEN SEVERN'S SWEEPING FLOOD HAD OVERTHROWN" 1842. 1842

When Severn's sweeping flood had overthrown
St. Mary's Church, the preacher would cry:
"Thus, Christian people, God his might hath shown
That ye to him your love may testify;
Haste, and rebuild the pile." — But not the stone
Resumed its place. Age after age went
And Heaven still lacked its due, though piety
In secret did, we trust, her loss bemuse.
But now her Spirit hath put forth its grace
In Power, and Poesy would lend her root:
Let the new Church be worthy of its site.
That in its beauty Cardiff may rejoice!
Oh! in the past if cause there was to shame,
Let not our times halt in their better days.
J TENT ON GATHERING WOOL FROM HEDGE AND BRAKE"

1842. 1842

suggested by a conversation with Miss Fen- t, who along with her sister had, during r childhood, found much delight in such serings for the purposes here alluded to.

ENT on gathering wool from hedge and brake

a busy Little-ones rejoice that soon or old Dame will bless them for the boon:

at is their glee while flake they add to flake

the rival earnestness; far other strife un will hereafter move them, if they make

time their idol, give their day of life pleasure snatched for reckless pleasure’s sake.

a pomp and show allay one heart-born grief?

ns which the World inflicts can she requite?

t for an interval however brief;

es silent thoughts that search for stedfast light,

ve from her depths, and Duty in her might,

d Faith — these only yield secure relief.

In desultory walk through orchard grounds,
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I paused
The while a Thrush, urged rather than restrained
By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his song
To his own genial instincts; and was heard (Though not without some plaintive tones between)
To utter, above showers of blossom swept
From tossing boughs, the promise of a calm,
Which the unsheltered traveller might receive
With thankful spirit. The descent, and the wind

That seemed to play with it in love or scorn,
Encouraged and endeared the strain of words
That haply flowed from me, by fits of silence
Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my Book!
Charged with those lays, and others of like mood,
Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,
Go, single — yet aspiring to be joined
With thy Forerunners that through many a year
Have faithfully prepared each other’s way —

Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled
When and wherever, in this changeful world,
Power hath been given to please for higher ends
Than pleasure only; gladdening to prepare
For wholesome sadness, troubling to refine,
Calming to raise; and, by a sapient Art
Diffused through all the mysteries of our Being,

Softening the toils and pains that have not ceased
To cast their shadows on our mother Earth
Since the primeval doom. Such is the grace
Which, though unsued for, fails not to descend

With heavenly inspiration; such the aim
That Reason dictates; and, as even the wish
Has virtue in it, why should hope to me
Be wanting that sometimes, where fancied ills
Harass the mind and strip from off the bowers
Of private life their natural pleasantness,
A Voice — devoted to the love whose seeds
Are sown in every human breast, to beauty
Lodged within compass of the humblest
sight,
To cheerful intercourse with wood and
field,
And sympathy with man’s substantial
rights —
Will not be heard in vain? And in those
days
When unforeseen distress spreads far and
wide
Among a People mournfully cast down,
Or into anger roused by venal words
In recklessness flung out to overturn
The judgment, and divert the general heart
From mutual good — some strain of thine,
my Book!
Caught at propitious intervals, may win
Listeners who not unwillingly admit
Kindly emotion tending to console
And reconcile; and both with young and
old
Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude
For benefits that still survive, by faith
In progress, under laws divine, maintained.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;
There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;
There insects live their lives, and die;
A peopled world it is; in size a tiny
sun
And thus through many seasons’ space
This little Island may survive;
But Nature, though we mark her not,
Will take away, may cease to give.

Perchance when you are wandering far
Upon some vacant sunny day,
Without an object, hope, or fear,
Thither your eyes may turn — the list
passed away;

Buried beneath the glittering Lake
Its place no longer to be found;
Yet the lost fragments shall remain
To fertilize some other ground.

"THE CRESCENT-MOON, THE
STAR OF LOVE"

1842. 1842

The Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,
Glories of evening, as ye there are
With but a span of sky between —
Speak one of you, my doubts remove.
Which is the attendant Page and which
Queen?

TO A REDBREAST — (IN SICKNESS)

(?). 1842

Almost the only verses by our lamented sis
ter Sara Hutchinson.

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,
And at my casement sing,
Though it should prove a farewell by
And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne’er enjoy
The promise in thy song;
A charm, that thought can not destroy,
Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour
Thy song would still be dear,
And with a more than earthly powr
My passing Spirit cheer.
MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,
Come, and my requiem sing,
Nor fail to be the harbinger
Of everlasting Spring.

I

was impelled to write this Sonnet by the
unresting frequency with which the word ar-
aft', imported with other impertinences from
Germania, is employed by writers of the
present day: for artifical let them substitute
natural, and the poetry written on this system,
both at home and abroad, will be for the most
part much better characterised.

DIOGENES.—He hath put his heart to school,
and dares to move unpropertied upon the staff
rich Art hath lodged within his hand—
must laugh
precept only, and shed tears by rule.
Art be Nature; the live current quaff,
d let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
fear that else, when Critics grave and
cool
we killed him, Scorn should write his
epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom un-
fold?
Because the lovely little flower is free
to its root, and, in that freedom,
and so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
comes not by casting in a formal mould,
it from its own divine vitality.

II

Hundreds of times have I seen, hanging about
above the vale of Rydal, clouds that might
be given birth to this Sonnet, which was
rowed off on the impulse of the moment one
evening when I was returning home from the
favourite walk of ours, along the Rotha, under
troughrigg.

He most alluring clouds that mount the
sky
beneath a troubled element their forms,
hue of sunset. If with raptured eye
ve watch their splendour, shall we covet
storms,
and wish the Lord of day his slow decline

Would hasten, that such pomp may float on
high?
Behold, already they forget to shine,
Dissolve—and leave, to him who gazed, a
sigh.
Not loth to thank each moment for its boon
Of pure delight, come whencesoe'er it may,
Peace let us seek,—to stedfast things
attune
Calm expectations—leaving to the gay
And volatile their love of transient bowers,
The house that cannot pass away be ours.

III

This Sonnet is recommended to the perusal of
all those who consider that the evils under which
we groan are to be removed or palliated by mea-
sures ungoverned by moral and religious prin-
ciples.

Feel for the wrongs to universal ken
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren
Taught him concealment) hidden from all
eyes
In silence and the awful modesties
Of sorrow;—feel for all, as brother Man!
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw
By casual boon and formal charities;
Learn to be just, just through impartial
law;
Far as ye may, erect and equalise;
And, what ye cannot reach by statute, draw
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

IV

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT
HISTORIES AND NOTICES OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION

Portentous change when History can appear
As the cool Advocate of foul device;
Reckless audacity extol, and jeer
At consciences perplexed with scruples
nice!
They who bewail not, must abhor, the
snear
Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;
Or haply sprung from vanting Cowardice
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.
Hath it not long been said the wrath of
Man
Works not the righteousness of God? Oh bend,
Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on High,
Laws that lay under Heaven’s perpetual ban,
All principles of action that transcend
The sacred limits of humanity.

V
CONTINUED
Who ponders National events shall find
An awful balancing of loss and gain,
Joy based on sorrow, good with ill combined,
And proud deliverance issuing out of pain
And direful thrones; as if the All-ruling Mind,
Whose with perfection it consists to ordain
Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,
Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind
By laws immutable. But woe for him
Who thus deceived shall lend an eager hand
To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,
And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make dim;
And Will, whose office, by divine command,
Is to control and check disordered Powers?

VI
CONCLUDED
LONG-FAVOURED England! be not thou misled
By monstrous theories of alien growth,
Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,
Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red
With thy own blood, which tears in torrents shed
Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth
Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,
Or wan despair—the ghost of false hope fled
Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,
My Country! if such warning be held dear,
Then shall a Veteran’s heart be thrilled with joy,
One who would gather from eternal truth,
For time and season, rules that work to cheer—
Not scourge, to save the People—not destroy.

VII
MEN of the Western World! in Fate’s dark book
Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire portent?

Think ye your British Ancestors first
Their native Land, for outrage prov’d
From unsubmissive necks the bride to give,
In their Descendants, free and free
And wider range to passions turbulent,
To mutual tyranny a deadlier look?
Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind’s breath,
Dive through the stormy surface of the flood
To the great current flowing underground
Explore the countless springs of all good;
So shall the truth be better understood,
And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong faith.

VIII
Lo! where she stands fixed in a saintly trance,
One upward hand, as if she needed rest.
From rapture, lying softly on her breast:
Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glass;
But not the less — nay more — that com
While thus illuminated, tells of painfull
For a sick heart made weary of this life;
By love, long crossed with adverse circumstance.
— Would She were now as when she bade to pass
At God’s appointed hour to them who were
Heaven’s sapphire pavement, yet breathe well content,
Well pleased, her foot should print on common grass,
Lived thankful for day’s light, for diet’s bread,
For health, and time in obvious duty seen

THE NORMAN BOY
1842. 1842

The subject of this poem was sent me by Mr. Ogle, to whom I was personally unknown, with a hope on her part that I might be induced to relate the incident in verse; and I do not regret that I took the trouble; for not improbably the fact is illustrative of the boy’s early pietas, as may concur with my other little pieces to children to produce profitable reflections on the youthful readers. This is said hown with an absolute conviction that children can derive most benefit from books which are unworthy the perusal of persons of any age.
THE POET'S DREAM

In which, from burning heat, or tempest driving far and wide,
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his lonely head must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a standard for the true
And faithful service of his heart in the worst that might ensue
Of hardship and distressful waste, amid the houseless waste
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by Providence was placed.

—— Here, Lady! might I cease; but nay, let us before we part
With this dear holy shepherd-boy breathe a prayer of earnest heart,
That unto him, where'er shall lie his life's appointed way,
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove an all-sufficing stay.

THE POET’S DREAM

SEQUEL TO THE NORMAN BOY

1842. 1842

Just as those final words were penned, the sun broke out in power,
And gladdened all things; but, as chanced, within that very hour,
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire flashed from clouds that hid the sky,
And, for the Subject of my Verse, I heaved a pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts from heaviness be cleared,
For bodied forth before my eyes the cross-crowned hut appeared;
And, while around it storm as fierce seemed troubling earth and air,
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling alone in prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake with articulate call,
Bowed meekly in submissive fear, before the Lord of All;
His lips were moving; and his eyes, up-raised to sue for grace,
With soft illumination cheered the dimness of that place.
THE POET'S DREAM

How beautiful is holiness! — what wonder
if the sight,
Almost as vivid as a dream, produced a
dream at night?
It came with sleep and showed the Boy, no
erub, not transformed,
But the poor ragged Thing whose ways my
human heart had warmed.

Me had the dream equipped with wings, so
I took him in my arms,
And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling his
faint alarms,
And bore him high through yielding air my
debt of love to pay,
By giving him, for both our sakes, an hour
of holiday.

I whispered, "Yet a little while, dear
Child! thou art my own,
To show thee some delightful thing, in
country or in town.
What shall it be? a mirthful throng? or
that holy place and calm
St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the
Church of Notre Dame?

St. Ouen's golden Shrine? Or choose what
else would please thee most
Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud
France, can boast!"
"My Mother," said the Boy, "was born
near to a blessed Tree,
The Chapel Oak of Allonville; good Angel,
show it me!"

On wings, from broad and stedfast poise
let loose by this reply,
For Allonville, o'er down and dale, away
then did we fly;
O'er town and t.wer we flew, and fields in
May's fresh verdure drest;
The wings they did not flag; the Child,
though grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense, the
gleam of light that broke
Forth from his eyes, when first the Boy
looked down on that huge oak,
For length of days so much revered, so
famous where it stands
For twofold hallowing — Nature's care, and
work of human hands?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I glided
round and round
The wide-spread boughs, for view of door
window, and stair that wound
Gracefully up the gnarled trunk; nor left
we unsurveyed
The pointed steeples peering forth from the
centre of the shade.

I lighted — opened with soft touch the
chapel's iron door,
Past softly, leading in the Boy; and, while
from roof to floor
From floor to roof all round his eyes to
Child with wonder cast,
Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each finer
than the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk, the
sanctuary showed,
By light of lamp and precious stones, the
glimmered here, there glowed,
Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings hung a
sign of gratitude;
Sight that inspired accordant thoughts,
and speech I thus renewed:

"Hither the Afflicted come, as thou hast
heard thy Mother say,
And, kneeling, supplication make to our
Lady de la Paix;
What mournful sights have here been seen,
and, when the voice was stopt
By sudden pangs; what bitter tears have
on this pavement dropt!

Poor Shepherd of the naked Down, a
favoured lot is thine,
Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings it
many to this shrine;
From body pains and pains of soul the
needest no release,
Thy hours as they flow on are spent, if not
in joy, in peace.

Then offer up thy heart to God in thank-
fulness and praise,
Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts
in thy most busy days;
And in His sight the fragile Cross, on thy
small hut, will be
Holy as that which long hath crowned the
Chapel of this Tree;
THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE SIDE

1842. 1842

The facts recorded in this Poem were given,
and the character of the person described,
by my friend the Rev. R. P. Graves, who has
officiated as curate at Bowness, to the
entire benefit of the parish and neighbourhood.

as that far seen which crowns the
sumptuous Church in Rome
where thousands meet to worship God
under a mighty Dome;
where the bending multitude, he hears
the choral rites,
not the less, in children’s hymns and
lonely prayer, delights.

for his service needeth not proud work
of human skill;
please him best who labour most to
do in peace his will:

"us strive to live, and to our Spirits
will be given
wings as, when our Saviour calls, shall
bear us up to heaven."

Boy no answer made by words, but,
so earnest was his look,
paled, and with it fled the dream — re-
corded in this book,
all that passed should melt away in
silence from my mind,
visions still more bright have done, and
left no trace behind.

"Oh! that Country-man of thine, whose
eye, loved Child, can see
sledge of endless bliss in acts of early
piety,
verse, which to thy ear might come,
would treat this simple theme,
leave untold our happy flight in that
adventurous dream.

as the dream, to thee, poor Boy! to thee
from whom it flowed,
as nothing, scarcely can be aught, yet
't was bounteously bestowed,
I may dare to cherish hope that gentle
eyes will read
't loth, and listening Little-ones, heart-
touched, their fancies feed.

The individual was well known to him. She
died before these verses were composed. It is
scarcely worth while to notice that the stanzas
are written in the sonnet form, which was
adopted when I thought the matter might be
included in twenty-eight lines.

I

How beautiful when up a lofty height
Honour ascends among the humblest poor,
And feeling sinks as deep! See there the
door
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a weight
Of blameless debt. On evil Fortune’s spite
She wasted no complaint, but strove to
make
A just repayment, both for conscience-sake
And that herself and hers should stand
upright
In the world’s eye. Her work when day-
light failed
Paused not, and through the depth of night
she kept
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed
With some, the noble Creature never slept;
But, one by one, the hand of death assailed
Her children from her inmost heart be-
wept.

II

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her tears
to flow,
Till a winter’s noontide placed her buried
Son
Before her eyes, last child of many gone —
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!
His very feet bright as the dazzling snow
Which they are touching; yea far brighter,
even
As that which comes, or seems to come,
from heaven,

Surpasses aught these elements can show.
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from that
hour
Whate’er befell she could not grieve or pine;
But the Transfigured, in and out of season,
Appeared, and spiritual presence gained a
power
Over material forms that mastered reason.
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her
thine!

III

But why that prayer? as if to her could
come
No good but by the way that leads to bliss
Through Death,—so judging we should judge amiss.
Since reason failed want is her threatened doom.
Yet frequent transports mitigate the gloom:
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss
The air or laugh upon a precipice;
No, passing through strange sufferings toward the tomb
She smiles as if a martyr's crown were won:
Oft, when light breaks through clouds or waving trees,
With outspread arms and fallen upon her knees
The Mother hails in her descending Son a
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

AIREY-FORCE VALLEY
1842 (?). 1842
— Not a breath of air
Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.
From the brook's margin, wide around, the trees
Are stilled as the rocks; the brook itself,
Old as the hills that feed it from afar,
Both rather deepen than disturb the calm
Where all things else are still and motionless.
And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance
Escaped from boisterous winds that rage without,
Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,
But to its gentle touch how sensitive
Is the light ash! that, pendent from the brow
Of you dim cave, in seeming silence makes
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,
Powerful almost as vocal harmony
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his thoughts.

"LYRE! THOUGH SUCH POWER
DO IN THY MAGIC LIVE"
1842 (?). 1842
Though such power do in thy magic live
As might from India's farthest plain
Now all the not unwilling Maid,
Assist me to detain
The lovely Fugitive:

Check with thy notes the impulse which
betrayed
By her sweet farewell looks, I longed a
aid.
Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,
The impregnable and awe-inspiring girt
Of contemplation, the calm port
By reason fenced from winds that sigh
Among the restless sails of vanity.
But if no wish be hers that we should put
A humbler bliss would satisfy my heart
Where all things are so fair,
Enough by her dear side to breathe the
Of this Elysian weather;
And, on or in, or near, the brook, easy
Shade upon the sunshine lying,
Faint and somewhat pensively;
And downward Image gaily vying
With its upright living tree
'Mid silver clouds,' and openings of the sky
As soft almost and deep as her cerulean eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance
Cast up the stream or down at her bristling,
To mark its eddying foam-balls pretty distract
By ever-changing shape and want of rest;
Or watch, with mutual teaching,
The current as it plays
In flashing leaps and stealthy creeps
Adown a rocky maze;
Or note (translucent summer's happiest chance!)
In the slope-channel floor'd with pebbles bright,
Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,
So vivid that they take from keenest sight
The liquid veil that seeks not to hide them.

TO THE CLOUDS
1842 (?). 1842
These verses were suggested while I was walking on the foot-road between Rydal Mount and Grasmere. The clouds were driving over the top of Nab Scarrow across the vale: they set my thoughts agogo, and the rest followed almost immediately.

ARMY of Clouds! ye winged Hosts of troops
Ascending from behind the motionless brow
f that tall rock, as from a hidden world,
a whither with such eagerness of speed?
hat seek ye, or what shun ye? of the gale
companions, fear ye to be left behind,
r racing o'er your blue ethereal field
entend ye with each other? of the sea
children, thus post ye over vale and height
sink upon your mother's lap — and rest?
r were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine
eyes
sheld in your impetuous march the like-
ness
f a wide army pressing on to meet
r overtake some unknown enemy? —
ut your smooth motions suit a peaceful
aim;
nd Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares
our squadrons to an endless flight of birds
erial, upon due migration bound
o milder climes; or rather do ye urge
a caravan your hasty pilgrimage
o pause at last on more aspiring heights
han these, and utter your devotion there
With thunderous voice? Or are ye jubili-
ant,
and would ye, tracing your proud lord
the Sun,
be present at his setting; or the pomp
of Persian mornings would ye fill, and
stand
oising your splendours high above the
heads
f worshippers kneeling to their up-risen
God?
Whence, whence, ye Clouds! this eagerness
of speed?
Speak, silent creatures. — They are gone,
are fled,
Buried together in your gloomy mass
That loads the middle heaven; and clear
and bright
And vacant doth the region which they
thronged
Appear; a calm descent of sky conducting
Down to the unapproachable abyss,
Down to that hidden gulf from which they
rose
To vanish — fleet as days and months and
years,
Fleet as the generations of mankind,
Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,
The lingering world, when time hath ceased
to be.
But the winds roar, shaking the rooted
trees,

And see! a bright precursor to a train
Percance as numerous, overpeers the rock
That sullenly refuses to partake
Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life
Invisible, the long procession moves
Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale
Which they are entering, welcome to mine
eye
That sees them, to my soul that owns in
them,
And in the bosom of the firmament
O'er which they move, wherein they are
contained,
A type of her capacious self and all
Her restless progeny.

A humble walk
Here is my body doomed to tread, this
path,
A little hoary line and faintly traced,
Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's
foot
Or of his flock? — joint vestige of them
both.
I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts
Admit no bondage and my words have
wings.

Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp,
To accompany the verse? The mountain
blast
Shall be our hand of music; he shall sweep
The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy
lake,
And search the fibres of the caves, and they
Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds.
And the wind loves them; and the gentle
gales —
Which by their aid re-clothe the naked
lawn
With annual verdure, and revive the woods,
And moisten the parched lips of thirsty
flowers —

Love them; and every idle breeze of air
Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and
stars
Keep their most solemn vigils when the
Clouds
Watch also, shifting peaceably their place
Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when
they lie,
As if some Protean art the change had
wrought,
In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep
Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes
And all degrees of beauty. O ye Light-
nings!
To see the Eagle ruffled by the breeze
May soothe thy memory of the days of Rome.

These children claim thee for their own
Of thy renown, from Cambrian fans
A flame within them that despises
And glorifies the truant youth of France

With thy own scorn of tyrants the advance,
But truth divine has sanctified their reign.
A silver cross encharged with flowers
France Their badge, attests the holy fight a wage.

The shrill defiance of the young crest
Their veteran foes mock as an idle jest.
But unto Faith and Loyalty comes it
From Heaven, gigantic force to bear the boys.

GRACE DARLING
1843. 1845

AMONG the dwellers in the silent field
The natural heart is touched, and awakes
And crowded street resound with his strains,
Inspired by one whose very name bespeaks
Favour divine, exalting human love;
Whom, since her birth on bleak Northern bria's coast,
Known unto few but prized as far as known
A single Act endears to high and low
Through the whole land — to Mankind moved in spite
Of the world's freezing cares — to General Youth —
To Infancy, that lisps her praise — to Age
Whose eye reflects it, glistening through tear
Of tremulous admiration. Such true love
Awaits her now; but, verily, good deed
Do not imperishable record find
Save in the rolls of heaven, where her soul live
A theme for angels, when they celebrate
The high-souled virtues which forget not earth

THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE
1842. 1842

Shade of Caractacus, if spirits love
The cause they fought for in their earthly home

WANFELL! THIS HOUSEHOLD
HAS A FAVOURED LOT
1842. 1845

WANFELL! this Household has a favoured lot,
Living with liberty on thee to gaze,
To watch while Morn first crowns thee
with her rays,
Or when along thy breast serenely float
Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note
Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard!) thy praise
For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought
Of glory lavished on our quiet days.
Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are gone
From every object dear to mortal sight,
As soon we shall be, may these words attest
How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone
Thy visionary majesties of light,
How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.

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Thy visionary majesties of light,
How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.
And shattered, and re-gathering their might;
As if the tumult, by the Almighty’s will
Were, in the conscious sea, roused and prolonged
That woman’s fortitude—so tried, so proved—
May brighten more and more!
True to the mark,
They stem the current of that perilous gorge,
Their arms still strengthening with the strengthening heart,
Though danger, as the Wreck is neared, becomes
More imminent. Not unseen do they approach;
And rapture, with varieties of fear
Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames
Of those who, in that dauntless energy,
Foretaste deliverance; but the least per-turbed
Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he per-
cieves
That of the pair—tossed on the waves to bring
Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life—
One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,
Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,
A guardian Spirit sent from pitying Heaven,
In woman’s shape. But why prolong the tale,
Casting weak words amid a host of thoughts
Armed to repel them? Every hazard faced
And difficulty mastered, with resolve
That no one breathing should be left to perish,
This last remainder of the crew are all
Placed in the little boat, then o’er the deep
Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,
And, in fulfilment of God’s mercy, lodged
Within the sheltering Lighthouse. —Shout
ye Waves,
Send forth a song of triumph. Waves and Winds,
Exult in this deliverance wrought through faith
In Him whose Providence your rage hath served!
Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert
join!
And would that some immortal Voice—a
Voice
Fitly attuned to all that gratitude

\[\text{as witnessed. Oh! that winds and waves could speak}\
\text{If things which their united power called forth}\
\text{from the pure depths of her humanity!}\
\text{Maiden gentle, yet, at duty’s call,}\
\text{firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse reared}\
\text{in the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-place;}\
\text{like the invincible Rock itself that}\
\text{braves,}\
\text{age after age, the hostile elements,}\
\text{as when it guarded holy Cuthbert’s cell.}\
\text{All night the storm had raged, nor}\
\text{ceased, nor paused,}\
\text{When, as day broke, the Maid, through}\
\text{misty air,}\
\text{spies far off a Wreck, amid the surf,}\
\text{seating on one of those disastrous isles—}\
\text{half of a Vessel, half—no more; the}\
\text{rest}\
\text{had vanished, swallowed up with all that}\
\text{there}\
\text{had for the common safety striven in vain,}\
\text{thither thronged for refuge. With quick}\
\text{glance}\
\text{Daughter and Sire through optic-glass}\
\text{ascern,}\
\text{clinging about the remnant of this Ship,}\
\text{Creatures—how precious in the Maiden’s}\
\text{sight!}\
\text{For whom, belike, the old Man grieves}\
\text{still more}\
\text{Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed}\
\text{where every parting agony is hushed,}\
\text{And hope and fear mix not in further strife.}\
\text{“But courage, Father! let us out to sea—}\
\text{A few may yet be saved.” The Daughter’s}\
\text{words,}\
\text{Her earnest tone, and look beaming with}\
\text{faith,}\
\text{Dispel the Father’s doubts: nor do they}\
\text{lack}\
\text{The noble-minded Mother’s helping hand}\
\text{To launch the boat; and with her blessing}\
\text{cheered,}\
\text{And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,}\
\text{Together they put forth, Father and Child!}\
\text{Each grasps an ear, and struggling on they}\
\text{go—}\
\text{Rivals in effort; and, alike intent}\
\text{Here to elude and there surmount, they}\
\text{watch}\
\text{The billows lengthening, mutually crossed}\

Breathes out from floor or couch, through
da pallid lip
Of the survivors — to the clouds might
bear —
Blended with praise of that parental love,
Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden
grew
Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,
Though young so wise, though meek so
resolute —
Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,
Yea, to celestial Choirs, Grace Darling's
name!

"WHILE BEAMS OF ORIENT
LIGHT SHOOT WIDE AND
HIGH"

1843. 1845

WHILE beams of orient light shoot wide
and high,
Deep in the vale a little rural Town
Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its
own,
That mounts not toward the radiant
morning sky,
But, with a less ambitious sympathy,
Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the cares
Troubles and toils that every day prepares.
So Fancy, to the musing Poet's eye,
Endears that Lingerer. And how blest her
sway
(Like influence never may my soul reject)
If the calm Heaven, now to its zenith decked
With glorious forms in numberless array,
To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose
Gleams from a world in which the saints
repose.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER
WORDSWORTH, D. D., MASTER
OF HARROW SCHOOL

After the perusal of his Theophilus Anglicanus, recently published.

1843. 1845

ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy
hand
Have I received this proof of pains bestowed
By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the road
That, in our native isle, and every land,
The Church, when trusting in divine com-
mand
And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod:

O may these lessons be with profit seen
To thy heart's wish, thy labour own
God!
So the bright faces of the young may
Shall look more bright — the happy, happy
still;
Catch, in the pauses of their keenest joy
Motions of thought which elevate the
And, like the Spire that from your own
Hill
Points heavenward, indicate the end of
way.

INSCRIPTION
FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTEWCH
CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF ESK

1843. 1845

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, as
His eyes have closed! And ye, loved no
more
Shall Southeys feed upon your precious
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their
nown,
Adding immortal labours of his own —
Whether he traced historic truth with
For the State's guidance, or the Church's
weal,
Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art
Informed his pen, or wisdom of the heart;
Or judgments sanctioned in the sound
mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet for holier use;
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like
cloud
From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven vowed
Through his industrious life, and Christian
faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and
death.

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL
AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY

1844. 1845

Is then no nook of English ground secure
From rash assault? Schemes of retire-
ment sown
In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept

A soothing spirit follows in the way
That Nature takes, her counter-work pursuing,
See how her Ivy clasps the sacred Ruin
Fall to prevent or beautify decay;
And, on the mouldered walls, how bright, how gay,
The flowers in pearly dews their bloom renewing!
Thanks to the place, blessings upon the hour;
Even as I speak the rising Sun’s first smile
Gleams on the grass-crowned top of your tall Tower
Whose cawing occupants with joy proclaim
Prescriptive title to the shattered pile
Where, Cavendish, thine seems nothing but a name!

"FORTH FROM A JUTTING RIDGE, AROUND WHOSE BASE"
1845. 1845
Forth from a jutting ridge, around whose base
Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks ascend
In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair
Rising to no ambitious height; yet both,
O’er lake and stream, mountain and flowery mead,
Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes
Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,
To one or other brow of those twin Peaks
Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb,
And took no note of the hour while thence they gazed,
The blooming heath their couch, gazed, side by side,
In speechless admiration. I, a witness
And frequent sharer of their calm delight
With thankful heart, to either Eminence
Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.
Now are they parted, far as Death’s cold hand
Hath power to part the Spirits of those who love
As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—
That, while the generations of mankind
Follow each other to their hiding-place
In time’s abyss, are privileged to endure
Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced
With like command of beauty—grant your aid.

"PROUD WERE YE, MOUNTAINS, WHEN, IN TIMES OF OLD"
1844. 1845
Proud were ye, Mountains, when, in times of old,
Our patriot sons, to stem invasive war,
Strengthened your brows; ye gloried in each scar:
Low, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst of Gold,
That rules o’er Britain like a baneful star,
Vills that your peace, your beauty, shall be sold,
And clear way made for her triumphal car
Through the beloved retreats your arms enfold!
Beard ye that Whistle? As her long-linked Train
Wept onwards, did the vision cross your view?
E’en, ye were startled;—and, in balance true,
Weighing the mischief with the promised gain,
Fountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call on you
to share the passion of a just disdain.

AT FURNESS ABBEY
1844. 1845
Here, where, of havoc tired and rash undoing,
Ian left this Structure to become Time’s prey.
For Mary's humble, Sarah's silent claim,
That their pure joy in nature may survive
From age to age in blended memory.

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL
TO MY GRANDCHILDREN
1845. 1845

PART I

Seek who will delight in fable
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb
Leapt from this steep bank to follow
'Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

Far and wide on hill and valley
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,
And the bleating mother's Young-one
Struggled with the flood in vain:

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden
(Ten years scarcely had she told)
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky channel,
Sinking, rising, on they go,
Peace and rest, as seems, before them
Only in the lake below.

Oh! it was a frightful current
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved;
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,
Shout in triumph, both are saved;

Saved by courage that with danger
Grew, by strength the gift of love,
And belike a guardian angel
Came with succour from above.

PART II

Now, to a maturer Audience,
Let me speak of this brave Child
Left among her native mountains
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,
Mother's care no more her guide,
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame,—remember him
Loth to rule by strict command;
Still upon his cheek are living
Touches of her infant hand,

Dear caresses given in pity,
Sympathy that soothed his grief,
As the dying mother witnessed
To her thankful mind's relief.

Time passed on; the Child was happy,
Like a Spirit of air she moved,
Wayward, yet by all who knew her
For her tender heart beloved.

Scarcely less than sacred passions,
Bred in house, in grove, and field,
Link her with the inferior creatures.
Urge her powers their rights to shield

Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,
Learn how she can feel alike
Both for tiny harmless minnow
And the fierce and sharp-toothed pike.

Merciful protectress, kindling
Into anger or disdain;
Many a captive hath she rescued,
Others saved from lingering pain.

Listen yet awhile;—with patience
Hear the homely truths I tell,
She in Grasmere's old church-steeples
Tolled this day the passing-bell.

Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains
To their echoes gave the sound,
Notice punctual as the minute,
Warning solemn and profound.

She, fulfilling her sire's office,
Rang alone the far-heard knell,
Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,
Paid to One who loved her well.

When his spirit was departed
On that service she went forth;
Nor will fail the like to render
When his corse is laid in earth.

What then wants the Child to temper,
In her breast, unruly fire,
To control the froward impulse
And restrain the vague desire?
a pious training
steadfast outward power
I supplant the weeds and cherish,
ir stead, each opening flower.

the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,
an-grown, meek-hearted, sage,
become a blest example
or sex, of every age.

Hful as a wheeling eagle,
ant as a soaring lark,
ld the country need a heroine,
ght prove our Maid of Arc.

e that thought; and here be uttered
er that Grace divine may raise
humane courageous spirit
o heaven, thro' peaceful ways.

AT FURNESS ABBEY
1845. 1845

ll have youw Railway Labourers to THIS
hdrawn for noon tide rest. They sit,
they walk
ong the Ruins, but no idle talk
oard; to grave demeanour all are bound;
rom one voice a Hymn with tune-ful
ound
low of the old sepulchral earth, around.
rs look up, and with fixed eyes ad-
ire
at wide-spanned arch, wondering how it
as raised,
keep, so high in air, its strength and
'race:
seem to feel the spirit of the place,
d by the general reverence God is praised:
fane Despoilers, stand ye not reproved,
hile thus these simple-hearted men are
moved?

'YES! THOU ART FAIR, YET
BE NOT MOVED”
1845. 1845

Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved
To scorn the declaration,
That sometimes I in thee have loved
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir;
Dear Maid, this truth believe,
Minds that have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit
To feed my heart's devotion,
By laws to which all Forms submit
In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

"WHAT HEAVENLY SMILES! O
LADY MINE"

1845. 1845

WHAT heavenly smiles! O Lady mine
Through my very heart they shine;
And, if my brow gives back their light,
Do thou look gladly on the sight;
As the clear Moon with modest pride
Beholds her own bright beams
Reflected from the mountain’s side
And from the headlong streams.

TO A LADY

*IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I
WOULD WRITE HER A POEM UPON
SOME DRAWINGS THAT SHE HAD MADE
OF FLOWERS IN THE ISLAND OF MA-
DEIRA

1845. 1845

FAIR Lady! can I sing of flowers
That in Madeira bloom and fade,
I who ne'er sate within their bowers.
Nor through their sunny lawns have
strayed?

How they in sprightly dance are worn
By Shepherd-groom or May-day queen,
Or holy festal pomps adorn,
These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho’ to me the pencil’s art
No like remembrances can give,
Your portraits still may reach the heart
And there for gentle pleasure live;
While Fancy ranging with free scope
Shall on some lovely Alien set
A name with us endeared to hope,
To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,
Some new resemblance we may trace:
A Heart's-ease will perhaps be there,
A Speedwell may not want its place. 30
And so may we, with charmed mind
Beholding what your skill has wrought,
Another Star-of-Bethlehem find,
A new Forget-me-not.

From earth to heaven with motion fleet
From heaven to earth our thoughts will pass,
A Holy-thistle here we meet
And there a Shepherd's weather-glass;
And haply some familiar name
Shall grace the fairest, sweetest plant
Whose presence cheers the drooping frame
Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its powers beguile
Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier breath;
Alas! that meek, that tender smile
Is but a harbinger of death:
And pointing with a feeble hand
She says, in faint words by sighs broken,
Bear for me to my native land
This precious Flower, true love's last token.

"GLAD SIGHT WHEREVER NEW WITH OLD"

1845(?). 1845

GLAD sight wherever new with old
Is joined through some dear homeborn tie;
The life of all that we behold
Depends upon that mystery.
Vain is the glory of the sky,
The beauty vain of field and grove,
Unless, while with admiring eye
We gaze, we also learn to love.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING

1845(?). 1845

It has been said that the English, though
their country has produced so many great poets,
is now the most unpoeetical nation in Europe.
It is probably true; for they have more temptation to become so than any other European people.
Trade, commerce, and manufactures, physical science, and mechanic arts, out of which so much wealth has arisen, have made our countrymen infinitely less sensible to movements of imagination and fancy than were our forefathers in their simple state of
How touching and beautiful were instances, the names they gave to our flowers, or any other they were familiar acquainted with! — Every month for have we been importing plants from all quarters of the globe, many of which are spread through our gardens, and haps likely to be met with on the few which we have left. Will their names ever be displaced by plain English appellations, which will bring them home to hearts by connection with our joys and sorrows?
It can never be, unless society trends back steps towards those simplicities which been banished by the undue influence of spreading and spreading in every direction that city-life with every generation taken and more the load of rural. Among scientifics, villages were reckoned the seats of barbarism. Refinement, for the more part increases the desire to accumulate wealth while theories of political economy are fully pleading for the practice, an excess pervades all our dealings in buying and selling.
This selfishness war against different imagination in all directions, and, evil round in a circle, barbarism spreads in a quarter of our island. Oh for the reign of justice, and then the humblest man would have more power and dignity about him than the highest have now!

You call it, "Love lies bleeding," —

Though the red Flower, not pressed
only droops,
As we have seen it here from day to day:
From month to month, life passing away:
A flower how rich in sadness! Even in stoops,
(Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marble power)
Thus leans, with hanging brow and bent
Earthward in uncomplaining languor:
The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower!
(Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led
Though by a slender thread)
So drooped Adonis bathed in sanguine
Of his death-wound, when he from immemorial
The gentlest breath of resignation drew;
While Venus in a passion of despair
Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair
Spangled with drops of that celestial shower.
be suffered, as Immortals sometimes do;
but pangs more lasting far, that Lover knew
Who first, weighed down by scorn, in some
lone bower
Did press this semblance of unpitied smart
Into the service of his constant heart,
His own dejection, downcast Flower! I could share
With thine, and gave the mournful name
Which thou wilt ever bear.

COMPANION TO THE FOREGOING

1845(?). 1845

T'ever enlivened with the liveliest ray
That fosters growth or checks or cheers decay,
Or by the heaviest rain-drops more deprest,
This Flower, that first appeared as summer's guest,
Reserves her beauty 'mid autumnal leaves
And to her mournful habits fondly cleaves.
When files of stateliest plants have ceased to bloom,
One after one submitting to their doom,
When her coevals each and all are fled,
What keeps her thus reclin'd upon her lonesome bed?
The old mythologists, more impressed than we
Of this late day by character in tree
Or herb, that claimed peculiar sympathy,
Or by the silent lase of fountain clear,
Or with the language of the viewless air
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a cause
to solve the mystery, not in Nature's laws
But in Man's fortunes. Hence a thousand tales
Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.
Nor doubt that something of their spirit swayed
The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick Maid,
Who, while each stood companionless and eyed
This undeparting Flower in crimson dyed,
Thought of a wound which death is slow to cure,
A fate that has endured and will endure,
And, patience coveting yet passion feeding,
Called the dejected Lingerer, Loves lies bleeding.

THE CUCKOO-CLOCK

1845. 1845

Of this clock I have nothing further to say
than what the poem expresses, except that it
must be here recorded that it was a present
from the dear friend for whose sake these notes
were chiefly undertaken, and who has written
them from my dictation.

Wouldst thou be taught, when sleep has taken flight,
By a sure voice that can most sweetly tell,
How far off yet a glimpse of morning light,
And if to lure the truant back be well,
Forbear to covet a Repeater's stroke,
That, answering to thy touch, will sound
the hour;
Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-clock
For service hung behind thy chamber-door;
And in due time the soft spontaneous shock,
The double note, as if with living power,
Will to composure lead — or make thee blithe as bird in bower.

List, Cuckoo — Cuckoo! — oft thy tempests howl,
Or nipping frost remind thee trees are bare,
How cattle pine, and droop the shivering fowl,
Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy air;
I speak with knowledge, — by that Voice beguil'd,
Thou wilt salute old memories as they throng
Into thy heart; and fancies, running wild
Through fresh green fields, and budding groves among,
Will make thee happy, happy as a child:
Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers, and song,
And breathe as in a world where nothing can go wrong.

And know — that, even for him who shuns
the day
And nightly tosses on a bed of pain;
Whose joys, from all but memory swept away,
Must come unhoped for, if they come again;
Know—that, for him whose waking thoughts, severe
As his distress is sharp, would scorn my theme,
The mimic notes, striking upon his ear
In sleep, and intermingling with his dream,
Could from sad regions send him to a dear
Delightful land of verdure, shower and gleam,
To mock the wandering Voice beside some haunted stream.

O bounty without measure! while the grace
Of Heaven doth in such wise, from humblest springs,
Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that trace
A mazy course along familiar things,
Well may our hearts have faith that blessings come,
Streaming from founts above the starry sky,
With angels when their own untroubled home
They leave, and speed on nightly embassy
To visit earthly chambers,—and for whom?
Yea, both for souls who God's forbearance try,
And those that seek his help, and for his mercy sigh.

AND WERE THE SISTER-POWER THAT SLEEPS
Night
So privileged, what a countenance of ecstasies
Would through the clouds break for human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall trust their eye
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky.
Converse with Nature in pure symphony
All vain desires, all lawless wishes cease;
Be Thou to love and praise alike supreme:
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIAN

1845. 1845

Days undefiled by luxury or sloth,
Firm self-denial, manners grave and austere,
Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness observe;
Words that require no sanction from the oath,
And simple honesty a common growth.
This high repute, with bounteous favor aid,
Won confidence, now ruthlessly betray;
At will, your power the measure of the truth!—

All who revere the memory of Penn,
Grieve for the land on whose wild waves his name
Was fondly grafted with a virtuous sheen;
Renounced, abandoned by degenerate hands
For state-dishonour black as ever came
to upper air from Mammon's lost den.

"YOUNG ENGLAND—WHAT THEN BECOME OF OLD"

1845. 1845

Young England—what is then become of Old,
Of dear old England? Think they die dead,
Dead to the very name? Presumptuous! On empty air! That name will keep a hold
In the true valiant bosom's inmost fold.
Forever. — The Spirit of Alfred, at the last
Of all who for her rights watched, toil and bled,
is not too bold. 
will and 
re-
dwells; 

CHANTS OF 

Poetry affect 

mountain 

height she drops 

plain with wild 

grove whose shades 

— there steals along, or 

least small bird that round 

worm, with sensitive respect. 

are therefore less divine, 

less deep, or void of grave 

fancies? Should that fear be 

, 

Votary, ere thy hand present 

kneel before her modest 

sorrows, in penitential sorrow 

and divines who write as poets, the spiritual part 
of our nature, and therefore the higher part of 
it, would derive no benefit from such intercourse 
with such objects.

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts en-
dowed, 
And a true master of the glowing strain, 
Might scan the narrow province with disdain 
That to the Painter's skill is here allowed. 
This, this the Bird of Paradise! I disclaim 
The daring thought, forget the name; 
This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers 
might own 
As no unworthy Partner in their flight 
Through seas of ether, where the ruffling 
sway 
Of nether air's rude billows is unknown; 
Whom Sylphs, if 'e'er for casual pastime 

Through India's spicy regions wing their 

way, 

Might bow to as their Lord. What 

character, 

O sovereign Nature! I appeal to thee, 

Of all thy feathered progeny 

Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair? 

So richly decked in variegated down, 

Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy 

brown, 

Tints softly with each other blended, 

Hues doubtfully begun and ended; 

Or intershooting, and to sight 

Lost and recovered, as the rays of light 

Glance on the conscious plumes touched 

here and there? 

Full surely, when with such proud gifts of 

life 

Began the pencil's strife, 

O'erweeening Art was caught as in a snare. 

A sense of seemingly presumptuous 

wrong 

Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song; 

But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew 

A juster judgment from a calmer view; 

And, with a spirit freed from discontent, 

Thankfully took an effort that was meant 

Not with God's bounty, Nature's love to vie, 

Or made with hope to please that inward 

eye 

Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy, 

But to recall the truth by some faint trace 

Of power ethereal and celestial grace, 

That in the living Creature find on earth a 

place.

"SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE"

1845 (?) 1845

This subject has been treated of in another 

I will here only by way of comment direct 

mention to the fact that pictures of animals 

and other productions of nature as seen in con-

servatories, menageries, museums, etc., would 

little for the national mind, nay they would 

rather injurious to it, if the imagination were 

inculcated by the presence of the object, more or 
est out of a state of nature. If it were not that 

we learn to talk and think of the lion and the 

tale, the palm-tree and even the cedar, from 

an impassioned introduction of them so fre-

tently into Holy Scripture and by great poets,
SONNET

1520

I know an aged Man constrained to dwell
In a large house of public charity,
Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell.
With numbers near, alas! no company.

When he could creep about, at will, the poor
And forced to live on alms, this old Man
A Redbreast, one that his cottage was
Came not, but in a lane partook his food.

There, at the root of one particular tree
An easy seat this worn-out Labourer found
While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his knee
Laid one by one, or scattered on the green.

Dear intercourse was theirs, day after day;
What signs of mutual gladness when they met!
Think of their common peace, their play,
The parting moment and its fond regret.

Months passed in love that failed to be fulfilled,
In spite of season's change, its own dear
By fluttering pinions here and busy be.
There by caresses from a tremulous hand.

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong
Was formed between the solitary pair.
That when his fate had housed him in the throng
The Captive shunned all converse near.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dear;
But, if no evil hap his wishes crossed,
One living Stay was left, and on that wise
Some recompence for all that he had done.

Oh that the good old Man had prove
By message sent through air or vital token,
That still he loves the Bird, and still in love;
That friendship lasts though fellowship broken!

"I KNOW AN AGED MAN CONSTRANGED TO DWELL"

1846. 1850

When the above was written, I was engaged in the translation of an ancient Greek poem, the "Iliad," which I had undertaken as a serious task. The work required careful study and consideration, and I was consequently occupied for many hours each day. The translation was a labor of love, and I took great care to render the original as faithfully as possible. The process was not without its difficulties, and I had to make many changes and revisions before I was satisfied with the result. Nevertheless, I found the task very rewarding, and I was proud of the work I had accomplished. I am now considering the possibility of undertaking another translation, this time of the "Odyssey," which is another great work of ancient Greek literature. I am also considering the possibility of writing a biography of Homer, the author of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," which would provide some insight into the life and times of this great poet.
W BEAUTIFUL THE QUEEN
OF NIGHT

1846(?) 1850

... beautiful the Queen of Night, on high
way pursuing among scattered clouds,
re, ever and anon, her head she shrouds
len from view in dense obscurity.
look, and to the watchful eye
ightening edge will indicate that soon
shall behold the struggling Moon
. forth, — again to walk the clear blue
sky.

EVENING VOLUNTARIES
TO LUCA GIORDANO

1846. 1850

RDANO, verily thy Pencil’s skill
h here portrayed with Nature’s happiest
ace;
air Endymion couch’d on Latmos-hill;
Dian gazing on the Shepherd’s face
apture, — yet suspending her embrace,
not unconscious with what power the
thill
her most timid touch his sleep would
chase,
d, with his sleep, that beauty calm and
still.

may this work have found its last retreat
ere in a Mountain-bard’s secure abode,
e to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia
h showed
ace of love which he in love would greet,
ed, by her smile, upon some rocky seat;
ured along where Greenwood paths he
rod.

WHO BUT IS PLEASED TO WATCH THE
MOON ON HIGH

1846. 1850

ho but is pleased to watch the moon on
high
avelling where she from time to time en-
shrouds
her head, and nothing loth her Majesty
nounces, till among the scattered clouds
me with its kindling edge declares that
soon
ill reappear before the uplifted eye
Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,

to glide in open prospect through clear
sky.
Pity that such a promise e’er should prove
False in the issue, that you seeming space
Of sky should be in truth the stedfast face
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which
must move
(By transit not unlike man’s frequent doom)
The Wanderer lost in more determined
gloom.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND
NEWSPAPERS

1846. 1850

DISCOURSE was deemed Man’s noblest at-
tribute,
And written words the glory of his hand;
Then followed Printing with enlarged com-
mand
For thought — dominion vast and absolute
For spreading truth, and making love
expand.
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute
Must laquey a dumb Art that best can
suit
The taste of this once-intellectual Land.
A backward movement surely have we here,
From manhood, — back to childhood; for the
age —
Back towards caverned life’s first rude
career.
Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear
Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower
stage!

"THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF
NIGHTLY STREAMS"

1846. 1850

The unremitting voice of nightly streams
That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful
powers,
If neither soothing to the worm that gleams
Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed
in bowers,
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers,—
That voice of unpretending harmony
(For who what is shall measure by what
seems
To be, or not to be,
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)
SONNET
Wants not a healing influence that can
creep
Into the human breast, and mix with sleep
To regulate the motion of our dreams
For kindly issues — as through every cline
Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest
time;
As at this day, the rudest swains who dwell
Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling
knell
Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could
tell.

SONNET
TO AN OCTOGENARIAN
1846. 1850
AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time brings
forth
No successors; and, lodged in memory,
If love exist no longer, it must die,—
Wanting accustomed food, must pass from
earth,
Or never hope to reach a second birth.
This sad belief, the happiest that is left
To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er
bereft,
Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a
dearth.
Though poor and destitute of friends thou
art,
Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
One to whom Heaven assigns that mourn-
ful part
The utmost solitude of age to face,
Still shall be left some corner of the heart
Where Love for living Thing can find a
place.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY
STREAM
1846. 1849
BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind
Crowded with thoughts that need a settled
home,
Yet, like to eddying balls of foam
Within this whirlpool, they each other
chase
Round and round, and neither find
An outlet nor a resting-place!
Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,
Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

ODE ON THE INSTALLATION
OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE
ALBERT AS CHANCELLOR
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAM-
BRIDGE, JULY 1847
1847. 1847
INTRODUCTION AND CHORUS
For thirst of power that Heaven
owns,
For temples, towers, and thrones
Too long insulted by the Spoiler's shock
Indignant Europe cast
Her stormy foe at last
To reap the whirlwind on a Libyan rock
SOLO — (TENOR)
War is passion's basest game
Madly played to win a name;
Up starts some tyrant, Earth and
Hea
to dare,
The servile million bow;
But will the lightning glance aside to
The Despot's laurelled brow?

CHORUS
War is mercy, glory, fame,
Waged in Freedom's holy cause;
Freedom, such as Man may claim
Under God's restraining laws.
Such is Albion's fame and glory:
Let rescued Europe tell the story.

RECIT. (accompained) — (CONTRAL)
But lo, what sudden cloud has
borne
The land as with a funeral pall?
The Rose of England suffers bight,
The flower has drooped, the Isle's de
d
Flower and bud together fall —
A Nation's hopes lie crushed in Clarence
desolate hall.

AIR — (SOPRANO)
Time a chequered mantle wears; —
Earth awakes from wintry sleep; Again the Tree a blossom bears —
Cease, Britannia, cease to weep! Hark to the peals on this bright May
They tell that your future Queen is here!

SOPRANO SOLO AND CHORUS
A Guardian Angel fluttered
Above the Babe, unseen;

Much the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no preface upon the principles of Poetry in general, they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE
FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDI-
TIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF
"LYRICAL BALLADS"

Note. — In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having little of a special application to their contents.

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing on this occasion the Reader would look only at my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the absurd and foolish hope of reconciling him to a probition of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearest coherence of which it is susceptible, it was necessary to give a full account of the state of the public taste in this country, and determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be done without pointing out in what manner and by the human mind act and react on each other, and without retracing the revision not of literature alone, but of literature itself. I have therefore altogether deferred to enter regularly upon this defence; yet sensible that there would be something the propriety in abruptly concluding the essay, without a few words of introduction. I am so materially different from those upon whose general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing verse an Author makes a formal express that he will gratify certain known taste or association; that he not only thus appeals to the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that these will be carefully excluded. This exposure symbol held forth by metrical language in different eras of literature have existed and been felt in different expectations: for example, in the verse of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and of Statius or Claudian; and in our own era, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaux and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowper or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take up space to determine the exact import of the post which, by the act of writing verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; he will undoubtedly appeal to many persons who have not fulfilled the terms of an express contract thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the grandeur and invariable phraseology of many modern writers, if they assist in reading this book to its conclusion, will find it.

1 The Ideas which were expanded into the following Prefaces and Essays first appeared as a Preface to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads, 1800. In the edition of 1802 the Preface to that of 1800 was enlarged and there was added an Appendix on "Poetic Diction." These were repeated in successive editions of the poet works — with alterations, insertions, and omissions — until they received their last revision in the Essay, 1845. — Ed.
frequently have to struggle with feelings of awkwardness and awkwardness: they will found for poetry, and will be induced to by what species of courtesy these at can be permitted to assume that title. therefore, the reader will not censure attempting to state what I have proposed to perform; and also (as far as the of a preface will permit) to explain some chief reasons which have determined me of my purpose: that at least he spared any unpleasant feeling of dispar- ent, and that I myself may be protected of the most dishonourable accusations can be brought against an Author; that of an indolence which prevents or endeavouring to ascertain what is his or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents or performing it.

principal object, then, proposed in these seems to have been to choose incidents and situations common life, and to relate or describe throughout, as far as was possible, in a son of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a cor- southing of imagination, whereby ord- things should be presented to the mind in usual aspect; and further, and above all, to make the incidents and situations inter- by tracing in them, truly, though not wholly, the primary laws of our nature: y, as far as regards the manner in which associate ideas in a state of excitement, ble and rustic life was generally chosen, use in that condition the essential passions heart find a better soil in which they can a their maturity, are less under restraint, speak a plainer and more emphatic language, because in that condition of life our conative feelings co-exist in a state of greater facility, and, consequently, may be more readily contemplated, and more forcibly articulated; because the manners of rural germinate from those elementary feelings, from the necessity of rural oc- on are more easily comprehended, and more durable; and, lastly, because in thatation the passions of men are incorporated the beautiful and permanent forms of nature.

The language, too, of these men has been (purified indeed from what appear to a real defect, from all lasting and rational es of dislike or disgust), because such men generally communicate with the best objects from the best part of language is organically used; and because, from their rank in soci- and the sameness and narrow circle of their source, being less under the influence of al vanity, they convey their feelings and one in simple and unembellished expressions, accordingly, such a language, arising out of rel- ence and regular feelings, is a more maner, and a far more philosophical length, than that which is frequently substituted it by Poets, who think that they are confer- honour upon themselves and their art in portion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation. 1

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its conse- quences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally con- ceived, but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influence of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representa- tives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general re- presentatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly, and without the guidance of the habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affection strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without

1 It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.
the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitness it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakspeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. — When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their style, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personification of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so shall interest him. Others who prefer a different track will interest him likewise; not interfere with their claim, but prefer a claim of my own. There is found in these volumes little of what is called poetical diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to induce it; this has been done for the already alleged, to bring my language as the language of men; and further, because pleasure which I have proposed to myself is of a kind very different from which is supposed by many persons to be proper object of poetry. Without being particularly to know how the Reader a more exact notion of the which it was my wish and intention than by informing him that I have at an endeavoured to look steadily at my consequently there is, I hope, in these a little falsehood of description, and my is expressed in language fitted to their importance. Something must have been by this practice, as it is friendly to as of all good poetry, namely, good has necessarily cut me off from a large of phrases and figures of speech which father to son have long been regarded a common inheritance of Poets. I have thought it expedient to restrict myself further, having abstained from the use of expressions, in themselves proper and biful, but which have been foolishly used by bad Poets, till such feelings of discourse connected with them as it is scarcely put by any art of association to overpower. If in a poem there should be found of lines, or even a single line, in which language, though naturally arranged, according to the strict laws of metre, do differ from that of prose, there is a class of critics, who, when they study these prosasms, as they call them, imagine they have made a notable discovery, and over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his profession. Now these men would enunciate a canon of criticism which the Reader would be a most easy task to prove to him the only language of a large portion of a good poem, even of the most elevated class must necessarily, except with reference metre, in no respect differ from that of prose, but likewise that some of the interesting parts of the best poems found to be strictly the language of prose is well written. The truth of assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the writings, even of Milton himself. To bring the subject in a general manner, I will adduce a short composition of Gray, who was the head of those who, by their resort have attempted to widen the space of separation between Prose and Metrical verse.
as more than any other man curiously
ate in the structure of his own poetic

a vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
reddening Flurus lifts his golden fire;
birds in vain their amorous descent join,
cheerful fields resume their green attire.

same ears, alas! for other notes repine;
Different object do these eyes require;
Lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
I in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Smiling smiles the busy race to cheer,
New-born pleasure brings to happier men;
Fleeting fly to all their wonds tribute bear.
Their little loves the birds complain.

Dullish mourn to him that cannot hear,
Weep I more because I weep in vain."

ill easily be perceived, that the only part
Sonnet which is of any value is the lines
called in Italian; it is equally obvious that
the rhyme and in the use of the single

fruit and honey, which is so
defect, the language of these lines does
respect differ from that of prose.

The foregoing quotation it has been shown
the language of Prose may yet be well
ed to Poetry; and it was previously
noted that a large portion of the language
of good poem can in no respect differ from
of good Prose. We will go further. It
be safely affirmed that there neither is,
can be, any essential difference between the
age of prose and metrical composition.
are fond of tracing the resemblance be-
Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly,
all them Sisters; but where shall we find
is of connection sufficiently strict to typify
affinity betwixt metrical and prose com-
position? They both speak by and to the
organ; the bodies in which both of them
clad are said may be said to be of the same
stance, their affections are kindred, and
et identical, not necessarily differing even
degree; Poetry 1 sheds no tears "such as
weep," but natural and human tears;
can boast of no celestial ichor that distin-
hes her vital juices from those of Prose;
same human blood circulates through the
of them both.

it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical
agement of themselves constitute a dis-
ion which overturns what has just been
on the strict affinity of metrical language
that of Prose, and paves the way for
artificial distinctions which the mind
arily admits, I answer that the language
uch Poetry as is here recommended is, as

I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my
judgment) as opposed to the word Prose,
ynonymous with metrical composition. But much
b of latter has been introduced into erism by this
tradition of Poetry and Prose, instead of the
philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact,
ience. The only strict antithesis to Prose is
ere; nor is this, in truth, a strict antithesis, because
and poetry are so naturally occur in writ-
that it would be scarcely possible to avoid
in, even were it desirable.

far as is possible, a selection of the language
really spoken by men; that this selection,
wherever it is made with true taste and feel-
ing, will of itself form a distinction far greater
than would at first be imagined, and will en-
tirely separate the composition from the vul-
garity and meanness of ordinary life; and,
if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that
a dissimilitude will be produced altogether
sufficient for the gratification of a rational
mind. What other distinction would we have?
Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist?
Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through
the mouths of his characters: it cannot be
necessary here, either for elevation of style, or
any of its supposed ornaments; for, if the
Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will
naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to
passions, the language of which, if selected
truly and judiciously, must necessarily be
dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors
and figures. I forbear to speak of an inno-
gruity which would shock the intelligent
Reader, should the Poet interweave any for-
ign splendour of his own with that which the
passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to
say that such addition is unnecessary. And,
surely, it is more probable that these passages,
which with propriety abound with metaphors
and figures, will have their due effect if, upon
other occasions where the passions are of a
milder character, the style also be subdued and
temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by
the Poems now presented to the Reader must
depend entirely on just notions upon this
subject, and as it is in itself of high importance
to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content
myself with these detached remarks. And if,
in what I am about to say, it shall appear to
some that my labour is unnecessary, and that
I am like a man fighting a battle without
enemies, such persons may be reminded that,
whatever be the language outwardly held by
men in practical faith in the opinions which
I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If
my conclusions are admitted, and carried as
far as they must be carried if admitted at all,
our judgments concerning the works of the
greatest Poets, both ancient and modern,
will be different from what they are at present,
both when we praise and when we censure:
and our moral feelings influencing and influ-
enced by these judgments will, I believe, be
corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general
grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the
word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does
he address himself? And what language is to
be expected from him? — He is a man speaking
to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more
live sensibility, more assurance and tenderness,
who has a greater knowledge of human
ature, and a more comprehensive soul, than
are supposed to be common among mankind: a
man pleased with his own passions and voli-
tions, and who rejoices more than other men in
the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the going-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than any other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) in more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without external exciting.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature; and the more industriously he applies to the task, the more his faith that no words, which his fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavours occasionally to pass his original, in order to make him for the general inferiority to which he must submit. But this would be idleness and unnaturally despair. For it is the language of men who speak of things we do not understand; who talk of Poets, as a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; will converse with us as gravely about poetry, as they express it, as if it were as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, Frontiniae or Sherry. Aristotle, I have told, has said, that Poetry is the metaphysic of all writing; it is so: it is truth, not individual and local, but general, operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart; truth which is its own testimony; gives competence and confidence to the poet to which it appeals, and receives the same tribunal. Poetry is the impassioned man and nature. The obstacles which the way of the fidelity of the Biographer, and of their consequent utility incalculably greater than those which be encountered by the Poet who conceives the dignity of his art. The Poet is one restriction only, namely, that of giving immediate pleasure to a person possessed of that information which we expect from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a philosopher, but as a Man. Except to this restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between and the Biographer and Historian, then the thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing pleasure be considered as a degradation of Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is knowledge of the beauty of the thing; an acknowledgment the more sincere if not formal, but indirect; it is a task not easy to him who looks at the world through the eye of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the elementary principle of pleasure, by which knows, and feels, and lives, and more have no sympathy but what is proper pleasure: I would not be misunderstood, wherever we sympathise with pain, we find that the sympathy is produced and tried on by the condition of the person who is suffering, that is to say, principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built on pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure itself.

The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and dangers may have had to struggle through, knew this. However painful may be the object which the Anatomist's knowledge is, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure, where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers the objects and the objects that surround him acting upon each other, so as to produce
complexity of pain and pleasure; he
sees man in his own nature and in his ordi-
nify as contemplating this with a certainty
of immediate knowledge, with cer-
knowledge, with certainty of immediate knowledge, with cer-
convictions, intuitions, and deductions,
from habit acquire the quality of intu-
t; he considers him as looking upon this
scene of ideas and sensations, and find-
erywhere objects that immediately excite,
sympathies which, from the necessities
nature, are accompanied by an overbal-
of enjoyment.

This knowledge which all men carry about
them, and to these sympathies in which, 
any other discipline than that of our
life, we are fitted to take delight, the
principally directs his attention. He con-

man and nature as essentially adapted to
other, and the mind of man as naturally
mirror of the fairest and most interesting
arties of nature. And thus the Poet,
ected by this feeling of pleasure, which ac-
ancies him through the whole course of his
es, converses with general nature, with
ций to those who, through labour
length of our days, the Man of science has
d up in himself, by considering him these
regular parts of nature which are the ob-
of his studies. The knowledge both of
Poet and the Man of science is pleasure;
the knowledge of the one clears to us as
ecessary part of our existence, our natural
unalienable inheritance; the other is a per-
and individual acquisition, slow to come
, and by no habitual and direct sympathy
ecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man
science seeks truth as a remote and unknown
factor; he cherishes and loves it in his soli-
: the Poet, singing a song in which all
man beings join with him, rejoices in the pre-
se of truth as our visible friend and hourly
pation. Poetry is the breath and finer
of all knowledge; it is the impassion-
ction which is the lifespring of all
mence. Emphatically may it be said of the
t, as Shakespeare hath said of man, “that
looks before and after.” He is the rock of
ence for human nature; an upholder and
ver, carrying everywhere with him rela-
ship and love. In spite of difference of soil
climate, of language and manners, of laws
 customs: in spite of things silently gone
of mind, and things violently destroyed,
 Poet binds together by passion and know-
ge the vast empire of human society, as
spread over the whole earth and over
ime. The objects of the Poet’s thoughts
everywhere; though the eyes and senses of
are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he
ll follow wheresoever he can find an atmos-
ear of sensation in which to move his wings;
etry is the first and last of all knowledge,
 is as immortal as the heart of man. If
ours of Men of science should ever create
 y material revolution, direct or indirect, in
 condition, and in the impressions which we
itually receive, the Poet will sleep then no
more than at present; he will be ready to fol-
low the steps of the Man of science, not only in
those general indirect effects, but he will be at
his side, carrying sensation into the midst of
the objects of the science itself. The remotest
discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or
Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the
Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed,
if the time should ever come when these things
shall be familiar to us, and the relations under
which they are contemplated by the followers
of these respective sciences shall be manifestly
and palpably material to us as enjoying and suf-
ferring beings. If the time should ever come
when what is now called science, thus familiar-
ised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were,
a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend
his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration,
and will welcome the Being thus produced as a
dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.

It is not, then, to be supposed that any one,
who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which
I have attempted to convey, will break in upon
the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transi-
tory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour
to excite admiration of himself by arts, the ne-
cessity of which must manifestly depend upon
the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry
in general, but especially to those parts of com-
positions where the Poet speaks through the
masks of his characters; and upon this point
it appears to authorise the conclusion that there
are few persons of good sense who would not
allow that the dramatic parts of composition
are defective in proportion as they deviate from
the real language of nature, and are coloured
by a diction of the Poet’s own, either peculiar
to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply
to Poets in general; to a body of men who,
from the circumstance of their compositions
being in metre, it is expected will employ a
particular language.

It is not, therefore, the dramatic parts of com-
position that we look for this distinction of lan-
guage; but still it may be proper and necessary
where the Poet speaks to us in his own person
and character. To this I answer by referring
the Reader to the description before given of a
Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated
as principally conducing to form a Poet, is im-
plied nothing differing in kind from other men,
but only in degree. The sum of what was said
is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from
other men by a greater promptness to think
and feel without immediate external excite-
ment, and a greater power in expressing such
thoughts and feelings as are produced in him
in that manner. But these passions and
thoughts and feelings are the general passions
and thoughts and feelings of men; and with
what are they connected? Undoubtedly with
our moral sentiments and animal sensations,
and with the causes which excite these; with
the operations of the elements, and the appear-
ances of the visible universe; with storm and
sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons,
with cold and heat, with loss of friends and
kindred, with injuries and resentments, grati-
tude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These,
and the like, are the sensations and objects
which the Poet describes, as they are the sen-
sations of other men and the objects which
interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in
the spirit of human passions. How, then, can
his language differ in any material degree from
that of all other men who feel vividly and see
clearly? It might be proved that it is impos-
sible. But supposing that this were not the
case, the Poet might then be allowed to use
a peculiar language when expressing his feel-
ings for his own gratification, or that of men
like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets
alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are
advocates for that admiration which subsists
upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises
from hearing what we do not understand, the
Poet must descend from this supposed height;
and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he
must express himself as other men express
themselves. To this it may be added, that
while he is only selecting from the real language
of men, or, which amounts to the same thing,
composing accurately in the spirit of such se-
lection, he is treading upon safe ground, and
we know what we are to expect from him.
Our feelings are the same with respect to metre;
for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader,
the distinction of metre is regular and uniform,
and not, like that which is produced by what
is usually called poetic diction, arbitrary, and
subject to infinite caprices, upon which no cal-
culation whatever can be made. In the one
case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the
Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may
choose to connect with the passion; whereas,
in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to
which the Poet and Reader both willingly sub-
mit because they are certain, and because no
interference is made by them with the passion
but such as the concurring testimony of ages
has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure
which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious
question, namely, Why, professing these opin-
ions, have I written in verse? To this, in ad-
dition to such answer as is included in what has
been already said, I reply, in the first place,
Because, however I may have restricted my-
selves, there is still left open to me what confes-
sedly constitutes the most valuable object of
all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great
and universal passions of men, the most general
and interesting of their occupations, and the
entire world of nature before me — to supply
endless combinations of forms and imagery.
Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is
interesting in these objects may be as vividly
described in prose, why should I be condemned
for attempting to superadd to such description
the charm which, by the consent of all nations,
is acknowledged to exist in metrical language?
To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may
be answered that a very small part of the plea-
sure given by Poetry depends upon the as
and that it is injudicious to write in verse
less it be accompanied with the other and
distinctions of style with which metre is ac-
companied, and that, by such devices as
will be lost from the shock which will be
given to the Reader's associations may be
counterbalanced by any pleasure which can derive from the general power of
In answer to those who still contend in
the necessity of accompanying metre with
appropriate colours of style in order to
accomplishment of its appropriate end, and
also, in my opinion, greatly under-
lie power of metre in itself, it might, per-
haps, as relates to these Volumes, have been
sufficient to observe, that poems are
written upon more humble subjects, with
still more naked and simple style, which
continued to give pleasure from generation
to generation. Now, if nakedness and
be a defect, the fact here mentioned as
a strong presumption that poems sometimes
naked and simple are capable of affording
sure at the present day; and, what I
chiefly attempt, at present, was to justify
self for having written under the impres-
this belief.

But various causes might be pointed
out when the style is manly, and the style
some importance, words metrically
will long continue to impart such a pleas-
mankind as he who proves the extent of a
pleasure will be desirous to impart. The
of poetry is to produce excitement in con-
sequence with an overbalance of pleasure; in
the supposition, excitement is an unusual
irregular state of the mind; ideas and feel-
do not, in that state, succeed each other as
customed order. If the words, how-
which this excitement is produced be in
selves powerful, or the images and feelings
an undue proportion of pain connected
them, there is some danger that the excite-
may be carried beyond its proper bounds.
If the co-presence of something regular, rel-
to which the mind has been accustomed is
uous and in a less excited state, it has
great efficacy in tempering and restrin-
ging the passion by an intertexture of ordinar-
king, and of feeling not strictly and
connected with the passion. This is unques-
tionably true; and hence, though the option
at first appear accidental, from the basis
of metre to diverse language, in a certain
degree of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of
consciousness of unsubstantial existence at
the whole composition, there can be little
but that more pathetic situations and
ments, that is, those which have a greater
portion of pain connected with them, endur-
ed in metrical composition, especially
rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the
ballads is very artless, yet they contain
passages which would illustrate this opin-
and, I hope, if the following poems be sa-
tively perused, similar instances will be
This opinion may be further illusory appealing to the Reader's own experience. The reluctance with which he comes to an arrival of the distressful parts of "Clara Lovew," or the "Gameter;" while Shae's writings, in the most pathetic manner, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual impulses of pleasurable surprise as metrical arrangement. On the other hand, what it must be allowed will much more readily happen, if the Poet's words should be insurmountable with the passion, and inadequately raise the Reader to a height of desirable sentiment, then (unless the Poet's choice of metre has been grossly injudicious), in the sense of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with particular movement of metre, there is found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to the complex end which the Poet proposes himself.

The essay undertakes a systematic defense of his theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes which the pleasure received from metrical verse depends. Among the chief of these is the to be reckoned a principle which must be known to those who have made any attempt the object of accurate reflection; y, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude.

This principle is the great spring of the unity of our minds, and their chief feeder. This principle the direction of the sexual act, and all the passions connected with it in origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation, and upon the accurate and delicate perception of similitude in dissimilitude, are predicated, depend our and our moral feelings. It would not be wise employment to apply this principle to consideration of metre, and to show that it is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous flow of powerful feelings: it takes its rise from emotion recoiled in tranquillity; emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reflection, the tranquillity gradually dissipates, and an emotion, kindred to that which before the subject of contemplation, is newly produced, and does itself actually enter into the mind. In this mood successful passion generally begins, and in a mood to this it is carried on; but the emotion, whatever kind, and in whatever degree, in various causes, is qualified by various moods, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumference of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his run-adays are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be spared with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions were I convinced, they were fancy at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author:
is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this
cannot be done without great injury to himself:
for his own feelings are his stay and support;
and, if he set them aside in one instance, he
may be induced to repeat this act till his mind
shall lose all confidence in itself, and become
utterly debilitated. To this it may be added,
that the critic ought never to forget that he is
himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet,
and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for
there can be no presumption in saying of most
readers, that it is not probable they will be so
well acquainted with the various stages of
meaning through which words have passed, or
with the fickleness or stability of the relations
of particular ideas to each other; and, above
all, since they are so much less interested in
the subject, they may decide lightly and care-
lessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope
he will permit me to caution him against a
mode of false criticism which has been applied
to poetry, in which the language closely re-
sembles that of life and nature. Such verses
have been triumphed over in parodies, of which
Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:

"I put my hat upon my head
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place
one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the
"Babes in the Wood."

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and down;
But never more they saw the Man
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the
order of the words, in no respect differ from
the most unimpassioned conversation. There
are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and
"the Town," connected with none but the
most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we
admit as admirable, and the other as a fair
example of the superlatively contemptible.
Whence arises this difference? Not from the
metre, not from the language, not from the
order of the words; but the matter expressed in
Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The
proper method of treating trivial and simple
verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would
be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a
bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but,
this wants sense; it is neither interesting in
itself, nor can lead to anything interesting; the
images neither originate in that same state of
feeling which arises out of thought, nor can
excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This
is the only sensible manner of dealing with
such verses. Why trouble yourself about the
species till you have previously decided upon
the genus? Why take pains to prove that
an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident
that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader,
which is, that in judging these Poems he would
decide by his own feelings genuinely, as
by reflection upon what will precisely
by judgment of others. How comes it
that a hear a person say, I myself do not observe
style of composition, or this or that except
but to such and such classes of poets: appear
mean or ridiculous! This mode of
icism, so destructive of all sound
agement, is almost universal: let the
then abide, independently, by his own
and, if he finds himself affected, let him
suffer such conjectures to interfere with
pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition,
impressed us with respect for his talent:
useful to consider this as affording a posi-
tion that on other occasions where we have
displeased he, nevertheless, may act a
written ill or absurdly; and further, to give
so much credit for this one composition as
induce us to review what has displayed with
more care than we should otherwise
bestowed upon it. This is not only un-
justice, but, in our decisions upon poety
ally, may conduces in a high degree to
improvement of our own taste: for an art
taste in poetry, and in all the other arts. Joshua
Reynolds has observed, is an art
talent, which can only be produced by use
and a long-continued intercourse with the
models of composition. This is con
so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent
most inexperienced Reader from judging
himself (I have already said that I wish to judge for himself), but merely to
temper rashness of decision, and to suggest that
Poetry be a subject on which much
cannot be bestowed, the judgment not
erroneous; and that, in many cases, it nat
rily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effect
contributed to further the end which I
view, as to have shown of what kind
pleasure is, and how that pleasure is pro
which is confessedly produced by mental
position essentially different from that vil
have here endeavoured to recommend: for Reader will say that he has been pleased by
composition; and what more can be done
him? The power of any art is limited: he will suspect that, if it be proposed to
him with new friends, that can be only
condition of his abandoning his old ties.
Besides, as I have said, the Reader is
self conscious of the pleasure which he
received from such composition, equal
to which he has peculiarly attached the
dearing name of Poetry; and all men
an habitual gratitude, and something of
honourable bigotry, for the objects which
long continued to please them; we wish
to be pleased, but to be pleased is a
particular way in which we have been
turned to be pleased. There is in these
enough to resist a host of arguments; and
should be the less able to combat them
fully, as I am willing to allow that, in
APPENDIX

799

...to enjoy the Poetry which I am recom-
meat, it would be necessary to give up much
is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my
have permitted me to point out how this
been removed, and the Reader assisted in
that the powers of language are not
ted as he may suppose; and that it is
for poetry to give other enjoyments, of
more lasting, and more exquisite nature.
art of the subject has not been altogether
ted, but it has not been so much my
aim to prove, that the interest excited
the other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and
orthy of the nobler powers of the mind,
as to offer reasons for presuming that if my
purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry
would be produced which is genuine poetry; in
its nature well adapted to interest mankind
permanently, and likewise important in the
multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a pe-
ursal of the Poems, the Reader will be able
clearly to perceive the object which I had in
view: he will determine how far it has been
attained, and, what is a much more important
question, whether it be worth attaining: and
upon the decision of these two questions will
rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

APPENDIX

1802

See page 796 — "by what is usually called poetico diction."

as, I have no right to expect that
ive perusal, without which, confined, as
been, to the narrow limits of a preface,
meaning cannot be thoroughly understood. I
xious to give an exact notion of the sense
which the phrase poetico diction has been
and for this purpose, a few words shall
be added, concerning the origin and char
istics of the phraseology which I have con
ed under that name.

earliest poets of all nations generally
from passion excited by real events;
rote naturally, and as men: feeling pow
ly as they did, their language was daring,
figurative. In succeeding times, Poets,
Men ambitions of the fame of Poets, per
the influence of such language, and de
o of producing the same effect without
imated by the same passion, set them-
 to a mechanical adoption of these figures
peech, and made use of them, sometimes
propriety, but much more frequently
ed them to feelings and thoughts with
they had no natural connection whatso
.
A language was thus insensibly produced,
ring materially from the real language of
in any situation. The Reader or Hearer
is distorted language found himself in a
urbed and unusual state of mind: when
ed by the genuine language of passion he
been in a perturbed and unusual state of
also: in both cases he was willing that
common judgment and understanding
ld be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive
failible perception of the true to make
ject the false; the one served as a pass-
 for the other. The emotion was in both
a delightful, and no wonder if he con-
ced the one with the other, and believed
both to be produced by the same or similar
es. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the
acter of a man to be looked up to, a man
ness and authority. Thus, and from a
ety of other causes, this distorted language
was received with admiration; and Poets, it is
probable, who had before contented themselves
for the most part with misapplying only ex-
pressions which at first had been dictated by
real passion, carried the abuse still further,
and introduced phrases composed apparently
in the spirit of the original figurative language of
passion, yet altogether of their own invention,
and characterised by various degrees of wanton
deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true that the language of the
earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from
ordinary language, because it was the language
of extraordinary occasions; but it was really
spoken by men, language which the Poet him-
self had uttered when he had been affected by
the events which he described, or which he had
heard uttered by those around him. To this
language it is probable that metre of some sort
or other was early superadded. This separated
the genuine language of Poetry still further
from common life, so that whoever read or
heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt
himself moved in a way in which he had
not been accustomed to be moved in real life,
and by causes manifestly different from those
which acted upon him in real life. This was
the great temptation to all the corruptions
which have followed: under the protection of
this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a
phraseology which had one thing; it is true, in
common with the genuine language of poetry,
namely, that it was not heard in ordinary
conversation; that it was unusual. But the
first Poets, as I have said, spake a language
which, though unusual, was still the lan-
guage of men. This circumstance, however,
was disregarded by their successors; they
found that they could please by easier means:
they became proud of modes of expression
which they themselves had invented, and
which were uttered only by themselves. In
process of time metre became a symbol or
promise of this unusual language, and whoever
took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language, and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Absurd of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is balled of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italic, consists of little else but this diction; though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers, both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase poetic diction than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testaments and those which they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue," etc. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," etc. 1st Corinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr. Johnson:—

"Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes, Observe her labours, slaggard, and be wise; No stern command, no monitory voice, Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice; Yet, timely provident, she hastes away To snatch the blessings of a pleasant day; When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain, She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain. How long shall sloth sojourn thy useless hours, Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers? While artful shades thy dooryard couch enclose, And soft solicition courts thy repose. Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight, Year chases year with unremitted flight, Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow, Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe."

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having so rich an overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of thine hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as a0 unawares, and thy want shall come as an whirlwind. Proverbs, xxi. 22-23.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

"Religion! what treasure untold! Resides in that heavenly word! More precious than silver and gold, Or all that earth can afford. But the sound of the church-going bell These valleys and rocks never heard, Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell, Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

Ye wise men, that have made me your sport, Convey to this desolate shore Some cordial endearing report Of a land I must visit no more. My Friends, do they now and then send A wish or a thought after me? O tell me I yet have a friend, Though a friend I am never to see."

This passage is quoted as an instance of the different styles of composition. The first lines are poorly expressed; some critics will call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely possible to be in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange about which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them for matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines "Ne'er sighed at the sound," are, in my opinion, a fine instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, from the mere circumstance of the composer being in metre, applied upon an occasion where it does not justify such violent expressions as these; I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughly admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing the natural language so naturally connected in metre. The beauty of this stanza temple to conclude with a principle which ought not to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said, namely, that in works of imagination and sentiment, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as idea and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. metre is but a ventive to composition, and the phrases for which that passport is necessary, even when it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.
DEDICATION
PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815

TO
GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

EAR SIR GEORGE,
accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition to the pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by doing these Poems with your Name, I seem to be in some degree to repay, by an approbation of your judgement, the great obligation which I owe to you, as part of the Collection — as having been the first making us personally known to you. Upon much of the remainder, also, there is a peculiar claim, for some of the pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Orton, where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of the woods that diversify the forest of Charnwood. — Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself — to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Valuing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil, may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,
My dear Sir George,
Yours most affectionately and faithfully,
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, Westmorland,
February 1, 1815.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815

The powers requisite for the production of Poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description, i.e., the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and to describe them, unmodified by passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer: whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs in submission to necessity, and never for the continuance of time: as its exercise supposes the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, in a state of subjection to external objects, which in the same way as a translator or editor ought to be to his original. 2dly, Sensibility, which, the more exquisite it is, the more will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more he will be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as related upon his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original Preface.) 3dly, Reflection, which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and late the sensibility in perceiving their connections with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Creativity, to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention, by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet’s own heart and head, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most pressing to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment, to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition. The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative, including the Epos, the Historiæ, the Poëme, the Tale, the Romance, the Monk-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourliness, that dear production of our days, the Metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic Poetry, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as singing from the inspiration of the Muse, "Arma virumque cano;" but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the Iliad or the "Paradise

1 The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be republished.
2 As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendant upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said of them upon those requisites.
Lost" would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to tell their tale; — so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2dly, The Dramatic. — consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3dly, The Lyrical — containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their full effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium. — descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the "Seasons" of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's "Schoolmistress," "The Cotter's Saturday Night" of Burns, the "Two Dogs" of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the "Allarce" and "Panerogo" of Milton, Beattie's "Minstrel," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loose descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic. — the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the "Georgics" of Virgil, "The Fleece" of Dyer, Mason's "English Garden," etc.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's "Night Thoughts," and Cowper's "Task," are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind predominant in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Death, and Immortality. My design is that the small pieces of which these consist, thus discriminated, might be considered under a two-fold view; as composing a work within themselves, and as adjoined to philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." The arrangement has long presented itself to my own mind. Nevertheless, I have preferred to scatter the contents of the same at random, if I had been permitted by the plan adopted, anything material to be taken from the natural effect of the individual, on the mind of the reader. I trust there is a sufficient view of each class to prevent this; while, for he who reads with reflection, the arrangement serves as a commentary unobtrusively calling his attention to my purposes, both part and general. But as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this division, it is proper first to remind the reader that certain poems are placed according to the idea of mind, in the Author's conception, prevalent in the production of them; prose which implies the exertion of other faculties to a lesser degree. Where there is more immensity than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the idea of imagination, and vice versá. Both the classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Pasiphae" on the Affections; as might result from those, and from the class " pasiphae" from Sentiment and Reflection. The striking characteristics of each piece, its construction, illustration, variety, and proportion, have earned me throughout.

None of the other Classes, except the Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dead, have been in the practice of selecting their works were composed to the music of the lyre; with what degree of affectation has been done in modern times, I leave it to judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability, or to make such a large demand on Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot be due force without a supposed musical companionship; but, in much the greatest case as a substitute for the classic lyre or rondel, I require nothing more than an artless or impassioned recitation, adapted to the object. Poems, however humble in their basis, they be good in that kind, cannot read the selves; the power of long syllable and short not be so inflexible, — the letter of metre nor so impassive to the spirit of verse as to deprive the Reader of all power to modulate, in subordination to sense, the music of the poem; — in the manner as his mind is left at liberty, and summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with;
Preface to the Edition of 1815

"Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro
Dumossa penderis procul de rupe videbo."

—"half way down
Hangs one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakspeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

"As when far off at sea a fleet described
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengal, or the isles
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend."

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word hangs, and exerted upon the whole image. First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as hanging in the clouds, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes:

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods," of the same bird,

"His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze;"

"O, Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?"

The stock-dove is said to coo, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor broods, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reverates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. "His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of seclusion by which this Bird is marked; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in
which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

"Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterizes the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incipient from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently porious situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

"As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
Wonder to all who do the same spy
By what means it could thither come, and whence,
So it seems a thing endued with sense,
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun himself.
Such seemed this Man: not all alive or dead,
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.

Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
And moveth altogether if it move at all."

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After it has been said, the image of the clod net be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying but the Imagination also shapes and souls and how? By innumerable processes: none does it more delight than in that of solidating numbers into unity, and dissolved and separating unity into number,—almost proceeding from, and governed by, a consciousness of the soul in her own eye vulgar in other divine powers. Recur to the point already cited from Milton. When the sea fleet, as one Person, has been introduced from Bengal, "They," i.e. "the Venetians," representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "play" their voyage to the extremities of the earth: "So" ring to the word "As" in the commence: "seemed the flying Fiend;" the image of a Person acting to recombine the scattered ships into one body,—the point from the comparison set out. "So seemed," whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse dictates the poem, to the eye of the mind, and to that of the Reader, presented a moment in the wide Ethiopian, and to the solitudes, then first broken in upon, the infernal regions!

"Modo me Theba, modo ponti Athen.""Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaks the Messiah going forth to expel the rebellious angels,

"Attended by ten thousand thousand hosts, He onward came: far off his coming shone the retina of Saints, and the Person of Messiah himself, lost almost and merced a splendour of that indefinite abstraction coming!"

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the sent Volume, and especially upon one of them, I shall spare myself and to the trouble of considering the Imaginary deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it relates the composition of characters, and mines the course of actions: I will not see it (more than I have already done by suspicion) as that power which, in the lessest one of my most esteemed Friends, "diverse things to one; which makes things animate, beings with their attributes, objects with their accessories, take one colour serve to one effect." 1 The grand store of enthusiastic and meditative Imaginative poetic, as contradistinguished from litany and dramatic Imaginative, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scripture, the works of Milton; to which I cannot fail to add those of Spenser. I select these as more in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphisms Pagan religion subjected the minds of.

1 Charles Lamb upon the genius of Homer.
SEST poets in those countries too much to
enjoy the de¯nite form; from which the
views were preserved by their abhorrence
of Plasty. This abhorrence was almost as
in our great Poets. From her, from the
srunace of his life, and from the constitu-
ficative of his mind. However imbued the surface
be with classical literature, he was a
ew in soul; and all things tended in him
to the sublime. Spencer, of a gentler
preservation, maintained his freedom by aid of his
spirited and alert, at one time inviting him to
to persons out of abstractions; and, all
by a superior effort of genius, to give
universality and permanence of abstractions
as human beings, by means of attributes
abundant, that belong to the highest moral
and the purest sensations,—of which
character of Una is a glorious example. Of
human and dramatic imagination the works
Shakespeare are inexhaustible sources.

X not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,
over give you kingdoms, call’d you Daughters!’

x if, in bearing in mind the many Poets dis-
ished by this prime quality, whose names
it to mention, yet justi®ed by recollection
re insults which the ignorant, the incapable,
the presumptuous, have heaped upon these
my other writings, I may be permitted to
cipate the judgment of posterity upon myself.
I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the
stituity of the fact above stated does not
ify me) that I have given in these unfavour-
times evidence of exertions of this faculty
its worthiest objects, the external universe,
moral and religious sentiments of Man, his
oral affections, and his acquired passions;
ch ave the same ennobling tendency as the
uctions of men, in this kind, worthy to be
en in undying remembrance.

the mode in which Fancy has already
characterised as the power of evoking and
ning, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has
led it, ‘the aggregative and associative
rer,’ my objection is only that the de®nition
o general. To aggregate and to associate,
evoke and to combine, belong as well to the
agination as to the Fancy; but either the
erials evoked and combined are different,
ye are brought together under a different
, and for a different purpose. Fancy does
require that the materials which she makes
of should be susceptible of change in their
stitution from her touch; and, where they
it of modi®cation, it is enough for her
ose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent.
the reverse of these are the desires
 demands of the Imagination. She recoils
in everything but the plastic, the pliant, and
indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to de-
be Queen Mab as coming,

‘In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore®nger of an alderman.’

y to speak of stature, she does not tell
that her gigantic Angel was as tall as

Pompey’s Pillar; much less that he was twelve
cubits or twelve hundred cubits high; or that
his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or
Atlas,—because those, and if they were a
million times as high, it would be the same,
bounded: The expression is, ‘His stature
reached the sky!’ the illimitable firmament!
—When the Imagination frames a comparison,
if it does not strike on the ®rst presentation, a
sense of the truth of the likeness, from the
moment that it is perceived, grows—and con-
tinues to grow—upon the mind; the resem-
bance depending less upon outline of form and
feature than upon expression and effect; less
upon casual and outstanding than upon inherent
and internal properties: moreover, the images
invariably modify each other. — The law under
which the processes of Fancy are carried on is
as capricious as the accidents of things, and the
effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing,
sweet, seductive, and images happen to
be appositely produced or fortunately com-
ined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and
profusion with which she scatters her thoughts
and images; trusting that their number, and
the felicity with which they are linked together,
will make amends for the want of individual
value; or she prides herself upon the curious
subtlety and the successful elaboration with
which she can detect their lurking affinities.
If she can win you over to her purpose, and
impart to you her feelings, she cares not how
unstable or transitory may be her influence,
knowing that it will not be out of her power
to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the
Imagination is conscious of an indestructible
dominion; — the Soul may fall away from it,
not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if
once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any
other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed,
impair, or diminished. — Fancy is given to
quicken and to beguile the temporal part of
our nature, Imagination to incite and to support
the eternal. — Yet it is not the less true that Fancy,
as she is an active, is also, under her own laws
and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In
what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a
rivalship with Imagination, and Imagination
stoops to work with the materials of Fancy,
might be illustrated from the compositions of
all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse;
and chiefiy from those of our own Country.
Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of
Bishop Taylor’s Works can be opened that
shall not afford examples. — Referring the
Reader to those inestimable volumes, I will
content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed
to Lord Chester®eld) in contrast with a passage
from the “Paradise Lost”:

‘The dews of the evening most carefully shum.
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the
sun.’

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with
other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus
marks the immediate consequence,
"Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retreat, as "A palsied king," and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of fanciful comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

"a magazine
Of sovereign juice is cellared in;
Liqueur that will the siege maintain
Should Phoebus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

"Tis that, that gives the poet rage,
And thaws the gally'd blood of age;
Matures the young, restores the old.
And makes the fainting coward bold.
It lays the careful head to rest,
Calms palpitations in the breast.
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,
And gird us round with hills of snow,
Or else go whistle to the shore.
And make the hollow mountains roar.

Whilst we together join to sit
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit.
Where, though bleak winds confine us,
Our fancies round the world shall run.

We'll think of all the Friends we knew,
And drink to all worth drinking to.
When having drunk all thine and mine,
We rather shall want healths than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply
Our friendship with our charity;
Men that remote in sorrows live,
Shall by our lusty trimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,
And those that languish into health,
The afflicted into joy; the oppressed
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find
Favour return again more kind,
And in restraint who staid his
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,
The lovers shall have mistresses,
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,
And the neglected Poet, lays.

Thus shall our healths do others read,
Whilst we ourselves do all we would:
For, freed from envy and from care,
What would we be but what we are?"

When I wrote down to write this Preface was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought not to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE

1815

Wrt the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself; the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation, while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protec against the pressure of trivial employments and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many who, having enamoured of this art in their youth, have for leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate pastoral literature; in which poetry has come to be comprehended as a study.

Into the above classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them but from the last only can opinions be formed of absolute value, and worthy to be dep
heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faulty for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the most enthralling beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chieflv looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can serve (i.e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, who have been considered are liable. But as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's
language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they received from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error so perilous, to be regarded with tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, be not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book.

To these excesses they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradiction? Secondly, the errors of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious; and at all seasons they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity: — the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence, and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an "imperfect shadowing forth" of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion — making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry — passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion — whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry — ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error; — so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and sceptical; for a critic whose affections are free and kindly as the spirit of nature, whose understanding is never as the sanguine getment? Where are we for that initiatory composure of mind with no selfishness can disturb? For a sensibility that has been tutored into cares without losing anything of its quickness and for active faculties, capable of assaying the demands which an Author of exalted imagination shall make upon them, with a judgment that cannot be despised by admiration by aught that is unworthy? — among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry remit much of its force, have applied a consideration of the laws of this art to the power of their understandings. At the time it must be observed that, as in the case of the mercenary or perhaps trustworthy, so does it include the meek and perverse. For to be mistaken worse than to be untaught; and no perverst that which is supported by system errors are so difficult to root out as which the understanding has pledged itself to uphold. In this Class are contained those who, if they be pleased with what is good pleased with it only by imperfect glimpse upon false principles; who, should they generalize rightly to a certain point, are yet suffer for it in the end; who, if they are upon a sound rule, are fettered by measure it, or by straining it too far; being moost of perceiving when it ought to yield to a higher order. In it are found critics so plight to be passive to a genuine poet, and feeble to grapple with him; men, who take them to report of the course which, by whom they are utterly unable to accompany confounded if he turn quick upon the way mayed if he soar steadily "into the rapa — men of palpied imaginations and indes hearts; in whose minds all healthy are languid, who therefore feed as the many of them, or, with the many, are greedy of vicious provocatives; judges, whose eas is suspicious, and whose praise ominous; this class meet together the two extremes beat and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can confidently relied upon be in reality so mock, I ought to follow that partial notice only, neglect, perhaps long continued, or even wholly inadequate to their merits, has been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the one hand, numerous productions have gained popularity, and have passed away, bearing scarcely a trace behind them: it will be ther found, that when Authors shall have
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raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and omissions have prevailed concerning their genius and work, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would add to; if they were not recompensed by the select Spirit for whom the qualified talent which is the struggle it makes, and its triumphing over it; and the nature of its domination, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more is for him to conquer.

To what extent does the poetical nature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts and premises given in this passage enable us to make an accurate estimate of the value of Spenser, whose genius is of a far higher order than that of Ariosto, is at once clearly shown well beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention paid to them by his countrymen, considered with that which they bestow on those of other writers, it must be pronounced indeed.

"The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors
And poets age" —

his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy; while its site, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been their best friend. But he was great power, and bears a high name: the poet has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly mighty genius of Shakespeare was listened to. The people were delighted; but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear on the same boards. Had there been a mal content for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakespeare, like his predecessors Phocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize judged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of the same, as serious, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, in Shakespeare stopped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and of the most striking proofs of his almost impenetrable genius is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose these materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the greatest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be the reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him. — His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakespeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their bouffon de Shakespeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakespeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say an established opinion, that Shakespeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild, irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakespeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakespeare expresses

1. The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bartas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakespeare.
his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them: and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions — "there sitting where he durst not soar."

Nine years before the death of Shakspere, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide: nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contumuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspere.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of various tinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the "Paradise Lost" made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "just to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncom-

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1 This flippant insensibility was publicly reprobated by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspere's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

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mon example, he asserts, of the pernicious genius in opposition to so much recent as Milton's public conduct had caused it to be remembered that, if Milton's political religious opinions, and the manner in which they had procured him numerous friends as well as personal danger was passed away, at a time of publication, would be easier to the master work of a man whom the devil and whom they would be proud to take, from the number of purchasers of this treasure and also of those who have possessed the Poem as a religious work. For, I fear, would be left who sought an account of its poetical merits. The did not immediately increase; "for," said Johnson, "many more readers the persons in the habit of reading poetry were supplied at first the Nation could afford." How careless must a writer be to make this assertion in the face of an existing title-pages to believe it! Turunt in silentia, I find the folio of Cowley, Walker, in the same edition, 1681. A book near it is Poems, fourth edition, 1696; Walker, same date. The Poems of Northcote not long after went, I believe, in nine editions. What further demand might be for these works I do not know; I well remember that, twenty-five years ago booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with fädos of Cowley. This is not mentioned a parangement of that able writer the man; but merely to show that, if the work were not more read, it was not the readers did not exist at the time. The editions of the "Paradise Lost" were put in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies the Work were sold in eleven years; and Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been sold from 1823 to 1694, that is, forty-one years only two editions of the Works of Shakspere which probably did not together make a thousand Copies; facts adduced by me to prove the fallacy of Readers — that were readers in multitudes; but the work went for other purposes, as their ad

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1 Hughes is express upon this subject: in his edition of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he thus: "It was your Lordship's encouragement of the Noble Edition of 'Paradise Lost' that first gave the incomparable Poem to be generally and esteemed."
"It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired; those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in poetry beyond a point of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart antithesis richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an elegiac complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering at the marvellous adroitness, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us: — but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year; and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal "Reverie of Lady Winchilsea," and a passage or two in the "Windsor Forest" of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the "Paradise Lost" and the "Seasons" does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the Iliad. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the mouth of those about him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; 1 those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden,
once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cote of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity!—If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time held in such estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was in such good condition at the time of the publication of the “Seasons,” the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little more; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is the rest to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental commonplace that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the “Seasons,” you will generally find one or two with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are parts of his Work which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him an elegant and philosophical Poet; nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson’s genius as an imaginative poet were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the “Seasons,” pointed them out in his Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope. In the “Castle of Indolence” (which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously developed, and in verse more harmonious and dreamlike.

Yet that fine poem was neglected at first—appearance, and is at this day the delight of a few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he announced a poetical curse upon him who should regard with insensibility the plane where Peace was forever deposited. The Poem is the mourners have now pressed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the kind of imprecation had been pronounced on surviving admirer, small is the number which it would not have comprehended. The more which his poems attained during his life was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he despaired of repaying the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and had the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the “Seasons” is Thomson, though at considerable distance in that work in order of time, come the Beaux of Ancient English Poetry, collected, revised, and in many instances (if such a construction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not silently into the world, as is evident from a number of legendary tales that appeared long after its publication; and had been valised, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the Old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, “mid the immense senate to which he gave laws, was not spared in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legatonic imitators were deservedly disregarded, and undervalued, their illimitated models and in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were maturing those imitations which the Rufus and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so ashamed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not dared to follow his genius into the region of true simplicity and genuine pathos as evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Caunce and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the case of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction sacred in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and the unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact1.

1 Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his “Seasons,” and find that even that does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

1 Shenstone, in his “Schoolmistress,” gives some more remarkable instances of this timidity. On the
stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghostly wounds. Precious memoranda from the pocketbook of the Blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. — Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson’s work, it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened, — yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the stews of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes; — of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface. — Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his “ends” and his “but!” and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a conscious plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own. — It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland; — a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.
Yet, much as these pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly unfruitful upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems,*—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson’s publication with the *Reliques* of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the *Reliques*; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces, biographical and critical, for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of *Prefatory Lives,* and to our astonishment the first name that fixes us is that of Cowley!—Is that become the morning-star of English Poets? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chancer? where is Speuser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have indicated,—where Shakespeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have not. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Pal and Walah, and Smith, and Duke, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Nottingham, grey, Broome, and other reputed Metrical writers utterly worthless and as except for occasions like the present, the productions are referred to as evidence a small quantity of brain is necessary to a considerable stock of admiratior for the aspirant will accommodate himself to his likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this aspect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished writer. From the literature of other ages and periods, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced a former part of this Essay are founded on truth. It was not an agreeable office, a prudent undertaking, to declare these importance seemed to render it not. It may still be asked, where lies the present relation of what has been said to these names?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when these poems were first published, seven years ago; who has also observed a degree the poetry of this Island has, after a period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of our own notion of the constitution of Poetic taste, and as far as concerns me, I have cause to be satisfied. The love of adoration, the indifference, the slight, the disdain, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing as I do the source within my own mind from which they have proceeded, and the labour and patience which, when labour and pains appeared, have been bestowed upon them, must I think consistently, be received as peculiar tokens, bearing the same general impression though widely different in value; the all proofs that for the present time I have laboured in vain; and afford assurances, or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the present Essay, that which has been given of the careers and of poetical Works, it is this—that an author, as far as he is great and at the same time original, has had the task of creating a taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has been, so will it continue to be. This was long since made me by the philosopher Friend for the separation of whose poems I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of high order will have smoothed the way for that he has in common with them; and as he will have in common; but, for the peculiarities of his own, he will be called up
ear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Ips.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating a taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of atom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of experience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of knowledge, it does not lie here. — Taste, I would remind the reader, like imagination, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a passive sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence not passive,—to intellectual acts and operations. The word imagination has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word imagination; but the word Taste has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office,—for in its intercourse with these the mind is passive, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime; are neither of them, accurately so far, objects of taste. For though they ever without a sinking in the spirit of nations have been designated by the metaphor — Taste. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating power in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies suffering; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and action, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact that, in popular language, to be in a passion is to be angry! — But,

"Anger in hasty words or blows
Itself discharges on its foes."

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate power, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer at his first appearance in the world. Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening of the sphere of human sensibility for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince on general-stretched on his palanquin, and borne by slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspired by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and there lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an animal sensation, it might seem that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence which is proved by effects immediate and universal, but there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct; and others that are complex and revolutionary; some to which the heart yields with gentleness; others
against which it struggles with pride; these
varieties are infinite as the combinations of cir-
cumstance and the constitutions of character.
Remember, also, that the medium through
which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected is
language; a thing subject to endless fluctua-
tions and arbitrary associations. The genius of
the poet melts these down for his purpose; but
they retain their shape and quality to him who
is not capable of exerting, within his own
mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a
meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an
enthusiastic as well as an ordinary sorrow; a sad-
ness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to
which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—
but to which it must descend by treading the
steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we
consider what are the cares that occupy the
passing day, and how remote is the practice
and the course of life from the sources of sub-
limity in the soul of Man, can it be wondered
that there is little existing preparation for a
poet charged with a new mission to extend its
kingdom, and to augment and spread its en-
joyments?
Away then, with the senseless iteration of
the word popular applied to new works in
poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in
this first of the fine arts but that all men should
run after its productions, as if urged by an
appetite, or constrained by a spell! — The qual-
ities of writing best fitted for eager reception
are either such as startle the world into at-
tention by their audacity and extravagance; or
they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon
the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a
selection and arrangement of incidents, by
which the mind is kept upon the stretch of
curiosity, and the fancy amused without the
trouble of thought. But in everything which
is to send the soul into herself, to be admira-
tory of her weakness; she is made conscious of
her power: wherever life and nature are
exercised upon by the creative or abstracting
virtue of the imagination; wherever
the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her
heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet,
with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have
produced that accord of sublimated humanity,
which is at once a history of the remote past
and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest
future; there, the poet must reconcile himself
for a season to few and scattered hearers.—
Grand thoughts (and Shakspeare must often
have sighed over this truth), as they are most
naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude,
so can they not be brought forth in the midst
of plaudits without some violation of their
sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the pro-
ductions of the sister Art, and be convinced
that the qualities which dazzle at first sight,
and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are
essentially different from those by which per-
nament influence is secured. Let us not shrink
from following these principles as far as
they will carry us, and conclude with observing
that there never has been a period, and perhaps
never will be, in which vicious poetry, or an
individual, has not struck with admiration, and been far more generally
than good; but this advantage assured
that the individual, as well as the spec
survives from age to age; whereas, if
proved, though the species be immortal,
individual quickly perishes; the object of
atention varies, being supplied
some other as easily produced; which, the
better, brings it with it at least the issue
of novelty, — with adaptation, more
skilful, to the changing humours of the
ity of those who are most at leisure to
poetical works when they first solicit
attention.
Is it the result of the whole that, in the
ion of the Writer, the judgment of the Pat
to be not to be respected? The thought is
injurious; and, could the charge be
against him, he would repel it with indignation.
The People have already been justified their eulogium pronounced by impulse
when it was said above that, of good poets an
individual, as well as the species, is
How does it survive but through the People?
What preserves it but their intellect and wisdom?

" — Past and future, are the wings.
On whose support, harmoniously composed,
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge."

The voice that issues from this Spirit is the
Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Each
must be who can mistake for this a local
clamour, or a transitory outcry — truce
though it be for years, local though from
ation. Still more lamentable is the error who
believe that there is anything of divine
ibility in the clamour of that small though a
portion of the community, ever governing
ious influence, which, under the name
the People, passes itself, under the mark
the People. Towards the Public, the
Writer hopes that he feels as much devotion
as it is entitled to: but to the People, philo
ically characterised, and to the embryo
spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists
moves, at the present, faithfully supported
its two wings, the past and the future, his
tent respect, his recompense, is due. He obe
it willingly and readily; and this does not
leave of his Readers, by assuring them that
if he were not persuaded that the contents
these Volumes, and the work to which they
subsidiary, evinces something of the "Virtue
the Faculty divine," and that, both in art
and things, they will operate in their degree
extend the domain of sensibility for the deific
the honour, and the benefit of human
notwithstanding the many happy hours
he has employed in their composition, and
manifold comforts and enjoyments they
procured to him, he would not, if he wished
do it, save them from immediate destruction
becoming at this moment, to the world
thing that had never been.
There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft or violence.

And here, etc. in the Report of the Commissioners, the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their "remedial measures" obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to his preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not contend for the duty of a Christian government, standing in loco parentis towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance involves the protection of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeopardizing of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public support when
from any cause they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the "Paradise Lost," Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul —

"Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man; did I solicit Thee
From darkness to promote me?
Concurred not to my being."

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessaries of life.

Englishmen, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in circumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tend its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms even they who have been imprudent and undeserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profligacy of life and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and incapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it produces.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and after looked up incessantly to the sky, but that her fellow-creatures could do nothing to minister her relief. Can there be Englishmen, who, of a good end in view, would, upon system, see their brother Englishmen to a like necessity, looking upwards only; or downwards and earth, after it shall contain no spot where destitute can demand, by civil rights, the right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy cast into this blank despair, but wandering about strangers in streets and ways, with the lap of stragglers from casual charity; what have they gained by such a change of scene? Was the condition of the famished Northern was dependent, among winter snows, upon chance-passage of a herd of deer, from whose one, if brought down by his rifle-gun, was made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of a savage islander, who, when the land has cast to afford him sustenance, watches for which the waves may cast up, or in vain desairs to extract it from the insalubrity deep. But neither of these is in a state wretchedness comparable to that which is so often endured in civilised society: maladies in all ages, have known it, of whom may said:

"Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,
And near a thousand tables pined, and wasted days.

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political in widely spread, did not impugn the principles and if the safeguards against such extremes were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted many, that every man who endeavours to work may find it: were this assertion capable being verified, there still would remain re we work, what kind of work, and how far may labourer be fit for it? For sedentary work to be exchanged for standing, and some up and nice exercise of the fingers, to whose labour has been accustomed all his life; severe labour of the arms, the best efforts was turn to little account, and occasion would given for the unthinking and the unfeeling warrantably to reproach those who are put such employment as idle, froward, and worthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the prizes here maintained would be superseded. Ec alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose cost famine are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men so liable to be thrown out of their order, means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers: by new discoveries, arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws in conformity with theories of political ear
which, whether right or wrong in the act, have proved a scourge to tens of thou-

sands, by the abruptness with which they have marched into practice.

It is urged—refuse altogether compul-
sion to the able-bodied, and the number

of those who stand in need of relief will steadily

rise through a conviction of an absolute

necessity for greater forethought and more pru-

dence of a man’s earnings. Undoubtedly it

is so, but so also would it, and in a much

er degree, if the legislative provisions were

sharply enforced, and parochial relief administered under

law of the upper classes, as it ought to be.

It has been invariably found, that wherever

lands and water are raised and applied under

sufficiency of gentlemen and substan-

propietors, acting in vestries and as over-

paupersism has diminished accordingly.

er care in that quarter would effectively

x what has fell in some degree to one of

worst evils in the poor law system, viz., the

miserable small and needy proprietors to join

spending rates that seemingly subject them

to hard times, while, in fact, this is done

a mutual understanding that the relief

is ready to bestow upon his still poorer

hours will be granted to himself, or his

wives, should it hereafter be applied for.

at let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler

city, in order to know what we have to build

Affecting proofs occur in every one’s ex-

ence, who is acquainted with the unfortu-

nate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to

owe their subsistence from aught but their

funds or labour, or to be indebted to paro-
dal assistance for the attainment of any object,

never dear to them. A case was reported,

other day, from a coroner’s inquest, of a pair

through the space of four years, had car-

ried about their dead infant from house to

house, and from lodging to lodging, as their

children drove them, rather than ask the

pittance to bear the expense of their interment:—

poor creatures lived in the hope of one day

being able to bury their child at their own cost.

must have been heart-rending to see and

the mother, who had been called upon to

sirex to the state in which the body was

ind, make this deposition. By some, judging

dly, if not harshly, this conduct might be

put to an unwarrantable pride, as she and

her husband had, it is true, been once in pros-

perity. But examples, where the spirit of inde-

dependence works with equal strength, though

with like miserable accompaniments, are

equently to be found even yet among the

slaves of society and mechanics. There is

it, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a

ke sense of honour may be revived among

people, and their ancient habits of independence

stored, without resorting to those severities

hitherto the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to

be examined, we have a right to expect that

the governors should take into account the various

manners and dispositions of mankind: while

some are led, by the existence of a legislative

provision, into idleness and extravagance, the

economical virtues might be cherished in others

by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail,

they have in the Poor Law a “refuge from the

storm and a shadow from the heat.” Despond-

ency and distaste are no friends to prudence;

the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness

be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men

become reckless, and have a sullen pride in

adding to the heap of their own wretchedness.

He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-

men will be almost irresistibly driven to care

little for himself; will lose his self-respect ac-

ccordingly, and with that loss what remains to

him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular ex-

perience and general intelligence of the individu-

als who framed the Act, and of those who in

and out of parliament have approved of and

 armored it, it is submitted that very much

upon the presumption that it is a labouring

group’s own fault if he be not, as the phrase

is, beforehand with the world. But the most

prudent are liable to be thrown back by sick-

ness, cutting them off from labour, and causing

to them expense: and who but has observed

how distress creeps upon multitudes without

misconduct of their own; and merely from a

gradual fall in the price of labour, without a

correspondent one in the price of provisions;

so that men who may have ventured upon

the marriage state with a fair prospect of main-

taining their families in comfort and happiness, see

them reduced to a pittance which no effort of

theirs can increase? Let it be remembered,

also, that there are thousands with whom vicious

habits of expense are not the cause why they do

not store up their gains; but they are generous

and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kin-

dred and friends; moreover, they have a faith

in Providence that those who have been prompt to

assist others, will not be left destitute, should

they themselves come to need. By acting from

these blended feelings, numbers have rendered

themselves incapable of standing up against a

sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in

common with all who have the misfortune to be

in want, if many theorists had their wish, would

be thrown upon one or other of those three

sharp points of condition before adverted to,

from which the intervention of law has hitherto

saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the

principle contended for makes the gift of life

more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led

to the conclusion that its legitimate operation

is to make men worthier of that gift: in other

words, not to degrade but to exalt human na-

ture. But the subject must not be dismissed

without adverting to the indirect influence of

the same principle upon the moral sentiments

of a people among whom it is embodied in law.

In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim,

deservedly eulogised, that it is better that ten

guilty persons shall escape, than that one inno-

cent man should suffer; so, also, might it be
maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer than one guilty escape: in France there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed; infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history and of works of fiction we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like all other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot be so, if they look into themselves, and consider their relation to God and their fellow creatures. That was a noble advance; a retrograde movement will assuredly be as if ever the principle which has been defended should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But, after all, there may be a little reason to apprehend permanent injury from any enactment that may be tried. On the one side be human nature rising up in her own defense and on the other prudential selfishness, to the same purpose, from a conviction without a compulsory provision for the security of the labouring multitude, that depravity to regulate the price of labour, also indispensable for the reasonable interest of manufacturers, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing section allusion is made to the state of the work congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class are subject, and to establish a perfect harmony between them and their employers it would be well to repeal such laws as pro the formation of joint-stock companies. In these, no doubt, many and great obstacles to progress and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of these they would obviously benefit. But the binding of masters to keep down wages and raise the price of labour would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable. It would encourage economy, instead of enabling a man to draw profit from savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture which he was habitually connected. His capital would then be working for him, whether he was at rest or asleep; he would more readily perceive the necessity of capital for curbing on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, would be slow to promote local disturbances that endanger public tranquillity; he would also be loth to act in that way knowingly; for not to be denied that such societies might grow into large and other evils to which they might be apt to foster would be, however, dangerous in itself, but only might act without being sufficiently constrienced, either by landed proprietors, or by the Church extending itself so as to embrace in its growing and ever-shifting population mechanics and artisans. But if the tenets of such societies would be to make the means by which such poor among us might belong to them, rulers and inhabitants should rejoice in the result, and do duty to the state by upholding and excelling.
Influence of that Church to which it owes, great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, as glory.

as in the temper of the present times, may difficult, but it is become indispensable, large towns in great numbers have sprung and others have increased tenfold, with or no dependence upon the gentry and the d proprietors; and apart from those mitral feudal institutions, which, till of late, acted so powerfully upon the composition e House of Commons. Now it may be said that, in quarters where there is no attachment to the Church, or the landed aris-acy, and a pride in supporting them, these people will dislike both, and be ready, upon incitements as are perpetually recurring, in in attempts to overthrow them. There neutral ground here; from want of due ation to the state of society in large towns manufacturing districts, and ignorance or scard of these obvious truths, innumerable meaning persons became zealous-support of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers which, whether destructive or constructive, would otherwise have been afraid of; and the framers of that bill, averted as they hit be by party resentments and personal pition, could not have gone so far, had not too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful he same truths both of fact and philosophy, but let that pass; and let no opponent of bill be tempted to compliment his own sight by exaggerating the mischiefs and sages that have sprung from it: let not time wasted in profitless regrets; and let those ty distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course may have pursued, have ever had a bond union in the wish to save the limited monhy and those other institutions that have, Ier Providence, rendered for so long a period time this country the happiest and wealthiest which there is any record since the founda- n of civil society.

II. A philosophic mind is best pleased when asking in religion in its spiritual bearing; as a ide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and support amid the instabilities of mortal life: the Church having been forcibly brought political considerations to my notice, while sitting of the labouring classes, I cannot for saying a few words upon that momentous pic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change that department. The clamour would be ented to more respect if they who are the most iger to swell it with their voices were not gen-ally the most ignorant of the real state of the church and the service it renders to the com-unity. Reform is the word employed. Let a speed and consider what sense it is apt to any, and how things are confounded by a lax as of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of some-thing fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that, therefore, we have experienced on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is debased to me- chanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish, is a favourite cry; but, without adverting to other obstacles, matter way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its indiscriminate adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly-peopled districts, espe- cially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be re- quired in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, under- takes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness: while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his training, managed by a superiour will not be liable to relapse in matter way. Prudence, seclusion, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining in- cumbent will be revived, by being in near com-
munion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money that in his new situation he is apt to fall unwares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent, whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgiven, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer and more enlightened view of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world, —that spirit and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England much more is required, both in large towns and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreplaceable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to support the truths of Christianity and to win its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the press his education cannot have brought with these accomplishments; and if the salaries equalising church incomes, which ministers are much bent upon, be realised, there should be little or no secular issue for a clergyman to desire a removal to a spot where he may chance to have been set down; surely not only opportunities obtaining the requisite qualifications was diminished, but the motives for deserting them would be proportionably small. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its commands adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for good, it may happen, that preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stopping the direct treatment of current passings, can furnish infallible rules through the delusions that surround them, who, appealing to the sanctions of the Bible, may place the grounds of its injustice in clear light that dissatisfaction shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and is cleansed from the dishonour of a base prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civil duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important: it is still more essential in training and subduing private passions and contentions. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves by their survey of the dispensations of Providence, has been partial and narrow; but now readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are taught, and reproaches are expressed everywhere, by imputations being cast upon government, and are prolonged or increased by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice, when the individual himself is at fault. If a Christian pastor be_competent to deal with these humours, as they may be with, and by no members of society successfully, both from more frequent and favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by the authority with which he speaks, will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching danger by submission to God's will, and lighten patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing of good at least, is generally acceptable, but we believe can be traced to preconceived notions and specific acts and formal courses of human understanding. A Christian minister thoroughly accomplished would be subduing restraint upon such presumptuous judgment, by impressing the truth that...

*In the unreasoning progress of the world A wiser spirit is at work for us, A better eye than ours.*
tion points to the purity and peace of a
world; but our sphere of duty is upon
and the relations of impure and conflict-
ings to each other must be understood, or
ill be perpetually going wrong, in all but
the preceding, and good orders of inten-
all itself relax through frequent disap-
p. How desirable, then, is it, that a
er of the Gospel should be versed in the
edge of existing facts, and be accustomed
de range of social experience! Nor is it
desirable for the purpose of counterbalance
ed tempering in his own mind that ambi-
with which spiritual power is as apt to be
d as any other species of power which
ovet or possess.
must be obvious that the scope of the argu-
is to discourage an attempt which would
ce into the Church of England an equal-
f income and station, upon the model of
of Scotland. The sounder part of the
ish nation know what good their ancestors
ed from the Church, and feel how deep in
we generation is indebted to it. They re-
and love it, as accommodated in so great
asure to a comparatively poor country, in
ugh the far greater portion of which pre-
uniformity of employment; but the ac-
ledged deficiency of theological learning
ng the clergy of that church is easily ac-
ted for by this very equality. What else
be wanting there? it would be unpleasant
quire, and might prove invincible to deter-
e: one thing, however, is clear; that in all
tries the temporalities of the Church Estab-
ment should bear an analogy to the state of
ity, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence
ugh the whole community. In a country so
and luxurious as England, the character of
ery must unavoidably sink, and their in-
se be everywhere inferior if individuals
the upper ranks, and men of leading tal-
s, are to have no inducements to enter into
body but such as are purely spiritual. And
"tinge of secularity" is no reproach to the
ry, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual
lownments. Parents and guardians, looking
ward to sources of honourable maintenance
their children and wards, often direct their
ights early towards the church, being deter-
 partly by outward circumstances, and
ly by indications of seriousness or intel-
tual fitness. It is natural that a boy or
uth, with such a prospect before him, should
in his attention to those studies, and be led
to those habits of reflection, which will in
degree tend to prepare him for the duties
is hereafter to undertake. As he draws
er to the time when he will be called to
ese duties, he is both led and compelled
tome the Scriptures. He becomes more and
ore sensible of their truth. Devotion grows
him; and what might begin in temporal
iderations, will end (as in a majority of in-
ces we trust it does) in a spiritual-minded-
ess not unworthy of that Gospel, the lessons of
ich he is to teach, and the faith of which he
is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here re-
peated an observation which, from its obvious-
ness and importance, must have been frequently
ed, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy,
and bringing their incomes much nearer to a
level, would not cause them to become less
 worldly-minded: the emoluments, howsoever
duced, would be as eagerly sought for, but
by men from lower classes in society; men who,
by their manners, habits, abilities, and the
 scanty measure of their attainments, would un-
avoidably be less fitted for their station, and
less competent to discharge its duties.
Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat
upon the subject of best providing for the
clergy; notions which have been sincerely en-
tertained by good men, with a view to the im-
provement of that order, and eagerly sought at
and dwelt upon by the designing, for its degra-
dation and disparagement. Some are beguiled
by what they call the voluntary system, not see-
ing (what staves one in the face at the very
of that system) what it is who stands in most need of
religious instruction, and amongst most of the
want, and therefore cannot reasonably be ex-
ected to make any sacrifices in order to supply
it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the de-
praved, take from the means of their gratifica-
tions and pursuits, to support a discipline that
cannot advance without uprooting the trees
that bear the fruit which they devour so greed-
ily? Will they pay the price of that seed whose
harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world?
A voluntary system for the religious exigencies
of a people numerous and circumstances as we
are! No more absurd would it be to expect
that a knot of boys should draw upon the pit-
tance of their pocket-money to build schools, or
out of the abundance of their discretion be able
to select fit masters to teach and keep them in
order! Some, who clearly perceive the hecrorc-
tence and folly of such a scheme for the agri-
cultural part of the people, nevertheless think
it feasible in large towns, where the rich might
subscribe for the religious instruction of the
poor. Alas! they know little of the thick dark-
ness that spreads over the streets and alleys of
our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a
few years since, contained not more than one
church and three or four small proprietary
chapels, while dissecting chapels of every de-
nomination were still more scantily found there;
yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted
at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the
parish church and the chapels of the Estab-
lishment existing there an impediment to the
spread of the Gospel among that mass of peo-
ples? Who shall dare to say so? But if any
one, in the face of the fact which has just been
stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to
the same effect from various other quarters,
should still contend that a voluntary system is
sufficient for the spread and maintenance of
religion, we would ask, what kind of religion?
wherein would it differ, among the many, from
deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establish-
ment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous; but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much overrate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated or too much impeded by legal obstacles; these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finicky taste, not by cutting off this or that from her articles or Creeds, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtlety had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals, acting in their private interests, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. In it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, and where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry.

Moreover, the force of public opinion is日益 increasing, and some may be led to think are not so happy as to be swayed by a high motive; especially they who derive large revenues from lay-propriations in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their suburban habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast areas, which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favouritism or purchased at insignificant prices after church-spoliation; such property, though not conscience-stricken (there is an end for that), may be prompted to make a use for which their tenantry and dependants will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given; an accession of means from the several sources, co-operating with a well-considered change in the distribution of some part of the property at present possessed by the church, a change scrupulously founded on due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends deem that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a man to have treated at length a subject which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may, without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all; nor need an answer be offered for going over ground which has been trodden before so ably and so often, without prejudice, however, to anything of novelty, either in matter or manner, something may be here offered to view which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labour but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my MSS. written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. It has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political trade-unions; but if a single workman—being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave—should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice, and little would I care for loss of credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political phil-
by or public measures, if the sober-minded
sit that, in general views, my affections have
moved, and my imagination exercised, un-
and for the guidance of reason.
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.
Be mine to follow with no timid step
Where knowledge leads me; it shall be my pride
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,
Matter not lightly to be heard by those
Who to the letter of the outward promises
Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit
In speech, and for communion with the world
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then
Most active when they are most eloquent,
And elevated most when most admired.
Man may be found of other mould than these;
Who are their own upholders, to themselves
Encouragement and energy, and will;
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
As native passion dictates. Others, too,
There are, among the walks of homely life,
Still higher, men for contemplation framed;
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy:
Words are but under-agents in their souls;
When they are grasping with their greatest strength
They do not breathe among them; this I speak
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts
For his own service, knoweth, loveth me,
When we are unregarded by the world."

Nature, and the power of human minds;
men as they are men within themselves.
Yet oft high service is performed within,
then all the external man is rude in show;
it like a temple rich with pomp and gold;
it a mere mountain chapel that protects
a simple worshippers from sun and shower!
these, said I, shall be my song; of these,
future years mature me for the task,
il I record the praises, making verse
oral boldly with substantial things — in truth
ad sanctify of passion, speak of these,
that justice may be done, obsequies paid
here it is due. Thus haply shall I teach,
spire, through unadulterated ears
our rapture, tenderness, and hope; my theme
other than the very heart of man,
found among the best of those who live,
o exalted by religious faith,
or uninformed by books, good books, though few,
Nature's presence: thence may I select
sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,
and miserable love that is not pain
heard of, for the glory that redounds
NOTES

1785

Page 1. LINES WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT HAWKSHED.

The great teachers of our time insist that the first movements in the evolutionary processes must be read in the light of all that follow. So it is in the study of the works of a great poet; after becoming familiar with all the stages of his art we return to the first and elemental stage and view it in the light of all that followed. The early poems of Wordsworth have a singular interest when thus considered, although in themselves they may be quite insignificant. We must remember it was at Hawkshead that this shy, awkward Cumberland lad came under influences which were the vital in forming his poetic ideas. In the old Edward VI. School, founded by Archbishop Sandsys of York in 1588, he had revealed to him something of the dignity, beauty, and catholicity of learning. The statutes provided that "there shall be a perpetual free school, to be called the free grammar school of Edwyne Sandsys, for teaching grammar and the principles of the Greek tongue, with other sciences necessary to be taught in the school, freely, without taking any stipend, wages, or other exactions from the scholars resorting to the said school for learning."

While this and the two following Hawkshead School poems are bilowy in feeling and mechanical in form, as are those of Coleridge written at the same time at Christ's Hospital, yet they are full of the spirit which in time will create its own purity and strength of language, sanity of thought and feeling. They are an expression of what came to him consciously in those days, as the early books of "The Prelude" are of what came to him unconsciously.

1787-9

Page 3. AN EVENING WALK.

This poem was begun in his first college vacation, the events of which are revealed in "The Prelude," iv. It was continued on the second vacation spent with his sister and Mary Hutchinson at Penrith, and completed on his return to Cambridge. As given to the press in 1793, it contained many passages from his various poems written at Hawksheda. Its present form is the work of years between 1793 and 1836.

This was the first poem that Wordsworth published, and his own note to it reveals why it was that he defined poetry, his poetry at least, as "emotion recollected in tranquillity." He did not give voice to his feelings at the time of experiencing them, but treasured for future use. In this way he avoided error of Byron, but at the same time he laid himself open to the charge of lacking passion. Here, too, the lover of Wordsworth who wishes to identify places referred to in his works that he must keep in mind Wordsworth's enthusiasm of those poets who go into the presence of nature with pencil and note-book. He says, "Nature does not permit an unveiling made of her charms! He should have at pencil and note-book at home; fixed his feet he walked with a reverent attention that surrounded him, and taken all at heart that he could understand and observe. Afterwards he would have discovered what was under the surface of what had adored and served to him, much was also most wonderful." That which remained, the poet surviving in his mind, would have proved the ideal and essential touch of the scene done so in large part by discarding much as though in itself striking, was not characteristic. In every scene, many of the brilliant details are but accidental."

Topographical notes are necessary in such a poet as Wordsworth, as every hill, vale, tarn and lake, highroad and low, grove or forest in the lake land is intimately associated with his work; but we bring with us an imagination trained by reading of his poetry in order to localize not materialize too scrupulously the scenes."

"From worlds not quickened by the sun,
A portion of the gift is won,
An intermingling of Heaven's poem is spread
On ground which British shepherds tread."

Although these early poems are full of embellishment in form, a study of them in the local to which they refer will reveal what is fundamental in all his works: a fine perception of the varying aspects of Nature as revealed to the eye; an exquisitely quick sensitiveness to the sounds of Nature in her quiet mood and a meditative pathos which carried him to the heart of the scene before him. The vigor of feeling in this poem which is of joy and peace of feeling which is mature. On the publication of "An Evening Walk" Dorothy Wordsworth writes to a friend: "He is not a glazing fault, but I hope you will discover many beauties, which could only have been created by the imagination of a poet."

Mr. E. Legouix thinks that the excess of faults which appear in these early poems account for the excess in the poet's reputation — his theory and practice.

Line 9. WISANDER SLEEPS. These lines
20. woodcocks roamed. In the beginning of the winter, these mountains are fredded by woodcocks. W. W.

49. intake. The word intake is local, signifies a mountain enclosure. W. W.

54. ghyll. Ghyll is also, I believe, a confined to this country; ghyll and dingle have the same meaning. W. W.

68. secret bridge. The reader who has a tour of this country, will recognize, in description, the features which characterize lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

133. 'green rings,' "Vivid rings of:"
—Greenwood's Poems on Shooting.

146. Sweetly fercious. "Dolcemente..."
—Tasso.

This description of the cock, I remembered it was one of the same animal in L'Agriculture des Georgiques François, of M. Bossuet.

101. Gives one bright glance, etc. From Byron. W. W.

207. Winding in ordered pomp. See a vision of an appearance of this kind in 's Survey of the Lakes, accompanied by hero of its veracity, that may amuse the reader.

1789


14. 'Who muttering here is: later ditty."

70. 'Ode on the Death of Thomson,' last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his lifetime. This Ode is alluded to in the next Stanza. W. W.

1791-2

9. Descriptive Sketches. Wordsworth's third college summer holidays, were spent with a fellow-student, Robert Southey, in traveling on foot through France and Switzerland. The mighty impulse of the French Revolution and the glories of Alpine scenery other roused the poet in his nature. Resigning to Cambridge, he took his degree in May, 1791, after which he spent some time in Paris with his sister at Formento Rectory, then went to London, and early in 1791 he again visited Paris. He was at work now upon "Sketches," as Swiss travels with Jones, and in 1793, when his sister at Formento, he published them, with "An Evening Walk." The deleted history of these years is given in "The Prelude," vi.-x. Coloride, during his last college year, before he met Wordsworth, chanced in these "Sketches" and at once pronounced a remarkable critical judgment, "Seldom, if ever, was the emergence of a great and original poetic genius above the literary horizon more doubtfully announced."

32. Memnon's lyre. The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays. W. W.

Line 70. The Cross. Alluding to the crosses seen on the tops of the spiny rocks of the Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible. W. W.

Line 72. streams of Life and Death. Names of rivers at the Chartreuse. W. W.

Line 75. Vallombre. Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse. W. W.

Line 157, 'her waters gleam.' The river along whose banks you descend in crossing the Alps by the Simplon Pass. W. W.

Line 200. cells. The Catholic religion prevails here; these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like the Roman tombs, along the roadside.

Line 202. death-cross. Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow, and other accidents, are very common along this dreadful road. W. W.

Line 214. wood-cottages. The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all built of wood.

Line 307. Through vacant worlds, etc. For most of the images in the next sixteen verses, I am indebted to M. Raymond's interesting observations annexed to his translation of Coxe's Tour in Switzerland. W. W.

Line 339. pensive Underwalden's pastoral heights. The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps; this, if true, may proceed from their being more secluded.

Line 340. chalets, etc. This picture is from the middle region of the Alps. Chalets are summer huts for the Swiss herdsmen. W. W.

Line 356. sugh. Sugh, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

Line 452. few in arms, etc. Alluding to several battles which the Swiss in very small numbers have gained over their oppressors, the house of Austria; and in particular to one fought at Naefels, near Glarus, where three hundred and fifty men are said to have defeated an army of between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the valley are to be found eleven stones, with this inscription, 1888, the year the battle was fought, marking out, as I was told upon the spot, the several places where the Austrians, attempting to make a stand, were repulsed anew.

Line 472. Pike's of darkness. As Schreckhorn, the pike of terror; Wetter-Horn, the pike of storms, etc., etc. W. W.

Line 537. Bos's young head, etc. The well-known effect of the famous air called in France "Rans des Vaches," upon the Swiss troops. W. W.

Line 546. Einsiedlen's wretched face. This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily affections. W. W.
Line 560. The fountains. Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain. W. W.

Line 619. Sour. An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire. W. W.

Line 636. majestic course, etc. The duties upon many parts of the French rivers were so exorbitant that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land. W. W.

1791-4

Page 19. GUILT AND SORROW.

After the publication of the two little quartos, "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches," 1793, Wordsworth went to the Isle of Wight with his friend, William Calvert of Windybrow, Keswick. They drove through the New Forest to Salisbury, but their carriage breaking down, Calvert went on horseback while Wordsworth walked through South Wales via Bristol, and visited his friend Jones. He spent several days wandering on Salisbury Plain, visiting the valley of the Wye and Goodrich Castle, which gave him material for two other poems: "We are Seven" and "Tintern Abbey."

"Stanzas xxii.--xxiv. and xxxviii.--xl. were published in 1798 under title of 'Female Vagrant.'" — E. DOWDEN.

Line 81. And, hovering round it often did a raven fly. From a short MS. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young. W. W.

1795

Page 31. LINES LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE.

After the experiences sketched in the previous poem, Wordsworth returned to Keswick and lived with the Speddings for a time, then joined Dorothy at Mill Horse, Halifax. He was in suspense as to what his future would be. His relatives were getting anxious for him to do some definite work. Dorothy and he, in 1794, traveled from Halifax to Keswick, Cockermouth, and Whitehaven, returning to the farm at Windybrow, loaned him by William Calvert. Dorothy writes of these days at the "farm:" "Our breakfast and our supper are of milk and potatoes, and we drink no tea."

Here she writes of the reception of his first poems, "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches:" "As I had done nothing by which to distinguish myself at the University, I thought these little things might show that I could do something. They have been treated with unmerited contempt by some of the periodicals, and others have spoken in higher terms of them than they deserve." During this year he changed his ideas in regard to the French Revolution, as may be seen in "The Prelude," xi. He projected a monthly magazine, but no publisher could be found. In the meantime Calvert's brother, Raisley, became ill and Wordsworth attended him until his death, when it was found that in his will he had left Wordsworth £900. This was sufficient to provide the shade in which he might grow ripe, and the leisure in which to grow wise. The sonnet to the memory of Raisley Calvert, together with the allusion to his "The Prelude," xiv., reveals the significance of this noble act. It was now possible for Wordsworth to live with his sister, whose arduous duty and marvelous insight, born of love, became such a force in his life. They settled Racedown in Dorsetshire.

The Old farmhouse on the slope of Blackdown, beautiful for prospect of hill, forest, sun and sky, remains essentially as in Wordsworth's day, and well repays one for a few days wandering. Dorothy often spoke of it later as "the place dearest to my recollection of my boyhood," and as "the first home I had." It is not surprising, therefore, that the first poem written here, through emotion recollected in solitude, should reveal elements of the genius and passion, as well as the wisdom and truth which were to constitute Wordsworth's essential gift to English poetry. This poem connects the new act in his life with the earlier happy time at Hawkhurst.

Line 1. The yew-tree was on the eastern side of the lake, about ten minutes' walk from the village.

Line 12. The individual spoken of was educated at the university, and was a man of talent and learning. W. W.

1795-6

Page 33. THE BORDERERS.

The years 1796-7 are eventful in the history of English literature. By a remarkable coincidence, Coleridge, who had but recently arrived, was giving to the world a slender volume of poems, and was preparing to settle at Nether Stowey. On hearing that the author of "Descriptive Sketches" was not far away, he took the first opportunity of visiting him. Of the visit Dorothy writes: "The first thing that was read on that occasion was 'The Raised Cottage' (now the first book of "The Excursion"), with which Coleridge was so much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two stanzas and a half of his tragedy 'Ossorio.' The next morning William read his tragedy 'The Borderers.'

"The Borderers' was born out of the Repeal of Terror, and Oswald, like the actors in the terrible tragedy, kills an innocent man in the belief that he is punishing a guilty one." — E. LEGOUX.

Wordsworth is here revealed in the depths of moral despondency, and in "The Raised Cottage" as restored to health.

"This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in
age, was composed in 1795-96. It lay from that time till within the last two or months unregarded among my papers, it being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions in my mind which made me unwilling to try the MS. I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it was revised with some care; but, as it was at written, and is now published, without any reference to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the text of the story, or the composition of characters; above all, in respect to the leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no sment to make any change. The study of nature suggests this awful truth; as in the trials to which life subjects us, all crime are apt to start from their very ible qualities, so are there no limits to the mingling of the heart and the perversion of understanding to which they may carry slaves. During my long residence in America, while the Revolution was rapidly arling to its extreme of wickedness, I had inopportunities of being an eye-witness to its process, and it was while that knowl was fresh upon my memory that the edly of 'The Borderer' was composed." V.

1797

GE 70. THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.
the edition of 1800 the following was added to the poem:—
"O Cast! return, to receive thee once more a house of thy Father will open its door, I then once again, in thy plain russet gown, irst hear the thrilling song from a tree of its own."

1798

GE 71. WE ARE SEVEN.
new era in the history of English literature—began with this first meeting of Wordsworth and Coleridge at Racedown, for then it that the epoch-making volume, the Lyri-Ballads, had its origin. William and Dorothy returned this visit soon, and, concluding that thirty miles was too far for daily walks, decided to leave Racedown and settle at Alfoxden. Alfoxden was a large mansion, stiltly located on a slope of the Quantock hills, in sight of Bristol Channel. Woods of oaks and large hollies, with abundant fern, foxglove, stetch in every direction, broken by pleasant downs and valleys such which the brooks run singing to the Dorothy wrote: "The deer dwell here, the sheep, so that we have a lively pretext; walks extend for miles over the hillside. This was the poet's spring-time of poetry and imaginative insight. The visitor to-day will find the country but little changed in what it was when she described it. The student of these poets should not fail to visit the Quantocks with their wealth of romantic loveliness which called forth such outbursts of poetical enthusiasm in that annus mirabilis of the two poets.

At each of three critical periods in the world's history mankind has learned its wisest lessons by gazing into the face of the child. In the early days of Christianity the spirit by which the new revelation was to be grasped was that of the child; at the breaking up of the Middle Ages modern life again breathed its highest conceptions of art in the person of a child; and in our own day, through the influence of this little poem, and others of like nature, Wordsworth flashed the great truths anew and asked "What intimations of life eternal are here?"

Page 73. ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS.
Much has been made of Wordsworth's limitations. The most devoted Wordsworthians admit his lack of dramatic power, his weakness in creation of character, and in evolution of narrative—and that he lacked humor; yet they insist that these very limitations must be considered in estimating his essential greatness.

The moral reflections with which the poem concludes are quite unlike the homiletics of the didactic school.

Page 81. LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.
In the unambitious loveliness of this little poem and that which follows is revealed that conception of Nature—the most original of all those which Wordsworth added to English poetry—as having its own peculiar life, an infinite activity of giving and receiving love and joy in itself, but also in the association of man. This life is none other than the Spirit of God vertically active in all parts, as well as in the individual whole which we call Nature. This idea reaches sublime heights in all his characteristic work, and becomes a protest against any mechanical theory of the Universe.

LINES 21-24. "This is the only immediate complaint breathed by Wordsworth's poetry, and it must be admitted that even here sorrow for mankind is outweighed by joy in nature." — E. Legouis.

This dell remains essentially as in the poet's time, and will repay a visit. It is now known as Wordsworth's Glen.

Page 83. EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.
In this and the poem which follows we have Wordsworth's protest against a mechanical conception of education. He knows that it is only in love and humility, "in a wise passiveness," that our essential selves, "What Is," meet and responds to the essential life in nature and art. The eye sees and the ear hears the life of things, the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge, only when man is potentially soul. When the physical and the intellectual are wedded to the spiritual in love and holy passion, the poetic
Page 96. *THE OLD CUMBRIAN READER.*

Notes

The early months of 1792 were spent in preparing for the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads,* when the lease of Alfoxden expired. Wordsworth did not ask for a renewal of the lease, as he was planning a visit to Germany in order to study the language. It is evident from Coleridge's letters at this time that after the advent of the Revolutionist, Thelwall, some suspicion grew up in regard to the character of the three which reflected upon Thomas Poole, the patron both of Coleridge and Wordsworth. It is certain that a government spy was sent to watch their movements. In June the Wordsworths left Alfoxden, and after spending a week with Coleridge, visiting Cotle at Bristol to arrange details of bringing out the *Lyrical Ballads,* they took the ramble on the Wye out of which grew this poem, which more than any yet written by him reveals the mastery of all the elements, a thing, it is thought, will make a work of art.

Of these, said Wordsworth, will I record the praise.

"That justice may be done, innocence put
Where it is due."

For this work his early associations of inspiration of the great *Peasant Poet* had predisposed him.

In order to see what a giant stride poets took in advance of the age, we may compare them with the poems which prest. Of man as found in the abodes of versification, preceding poetry had been well and Wordsworth was too broad to recognize that from hence had proceeded a work that was pure and undrowth, yet he was not to have rich veins of poetic feeling laid in the lives of homely men and women. The great Robertson says, "a real holy work," and for it both the rich and poor praise him.

Lines 1-98. Plain imagination and unpretentious production does not produce a more distinct poet than one who, to the eye of the economist, led all usefulness.

"Wordsworth's is the poetry of intellect and feeling—of humanity in the abstracted and yet what is more human than T. Cumbergen Beggars?"—Dr. John Brown.

Lines 67-87. See note on "Lines Left a Seat in a Yew Tree."

Page 96. *ANIMAL TRANQUILITY AND DECAY.*

"In the edition of — this Poem was

"Old Man travelling: annual tranquility: decay." — Knight.

Page 96. *PETER BELL.*

One of the most comprehensive studies of a poem, so often the subject of critical essay is that of Mr. Walter Legge, in his "The Wordsworth *Lyrical Ballads.*" Mr. Basil Bopoly calls "Peter Bell*" Wordsworth's "Ancient Mariner."

Part First. Lines 1-10. Peter, in the dialect of the North, a numerous sort of character thus designated. W W W

Those who have never seen "Peter Bell," with a contemporary spirit, may be surprised the following in Mr. Legge's "Wordsworth," p. 232.

"In the very warmest poet of the time Mr. Coleridge's genius was unspoken and even down to the commencement that the original Wordsworthian..."

Page 98. *THE OLD CUMBRIAN READER.*

The verse of a Poet's Mind" as Wordsworth has revealed it in him into the poet of humanity. Him and women, the village dames, the dalemen, and the humble shepherds—"
It must have cost great labour, an extraordinary poem both as a whole retail.'  

Interesting to note that the twofold of the Quantoocks is to be found in the of Coleridge and Wordsworth. To Coleridge look for the poetical presentation of the romance of the Quantoocks, the loveliness and comb, the glorious prospects of wading woods and the loud sounding sea; Wordsworth for a corresponding rendering of the life of the inhabitants of the district, s, toilers in the field and shepherds in s.

1799


aworth, Dorothy, and Coleridge left Eng- the 16th of September, 1798, before the had time to level their guns on the A of the Lyrical Ballads. On arriving in they received this cheerful news from coleridge: "The Lyrical Ballads are not at all by any." Coleridge soon left the worths to study the German language, re, and philosophy at Ratzburg and Göt- and they settled down for the winter in the imperial town of Goslar, at the foot of the Hartz Mountains. Here in the coldest of the century, — with little of that har- without which had evolved the Lyrical Is, — recollections of Hawkshead and y again aroused the harmony within. poem will be found in the sixth book of Prelude." It was first published in the 2ed edition, 1845. It refers to Word- s first visit to Switzerland in 1790.

e 110. Influence of Natural Ob- e's picture of school life at Hawkshead was s incorporated in the first book of Prelude.

111. There was a Boy.  
it published in the second edition of al Ballads, 1800.  
a passage is found in the fifth book of Prelude." Wordsworth sent these lines to rige, who wrote from Ratzburg of them: —  
uncertain heaven received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake,  
uld have recognized anywhere; and had these lines running wild in the deserts of is, I should have instantly screamed out, "aworth!"

111. Nutting.  
is not difficult for the visitor at Hawks- to locate the scene of this holiday sport.

112. Strange Fits of Passion Have  

is fortunate for us that Wordsworth was absorbed in German philosophy, else we r would have possessed these exquisite poems on Lucy, — pearls gathered upon a golden thread. Five short poems are all we have of her whom we know not, save as she is here en- shrined with an " artlessness which only art can know."

To analyze such poems as these is almost a sin; as well might one attempt to ascertain by the microscope the source of beauty in the flower.

They are genuine love-poems, and yet how far removed from that species of love-poetry which encourages vulgar curiosity, or the parade of the inmost sanctuary of the heart. All that is given us is that Lucy once lived, is now no more. Those who are able to comprehend these poems will be least disposed to discuss them.

Many have wondered why one who could write such love-poems as these wrote so few. Aubrey de Vere says: "This question was once put to the Poet by myself; and a part of the reply was this, — Had I been a writer of love-poetry it would have been natural to me to write it with a degree of warmth which could hardly have been approved by my principles." In his stanzas "The Poet and the Caged Turtle Dove" we find this additional answer, —

"Love, blessed love, is everywhere  
The spirit of my song."

It is significant that these are almost the only poems as to which the poet was silent in his autobiographical notes.

Page 113. A Poet's Epitaph.  
Lines 37-56. In this portrait of Words- worth's ideal poet we find clearly marked those characteristics which he himself possessed.

Page 114. Address to the Scholars of the Village School of —

The subject of this poem, and the three which follow it, was the master of Hawkshead School, Rev. William Taylor, the third of the masters who taught Wordsworth.

Lines 3, 4. These lines were no doubt suggested by the fact that just before his death the master sent for the boys of the upper class, among them Wordsworth, and gave them his blessing. He was buried in Cartmel Church- yard. See "The Prelude," x. 534.

Page 115. Matthew.  
In editions of the poet's works 1800-1820, the title of this poem was, "Lines written on a Tablet in a School." Not until after 1836 was it called "Matthew." The tablet still may be seen in the old school, which has now been adorned with quotations from the poet's works.

1800

Page 123. "The Season Was It."  
On Feb. 10, 1799, Wordsworth and his sis- ter set their faces toward England, and the poet voiced their feelings at the joyous event in that vernal hymn which now stands as the
The first forty lines of "The Prelude." At this time Wordsworth had in mind a poem in three parts and an introduction. The introduction was to deal with events in the development of his own life, while the main work, in three parts, was to be a philosophical discussion of the great principles pertaining to man, Nature, and human life. This poem was to be called "The Recluse." Only the introduction, "The Prelude," the second part, "The Excursion," and the first book of the first part were completed. "The Excursion" was the only part published during his life. "The Prelude" was published in 1850, and the first part of "The Recluse" not until 1808. This selection and the one following from "The Recluse" were first published by the bishop of Lincoln in his Memoirs of the poet, 1851. To relate to the settlement at Grasmere, and I place them here on the supposition that they were written not far from 1800.

On returning to England Wordsworth and his sister visited their relatives, the Hutchisons, at Sockburn-on-Tees, County Durham; there they remained until autumn. In September Wordsworth, his brother John, and Coleridge made an excursion through the Lake District. They were greatly pleased with the vale of Grasmere and the cottage at Town-End which bore the sign of The Dove and Olive Bough. Wordsworth leased the cottage and on the 19th of December, 1799, they set out for their new home. After a journey of three days over snow and ice, turning aside to see the frozen waterfalls and watch the changing aspect of cloud and sunshine, they reached Dove Cottage on the 21st. During the years of residence here, by dint of "plain living and high thinking," was produced that poetry which placed Wordsworth among the Immortals. Dove Cottage is perhaps more often thought of in connection with the poet than is Rydal, the home of his later years.

The situation is beautiful for prospect, being on the right of the road over White Moss Common as you approach Grasmere from Ambleside. The garden, so often alluded to in his poetry, slopes upward to the wooded heights, and has not suffered much alteration since 1800. Here still bloom the primroses and daffodils. From the terrace approached by stone steps cut by Wordsworth himself, one gets a beautiful view across the lake to Silver Howe, Red Bank, and Loughrigg, on the west and south: while to the east and north the eye ranges from Fairfield, Helvellyn, and Dunmail Raise, to Helm Crag and Easedale. The view from the front of the house has become obstructed by cottages and a pretentious modern hotel. The house and garden are now the property of trustees, and will forever remain memorials of the great poet. At Dove Cottage was begun Dorothy's Grasmere Journal, which, besides revealing the manner of plain living, gives us a clear insight into her own rare poetic nature, and discloses the day and hour, with attendant incidents, of the birth of most of the poems her brother wrote here.

Page 124. The Prelude.

The history of "The Prelude" is interesting in many ways, as it is, in the nature of its revelations, the most significant poem he ever wrote. It was begun on Feb. 10, 1799, as he turned from England after an absence of six months in Germany. His Republican ardor had cooled, and he had come to know, in very real sense, the spirit of his native land. On settling at Grasmere "The Prelude" became his serious work until 1805, when it was completed. It was mainly composed on the race walk at Under Lancerigg, and was written by his faithful amanuenses, his sister Dorothy and Mrs. Wordsworth. It was written primarily for himself, as a test of his own powers at a time when he was dissatisfied as to his ability to serve the muse on any more arduous subjects. When it was completed he found the result so far short of his expectation that he was not taken to publish it. The fact that it pleased Coleridge, "the brother of my soul," made large amendments for his own disappointment, and he occasionally revised it until 1839. Late as 1839 Miss Fenwick alludes to Wordsworth's revision of "The Prelude." At the time Coleridge once said: "Wordsworth ought to abandon the contemplative position. The proper title is spectaculard extra." The work of Wordsworth's poetic nature, as seen in "The Prelude," affords us an introduction to all his other work, but also to modern poetry in general. It reveals a source of that genius and passion, wisdom and truth, which characterizes his great work as poet and philosopher. As it deals with the period of his life before 1800, it should be here as an introduction to the Grasmere poet. The student is advised to read with "The Prelude," La Jeunesse de Wordsworth by a distinguished French scholar and critic M. Fusteguin. This singularly interesting study is one of the most illuminating contributions to Wordsworthian criticism. It has recently been translated into English.

Book First. Lines 1-40. In the spring 1799 the Wordsworths, after a cold dark winter at Goslar, returned to England; and left the city and felt the breeze in the

1799-1805
Wordsworth poured forth the gladome
with which "The Prelude" opens. This
was thirtieth year. "The Prelude" was
55 print of "The Prelude," 1830, Sara
gave wrote: "It is a great pride and
and it is addressed to
her. They will ever be associated in
of men in time to come. I think
was never so close a union between two
minent minds in any age.
62. place. At Stockburn-on-Tees,
Durham, where, on returning to Eng-
they visited their kindred, the Hatch-

64. cottage. Dove Cottage.
55 rusted. The sense of hearing was
kably acute in Wordsworth, and its
age are prominent in his poetry.
106. journey. Wordsworth and his sis-
ter Stockburn on the 19th of December,
and reached their cottage on the 21st.
ese 108-120. With only a hundred pounds
they were turning their backs upon the
, with dalesmen for their neighbors and
making for their business. Here was pro-
l the most of that poetry which has made
worth immortal.
68-69. Mithridates of Pontus, who
into Armenia.
191. Sertorius. A Roman general who
proscribed by Sulla, fled into Spain and
se to Mauritania.
192. Fortunate Isles. Supposed to be
Cairnies.
292. heroes. They claimed to have de-
d from a band of Christians who fled from
when it was conquered by the Moslems.
206. Frenchman. Dominique de Gour-

212. Gustavus I. of Sweden.
in 214, 215. name of Wallace, etc.
At Wallace's name what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood." —Brass.
lines 270-275. Wordsworth was born at
kermouth in the north country of England
sight of the Scottish hills. The town
situated at the junction of two rivers, the
ker and the Derwent.
293. towers. Cockermouth Castle,
standing on this very hillside not far from the
or-house in which Wordsworth was born,
as built by the first lord of Allerdale in the
of William I. as a border defense. It is
one of the finest castles ruins in England. See
et. "Spirit of Cockermouth Castle."
296. terrace walk. At the garden, in
rear of the manor-house, is the terrace
on which the poet had his childhood play.
house and its surroundings are unaltered
the poet's father lived there.
298-300. At this early age he took
light in his own thoughts and his own com-
ny, and was touched with "those visions of
the hills" which produced in him the feeling
of reverence and awe in the presence of Nature.
133. Vale. At Hawkshead, a small
market-town in the vale of Eathwaite, the
most picturesque district of Lancashire. This
old town presents us more of interest as con-
ected with Wordsworth than Grasmere even,
as it has suffered less from modern "improve-
ments," and for this reason is less frequented
by the hasty tourist who allows only a few
days in which to see the Lakes. There is
no more delightful spot in the district for
recreational enjoyment; whether we wander by
the lake, or loiter on the fellside, whether we
ascend the summit of Wetherlam where the
raven's nest, or rest in the vale where "wood-
cocks run."
307. birth-days. Wordsworth, at the
age of nine, entered the Hawkshead school.
311. heights. The hills leading up to
the moor between Hawkshead and Coniston.
326. Vale. Yewdale. A beautiful
pastoral vale near Hawkshead.
335. crag. Ravens' Crag in Yewdale.
339. cove. By the side of Eathwaite
Lake. One going from Hawkshead by the east
shore of the lake can recognize this spot.
370. craggy ridge. The mountain
Ironkeld.
378. huge peak. Either Nab Scar or
Pike o' Stickle.
400-410. This educational power of
Nature never ceased; day and night, summer
and winter, its silent influence stole into his soul.
425-463. Coleridge cites these lines in
proof of his fourth characteristic excellency of
Wordsworth's work.
490. brooks. Among the hills of Yew-
dale.
499. cottages. Wordsworth lived for
nine years with one Anne Tyson for whose
simple character he had a profound regard.
The house still remains unaltered. The door
is interesting as having upon it the "latch"
mentioned in book second.
543. The dalesmen tell us that the sound of the ice
breaking up in this valley is
just as here described.
586. In all his sports there was nothing to
distinguish him from other boys, except that
in the midst of the scramble for the raven's
nest or the run of "hare and hounds," the
invisible, quiet Life of the world spoke to him
rememberable things.
BOOK SECOND. Lines 5-10. Never did boy
spend a healthier, purer, or happier
-time. His love for Nature was no different
from that of other boys. It was a time full of
giddy bliss and joy of being, yet he was gaining
"Truths that wake to perish never."

19-32. In after life, when sorrow and
pain come upon us, it will help us rise above
them if we recollect the joy and force of youth.
The possibility of turning the lamentable waste
of excessive sorrow into a source of strength is a
central idea in Wordsworth's philosophy.
NOTES

The first step in Wordsworth's the influences of Nature were received, was now closing, and when the influences were commonly, the prop of his early impressions with sports, and when he turned then, still the impression remained. He has realized all that he had been "inescapably."


emience. One of the heights
west of Hawkshead.

Nature now began to put on the appearance of personality, with whom he could commune. It is a wonderful picture of a youthful life in communion with the King of the world.

He was now in his seventeenth year. The history of his boyhood is completed in the adoration and love of God. Looking back upon these years he recognizes that the faithful temperate, and quiet character of his life has been due to the early association with the beautiful and the sublime things in the outward world. This is the philosophy of the great "Ode."

Coleridge was a charity boy at Christ's Hospital, London. This old school was founded on the site of Grey Friars Monastery, by Edward VI. In 1620 it was moved to Horsham, Sussex.

Line 403. Coleridge had gone to the Mediterranean in search of health.

BOOK THIRD. Lines 1-6. Through the kindness of two uncles, the education of Wordsworth was prolonged beyond his school life at Wordsworth, in October, 1787, entered at John's College, Cambridge. His classmate, the hands of Nature was to cease for a time. It was a great change from the retirement of the Grammar School at Hawkshead to College Chapel, with its lofty pinnacles, fine roof of stone, and huge windows of stained glass, is the special boast of Cambridge.

Lines 13, 14. Many a country boy has had similar experience as he entered a college for the first time.

Line 15. The ruins of a camp or fort used to defend the Fen-land (Cambridgeshire) against William I.

Line 16. Named from the college which connects with those on the other side of the

Line 17. The Hoop Inn still exists.

Line 23. The newcomer at Cambridge is dined into his rooms by a gown, or collars vast, who attends upon a number of students he takes the former tenant's furniture at a valuation by the college upholsterer.

Line 32. The gowns of the various colleges are different from each other, and also those worn by the officers.

Line 43. "These wine parties are the common entertainments, being the cheapest and most convenient." — BRISTOL, FINE YEN in an English University.

Lines 47, 48. Although Wordsworth's characteristics are not pointed out to us by the officials, we feel that it is one of two answering to this description.

Line 61. All of the details here are correct. The statue of Newton is full-size. In his right hand he holds a roll which rests upon the finger of the left hand; his face is raised as if looking off into the upper sphere. Miss Wick says that Wordsworth, on visiting Cambridge in 1839, found that the occupant of an old room had his bed in an alcove, but he threw it out to the window to show them how it was as this passage reveals.

Lines 64-75. "The little interests of life were not great enough for one accustomed to the solemn and awful interests of Nature." — REV. S. BROOKE.

Lines 90-143. He was living a double life of Cambridge: one with the students; the other with himself.

Lines 144-154. Sometimes he betrayed an inner life, but as at Hawkshead he was a presence little different from the others — Wordsworth made Nature a new thing to him by adding what the true artist must ever add — "the pleasant, the pleasant, the pleasant life on sea or land."

Line 170. The philosophical theory of Witt...
is rounded upon the identity of our child-
tincts and our enlightened understanding. 
"Arnold is the type of English 
; Wordsworth is the type of English 
"— F. W. ROBERTSON.

Lines 258-269. On a nature susceptible as his 
a residence in that ancient seat of learning 
not but tell powerfully; if he had learned 
more than what silently stole into him, the 
would not have been misspent.

Line 275. Mill. Remains of this are to be seen 
three miles from Cambridge.

Lines 283-300. Of this exploit Sir Francis 
e, in his Oxford lectures, remarks: "A 
ny clerical friend of mine, one of the best 
critics I know, and also one of the 
best judges of port wine, always shakes his 
about this, and says: Wordsworth's ins-
ions were good, no doubt, but I greatly fear 
this standard of intoxication was miserably

Line 312. Surplice. On Saturday evenings, 
lays, and Saints' days the students wear 
laces instead of gowns.

Line 322. His genius grew too deep and 
ng to grow fast.

He read the face of Nature; he read Chau-
Spenser, and Milton; he amused himself 
rested, and since he was Wordsworth he 
did not have done better." — REV. S. 
JOKE.

Wordsworth's sister Dorothy, in a letter 
ten in 1791, says: "William reads Italian, 
ish, French, Greek, Latin, and English.

Line 491. He lost the shadow, but kept the 
stance of education.

Lines 580, 581. In this miniature world he 
developed in him the human element.

BOOK FOURTH. Lines 1-10. On the 
ding from Kendal to Windermere. The de-
ption is exceedingly accurate.

Line 13. The ferry, called "Nab," is below 
ness.

Line 18. Hill. Leading from the ferry to 
rey.

Line 21. Hawkshead Church. An old Nor-
structure built in 1160.

Line 22. The position of the church on the 
above the village is such that it is a con-
cuous object from the Sawrey Hill. In 
ming through this region "The Prelude" is 
a best of guides.

Lines 28-39. Ann Tyson, with whom the 
et had spent nine years.

Lines 47, 48. There is no trace and no tradit-
 of the "stone table" and "dark pine" at 
akshead.

Line 51. The famous brook presents some 
ficulties to the relic hunter. Crossing the 
eading to the cottage we find it nearly 
covered with large, slate flags, giving the name 
ng streets to one of the alleys of Hawks-

Line 76. His academical attire.

Line 82. Cottage faces southwest, and in 
e of the two upper rooms the poet must have 
pt.

Line 89. No remains of the ash can be found.

Lines 191, 192. The result of his university 
ife.

Lines 280, 281. "We must often reach the 
her higher by going back a little, and Wordsworth's 
boundless chase of trivial pleasures" was a 
necessary parenthesis in his education." — REV. 
S. BROOK.

Line 310. At a farmhouse near Hawks-
head.

Line 323. At this baptismal hour his path 
must have been from some of the heights 
of Hawkshead.

Line 380. The brook is Sawrey beck, on the 
road from Windermere to Hawkshead, and the 
ong ascent is the second from the ferry.

Line 387. The narrative with which he closes 
the book is a proof that his interest was now 
turning toward man.

BOOK FIFTH. Lines 18-28. Thou also, man! 
so. We seem likely to find reason for his 
deliberately sacrificing this great poem during 
these years when he published it; it would 
have meant so much to him.

Line 60. I read while at school all Field-
's works, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, Gulliver's 
travels, and the Tale of the Tub. W. W.

Lines 88-92. All that is of lasting value in 
the intellectual achievement of the poet, accord-
ing to this dream, are the books of poetry and 
mathematical science. Cf. Preface, 1800, "If 
the time should ever come when what is now 
called science, thus familiarised to man, shall be 
ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and 
blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid 
the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being 
thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of 
the household of man."

Line 162. See Coleridge's sixth character-
istic of Wordsworth.

Line 198. Wordsworth believed in the motto 
non multa sed multum as applied to reading, and 
Emerson is perhaps, next to Wordsworth, the 
best exponent of the results of such a course.

Lines 230-241. A high tribute to his early 
teachers. Before going to Hawkshead Words-
worth had been taught by his mother, the Rev. 
Mr. Gillbanks of Cockermouth, and Mrs. Anne 
Birkett of Penrith; while his father had 
required him to learn portions of the great 
English poets. At Hawkshead he wrote Eng-
lish and Latin verse, studied mathematics and 
classics, but best of all had freedom to read 
what books he liked. This was equally true of 
Coleridge at Ottery and Christ's Hospital.

Line 257. Mrs. Wordsworth died when the 
poet was in his eight year.

Lines 264-293. Wordsworth, fortunate as he 
was in his birthplace, was no less fortunate in 
having a mother worthy of such a tribute as he 
346-359, and Tennyson's "Princess," 292-312, 
for similar tributes to a mother's influence.

Lines 298-340. He was among the first to 
protest against educational hot-beds.

Lines 347-388. Wordsworth here breaks with 
Rousseau, who taught that the child must be
withdrawn from the active world by a network of precautions born of mistrust, and asserts the guiding power of Nature.

Lines 383, 384. The frequent description of such scenes as this shows us how sensitive was the poet's ear. He recalls not only the general aspect of the place, but the sounds return as well.

Line 391. Esthwaite.
Line 392. churchyard. The description here is accurate.

Line 393. school. Hawkshead Free Grammar School, founded by Archbishop Sandys in 1585, was a famous classical school of the North of England; the building is changed but little since the poet's time. It rivals in interest and quaintness the Stratford Grammar School, and, like the latter, is still used. There is in it a library presented by the scholars, and an interesting old oak chest containing the original charter of the school. On the wall is a tablet containing the names of the masters. The oak benches are somewhat "insolp'd upon," and one of them contains the name,—William Wordsworth. This the Wordsworth Society has had covered with glass to preserve it from relic-hunters. Over the outside door is the old sun-dial.

Line 397. grave. The grave of the boy cannot be identified.

Lines 421-425. The late Dr. Hudson has the following wise comment upon education: "Assuredly the need now most urgently pressing upon us, is to have vastly more of growth, and vastly less of manufacture, in our education; or, in other words, that the school be altogether more a garden, and altogether less a mill."—Essays.

Lines 491-495. Worldly advancement and preferment neither are, nor ought to be, the main end of instruction, either in schools or elsewhere. W.W.

Lines 507-511. Our childhood sits, etc. In these lines we have the principle of the "Ode on Immortality."

Lines 522-535. The picture here presented of the young imagination feeding upon the romantic and the legendary, is one which may well cause us to tremble, when we think how little present methods of education are doing to feed the taste in the young.

Line 561. dear friend. Unknown.
Line 563. lake. Esthwaite.

Line 570. Passages from Pope and Goldsmith. "The first verse I wrote were a task imposed by my master. I was called upon to write verses upon the completion of the second centenary of the school (1785). These were much admired — far more than they deserved, for they were but a tame imitation of Pope's versification and a little in his style."—W.W.

Lines 585-605. who in his youth, etc. Wordsworth everywhere teaches that the joy of life must come from those childlike emotions which, if cherished, will become the most fruitful sources of ennobling the character.

BOOK SIXTH. It will be well for us to re-

view the first two acts in the poet's life that we may the better understand the, into which the following books conduct us.

We have seen how his love of Nature begotten, and how it was nurtured by a new element of Humanity is introduced by University surroundings. We have been him in those sacred moments, when — in the gray light of the gloaming, and as the crimson flood of dawn — he felt the altar-flame of his devotion was kindled in him; and thenceforth he was "a dedicated servant in the service of Nature. From these experiences I have learned something of the circumstances under which true poetry is born in all the souls, and we are now ready to follow his return to the University, and on his visit to the continent.

Line 6. Grants and Cam are names in same stream.

Line 23. many books, etc. Being inst of his class in Mathematics, he spent mostly with the Classics.

Line 28. disobedience. Considering the circumstances under which he was sent to Cambridge, it would not be unlikely that he was satisfied with his course.

Lines 45-56. Many of Wordsworth's poems were composed before this time (1804), but he was still at work on "The Lute."

Line 76. A single tree. In 1803, Davie visiting Cambridge, wrote: "I sought my favourite ash-tree which my brother spoke in his poem."

Lines 99, 100. This shows that the rest of the poem was not very "vague" after all.

Lines 110, 111. Alluding to the composing English verse after the model of the Classics.

Line 117. Though advanced. "Before going Cambridge he had mastered five books of Euclid, and Algebra through Quadratics."

Line 180. Bard, etc. Thomas, "Cae of Indolence."

Line 189. It is this character of frankness Wordsworth which renders "The Prelude" faithful a record.


Lines 194-200. During his second summer vacation he was restored to his sister, who had been living at Penrith with maternal relatives. Line 203. castle. Brougham Castle, by Roger Lord Clifford, and situated at the junction of the Emont and Lowther, about a mile from Penrith. It is now in ruins. "Song at the Feast of Brongham Castle."

Line 208. Helvellyn. One of the three mountains of the lake region, east of Grasmere and in sight of Dove Cottages.


Line 224. Mary Hutchison, a schoolgirl of his at Penrith. See note, line 62, below. Also see "She was a Phantom of delight."
So near us. Wordsworth married—

Border Beacon. A hill northeast of Penrith which, during the Border Wars, was fortified with many towers. In 1388 it was captured.

Col. de Balme.

Built by Napoleon.

See poem on the Simplon Pass.

The banks of Lago di Como are mountains 3000 feet high, with hamlets, villas, chapels, and convents.

Footpaths. Footpaths are the only communication, by land, from village to village.

Descriptive Sketches.

At the head of Lake Como.

Aug. 21, 1790.

Cologne Sept. 28, and went thence through Belgium to Calais.

Feb. 10, 1799.

In a letter dated Grasmere, June 3, 1805, Wordsworth says: "I have the pleasure to say that I finished my poem about a fortnight ago." Thus we are assured that the last seven books must have been written in the year 1805.

First two paragraphs of book i.

The highest mountain in the Lake District.

Stopped. It is evident that this was in 1802, otherwise we cannot account for the "years" intervening before "last primrose-time," 1804.

The book must have been begun in the fall of 1804.

John's Grove, so called because it was the favorite resort of the poet's brother, Captain Wordsworth. It is but a few moments' walk from Dove Cottage. One passes it by the middle road to Rydal, opposite the famous "Wishing Gate;" from it there is a fine view across the lake to the mountains beyond. See "When, to the attractions of the busy world."

Related in book vi.

He took his degree, B.A., in January, 1791.

Undetermined, etc., he went at once to visit his sister at Forncett Rectory, near Norwich, where he remained six weeks. The crisis of his life came between this time and his settlement at Grasmere. He had resolved to be a poet, but poetry would not feed him unless he prostituted his talents and wrote for the crowd. In this perplexity of mind he went to London, and roamed about, noting men and things. Meanwhile his friends were urging him to enter the church, the law, or the army.

Three years. It is evident from this that he visited London in 1788.

A famous citizen of London, thrice Lord Mayor.

Pleasure gardens on the Thames, now built upon.
Line 129. See "Sonnet on Westminster Bridge."
Line 135. Monument. On Fire Street Hill, erected to commemorate the Great Fire in September, 1666. Tower. The most celebrated fortress in Great Britain. It has been used as royal residence, armory, prison, treasure-house and seat of government.
Line 160. Referring to the custom of marking the house in which some noted man lived. 7 Craven St., Strand, has, "Benjamin Franklin lived here."
Line 207. Sadler's Wells. A theatre, named from the spring in the garden.
Line 209. Maid. Buttermere is about fifteen miles from Grasmere. The "Spoiler" was afterwards hanged at Carlisle.
Line 383. To Cambridge, 1787.
Line 458, 459. All of these events lose their triviality when considered as necessary parts of the poet's education.
Line 484. His father had set him to learn passages from the best English poets.
Line 491. stage. Parliament, when the debates were in progress on the French Revolution. He said, "You always went away from Burke with your mind filled."
Line 496. See Shakespeare's King Henry V.
Line 535. Wordsworth seldom resorts to satire, but here are some keen shafts directed against the fashionable preacher of the day.
Line 573. St. Bartholomew. Henry I. granted the privileges of holding fairs on this day.

Book Eighth. In the rush and roar of London, caught in the tides of her feverish life, Wordsworth seems to have been drifting aimlessly. But the poet's heart was beating in his breast all the more rapidly because of the contrast of the city's din to the quiet of his cloister life at Cambridge; and at each pulse he felt himself drawn nearer to the life of man. Until this time, Nature was first, and Man second; here in the centre of the great metropolis the transition was made. Now, at the beginning of the eighth book, he looks back and gives us an inside view of the workings of his own soul while it was being played upon by the influences of Nature and of Man. The value of book vii., of itself the least interesting in "The Prelude," is not grasped except by understanding its relation to the following,—

"There's a day about to break,
There's a light about to dawn."

1800, when Coleridge was with them at a Cottage. "We walked to the Fair... was a lovely moonlight night, and the music, dancing and merriment came along in the air." The annual sports of the North of England at Grasmere resemble one of these fairs.

"Bid by the day they wait for all the year
Shepherd and swain their gayest clothes in array.
For race and mimic wrestling meet upon
The tourney ground beside the shining sea;"

H. D. Rawnsley

Lines 48-52. From Malvern Hills, by Joseph Cottle (see Prefatory Note to best. Lines 70-76. Looking back, the poet feels that his love of Nature led him to the side of Man.

Line 77. Gehol. Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

Lines 98-100. His childhood, passed among magnificent scenery where man was free moulded by the simple life of home. These were as sturdy and incorruptible as the people themselves. The beauty of his heart, like that of Switzerland, was more beautiful because of the liberty of soul which characterized the people.

Line 128. These shepherds, living as they did so near to Nature, seemed to him the most interesting but another aspect of the hills. The rocks and streams were as much a part of the traditions of the dalesmen, with their tales of suffering and heroism amid the howling winds and the driving storms which destroyed both them and their flocks, as "Fidelity."

Lines 145-163. Some of the rural pastures still kept alive in the region of the Lake. The tourist, with his fine clothes, pretentious presents, has done much to create dissatisfaction in the breasts of the rural folk. At Grasmere and Ambleside the custom of "The Bear" is continued, in memory of the time when the people strewed the ground of the churches with rushes gathered from the side of the road. It now occurs in August, and the sides are wreathed with flowers are used to decorate the church. It is a Children's Festival. New do they forget to place an offering on the grave.

Lines 170-172. See "The Brothers."
Line 175. Galesus. An Italian river, noted for fine-breasted sheep.


Line 182. Lucretius. A hill near the sea of Horace.

Line 210. walls. He says, "I walked on the ramparts, or on a sort of public green or garden."


Line 217. channels. Westdale, Essen, Yewdale, etc.

Lines 223-233. The passage is unique at
hable; it is characterized by a profound y and an exquisite naturalness.

340-341. Thus it was that the poet his firm faith in the nobility of man. Not for evil as fast as he found good a early days, for he read his first lesson s from the book of Nature, and saw him setting of beauty and sublimity.

340-381. Although Nature was at first inent in his thoughts, yet his vision of man owning clearer and clearer, and he began e the two in one picture.

408. rock. It is difficult to determine or this alludes to Dove Cottage or that n Tyson. If the former is meant, the would be on Red Bank; if the latter, it be on the hill northwest of Hawskhead.

421. In preface to Lyrical Ballads, he "Fancy is given us to quicken and beguile impartial part of our nature; imagination, to and support the eternal." 433. Thurstromore. Coniston Lake, to east of Hawskhead.

468. The following eight lines are recast a poem which he wrote in anticipation wing school, and which he said was a taming of Pope's versification.

477. high emotions. Poetry written be-805.

543. Entered. Probably in 1788.


619. For Wordsworth's theory of dice-see Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1800.

OK Ninth. He now loved both Nature Man, and his enthusiasm for humanity growing day by day. After spending four the, February, March, April, and May, in lon, he visited his friend Jones in Wales, refreshed himself by communion with the visiting Menai, Conway, and Bethesda: even here in the solitude of Nature, the of Humanity sounding in that song of ty allured him to the theatre of Revolu-

The Revolution was not confined to the are of politics: that was only one feature the great movement toward the goal of l rights to which the nations were tend-

It was a return to Nature in all the de-

ments of life. This enthusiasm for Nature form in France under Rousseau's extrava-
ted and diseased sensibility. In Germany the feeling was manifested by Goethe, who joined the poet with the scientific aspect of pure, and swelled the great wave of feeling ich was gathering force as it advanced. In land it had been growing into form for half entury. The heralds of the day arose from utors, and under circumstances quite unex-
ted,—from the sorrow and disappointment Cowper and the untaught melodies of the ghiboy of Ayrshire,—the one in his invalid hcape, the other in his blue bonnet and mespun. But the poet who was to conduct heart of England to the love of rivers, ods, and hills was, in the autumn of 1791, leaving Brighton for Paris, about to plunge into the blood and furor of that revolutionary city.


40. tour of Orleans.

45. field of Mars. In the west of Paris.

46. St. Antony. In the east of the city.

47. Mortre. In the north of the city.

Dome. The Pantheon, in the south.

51. toss. On May 4, 1789, the clergy, noblesse, and tiers état, constituting the States General, met in Notre Dame. The next day the tiers état assumed the title of the National Assembly, and urged the others to join them.

52. Palace. Palais Royal, built by Cardinal Richelieu.


77. Le Brun. Court painter of Louis XIV.

132. They were so disgusted with the Revolution that they stood ready to join the enemists in arms against their country under Leopold, king of Prussia, and to restore the old régime.

139. One. The Republican general,

Beaupuis.


182. flight. See note, line 132.

216, 217. Ruskin, in 1876, said that he had, in his fields at Coniston, men who might have fought with Henry V. at Agincourt without being distinguished from one of his knights.

230-232. "Drawn from a strong Scandina-vian stock, they dwell in a land as solemn and beautiful as Norway itself. The Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded, perhaps, as near a realization as human fates have yet allowed of a rural society which statesmen have desidered for their country's greatness." —F. W. H. MYERS.

265. posting on. See note, line 132.

381-387. Thus it was that the Revolution touched the hearts of the young and imagina-tive minds of England; the light of a new heaven and a new earth seemed about to dawn on men.

290-321. In company with this re-jected Republican, Wordsworth lived; they were kindred spirits.

340-355. The oppression and tyranny which had hindered Man's progress.

390-430. "Beaupuis was to Wordsworth the ideal at once of a warrior and a citizen." —E. LEOUIS.


409. Dion. A pupil of Plato's. See the poem "Dion," composed in 1816.

410. Both Plato and Dion tried to in-fluence Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, but did not succeed.

412. Philosophers who assisted Dion.
Line 413. Syracusean exiles.
One of the Cyclades.
Line 424. perished, etc. Beaupuis did not perish in La Vendée, he was wounded.
Line 482. Blois. Wordsworth went from Orleans to Blois in the spring of 1792.
Line 484. lady. Claude, daughter of Louis XII.
Lines 501-514. These dreams have been pronounced chimerical; yet if they are to prove so, the spirit of Christianity and its root-thoughts must be equally chimerical.
Line 547. a tale. "Vaudacour and Julia," founded on a tale related to Wordsworth by a French lady who was an eye-witness of the scene described. See p. 327.
Line 553. The following four lines are the prelude to the above-mentioned poem.
Line 12. fallen. Aug. 10, 1792, the mob stormed the Tuileries and imprisoned the king and his family in the Temple.
Line 20. Rajahs, the native princes of India; Omrahs, their officials.
Line 41. Republic. On the 22d of September, 1792, the Republic was proclaimed.
Line 43. massacre. The Danton massacres were just over.
Line 48. He arrived in Paris in October, 1792. The city heaved like a volcano. Robespierre, one of the Committee of Public Safety, was rising.
Line 56. Carrousel. Place de Carrousel, a public square.
Lines 63-93. But that night, etc. Although he took sides against Robespierre, yet he held fast to the principles of the Revolution.
Line 111. Jean Baptiste Louvet.
Line 114. Robespierre got a delay of one week to prepare an answer, and by smooth speech finally triumphed.
Lines 120-190. The vein of optimism running through these lines is characteristic of a man trained as he had been.
Lines 198, 199. Harmodius and Aristogiton. Athenians, who put to death the tyrant Hipparchus.
Lines 222-231. Such was the fascination of the terrible city, and such was his sympathy in the great movement, that had his funds not given out, he doubtless would have perished with his friends, the Brissotines. He returned to England in December, 1792.

Line 236. Twice. He left England in November, 1792.
Line 243. To abide. He remained in Leeds during the winter of 1792-93, with his brother Richard.
Line 247. The movement of Clarkson and Wilberforce for abolishing the slave trade, to sonnet to William Clarkson.
Lines 264, 265. When in 1793 England joined with Holland and Spain against France, his indignation knew no bounds. If England was to disappoint him, where was he to look for support?
Line 283. rejoiced. This is the culmination of that idea of interest in mankind outside the bounds of England which began in the poetry of Goldsmith, was continued in Cowper, and became so intense in Wordsworth.
Line 315. red-cross flag. Union Jack of the red cross of St. George, and the white cross of St. Andrew.
Lines 316-330. Wordsworth, in his advertisement to "Guilt and Sorrow," says: "During the latter part of the summer of 1793, passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet preparing for sea at Portsmouth, and in the place with melancholy forebodings.
Lines 331-375. The "Reign of Terror" began in France in July, 1793.
Line 381. Madame Roland, wife of the register of the interior under Dumourier. Was upon the scaffold, turning to the statue of Liberty, she said, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" Her husband committed suicide.
Line 383. O Friend, etc. The result, given in the following lines, was not a strange one. a nature like Wordsworth's. The eclipse of the idol of the rights of man was almost total.
Line 430. The love of Nature had been preserved by the love of Man, and now that second love was weakening, the crisis was at hand.
Lines 436-480. In his most passionate mood, temperance was at the centre, and preserved the flame of emotion from consuming him.
Line 491. With Robert Jones in the vacant of 1790.
Lines 496-497. See sonnet, "Composed as Calais," 1802.
Line 512. The reaction from the "Reign of Terror" had set in; all parties combined against Robespierre, and he was executed by his former supporters, July 28, 1794.
Line 513. The day. In August, 1794.
Line 615. Over the Ulverston sands, where the waters of Windermere find their way to the sea.
Line 534. At Cartmel, where the Rev. William Taylor, master at Hawkshead School, 1782-96, was buried. Just before his death he sent for the upper boys of the school (among whom was Wordsworth), and took leave of them with a solemn blessing.
his sister Dorothy." See Dorothy Wordsworth; or, Story of a Sister's Love, by Edmund Lee.

Line 360. Buonaparte summoned the Pope to anoint him emperor of France in 1804.

Line 376. Coleridge was in Sicily, whither he had gone from Malta.

Line 379. Timoleon. Who reduced Sicily to order. He refused all titles, and lived as a private citizen.

Lines 418-423. See sonnet on "Departure of Sir Walter Scott for Naples."


Line 450. At Dove Cottage.

Of the three books of "The Prelude" which describe the poet's residence in France Mr. John Morley says: "They are an abiding lesson to brave men how to bear themselves in hours of public stress."

BOOK TWELFTH. Lines 1-43. Healing had been ministered to a mind diseased, and he now looked upon the face of Nature with the imaginative delight of childhood yet with a fuller appreciation of the sources of her beauty. The harmony of thought and language in this passage is hardly surpassed by that of "Tintern Abbey."

Line 151. And yet I knew a maid, etc. The reference here is not to his sister, but to Mary Hutchinson, who afterward became his wife. Next to the blessing of that sister, who conducted him from the region of despair and spiritual death to that of assured hope and enlargement of soul, stands that

"Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food."

Her simplicity of manner and her soothing and sustaining influence are celebrated in many lines of the poet's later works. In the companionship of two such appreciative and home-hearted women, he was blessed beyond most of his brethren in song.

Line 268-273. It is this element in Wordsworth's poetry that gives it its unwithering freshness, its power to make us see beauty in the commonplace, and to help us idealize the real. Thus Wordsworth's philosophy is not a theory; it is a life. It had saved him from despondency and spiritual death; it will recreate all of those who will but put themselves under its influences.

Lines 261-271. When, etc. The spiritual freedom which sets the poet's imagination into action seldom fails to centre it upon solid foundations.

Line 287. One Christmas-time. This was evidently 1783. His father was then living at Penrith, and the led palfreys would go by Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside. From Ambleside to Hawkhed there are two roads which meet within about two miles of Hawkhed village; here there are two crags, either of which would answer the description.

Lines 311-335. Wordsworth in this passage corroborates what has already been said of his
susceptibility to sound; he is always listening, and when he afterwards recalls the scenes, he blends sights and sounds, the latter often being the most prominent.

BOOK THIRTEENTH. Lines 1-10. The power with which Wordsworth illustrated this truth makes him one of the greatest teachers and benefactors of his age. He is no less the poet of contemplation than the poet of passion, and the lesson was taught him by Nature. It is only by calmness in the midst of passion that the highest beauty in poetry is attained. All of Wordsworth's finest poetry is the result of emotions recollected in tranquillity.

Lines 49-10. His emotion being now under regulation, he determined to find out the truths of human life. He gave up his sanguine schemes for the regeneration of mankind, and turned to the abodes of simple men, where duty, love, and reverence were to be found in their true relation and worth.

Lines 130-141. His wounded heart was healed as he experienced the "love in huts where poor men lie."

Lines 141-160. From the terrace-walk in the garden of the Cockermouth home can be seen the hill here referred to, and the road running over its summit. The road is now only a footpath, but was then a public way to Isel, a town on the Derwent.

Lines 160-185. The riches which he gleaned from these mines of neglected wealth made him the singer of "simple songs for thinking hearts."

Lines 186-220. Wordsworth here touches the core of our modern artificial life and thinking.

Lines 220-278. This passage is the finest in thought, and the most perfect in expression, of any of "The Prelude." It illustrates the courage of the man who dared thus, in an age of superficiality and pride, to fly in the face of all the poetical creeds, and make the joys and sorrows that we encounter on the common high road of life the subjects of his song.

Line 314. SARM'S Plain. In 1793 he wandered with his friend William Calvert over Sarm's Plain. See "Will and Sorrow."

Line 353. unpremeditated strains. The "Descriptive Sketches." Coleridge happened upon these when an undergraduate at Cambridge, 1793, and wrote of them: "Seldom, if ever, was the emergence of a great and original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced."

Line 361. The poets did not meet until 1797.

BOOK FOURTEENTH. Lines 1-10. In the summer of 1793 he visited his friend Jones in Wales.

Lines 35-130. Of this vision of the transmuting power of imagination, Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "It is one of the finest specimens of Wordsworth's grand style. It is as sustained and stately as Milton, but differs from Milton's style in the greater simplicity of diction."

Lines 168, 169. By love, etc. No great poet has been content with mere outward Nature; he must pass through it to the soul of man.

Wordsworth never rests in what appears outward eye; he rests only in the scenes caused by what the senses reveal.

Line 253. "What was once hard in Wordsworth was toned by the womanly sweetness his sister; and with a devotion as rare as noble she dedicated to him her life and art. —EDMUND LEE. See "The Sparrow" and "Tintern Abbey."

Lines 266-268. Mary Hutchinson. See was a Phantom of delight," second scene.

Line 281. Wordsworth said: "He and sister are the two beings to whom my soul is most indebted."


Line 333. After leaving London, he went to the Isle of Wight, the Wye, and later visited with his son scenes of his youth in Cumberland and moreland.

Lines 355-369. Calvert. See some: Raisley Calvert," and note to "Lines upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree."

Line 396. See prefatory note to "The Prelude."


Line 419. In the spring of 1800 their son John, who was captain of an East India ship, joined to their new home at Grasmere. Be- gained with them about eight months after he started upon the voyage which intended should be his last, as he desired it with his brother and sister. In February, his vessel was wrecked off Portland, and all aboard perished. There are touching alms to him in "Elegias Verses," "Character of Happy Warrior," and "Lines suggested by Seeing Peel Castle in a Storm."

Lines 430-454. The grand determinations which Wordsworth, abandoning professions of life and giving himself to counteract "mechanical and utilitarian theories of time," stood up against ridicule and other cannot be matched in literature.

See Coleridge. "To a Gentleman," for a significant appreciation of "The Prelude."

Page 222. THE RECLUSE.

The poet's own history of this poem has been given in his introductory notes to "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," pp. 128 and 131. "The Excursion" was the only one of the projected poems that was published during a author's life. Selections from "The Recluse" were published in his Guide to the Lakes of which, "The Water-Fowl," appeared in sequent editions of his poems; and the "Nature's invitation do I come" and "The season was it," were published by the Bishop of Lincoln in the Memoirs. Although the sections have been given in this edition, "The Recluse" was first printed in 1818, and a date of composition in conjectural, it seems set to place it here with the poems written at Grasmere.
Ghyll, not far from Dove Cottage. Turning to the right from the highway by the "Swan Inn," and following the beck, one will, without much difficulty, find where "The Evening Star" was situated; and a little farther up the beck sheepleads, which are now used. Probably Michael's fold was still higher up; on the right of the beck there is a large oak tree which may be the "Clipping Tree." A visit to the Ghyll and the pasture-land on the side of Fairfield is of great assistance to the appreciation of the spirit of the poem.


In a letter to Mr. Charles James Fox written this year, Wordsworth called attention to the greatest of national dangers—the disappearance of such a class of "Statesmen as Michael represents, through the absorption of small freeholds by large estates. See F. W. H. Myers, Wordsworth, chapter iv.

"Line 109, Clipping Tree. Clipping is the word used in the north of England for shearing. W. W."

See H. D. Rawnsley, Lives and Nature of the English Lakes, "A Brig End Sheeplead Clipping."

Page 244. The Idle Shepherd-Boys.

The scene of this poem is in the Langdale Pikes, — Harrison Stickle, and Pike o' Stickle, at the head of Great Langdale. It is reached from Grasmere by Easedale, a vigorous climb, over Silver Howe, or by Red Bank. The first two routes for pedestrians only, the last is a good carriage road. The last stanza of the poem is a good description of the Ghyll as it is to-day.

Page 247. "It was an April morning: fresh and clear."

In this year life at the Cottage was enriched by visits from Coleridge, Robert Jones, John Wordsworth, and the Hutchinsons. Dorothy writes in her Journal, "On Sunday (June 29) Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley came."

This and the following six poems belong to a class, "On the Naming of Places," written to record incidents which happened in connection with some of the poet's friends. To one familiar with the lake land the evidence of attachments for localities where little incidents have taken place is seen in the names there preserved. All lovers of the poet delight in identifying places especially dear to him.

The scene of this poem is in Easedale, a half-hour's walk from Dove Cottage. Leaving Grasmere village we soon cross Goody Bridge and Easedale beck, by the side of which the poet said he had composed thousands of verses. Following this beck from the bridge, we come to a deep pool, with a "single mountain cottage" not far distant. On the opposite side of the valley is the mountain terrace, Lancerigg, where "The Prelude" was composed.
The poet's sister is frequently referred to as "Emma" or "Emmeline."

Page 248. To Joanna (Hutchinson).
This scene is laid on the Rothing, the river which flows by the Grasmere Churchyard (where the poet is buried), and empties into the lake; thence it flows into Rydal Water.

Dorothy writes, Aug. 22, "W. read us the poem 'Joanna,' beside the Rotheby, by the roadside."

The "lofty rise" stood near the church tower but were removed to widen the road. The "tall rock" is probably on the side of Helm Crag. Silver-how, Loughrigg, Fairfield, and Helvellyn are the mountains which surround the Vale; while Skiddaw, Grasmere, and Kirkstone are at a considerable distance on the north and east.

Page 249. "There is an EMINENCE."
The "eminence" is Stone-Arthur, on the east of the road leading over Dunmail Raise, and is between Greenhead Ghyll and Tongue Ghyll.

Page 249. "A Narrow Girdle of Rough Stones and Crags."
The Coleridges remained at Dove Cottage until Greta Hall, at Keswick, was ready for them in July.

The scene of the poem is easily identified, although no woodland path now leads from the cottage to the lake, and the coach road and cottages break the privacy of the eastern shore. On the 10th of October, Dorothy's Journal says: 'William sat up after me writing 'Point Rash Judgment.'"

Page 250. To M. H.
Dorothy writes to Mrs. Marshall, Sept. 10: "Our cottage is quite large enough for us, though very small. . . . We have a boat on the lake, and a small orchard and a small garden; which, as it is the work of our own hands, we regard with pride and partiality." The cottage contained only six rooms, and with the Coleridges, the Hutchisons and John, they must have been a bit crowded. Mary Hutchinson was with them for several months during this year, and the Coleridges for two.

Of the exact location of the scene of the poem it may still be said, "the travellers know it not," although many attempts have been made to ascertain it. The place is near Rydal Mount or in the grounds of Rydal Park, and a hunt for it will well repay one.

There are three roads from Grasmere to Rydal: one, a footpath under Nab Scar, which Dr. Arnold called "Old Corruption;" a second over White Moss Common, which he called "Bit by Bit Reform;" and a third, the coach road by the lake-side, "Radical Reform." It is by the first of these roads that the scene of this poem is laid. Eglinoville still goes to though not abundantly.

Friday, April 23, 1802, Dorothy writes in her Journal: "We went toward Rydal under Scar. The sun shone and we were on. Coleridge and I pushed in before. We William sitting on the stones, fessing silence, and I sat down upon a rocky a couch it might be, under the bole. William's Eglantine."

Page 252. The Oak and the Brook.
Wordsworth's note helps us to determine locality under Nab Scar, near the moor path, "Old Corruption." There is still a stone far up on the side of the mountain. It may be the "lofty stone" of this poem.

Suggested to Wordsworth and his sister as they were making the memorable journey to Soughburn to Grasmere in December 1798. 1887 I visited the scene here described, found a desolate spot indeed.

"More dolorous place did never eye survey."
The aspens and stone pillars are no more, the stone basin still remains. A wall has been built where it is possible that the "fell was stood. Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, who visited place in 1883, thinks the stone in the which shows signs of having been hewn dressed, may be one of the "pillars."

Page 257. The Childless Father.
Line 10. funeral basin. In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral is at place, a basin filled with sprigs of boxwood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who enters the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this boxwood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased. W. W.

Page 257. Rural Architecture.
The scene of this poem is associated with Lake Thirlmere, Great How being the hill which rises between Thirlmere and Letherthwaite Dale. See note to "The Waggoner."

Page 258. Ellen Irwin.
See Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Bard, vol. i. p. 93, for the history of the famous ballad "Fair Helen of Kirkconnell."

Sept. 10, Dorothy writes to a friend: "William is going to publish a second edition of the Lyrical Ballads with a second volume. These were published at the close of this year, with the famous Defense of his principles of poetic diction. Coleridge wrote of these volumes: "I should judge of a man's heart and intellect, precisely according to the degree of intensity of the admiration with which he reads these poems."

The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the scene here related took place. W. W.
Page 260. A CHARACTER.
This is a tribute to Wordsworth’s college
and friend, Robert Jones, with whom he
visited France and Switzerland in the college
campaign of 1790, and Wales in 1791. To him
he dedicated “Descriptive Sketches,” 1793.

Page 261. INSCRIPTIONS:
FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT’S ISLAND, DER-
WENTWATER.
Derwentwater is rich in literary and histori-
cal associations. It attracted Gray, Words-
worth, Coleridge, Keats, Carlyle, the Arnolds,
and Southey. The places here of most interest
are the island where Herbert, St. Cuthbert’s
end, had his shrine; Cat-Ghyll, the favorite
ok of Southey’s, and Crag of the Friars
beauty first inspired Ruskin, and where
w stands the simple memorial of that
written with a pencil upon a stone in
the wall of the house (an outhouse),
on the island at Grasmere.
There is only one island in Grasmere Lake,
is still a pasture for sheep, and a rude pile
stands there.

1802

Dorothy Wordsworth’s Journal reveals to us
at this year there was much reading of
erasure and Chaucer, and much worry over the
edication of Coleridge. The actual poetic out-
put was not large. Wordsworth tried his hand
modernizing Chaucer, and began “The Ex-
trition.”

Page 262. THE SPARROW’S NEST.
The old manor house with garden and ter-
race walk at Cockermouth remains essentially
it was in Wordsworth’s day, Emmeline is
a sister Dorothy. An interesting memorial
the early days of these children has been
sently erected in the Park at Cockermouth:
drinking fountain for man and beast sur-
mounted by a bronze statue of a child.

Page 262. PELION AND OSSA.
How the desire of the poet’s heart has be-
e a reality is revealed in the following from
mes Russell Lowell, alluding to the lake
ed, “This Chartreuse of Wordsworth, dedi-
ted to the Genius of Solitude, will allure to
imperturbable calm, the finer natures and
more highly tempered intellects... and
the entrance gate to that purifying seclu-
shall be inscribed:
Minds innocent and quiet take
This for an hermitage.”

Page 263. THE PRIORESS’S TALE.
Prof. Dowden calls this work “at once frank
and faithful,” in spite of its many defects.
Friday, 4th, Dorothy writes in her Journal:
Wm. translating “The Prioress’s Tale.”

Page 266. THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHT-
GABLE.
Line 201. With such a master, etc. From a
manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also Stanzas
xlv. and xlv., which are necessary to complete
the sense. W. W.

1802

This year is an exceedingly busy one for the
poet. A frequent entry in Dorothy’s Journal
is, “Wm. worked at the Pedlar.” The ballads
and sonnets are revelations of the life he was
living, the most significant event of which was
his marriage to Mary Hutchinson.

Page 273. THE SAILOR’S MOTHER.
The title of this poem in Dorothy’s Journal
is “The Singing Bird.” Friday, March 12,
she writes: “William finished ‘The Singing
Bird.’”

Page 274. ALICE FELL.
Under date of Feb. 16, Dorothy gives a de-
tailed history of the occurrence with Mr.
Graham, closing with: “Mr. G. left Mary to
buy her a new cloak.” On Friday (March 14),
Dorothy writes, “In the evening after tea Wil-
liam wrote, ‘Alice Fell.’”

Page 275. BEGGARS.
Under date of May 27, 1800, Dorothy gives
details of the event out of which the poem
grew, and under Saturday (March 13, 1802) she
writes: “W. wrote the poem of the Beggar
Woman.” The quarry is near the junction of
the two roads leading from Rydal to Gras-
mere. See “Sequel to the Beggars,” 1817.

Page 276. TO A BUTTERFLY.
This poem refers to the same period as “The
Sparrow’s Nest,” Cockermouth days, before
1778. Dorothy says: “While we were at break-
fast W. wrote the poem ‘To a Butterfly.’
The thought came upon him as we were talking
about the pleasure we both always felt at the
sight of a butterfly. I told him that I used to
chase them a little, but that I was afraid of
brushing the dust off their wings, and did not
catch them.”

Page 276. THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.
March 16 Dorothy writes: “William went
up into the orchard and wrote a part of ‘The
Emigrant Mother.’” “Wednesday.—William
went up into the orchard and finished the
poem.”

Page 277. “MY HEART LEAPS UP.”
This poem is the key-note of all Words-
worth’s poetry: it is “The Prelude” condensed
into a lyric.
Page 278. Written in March.
Under date of April 16 (Good Friday), Dorothy writes in the Journal the details of their walk from Ulswater over Kirkstone Pass, during which this poem was composed. A little below Hartsteep in Patterdale is the bridge over Goldrill Beck.


Page 278. The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly.
On Sunday, April 18, Dorothy writes: "A mild grey morning with rising vapours. We sate in the orchard. William wrote the poem on the Robin and the Butterfly. "Tuesday 20, wrote a conclusion to the poem of the Butterfly, ‘I’ve watched you now a full half hour.’"


Page 279. Foresight.
On January 31, Dorothy says: "I found a strawberry blossom in a rock. . . . I uprooted it rashly, and felt as if I had been committing an outrage; so I planted it again."

Under date of 23th of April she writes: "Wm. was in the orchard . . . at dinner time he came in with the poem, ‘Children gathering Flowers.’"

Page 279. To the Small Celandine.
In Dorothy’s Journal, April 30, we have the following: "We came into the orchard directly after breakfast, and sat there. The lake was calm, the sky cloudy. W. began to write the poem of the Celandine . . . I walked backward and forward with William. He repeated his poem to me."


Page 280. To the Same Flower.
In Dorothy’s Journal, May 1, 1802, is the following: "Wm. wrote the Celandine, second part."

Page 280. Resolution and Independence.
Dorothy writes: "When Wm. and I returned from accompanying Jones, we met an old man almost double. . . . His trade was to gather leeches. . . . It was late in the evening."

We see from the Fenwick note that the elements which were gathered together in this poem were from various sources. The mental mood and "the hare running races in her mirth" are brought from the walk over Barton Fell. The "lonely moor" with the "pool" is White Moss Common on which one crosses by the middle road to Rydal.

After the storm and the tumult of Nature — "the roaring of the wind," and the driving of the floods — there came the calm, the singing of the birds, the music of the books, the fresh, clear atmosphere, and "the base on races." One would think that — "A post could not but be gay In such a jovial company."

A kindred mood is awakened in the but it is soon beclouded with "fancies" which arise from the contrast between the free, happy, careless life of unfolding creatures of God’s love, at life of man burdened with care for work, row, obliged to sow before he can reap ing before and after." Strong as he a nevertheless made weak by such deject in this weakness there appears the figure old man, by conversation with whom is imparted, power is given, a new man living is supplied, life is made a happier, a more, diviner thing. As to style, we might almost say the none. By the simplest language, in the of all color, with no complexity of ideas, have one of the most harmonious and refined of sketches, — the beauty and strength of Repose. In its ethical bearing the poem makes more cause with all of Wordsworth’s best messages of which is — "Wasten That his philosophy in this respect -- the theoretical but practical, we will let his have made a trial of it testify. John Stuart Mill, in a time of disappearance at the failure of cherished hopes, and he seemed nothing but a struggle against necessity, went to Wordsworth’s poems as the result says: — "From them I seemed to learn what be the perennial sources of happiness, wit the greater evils of life shall have been moved. And I felt myself at once not happen as I came under their influence."

Page 282. I Grieved for Bookman.
In the sphere of the sonnet among the writers, Wordsworth’s work is of the significant, not only in the nature and of the subjects treated, but also in the of composition. He restored the sonnet place it had in Milton’s time. The sonnet was at the farthest removes free style of "The Prelude" and "The Excursion" and it is not a little remarkable that so possessed such wealth of thought and fluency of language should have been one

"Within the sonnet’s scanty plot of ground."

But Wordsworth "had the tonic of a some pride;" he was a most careful writer was exceedingly frugal in his literary these were the prerequisites for success the sonnet. The care which he exerted pruning, recasting, and correcting his workshop is seen in frequent alterations text; many of them cover the period of a time, and preserve for us the changes in the poet’s mind.

May 21, Dorothy writes: "W. wrote
These sonnets are the highest type of Wordsworth's pure style; all the elements are so fused that there is nothing to divert attention from the single sentiment pervading the whole.

Page 284. COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802.

Dorothy writes: "Arrived at Calais at four in the morning of July 31. Delightful walks in the evenings: seeing far off in the West the coast of England, like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the Evening Star, and the glory of the sky."

Page 285. COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARDRES.

Line 1. Jones I as from Calais southward. (See Dedication to "Descriptive Sketches.")

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic Country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude, which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption, and, while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasing sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the sonnet entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 602. W. W.


Page 286. THE KING OF SWEDEN.

In this and a succeeding sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles avowed in his Manifesto; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous, and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished. W. W.

Page 288. COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

On their return from France, Aug. 30, they spent three weeks in London, and reached Gal-
low Hill Sept. 24. Dorothy writes: "Mary first met us on the avenue. She looked so fat and well that we were made very happy by the sight of her; then came Sara, and last of all Joanna. Tom was forking down, standing upon the corn cart."

On Monday, Oct. 4, Wordsworth was married to Mary Hutchison, in the old church at Brompton, and set out on the return to Dove Cottage the same day. Dorothy's entry in the Journal for this day (too long to give here) should be read.

Page 298. STANZAS WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S "CASTLE OF INDULGENCE."

Dorothy writes: "We arrived at Grasmere at about six o'clock on Wednesday evening, the 6th of October, 1802. . . . I cannot describe what I felt. . . . On Friday, 8th, Mary and I walked first upon the hillside, and then in John's Grove, then in view of Rydale, the first walk that I had taken with my sister." Thus the circle at Grasmere was widened and enriched; now two high-minded and loving women, through their own sweetness and purity, calmness and goodness, contribute to make his work reach a height of fullness and completion only dreamed of as yet. I am inclined to think that the characters alluded to in this poem are Wordsworth and Coleridge; although there is some difficulty in assigning the stanzas. The editor of the Memoirs concludes that the allusions in the first four stanzas are to Wordsworth, and those in the last three to Coleridge.

Page 299. TO H. C.

These lines, which Mr. Walter Bagehot styles, "the best ever written on a real and visible child," refer to Hartley Coleridge, the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They are singularly prophetic of that life of dreamy waywardness, of lonely wanderings, of lofty hopes and deep despair which was to be his. The gift of continuous conversation which distinguished his father was his no less, and it won for him hosts of friends. He became the ward of Wordsworth, who never ceased to care for him. He is known in the Lakes as "The children's laureate." His body lies in Grasmere Churchyard, near that of his friend and benefactor, Wordsworth.

Nab Cottage, where Hartley lived and died, is on the coach road from Rydal to Grasmere, and faces Rydal Water. It is now a favorite lodging house in the Lake District. See lines 43-64 in S. T. Coleridge's "Fears in Solitude."

Page 299. TO THE DAISY.

This Poem, and two others to the same flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a Poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery's, entitled, "A Field Flower." This led said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets: —

"Though it happe me to rebarein —
That ye han in your frese songs said,
Forberith me, and beth not ill spaeed,
Bith that ye se as I doe it in the honour
Of Love, and ese in service of the Fear."

W. W. 1803

The best expression of the spirit of Wordsworth's Nature poems — like this and the following — is to be found in Whittier's tribute to Wordsworth,

"The violet by its mossy stone,
The primrose by the river's brim,
And chance-born daffodil have found
Immortal life through him.

"The sunrise on his breezy lake,
The rosy hues his sunset brought.
World-seen, are gladdening all the vales
And mountain-peaks of thought."

Line 80. Art Nature's favourite. See a Chancer and the elder Poets. The bonfire formerly paid to the flower. W. W.

Ruskin in Modern Painters, "Imagination Contemplative," cites the third and fifth stanzas as illustrations of "fancy regardest," and the sixth of "heavenly imagination."

1803

Page 299. THE GREEN LINNET.

The "orchard seat" was upon the terrace at the rear of the garden, and was reached by steps cut by Wordsworth himself. At the present time an arbor stands there.

Coleridge, in his Biographia Literaria, chap. xxi., cites this poem as an illustration of "The perfect truth of Nature in his [Wordsworth's] images and descriptions as taken immediately from Nature, and proving a long and free intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of Nature."

Page 299. YEW-TREES.

Written at Grasmere. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnificence. W. W.

At this time Wordsworth was at work upon "The Prelude" and "The Excursion."

Coleridge, in challenging for Wordsworth the gift of imagination (and citing this poem), says: "In imaginative power he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton, yet in kind perfectly unborrowed and his own."

Ruskin, alluding to this poem, in Modern Painters, says: "I consider it the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted."

The "pride of Lorton Vale" has lost its beauty and its grandeur, and in 1833 the "Eternal Four" were visited by a whirlwind..."
uprooted and despoiled them. The yews in the district are now those of the. See "The Prelude," i. 306.

294. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SOUTHERN SCOTLAND 1803 was made memorable by the friendship of Wordsworth, his sister, and Colleridge, to Mary Wordsworth had been born and lived in the "land of song," yet not this year had he set foot upon her soil. His Journal is a record of this journey, a hardly less poetical than the immortal songs. In my various visits to Scotland I found the Journal the best guide to these sites.

294. DEPARTURE.
Dowden thinks this was written in 1803, although it refers to events in 1802. Dorothy's Journal says: "William and I left from Mary on Sunday afternoon, August 14th; and William, Colleridge, and I left on the 15th." I wonder if the poet ever went to Scotland.

294. AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS. As party reached Dumfrieds on the evening of the 17th. Under date of Thursday, the 16th, Dorothy wrote: "Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. He lies at the west end of the churchyard, and his son Francis lies beside him. We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, stating to each other his own verses:"

"Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career
Wild as the wave? —
Here let him pause and through a tear
Survey this grave."

295. THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A VISIT TO THE BANKS OF THE NITH. The following is extracted from the journal my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons unainted with my poems will know, I have no obliged on other occasions: — [W. W.]

"DUMFRIES, August 1803.
On our way to the churchyard where Burns was buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean air, and is in a bye situation; the front is strewed with dirt; the doors, as most such houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Anceis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some monument. There, said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies — (I have forgotten the name) — a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and rarely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph: —

"Is there a man, etc.

"The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes, obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, etc. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time by the seashore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour. The walls were coloured with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as a present. The house was clean and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right — his farm-house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot."

"I cannot take leave of this country which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighbourhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say, —

"Scruffa, from the sky
That Annandale doth crown, with a most amorous eye
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten him."

"These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying: —

"If Skiddaw hath a cap,
Scruffa was well of that."

"We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions; indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."

What could be more fitting than that the first-fruits of this visit to Scotland should be dedicated to the memory of that poet who had taught Wordsworth..."
"How verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth?"

These poems of his written in Burns’s favorite metre are the finest tribute ever paid to that "daring of the Muses."

Page 297. TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.
The tourists had the usual experience with Scottish weather, and when they left Loch Katrine for Loch Lomond it rained almost continually. The Journal for the 28th has the following:

"When beginning to descend the hill toward Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry until evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful; and the figures of both of them, in gray plaidss falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them." Long after his return Wordsworth wrote this poem in recollection of the experience at the ferry-house.

Page 298. GLEN-ALMAIN.
On leaving Dunkeld for Callander they concluded to go by Crieff, as the "Sma’ Glen" would be on their way.

"September 9. We entered the Glen at a small hamlet at some distance from the head, and turning aside a few steps ascended a hillock which commanded a view to the top of it, — a very sweet scene, a green valley, not very narrow, with a few scattered trees and huts, almost invisible in a misty gleam of afternoon light. The following poem was written by William on hearing a tradition relating to it."

— Journal.

Page 299. STEPPING WESTWARD.
From Callander they went to Loch Katrine. "We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening. Ben Lomond and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond were very majestic under the clear sky, the lake perfectly calm, and the air sweet and mild. The sun had been set for some time, when our path having led us close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly dressed women, without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening’s walk. One of them said to me in a friendly, soft tone of voice, ‘What! are you stepping westward?’ I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front, yet glowing with the departing sun. William wrote this poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine.” — Journal.

Page 300. THE SOLITARY REAPER.
Having crossed Loch Lomond they continued their journey through Glenaloch and Glenyle, along the side of Loch Voil between the bruses of Balquidder and Strathbey, and returned to Callander. Of the scenery by Loch Voil Dorothy says: "As we descended the scene became more fertile, our way was pleasantly varied, — through coppice and fields, and passing farm-houses, though with an intermixture of uncultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields were gay — might I say pensively? — enlivened by companies of reapers. It is not uncommon to see single person so employed. This poem was suggested to William by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson’s Tour in Scotland."

Page 300. ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE.
Soon after leaving Loch Lomond the ridge parted with the Wordsworths and passed on to Inverary and by Loch Awe-Dalmally.

Not far from the spot where Wordsworth poured out these verses is now to be seen a monument of rude unhewn stones erected together. This monument has been erected to the memory of Duncan MacIntyre, the Laird of Glenorchy — Fair Duncan of the Somnish who lived on the lands of the Earl of Breadalbane by whose family Kilchurn Castle had been built.

Line 43. Lost on the aereal heights of Crusades. The tradition is that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her husband in Palestine. W. W.

Page 301. SONNET COMPOSED AT CASTLE.
On returning from the Highlands they spent a day in Edinburgh and then went to Paisley. On the morning of Sept. 17 they walked to Lasswade, and met, for the first time, W. S. Scott, who was living there. In the afternoon Scott accompanied them to Roslin and with them to meet them at his house two days after. Passing on to Paisley, they traveled down the Tweed, past Newcast Castle.

Page 301. YARROW UNVISITED.
The Journal has the following: "September 18. We left the Tweed when we were about a mile and a half or two miles of Clovenford, where we were to lodge. Turned up the side of a hill and went along the sheep-paths till we reached the spot, — a single stone house. On our mentioning Mr. Scott’s name to the last of the house showed us all possible civility. Mr. Scott is respected everywhere; I believe that by favour of his name one might be hospitably entertained throughout all the borders of Scotland.

"At Clovenford, being so near to Yarrow we could not but think of the possibility of going thither, but came to the conclusion of reserving the pleasure for some future days in consequence of which, after our return, William wrote the poem which I shall transcribe.

The three poems upon the Yarrow, written in the metre of the old Yarrow ballads, sh
This year much of "The Prelude" was written.

Page 310. To the Cuckoo. 
Composed in the orchard at Town-End, Grasmere, 1804. W. W.

If, as Prof. Dowden thinks, the following from Dorothy’s Journal refers to this poem, the date should be 1802. She writes (May 14, 1802): "William tired himself with seeking an epithet for the Cuckoo."

Of all Wordsworth’s illustrations of the effect of sound upon the spiritual nature this is the finest. "Of all his poems," Mr. R. H. Hutton says, "the ‘Cuckoo’ is Wordsworth’s own darling."

Page 311. "She was a Phantom of Delight."
That so trivial an incident as the meeting of this Highland maid should have been thus cherished by the poet, and reproduced here, and in the "Three Cottage Girls," written nearly twenty years after, shows us how he valued his experiences.

It is hardly necessary to say that the subject of the poem is Mrs. Wordsworth. Allusions are also made to her in "The Prelude," book vi. 224; xii. 161; xiv. 206; and in "A Farewell," "To M. H.," "O dearer far than light and life are dear," 1824.

Page 311. "I wandered lonely as a cloud."
Town-End, 1804. The two best lines in it are by Mary. W. W.

The incident upon which this poem was founded occurred during a walk in Patterdale. Dorothy’s Journal says: "When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more, and yet more; and at last under the boughs of the trees we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore... I never saw daffodils so beautiful... they tossed and reeled and danced as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake."

Lines 21, 22. These lines were suggested by Mrs. Wordsworth. Daffodils still grow abundantly about Ullswater.

Page 312. The Affliction of Margaret. 
Written at Town-End, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to inquire of him after her son. W. W.

No poet could have drawn this portrait until
he had lived close to the realities of the humblest lives. As an old dalesman has said of him, "He was a kind man, there's no two words about that; if any one was sick i' the place he wad be off to see til 'em." Thus it was that he entered into the mystery of suffering, and became —

"Convinced at heart, how vain
A correspondence with the talking world
Proves to the most."

This is a companion picture to the "Story of Margaret" in "The Excursion," the purpose of both being to awaken in us a responsive chord to the sufferings of those about us, to further the culture of the finer feelings.

"Others will teach us how to dare
And against fear our breast to steal;
Others will strengthen us to bear;
But who, ah! who will make us feel?"

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Page 314. THE SEVEN SISTERS.
The story of this poem is from the German of Frederica Bruu.

Page 315. ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA.
Of Wordsworth's strong and deep love for his children we have frequent evidence in his poems. For Dora he seems to have had the most intense affection, loving her as his own soul. "The Longest Day," written in 1817, is addressed to her. After the sad illness of the dear sister, Dora became his comforter and stay, and occupied in his later life the same position which Dorothy had in his earlier. So dependent upon her did he become, that her marriage was a severe trial for him.

"When, in 1847, death came to her, a silence as of death fell upon him. . . . I believe his genius never again broke into song." —SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

Page 318. AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK.
We are familiar with the gifts of the princely merchants, Cottle, Poole, and the Wedgewoods, to Coleridge. This gift to Wordsworth by his patron is equally interesting.

In August, 1806, Wordsworth writes to Sir George Beaumont: "Applethwaite I hope will remain in my family for many generations."

The cottage is now the property of Wordsworth's grandchildren.

1805

This year "The Prelude" was completed.

Page 320. TO A SKY-LARK.
Of all Wordsworth's poems this seems the most inevitable; it is as spontaneous as the lark's own song. The idea that the life of Nature is one of enjoyment, of love and praise to the Almighty Giver, characterizes that spirit of religious awe in which Wordsworth walked with Nature.

Page 320. FIDELITY.
Scott first visited Dove Cottage in the year when, with Wordsworth and Sir Humphrey Davy, he climbed Helvellyn and viewed the scene of this accident. See Scott, "Helen"
The traveler who ascends Helvellyn takes a detour to Patterdale, by passing Striding Edge will see the monument erected there to commemorate this act.

Line 20. tarn. A small mere or lake mostly high up in the mountains. W. F.

Page 322. TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORIAL OF THE SAME DOG.
The dog "Music" died, aged and was falling into a draw-well at Gallow Hill.

Page 322. "WHEN TO THE ATTACH OF THE BUSY WORLD."
"Wordsworth assigned two dates to the poem. In editions of 1815, 1820, it is read while in the edition of 1836 and later editions is 1803." — DOWDEN. I have therefore put it before those relating to his brother's death.

In the year 1800 the brothers spent four months together at the Grasmere house, but had seen but little of each other since childhood, and at this time the poet formed a brother an intense and delicate appreciation of his poetry. In the fir-grove, now called the Grove, they spent many hours discussing whether the future of the Lyrical Ballads would be secure. John Wordsworth confidently believed that it would in time become appreciated, and he determined to assist his brother in whatever ways. As captain of a merchant vessel, he had acquired some means, and he used them to help the cottage, and looked forward to the day when he could settle at Grasmere and remain in the home in company with Dorothy and their son.

See "The Prelude," vii. 43.

Page 324. ELEGIAC VERSES IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH.
When in September, 1800, John Wordsworth left Grasmere, the brother and sister accompanied him as far as Grisdale Tarn, the way to Patterdale. They then parted; his was to be his farewell to Grasmere, but proved otherwise. Soon he was appointed captain of "Aberavenny," an East Indiaman; and on Feb. 5, 1805, when setting sail from London, through the incompetence of the captain she struck the reefs of.the Bill of Portland and was lost. Wordsworth says:

"A few minutes before the ship went my brother was seen talking to the first officer with apparent cheerfulness; he was standing a point where he could overlook the whole
e moment she went down, — dying, as he had 
ed, in the very place and point where his duty 
led him."

In execution of the poet's wish, —

"Here let a Monumental Stone 
Stand — sacred as a Shrine," —

The Wordsworth Society has caused lines 21-24, 
64 of this poem to be engraved upon a stone 
at the tarn.

Line 52. Meek Flower. Moss Campion 
elena aculea). This most beautiful plant is 
ure in England, though it is found in great 
undance upon the mountains of Scotland. 
first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native 
, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion 
ing at least eight inches in diameter, and the 
ent proportionally thick. I have only met 
that it in two places among our mountains, 
both of which I have since sought for it in 
in.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I cau 
them against carrying off, inconsiderately, 
and beautiful plants. This has often been 
ne, particularly from Ingleborough, and other 
mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have 
ally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers 
nature living near the places where they 
ow. W. W.

In 1808 I found the Meek Flower still grow 
g upon its native bed." See "The Pre 
d," xiv. 414.

Wordsworth says: "I never wrote a line 
the thought of giving him pleasure; 
y writings were his delight, and one of the 
ief solaces of his long voyages. But let me 
p. I will not be cast down; were it only for 
sake I will not be dejected."

This faith and fortitude was so strong in 
orwordsworth that he became a singular example 
the power of will to rise above the ills caused 
idents of every-day experience. This is 
a great moral lesson of his life. See Leslie 
phens, Hours in a Library, vol. ii., "Words 
worth's Ethics."

Page 335. ELEGiac STANZAS SUggested by 
PICTURE of PEeCLE CASTLE.

Line 1. I was thy neighbour once, etc. 
Wordsworth had spent four weeks of a col 
, vacation out there, at the house of his 
ain, Mrs. Burke." — CHRISTOPHER WOR 

Some have found, or think they have found, 
this poem an illustration of pathetic failuy. 
Ruskin calls it, — the imposition upon Nature 
the poet's own feeling. Let us see; in the 
rt part of the poem the poet views the sea at 
, not as a reflection of his own calm, but 
cause he has been familiar with it, not in 
erm but in calm; he knows its nature as man 
ated in repose, and hence cannot appreciate 
work of art which is at variance with his 
ogest impression. In the closing part of 
poem, he does not violate his philosophy, 
now having experienced what the storm at 
be can do, the impression of calm is replaced 
by that of storm, and hence he can supply what 
before was wanting, and appreciate the artist's 
work.

The following lines were written by Mary 
 Lamb, and sent to Dorothy on the death of 
C.aptain Wordsworth: —

"His voice they 'll always hear,
His face they 'll always see;
There's naught in life so sweet,
As such a memory."

Peole Castle, on the Isle of Man, was once a 
residence of the Princes of Mona.

"This painting still hangs in the gallery at 
Colesorton."—KNIGHT.

In writing to Sir George Beaumont, Aug. 1, 
1805, Wordsworth says: "I am glad you liked 
the verses. . . . It is a melancholy satisfaction 
to connect my dear brother with anybody whom I 
love so much."

Page 326. LOUISA.

Prof. Dowden says the following was most 
unhappily omitted from later editions: —

"And she hath smiles to earth unknown; 
Smiles, that with motion of their own 
Do spread, and sink, and rise; 
That come and go with endless play, 
And ever as they pass away, 
Are hidden in her eyes."

Page 327. To A YOUNG LADY.

This poem and the one which follows were 
addressed to Dorothy Wordsworth.

The following is from a letter by Dorothy: —

"He was never tired of comforting his sister; 
he never left her in anger; he always met her 
with joy; he preferred her society to every 
other pleasure."

See Dorothy Wordsworth, by Edmund Lee. 

Page 327. VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA.


This story was evidently the outcome of the 
illustrations which his friend Beaupuy gave of 
the tyranny of the noblesse in France, although 
the Fenwick note gives him another origin. Mr. 
E. Legouis says: "Beaupuy perceived that his 
friend was more easily to be captivated through 
his imagination than by argument, and intro 
duced some moving tale of passion."

Page 331. THE WAGGONER.

The subject of this sketch has an interesting 
history. On his hooded wagon was the sign: 
"William Jackson, Carrier, Whitehaven to 
Kendal and Lancaster." Jackson was no com 
mmon carrier like Milton's, who had no interests 
side from his carting. He was a lover of men 
and books. He was building Greta Hall in 
1800 and was contemplating retiring from active 
business. When Coleridge came north in this 
year, Jackson, who was introduced to him by 
Wordsworth, offered him a home with him at 
the Hall: later this circle was widened by the 
avdent of Southey and his family. Jackson's 
tomb may be seen in Crosthwaite Church. It
bears his coat of arms: a greyhound above, and below three crescents and stars, with the motto, "Semper paratus."—\*\*

Charles Lamb, "the soorner of the fields," after various entreaties on the part of Wordsworth and Coleridge, visited the Lakes in 1802, and was won by their charms.

He was delighted with the dedication of "The Waggoner" to him and wrote: "The Waggoner seems to be always open at the dedication. ... If as you say 'The Waggoner' in some sort came at my call, Oh! for a potent voice to call forth 'The Recluse' from its profound dormitory. ... You cannot imagine how proud we are here of the dedication. ... Benjamin is no common favourite."

No poem of Wordsworth's is more minutely connected with the lake land than this. The route described is over White Moss Common (now road through Wytheburn, St. John's Vale, to Keswick.

Three other poets have dealt with some aspects of this route of Benjamin: Gray in his Journal in the Lakes, Scott, in "The Bridal of Triermain," and Matthew Arnold in "Resignation."

"Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his wagon, he said, 'They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas.' "The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eye-witness." W. W.*

CANTO FIRST. Line 3. the buzzing dor-hawk, etc. When the Poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described: —

"The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune, Twirling his watchman's rattle about — "

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands. W. W.

Line 34. Now he leaves the lower ground. Takes the road over White Moss Common.

Line 53. Dove and Olive-bough. The sign which used to hang from Dove Cottage when it was a public house.

Line 88. Swan. The public house on the right of the road leading from Dove Cottage to Dunnmail Raise.

Line 90. painted. Of this sign Wordsworth wrote in 1819. "This rude piece of self-taught art (such is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted by a professional production."—\*\*

Line 168. Helm-crag. A mountain of Grassmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arrochar in Scotland. W. W.

On the terrace at Under Lameon; Crag, Wordsworth composed most of "Thackle."

Line 209. pile of stones. Still to be

on the Raise.

CANTO SECOND. Line 1. modest E. prayer. This chapel still stands opposed Head Inn.

Line 22. Cherry Tree. This still tree is no longer used as a public house.

Line 30. Merry-night. A term used in the North of England, as applied to festivals where young persons meet in dancing for the purpose of dancing.

W. W.

Line 97. fiddle's squawk. At the close of strathspey, or jig, a particular note not fiddle summons the Rustic to the arduous duty of saluting his partner. W. W.

CANTO THIRD. Line 29. Can any mortal love etc. After the line, "Can any mortal love her," followed in the MS. an whole which has been kept back. Part of expressed verses shall here be given as a section of private feeling, which the well-susan reader will find no difficulty in excusing. They are now printed for the first time.

"Can any mortal love her? It can: —

But Benjamin, in his vexation,
Possesses inward consolation;
He knows his ground, and hopes to find
A spot with all things to his mind,
An upright mural block of stone,
Moist with pure water trickling down,
A slender spring; but kind to man
It is, a true Samaritan;
Close to the highway, pouring out
Its offerings from a chink or spout;
Whence all, howe'er shut in, or drooping
With toil, may drink, and without stopping
Cries Benjamin, 'Where is it, where
Voice it hath none, but must be near.'
— A star, declining towards the west,
Upon the watery surface threw
Its image tranquilly immovable,
That just marked out the object and which
Right welcome service! . . .

Light is the strain, but not unequal
To Thee, and thy memorial trust
That once seemed only to express
Love that was love in idleness;
Tokens, as year hath followed year
How changed, alas, in character!
For they were woven on the smooth breast
By hands of those my soul loved best;
Meek women, men as true and brave
As ever went to a hopeful grave:
Their hands and mine, when side by side
With kindred seal and mutual pride,
We worked until the Initials took
Shapes that defied a scornful look —
Long as for us a genial feeling
Survives, or one in need of healing.
The power, dear Rock, around thee cast,
Thy monumental power, shall last
For me and mine! O thought of pala,
That would impair it or profane:
Take all in kindness then, as said
With a staid heart but playful head;
And fail not Thou, loved Rock! to keep  
Thy charge when we are laid asleep."  
W. W.

All the local allusions in this poem are readily recognised by one reading the poem on the spot, as given above, except perhaps the "Rock of Names." It was the custom of clerics and the Wordsworths to meet beside Birkmore for their tryling, as it was about half way between Grasmere and Keswick. On one occasion each member of the party carved initials on the face of a mountain stone standing beside the road:—

W. W.  
M. H.  
D. W.  
S. T. C.  
J. W.  
S. H.

his stone was preserved from spoliation by the care of Nature; for by the water which came from a little rill on the mountain side the ice became covered with moss and lichens so as to conceal the initials. When the city of Lancaster gained possession of Thirlmere, and was about to convert it into a reservoir, the rock would have been submerged by the rising water of the lake when it became dammed up, but for the thoughtfulness of Canon Rawnsley, who removed it to higher ground beside the new road.

Canto Fourth. Line 17. murmuring Greta.  
the vale of St. John.  

Line 21. Ghimmer-crag. The crag of the we lamb. W. W. This is not easily determined, as no crag now bears that name. Some think it is Fisher Crag.

Line 37. Nathdale Fell. The ridge, High sign, between Naddle Vale and that of St. John’s.

Line 43. Threlkeld-hall. The part of this in ruins is used as a farmhouse.

Line 61. Castrigg. Castlerig, the ridge between Naddle Vale and Keswick.

Page 340. FRENCH REVOLUTION.  
See "The Prelude," xi. 103-144.

1806

Page 340. CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY VARRIOR.  
The death of Nelson, at the moment of victory, touched the whole English nation. It occurred soon after the death of the poet’s father, and in giving voice to his emotion Wordsworth weaves together their memories in melody which for simplicity and power has no equal in the language.

In this poem we have the purest and noblest manifestation of that faith in God and Immortality which characterized Wordsworth as man and poet. It is this truth, revealed not so much to the eye of reason as to the eye of the soul, which renders the life of men and of nations divine.

Page 342. THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE.  
The scene of this poem is the old castle near the town of Egremont, on the river Eden, not far from St. Bees.

"This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor." W. W.

Page 345. "YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO."  
The relative position of the mountains in the district renders the production of echoes a common one. To one rowing upon Grasmere or Rydal Lake the voice is repeated with great variety; while the echoes from the blasting at the quarries remind one of the cannonading effect of thunder in our own Catstills.

Often while on Loughrigg Fells have I heard the voice of the cuckoo from across Rydal Mere. The terrace along the side of Loughrigg is one of the favorite walks. No stone is to be found bearing Dorothy’s name, and it is well that it is safe from the hand of the Philistine who has marred so many of these memorials.

Page 346. "NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT’S NARROW ROOM."  
[The Fenwick note refers not so much to this particular sonnet as to Wordsworth’s sonnet-writing in general. This was originally a "Prefatory Sonnet" prefixed to a group in the early editions of the Poems.]

Line 6. Furnace-fells. The hills west of Windermere, south of the Brathay and east of the Duddon. Furness Abbey was the centre of the ecclesiastical district known as Furness.

The note of liberty as developing under restraint is a common one in Wordsworth’s poetry. See "Ode to Duty."

Sir Henry Taylor says: "It may be noted that self-repetition is almost invariably incident to men of genius and constitutes a great element of their power."

Page 346. PERSONAL TALK.  
Wordsworth found a new use for the sonnet, and turned its force into fresh channels. While others had addressed several sonnets to the same person, no one until his time had so united a series that, while each sonnet was complete in itself, it at the same time formed a stanza of a larger poem. The four following, entitled "Personal Talk," illustrate this unity, evolution, and completeness.

Wordsworth’s domestic life was one of the brightest in the history of literary genius. Free, joyous, and contented in his cottage home—
which was even less pretentious than that of many of the humble dalesmen—he gave to the world an example of “plain living and high thinking.”

Lines 9-12 of Sonnet iv. are cut upon the pedestal of the poet’s statue in Westminster Abbey.

Page 347. “BELOVED VALE!” I SAID.
This refers to Hawkshead.

Page 348. “WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON.”
The first two lines are from Sidney’s “Astrophel and Stella,” xxxi.

Page 349. “THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US.”

Page 349. TO SLEEP.
This group of sonnets was evidently suggested by Wordsworth’s reading and attempting to translate those of Michael Angelo on this subject.

Page 350. TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.
First published in Prof. Knight’s edition, 1883.

“‘These were written in vol. i. of Lord Coleidge’s copy of Wordsworth’s Poetical Works, ed. 1836-1837.” — Dowden. The last four verses are a translation of the Latin by Thomas Warton.

Page 351. TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.
See “The Prelude,” xiv. 335-369, and note to “Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree.”
Memorials to William and Raisley Calvert are to be seen in the old Church of St. Kentigern, Crosthwaite, Keswick.

Page 351. “METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOTSTEPS OF A THRONE.”
“The sonnet alluded to in Wordsworth’s introductory note to this poem is: ‘Even so for me a Vision Sanctified,’ 1836.” — Knight.

Page 352. LINES COMPOSED AT GRASMERE.
Line 17. A Power, etc. Charles James Fox, Minister of Foreign Affairs, succeeded William Pitt. He died Sept. 13, 1806.

The description in the first stanza is extremely accurate, for in any of the vales of the district the effect of a sudden shower, even, is such as to produce a unison of voices from the beck, while the position of the mountains causes the sounds to be reverberated, as mentioned in a previous note.

Page 352. NOVEMBER 1806.
Lines 13, 14. “Danger which they fear, and honour which they understand not.” Wordsworth’s Life of Sir F. Sidney.

Page 353. ODE, INTIMATIONS OF IMPURITY.
To those familiar with Wordsworth’s before this date, the philosophy of the seem what in truth it is — “the broader finer spirit of all knowledge.” The theme in which the poet is represented are a reflection of what we have so often seen in poetry, — the relation of the soul to the possibility that the former may fake celestial birth. The subject of the poem, origin, development, and destiny of the soul — has seldom been absent from the scene but the treatment is in striking contrast in former methods. The total effect is the grandest in the literature of the era so that the term “inspired” is not when applied to the poet, who could pass such a result.

The chief value of the poem arises from the fact that it never descends to the plane of argument; it ever keeps on the high plane of the essential identity of our childish knowledge and our enlightened reason. The truths of the soul cannot be argued, they can be lived. In the first four stanzas we have experience of our common humanity, as we are to go in company with fear arow, — “miserable train,” — how we prevent ourselves from “wrocinging” the life that is about us? The poet in the next four stanzas, answers the question of viewing the history of the soul, and trace steps by which it reached that stage. That is because the soul has become woman in the seen and the temporal, and has added its glory and its beauty; it has walked and stroyed its spiritual vision. In the second stanza he shows us that this may be and the melancholy fear may be can by any return to those simple ways in which childhood walked. We must become like children in this life of the soul, and by the early intuition and mature reason we are able to see into the life of things. That the poet teaches better science than the scientist, better philosophy than the philosopher, and better religion than the priest. The line of the poem is worthy of the closest Lines 67-76. Reeskin cites these lines Modern Painters: “Ideas of Infinity,” and in the work of one whose authority has without appeal on all questions relating to influence of external things upon the human soul.”

In October, 1806, the Wordsworths and Sara Hutchinson left Dove Cottage for Colleorton, Leicestershire, to spend the winter in the farmhouses of Sir George Beaumont. While there, Wordsworth planned the grander Coleorton Hall and wrote many poems which forever associate him with the historic site. Here Scott and Coleridge visited him and hearing “The Prelude” recited to him.
dge wrote that pathetic poem "To a
man." Sir George Beaumont was an
of repute and a lover of letters. His in-
and helpful relations to Wordsworth
tide and Coleridge will be found recorded in Me-
lis of Colereton.

e 356. THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE
DICTIONARY OF SWITZERLAND.
1802 Napoleon crushed out the liberties of
land, in 1807 he was master of Europe,
was making gigantic preparations to in-

ere 356. TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE
PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABO-
OF THE SLAVE TRADE.
arkson's work began when he selected his
ct for his Latin essay at St. John's Col-
cambridge: "Anne liecat invitex in ser-
em dare?" From that time he devoted
elf to the abolition of the slave trade,
most powerful opposition arose against
and not until the accession of Fox, in
the cause gain advantage in Parlia-
; in March, 1807, the Government declared
ave trade illegal.
arkson lived from 1795 to 1806 at Emsmere,
Ullswater, where the Wordsworths were
ent guests.

age 357. THE MOTHER'S RETURN.
he Fenwick note here is incorrect, as the
n was written at Coleorton by Dorothy,
Wordsworth and Mary were in Lon-

Mrs. Wordsworth has a strong impression :
'The Mother's Return' was written at
orton, where Miss Wordsworth was then
ng with the children, during the absence
he former." W. W.

age 358. TO LADY BEAUMONT.
fany memorials of Wordsworth's skill as a
decapitator are to be seen in the grounds
coleorton.

Page 358. "THOUGH NARROW BE THAT
D MAN'S CARES."

Line 10. Seven Whistlers. A kind of weird
ers, according to the old tradition.

Line 12. Gabriel's Hounds. Alluding to
ery of wild geese when in flight, which
ndis a pack of beagles in full cry.

Page 359. SONG AT THE FEAST OF
COCKHAM CASTLE.

Henry Lord Clifford, etc., who is the sub-
t of this Poem, was the son of John Lord
fford, who was slain at Tawton Field,
ch Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader
English history, was the person who after
 battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit,
 young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of
rk, who had fallen in the battle, "in part
venged" (say the Authors of the History
umberland and Westmoreland); "for the
Earl's Father had slain his." A deed which
worthily blemished the author (saith Speed);
but who, as he adds, "dare promise any thing
perate of himself in the heat of martial
fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave
any branch of the York line standing; for so
one maketh this Lord to speak." This, no
obt, I would observe by the bye, was an
on sufficient to maintain the vindictive spirit of the
time; and yet not altogether so bad as repre-
sented; "for the Earl was no child, as some
writers would have him, but able to bear arms,
between sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is
evident from this (say the Memoirs of the
Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably
xious to wipe away, as far as could be, this
stigma from the illustrious name to which she
was born), that he was the next Child to King
Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by
Richard Duke of York, and that King was
then eighteen years of age: and for the small
distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vin-
cent, in his Book of Nobility, p. 622, where he
writes of them all."

It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself
only twenty-five years of age, had been a
leading man and commander two or three
years together in the army of Lancaster, before
this time; and, therefore, would be less likely
to think that the Earl of Rutland might be en-
titled to mercy from his youth. — But, inde-
pendent of this act, at best a cruel and savage
one, the Family of Clifford had done enough
to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the
House of York: so that after the Battle of
Towton there was no hope for them but in
flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of
the Poem, was deprived of his estate and
honours during the space of twenty-four years;
all which time he lived as a shepherd in York-
shire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his
father-in-law (Sir Lancaster Threlkeld) lay. He
was restored to his estate and honours in the
first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded
that, when called to Parliament, he behaved
nobly and wisely; but otherwise came seldom
to London or the Court; and rather delighted
to live in the country, where he repaired sev-
eral of his Castles, which had gone to decay
during the late troubles." Thus far is chieflly
collected from Nicholson and Burn; and I can
add, from my own knowledge, that there is a
tradition current in the village of Threlkeld
and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that
in the course of his shepherd-life he had ac-
quired great astronomical knowledge. I can-
not conclude this note without adding a word
upon the subject of those numerous and noble
feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the
ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great
an ornament to that interesting country. The
Cliffords had always been distinguished for an
honourable pride in these Castles; and we have
seen that, after the wars of York and Lanca-
ter, they were rebuilt; in the civil wars of
Charles the First they were again laid waste,
and again restored almost to their former mag-
significance by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, etc. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, while the estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Broughton, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap., 12th verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader: — "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations. W. W.

Lines 1-4. Brougham Castle is situated on the river Emont, about one mile and a half from Penrith. It is now in ruins. During the last half of the sixteenth century the castle was neglected, and it suffered much as Furness Abbey has suffered, — the stone of which has been used for dwellings. Brave and bonny" Cumberland during the Border Wars and the Wars of the Roses erected castle after castle, many ruins of which now stand, grim historians of the political life of those days. See "Prelude," vi. 190-220.

Line 7. From first battle of St. Albans, 1455, to battle of Bosworth, 1485.


Line 27. Earth helped him with the cry of blood. This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony, and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers's Collection of English Poets. W. W.

Line 36. Skipton. Castle in Yorkshire comprised in the estates of the Cliffords, deserted while the Peasant Lord was attained. When the dissolution of the Monasteries was followed by insurrection the dispossessed Heads were finally repulsed at Skipton by the Earl of Northumberland.

Line 40. Pendragon. Another of the castles of the Cliffords, near the source of the river Eden, Cumberland, destroyed in 1686. Its origin is ascribed to Uther Pendragon, the mighty Briton who withstood so long the ravages of the ruthless Saxons. Tradition says he tried to alter the course of the river to better fortify this castle, but failed.

"Let Uther Pendragon do what he can, The river Eden will run as it ran." 

Lines 44, 45. Brough Castle on the Hillbeck stream, which flows into the Eden, and is probably older than the Norman Conquest.

Line 46. And she, etc. Appleby Castle a ruin since 1565.

Line 54. The mother of Henry Lord Carl was Margaret, daughter of Lord Vesci.

Line 73. Carrock's side. Not far from Carl Sowerby, Cumberland.

Lines 89-92. Mosedale, etc. The vale of Mosedale is north of Blencathara (Saddleback mountain not far from Keswick. Glenskelekin rises on the high ground not far from a deblake.

Lines 94-100. Sir Lancelot Thrakeld sealed the boy on his estates in Cumberland.

In "The Waggoner" we have: —

"And see beyond that hamlet small The ruined towers of Thrakeld Hall, There at Blencathara's rugged head, Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat To noble Clifford."

The hall is now a ruin, save one portion as a farmhouse.

Line 122. fish. It is imagined by the poet of the country that there are two immortal inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in mountains not far from Thrakeld. — Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and present name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback. W. W.

Lines 142-145. These lines have a grand epic ring, and reflect the life of the time-time filled with the prejudices, the peace, and the pomp of war. The Northern Hags seem to have contributed their full share toward all these. In 1584 we find that Cumberland and Westmoreland furnished "for thousand three hundred and fifty horse archers, and billmen." The Kendal men were mentioned with honor at the battle of Flod—

"There are the bows of Kentdale bold Who fierce will fight and never flee."

Wordsworth's Muse loves to range

"Where untroubled peace and concord dwell, and seldom does she lead him into the fields of chivalry and romance. In but two instants do we have subjects which would permit it full epic treatment."

In this poem he does not dwell, as he would have done, upon the mastering of forces, the description of the leaders, the end of battle, and the deeds of prowess, but those qualities of the Shepherd Lord which distinguish him as a man and by which he endeared to all. The treatment is subjective rather than objective; and in its rapid movement from the jubilate at the opening, through the various phases of family fortune, to the slowly moving, meditative stanzae at the close, the poem is representative of that variety of form and feeling of which Wordsworth was master. This is, I take it, what Coleridge means when he says:

"From no contemporary writer could
...be quoted, without reference to the
s which they are to be found, for their
dependent weight and beauty.”

142., 143.

Armour rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls.

martial character of the Clifford's is well
to the readers of English history; but
not be improper here to say, by way of
nt on these lines and what follows, that
several others who perished in the same
: the four immediate Progenitors of the
: in whose hearing this is supposed to be
all died in the Field. W. W.

361. THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.
ough this poem was begun in 1607 it was
years before it assumed its final form.
worth visited the scene of the poem
seven district of Yorkshire — on his return
Colesorton to Grimarere in the summer of

events upon which the poem is based
ed in 1569, the twelfth year of the reign
seen Elizabeth, as given in the old ballad
Ry Reliques,” “The Rising of the North,”
mpression of Mary Queen of Scots
pered her followers in the north and a plan
: marriage to the Duke of Norfolk and
:aration of the old faith was formed by
: the English nobles, among them the
: of Northumberland and Westmoreland.
: this was known to Elizabeth she sent
: to the Tower and summoned the Earls
: pear at court. But instead of complying
: gathered their vassals at Brancepeth
: in Yorkshire, where they were joined by
: of the ancient family, Richard Norton,
:is eight sons. They entered Durham, had
: said, and then set out for York. On their
: they laid siege to Barnard Castle, which was
: by Sir George Bowes, a follower of Eliza-
:
: While this was taking place Sussex came
: them from York and the insurgents
: heart, returned towards the Border and
: Earls escaped into Scotland. Norton and
: ons fell into the hands of Sussex and were
to death. These are the events of the
: the ballad, but Wordsworth's poem centres its
: about the fate of the Normans and the
: tradition of that sole survivor, Emily with
: White Doe. The scenery surrounding the
: old Hall, the
tities of the famous Priory, and the decay
: ancient chivalry are impressive to the modern
:or.

The Poem of 'The White Doe of Rylstone'
: on a local tradition, and on the Bal-
: in Percy’s Collection, entitled 'The Rising
: the North.' The tradition is as follows:—
:out this time,’ not long after the Dissolu-
: 'a White Doe,' say the aged people of
:bourhood, 'long continued to make a
:ly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells
: Bolton, and was constantly found in
: the Churchyard during divine service; after
: close of which she returned home as regu-
lary as the rest of the congregation.'” — DR.
: “Rylstone was the property and residence of
: the Normans, distinguished in that ill-advised
: and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me
to connect with this tradition the principal cir-
: cumstances of their fate, as recorded in the
: Ballad.

“Bolton Priory,” says Dr. Whitaker in his
: excellent book, The History and Antiquities of the
: Deanery of Craven, “stands upon a beauti-
: ful curvature of the Wharf, on a level suffi-
: ciently elevated to protect it from inundations,
: and low enough for every purpose of picturesque
: effect.

“Opposite to the East window of the Priory
: Church, the river washes the foot of a rock
: nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple,
: where several of the mineral beds, which break
: out instead of maintaining their usual inclina-
: tion to the horizon, are twisted by some incon-
: ceivable process into undulating and spiral
: lines. To the South all is soft and delicious;
: the eye repose upon a few rich pastures, a
: moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tran-
: quil to form a mirror to the sun, and the
: bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too
: lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of
: his rays.

“But after all, the glories of Bolton are on
: the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste
could require to constitute a perfect landscape,
is not only found here, but in its proper place.

In front, and immediately under the eye, is a
smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted
with native elm, ash, etc., of the finest growth:
: on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting
: points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse.
: Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton
: Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet,
: the barren and rocky distances of Simon-seat
: and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth,
: fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley
: below.

“About half a mile above Bolton the valley
: closes, and either side of the Wharf is over-
hung by solemn woods, from which huge per-
: pendicular masses of grey rock jut out at
: intervals.

“This sequestered scene was almost inaccessi-
: ble till of late, that ridings have been cut on
: both sides of the river, and the most interesting
: points laid open by judicious thinnings in
: the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a
: waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to
: mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the
: Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in
: the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclos-
: ing a woody island — sometimes it reposes for
: a moment, and then resumes its native character,
: lively, irregular, and impetuous.

“The cleft mentioned above is the tremen-
dous SRID. This chasm, being incapable of
: receiving the winter floods, has formed on
: either side a broad strand of naked gristone
: full of rock-basins, or "pots of the Linn,"
: which bear witness to the restless impetuousity
of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like "the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters," heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

"The terminal point of the landscape is the remains of Bardoe Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite." — W. W.

DEDICATION. In this poem the author suggests the kind of interpretation to which the spiritual romance of the White Doe is susceptible.

Line 1. In trellised shed, etc. In the garden at Dove Cottage.

Page 362. "Action is transitory." This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago. W. W. The verses are from "The Borderers," act ii. scene 4. 405-410.

CANTO FIRST. Line 1. From Bolton's old monastic tower. It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge." — W. W.

Line 27. A Chapel. The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral. W. W.

This chapel still stands; the rest of the church is a ruin.

Line 34. Prior's Oak. At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for 70L. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber. W. W.

The location of the tree is not now known.

Line 58. A solitary Doe. A White Doe, say the aged people of the neighbourhood, long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Ryilstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service. W. W. 1713.

Line 126. She sees a warrior carved in stone. No record of this can now be found at Bolton. It may have been only a creation of the poet.

Line 170. It was a solitary mound. The grave of Francis Norton cannot be found.

Line 226. When Lady Ailina mourning. The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection. "The Force of Prayer." — W. W.

Line 242. yon chantry door. At the East end of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church is a chantry belonging to Bethnesly Hall, and a vault where, according to tradition, the Cap- hams (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Manulevers) were interred on the right. John de Clapham, of whom this chantry is probably in his time; he was a venerated parson of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffs, seemed to survive.

W. W.

Line 268. Who loved the Shepherd-son: meet. Among these Poems will be found an entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brough Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burn and Nicholson's History of Cumbria and Westmorland. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him from Dr. Whitaker, who says he "retired in the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keepers' lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of a servant himself. I think the troublesome man resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have examined at Barden.

"His early habits, and the want of these artificial measures of time which even the herdsmen now possess, had given him a turn in observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and, having purchased such an apparatus could then be procured, he amused and formed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was the known of the science.

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company."

"For, from the family evidences, I have with two MSS. on the subject of Aker, which, from the character, spelling, etc., almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originals deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffs, I might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of the Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with."

"In these peaceful employments Lord Harford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by heats of peace."
survived the battle of Flodden and died April 23rd, 1529, aged about 70. His last will be appointed his body to be buried at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland, at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire."

respects to the Canon of Bolton, Dr. John Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanking God for Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day." This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville’s Cross from the following circumstance:

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone work was erected and dedicated to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Neville’s Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "the Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made" (which is then described at great length), "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relic and corporal-cloth enclosed, etc., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried, and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean Whittingham, whose wife, called Katharine, being a French woman (as is most credibly reported by eyewitnesses), did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly relics." — Extracted from a book entitled Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery. It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field. W. W., Barnard’s Tower. On the Tees, Yorkshire.

Canto Fifth. Line 8. Norton Tower. It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: — "Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Northons and Cliffs. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsaworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories..."
high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are peculiarly tall), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch-tower." W. W.

Of this only the roofless walls now stand.

CANTO SEVENTH. Line 18. despoiol and desolation. "After the attainer of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2d or 3d of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland." From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that "the mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, and off, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium; for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, an island, etc. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainer of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey, among the old tenants is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butcher to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon." W. W.

Line 157. Amerdale. "At the extremity of the parish of Burnsal, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfdale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrok, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Ternonic word, signifying concealment." — DR. WHITAKER. W. W.

Line 212. "geu us spir." On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, "I. N." for John Norton, and the motto, "geu us spir." W. W.

Line 223. rock-encircled Pound. Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: "On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the S.W. to the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W., where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such ponds for deer, etc., were far from being uncommon in the west of Scotland. The principle of them was a thing like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the face on the outside, yet so high without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better than the neighbouring parks or forests; whoever is acquainted with the habits of sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that the leader was once tempted to descend, the snare, a herd would follow."

I cannot conclude without recommending the notice of all lovers of beautiful Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. An enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Norfolk; and the superintendence of it has, for some years been entrusted to the Rev. W. Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added, has managed to do justice to the place, by working with a visible hand of art in the very spirit of W. W.

For a contrast of the two types of criticism in this great poem, compare Jeffrey's in the Edinburgh Review, and Prof. Shairpe's in Ancient Poetry.

1808

Page 382. COMPOSED WHILE THE ACT WAS . . . WRITING A TRACT.

Dove Cottage now became too small for growing family, and this year Wordsworth moved to Allan Bank, across the lake a foot of Silver How. At this time he was working on his pamphlet the "Convention of tra," now printed in prose works, vol. iii. "The Excursion."

Page 382. GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN.

This poem was never published by Wordsworth. It appeared in De Quincey's Notes of Grasmere. The parents lost their lives in a snowstorm, on the way from Langdale to Grasmere, and six children were left orphans. Wordsworths found homes for them. In 1820 Dorothy wrote Lady Beaumont: "I am happy to inform you that the orphan has been fixed under the care of very respectful people. . . . I am going to transcribe a poem composed by my brother a few days after his return." Memorials of Coleront, ii. p. 53.

1809

Page 383. HOFFER.

The sonnets of this year on the Tyrolese herdsmen — patriots who fought in vain for the French under the leadership of Auberger — Hoffen, an innkeeper in the Forêt des Mouflons, sound the note of Independence and Liberty, which he early learned among the sheep on his own Westmoreland hills.
Page 384. "AND IS IT AMONG RUDE UNTUCHED DALES." This and the two sonnets which follow sing praise of the Spanish patriot, Palafax.

Page 384. "HAIL, ZARAGOZA." In this Sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer. W. W.

Page 385. "BRAVE SCHILL! BY DEATH DELIVERED, TAKE THY FLIGHT." Ferdinand von Schill attempted to liberate Germany from the tyranny of Napoleon, but as killed at Stralsund in 1809.


Page 385. "LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVENTURER." This sonnet on Napoleon is in contrast to that which precedes.

Page 386. "IS THERE A POWER," ETC. This sonnet evidently refers to Palafax.

Page 387. ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY. T. Quintius Flamininus, who defeated Philip of Macedon and gave freedom to Greece in 196 B.C., at the celebration of the Isthmian Games.

Page 387. UPON THE SAME EVENT. Alluding to the fact that the Eotians after closing Flamininus at Cyzicus insisted on his expulsion of the Macedonians.

Page 388. O'ERWORKING STATESMEN. See Labore's Character of the Spanish People; from him the statement of these lines were taken. W. W.

Page 388. EPIGRAMS TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN. The nine Epigrams which follow are from the Italian poet Chiaberra who was born in Savona, 392.

II. Line 13.

la vita gia condù o i suoi pensieri
Erano tutti ross.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer his original. W. W.

Page 389. IN JUSTICE TO THE AUTHOR, I ABJOIN THE ORIGINAL:

— o degli amici
Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

W. W.

Page 393. EPISTLE TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART. In August Wordsworth went to Bootle with his family in order that his children might have a change. They went by way of Red Bank, Loughrigg Tarn, and Little Langdale, to Yewdale, and over Walna Scar to the Duddon, thence to Bootle.

Line 59. Mona's Isle. Wordsworth in a letter, written from Bootle to Sir George Beaumont Aug. 28, 1811, says: "The Isle of Man is right opposite our window."

Line 189. that Abode. Sir George purchased Loughrigg Tarn, intending to build a summer cottage upon it in order to be near Wordsworth for a part of the year, but for some reason the cottage was not built, the Tarn was sold and the money given to Wordsworth; he used it to purchase the yew trees which still stand in the Poet's Corner, Grasmere Churchyard.

In July, 1804, Wordsworth wrote to Sir George Beaumont: "Loughrigg Tarn is a perpetual mortification to me when I think that you and Lady Beaumont were so near having a summer seat here."

NOTE.—LOUGHRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or Speculum Diane as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," so called from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. W. W.

Page 398. ON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE. This must have been written in 1841, but I place it here, as it should be read with the foregoing.


Writing to Sir George Beaumont from Bootle, Aug. 28, 1811, Wordsworth says: "Over the chimney-piece is hung your little picture from the neighbourhood of Coleorton."
Page 399. Inscriptions:
In the grounds of Coleorton.
Although this poem was written in 1808 it belongs naturally with these Coleorton poems.
The student should read Memorials of Coleorton, vol. i. 1805-7, for an account of the work which Wordsworth did for Sir George during these years.
"Although the cedar has yielded to the ravages of time, the inscription still remains on the stone." — Knight.

In a Garden of Sir George Beaumont, Bart.
Line 8. This little Niche. "The niche may still be seen at Coleorton." — Knight.
Written at the Request of Sir George Beaumont, Bart.
This was written in 1808, but belongs naturally here. In 1811 Wordsworth wrote to Sir George relative to an attempt at recording these lines: "I hope this will do: I tried a hundred different ways, but cannot hit upon anything better.

For a Seat in the Groves of Coleorton.
Line 4. In 1811 Wordsworth wrote to Lady Beaumont: "Grace Dieu is itself so interesting a spot, and has naturally and historically such a connection with Coleorton, that I could not deny myself the pleasure of paying it this mark of attention."

1812
During this year Wordsworth's life was darkened by the death of little Catherine and Thomas, and not much creative work was done. The estrangement from Coleridge also began at this time.

Page 401. Song for the Spinning Wheel.
It will be interesting in connection with this poem to read the account of Ruskin's success in reinstating the spinning-wheel in the Lakes as given by Canon Rawnsley in his Ruskin in the English Lakes.

"This poem refers to the marriage of Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Thomas Hutchinson, to Mary Monkhouse, November 1, 1812." — Knight.

Page 401. Water-Fowl.

1813
During this year the Parsonage was given up and they settled at Rydal Mount.

Page 402. View from the Top of Black Comb.
The Druid-haunted hill of Black Comb is near Bootle in the south of Cumberland is the scene of Faber's poem "Sir Lanf

Page 403. November 1813.
This poem refers to the victory of the Allied Forces over Napoleon. The aged King was George III.

1814
Page 403. The Excursion.
"The Excursion" was in process from 1812 to 1814. The story of Margaret in the first book and a few lines at the close of the fourth book took shape at Racedown, Alfoxden, 1795-8. At Duve Cottage and Bank the work was completed, while Craggs was dictating The Friend under the name of Dorothy's Grassmere Journal, 1801-2, from alludes to the poet's care in writing of "The Pedlar," as she played the poem. She says: "William works on the 'Pedlar'; " "Sate up late at the Pedlar;" "William worked hard at the Pedlar and tired himself." It was published in 1814 and October 1820. It was a quartino that Jeffrey stamped as judicious with the exclamation, "This will never..." adding: "The case of Mr. Wordsworth we perceive, is now manifestly hopeless; and give him up as altogether incurable, and yond the power of criticism." It is a letter from Jeffrey to Arnold; and in the next point of view in regard to Wordsworth has changed from judicial to sympathetic that as Mr. Walter Raleigh says: "In one who has felt, even remotely, the elevation of thought and the lonely sort of emotion that upheld the poet through his dealings with this human agony ("White Doe"), the comments of Jeffrey, like the noises of a street brawl breaking upon the performance of a grave and solemn symphony."

To the Right Hon. William E. Lonsdale, K.G. etc. See sommet, "Lamps in thy majestic Pile are seen," and note.

Book First. The local allusions in "The Excursion" refer mainly to places in Grasmere the vales of Little and Great Langdale. Characters and incidents are in main historic. Each is idealized at times to suit the part of the poet. Like the rest of Wordsworth works, "The Excursion" gains much in color and beauty when read in the scenes to which it alludes. The first book has the least of coloring, and is in many respects the most critical. The Wanderer, as Wordsworth tells in the Fenwick note, was one James Pace of Scotshman, who died of fever. His grave may be seen in the churchyard of Kendal. To one familiar with The Prelude it will be evident that in creating this character the poet has repeated much of an autobiography; the Wanderer is some Wordsworth.
1. “Twas summer, etc. See "Nature"—The scenery of which is at Hawkshaw.


3. 132. So the foundations of his mind were
See "Prelude," ii.

4. 197. Such was the Boy, etc. This is
the most Wordishonian note in "The
sion."

5. 234. The divine Milton. Charles Lamb, in
"Paradise lost, etc."—Note: "Charles Lamb, to the best
part of Milton, and therefore the wonder
of this pleasant edition. Jan. 2d, 1820."

6. 341. much did he see of men. At the
of giving a shock to the prejudices of
society, I have ever been ready to pay
go to the aristocracy of nature; and a
ction that vigorous human-heartedness is
constituent principle of true taste. It may
however, be satisfactory to have prose
mony how far a Character, employed for
ises of imagination, is founded upon gen-
fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from
author who had opportunities of being well
ainted with a class of men, from whom my
personal knowledge emboldened me to
t this portrait.

We learn from Cesar and other Roman
ers, that the travelling merchants who fre-
atred Gaul and other barbarous countries,
er newly conquered by the Roman arms, or
nering on the Roman conquests, were ever
first to make the inhabitants of those
tries familiarly acquainted with the Ro-
n modes of life, and to inspire them with an
ination to follow the Roman fashions, and
joy Roman conveniences. In North Amer-
travelling merchants from the Settlements
re done and continue to do much more to-
ards civilising the Indian natives, than all the
sionaries, papist or protestant, who have
r been sent among them.

It is farther to be observed, for the credit of
most useful class of men, that they com-
only contribute, by their personal manners,
t to the sale of their wares, to the
ement of the people among whom they
v. Their dealings form them to great
ickness of wit and acuteness of judgment,
aving constant occasion to recommend them-
ives and their goods, they acquire habits of
ost obliging attention, and the most in-
ating address. As in their peregrinations
y have opportunity of contemplating the
ners of various men and various cities, they
ome eminently skilled in the knowledge of
world. As they wander, each alone, through
ly-inhabited districts, they form habits of
fection and of sublime contemplation. With all
ese qualifications, no wonder that they should
en be, in remote parts of the country, the
ememors of fashion, and cusars of man-
ers; and should contribute much to polish the
ughness and soften the rusticity of our peas-
try. It is not more than twenty or thirty
ears since a young man going from any part
Scotland to England, of purpose to carry the
pack, was considered as going to lead the life
and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When,
after twenty years’ absence in that honourable
of employment, he returned with his acquis-
tions to his native country, he was regarded
as a gentleman to all intents and purposes.”

W. W.

Line 370. He could afford to suffer, etc. See
"Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree," ii.
483.

Line 420. Plain his garb, etc. A portrait of
Wordsworth himself as given by many con-
temporaries.

Line 511. “I speak,” continued he, “of One,”
etc. The local setting here is in the southwest
of England — Dorsetshire and Somersetshire.
In the incidents and pictures of this wonderful
poem we have Wordsworth at his best; there
are no theories, no maxims or proverbs for
practice — only the solemn and moving
spectacle ministering to the spirit of wonder
and awe. Coleridge says of it:

“I was in my twenty-fourth year when I had
the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth
personally, and, while memory lasts, I shall
hardly forget the sudden effect produced on
my mind by his recitation of a manuscript poem
which still remains unpublished, but of which
the stanza and tone of style were the same as
those of ‘The Female Vagrant,’ as originally
printed in the first volume of the Lyrical
Balls. There was here no mark of strained
thought or forced diction, no crowd or turbu-
ence of imagery; and, as the poet hath himself
well described in his ‘Lines on Re-visiting the
Wye,’ manly reflection and human associations
had given both variety and an additional inter-
est to natural objects, which in the passion
and appetite of the first love they had seemed
to him neither to need or permit.”

BOOK SECOND. The localities in which the
scenes of this book are laid may be readily
identified although some of the details are baf-
fing. The route taken by the Poet and the
Wanderer was that on the west of Grassmere
Lake over Red Bank to Ellswart and the vales
of Great and Little Langdale.

Line 62. Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,
etc. See "Song at the Feast of Broughton Castle;"

“Love he had found in huts where poor men lie," etc.

Line 92. mountains stern and desolate. The
Langdales.

Line 130. annual Wake. Folk festivals, com-
mon in the valley, then and not yet extinct.

Line 127. brook hill. Lingmoo, — which
divides Great Langdale from Little Langdale.

Line 155. In a spot, etc. Blea Tarn in
Little Langdale.

Line 175. Chaplain. See Wordsworth’s ac-
count of the Solitary in the Fenwick note intro-
ducing this poem.

Line 213. That promised everlasting joy to
Line 318. wide vale. Great Langdale.
Line 324. A steep ascent . . . dreary plain.
They evidently ascended Lingmoor at its highest point to the Tarn, on its summit.
Line 325. tumultuous waste, etc. From the top of Lingmoor many of the mountains of the lakes are visible.
Line 328. little lowly vale. Little Langdale.
Line 339. one abobe. Blea Tarn house.
Lines 343, 347. band of rustic persons, etc. A vivid description of the type of ceremony at that time current in the vales, and even now not altogether extinct in Cumberland and Westmoreland.
Line 404. wound from crag to crag, etc. Descending to Blea Tarn Cottage.
Line 420. a little turf-built seat. The location of this will give the traveler some trouble; it is evidently near the Ghyll.
Line 638. the Cottage. As humble as Dove Cottage at Grasmere. It has three small rooms on lower and four on upper floor. It is used now as a semi-public house.
Line 692. two huge Peaks. The Langdale Pikes.
Line 696. Many are the notes, etc. One who has been in the North will never forget how Wordsworth has caught the spirit of the scene in this passage.
Line 741. The Housewife, etc. The character of the hostess and all the incidents associated with this episode belong to Patterdale. See Fenwick note.
Nothing like the closing passage in this book is to be found in any other poet. It reveals the truth of Coleridge's fifth characteristic of Wordsworth's work. He says: "Lastly, and pre-eminently, I challenge for this post the gift of imagination in the highest and strictest sense of the word... . In imaginative power he stands nearest of all moderns to Shakespeare and Milton; and yet in a kind perfectly unobtruded and his own."

BOOK THIRD. The scenery of the book is that associated with Blea Tarn and Little Langdale.
Line 14. How Nature hems you in, etc. A characteristic of every vale in the district, especially that of Little Langdale. There is no egress except by a single road without a climb.
Line 30. a semicircle of turf-clad ground, etc. This description is wonderfully true to the conditions about the Tarn as they are to-day, and careful search will reveal its every detail: "the mass of rock," "the holly," the "softly creeping brook," and the fir trees.
Lines 34-100. Ruskin cites these lines in Modern Painters, vol. i., "Truth of open Sky."
Line 112. Lost in unsearchable eternity! Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's Theory of the Earth, a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.


"In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquis insensum et mirabile, sed praecedit mihi pales illa, quá sederebamus, rupes; erat maxima et asima, et quá terram respicebat, mollior semetipsum adaltitudinem suam dissimulatam; quæ verò horrendum præceps, et quasi ad perpendiculum factura, inauria. Praeterita igitur marina aderó erat levius ac uniformis (quoque) rupebus aliquando observare licet, ac si eos visisset ad summo ad imum, in illo plano; "terre motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divisus.

"Ima pars rupea erat cava, receussaque in eam, et saepe specus, euntes in vacuo montes, sitae natura pridem factos, sine egresso maiore, sed fragum, cum obscurum et et fortiter exas vacabat et frangere, sustentis maris factio quae iterum spumantes reddidit astrum. quasi ab imo ventre evominit.

"Dextrum latus montis erat præpugnator aspero saxo et nudæ caute; sinistrum non modo neglexerat Natura, arboribus utroque et prope pedem montis rivos limido praepugnator; quibus vicinam vallem irrigaverunt, lento motu serpens, et per varios mesures quasi ad prostrahendum vitam, in maris magnis absortus subito perit. Denique in vertice promontorii, commode emeniat, cui insidiam contemplabilia, Vale sœcum salutum. Rege dignus: Augustae rupea, semper mihi memoranda et."

"P. 89. Telluris Terræ sacræ, etc. Edito secundo. W. W.
Lines 143-144. that huge Pile... on Sara's naked plain. Stonabunge. See "Guilf and Seow," p. 19.
Lines 231, 232. Wisdom is of times we... we stoop than when we soar. See Aphorism de Vere, Wisdom and Truth of Wordsworth's Poetry, in vol. i., "Essays chiefly on Poetry.
Line 307. Blow winds of autumn, etc. See "Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."
He then quotes these lines. See Morley’s Life of Gladstone, vol. i. p. 67.

Line 39. Yet I will praise thee, etc. Sir Leslie Stephen, who has written a most illuminating essay on Wordsworth’s Ethics, says: “The purpose then of the ‘Excursion,’ and of Wordsworth’s poetry in general is to show how the higher faculty reveals a harmony which we overlook when with the Solitary we skil amon the surface of things.”

Line 111. What visionary powers, etc. A perversion here in memory to the experiences revealed in the second book of “The Prelude.”

Line 123. Those fervent raptures are for ever flown, etc. The half-conscious instincts of youth have passed into enlightened reason through the years that bring the philosophic mind. The identity of the two revelations constitutes Wordsworth’s optimism.

Line 130. ‘Tis, by comparison, etc. See, upon this subject, Baxter’s most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (dately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth’s Ecclesiastical Biography. W. W.

Line 197. not fearing for our creed, etc. The most significant tribute to the truth of this philosophy has been given by Sir Leslie Stephen. He says: “Other poetry becomes trifling when we are making our inevitable passages through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Wordsworth’s alone retains its power. We love him the more as we grow older and become impressed with the sadness and seriousness of life. . . He is a prophet and a moralist as well as a mere singer.”

Line 205. Alas! etc. This subject is treated at length in the Ode — “Intimations of Immortality.” W. W.

Line 324. Knowing the heart of man, etc. The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the last lines, printed in italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man’s mind in a time of public commotion.

“Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks Of tyrant’s threats, or with the surly brow Of Power, that proudly sits on others’ crimes; Charged with more crying sins than those he checks The storms of and confusion that may grow Up in the present for the coming times, Appal not him: that hath no side at all, But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.”

“Although his heart (so near allied to earth) Cannot but pity the perplexed state Of troublous and distressed mortality, That thus make way unto the ugly birth Of their own sorrows, and do still beget Affliction upon Imbecility: Yet seeing thus the course of things must run, He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-ordained.”

“And whilst distraught ambition compass Aud is encompassed, while as craft decoy
And is deceived: whilst man doth ranack man,  
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;  
And uninheritance of desolation leaves  
To great-expecting hopes: he looks thereon,  
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,  
And bears no venture in impiety.

"Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared  
A rest for his desires; and sees all things  
Beneath his feet, and hast heard this book of man,  
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared  
The best of glory with her sufferings:  
By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
To plant your heart: and set your thoughts as near  
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear."

W. W.

Line 343. Up from the creeping plant, etc.  
Here is a recognition of the great scientific  
doctrine of evolution which has revolutionized  
modern philosophy, and a prophecy that the  
knowledge it brings leads to love and reverence  
rather than to skepticism.

Lines 402, etc. I heard... a voice sent forth,  
etc. See "Yes, it was the mountain Echo."

Line 489. Take courage, etc. These homely  
lines were made the butt of ridicule by Words-  
worth's assailants, but Wisdom is justified of her  
children, and a century has revealed their signifi-  
cance. They have become the eternal warning  
of Science.

Line 703. We live by... that fair clime, etc. "No  
Hellenes is old," says the Egyptian priest in  
Plato, "in mind you are all young."

Lines 859. beardless Youth. Apollo.  
Line 865. beaming Goddess. Diana.

Line 910. good Saint Fillan. Scott alludes  
to the Spring of Saint Fillan in Canto i., "Lady  
of the Lake." There is one at the eastern end of  
Loch Earn and another at Saint Fillan's on the  
road to Tyndrum. This is known as Holy Pool.

Line 911. Saint Giles. The Church of Saint  
Giles, High St., Edinburgh, is the Westminster  
Abbey of Scotland.

Line 917. Only to be examined, etc. Words-  
worth's continued protest against such a process  
as an end in itself, apart from a union with the  
earthly soul, has at last justified itself in the  
judgment of all thinking minds.

Line 917. Crowned was he, etc. Voltaire  
was thus honored at Paris when he was eighty  
years old.

Line 1146. And central peace, etc. These  
lines illustrate Coleridge's third characteristic  
of Wordsworth's poetry: "The sinewy strength  
and originality of single lines and paragraphs."

Book FIFTH. The scene of this book is in  
the Vale of Grasmere.

Line 3. attractive scat, etc. The tarn where  
the scene of books iii. and iv. is laid.

Line 12. sole outlet. The road leading to  
the village of Little Langdale.

Lines 20, 30. Knowledge, should... have,  
etc. Mr. Matthew Arnold as president of the  
Wordsworth Society in 1883 said: "A monas-
tastery is under the rules of poverty, charity,  
and obedience. He who comes under the  
shadow of Wordsworth comes under these rules  
Wordsworth constantly both professed and  
practised them."

Line 80. a grey church-tower. This thought  
must be in Little Langdale, as the poet himself says in the Fenwick note  
that passes at once to the Vale of Grasmere.

Line 97. stately House, etc. The is Hackett Cottage alluded to in the "Epistle  
Sir George Beaumont" —

"High on the sunny hill," etc.

The poet was a frequent visitor here.

Line 134. village-churchyard. St. Oswald's  
Grasmere.

Line 144. Not raised in nice proportions.  
This description is in almost every detail  
of St. Oswald's Church, Grasmere, and, as  
we see it in its present state. Among the "monuments" may now be seen the near  
Wardsworth.

Line 226. Where sun and shade were mixed.  
The oak is no more, but yew is planted by Wordsworth himself furnishing  
"a pleasant awning" not far from the wall on the  
side of the churchyard where they repaired for  
discussion.

Line 411. How gay the habitations, etc.  
"On Nature's invitation do I come," line 45.

Line 441. The... Pastor. This echoes in  
the main that of the Rev. R. E. Walker, "the wonderful Walker" of  
thwaite Chapel. See Duddon Sones.

Line 646. Or rather, as we stand.

Leo, You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves?

Philis. For eight-score winters past.

With what I've witnessed, and with what I've  
seen: and perhaps I might...  
By turning o'er these hilltops one by one.

We two could travel, Sir, through a strange road  
Yet all in the broad highway of the world.

The Brothers.

Line 670. You behold, etc. Here the  
poet reverts to the Hackett Cottage again in a way  
Langdale, and the dark mountain is Loughrigg  
as he tells us in the Fenwick note to "Epistle  
Sir George Beaumont."

Line 917. streams, whose murmur, etc.  
"Resolution and Independence": —

"And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of  
water.

Line 975. And gentle Nature, etc.  
"And suffering Nature griefed: that one shall...  
Southey's Retrospect."

Line 978. And whence that tribute. The  
sentiments and opinions here uttered are  
personal with those expressed in the following  
upon Epitaphs, which was furnished by Mr.  
Coleridge's periodical work. The first  
and as they are dictated by a spirit congenial  
that which pervades this and the two next
books, the sympathising reader will not be pleased to see the Essay here anned.

1012. Life, I repeat, is energy of love,

** The cloud of mortal destiny
Others will front it fearlessly
But who, like him, will put it by?**

ARNO LD, Memorial Verses.

the first edition of 'The Excursion,' 1814, sworth printed with his notes the following which first appeared in The Friend, Feb. 10." — J. R. Tutin.

ESSAY UPON EPITAPHS

needs scarcely be said, that an Epitaph opposes a Monument, upon which it is to be seen. Almost all Nations have wished that an external sign should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among savage nations, unacquainted with letters, this has mostly been done either by rude stones placed near the grave, or by mounds of earth raised over them. Custom proceeded obviously from a two-fold desire: first to guard the remains of the dead from irreverent approach or from sacrilege; and secondly to preserve their memory. "Never any," says Camden, "neglects burial, but some savage nations; as the Aborigines, which cast their dead to the dogs; the Arabsologists, as Diogenes, who debar them from being devoured of fishes; some solitary, as the Sieges, who was wont to say, "Turpins, I am not; sepulchre our ancestors."

careless of a grave: — Nature her dead will save."

soon as nations had learned the use of let-
epitaphs were inscribed upon these monu-
ta; in order that their intention might be surely and adequately fulfilled. I have
read monuments and epitaphs from two
ces of feeling, but these do in fact resolve
theselves into one. The invention of epitaphs,
ever, in his Discourse of Funeral Monuments, was
rightly, "proceeded from the presage or
feeling of immortality, implanted in all
naturally, and is referred to the scholars
inus the Theban poet, who flourished about
year of the world two thousand seven hun-
nd who first bewailed this Linus their Mas-
then he was slain, in doleful verses, then
ed of him (Euma, afterwards Epiphanias, for
they were first sung at burials, after en-
dered upon the sepulchrers."

and, verily, without the consciousness of a
ipple of immortality in the human soul, Man
ld never have had awakened in him the de-
le to live in the remembrance of his fellows:
love, or the yearning of kind towards kind,
ld not have produced it. The dog or horse
ishes in the field, or in the stall, by the side
companions, and is incapable of anticipat-
the sorrow with which his surrounding sa-
ates shall bemoan his death, or pine for his
s; he cannot pre-conceive this regret, he can
form no thought of it; and therefore can
possibly have a desire to leave such regret or
remembrance behind him. Add to the prin-
ciple of love which exists in the inferior animals,
the faculty of reason which exists in Man alone,
will the conjunction of these account for the de-
sire? Doubtless it is a necessary consequence
of this conjunction; yet not, I think, as a direct
result, but only to be come at through an inter-
mediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or
assurance within us, that some part of our na-
ture is imperishable. At least the precedence,
in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is
unquestionable. If we look back upon the days
of childhood, we shall find that the time is not
in remembrance when, with respect to our own
individual Being, the mind was without this
assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered
by our friends or kindred after death, or even
in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation
that does not form itself till the social feelings
have been developed, and the Reason has
reacted itself with a wide range of objects. For-
lorn, and cut off from communication with the
best part of his nature, must that man be, who
should derive the sense of immortality, as it ex-
ists in the mind of a child, from the same un-
thinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits
with which the lamb in the meadow or any other
irrational creature is endowed; who should as-
scribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the
child; to an inability arising from the imperfect
state of his faculties to come, in any point of his
being, into contact with a notion of death; or to
an unreflecting acquiescence in what has been
instilled into him! Has such an unfolder of the
mysteries of nature, though he may have forgot-
gotten his former self, ever noticed the early,
obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of
children upon the subject of origination? This
single fact proves outwardly the monstrousness
of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct
evidence of the minds of very young children,
meditate feelingly upon death and immo-
tality, these inquiries, which we all know
they are perpetually making concerning the
whence, do necessarily include correspondent
habits of interrogation concerning the whither.
Origin and tendency are notions inseparably co-
related. Never did a child stand by the side
of a running stream, pondering within himself
what power was the feeder of the perpetual
current, from what never-wearied source the
body of water was supplied, but he must have
been inevitably propelled to follow this question
by another: "Towards what abyss is it in pro-
gress? what receptacle can contain the mighty
influx?" And the spirit of the answer must
have been, though the word might be sea or
ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image
gathered from a map, or from the real object
in nature — these might have been the letter,
but the spirit of the answer must have been as
invariably, — a receptacle without bounds or di-
mensions; — nothing less than infinity. We
may, then, be justified in asserting, that the
sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and

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twin birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring: and we may further assert, that from these conjunct, and under their countenance, the human passions are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which revelation coincides, and has through the sacred vessels of the heart (for Christ is in our possession) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a holiness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no respite, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the spirit, so penetrating and powerful that there could be no motions of the life of love; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow. If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that Man is an immortal being, and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corse of an unknown person lying by the seashore; he buried it, and went on board without a drop of tear. But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a different mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had been the philosophic poet to the performance of a pious duty. And with regard to this, we may be assured that, if he had been desirous of commingling with the tempered thoughts that appertain to human life, he would have cared no more for the stranger than for the dead body of a porpoise which might have been cast upon the waves. We respect the corporeal frame not merely because it is the habitat of a Soul, but of an immortal Soul. Each of our Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature; feelings which, though they are opposite to each other, have another and still closer connection than that of contrast. It is an inextricable knot formed through the subtle progress by which both in the natural and the moral qualities pass insensibly into their corresponding reverse. For, like the sun, the regions where the sun sets are gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth again and, in like manner, a voyage towards the birth-place in our imagination of the evening, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our contemplative Soul, travelling in the region of mortality, advances to the everlasting life; and, in like manner, we continue to explore those cheerful traces. Much is brought back, for her advantage and joy, to the land of transitory things — of some of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which demands the thoughts and feelings of the Sage whom we have represented in our story, the Author of that species of composition, whom we are to regard as the author of the law of which it is our present purpose to explain, takes his stand. Accordingly, recto to the twofold desire of guarding the rest of the deceased and preserving their memory, may be said that a sepulchral monument: a tribute to a man as a human being; and the epitaph (in the ordinary meaning of the word) includes this general feeling of things; a sentiment of memory of the dead, as a tribute due to the individual worth, for a satisfaction to the rowing hearts of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living: which recurrent acknowledgment of the human face, where it can be in close connection with the remaining of the deceased, and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe are deposited within, or contiguous to the places of worship. In ancient times, as we are known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities; and the Greeks and Romans they were frequented by the waysides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have accrued from such a practice. We might ruminate upon
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"Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot
Where healing Nature her benignant look
Ne'er changes, save at that lurid season, when,
With tears descending o'er her sable stole,
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgins erst,
With annual prayer upon the mountains wept
Their fairest gone,) there in that rural scene,
So placid, so congenial to the wish
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within
The silent grave, I would have stayed:

— wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven
Lay on the humbler graves around, what time
The pale moon gazed upon the turfy mounds,
Penetrating, as though like me, in lonely muse,
T were brooding on the dead innumerable beneath.
There while the flowers of the field, and the grass of Uz,
O'er human destiny I sympathized,
Counting the long, long periods prophecy
Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives
Of resurrection, of the blue-eyed Spring
Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,
Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer
The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed
And I would bless her visit; for to me
'T is sweet to trace the consolance that links
As one, the works of Nature and the word
Of God. —

JOHN EDWARDS.

A village churchyard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth — upon personal or social sorrow and admiration — upon religion, individual and social — upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices, in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother; a friend perhaps inscribes an encomium record-
ing the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand churchyards; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes: first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, “to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all.” Such language may be held without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critique and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant: and every man has a character of his own to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of this want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us; with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to object the diseased by which a good quality of virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and least of all do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death — the source from which an epitaph proceeds — of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellences be super-added. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellences are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition. — It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to emotions excited by a distinct and clear conception conveyed to the reader’s mind, of the individual whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character after death, it appeared to the loved one and lamented his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images, circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; so that these ought to be bound together and solemnly into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, as exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he would upon to think of with interest. A distinctive conception should be given (implicitly where it is rather than explicitly) of the individual’s mental — But the writer of an epitaph is an anatomist, who dissect the actual state of the mind; he is a teacher, a writer, who spurs the pupil on to leisure and in entire equability: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and the more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is this virtue clothed in, the image of which must a longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen — no, nor ought to be seen — otherwise than a tree through a tender haze or a luminous light that spiritualises and beautifies it; that the away, indeed, but only to the end that its parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress us affect the more. Shall we say, then, that is not truth, not a faithful image; and accordingly, the purpose of the memories cannot but be his loss? It is truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtful things not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, proportions are brought into distinct which before had been only imperfectly or consciously seen: it is truth hallowed by — the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This easily be brought to the test. Let our unsharpened eyes have been sharpened by personal bonds; to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, what a change is wrought in a moment! Immanence melts away; and, as it disappears, lovely lineness, disproportion, and deformity, vanished, and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Erase such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No; the thoughtful look, the sigh, perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that he had a sene, a generous, and good man; that on the writer’s mind had remained as
On which was a true abstract of the char-
more of the deceased; that his gifts and graces
remembered in the simplicity in which
ought to be remembered. The compo-
sud quality of the mind of a virtuous man,
templated by the side of the grave where his
is mouldering, ought to appear, and be s
something midway between what he was
while walking about with his living frailties,
that he may be presumed to be as a Spirit

suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the
branches of the worth of the deceased
slyly and unaffectedly represented. Any
der detail, minutely and scrupulously pur-
especially if this be done with laborious
antithetic discriminations, must inevitably
rate its own purpose; forcing the passing
ator to this conclusion,—either that the
did not possess the merits ascribed to him,
that they who have raised a monument to
memory, and must therefore be supposed
have been closely connected with him, were
able of perceiving those merits; or at least
ng the act of composition had lost sight of
; for, the understanding having been so
in its petty occupation, how could the
ct of the mourner be other than cold? and
ether of these cases, whether the fault be on
part of the buried person or the survivors,
memorial is unafflicting and profitless.
uch better it is to fall short in discrimina-
than to pursue it too far, or to labour it
feelingly. For in no place are we so much
posed to dwell upon those points of nature
condition wherein all men resemble each
er, as in the temple where the universal
ther is worshipped, or by the side of the
ve which gathers all human Beings to itself,
“equalizes the lofty and the low.” We
fer and we weep with the same heart; we
re and are anxious for one another in one
irrit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and
vices by which we are all to be furthered
support, as patience, meekness, good-
, justice, temperance, and temperate de-
es, are in an equal degree the concern of us

Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least
ese acknowledgments to our common nature; or
let the sense of their importance be ascri-
ed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute
ctions in individual character; which if
y do not (as will for the most part be the
se), when examined, resolve themselves into
ick of words, will, even when they are true
ad just, for the most part be grievously out of
ace; for, as it is probable that few only have
explored these intricacies of human nature, so
an the tracing of them be interesting only to a

But an epitaph is not a proud writing
hat up for the studious: it is exposed to all—
o the wise and the most ignorant; it is conde-
cending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits re-
ard; its story and admonitions are brief, that
he thought and the busy and indolent, may
not be deterred, nor the impatient tired: the
steeping old man cons the engraver record like

a second horn-book;—the child is proud that
he can read it;—and the stranger is introduced
through its mediation to the company of a friend;
it is concerning all, and for all:—in the church-
yard it is open to the day; the sun looks down
upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat
against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite
sympathy is bound in this case, more than in
any other, to give proof that he himself has
been moved, it is to be remembered that to
raise a monument is a sober and a reflective
act; that the inscription which it bears is in-
tended to be permanent and for universal pera-
sal; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and
feelings expressed should be permanent also
liberated from that weakness and anguish
of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and
which with instinctive decency retires from no-
tice. The passions should be subdued, the emo-
tions controlled; strong, indeed, but nothing
ungovernable or wholly involuntary. Seem-
liness requires this, and truth requires it also:
for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted?
Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object:
resignation in course of time springs up from it
as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling
the turf with which it may be covered, or gath-
ering round the monument by which it is de-
defended. The very form and substance of the
monument which has received the inscription,
and the appearance of the letters, testifying
with what a slow and laborious hand they must
have been engraved, might seem to reproach
the author who had given way upon this occa-
sion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of
conflicting passion; though the same might
constitute the life and beauty of a funeral ora-
tion or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon
perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the
main causes why epitaphs so often personate
the deceased, and represent him as speaking
from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mor-
tal is introduced telling you himself that his
pains are gone; that a state of rest is come;
and he conjures you to weep for him no longer.
He admonishes with the voice of ought and
encouraged in the vanity of those affections which
are confined to earthly objects, and gives a ver-
dict like a superior Being, performing the office
of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead
him, and whose decision cannot but be dispa-
sionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting,
and affliction unsubstantiated. By this tender
fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a se-
dater sorrow, and employ the intervention of
the imagination in order that the reason may
speak her own language earlier than she would
otherwise have been enabled to do. This shad-
owy interposition also harmoniously unites the
two worlds of the living and the dead by their
appropriate affections. And it may be observed
that here we have an additional proof of the
propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions
were referred to the consciousness of immort-
ality as their primal source.
I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be cast in this mould preferably to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws which ought to govern the composition of the other may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable, as it admits a wider range of notices; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the general ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men in all instances, save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenor of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the actions of a man, or even some one conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act: and such sentiments dwelt upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed.—The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches in such a place; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration — or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue — or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation — or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power; these are the only tribute which can here be paid — the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

"What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in piled stones,
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-pointing pyramid?
Dear Son of Memory, great Heri of Fame
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
And so sepulchred, in such pomp drest so.
That kings for such a tomb would wish to sit.

BOOK SIXTH. The scene of this last Churchyard of St. Oswald, Grasmere.
See "Ecclesiastical Sonnets."
Professor Dowden says of Wordsworth's; "underneath the poet lay a North Countryman." Senator Hoar says: "No man of time, statesman, philosopher, poet, such a man as he might be; his instinctive power from the currents of history.
"And spires whose silent fingers point to heaven." An instinctive taste teaches to build their churches in flat country; spire-steeple, which, as they cannot belong to any other object, point as with silent eyes to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when the reflection of a bright light of a railway in summer, seems like a pyramidal flame less heavenward. See The Friend, by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223. W. W.
"Men, whose delight, etc. See "
swathe Chapel."
"A Visitor. A schoolboy Wordsworth. See Fenwick note to this page."
"Swain. This character in Patterdale. See Fenwick note."
"He lived not, etc. This character was born and bred in Grasmere. See Fenwick note."
"in a petty town. The story told was one which the poet heard was schoolboy from Ann Tyson at Hawskhead. See Fenwick note."
"That asks a borrowed name. See Fenwick note."
"A dial. There are no records such a dial at Grasmere Church."
"These Dalesmen, etc. See Fenwick note."
"The Brothers." "Brothers."
"Stone lift its forehead raised"
"Plain is the stone that marks the Poet's rest:
Not marble worked beneath Italian skies—
A grey slate headstone tells where Wordsworth's
Cleft from the native hills he loved the best." — H. D. Rawnsley
Sonnets at the English Inn.

Line 676. A woman rests. She was poet's neighbor at Town-End. See Fenwick note. Line 779. A long stone-seat. This used at the left of the entrance-gate, opposite Parsonage.

Line 792. Mother's grace. The poet as "Every particular was exactly as I lated." See Fenwick note. Line 930. The natural feeling of humanity. "The Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded hope as near a realization as human
Flowed of the rural society which states-desire for their country's greatness." — H. Myers.

1144. sprung self-raised from earth, etc. A humble dwellings remind the contemplative spectator of a production of Nature, and rather be said to have grown, than to have erected. — Wordsworth, Scenery of the s.

All is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty, as neatest and most becoming attire." — Journal at the Lakes.

OK SEVENTH. The discussion is contin-


ne 37. village-school. "The schoolhouse to be near the Lich gate at the west of the chyard, and the children used that part of churchyard as a playground, which had yet been used for burials." — Dr. Chadk.

line 43. The length of road, etc. The poet is looking toward Helvellyn to the east, and "easy inlet of the vale" is the old Roman 1 leading to Keswick through the gap in the mountains where the bones of King Dunmail, Cumberland's last king, lie. Hence it is known Dunmail Raise. See "The Waggoner," to l. 200-212.

"And now have reached that pile of stones, Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones; His who had once supreme command, Last king of Rocky Cumberland."

Line 55. lovely Parsonage. This house still stands on the right of the Raise, beyond the nonplus Swan Inn. The clergyman and his family were intimate associates with Wordsworth. See Fenwick note.

Line 143. From Rosamund. Rosamund Clifford, daughter of Walter R. Clifford. She was a mistress of Henry II., poisoned by Queen Eleanor, 1177, and buried at Godstow. Children of the Wood. Old English ballad and say.

Line 92. sage Whittington. London's famous Lord Mayor. Line 140. the chapel stood.

"Wytheburn's noblest house of prayer, As lowly as the lowliest dwelling." The Waggoner.

This chapel stands on the right of the road, opposite "Nag's Head Inn." Just beyond the chapel now stands a memorial to Matthew urbool. It was from Nag's Head that the army set out as recorded in his "Resignation," which contains some striking Wordsworthian lines:

"And now, in front, behold the turnpike road Those upper regions we must tread! Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells, The cheerful silence of the fells."

Line 171. Was trimmed and brightened, etc. Much of this description applies equally well to Dove Cottage, where the poet lived, and to the older type of houses in the vale.

Line 250. meek Partner of his age. Mrs. Symeon died Jan. 24, 1806, aged 81.

Line 255. Death fell upon him, etc. He was found dead in his garden across the road on June 27, 1807, in his ninety-second year. Canon Rawson says: "Just such another clergyman was the late Vicar of Wytheburn, who died in 1826."

Line 291. Were gathered to each other. The burial-place of the Symes may be seen in Grasmere Churchyard, not far from that of the Poet's Corner, where Wordsworth and his family are buried.

Line 316. A Priest abides. See note to "Seathwaite Chapel,"

Line 348. Behind you hill. If the speaker is in Grasmere Churchyard, Seathwaite would be beyond several hills; but the Fenwick note alludes to the cottage "called Hackett," between the two Langdales, hence the hill is that between Langdale and the Duddon.

Line 352. A simple stone, etc. The Chapel and Parsonage have been remodeled, and the simple stone has been turned over and a fresh inscription cut.

Line 400. a gentle Daleman lies. Not at Grasmere, but at Hawes-Water. See Fenwick note.


Line 413. lofty crags. The Helvellyn range.

Line 585. his doings leave me to deplore tall ash-tree, etc. "I member there was a walling chap just going to shoot a girt stoan to bits wi' powder in the grounds at Rydal, and Wordsworth came up and saaved it, and wrote summat on it." — Reminiscences of Wordsworth among the Peasantry of Westmorland. H. D. Rawson.

Line 603. hymn. John Gough of Kendal. This sketch is exceedingly accurate in all respects except that he was still alive when "The Excursion" was written.

Line 616. That Sycamore, etc.

"This Sycamore oft musical with Bees; Such Tents the Patriarchs loved." S. T. Coleridge. W. W.


Line 701. Dear Youth. See Fenwick note.

Line 735. boastful Tyrant. See "I Grieved for Buonaparte."

Line 763. a gateway. An allusion to the Knot houses, in Fenwick note to "The Excursion." "The house still stands under Place Fell, on the southeast side of the valley of Patterdale." — H. D. Rawnsley.

Line 980. Perish the roses and the flowers of
In this book the poet rises to the height of his great argument of Nature and Man.—

"Wisdom abashed
In song love-humble, content placience high:
That built likearts their base upon the grand
In sight and vision; sympathies profound:
That spurned the total of humanity."

AUGUST 26

The fundamental teaching of this book be found in all of the poet's work after that when he threw off the spell of Godwin's Wealth of Nations, and returned to sweetly human affections. Some called it desertion, and their sentiments were echoed in Browning's "Lost Leader."

BOOK NINTH. The scene of the earlier book of "The Excursion" is at the Passm and on Loughrigg Fall, at the foot of Grasmere Lake.

Line 3. An active Principle, etc. See "Prelude," ii. 399-418, and "Tintern Abbey" i. 88-111.

It was this philosophy of Wordsworth's profoundly interested such minds as Stuart Mill and George Eliot.

Line 59. High peaks. Fairfield and Hardlyn and Helm Crag.

Line 68. Full river. The Rothe, which in Easedale, flows past the churchyard of Grasmere Lake.

"Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave!
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone."

AUG.

Line 81. Placed by age, etc. See "Od to coria," and "Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."

Line 299. Binding herself by statute. The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; it is impossible to overrate the benefit which accrue to humanity from the universal operation of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government. W. W.

Scotland passed her Education Act in 1872 and England in 1899. The present activity in England in regard to education as a means of promoting her against the industrial competition of Germany and the United States has significant testimony to the wisdom of Wordsworth; for it is in these two countries that national education in all grades has made its greatest strides.

Line 363. With such foundations laid, etc. This appeal to the soul of England reveals Wordsworth in the heights, seeing with the eyes and speaking with the voice of a prophet.

Line 422. As if preparing for the poet's evening. See sonnet, "Composed by the side of Grasmere Lake."

Line 496-498. A rocky hole... the side. This description applies to Rydal More.

Line 670. We climbed a green hill's side Loughrigg Fall, looking toward Grasmere.
575. Church-tower. St. Oswald's, Grass.

650. Mysterious rites, etc. Memorials

774. one cottage. The scene closes

814

552. Laodamia.

509. spiny trees, etc. For the ac
test

630. the other product of this revival of interest in classics was "Dion.

927. Fair is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing

1577. — His Laodamia,

2527. Dion.
and purple. Then it was that I appreciated these lines, —

"Mock loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy," —
such was the pensive loveliness of the scene.

1815

Wordsworth published a new edition of his poems this year in two volumes. It was dedicated to Sir George Beaumont and contained his illustrations to "The White Doe of Rylstone", "Lucy Gray", "The Thorn," and "Peter Bell." With these poems the first great period in the creative work of the poet closes. From this time the vision and the faculty divine — so significant in conception and execution, in dignity and intensity of feeling, in sweetness, purity, and melody — passed away to return only at rare moments.

On receiving a gift copy of the edition from Wordsworth, Lamb wrote: "I am glad that you have not sacrificed a verse to those scoundrels [the critics], I would not have had you offer up the poorest rag that lingered upon the stript shoulders of little Alice Fell, to have stoned all their malice. . . . I would rather be a doorkeeper in your margin, than have their text swarming with my eulogies."

Page 534. To B. R. HAYDON.

A more brilliant or a more pathetic career than that of Haydon is hardly to be found. Confessedly a genius of the highest order; with a love for his art which has never been surpassed; sublimely courageous in his devotion to what he considered to be his duty as a leader of "Historic Painting;" surrounded by the most steadfast friends and the most subtle enemies; now upon the highest wave of favor, now lodging in a debtor's jail, and at last driven to despair at being cheated of his deserts; repeating the wail —

"Stretch me no longer on this tough world," —

he takes his own life.

What the sympathy of a man like Wordsworth meant to him is shown in his correspondence. On receiving this sonnet he wrote: "It is the highest honour that ever was paid or ever can be paid to me. You are the first English poet who has ever done complete justice to my delightful art."

The Judgment of Solomon and Christ's Entry into Jerusalem showed conclusively that Haydon was the first historical painter that England had produced. The latter is now the property of the Catholic Cathedral in Cincinnati.

In the diary of Henry Crabb Robinson, June 11, 1820, is the following: "Breakfasted with Monkhouse; Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth there. We talked of Haydon; Wordsworth wants to have a large sum raised to enable Haydon to continue in his profession."

Page 534. ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE.
The allusions in this poem are from Milton's History, and not from "The Preface."

Lines 1, 2. In the "Epitaphium Domini Milton says (162 et seq.): —

"Of Brutus Dardan Chief my song shall be.
How with his brows he plunged the Briton in his tears." In his Latin poem "Mansus," Milton describes something of his plan for an epic based on the legendary history of Britain.

Line 14. giants. Alluding to the battle of Monmouth, which tells of the expulsion of the giants from Albion. Brutus the name Britain to the land.

Line 17. Corinna. A Trojan chieftess who came with Brutus and to whom Cressida was given.

Line 34. Guendolen. Locrine, son of Brutus married Guendolen of Cornwall, but his wife, Treda, a German princess, by whom he had a daughter. Guendolen raised an army of wall, defeated Locrine. See "Corinna," p. 830.

Line 41. Leir succeeded Locrine in Cornwall. See Shakespeare's "King Lear."


Line 97. Trosnovant. Troia nova, now notatum, now London.

Line 234. Brother by a Brother saved. alluding to Milton's History.

Page 538. "THE FAIREST, BEST HUES OF ETHER FADE."

This and the following eight sonnets were originally published in the edition of 1634. The precise year of their composition is not known, but Prof. Knight says they fall between 1633 and 1815.

Page 540. "MARK THE CONCEIVED ZELT."

The scene of this sonnet is the terrene Under Lancrigg where the poet composed "The Prelude."

Page 541. "BROOK, WHENCE SOCIETY POST SEES."

This brook is evidently the Rothay, or Easedale Beck, associated with Eddleston. See note to "It was an April morrow."

1816

Page 541. ODE — THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the mentious subject here treated would this be, before whose eyes the present scene under which this kingdom labours could expose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or to obscure, the splendour of this great triumph. If I have given way to uncles unchecked by these distresses, it would be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insubordination, should I state my own belief that sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wise of a very large majority of the British arrested that generosity which poured out:
The advisers and abettors of such a design were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned, and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination;—by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded and its riches acquired;—by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovable upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect;—by adequate rewards and permanent honours conferred upon the deserving;—by encouraging athletic exercises and many sports among the peasantry of the country;—and by especial care to provide and support institutions in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as THINGS.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through this volume.

W. W.

Line 122,

"Discipline the rule whereof is passion."

LORD BROOKE. W. W.

Compare this and the following tribute to Wellington with that of Tennyson in the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington."

Page 549. THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA. Alluding to that disastrous retreat of Napoleon from Moscow.

Page 550. "By Moscow Self-Devoted to a Blaze."

Alluding to the burning of the city by order of the governor, to prevent it from falling into the hands of Napoleon.

Page 550. THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCHHEIM.

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day: "When the Austrians took Hoch-
heim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted—not a gun was fired—not a voice heard: they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzrobe rode up to know the cause of the sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water.” W. W.

Page 551. SIEGE OF VIENNA RAMED BY JOHN SOBIESKI.

Line 14. He conquering, etc. “See Filicaia’s ode addressed to Sir John Sobieski, King of Poland. Sobieski relieved Vienna when it was besieged by the Turks, 1683.”—KNIGHT.

Page 551. OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

Line 9. Assailed, etc. “From all the world’s encumbrance did himself assail.”—SPEENB. W. W.

Page 551. EMPERORS AND KINGS, ETC.

Line 8. After the battle of Waterloo.

Page 552. FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST.

“Alluding to the treachery of Napoleon in capturing and executing the Duc d’Enghien, grandson of the Prince of Condé, on suspicion of his complicity in a plot to overthrow him.”—KNIGHT.

1817

Page 556. VERNAL ODE.

There is no poem of Wordsworth’s which reveals lofter spiritual insight or nobler philosophic truth than this Orphic Ode, and the two poems which follow it. The transience of external things brings no sorrow to one who can exercise such faith.

Page 558. ODE TO LYCORIS.

While these poems are less direct in allusions to places, yet to one who has once felt the meaning and charm of Rydal they abound in sights and sounds peculiar to it.

“In the Fenwick note to ‘To the Same,’ ‘the two that follow’ are ‘September 1819,’ and its sequel ‘Upon the Same Occasion.’”—KNIGHT.

Page 561. THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

If one is staying at Grasmere a pleasant tramp of two days may be made by crossing Helvellyn by Grizedale Tarn to Patterdale, and returning by way of Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside. From Patterdale one passes Brother’s Water, the scene of the “Daffodils,” and near the summit of the Pass on the right the Kirk stones. The views on the route are of surpassing beauty. From the inn to Ambleside the scenery is in marked contrast to the ruggedness and desolation of the ascent.

Lines 41–48. Among the evidences of occupation in these regions are the roads. Kirkstone Pass was one of the roads by which Cola led his two columns into Westmorland.

1818

Page 564. THE PILGRIM’S DREAM.

The allusions in this poem and ii. and which follow are to the middle road over Moss Common. See “The Princess Rock,” note.

Page 566. COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOUR AND BEAUTY.

After the production of the immortal (1806) Wordsworth’s inspiration did not reach that lofty height, unless upon this occasion, a sunset among the Westmorland hills where earth and heaven are commingled viz. a natural magic and moral sublimity, which is his peculiar gift to English poetry.

The poet is looking toward Grassmere in the hills about and beyond it.

Line 49. Wings at my shoulders seem to pass In these lines I am under obligation to an exquisite picture of “Jacob’s Dream,” by ALLSTON, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends. W. W.

1819

Page 567. “PURE ELEMENT OF WATER WHERESOEVER.”

This and the two following were suggested by Mr. W. Westall’s views of the Cars. near in Yorkshire. W. W.

In “The Prelude,” vi. 194, Wordsworth says, that making quest for scenes renowned in beauty, he and his sister “pried into Yorkshire dales.”

Page 568. AERIAL ROCK.


Page 570. TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

This river of Wordsworth’s youth runs a Borrowdale, near the Eagle’s Crag. See “The Prelude,” i. 270–298.

Page 570. “GRIEF, THOU HAST LOST IN EVER-READY FRIEND.”

See Ruskyn and the English Lakes, by CASH RAWNSLEY, chap. v.

Page 571. “I HEARD (ALAS! IT WAS ONLY IN A DREAM).”

See the Phaedon of Plato, by which this notion was suggested. W. W.

Page 571. THE HAUNTED TREE.

Some of the noblest forest trees in England stand in Rydal Park. The “Lady” was the poet’s daughter, Dora.
1820

Larger part of the poems of this year rise from two experiences in the life of the poet: visit to the Continent, and reminiscences of various visits to the Duddon valley. The interesting commentaries on the first series of Dorothy's Journal, and Diary, Reminiscences Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson.

Page 573. "There is a little unprejudiced kindly" is evident from the Fenwick note that the house which the poet and his sister rested at Kendal to Grasmere in the summer of 1794 was Skel-Ghyl Beck, which one on the road from Bowness to Ambleside, before reaching Low Wood. It rises from Wansfell on the right, and passes behind the Nest, the home of Mrs. Hemans, under road to the lake. See H. D. Rawnsley, The Tish Lakes, vol. ii. chap. iv.

Page 574. On the Detraction which Lowed the Publication of a Certain MS.

Under date of June 11, 1820, Henry Crabb Robinson writes: "Breakfasted with Monkse. Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth there. He resolved to make some concession to the public taste in 'Peter Bell.' . . . I never saw a so ready to yield to the opinion of others."


Wordsworth, with his wife and sister, set out London on their way to the Continent in early summer and were at Oxford on May This visit inspired two sonnets.


The Wordsworths arrived in London early in the year, and then to be present at the marriage of Mr. Monkhouse. They stayed with Christopher Wordsworth at the Rectory, Lambeth. It is during this time that the poet visited chalkland, where Thomson is buried.

Line 2. Groves. Wallachia. W. W.


Page 575. Memorials of a Tour on the Continent, 1820.

This Series was written between 1820 and 1822.

Under date of July 10, 1820, Dorothy writes in her Journal: "We—William, Mary and Dorothy Wordsworth—left the Rectory House, Lambeth, at a quarter to eight o'clock. Had us Union coach to ourselves till within two tages of Canterbury."

Page 575. Fish-Women—On Landing at Calais.

If in this sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking. W. W.


This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful city; Mr. Southey, in the "Poet's Pilgrimage," speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

"Time hath not wronged her, nor hath ruin sought
Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,
Safe in those recent days, with evil fraught,
When mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

"But for the scars in that unhappy rage
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;
Like our first Sire, a beautiful old age
Is hers in venerable years arrayed;
And yet, to her, beignant stars may spring,
What fate decreed to us,—a scene of spring.

"When I may read of tilts in days of old,
And tourneys graced by Chieftains of renown,
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,
If fancy would pourtray some stately town,
Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,
Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee."

In this city are many vestiges of the splendour of the Burgundian Dukesdom, and the long black mantle universally worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connection, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Bruges is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. The hotel to which we drove at Ghent furnished an odd instance. In the passages were paintings and statues, after the antique of Hebe and Apollo; and in the garden a little pond, about a yard and a half in diameter, with a weeping willow bending over it, and under the shade of that tree, in the centre of the pond, a wooden painted statue of a Dutch or Flemish boor, looking ineffably tender upon his mistress, and embracing her. A living duck, tethered at the feet of the sculptured lovers, alternately tormented a miserable eel and itself with endeavours to escape from its bonds and prison. Had we chanced to espy the hostess of the hotel in this quaint rural retreat, the exhibition would have been complete. She was a true Flemish figure, in the dress of the days of Holbein; her symbol of office, a weighty bunch of keys, pendant from her portly waist. In Brussels the modern taste in costume, architecture, etc., has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle; but in Bruges old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goes on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a par-
sive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children. — Extract from Journal. W. W.

Page 576. After Visiting the Field of Waterloo.

Dorothy tells us in her Journal, July 17, that their guide was one Lacoste, who was Napoleon’s guide through the country previous to the battle. He was compelled to stay by Napoleon’s side till the moment of flight. See Scott, “The Field of Waterloo,” and Byron’s Waterloo, Canto III., “Childe Harold,” for contrasts to Wordsworth’s contemplative style.

Page 577. Aix-la-Chapelle.

Line 14. Where unemitting frosts the rocky crescent bleach. “Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms — let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that in the very middle of the wall, a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous Roland, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the ‘Breche de Roland.’” — Raymond’s Pyrenees. W. W.

Page 578. HYMN FOR THE BOATMEN.

Line 24. Misere Domine. See the beautiful Song in Mr. Coleridge’s Tragedy, “The Remorse.” Why is the harp of Quantock silent? W. W.

Page 579. THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE.

Lines 1, 2.

Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
Doth Danube spring to life!

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a capacious stone Basin in front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it, — and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The copiousness of the spring at Doneschingen must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube. W. W.

Page 578. ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH, LÄUTERBRENNEN.

“The Staub-bach” is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and after a fall of 330 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard; the notes reached me from far, and on what occasion they were sung could not guess, only they seemed to suit in some way or other, to the Waterfall — reminded me of religious services that Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Southey has thus accurately characterized peculiarity of this music: “While we were the Waterfall, some half-score peasants and women and girls, assembled just out of one of the Spring, and set up — surely, the chorus that ever was heard by human ear, a song not of articulate sounds, but in the voice was used as a mere instrument, more flexible than any which art can produce — sweet, powerful, and thrilling sound description.” See Notes to A Ta Paraguay. W. W.

Page 580. ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF RELIGION.

The Convent whose site was pointed to according to tradition, in this manner, is at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worth the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it. W. W.

Page 584. THE LAST SUPPER.

Lines 1, 2.

The searching lamps and many an earnest eye
Have marred this Work.

This picture of the Last Supper has only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is still untouched by time. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs; I speak of it as I feel. The copy exhibited London some years ago, and the engraving by Merchen, are both admirable; but in the original is a power which neither of these works attained, or even approached. W. W.

Page 584. THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

Line 40. Of Figures human and divine 7 statues ranged round the spire and above proof. This has been a constant fault with the artist whose exclusive aim is for themselves. It is true, the same expense and labour, judiciously devoted to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, Statues appear diminutive. But the copyist from the best point of view, which is half up the spire, must strike the unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country, the imaginings and feelings of the spectators. It was with great pleasure that I saw, for the two ascents which we made, several different ones, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look at them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or any other works of art, if placed within easy reach.
member also that you have the Alps on de, and on the other the Apennines, with lain of Lombardy between." W. W.

Page 587. PROCESIONS.

lines 48, 49.

with those white-robed Shapes—a living Sea
of glacier Pillars join in solemn guise.

is Procession is a part of the sacramen-
ty performed once a month. In the
y of Engelsberg we had the good fortune to present at the Grand Festival of the Vir-
but the Procession on that day, though
esting of upwards of 1000 persons, assem-
from all the branches of the sequestered by, was much less striking (notwithstanding sublimity of the surrounding scenery); it
ted both the simplicity of the other and the arrangement of the Glacier-columns, whose
ly resemblance to the moving Figures gave most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

W.

Page 588. ELEGIAC STANZAS.

The “Friend” alluded to in the Fenwick e was Henry Crabb Robinson. He writes as of meeting the strangers: "In the stage
ween Berne and Solothurn, which takes a suit through an unpicturesque, flat country, re two very interesting young men... o elder was an American, aged twenty-one, and Goddard." On August 16 Wordsworth ites of meeting the young men: "Mr. Rob-
on introduced two young men, his compan-
ners, an American and a Scotchman—gentee, pleat youths." In October, 1809, when I was collecting sub-
ription for the preservation of Dove Cottage, rs. H. M. Wigglesworth, of Boston, Mass., sister of the young man commemorated in is poem, sent me a check in memory of her other. Alluding to his death she wrote: Wordsworth showed a very kind interest, rote a letter full of sympathy to my mother, d latter sent the memorial lines beginning,
Lulled by the sound of pastoral bells! It will lve me pleasure to add something to the sum ou are collecting."


Line 75. This tribute, etc. The persuasion ere expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted mother elt, was derived from this tribute to her son’s memory, a fact which the author learned, at is own residence, from her daughter, who vis-
ted Europe some years afterward. W. W.

Page 590. ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOLOGNE.

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhang-
ing the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligna, who here termin-
nated his western expedition, of which these sea-
shells were the hoarded spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, stand-
ing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the ex-
loits of Cesar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards were to float.
He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that ground, in
memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column which was not completed at the time we were there. W. W.

Page 590. AFTER LANDING—THE VALLEY OF DOVER, November 1820.

Lines 6, 7.

We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate.

This is a most grateful sight for an English-
man returning to his native land. Everywhere one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will. W. W.

Page 591. DESULTORY STANZAS.

Line 37. Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks. At the head of the Valais, Les Fourches, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that inclose the Valais, which terminates at St. Maurice. W. W.

Lines 49-51. ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount.

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Unterwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landen-
berg, from the tyrant of that name, whose chateau formerly stood there. On the 1st of January 1308, the great day which the confeder-
ated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Govern-
ers were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their crea-
tures, to the frontier; they then witnessed the destruction of their strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well de-
scribed by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland. W. W.

Line 56. Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge. The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scrip-
ture History, on the Cathedral-bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed. W. W.

Page 592. THE RIVER DUDDON.

They returned from the Continent on Nov.
9, and went to Cambridge. During their visit to the Continent their brother Christopher had been promoted to be Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. From Cambridge they went into Colserton, and returned to Rydal Mount Dec. 20.

A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the Ruins of Rome:

"The rising Sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft;"

and ends thus —

"The setting Sun displays
His vivid great round, between you towers,
As through two shady cliffs;"

"Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, 'Lewesdon Hill,' is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

'To-morrow for severer thought, but now
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day.'"

"No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that this series of Sonnets was the growth of many years; — the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground preoccupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled 'The Brook,' of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

"May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it? — There is a sympathy in streams, — 'one calleth to another;' — I would gladly believe, that 'The Brook' will, ere long, murmur in concert with 'The Duddon.' But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages — through the 'Flumina amem sylvis' of Virgil, down to the sublime apotheosis to the great rivers of the earth by Lascelles, and the simple ejaculation of Burns (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Colerige, a motto for his embroyo 'Brook').

"The Muse nae Poet ever send her,
Till by himself he learned to wander,
Adown some cowering burn's meander,
And nae 'think lane.'"

W. W.

SONNETS I., II., III. — Next to "The Prize" and "The Excursion," the Duddon seems to demand of the student a careful study of the topographical allusions and the use of a discriminating imagination. During several seasons I have studied this region; and while I have made notes quite independent of others, I have found them to agree in the main with those of Mr. Herbert Rix and Canon Rawnsley.

The birthplace of "a native Stream" is easily identified, although it is on the northwest Cumbrian side of Wrynone Fell. The expert will find two possible sources, not far from the Three Shire Stones: one of these has a broad prospect of lake and mountain, while the other is in the middle of the "lofty waste" of net li. The allusions in Sonnet iii. to "tripping lambs" and the "brilliant moss" of Bog-moss which glistens like gold when the sun shines upon it — are strikingly Wordsworthian.

SONNET II. Line 11. huge deer. The buttressed light is the Leigh, a gigantic species of stag which has never been extirpated. W. W.

SONNET IV. The descriptions in this and the following apply to any one of the several "falls" visited, the stream makes from Wrynone Gap to the valley below. Canon Rawnsley thinks the point of view is from the main road leader to Cockley Beck.

SONNET V. When one passes from Wrynone Bottom to Cockley Beck and turns to the northeast, one will behold the "unfrail" vegetation. The cottage may have been noted several in this vicinity.

SONNET VI. The allusions here are to species which grow by the Duddon from April to August, from the speedwell to the forget-me-not in great profusion.

Lines 9, 10. There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness, etc. These two lines are a great measure taken from "The Beasts Spring," by the Rev. Joseph Symeon. He was a native of Cumberland, but educated at Hawkshead school; his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the Vereintjen, his "Vision of Alfred," is harmonious and reserved. In describing the motions of the plants that constitute the strange machinery of the Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile:

"Glancing from their plumes
A changeful light the azure vault illumine.
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adores
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn.
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed
On Bothula's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread."
here the lone native, as he homeward glides,
in polished sandale o’er the imprisoned tides,
and still the balance of his frame preserves,
hoofed on alternate foot in lengthening curves,
seen by a glance, above him and below
two rival heaven’s with equal splendour glow.
painted in the centre of the world he seems;
or all around with soft effulgence gleams;
suns, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,
and solemn midnight pours the blaze of day.

was a man of ardent feeling, and his facult
of mind, particularly his memory, were ex-
dordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to a
place in the History of Westmoreland.

V.

NET VIII. In passing from Cockley Beck to the north one
gets a glimpse of the features of the valley
leading in this sonnet. Wordsworth calls the
von “Blue Streamlet” from the aspect
of it as it passes over the blue-gray slate
of.

NETS IX, X. These sonnets refer to the
of the four stepping-stones on the Duddon,
the opposite Seathwaite, and under Walla-
row Crag.

NETS XI, XII. In these sonnets we return
of Birks Brig below the first stepping-stones.
ran asley thinks the scene is in the field
that of Sonnets IX, X, because there a
blue stone may be seen midstream.

NETS XIII. The scene of these son-
ets is that from Pen Crag, which stands in
the tre of the vale. The “hamlet” is Sea-
rake; “barn and byre” are those of New-
d farmhouses, in Wordsworth’s day an inn
farm combined; while the “spouting
is now a ruin to be seen near Seathwaite
ap on the beck.

Newfield is no longer an
but generous hospitality will be found there
I can testify. At the foot of this crag the
Duddon plunges out of sight as if shunning
he haunts of men.

SONNET XV. The “chasm” is that of xiv;
the niche,” according to Canon Rawns-
ey, is that to be seen on the southern face of
Crag by one standing at Newfield Farm.

SONNET XVI. “The weathering of the vol-
ic ash of the Crag, and the cliff of Walla-
row opposite would naturally have suggested
sonnet.” — H. D. Rawnsley.

SONNETS XVII, XVIII. The Eagle requires a
edge for its support: but several pairs,
many years ago, were constantly resident in
this country, building their nests in the steeps
of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on
the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I
waited anglers speak of the grandeur of their
appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in
of the coves of this mountain. The bird
rarely returns, but is always destroyed.
long since, one visited Rydal lake, and re-
observed some hours near its banks; the conster-
ation which it occasioned among the different
species of fowl, particularly the herons, was
expressed by loud screams. The horse also is
naturally afraid of the eagle. — There were

several Roman stations among these mountains;
the most considerable seems to have been in
meadow at the head of Windermere, estab-
lished, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes
of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknott
and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a
coin of Trajan was discovered very lately. —
The Roman fort here alluded to, called by
the country people “Hardknott Castle,” is most
impressively situated half-way down the hill on
the right of the road that descends from Hard-
knott to Easdale. It has escaped the notice of
most antiquarians, and is but slightly men-
tioned by Lysons. — The DRUDICIAN CIRCLE
is about half a mile to the left of the road as-
sending Stoneside from the vale of Duddon:
the country people call it “Sunken Church.”

The reader who may have been interested in
the foregoing Sonnets (which together may be
considered as a Poem) will not be displeased to
find in this place a prose account of the Duddon,
extracted from Green’s comprehensive Guide to
the Lakes, lately published. “The road lead-
ing from Coniston to Broughton is over high
ground, and commands a view of the River
Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand
stream, having the beautiful and fertile lands of
Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each
way from its margin. In this extensive view,
the face of nature is displayed in a wonder-
ful variety of hill and dale, wooded grounds
and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton
Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising el-
gantly from the valley, is an object of extra-
ordinary interest. Fertility on each side is grad-
ually diminished, and lost in the superior heights
of Backonub, in Cumberland, and the high
lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

“The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is
on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lanca-
shire side it is of various elevations. The river
is an amusing companion, while brawling
and tumbling over rocky precipices, until
the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving
at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its
course is soon again ruffled, and the current
turns into every variety of form, which a rocky
channel of a river can give to water.” —
Vide Green’s Guide to the Lakes, vol. i. pp. 98-
100.

After all, the traveller would be most grati-
ified who should approach this beautiful Stream,
nor at its source, as is done in the Sonnets,
not from its termination; but from Coniston
over Walna Scar; first descending into a little
valley, a collateral compartment of the
long winding vale through which flows
the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of
September, when the after-grass of the mea-
dows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of
many of the trees faded, but perhaps none
fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point where
sufficient to show the various objects in the val-
ley, and not so high as to diminish their im-
portance, the stranger will instinctively halt.
On the foreground, a little below the most
favourite station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown
over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the wayside. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This uninitiated region stands in need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator’s heart with gladness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house exchanging “good-mornings,” as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; then he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is then conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon is a view upwards into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of The Pen; the one opposite is called Wallabarrows, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The chaotic aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strove out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, “What way he had been wandering?” replied, “As far as it is finished!”

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, “are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls” (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high) displayed in the short space of half an hour. That there is some hazard in frequenting desolate places, I myself have had proof one night an immense mass of rock fell at the very spot where, with a friend, I gazed the day before. “The summons of Mr. Green, speaking of the event, for he was in the practice of his art, on that day was addressed to the boy for a still longer time to the cause was heard, not without alarm, by the baying shepherds.” But to return to the Churchyard: it contains the following inscription:—

“In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker who died 25th of June 1852, in the 58th year of his age, and 67th of his cure at Seathwaite. Also, of Anne his wife, who died 11th of January, in the 93rd year of her age.”

In the parish-register of Seathwaite the following is this notice:—

“Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite six years. He was a man singular for his perseverance, industry, and integrity.”

This individual is the Pastor alluded to in the 18th Sonnet, as a worthy companion of a country parson of Chacecar, etc. In the second book of the “Exursion,” an abstract of this character is given, beginning, “A Priest abides before whose life such days fall to the ground;” and some account of his life, for it is well being recorded, will not be out of place.

W. W.

The Chapel has been rebuilt and the portion enlarged.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the parent of twelve children. His eldest brother inherited the small family estate, died under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years younger than the object of this memoir. He was born of the same mother, Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his father's youth, continuing to be of delicate frame, tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to breed him a scholar, it was not likely that he would be able to maintain himself by bodily labour. At that period, these dales were furnished with the houses; the children being taught to write in the chapel; and in the same building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater, not being called upon, probably, in that condition to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, in the assistance of a "German" man in the neighbourhood, he acquired leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies—the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston.
Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value was the same, viz. five pounds per annum. The cure of Seathwaite having a cot-taged to it, as he wished to marry, he took it in preference. The young person on his affections were fixed, though in the son of a domestic servant, had given to her serious and modest deportment, her virtuous dispositions, that she was to become the helpmate of a man enter on a plan of life such as he had marked for himself. By her frugality she had up a small sum of money, with which began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, she 1 upon her curacy; and, nineteen years after, his situation is thus described, in letters to be found in the Annual Register 40, from which the following is extracted:

To Mr. —

"Comiston, July 26, 1754.

Mr. — I was the other day upon a party of re, about five or six miles from this place. I met with a very striking object, and of one not very common. Going into a clergy-house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a large square, as is commonly used in this country, a lower class of people, dressed in a coarse frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a black shirt, a leathern strap about his neck, a coarse apron, and a pair of great iron-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve what we call clogs in these parts, with a upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his and the remainder of his children, were of them employed in waiting upon each, the rest in tressing and spinning wool, at a trade he is a great proficient; and more when it is made ready for sale will lye it,getValue thirty-two pounds weight, upon ask, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will it the market, even in the day of or. I was at all this, which may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess if astonished with the alacrity and the humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and unity of the clergyman himself...."

en follows a letter from another person, 1 1755, from which an extract shall be:

3 by his frugality and good management he is the wolf from the door, as we say; and advances a little in the world, it is owing to his own care than to anything else he to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is ing after further preterment. He is settled the people, that are happy among them, and lives in the greatest unanimity and idship with them; and, I believe, the men — and people are exceedingly satisfied with others; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in, and bear wit, if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity." We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

From the Rev. Robert Walker

"Sir — Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C——, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments in the last lines of the epistle. Be assured, my dear sir, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows: — Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23rd inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of a tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17l., of which is paid in cash, viz. 3l. from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 3l. from W. P., Esq., of P——, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3l. from the several inhabitants of L——, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 3l. yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplus fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3l.; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40l. for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of
life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge) I hope you will not think your favour to me out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford’s effects quite misbegot, for which I must ever gratefully own myself. Sir, your much obliged and most obedient humble servant;

"R. W., Curate of S.—"

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Sexacthaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me), thus expresses himself. "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Sexacthaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:—

"My Lord—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship’s hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Sexacthaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Sexacthaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefits could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1776, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"May it please your Grace—Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of de- himself candidate for deacon’s order at Grace’s ensuing ordination: the first at 25th instant, so that his papers could be transmitted in due time. As he is now an age, and I have afforded him education utmost of my ability, it would give me satisfaction (if your Grace would take the trouble to find him qualified) to have him ordained; constitution has been tender for some years; entered the college of Dublin, but I would not permit him to continue there; would have supported him much longer, and has been with me at home above a year, which time he has gained great street body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for forming the function. Divine Providence assisted by liberal benefactors, has helped his endeavours, from a small income, to a numerous family, and as my time of life draws me now unfit for much future event from this world, I should be glad to see him settled in a promising way to acquire a livelihood for himself. His being an assisting himself in life has been irreproachable, and I have not degenerate, in principles or acts, from the precepts and pattern of an understanding parent. Your Grace’s favourable reception this, from a distant corner of the diocese, an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude; a due use shall be made of the obligation so safely thereby to your Grace’s very devout and most obedient Son and Servant,

"Robert Walker."

The same man, who was thus liberal in education of his numerous family, was munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday were served upon the table at which he has been described sitting with his kinsmen, andrefreshment of those of his congregation came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It is scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his church and what would to many have been a kind of self-denial was paid, by the pastor and family, for this gratification; as the treat was only provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a session of days, the table was covered with victuals only. His generosity in old age was be still further illustrated by a letter related at the instance of his grandson, that years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half may be left for "little Robert's pocket money" who was then at school: instigating the idea of a lady, who, as he says, "may spare" to promise to send him an equal allowance weekly for the same purpose. The copy of the same letter is so characteristic, as cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," instigating his wife and himself, "are in our every
of health, allowing for the hasty strides of age knocking daily at our door, and seemingly telling us we are not only mortal, but expect ere long to take our leave of ancient cottage, and lie down in our last story. Pray pardon my neglect to answer; let us hear sooner from you, to augment the pleasures of the approaching season, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

ROBERT WALKER."

loved old customs and old usages, and in instances stuck to them to his own loss; having had a sum of money lodged in the house of a neighbouring tradesman, when long of time had raised the rate of interest, more was offered, he refused to accept it; it not difficult to one, who, while he was seventeen pounds a year from his uncle, declined, as we have seen, to add the profit another small benefit to his own, lest he be suspected of cupidity. From this vice of uttering free, he made no charge for singing school, such as could afford to pay him. Williams, the printer, who kept a diary of his expenses, however large, the amount, at the end of the year, of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less than 2000l.; and such a sense of his vast excellences was prevalent in the country, the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day shed to his name.

Here is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further explanatory remarks. — And to begin with his industry; eight o'clock in each day, during five days in the week, half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in spinning. His seat was within the rails of the spinning wheel, the communion table was his desk; and, Shenstone’s schoolmistress, the master emeritus himself at the spinning-wheel, while theiren were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more industriously engaged, he continued the same kind of employment, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for large one on which wool is spun, the spinner going to and fro. Thus was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment’s time. Nor was his industry with the wheel, when occasion called for it, less eager. Inlaid with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, of conveyance, wills, covenants, etc., with undoubted gain to himself, and to the great esteem of his employers. These labours (at all events considerable) at one period of the year, between Christmas and Candlemas, when key transactions are settled in this country, are often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasture upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompense for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, the more so with Magazines. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woolen and linen cloth, worth from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor’s own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the moors by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. White candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried for winter provision; the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. — By these various resources, this
venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessaries of life," but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts, and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chances to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one, it might be thought, could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his affections suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away,"—the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale— the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that as in the practice of their pastor there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing that upon these occasions selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also—while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto—that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was numerously attended than that of the morning but by a more serious auditory; than from the New Testament, on whose seat was accompanied by Burkett's Common Version. These lessons he read with intonations, frequently drawing tears from hearers, and leaving a lasting impression on minds. His devotional feelings and those of his own mind were further exercised with those of his family, in numerous devotions: not only on the Sunday evening, or every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the men and in her turn the servant, for the usual practice in reading, or for instruction, was Billy aloud; and in this manner the verse repeatedly gone through. That so much importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert, as length, as it is characteristic and very curious. "There is a small chapel at a county palace of Lancaster, where a clergyman has regularly officiated above three years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in their hands to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received his first company out of the assembly he approached the altar, and kneeled down, deputing the sacred elements, consigning the parson's wife, to whom he had been upwards of sixty years; and four daughters, each with her husband and the ages, all added together, amount to above thirty years. The several and respective doses from the place of each of their abodes: a chapel where they all communicated. Will not more than 1000 English miles. Whilst the narration will appear surprising, it is very hard to doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly years before, met at the same place and joined in performance of the same sacred duty. He was indeed most zealously attacked the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him condemn himself that he had no dissenters in his any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his religious impressions were received, before a reader will acquit him of bigotry, when it appears that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of it in the purchase of an estate offered to him advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker; whether from scruples or a disposition that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church, between persons not in religious sympathy each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition that one time was too frequently conspicuous.
Of this an instance had fallen under my notice: for, while he taught school at 
eswater, certain persons of that denomination
had refused to pay annual interest due
for the title of Church-stock; a great hindrance
upon the incumbent, for the curacy of 
eswater was then scarcely less poor than
of Seathwaite. To what degree this pre-
ce of his was blamable need not be deter-
ed; certainly it is, that he was not only
rare, as he himself says, to live in peace,
in love, with all men. He was placable,
charitable in his judgments; and, however
witty in conduct and rigorous to himself,
was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of
others, and to soften the censure that was cast
in their frailties—It would be unpar-
donable to omit that, in the maintenance of his
houses, he received due support from the part-
ners of his long life. She was equally strict,
in sending to her share of their joint cares, nor
in diligence in her appropriate occupations.
A son who had been some time their servant
the latter part of their lives, concluded the
negligence of her mistress by saying to me, "She
was no less excellent than her husband; she
was good to the poor; she was good to every-
thing!" He survived for a short time this vir-
uous companion. When she died, he ordered
her body should be borne to the grave by
the daughter and her granddaughter;
when the corpse was lifted from the thresh-
old, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feel-
ing about, for he was then almost blind, took
of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a
rere of the body, entered the chapel, a few
steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this ob-
urely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth,
ory-repaired Churchman, present to that of a
ardinal Wolsey!

"Oh! is a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden
 Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace
the moral world, that have brought us again
the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground, in
which two remarkable trees lie interred. The
nudging brook, that rolls close by the church-
yard, without disturbing feeling or meditation,
now unfortunately laid bare; but not long
go it participated, with the chapel, the shade
of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring
again. While the spectator from this spot is
looking round upon the girdle of stony moun-
tains that compasses the vale, masses of
ock, out of which monuments for all men
hat ever existed might have been hewn—it
would surprise him to be told, as with truth
he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to
the memory of this aged pair is a production of
a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a
mark of respect by one of their descendants

Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which
"seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his
rights than detain for dues which the parties liable
refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as
beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small dis-
tance from the parsonage, has been erected a
mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disad-
greeable object, though not unimportant to the
spectator, as calling to mind the momentous
changes wrought by such inventions in the
frame of society—changes which have proved
especially unfavourable to these mountain soli-
dudes. So much had been affected by these
new powers, before the subject of the preceding
biographical sketch closed his life, that
their operation could not escape his notice, and
doubtless excited touching reflections upon the
comparatively insignificant results of his own
manual industry. But Robert Walker was not
a man of times and circumstances; had he
lived at a later period, the principle of duty
would have produced application as unremit-
ting; the same energy of character would have
been displayed, though in many instances with
widely different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and
confirmatory of the above account, extracts
from a paper in the Christian Remembrancer,
October 1819: it bears an assumed signature,
but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert
Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of
Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker,
whose worth it commemorates, by a record not
the less valuable for being written in very early
youth.

"His house was a nursery of virtue. All
the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and
happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, charac-
terised the whole family. No railings, no idle-
ness, no indulgence of passion were permitted.
Every child, however young, had its appointed
engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting,
spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes,
making shoes, were by the different children
constantly performing. The father himself sit-
ting amongst them and guiding their thoughts,
was engaged in the same occupations.

"He sate up late, and rose early; the
family wore the rest. He retired to a little room
which he had built on the roof of his house.
He had slain it, and fitted it up with shelves
for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing
apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold
winter's night, without fire, while the roof
was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writ-
ing till the day dawned. He taught the chil-
dren in the chapel, for there was no school-
house. Yet in that cold, damp place he never
had a fire. He used to send the children in
parties either to his own fire at home or make
them run up the mountain side.

"It may be further mentioned, that he was
a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his
mother and he was a dutiful child. While en-
gaged on the mountains, it was his greatest
pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tran-
tual evenings, as it sailed behind the hills, he
bled its departure. He was skilled in fossils

1 Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which
"seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his
rights than detain for dues which the parties liable
refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.
taught school, I will add a few memorandum its parish register, respecting a person of the parsonage of desires as moderate, who was must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would ascend the towering Of courtly grandeur, and become as gase As are his mounting wishes; but for me, Let sweet repose and rest my portion be! —Henry Forest, Esq."

"Honour, the idol which the most adore, Receives no homage from my knee; Content in privacy I value more Than all uneasy dignity."

"Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1706, being 25 years of age."

"This curacy was twice augmented by the gifts of Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited in me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. I said 9th of May, y' said Mr. Curwen went to his office, and saw my name registered theret.

This, by the Providence of God, came by this poor place."

"Haece testor H. Fore."

In another place he records that the red橡 trees were planted in the churchyard 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate three years. It is not improbable that H. Fore was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto which the following verses are a part:

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam temperas gress
Diffigunt, nullque sono convertitur assur;
Utendum est utile, cito pede praestat stas."

W. W.

SONNET XIX. Seathwaite Chapel is on the Bank, the "tributary stream" of this sonnet.

SONNET XX. Donnerdale, or Dunnerdale, as it is now called, is the tract lying between the east bank of the Duddon from Ulpha bridge to the limits of Broughton. It is bounded on the north by fells which separate it from Seathwaite. There is a hamlet called Hall Dorendale between Seathwaite and Ulpha. It is the bridge below this hamlet that Mr. E. thinks Wordsworth saw the plain.

SONNET XXI. Lines 1–3. See Fenwick to this series of poems.

SONNET XXII. The scene of this tragedy has been one of the pools between Seathwaite and "Traveller's Rest" inn. The tradition is self is unknown to the present inhabitants.

SONNETS XXIV.–XXVII. There are many sites from which these sonnets could have been taken and the "House" (xxvii.) be in view. In castle, the seat of the Lords of Ulpha, is a ruin.

SONNET XXIX. The subject of this sonnet is the hillside burial-place of the Friends, now the scene of Sonnet xxii. It is called Sepulchre. Inside the inclosing wall is a

and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They immortalized his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information. — Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

"Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicacity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of great age, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a homely, head clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker. . . . He allowed no dissenter or Methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his care: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish. — Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolical descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace kindled a flame to exult in the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

"Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. 'How clear the moon shines tonight!' He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave."

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker

...
the stone seats used by the Friends, who
not worship under any roof but the heav-

SONNET XXX. Just beyond the burial-place
of previous sonnet the poet turned to the
seek the plain, while the river was lost
in woods.

SONNET XXXI. From the plain of Sonnet XXXI,
we seen the kirk situated on a rock washed
d Duddon. The church has been restored,
in the spirit of the days when the poet
d it.

SONNET XXXIV.
ne 14. We feel that we are greater than we
And feel that I am happier than I know.”

ne allusion to the Greek Poet will be ob-
to the classical reader. W. W.

ge 602. A PARSNAGH IN OXFORDSHIRE.
ne "note" alluded to in the Fenwick note
at to a Pastoral Character in "Ecclesiasti-

ge 602. To ENTERPRISE.
ne 114. living hill.

— “while the living hill
seeded with convulsive thorns, and all was still.”

Dr. DARWIN. W. W.

1831-2

Page 604. ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

PART I.

uring the month of December 1820, I ac-
pained a much-beloved and honoured Friend
walk through different parts of his estate,
a view to fix upon the site of a new Church
he intended to erect. It was one of the
t beautiful mornings of a mild season,—
feelings were in harmony with the cherish-
influences of the scene; and such being our
pose, we were naturally led to look back
past events with wonder and gratitude,
on the future with hope. Not long after-
da, some of the Sonnets which will be found
ardis the close of this series were produced
private memorial of that morning’s occupa-

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in
liament about that time, kept my thoughts
he same course; and it struck me that cer-
ponts in the Ecclesiastical History of our
tray might advantageously be presented to
verse. Accordingly, I took up the sub-
t, and what I now offer to the reader was
result.

When this work was far advanced, I was
veably surprised to find that my friend, Mr.
they, had been engaged with similar views
writing a concise History of the Church in
land. If our Productions, thus uninten-
nally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate
each other, it will prove a high gratification to
me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point
of the subject to another without shocks of
abruptness, this work has taken the shape of
series of Sonnets: but the Reader, it is to be
hoped, will find that the pictures are often so
closely connected as to have jointly the effect
of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to
which there is no objection but one that bears
upon the Poet only — its difficulty. W. W.

Most of the Ecclesiastical Sonnets were com-
posed in 1821, but there were some additions
made at a later date. The date of composition
of a few is conjectural. The fact that his broth-
Christopher had published an Ecclesiastical
Biography may have influenced him to write
these sonnets. One should read in this connec-
Ambrose de Vere’s Legends of Saxon Saints.
The motto, after George Herbert, was inscribed
in 1827. See Herbert’s Church Porch, v. 5-6.

SONNET II. Line 6. Did holy Paul, etc.
Stillingfleet address many arguments in sup-
support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing.
The latter part of this Sonnet refers to a favour-
ite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that
Joseph of Arimathea and his companions
brought Christianity into Britain, and built a
rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to here-
After, in a passage upon the dissolution of
monasteries. W. W.

SONNET III. Line 1. selvew — white. This
water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem
of those traditions connected with the Deluge
that made an important part of their mysteries.
The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen. W. W.

SONNET V. Line 2. Snowdon’s wilds. See
The Brigantes were the hill-men whom the Rom-
ans could not conquer.

Line 8. Iona’s coast. See sonnets on Iona,
1833.

Line 10. tays. Taliesin was the Cymric bard
who sang the deeds of his chief Urien in his
struggle against the Angles.

SONNET VII. Line 11. St. Alban was the
first Christian martyr in Britain.

Line 13. That Hill, whose flowery platform,
etc.

This hill at St. Alban’s must have been an ob-
ject of great interest to the imagination of the
venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a
delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that
rude age, traces of which are frequent in his
works: "— Varies herbarum floribus depictus
imulloqueque vestitus, in quo nihil repent
arduum, nihil praecox, nihil abruptum, quem
laterius longo latet succulentum in modum
squiris natura onomatix, dignum videlicet
eum pro insita sibi specie venustatia jam olim
reddens, qui beati martyris crucem dicaretur.”

W. W.

SONNET IX. Line 10. forced farewell. Roman
forces in Britain were called home to protect
the imperial city against the barbarians. The Britons then became prey to Picts and Angles.


SONNET xi. Line 2. hallelujahs. The Britons sought aid of Germans, and as he led his forces against Picts and Saxons he ordered them to shout Hallelujah three times, on hearing which the enemy fled.

Lines 1, 2.

Nor want the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs.

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus. — See Bede. W. W.

Lines 9, 10.

By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth.

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the force of David, and here I must state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent, — obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wielisfe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than verify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

W. W.

SONNET xii. The convent of Bangor was attacked by Ethelfirth while the monks were praying for safety; then the monastery with all its monks was destroyed.

"Ethelfirth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: "If they are praying against us," he exclaimed, "they are fighting against us;" and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelfirth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice." — See Turner's valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons.

"Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices." W. W.

SONNET xiii. Alluding to the familiar story of Gregory setting free the Angel York posed for sale at Rome.

SONNET xv. The person of Paulinus described by Bede, from the memory of eye-witness: — "Longe stature, praela curvus, nigro capillo, face maciea; adunco, pertinax, venerabilis simul ac aspexit." W. W.

King Edwin was converted by Paulinus.

SONNET xvi. Line 1. "Mas, la vie est Sparrow." See the original of this psalm of Bede. — The Conversion of Edwin, as narrated by him, is highly interesting — and the bringing up of this Council accompanied by so striking and characteristic a scene to give it at length in a trice: "Who, exclaimed the King, when the end was ended, shall first desecrate the cloister of the temples? I, answered the Chieftain for who more fit than myself, through the word which the true God hath given me, the story, for the good example of others, in a foolishness which I worshipped? Immediately in the name of the King he gave to S. Aidan and the Bishop of York to grant him what he had asked, to a priest, arms and a cannon (sagittarium): which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to use the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, him mad — he, however, halted not, but prancing, he profaned the temple, and against it the lance which he had held in hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered the companions to pull down the temple. This was the place designated a pleasing proof that the venerable saint Wearmouth was familiar with the poet Virgil. W. W.

SONNET xvii. Line 11. The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers for convenience of baptism.

SONNET xix. Having spoken of the disinterestedness, and temperance of those of those times, Bede thus proceeds: "In quibus erat veneratione tempore religiosis habitus, ut ubi ubicunque erat quis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudet omnibus tanquam Dei famulis exornata. Etiam si in timere pergessit inveniatur, secundum, et flexit cervix, vel manu signavit, et illius se benelecti, gaudet. Beant quoque horum exhortatoris diligenter ut proebant." Lib. iii. cap. 26. W. W.

SONNET xxii. Bede lived at the manor of Jarrow on the Tyne. See Aubrey de la Legends of Saxon Saints. "Bede's Last Line."

SONNET XXVI. See Alfred the West Saxon, McFadyen.
Line 10. pain narrow his cares. Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject toievous maladies. W. W.
SONNET XXIX. Line 1. Woe to the Crown at doth the Cow! obey! The violent mea-
ses carried on under the influence of Dunn,
in strengthening the Benedictine Order, are a leading cause of the second series of
amish invasions. - See Turner. W. W.
SONNET XXX. Alluding to the old ballad
high Canute composed when being rowed by
by where he heard the monks chanting.
"Mere saengen the Meneches bines Ely."
SONNET XXXI. Line 1. woman-hearted. "He
as of a gentle and pious nature not, not,
meek and good." - M. J. G. EUB.
SONNET XXXII. Line 14. The decision of
the Council was believed to be instantly known
remote parts of Europe. W. W.
SONNET XXXVI. This order came from
Incent III. because King John forbade Lang-
n to land in England.
SONNET XXXVII. See Aubrey de Vere, Saint
Homas of Canterbury, and Tennyson, Thomas
Becket.

PART II.

SONNET III. Line 1. "Here Man more purely
vis, etc. "Bonum est nos hic esse, quin humo
ivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit
atus, quisescit securius, moritur felicius, pur-
structus, praeceps, procellius." - BERNARD.
This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usu-
ly inscribed in some conspicuous part of the
istorian's houses." W. W.
SONNET VI. Line 4. St. George's Chapel
Findsor.
SONNET XII. Line 9. Valdo. Peter Waldo,
rich merchant, who founded the order of
or men of Lyons.
SONNET XIV. Among those martyrs of whom
lion sings in his Sonnet on the Late Mas-
eere in Piedmont were followers of Waldo.
Line 8. Whom Obloquy pursues, etc. The
st of foul names bestowed upon those poor
atures is long and curious; and, as is,
also too natural, most of the opprobrious ap-
dations are drawn from circumstances into
hich they were forced by their persecutors,
ho even consolidated their miseries into one
proachful term, calling them Pataronians, or
aturns, from 8atti, to suffer.

"W. W."

SONNET XV. This alludes to the influence of
Archbishop Chichele on Henry V. to make war
in France, which ended at Agincourt.
SONNET XVI. See note to "Song at the Feast
of Brougham castle."
SONNET XXII. Lines 7, 8. And the green lizard,
etc. These two lines are adopted from a MS.,
written about the year 1770, which accidentally
fell into my possession. The close of the
preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptnousness is
taken from the same source, as is the verse,
"Where Venus sits," etc., and the line, "One
ye were holy, ye are holy still," in a subsequent
Sonnet. W. W.
Line 14. Glastonbury, built by Joseph of
Arimatheus as the legend goes.
SONNET XXXI. Line 1. Quoted from Words-
worth's "Selections from Chaucer Modernized,"
stat. ix. of "The Prince's Tale."
Line 9. Edward became king at the age of
ten. He founded the famous Charity School,
Chris't Hospital in London, and many other
schools in England.
SONNET XXXII. Influenced by Cranmer Ed-
ward signed the warrant for her execution.
SONNET XXXIII. Edward reigned only six
years, and at his death the Roman Catholic wor-
ship was restored.
SONNET XXXIV. Latimer and Ridley were
burned together at Oxford in front of Balliol
College - where now stands the Martyr's Mem-
orial.
Line 4. One (like those prophets), etc. "M.
Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to
pull off his hose, and his other array, which
took unto was very simple: and being
stripped into his shrowd, he seemed as comely
a person to them that were present, as one
should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes
he appeared a withered and crooked sallow
(weak) old man, he now stood boul upright, as
comely a father as one might lightly behold.
... Then they brought a faggotte, kindled
with fire, and laid the same down at doctor
Ridley's feet. To whom M. Latimer spoke in
this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master
Ridley, and play the man: we shall this day
light such a candle by God's grace in England,
as I trust shall never be put out.'" - Fox's
Acts, etc.

Similar alterations in the outward figure and
department of persons brought to like trial were
not uncommon. See note to the above passage
in Dr. Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography,
for an example in an humble Welsh fisher-
man. W. W.
SONNET XXXV. Cranmer's statue is included
in the Memorial at Oxford.
SONNET XXXVII. Under Mary hundreds of
the clergy sought refuge on the Continent.
They returned on the accession of Elizabeth.
Line 9. speculative notions. "Alluding to
the discussion aroused by Knox's suggestion of
modification of the Prayer Book, for which
he left Frankfort and went to Geneva." -
Knight.
SONNET XXXVIII. Line 7. alien storms. Foreign intrigues against the Queen and those of Mary Queen of Scots.
SONNET XXXIX. Line 12. foul constraint. This may refer to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.
SONNET XXXVIII. Line 5. The gift exciting, etc. "On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsell and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'"—See Walton's Life of Richard Hooker. W. W.
SONNET XL. Line 2. sects. Nonconformists.
SONNET XL. Lines 10. craftily incites, etc. A common device in religious and political conflicts. See Strype, in support of this instance. W. W.
SONNET XL. Line 13. new-born Church. The Church Reformed of the previous sonnet, which Wordsworth originally wrote New-born Church.
SONNET XLV. In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—"Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external publick worship of God, so much ailed in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which we live in the body, needs external helps, and all enough to keep it in any vigour." W. W.

PART III.

SONNET III. A vivid picture of the passion.
SONNET IV. Lines 6, 7. "Now blind, disheartened, amazed, disheartened quelled,
To what can I be useful? Wheresoe'er serve
My nation, and the work from Heaven impart.

SONNET VI. Results of the Act of Union.
SONNET VII. Lines 1-3. See Milton, "On Late Massacre in Piedmont."
SONNET VIII. The indignation of the freemen of the authorities to set free the Earl of Essex, who refused to be party to James II.'s Declaration of Indulgences.
SONNET IX. Line 13. King James II.
SONNET X. Alluding to Sacheverell's proceeding in regard to the Act of Toleration which had made him a popular hero.
SONNET XI. American episcopacy, in so far as with the church in England, strictly belonged to the general subject; and I here make an acknowledgments to my American friends, Ese Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia for having suggested to me the proper advertizing to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, who so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated by Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore, and before his long life was closed, twenty bishops had been consecrated in America himself. For his character and opinions, his own numerous works, and a "Sermon on the Remembrance of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey." W. W.
SONNET XV. The earliest Episcopal Bisk in America were Dr. Seabury of Connecticut and Dr. White of Pennsylvania.
SONNET XVIII. Line 1. A general sort, etc. Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Siddall has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which it belongs may be reckoned as eminently important: examples of civility and refinement which a clergy stationed at intervals afford to the various people. The established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism and the link which unites the scattered provinces with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe that their taste, as acting upon respectable residences and scenery, often furnishes much which country gentlemen, who are more a liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, partake by. The precincts of an old residence.
be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, from prudence and necessity. I remember much pleased, some years ago, at Castle, the rural seat of the See of Car in a style of garden and architecture, if the place had belonged to a wealthy man, would no doubt have been swept away. An ancient house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes fa- ble restraint, and sometimes suggests an union of the accommodations and incises of life with the outward signs of and morality. With pleasure I recall to a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued friend in Oxford. The house and church stand parallel each other, at a small distance; a circular lane, or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side to the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind the side of the shrubs towards the steeple, of the church, you catch a single, ill, low, monumental headstone, mossy, growing into and gently inclining towards the th. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens in the view. This humble and beautiful par- dage called forth a tribute, for which see the net entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 302. W. W.

SONNET XXXII. This is still continued in my churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and once it is called the "Rush-bearing." W. W. It is now observed at Grasmere as a Childen's Festival. See Canon Rawnsley, Life and Nature at the English Lakes, "Rush-bearing."

SONNET XXXVII. Line 10. "Teaching us to forgive." This is borrowed from an interesting passage in Mr. George Dyer's history of Cambridge. W. W.

SONNET XXXVIII. Lines 2-5. "had we, like them, endured, etc." See Burnet, who is usually animated on this subject; the east end, so anxiously expected and prayed for, is called the "Protestant wind." W. W.

SONNET XXXIX. This and the following refer to the church to be erected by Sir George saumont at Coleorton.

SONNET XL. Line 9. "Yet will we not consent, etc." The Lutherans have retained the cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same. W. W.

SONNETS XXXIII.-XLV. Unless one has passed time in the presence of England's noblest and most inspiring cathedrals, one is apt to wonder at the place they occupy in the literature and the life of her people. Wordsworth, reverencing King's College Chapel, — the noblest and most inspiring structure ever erected for collegiate worship, — has yielded to the spell of this human past. The history of this magnificent chapel, the last of the thoroughly medi-

1823

Page 635. MEMORY.
For the origin of this poem see Fenwick note to lines "Written in a Blank Leaf of Macpherson's Ossian," p 715.

Page 636. "TO THE LADY FLEMING.

Page 12. Sir Michael Fleming came over with William of Normandy, and was given estates in Cumberland.

Line 15. Bekanga Ghyl — or dell of Nightshade — in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness. W. W.

Page 637. ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Lines 4, 5. Grasmere Church, dedicated to St. Oswald.

1824


Page 640. "TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.
"Lady Eleanor Butler and the Hon. Miss Ponsonby." — Knight.

Page 640. COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE.

"Wordsworth visited Carnarvon Castle in September, 1824." — Dowden.

Page 642. EPITAPH IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORELAND.

This may be seen in the churchyard at Chapel (High) Stile, Great Langdale.

1826

Page 646. "THE MANY WAYS, CARRIED ACROSS THESE HEIGHTS."

Evidences of Roman occupation are to be found at Ambleside, Grasmere, and other places in the Lakes. The "Far-terrace" of Rydal is as sacred as the garden at Dove Cottage.

Page 646. THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

Line 46. "more high, the Dacian force, etc." Here and infra, see Forsyth. W. W.

The column was set up by the Senate and people in commemoration of the conquest of
Dacia by Trajan. It was 132 feet high and sur-
mounted by a colossal statue of the Emperor;
it stood in the centre of the Forum Traiani.
The sculptures which covered it pictured the
Dacian wars. See Merivale's Romans under the
Emperors.
Lines 55-60. See "Character of the Happy
Warrior."

Page 647. FAREWELL LINES.
Lamb wrote Wordsworth in 1822: "I grow
ominously tired of official confinement. Thirty
years have I served thePhilistines, and my
neck is not subdued to the yoke." In March,
1823, he received his pension and the next
year he settled at Enfield, where he wrote to
Wordsworth: "How I look down on the slaves
and drudges of the world! Its inhabitants are
a vast cotton-web of spin-spin-spinners! O
the carking cares! O the money-grabbers!
Sempiternal muck-worms."

1827

Page 648. ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN
THE FORM OF A HARP.
To Edith May Southery. See "The Triad."

Page 648. To —
Possibly addressed to his sister Dorothy.
Dowden thinks "To —" means "To Mary."
[The Fenwick note, here as on page 346, re-
fers to Wordsworth's sonnet-writing in general.
This sonnet was the Dedication for the col-
clection of Miscellaneous Sonnets beginning with
"Numa frat not."
Line 14. "Something less than joy, but more than dull
content." COUNTER OF WISCHMERE, W. W.

Page 649. To S. H.
Sara Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister.

Page 650. "SCORN NOT THE SONNET."
It is not often that criticism is presented to
us in the form of the highest poetry and con-
densed into fourteen lines. This sonnet alone
is sufficient to vindicate Wordsworth's claim to
mastery in this form of poetry; for in it we have
history enriched with the finest touches of the
imagination, and transmitted in diction pure
and strong, while the music varies from the
most powerful animation to the softest cadences of
metrical harmony.

Page 651. RECOLLECTION OF THE POR-
TRAIT OF KING HENRY EIGHTH, TRINITY
LODGE, CAMBRIDGE.
The statue stands over King's Gateway to
the Great Court of Trinity College.

Page 651. "WHILE ANNA'S PEERS AND
EARLY PLAYMATES TREAD."
See "Liberty," line 2.

Page 652. TO ROTH A Q—.
Line 9. See Matthew Arnold, "Memorial
Verses."

"Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave!
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hear thy voice right, now he is gone."

Page 653. IN THE WOODS OF RITUAL.
This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself; the
scene of the incident having been a wood, it may be doubted, as a point of
history, whether the bird was aware that
attentions were bestowed upon a human,
even a living creature. But a Redbreast a
perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, a
slight on the handle of the spade when his
is half upon it — this I have seen. And on
my own roof I have witnessed affecting
instances of the creature's friendly visits to
chambers of sick persons, as described in
verse to the Redbreast, page 763. One of the
welcome intruders used frequently to root up
a nail in the wall, from which a picture is
hung, and was ready, as morning came, to
his song in the hearing of the Invalid, who
has been long confined to her room. These
inventions to a particular person, when marketed
continued, were reckoned omen; in
the superstition is passing away. W. W.
Line 1. Redbreast. The MS. title of the poem
was "To a Redbreast." Jemima, the daugh-
ter of Edward Quillinian. See "Lines of
Portrait."

Page 653. CONCLUSION. To —
This may be addressed either to his sister
Dorothy or to his daughter Dora.
Line 3. public life. See Sonnets on Inheri-
cence and Liberty, edited by Stopford Brooks.

1828

Page 654. THE TRIAD.
Line 36. Lucida! Edith Southery.
Line 90. youngest, etc. Dora Wordsworth.
"There is truth in the sketch of Dora," says
Sara Coleridge, "poetic truth, though such a
none but a poet-father would have seen."

Page 658. THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED.
"In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of
the old high-way leading to Ambleside, is a
road which, time out of mind, has been called the
Wishing-gate."

Having been told, upon what I thought
good authority, that this gate had been de-
stroyed, and the opening, where it hung, wall-
up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in
these stanzas. But going to the place some
time after, I found, with much delight, my old
favourite unmolested. W. W.
A gate still stands in the old place, and from
the inscriptions cut upon it one would judge
that "Hope" still rules there.

"Beside the wishing gate which we name,
Mid northern hills to me this fancy came.
A wish I formed, my wish I thus expressed:
Would I could wish my wishes all to rest
And know to wish the wish that were the best."
Page 660. **On the Power of Sound.**

A student of Wordsworth is everywhere
sed with his exquisite sensitiveness to
and sounds. The eye and the ear are
val avenues through which the world of
reaches the world of mind.

**1829**

The most important event of this year was
worth’s visit to Sir William Hamilton in
Miss Eliza M. Hamilton (Sir William’s
who assisted in entertaining Words-
write to him: “I think it would be
possible for any one who had once
in Wordsworth’s company ever again
ik anything he has written silly.”

**Page 664. Liberty.**

**1829**

“While Anna’s peers,”

**Page 665.**

**Page 666. Humanity.**

**Page 667. The Armenian Lady’s Love.**

See, in Percy’s Reliques, that fine old ballad,
*The Spanish Lady’s Love;* from which
em the form of stanza, as suitable to dia-
ue, is adopted. W. W.

**Page 672. The Russian Fugitive.**

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his en-
tertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale,
affirms that, besides the concurring reports of
others, he had the story from the lady’s own
mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the
close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing
that name as the acknowledged Wife of Peter
the Great. W. W.

**Page 682. “In These Fair Vales Hath Many a Tree.”**

Inscription intended for the stone in the
grounds at Rydal Mount. The inscription still
remains upon the stone.

**Page 683. Elegiac Musings.**

Lady Beaumont died in 1829. Wordsworth
visited Coleridge in November, 1830. On leaving
Coleridge, he went to Cambridge, and on his
way thither composed this poem. From Cam-
bidge he wrote Sir William Rowan Hamilton,
saying: “Thirty-seven miles did I ride in one
day through the worst of storms; and what was
my recourse? Writing verses to the memory of
my departed friend, Sir George Beaumont.”

**Page 684. The Primrose of the Rock.**

“We walked in the evening to Rydal. Coler-
ridge and I lingered behind. We all stood to
look at the Glow-worm Rock—a primrose that
grew there, and just looked out on the road
from its own sheltered bower.”—DOROTHY
WORDSWORTH. 1802.

The rock still remains.

**Page 685. Yarrow Revisited.**

There seems to be a deep significance in the
fact that this time the two poets did not linger
on the bracken and bents, but about the mould-
ering ruin of Newark; we can see in it the effect
of the thought that this was probably the last
meeting of the two. The fear that Scott would
not be able to revive his strength, even upon
“Warm Vesuvio’s vine-clad slopes,” oppresses
Wordsworth and colors the whole poem. These
forebodings proved too true. This was not only
their last meeting, but it was Scott’s last visit
to the Vale of Yarrow and the scenes he loved
so dearly.

“On the 22d,” says Mr. Lockhart, “these
two great poets, who had through life loved
each other and appreciated each other’s genius
more than infirm spirits ever did either of
them, spent the morning together in a visit to
Newark. Hence the last of the three poems
by which Wordsworth has connected his name
to all time with the most romantic of Scottish
streams.”

**Page 687. On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abotsford, for Naples.**

There is no finer tribute of one great poet to
another than is found in this poem.
Page 693. THE TROSCAHS.
This poem has often been cited as the triumph of the pure style.

Page 692. HIGHLAND HUT.
This sonnet describes the exterior of a Highland hut, as often seen under a morning or evening sunshine. To the author of the "Adress to the Wind," and other poems, in this volume, whose my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the interior of one of these rude habitations.

"On our return from the Troscachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I had sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

"A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of the clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whisky bottle for his refreshment, at our request. 'She keeps a dram,' as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the wayside, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk: and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, 'Ye'll get that,' bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; and above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been eroded over and varnished by many winters, till, where the firelight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten our supper we sat about half an hour, as I think I never felt so deeply the hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The of the house repeated from time to time we should often tell of this night when up to our homes, and interposed praises of the lake, which he had more than once, vainly were returning in the boat, ventured to was 'bonnier than Loch Lomond.'

Page 694. O'GROAT'S HOUSE.
"On our return from the Troscachs, who was an Edinburgh drawing-master during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to O'Groat's House, was to sleep in the barn my fellow-travellers, where the man had plenty of dry hay. I do not believe the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry; this year it had a better chance than usual; or dry, however, the next morning they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to 'go as attended me with a candle, and assured that the bed was dry, though not 'as it is used to.' It was of chaff; there were iron bars in the room, a cupboard and seven upon one of which stood milk in wooden bowls cover. The walls of the house were stone unplastered; it consisted of three rooms, the cow-house at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spacious at the other end; the rooms were divided, not by the rigging, but only to the beginning of roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us as they had a bright fire, which I could not out the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a maze as I have seen the undertaker of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of the above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was a style of light I should never have thought would suit a temple to be built with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means other; and yet the colours were more in those of melted gems. I lay looking up the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their at the other end of the room; I did not much, but passed a comfortable night; for, bed, though hard, was warm and clean; the unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves best against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and I shut up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less comforted by remembrance of the Troscachs, beautiful they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head. I thought of the Faery-land of Spenser, and I had read in romance at other times: then what a feast it would be for a Lady Fantomime-maker could he but transport it.
ge 692. BOTHWELL CASTLE.

The old stone walls of the castle are still standing, and the ruins are a picturesque sight. The castle was built in the 12th century and was the residence of the Douglases, the most powerful family in Scotland. It later passed to the Stuarts and was held by them until the revolution of 1688. The castle has been largely restored, and is now a popular tourist attraction.

Page 694. HART'S-HORN TREE.

The Hart's-horn Tree is a type of oak that is found in the forests of Scotland. It is known for its unique characteristic of growing a single horn on its trunk, which is believed to be a symbol of the Scottish people's connection to the land. This tree is often associated with the legend of the Green Man, who is said to have been born from the oak.
Churchyard; Arthur’s Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough; the excavation, called the Giant’s Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, etc. W. W.

Page 694. COUNTESS’S PILLAR.
This still stands.

Page 695. ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.
Hodgson’s History of Northumberland says that one of Agricola’s two legions came to Ambleside and there divided; one division going by Grasmere and the Raise to Carlisle, while the other went over Kirkstone to Penrith.

1833

Page 696. DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.
This poem gives conclusive evidence that in old age Wordsworth still preserved his young love for Nature, and his magical interpretive power. The keenness of insight, the lyric capture, the soothing effect of this work written at the age of sixty-two, indicate that the prayer he uttered for another had been answered for him, and an old age serene and bright had been granted.

Page 698. TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING HIS PICTURE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE ON THE ISLAND OF ST. HELENA.
The picture is described in vol. ii. p. 301 of the Life of Benjamin Robert Haydon.

Page 700. “IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THE LIGHT,” ETC.
This poem should preface every edition of the poet’s works as it did that of 1845, at his request. See “Letter to Lady Beaumont.”

Page 700. TO THE AUTHOR’S PORTRAIT.
The portrait here alluded to was painted by H. W. Pickersgill, R. A., at the request of the Master and Fellows of St. John’s College, Cambridge. The picture hangs in the dining hall at St. John’s. It was completed in 1832.

1833

Page 700. A WHEN’S NEST.
All the conditions revealed in this poem are still to be found at Rydal.

Page 707. TO THE RIVER CRESCOT.
Line 5. But if thou (like Coeby, etc. Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that “the name of the river was taken from the bridge, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A.” Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, “to great;” signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping: a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up that name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, as considered as having its source in the cove of Wythburn, and thence flowing to Thirlmere. The beautiful features of the coast are known only to those who travel between Grasmere and Keswick, have some main road in the vale of Wythburn, running over to the opposite side of the lake proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately below Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, in a great measure cleared of the large stones which, by their concussion in the stream, produced the loud and awful noises heard in the sonnet.

“The scenery upon this river,” says Southey in his Colloquies, “where it lies under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the most beautiful kind:

—ambiguo lapes refutitque fissaque,
Occurrerque sibi venturae aspectus est.”

Page 707. IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COKERMOOR.
Line 1. The poet’s father was buried in the churchyard of St. Michael’s at Cockermouth.
Line 2. Catherine and Thomas, his children, are buried in the Poet’s Corner in the churchyard.

Page 707. ADDRESS FROM THE STREET.
Cockermouth Castle stands on an eminence not far from the manor-house in which the poet was born. It is easy to imagine the extent of such a ruin upon his susceptible mind in childhood. See “The Prelude,” i. 294.

Page 708. NUN’S WELL, BRIGGATE.
Line 11. By hooded Porters, to which attached to the church of Brigham was a chantry, which held a moiety of the revenues in the decayed parsonage; some vestiges of nastic architecture are still to be seen.

Page 708. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS LIE AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT.
“The fears and impatience of Mary were great,” says Robertson, “that she got a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; thence she was conducted with much respect to Carlisle.” The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall, where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen (who came her rank and misfortunes) was kept in a state of preservation, out of respect to her memory, and left; and one cannot but regret that no necessary alterations in the mansion could be effected without its destruction.

Page 709. STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A SENUA BOAT OFF SAINT BEES’ HEADS.
St. Bees’ Heads, anciently called the Ch
st. Bees," say Nicholson and Burns, "had its origin from Beg a holy woman from Irene who is said to have founded here, about a year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, and afterwards a church was built in memory of her. The aforesaid religious house, being devoured by the Danes, was restored by William Teeschiens, son of Ranulf, and brother of Alph de Meschius, first Earl of Cumberland; and made a cell of a and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighborhood; one of which is alluded to in these stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkin, M. A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees' College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, St. Bees College remained a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; recently, under the patronage of the Earl Lonsdale, a college has been established for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College, and is now worthy of being visited by any stranger who might be led to the neighbourhood of this abraded spot. The form of stanza in this Poem, and some in the style of versification, are adopted from "The Monks," a poem of much beauty on a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: and to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and it little unambitiously, but with true feeling of rural nature, at a time when nature was not so much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns. W. W.


Page 712. ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN.

Line 8. The Tower of Refuge, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved. W. W.


Page 712. ISLE OF MAN.

Of course the Fenwick note "William" should be John.

Page 713. ISLE OF MAN.

Line 8. veteran Marine. Henry Hutchinson, the poet's brother-in-law. See Fenwick note to the following sonnet.

Page 713. BY A RETIRED MARINER.

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here. W. W.

Page 713. AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN.

Line 3. Rushen Abbey. W. W.

Page 713. TYNWALD HILL.

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. "I found myself," says he, "on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years." It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance! W. W.

Page 715. On Revisiting Dunolly Castle. This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place. W. W.

Page 716. Cave of Staffa. The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steamboat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind. W. W.

Page 717. Flowers on the Top of the Pillars at the Entrance of the Cave.

Line 1. Hope smiled when your nativity was cast, etc. Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces. W. W.

Page 717. Iona. The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russell, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do. W. W.

Page 719. The River Eden, Cumberland.

Line 5. Yet fetched from Paradise. It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, a valley? Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden, and the stream which flows, when the sun sets, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Es-Sau French—aqua, Latin. W. W.


Line 14. Canal, etc. At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of similar works is thrown over a deep glen or moss a very short distance from the main road. W. W.

Page 721. Steamboats, Viaducts and Railways.

See "The Lake District Defense Society" by Canon Rawnsley, in Transactions of Wordsworth Society.

Page 721. The Monument Called Long Meg and Her Daughters near the River Eden.

Line 1. A weight of awe, not easy to be lifted, thronged. The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a stone circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-one in number above ground; a little way up the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came on it by surprise, I might overrate its importance as an object; though it will not bear a comparison with Henge, I must say, I have not seen an relic of those dark ages which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance. W. W.

Page 721. Lowther. Lowther Castle is about five miles by Pooley bridge, Ullswater. Lord Londonderry is a patron of the poets, and the Castle was a frequent meeting-place of Wordsworth and his friends.

Page 721. To the Earl of Lonsdale. This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials took place at the Cumbria Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in sequence of repeated and long-contested and upon his character through the local press, was thought it right to prosecute the consul and proprietors of three several journals. The verdict of libel was given in one case; and the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from like in future. W. W.

Page 722. The Somnambulist. Line 1. Lupa’s Tower. A pleasure house built by the late Duke of Norfolk near banks of Ullswater. W. W. These piers are reached from Grasmere by the Grisedale path over Helvellyn. See "Airy-Foot Valley."
3E5 725–745

NOTES

3E5 725. "NOT IN THE LUCID INTERVALS OF LIFE."

It is interesting to note that when the Edin-

b urgh Review was attacking Byron, Words-

worth wrote: "The young man will do some-

thing if he goes on as he has begun. But these

words, just because he is a lord, set upon

" Although Byron in "English Bard of

Scottish Reviewers" alluded to Wordsworth

"That mild apostate from poetic rule,

later in life after meeting Wordsworth at

name on being asked how he was impressed,

explained: "Why, to tell the truth, I had but

feeling from the beginning of the visit to

end, and that was reverence."

3E5 727. THE REDBREAST.

line 45. Matthew, Mark, etc. These words are

a part of a child's prayer, still in general

use throughout the northern counties. W. W.

3E5 728. LINES SUGGESTED BY A POR-

TAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF F. STONE.

The " J. Q. " of the Fenwick note was

Jemima Quillimain, the daughter of Mr.

ward Quillimain. See "In the Wood.

3E5 730. Written after the Death of Charles Lamb.

Lines 1, 2. Lamb died on the 27th of De-

mber, 1834, and was buried in a lot selected

himself in Edenton Churchyard. See note

"Farewell Lines."

Line 23. From the most gentle creature

s and fields. This way of indicating the

ame of my lamented friend has been found

t with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say

justification of the double sense of the word,

at similar allusions are not uncommon

staphs. One of the best in our language in

use I ever read, was upon a person who bore

the name of Palmer; and the course of the

ought, throughout, turned upon the Life of

De Parted, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor

think that the objection in the present

use will have much force with any one who

members Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet

addressed to his own name, and ending—

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!"

W. W.

3E5 732. Thou wert a scowler, etc. Lamb was

"scowler of the fields" until he visited the

ake. To the first invitation hither he replied:

Sweets, sweets, markets, theatres, churches, city

gardens, shops sparkling with pretty

tes of industrious milliners, . . . O city, for

may Keswick and her giant brood go hang."

When the Lakes had wrought their spell

him, he wrote: "We thought we had got

into fairyland. . . . Skiddaw, oh, its fine black

head, and the bleak air atop of it. . . . It was

a day that will stand out like a mountain, I

am sure, in my life. I was very little. I had

been dreaming I was great."

Line 85. Her love, etc. See Landor, "To the

ister of Elia."

3E5 736. EXTENPORE EFFUSION UPON THE

DEATH OF JAMES HOGG.


Line 23. How fast, etc. Walter Scott died

Sept. 21, 1832; S. T. Coleridge died July 25,

1834; Charles Lamb died Dec. 27, 1834; George

Crabbe died Feb. 3, 1834; Felicia Hemans

died May 16, 1836.

3E5 737. NOVEMBER 1836.

Sara Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister,

who had been so much both to Wordsworth and

Coleridge, died at Rydal in June, 1836, and

was buried in Grassmere Churchyard. Such places

as "Sara and Mary Crags," near John's Grove,

"Rock of Names," and Sara's Seat by Thirl-

mere, perpetuated her name in the Lakes.

Page 741. "SIX MONTHS TO SIX YEARS

ADDED HE REMAINED."

Alluding to the poet's son Thomas, who died

December, 1812.

3E5 739. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

It is impossible to fix accurately the date of

every sonnet in this series. Prof. Dowden says

they comprise the time between 1837 and 1842.

Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary, 1837, will be

found an interesting commentary of this tour. In

writing to Wordsworth of this tour in pro-

spective Robinson said: "I am pleased when I

am called on to spend at the suggestion of

others."

3E5 742. MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENT.

Line 57. "The Wizard of the North." Under

date of June 12 Robinson writes: "As long as

the light lasted I read Lockhart's Life of Scott

which Ticknor had lent me."

Line 76. He said, "When I am there, etc.

These words were quoted to me from "Yar-

row Unvisited" by Sir Walter Scott when I

visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two be-

fore his departure for Italy; and the affecting

condition in which he was when he looked upon

Rome from the Janiculian Mount, was reported to

me by a lady who had the honour of conduct-

ing him thither. W. W.

Line 98. The whole world's Darling. While

writing this of Scott, Wordsworth was much

pleased that an edition of his own works was

being prepared in America by Prof. Henry Reed,

of Philadelphia. See "On the Departure of

Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford."

Line 159. Mount Calvary. Alluding to the

fact that earth had been brought here from

Mount Calvary to form a burial-ground.
Lines 233-236. Savona... Chiabrera.

"Wordsworth took a great fancy to the place and thought it a fit residence for such a poet." — H. C. Robinson.

Line 241. his sepulchral verse. If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them on pages 388-391. W. W.


Line 306. vault. Alluding to the legend that St. Peter was imprisoned here, and caused a spring to flow in order that he might baptize his keeper.


It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church; — a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity. W. W.

It is well to remember in connection with the spirit of this note that Wordsworth at this time was intimate with the young poet and preacher F. W. Faber, who had come to Ambleside as curate, and tutor to the sons of Mrs. Benson Harrison, one of the Rydal Dorotheas. (See H. D. Rawnsley, "The Last of the Rydal Dorotheas" in a Rambler's Note Book.) The influence of Wordsworth upon Faber was very marked, as is to be seen in his poems written at the Lakes. An enduring memorial of this friendship is to be seen in the Bible of Wordsworth's old age, presented to him in 1842 by Faber. It is now in possession of Hon. George F. Hoar, Worcester, Mass., who has kindly sent me the following inscription which it bears: —

William Wordsworth
From Frederick Wm. Faber
In affectionate acknowledgment of his kindnesses,
and of the pleasure and advantage of his friendship.
Ambleside. New Year's Eve, 1842 A. D.
Be steadfast in the Covenant, and be conversant
therein, and was old in thy work.
Ecclesiasticus, xi. 20.

Page 753. AT THE CONVENT OF CAVENDISH.

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo (or Ravali: as our ancestors Saxonised the name) in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines and may therefore be classed among the tementes of the monastic orders. The name comprehends two orders, monks and hermits symbolised by their arms, two doves driven out of the cup. The monastery is visited by the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not much of interest. The hermitage is placed in a clear and wider region of the forest. It is comprised between twenty and thirty distinct residences each including for its single hermit an isolated piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence given by the hermit long enough to kill his cell, and when the hermit arrives he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had in the year 1831 fallen with the monk, the subject of these two dissertations, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about
of age, but his appearance was that of a
man. He had been a painter by profes-
sion but on taking orders changed his name
Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an uncon-
scious reference as well to the great Sanozio d'
no as to the archangel. He assured my
that he had been thirteen years in the
stage and had never known melancholy or
i. In the little recess for study and prayer,
was a small collection of books. "I read
said he, "books of asceticism and mysti-
heology." On being asked the names of
most famous mystics, he enumerated Scar-
San Giovanni della Croce, St. Dionysius
reopagist (supposing the work which bears
name to be really his), and with peculiar
hails Riccardo di San Vitto. The works
aint Theresa are also in high repute amon-
tifician. These names may interest some of
readers.
heard that Raffaello was then living in
convent; my friend sought in vain to renew
quaintance with him. It was probably a
of seclusion. The reader will perceive that
sonnets were supposed to be written when
was a young man. W. W.

age 753. AT THE ERIMITE OR UPPER
VEINT OF CAMALDOLI.
line 1. What aim had they, the Pair of
aks. In justice to the Benedictines of
odi, by whom strangers are so hospitably
ained, I felt obliged to notice that I saw
ong them no other figure at all resembling, in
and composition, the two monks described
his Sonnet. What was their office, or the mo-
which brought them to this place of morti-
tion, which they could not have approached
out being carried in this or some other way,
seling of delicacy prevented me from in-
ing. An account has before been given of
ermitage they were about to enter. It
visited by us towards the end of the month
May; yet snow was lying thick under the
rarious, within a few yards of the gate.

Page 753. AT VALLOLMOSA.
ilton visited Italy in 1838.
The name of Milton is pleasingly connected
Vallommosa in many ways. The pride
which the monk, without any previous
ation from me, pointed out his residence, I
not readily forget. It may be proper here
defend the poet from a charge which has
brought against him, in respect to the pas-
in "Paradise Lost," where this place is
ioned. It is said, that he has erred in
oking of the trees there being deciduous,
trees they are, in fact, pines. The fault-
ers are themselves mistaken; the natural
eds of the region of Vallommosa are decidu-
as, and spread to a great extent; those near
convert are, indeed, mostly pines; but they
avenues of trees planted within a few steps
other, and thus composing large tracts
n wood; plots of which are periodically cut
down. The appearance of those narrow avenues,
upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of
the height which the trees attain by being
forced to grow upwards, is often very impres-
sive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years
old, pointed this out to me in several places." W.

Page 761. "BLEST STATESMAN HE."
Line 14.
"All change is perilous, and all chance unsound." W. W.

Page 761. SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT
OF DEATH,
These were occasioned by the general dis-
cussion in England in 1836-7 in regard to abol-
ishing the death penalty in all cases excepting
murder and treason. Wordsworth's ideals, while
conservative, in many respects were in advance of
his time.
In 1841 Wordsworth wrote to Sir Henry Tay-
or as follows: "You and Mr. Lockhart have
been very kind in taking so much trouble about
the sonnets. I have altered them as well as I
could to meet your wishes, and trust that you
will find them improved, as I am sure they are
where I have adopted your own words."

Page 764. SONNETS ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F.
This year is memorable from the fact that
Miss Fenwick came to Rydal to live. To her
interest in Wordsworth as poet and man we are
indebted for the autobiographical notes prefixed
to the poems of this volume. They were dic-
tated to her by the poet and are known as the
"Fenwick Notes." She once said to Sir Henry
Taylor: "I would be content to be a servant in
the house to hear his wisdom." It was natural
that the first two sonnets of this year should be
a tribute to Miss Fenwick. The lower terrace
at Rydal was cut by the poet for her.

Page 765. POOR ROBIN.
The Poor Robin is the small wild geranium
known by that name. W. W.
The hope expressed in the Fenwick note and
the poem itself has been reverenced by those who
have had the care of Rydal since Wordsworth
left it; it has lost none of its beauty or charm.

Page 765. ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE
OF WELLINGTON UPON THE FIELD OF WATER-
LOO, BY HAYDON.
Sept. 4, 1840, Haydon writes in his Journal,
"I heard from dear Wordsworth with a glorious
sonnet 'On the Duke and Copenhagen.'"
This picture used to hang on the staircase near
the clock at Rydal. See "On the Field
of Waterloo."
1841

Page 766. To a Painter.
Miss Margaret Gillies painted five portraits of Wordsworth on ivory. One of these was so pleasing to the family that it was reproduced with Mrs. Wordsworth at the poet’s side. It is her portrait that the two sonnets of this year refer.


“In a letter of Wordsworth to his daughter (printed in the Cornhill Magazine, March, 1893) he writes of this and the following poem: ‘Dearest Dora, Your mother tells me she shrinks from copies being spread of these sonnets; she does not wish one, at any rate, to be given to Miss Gillies, for that, without blame to Miss G., would be like advertising them. I assure you her modesty and humble-mindedness were so much shocked, that I doubt if she had more pleasure than pain from these compositions though I never poured out anything more from the heart.”” — DOWDEN.

It is interesting to note that (in June, 1841) when Wordsworth was receiving honor at home and abroad for the great fight he had fought, Carlyle wrote a letter to Browning (just published), regarding “Sordello” and “Pippa Passes,” in which he lays down the following distinctive doctrine for which Wordsworth had contended both in verse and prose. “Unless poetic faculty means a higher power of common understanding, I know not what it means. One must first take a true intellectual representation of a thing before any poetic interest that is true will supervene.”

1842

This year Wordsworth was granted £300 for the Civil List for distinguished service in the cause of literature.

Page 766. “When Severn’s Sweeping Flood,” etc.
“The occasion of this sonnet was a bazaar held in Cardiff Castle to aid in building a new church on the site of one destroyed by floods two hundred years before.” — KIght.

Page 769. Miscellaneous Sonnets.
Sonnet i. A Poet! — He hath put his heart to school. In the first four verses of this sonnet Wordsworth reveals something of the method of the poets of the Restoration, who, as Keats says, taught that to write poetry was “to smooth, inlay, and clip & fit, easy was the task, A hundred handicraftsmen wore the mask Of Poesy.”

It was against such a perversion of art that Wordsworth did battle even to the last; insisted that art was the product of the nature, intellect, sensibility, and will, with a lofty spiritual imagination.

Sonnet vii. Men of the Western World.
These lines were written several years ago when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by means made possible by their own passions. A far more formidable appearance among those States, which have broken faith with the public creditor in matters so infamous. I cannot, however, but remember at both evils under a similar relation to me: good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wear this stain from their name and nation.

Additional Note

I am happy to add that this anticipation has already partly realized; and that the report addressed to the Pennsylvanians in the matter on page 764 is no longer applicable to them. I trust that those other States to which it has not yet applied will soon follow the example set them by Philadelphia, and redeem their country with the world. — 1850. W. W.

Page 771. The Poet’s Dream.
Line 25. Chapel Oak of Allonville. As ancient Trees there are few, I believe, as in France, so worthy of attention as one which may be seen in the “Pays de la Loire” about a league from Yvetot, close to the sea, and in the burial-ground of Allonville.

The height of this Tree does not answer its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height.

Such is the Oak of Allonville in its original nature. The hand of Man, however, has degenerated to impress upon it a character of more interesting, by adding a religious feeling to the respect which its age naturally inspires.

The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter, carefully wainscoted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble sanctuary.

Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year, divine service is performed in this Chapel.

The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the houses, like an ancient hermitage above the surrounding Wood.

Over the entrance to the Chapel an inscription appears, which informs us that it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville.
year 1806; and over a door is another, stoning it "To our Lady of Peace."
'Le No. 14, Saturday Magazine. W. W.

1843

WANSFELL.

Wansfell, the Fell of Woden, lies to the west of Rydal above Ambleside.

GRACE DARLING.

Grace Darling with her father, the lighthouse-keeper at Longstone on the Northumbrian coast, rescued nine survivors from the wreck of the steamship Forfarshire, Sept. 7, 1838.

Cuthbert's cell. Cuthbert came from Rosedale to Lindisfarne.

"WHILE BEAMS OF ORIENT SHOOT WIDE AND HIGH."

2. rural Town. Ambleside.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WOODSWORTH, D. D.
The poet's nephew.

INSRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT.

This monument was erected in the Church of Kentigern, Crosthwaite, Keswick, in memory of Robert Southey. It stands on the east side of the altar tomb.

Butke, etc. These lines were added by Wordsworth after they were cut on monument. One can recognize this by running the fingers over them.

1844

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY.
The degree and kind of attachment which the yeomanry feel to their small heritas can scarcely be over-rated. Near the use of one of them stands a magnificent tree, ich a neighbour of the man advised him to it for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the man, "I had rather fall on my knees and rasp it." It happens, I believe, that the proposed railway would pass through this little spery, and I hope that an apology for the swer will not be thought necessary by one who ters into the strength of the feeling. W. W. Wordsworth sent this sonnet to Gladstone with a letter calling his attention to the "desecrating project."

That Wordsworth's spirit is still potent to save the Lakes for "Nature and Mankind," is evidenced by the work of the Lake District Defence Society, which has prevented the promoters from invading Borrowdale, Buttermere, and Braithwaite. In this good work it has had substantial aid from England, from across the Border, and from America. Many dalesmen may be found on the Lakes as loyal to its beauties as was that one referred to by the poet himself. So long as this feeling prevails Mr. Ruskin's prophecy that there would in time be built "A railway for Cook's excursion trains up Seaw Fell, another up Helvellyn, and a third up Skiddaw with a circular tour to connect all three branches," will not become true.

ORRESS-HEAD. The height north of Windermere, back of Elleray, the home of Christopher North, from which there is a magnificent view of Windermere and its surroundings.

1845

Early in this year Wordsworth was summoned to attend a State Ball in London. He complied, and "wore Rogers' clothing, buckles, and stockings, and Davy's sword," says Haydon.

FORTH FROM A JUTTING RIDGE, etc.

This rock may be easily found by turning to the left at the highest point of the middle road, "Bit-by-Bit Reform," on White Moss Common, as one goes from Rydal; or on the right of the coach road, "Radical Reform," not far from the "fir grove." They are now surrounded with thick shrubbery, but are "heath-clad" still.

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL.
The scene of this poem is on the western side of Grasmere Lake, at the right of the road leading to Red Bank, where the brook descends from Silver How. The cottage known as Wyke Cottage still stands.

SO FAIR, SO SWEET."

The circumstance which gave rise to this poem was a walk in July, 1844, from Windermere, by Rydal and Grasmere, to Loughrigg Tarn, made by Wordsworth in company with J. C. Hare, Sir William Hamilton, Prof. Butler, and others. One of the party writes of it as follows:

"When we reached the side of Loughrigg Tarn the loveliness of the scene arrested our steps..."
and fixed our gaze. When the Poet’s eyes were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in search, to them a happy vital habit, for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. There his attention was arrested by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich’s egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer inspection this proved to be the shadow of a daisy projected upon it. The Poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it, which so interested Professor Butler that he plucked the tiny flower, and, saying that “it should be not only the theme but the memorial of the thought they had heard,” bestowed it somewhere for preservation.”—Knight.

Ruskin says of the first six lines: “This is a little bit of good, downright, foreground painting and no mistake about it, daisy, and shade, and stone texture and all. Our painters must come to this before they have done their duty.”—Modern Painters, vol. i. part ii., section ii., chapter vii.

Prof. Dowden thinks this was composed between 1835 and 1842.

1847

This sonnet refers to the poet’s grandson, who died in Rome, 1846.

“This sonnet was occasioned by the death of the grandson alluded to in the previous sonnet; the illness of his brother Christopher, and of another grandson John, son of his brother Richard.”—Knight.

Page 787. To Luca Giordano.
The picture which suggested this sonnet used to hang on the staircase at Rydal. It was brought from Italy by the poet’s eldest son.

Hon. George F. Hoar, reviewing Wordsworth’s relation to righteousness and liberty, wrote out in the conduct of statesmen, “The influence of William Wordsworth, it is the greatest power for justice, and righteousness, and liberty, that has been on this planet since Milton. The knights, the good and brave champions of freedom, as they take up their lips the vows of consecration, bathe themselves in Wordsworth as in a pure and clear fountain. The love of liberty under law, the lofty political philosophy, snowy purity of life, sympathy with every human sorrow, breathe from every line Wordsworth ever wrote, until at the age of eighty the mighty power passed from the earth, and,

The man from God sent forth,
Did yet again to God return.”—International Monthly, October, 1886
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**28**

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MAP OF THE
LAKE DISTRICT

[Map of the Lake District with various locations and waterways labeled]
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