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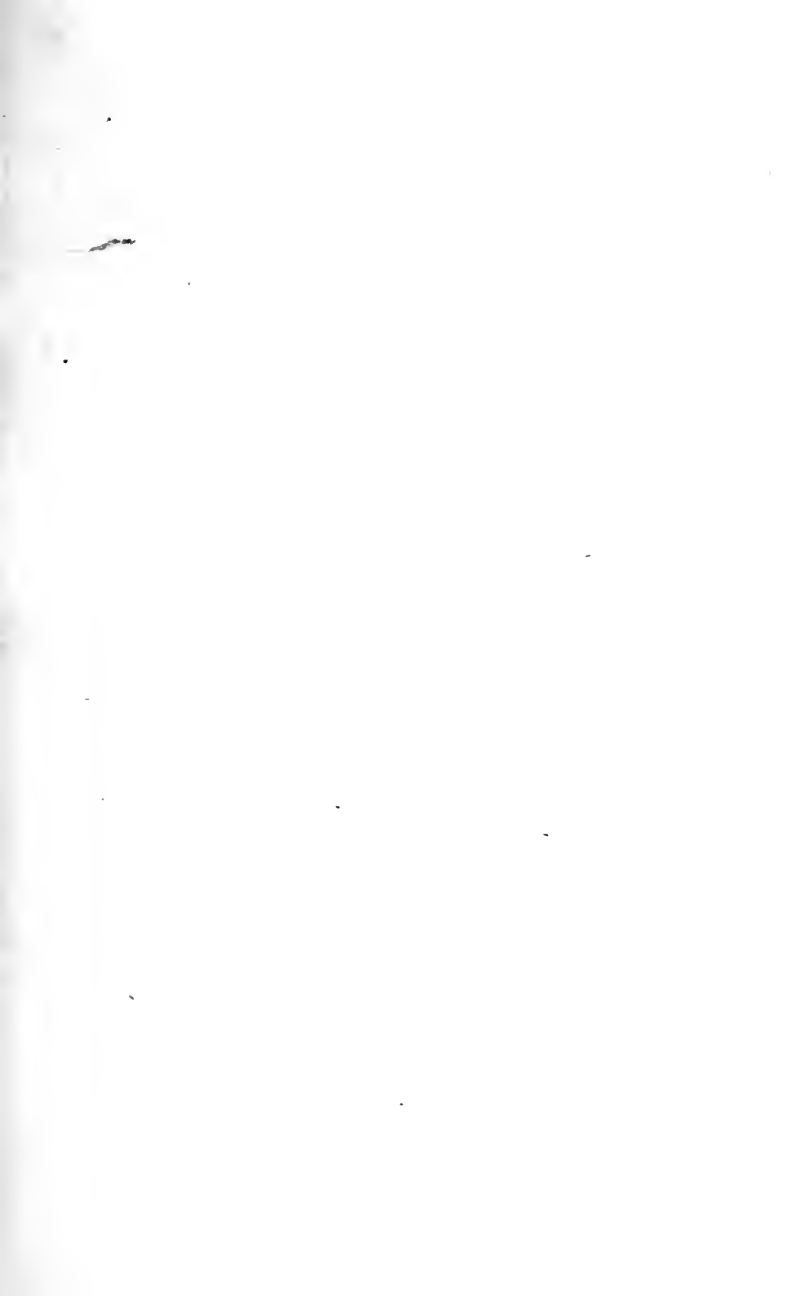


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AMADELADE
A Poem



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A MADELADE.

A Poem

OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY S. SPRING.

LONDON:

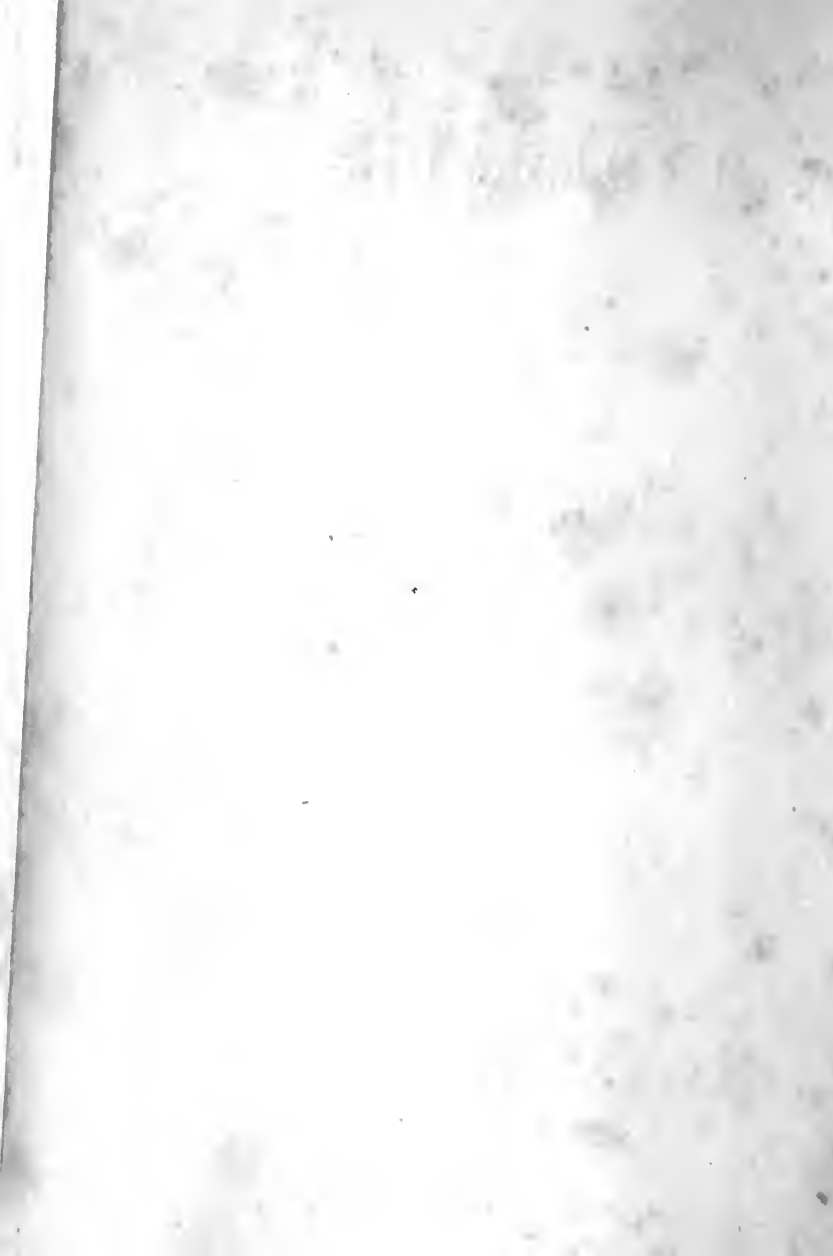
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1857.



TO THE

Right Honourable Lady Arundell,

THIS POEM

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.



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PREFACE.

THIS Poem now offered to the public is intended to show the determination on the part of the Barons to unfetter themselves from the will of a proud tyrant. The love of liberty had rooted in the breasts of bold and chivalric men; they believed it to be a sacred duty imposed upon them to wrench their rights from a King who had treated them with contempt. A united nation overcame his obstinacy, and he was forced to yield to the desires of his people by breaking the chain which held them slaves to his power. The length of time taken up in the poem is three months: it closes immediately after the signing of Magna Charta.

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CANTO I.

'Twas on a calm and lovely night,
The stars were shining clear and bright ;
The moon drove on through spangled sky,
Diffusing light from path so high ;
Yon turrets caught a tender gleam,
The walls look'd well in moonlight scene,
A soldier rode, and, urged fast,
He gain'd the castle-gate at last.
The weighty doors on hinges creek ;
Sir Godfrey Belton did he seek.
The knight was young, his figure tall,
And stubborn foes he might appal.
Sir Godfrey did the stranger greet ;
He gave his guest both wine and meat.
Their supper o'er, the Knight then spoke.
A lengthy silence thus he broke :—

“ View me, Sir Godfrey; mark! with care
 “ A royal mandate here I bear.
 “ The king by me this message sent,
 “ That you may humble and repent;
 “ For many barons now declare
 “ His massive chains they’ll never wear,
 “ And discontent reigns in the land—
 “ The king must check this daring band.”
 “ Sir Baldwick is my proper name,
 “ From kingly courts I hither came;
 “ Thy verbal message must I take,
 “ Our nation’s peace is near at stake.
 “ Never will I my word withdraw
 “ ‘To please the monarch’s mighty awe,
 “ Tho’ sturdy armies scale my wall,
 “ And turrets to foundation fall;
 “ Yet still I’d hold the beaten place
 “ And pass it down to Belton race;
 “ And future ages, with a smile,
 “ Will point it out a holy pile;
 “ And firmly hold it did its best
 “ To gain bright freedom for the rest.
 “ This isle is bound in galling yoke,
 “ Awake! ye sons, and give the stroke,

" Or drive a despot from the crown
 " Whose brother held it with renown.
 " I hold the king is in the wrong,
 " Nor will I keep his service long ;
 " But blood will flow a dreadful tide
 " From manly frame and youthful side,
 " And steel must glare in mid-day sun
 " 'Till vict'ry on our side is won."
 " I'll tell the monarch what you've said ;
 " Oh ! may it cause him fear and dread."

The air was calm, the night was still,
 The moon lit up yon neighb'ring hill,
 A female voice was faintly heard—
 The sound was sweet—like midnight bird,
 The lute replied, with note so clear,
 It captivated Baldwick's ear :—

I love this pale and quiet light
 Which softens nature's colours bright ;
 The brook glides on in sportive play,
 And hastens on its bending way.
 The rose-bud is no longer seen,
 It hides itself in leafy green.
 Zephyrs kiss the scented flower :
 Give me moonlight magic power.

The tulips boast of colours bright,
 Like not this weak and gentle light :
 The lily bends its modest head
 To seek repose on earthy bed ;
 And witches dance or trip along
 Muttering some unearthly song.
 Zephyrs kiss the scented flower :
 Give me moonlight magic power.

Sir Godfrey saw his youthful friend
 A solemn sigh did often send,
 The stranger's eyes then wander'd round
 To find the voice that made such sound.
 A fair young girl, with pleasing face,
 And figure claiming matchless grace,
 Then stole upon the stranger's view,
 His bounding heart impatient flew.
 Sir Baldwick rose to greet the fair,
 Possessing beauty great and rare ;
 And blushes ting'd the maiden's cheek
 While Baldwick strove his best to seek
 How much the fair would yield her heart
 Before the stranger must depart.
 They then retir'd, and slumbers deep
 Lull'd all their thoughts in silent sleep.

The knight he rose at peep of day
 To leave his host and haste away,
 And cloudy thoughts hung o'er the brain,
 His youthful heart felt gnawing pain.
 He sigh'd "farewell;" his beast bestrode,
 Then far away Sir Baldwick rode.
 The Belton lord had bid "adieu,"
 His strength was small, his numbers few;
 His face then wore a deeper shade,
 The eyes were on Amadelade.
 "Oh! why does sorrow dim that eye,
 "Is not thy daughter standing nigh?
 "If thou hast grief I'll have a share,
 "For mighty woes my heart can bear.
 "What message did that stranger bring?
 "I see his words have left a sting."
 "Amadelade, my all in life,
 "Again we draw the flashing knife;
 "The king will send an army strong,
 "I cannot count its absence long,
 "To storm these walls, or famine try,
 "To make us yield or nobly die.
 "I'll place thee in a neighbour's care,
 "That you may breathe more bracing air.

“ You’ll climb the hills, and views obtain
 “ Of distant woods or fertile plain ;
 “ Thy hound will sport with spirits gay,
 “ And fond caresses will repay.
 “ In innocence thy life will glide,
 “ If virtue be thy only guide.
 “ For should you stay within this place
 “ Some man may claim thee low and base ;
 “ Thy blushing beauty soon would fade,
 “ And you in silent tomb be laid.”

He made a pause. The daughter spoke.

A solemn silence thus she broke :—

“ If I must leave thee death is near—
 “ His flight is rapid—and I fear
 “ He marks me out an early prey,
 “ His work begins upon the day
 “ That sends me from my youthful home,
 “ Away from danger bid to roam.
 “ Oh ! let me stay and bear a share
 “ In all thy troubles great and rare.
 “ If they should storm with fiendish hate
 “ Thy child shall share the common fate.”

Her sire had scarcely pass’d the time

When man is in his health and prime ;

His hair, once dark, had turn'd to grey,
 But yet his form did not decay;
 His strength was known with fear and awe—
 His mighty steel oft led the war.

A forest near the castle stood;
 The buds were op'ning in the wood;
 The vales threw up a verdant green,
 And daisies dot the summer scene;
 A youth drew near and met the knight
 To lend his arms in coming fight.

“ Who art thou, stranger? Tell thy name.

“ Are you in quest of sounding fame?”

“ My name is Radley. Much I know

“ About the shaft or stubborn bow;

“ Or tame the steed, or drive the spear,

“ 'Twill draw from friends the briny tear.”

“ You brave the king and all his host.”

“ I wish to take a useful post,

“ And prove how well I use the bow

“ By driving death amongst the foe.”

He gave his hand to thank the youth
 Who spoke his mind in simple truth,
 And led him through the castle-gate
 Conversing on their future fate.

Sir Baldwick rode, his message gave
 That Godfrey would his castle save.
 No words will shake, no promise bind,
 He calls them all thin airy wind.
 “ Does Godfrey think my heart will spare
 “ The growling monster in his lair ;
 “ Who scorns my words and arms defy
 “ As if he'd force me to comply ?
 “ Collect thy arms and steeds prepare ;
 “ Let pointed weapons gleam in air ;
 “ And march to Belton's lonely pile,
 “ And tarry round its walls awhile ;
 “ Or storm the place with fearful rush—
 “ All hopes and pride together crush.”
 Sir Baldwick gaz'd with flashing eye,
 And barons watch'd him standing by ;
 For braver knight ne'er took the field,
 With pointed lance and massive shield.
 He marking out his well-known crest
 (A sleeping lion then at rest).
 “ When drowsy sleep doth leave his eye
 “ You know that victims then must die.
 “ He prowls away, but craving food
 “ Is his desire when in the mood

“ For slaughter : so with me ’tis right,
 “ I seek a cause before I fight.”
 The monarch spoke with haughty sneer,
 “ Thy heart is gone I greatly fear.
 “ Amadelade too soon I find
 “ Has made you bow to woman kind.
 “ Like Venus, with her cestus spell,
 “ She’s bound thy heart, and done it well.
 “ Urana’s daughter conquer’d war,
 “ And Mars broke through all holy law ;
 “ He cast aside the nodding plume
 “ To love the queen and hear his doom.
 “ His arms neglected, seek no more
 “ To plunge their heads in liquid gore.
 “ Has beauty made thee drop thy arms
 “ To drive her false and wild alarms ?
 “ If so, thy lion’s fame is dead ;
 “ No more he’ll make the victim red.
 “ Thy sire was known to distant foe,
 “ And many felt his weighty blow.
 “ ’Twas in the plain of Ascalon
 “ Your sire his little band led on ;
 “ They had a hard and well-fought day—
 “ The foe drew back in sad dismay.

“ Sir Hugh was found among the slain,
 “ His armour red and head in twain.
 “ He left a boy with stubborn will,
 “ So headstrong then and is so still.
 “ Behold! the last of all our race,
 “ Sir Hugh is in his resting-place;
 “ And may his ashes still repose
 “ A stranger to these pressing woes.
 “ Let me have honour, candour, truth—
 “ All these I’ve known in early youth—
 “ And when I die let it be said
 “ He fought for honour, not through dread.”

Walbeck, a man whose heart was base,
 Yet strove to wear a pleasing face,
 The chieftain o’er a reckless few,
 The silent woods the robber knew.
 His men rode fast to seize their prey,
 Then quickly turn’d their steeds away;
 For plunder was the only prize
 That pleas’d the robbers’ greedy eyes.
 Ambition sat on Walbeck’s brain—
 His only wish was greater gain—
 He left the woods to join the king,
 In hopes that fortune there would cling.

Although not happy—ne'er at rest—
 For war was in his troubl'd breast,
 Yet conscience left the smarting soul
 When pleasing wine ran o'er the bowl.
 His laugh was loud, and voice was deep,
 Till wine threw o'er him drowsy sleep.
 The monarch thought within his mind
 To send a leader of this kind.
 He told a guard that he must be
 Conducted to his privacy.
 The chief drew near without delay
 To hear the cause and word obey.
 The king then told the simple case,
 And saw reply in Walbeck's face.
 His hand was resting on his side,
 In solemn words he thus replied :—
 “ Oh ! spare me arms and lend me men ;
 “ To you I'll ne'er return again
 “ 'Till Godfrey yields a captive bound,
 “ Or Belton crumbles o'er the ground.”
 The king then spoke. “ He knew not why
 “ Sir Baldwick left with flashing eye,
 “ Unless it be some maiden fair
 “ Has bound him down in beauty's snare.

" He's cast aside the spear and bow—
 " He'll ne'er oppose the wary foe.
 " When battle's lost its rude alarms
 " Amadelade with all her charms
 " Shall be thy great and lawful gain,
 " To bless the heart or sooth thy pain.
 " And riches too shall crown thy might
 " When Belton yields the dreadful fight."

O! sweet and most delightful spot,
 How lovely was thy quiet lot,
 Thy dales were all a flow'ry bed
 Where lowing cattle often fed ;
 A brook ran through with rippling sound
 And lost itself in forest ground,
 While fishes caught the sporting fly
 As in their course were gliding by.
 The woods receiv'd the passing breeze,
 And branches wav'd on blooming trees.
 The castle stood to keep in awe
 Who dare oppose its martial law.
 Its form was built by Saxon hand—
 Its walls would dare a countless band—
 And this was Belton in its pride.
 With manly hearts and daring guide

The sentry went his quiet round,
While eyes were lost in slumber sound,
And stars were waning in the sky,
The watchers knew that day was nigh.
A youth was there in armour bound,
He kept the watch on turrets round ;
His figure tall, and body straight,
A pleasing face and manly gait ;
From early childhood he'd been taught
To bend the bow and fear at naught.
The youth stood still and gaz'd around,
A horse had made a coming sound—
A smoking beast the man bestrode—
The gates roll'd back and in he rode.
The pond'rous doors were open'd wide,
And Radley was the stranger's guide.
The horseman told his youthful friend
Sir Baldwick would assistance lend,
And join Sir Godfrey's noble cause
Against the king and hostile laws.
Two hundred men, all bearing arms,
Will swell the battle's rude alarms ;
To-morrow's sun will not decline
Before you see their martial line.

Young Radley sought the vet'ran chief,
 To ease his heart and give relief ;
 And Radley told the welcome tale
 That Baldwick sought, in shining mail,
 To save the hall from danger near,
 And keep the heart from knowing fear.
 The daughter met young Radley's eye,
 His panting heart drew forth a sigh ;
 A smile stole o'er the maiden's face,
 And check'd the youth's retiring pace.
 She often rode her palfrey grey
 Before the sun sent down his ray ;
 Its arching neck and nodding mane
 Were subject to the guiding rein.
 The lady wish'd the youth to ride,
 And blushes o'er their features died ;
 She'd show him all the spacious grounds,
 And ride to Belton's utmost bounds.
 Young Radley bow'd a low assent ;
 He chose a steed and on they went.
 The maiden spoke in accent clear,
 And pleas'd her friend's attentive ear.
 " A soldier came," I heard you say,
 " And found the hall before 'twas day :

" He rode all night to bid us know
 " Sir Baldwin's arms will meet the foe.
 " Dread war again must take the field,
 " And steel must bite the sounding shield;
 " And death will mark the wounded prey
 " To steal the fleeting life away."

Then Radley spoke his passing thought—
 Amadelade the subject caught.

" I love to see the flashing blade
 " Mow down whole ranks, make men afraid;
 " Or hear the whistling arrows fly,
 " And see the victim prostrate lie;
 " Or stop the charger in his flight—
 " He rears and plunges at full height,
 " For smarting pain has stung him so—
 " A pointed shaft then lays him low."
 " Is man then born with this intent,
 " On naught but blood and slaughter bent,
 " And fight a foe to his last breath,
 " Then calmly smile upon his death?
 " Or see the wounded lie in pain,
 " And know he fell by thy good aim.
 " The friends weep o'er that sinking form
 " Although his heart is beating warm;

“ They watch the pale and livid face
 “ And say that death has come apace ;
 “ The wife breathes out her trembling sigh,
 “ And children send a mournful cry ;
 “ Or sisters weep o’er brothers dead—
 “ The clotted field their only bed—
 “ Their hands still hold the spear or dart,
 “ When life is seen in haste depart.
 “ Can war give joy or grief appease ?
 “ Yet men delight in scenes like these.
 “ The female heart was made to soothe
 “ Our surly nature, and to prove
 “ How much we owe to realms above
 “ For sending here sweet peaceful love.
 “ No parent watches o’er my life,
 “ Nor sister dear, nor loving wife ;
 “ A brother fights upon their side—
 “ Oh ! may our arrows miss him wide.”
 “ My heart is free ; no love I’ve found
 “ Save for a true and faithful hound,
 “ That leans its head upon my breast
 “ When sinking nature urges rest.”
 His face was sad, and there she read
 He spoke his mind in all he’d said.

She dare not ask, yet wish'd to know
Why he had drawn the fatal bow.
To hold their home against the might
That soon would fill their soldiers' sight,
She rode along at faster speed
To see whose horse would keep the lead,
But passing by a rippling pool—
The air was brisk and morning cool—
Her horse was restive, and she fell,
While Radley strove her fears to quell.
He gave a plunge, and tried to save
The lovely maid from early grave.
She soon arose—he grasped an arm—
And strove his best to stay alarm ;
Then striking boldly gain'd the shore—
Amadelade quite safe he bore.
The fainting girl was pale and white,
And still she felt the awful fright ;
Young Radley turn'd the guiding rein
To bear them back to home again.
He plac'd the girl in servants' care,
And gaz'd upon the face so fair ;
Her features pale, like marble cold,
More like the work of sculptor bold.

Sir Godfrey heard the dreadful case,
And bent his way with hurried pace ;
He saw his child, once blithe and gay,
Like lifeless death so still she lay.

“ Spare me, O Lord ! thy mercy show,

“ Or send me help to bear this blow ;

“ My heart is bursting with my grief,

“ Oh ! give me grace and send relief.

“ Lord, look down and hear my prayer,

“ And give me back my daughter fair,

“ To nurse my life when time shall spread

“ Its hoary locks upon my head.

“ The eyes will dim, and strength relax

“ That now can wield the cleaving axe ;

“ And when my soul must leave this clay

“ Point out my flight to realms of day.”

The daughter woke while he was nigh,

And life lit up the beaming eye.

She told him all in warmth of tone

When chance had left them quite alone ;

And when she spoke young Radley's name

Her face was changed—a colour came—

The blush soon left the faded cheek,

It died away, its force was weak.

Sir Godfrey left the maiden's side
 To thank the man that thus defied
 All thoughts of fear—a life to save—
 His name shall rank amid the brave.
 The day roll'd by and night came on,
 All heavy eyes to rest had gone ;
 Their frames repos'd in tranquil sleep,
 Their breathing grew both loud and deep,
 And fancy truths swam o'er the brain,
 They serv'd Sir Godfrey much the same :
 For when he lay upon his bed
 He saw the battle bloody red,
 And trembl'd at the awful sight,
 Although he mingl'd not in fight ;
 But saw his men were falling fast,
 And hopes gave way to fear at last.
 Sir Baldwick saw him standing still,
 And sought to bend his iron will.
 At length he spoke :—" My lordly chief,
 " Why standing here a prey to grief,
 " The men that fall around thy moat
 " Their latest breath to you devote,
 " And long to see thy nodding crest—
 " Thy portly form and heaving breast—

“ Give them new vigour—lead them on,

“ And lend new strength to every one.”

There was a pause both long and still—

Sir Godfrey shook, and tears did fill

His swimming eyes with scalding brine.

“ Most unfortunate me and mine.”

He gaz'd at Baldwick when he spoke,

His feelings then had ceas'd to choke

His utterance. “ How much I dread

“ Beholding those now still and dead,

“ Whose last sad shout and thrilling cry

“ Was spent in calling ‘ victory.’ ”

He held his sword above his head,

And swore to fight for those who'd bled ;

And from that time he ne'er would rest

While life was throbbing in his breast.

Sir Godfrey rode to gain the field—

Perhaps to die—but ne'er to yield.

The soldiers saw his manly form,

And every heart then beating warm

Sent forth a shout, and foes defied,

Which lost itself in valleys wide.

They rush'd again in firm array

To gain their ground and win the day.

Sir Godfrey led—then ardour fir'd—
Or cheer'd them on and deeds admired,
And swinging round his well-made steel,
He made the ranks give way and feel
The force of his destructive arm,
That drove such terror and alarm.
The foe drew back in sad dismay—
Their frighten'd steeds had run away,
And bore their riders out of sight ;
Nor could they check the rapid flight ;
They strove to make for Belton wood,
To gain protection if they could.
The shouts of triumph were but short,
For many found it dearly bought :
Some friend or son was lying there,
The father torn by wild despair,
He view'd the scars and trickling gore—
A farewell look—and all was o'er.
But grief drew near the parent's side—
Its silent work no breast can hide—
His form grew bent, his hair turn'd white,
The eyes had lost their former light ;
The father died through weight of woe,
And by the son the sire lay low.

But one was braver than the rest
Upon his head he wore his crest—
The eagle with its open wing
Preparing on its prey to spring.
Sir' Godfrey gave them fresh desire
To face again and not retire.
Steeds and riders were o'erthrown,
And heaps of men and horses moan.
Sir Godfrey felt a smarting pain,
His strength gave way—he loos'd the rein,
For life was flowing quick and fast,
And no one thought the chief could last.
They bore his form with silent care—
Many said a solemn prayer.
The priest came near, his soul he bless'd,
That he might taste a tranquil rest,
And shape his path for life on high,
Where sin and death he would defy.
Amadelade had heard with fright,
And soon beheld the awful sight ;
No tears were seen to ease her grief,
Nor could they flow to give relief.
The men stood near to watch the knight—
Their ranks were few through war and fight—

Fierce anger roll'd in every breast,
And flashing eyes gaz'd o'er the west
To scan the hill and dale with care :
No bitter foe could they see there.
Sir Godfrey rose—his speech had gone—
And yet his life had linger'd on ;
He show'd his wounds and oozing gore,
Then gave a groan, and all was o'er.
He woke in fright, and soon he found
A dream had held his senses bound.



CANTO II.

SIR Baldwick was of ancient name,
At Hastings battle first they came ;
The Norman gave them land and spoil,
And mighty castles fill'd the soil.
'Twas Richard made Sir Hugh a knight
For noble courage—deeds of might.
He fell, and left an only son
Who scarce his life had then begun.
An uncle took the wayward child
To check the growth of passion wild,
And in the convent's lonely cell
He took his boyish lessons well.
When time wore on he lov'd to tame
The rapid hawk with certain aim,
And seldom miss'd the hurried prey
That strove its best to wing away.

He left the convent's quiet charms
 To mix in battle's rude alarms.
 The monarch lov'd the youthful knight,
 Whose heart was buoyant, gay, and light,
 Until the day that he was sent
 To ask Sir Godfrey what he meant.
 Sir Baldwick left the tyrant's cause
 To bind himself to barons' laws ;
 And bid his men in haste prepare
 To take in war a willing share.
 When night came on he spoke his mind
 To warlike men of sturdy kind :—
 “ You knew my sire, and thought him brave.
 “ Oh? may he rest in silent grave !
 “ He led you on in distant war—
 “ The foe gave way through fear and awe—
 “ With sword in hand you saw him fall,
 “ And ne'er retreat his dying call.
 “ He left but one to bear his name,
 “ And reap the chief's immortal fame.
 “ These walls have seen my infant head—
 “ They've heard my cry with passion fed—
 “ And brawny arms have bourne my weight :
 “ Our men foretold my future fate.

" But manhood's strength is in me now,
 " While youth is resting on my brow ;
 " My soul's uneasy, and I burn
 " To lead the field and glory earn ;
 " And may we ne'er return again
 " 'Till vict'ry crowns Sir Baldwick's men."

Then one stood up who once had fame
 For eloquence. Andrew by name,
 His hair was white as driven snow,
 But still his arms could bend the bow :—

" A length of years my life has been
 " Since first I saw the summer green.
 " Oh ! could I call my childhood o'er—
 " Those days will come for me no more—
 " For oft I've play'd in days gone by,
 " And climb'd these lofty turrets high ;
 " Or in the dusky shades of night
 " I've made its echoes sound delight
 " With merry laugh and sportive joy.
 " But brave Sir Hugh was then a boy.
 " I saw the knight in armour clad,
 " His features pale—the heart was sad—
 " He spoke his thoughts in pensive tone,
 " And weighty trouble seem'd to own :"—

“ Ha ! my child,” the chieftain said,
“ I go to swell the ranks of dead,
“ Thy noble house is known too well,
“ For all our chiefs in contest fell.
“ Thou art the last, and hold with care
“ The fame that falls to Baldwick’s share.
“ Thy wavy hair he threw aside,
“ His tears roll’d down a briny tide ;
“ A farewell look the father gave,
“ Then hurried o’er the sounding wave.
“ I saw his grief unbidden rise
“ And fill the sad and doleful eyes.
“ Oh ! how I felt to see him weep,
“ And bid good bye to one asleep.
“ Right well they knew this castle’s lord
“ Throughout the shores of lands abroad.
“ Ay ! who’d have thought that he could feel
“ And see him use his pond’rous steel.
“ Wheree’r he rode he rul’d the fight,
“ And sent whole hosts to realms of night.
“ I saw him fall, and heard him speak—
“ His voice was faint and frame was weak—
“ ‘ I would my son that you were by
“ ‘ That I might teach thee how to die.’

“ He took my hand, and pointed ‘ on,’

“ His head fell back—his soul was gone—

“ And may I see the last of all

“ Rise up to fame, or nobly fall.”

Old Andrew shook his hoary head,

He felt the truth of what he’d said.

Sir Baldwick, mov’d by what he’d heard,

Then made them haste their bodies gird

With shining arms : he led the way

While nature yet in darkness lay.

As soon as morn had streak’d the sky

They found that Belton ground stood nigh ;

Their friends rode out with pleasing haste

To welcome those that stood encas’d

In warlike arms : a martial train,

That knew right well both war and pain.

The knights soon met, and voices cried

That echo’d through the vallies wide.

Rejoicings o’er, they crav’d repose,

To give them strength against their foes.

Young Radley pac’d his silent round

Together with his sportive hound ;

Amadelade stole on his view,

His heart flew quick—a sigh he drew—

The youth beheld her faultless make,
 And dormant feelings did awake ;
 He paus'd to meet the faithful orb,
 And read its workings of accord.

“ Oh! give me eyes of azure blue—

“ Gentle, forgiving, and so true—

“ If once they love they'll ne'er forget

“ Endearing visions once they met ;

“ And these were thine Amadelade,

“ With lashes long, that they might shade

“ Thy beaming eye.” The maiden said,

“ I'll tell thee why I'm hither led :

“ To thank thee for thy noble zeal,

“ Tho' tongues ne'er speak what hearts can feel.

“ You've sav'd me from the rippling wave—

“ Thy soul is noble, bold, and brave.”

Her sight was lost in grateful tear—

The voice was tremulous to hear—

Subduing all not vainly strove

To speak her thoughts where they should rove.

“ Grant, my friend, that I may make

“ A token—one that you would take.

“ Accept from me you've bid to live

“ A present that I'll freely give.

" Refuse me not this great request,
 " That I may count my soul as bless'd."
 He took her hand so clear and white,
 The fingers long and shining bright
 With jewels: pressing there a seal,
 Affection only will reveal
 To every heart what I have said,
 For Cupid once themselves has led.
 " Pray name your wish, be what it may,
 " I'll keep it till my dying day;
 " The precious gift to me you trust
 " Shall mingle in my crumbling dust."
 She gave a ring of purest gold
 To grace the hand of Radley bold;
 Then left the youth to pace his round
 In love's fair meshes was he bound.
 The nights were past, in times like these,
 In pleasing song or thirst appease.
 Sir Baldwick's harp was tightly strung,
 And sweetest sounds the soldier rung—
 He struck the cords with perfect ease
 And strove his best the knight to please :—

SONG.

De Gilbert fought on holy soil,
And took his share of war and toil ;
The cross was hung upon his breast,
His sword lay harmlessly at rest,
And gazing on a twinkling star,
His thoughts were bent on one afar.

“ I love to view thy gentle light,
“ And wait thy coming when 'tis night ;
“ A maiden oft doth search for thee,
“ And then her thoughts revert to me :
“ A frothy ocean swells its tide,
“ And parts the lover from his bride.

“ But yet our hearts are bounding high
“ Whene'er we scan the dotted sky ;
“ We trace thy form, and then we find
“ Thy light sheds comfort o'er the mind ;
“ Though miles have plac'd me far away,
“ Yet both can see thy tender ray.

“ Ah ! rest thee, Mary, rest awhile,
“ For soon I'll see my native isle,
“ And bring thee wealth, my lawful gain,
“ So rudely taken from the slain ;
“ For joy shall drive all care aside,
“ And pleasure crown De Gilbert's bride.”

The music lost its perfect sound
 And left a stillness, deep, profound.
 Then crowds of men the silence broke,
 And each his feelings freely spoke.
 Sir Baldwiche sought the maiden's side
 To speak his heart, for love did ride
 Triumphant o'er the soldier's frame.
 Her blushes rose when e'er he came :
 He told his love, with fond desire,
 His breast was like a raging fire.
 So much he loved her : but too late,
 Her soul had found a favour'd mate.
 " Seek not in me " she humbly said,
 " A worthy mate for you to wed :
 " Thou art my friend, I'm proud to own,
 " Thy soldiers guard our ancient home.
 " I ne'er can love thee—strive no more,
 " To press thy suit—my heart is sore."
 " Ambition guide my rapid flight
 " And show my course in glaring light :
 " Where'r you point the mazy way
 " I follow on—thy wish obey—
 " Sir Godfrey's head my hand must gain,
 " And Baldwiche swell the ranks of slain."

“ Ah! Walbeck! Walbeck! why so base—

“ A flinty heart, yet smiling face.

“ You seek the fields of clotted gore

“ To serve thy end, you’d ask for more.

“ Daring thou art, that none deny,

“ The first in danger—last to fly:

“ So cool in battle—hot in peace—

“ When ev’ry passion you release.

“ How many minds with deadly hate

“ Watch o’er thy fate and death await?

“ They’ll bless the time and voices rend

“ The clouded heavens at thy end.”

He took the woody hills close by

And on his men he did rely:

About six hundred yards, I guess,

From Belton walls, not more nor less.

He sent his men to tell the knight,

“ To yield his arms, or else they fight.”

The Knights had seen the sturdy foe

And hop’d to change a mighty blow:

They sat in council. Soon they heard

Bold Walbeck’s proud and haughty word.

“ Then bid him come,” Sir Godfrey said,

“ We’ll die our arms a crimson red:

“ No man will yield his trusty blade
“ Until by death a corpse he’s laid.”
They told their chief the answer sent
And what Sir Godfrey’s message ment.
“ Dream on thou dupe e’en soon to wake,
“ My arms shall make thy turrets shake:
“ The clang of war shall sound afar,
“ And men shall bear the bleeding scar.”



CANTO III.

TESPAR, a man in Baldwick's train,
Would sell his chief for trifling gain,
Yet look'd so modest and demure
As if no price would him secure.
He crept away to join the tent,
To speak his mind and passions pent ;
A scheme was form'd—a promise made—
To steal the fair Amadelade.
The soldier left and gain'd his post
To mix in Godfrey's friendly host.
He saw the maiden leave her home,
In solitude she wish'd to roam ;
A muffler round her face was cast
To stop her cry, so tight and fast
They held, then rudely bore away
The victim : still as death she lay.

Soon Walbeck saw his men return,
 And joy lit up his features stern ;
 He rais'd a cry of wild delight
 When he beheld this dreadful sight.
 " Behold ! in me, O fair young maid,
 " A suitor for Amadelade.
 " John will give me mighty power
 " When we crush yon haughty tower.
 " I'll spare Sir Godfrey for thy sake ;
 " Then bid me hope and love awake.
 " Refuse me not. O don't deny,
 " Nor loose my wrath, but hear my sigh."
 " Keep thy love for a better chance
 " For you'll not mine the least enhance ;
 " If courage warm'd thy guilty soul
 " You'd let me free : the swimming bowl
 " Has won thy deep impatient sigh—
 " I dare thy wrath and rage defy.
 " Woman's tongue is her best defence,
 " Provided too with witty sense ;
 " It drives so deep there is no cure—
 " No guided steel e'er struck so sure."
 The castle mourn'd the daughter's fate,
 No soothing hope could grief abate ;

No tear was seen in Belton's eye,
 For rage had made the fountain dry.
 "How blind is mortal," Godfrey said,
 "I ne'er could bear to count the dead.
 "My heart has oft this answer made,
 "That I should in the tomb be laid
 "Before her fleeting life is past,
 "When death must count her his at last;
 "And now my heart could bless the day
 "When fate shall snatch her life away.
 "Thy soul so pure, my comely child,
 "Will hear the jests of soldiers wild,
 "And ribald songs may strike thine ear
 "And wound thy soul with pain I fear."
 Sir Baldwick spoke his inward thought—
 "Amadelade must now be sought.
 "Radley, what think you can we do
 "To save her—I appeal to you."
 "Although she's lost, yet there's a ray
 "Her brightest hopes shall not decay.
 "I know a plan that will succeed
 "To search their camp, and she'll be freed."
 He told his scheme to those around:
 His friends a willing answer found.

" Sir Baldwick," you must soon prepare
 " To meet with dangers great and rare ;
 " And, in the minstrel's lowly garb,
 " Seek you the camp, but don't retard ;
 " While list'ning to your skilful play
 " I'll take Amadelade away."

" Heaven bless thy undertaking—
 " Calm the heart that's all but breaking.
 " Liberate her from such danger,
 " Where all virtue lives a stranger."

They both set out in dusky eve
 Their former treasure to retrieve ;
 They bent their way through mazy wood,
 To hide their coming, if they could.

Then Radley paus'd : to gain a chance
 The other did his steps advance.

He reach'd the tent, and there he found
 The meal and goblet soon went round.

' An aged harper's here," they say,
 " Then make him enter—bid him play ;
 " We'll have a song to cheer us up ;
 " Refresh thyself and drain the cup,
 " 'Twill enliven—your strength restore—
 " And make you younger than before."

" Alas ! but that can never be,
 " For I'm so old—infirm—you see ;
 " Three kings I've seen upon the throne,
 " And many changes I must own ;
 " But Richard's was the time for me,
 " He fought in war so manfully."

Oh ! rest thee, mighty monarch, rest,
 Thy crumbling ashes ever blest ;
 Our country weeps her hero dead,
 Who follow'd fame where'er she led ;
 Thy noble spirit went afar
 To conquer lands in holy war.

Thy steel was dyed with purple gore,
 And chiefs will see the light no more ;
 Where'er you drew the guiding rein
 Thy weapon swell'd the ranks of slain,
 And terror fought upon thy side—
 It smote all hearts both far and wide.

Thy name was heard with awful fright,
 And cheeks grew pale—a sickly white ;
 The fighting host, with dread alarm,
 Sought flight before thy mighty aim :
 They drove along with rapid pace,
 And left the field in eager race.

Thy hand could tune the music string,
 And thoughts of home it oft would bring ;
 The soul would sip the pleasing strain
 Then war would leave the heated brain :
 Thy skill was great in tuneful play—
 The harp would fain they wish obey.

Thy voice was rich with mellow sound,
 With range of note not often found ;
 So true in love, yet fierce in war,
 Whene'er you spoke, thy word was law :
 Our country mourns—her loss is great,
 Her silent grief will ne'er abate.

And fame still lingers near thy grave ;
 It weeps thy loss : she strove to save,
 But death the contest quickly won,
 And snatch'd thy most deserving son ;
 But Britain's isle will hand him down
 The greatest son of high renown.

His song was o'er—his harp was still,
 Its rapid notes had ceas'd to fill
 The ears of those who sat around,
 Yet held them captives to its sound.
 At last their chief the silence broke,
 And loos'd the spell their souls awoke.

" Thou art no novice in thy trade,
 " For music in thy soul is laid ;
 " You call it forth whenc'er you will,
 " To strike the chords with magic skill.
 " Come show thy life, and let us see
 " Thy bold and daring history.
 " Some pleasure will it now afford,
 " So taste the wine that crowns the board."

The harper took the brimming cup,
 And long he held the goblet up ;
 He look'd askant with timid care—
 No female heart was beating there.
 He bow'd his head to hide his face,
 And then began his life to trace.
 " An humble life I've always led,
 " My parents long have both been dead—
 " They left me young, so I've been told,
 " A grandsire feeble, weak, and old,
 " Watch'd o'er my days of early glee,
 " And sooth'd my troubles on his knee ;
 " He taught me well the harp to string,
 " And strike each chord to make it sing ;
 " And oft he wish'd that he could train
 " My youthful arms to certain aim.

“ I’ve seen him strive to bend the bow,
“ And then give up—its form let go—
“ A tear would start and dim the eye
“ As soon as he should cease to ply
“ The weapon. Like the feeble hound
“ That rouses when it hears the sound
“ Of baying dogs that chase the stag,
“ But age has made his spirits flag;
“ And pleasure lent its weakest ray,
“ For strength no more can wish obey.
“ He died when Richard took the throne,
“ And I was left at last alone;
“ But manhood had begun to peep—
“ Its down was spreading on my cheek—
“ I join’d the monarch’s noble cause,
“ To win my share of loud applause;
“ We loos’d the sails to fill with wind,
“ And soon we left these shores behind.
“ I watch’d the coast sink pale and blue,
“ And then I bid my last ‘ adieu.’
“ A maid stood on the sandy shore—
“ The waves retir’d with frightful roar—
“ Her raven hair lay loose unbound,
“ The wind play’d through with mournful sound;

“ Those flashing orbs I’d often read,
“ And when she spoke my soul she led.
“ We sigh’d ‘ farewell ’—it was the last—
“ Our ships were plunging onward fast,
“ We gain’d the land that’s so well known
“ In eastern clime or western home.
“ My blood I’ve shed, and scars I bear,
“ They’re honours that I proudly wear.
“ ’Twas my good fortune once I know
“ To shield the king, and take the blow.
“ The foe had made a circle round
“ To stretch the monarch on the ground ;
“ His axe he flourish’d high in air,
“ And bid them charge him if they dare.
“ They rush’d upon our mighty chief—
“ I came in time to give relief—
“ One aim’d a blow with all his might,
“ It rung upon my shield so bright,
“ His sword in fragments flew around,
“ He turn’d for flight with hasty bound.
“ For years I’ve fought upon that soil
“ Through danger, rapine, war, and toil.
“ At last we left to seek our home,
“ And brave the deep so white with foam ;

“ My heart did throb with quicken’d pace
 “ When Britain we again did trace.
 “ No friend look’d out for my return—
 “ The maiden’s death I soon did learn—
 “ They show’d the place where she was laid,
 “ And often on the sod I’ve pray’d.
 “ ’Tis grief that makes my limbs so weak,
 “ There’s nought in life for me to seek.”

Radley stole on in his disguise,
 The youthful heart his dress denies,
 An age least skilful in deceit,
 And may he ne’er this plan repeat.
 He found a large and spacious tent,
 The road direct, and in he went ;
 Amadelade was lost in sighs ;
 Hearing a step, she rais’d her eyes.
 “ Don’t speak,” he said, “ nor breathe a word,”
 “ The guard is near, we shall be heard ;
 “ Though I’m your friend, yet think it wise
 “ To enter here in this disguise.”
 He threw a mantle o’er her form—
 The night was cold—to keep her warm.
 They started out with noiseless tread,
 Like ghostly spirits of the dead ;

They made a circuit far and wide
 Before they gain'd the castle-side.
 Sir Baldwick rose to leave the tent,
 With shuffling gait his back was bent ;
 He took his leave with silent haste,
 The woody road again retrac'd.
 " Amadelade from us has fled—
 " She's left the camp"—a soldier said.
 " Then stop the minstrel," Walbeck roar'd,
 " His heart shall sheathe my flashing sword ;
 " I've had that demon in my sight,
 " Who scowls upon me day and night ;
 " I hear his voice borne on the wind,
 " He scorns the fool he's left behind."
 Like the wild ocean in full play,
 The rugged rocks receive the spray,
 Making its deep and hollow sounds
 The swelling tide refuses, bounds,
 It strikes the beach, and then recoils,
 The angry wave with fury boils ;
 Its waters mix in next attack,
 The rocky sides then roll it back.
 So with Walbeck : he knew no rest,
 The surge of passion lash'd his breast ;

The tempest oft would onward rush,
 As if it strove all hope to crush.
 He struck the table with his hand,
 While thus he gave his stern command :
 “ Let none spare, nor give them quarter—
 “ Fight to death in coming slaughter ;
 “ If they should think that Mercy’s near,
 “ Too soon they’ll find that she’s not here.”
 “ Oh ! happy moment this for me,
 “ The timid dove is safe and free ;
 “ The hawk has lost its savage hold—
 “ Its miss’d its prize—and glitt’ring gold ;
 “ Let ev’ry man prepare his steed,
 “ With armour on in case of need ;
 “ His weapons sharp, and bow well bent,
 “ To meet the foe where’er he’s sent.
 “ To-morrow morn as soon ’tis light
 “ The host attack to make us fight ;
 “ Double the watch against surprise—
 “ At sound of trumpet all arise.”
 Both armies met before ’twas day,
 When light appears a misty grey—
 Both anxious for great feats of strength,
 To cast their rivals down full length.

The bill and pikemen first advance,
And next was seen the lengthy lance ;
Sir Godfrey's arm did charge the foe,
And oft he dealt the ringing blow.
Both steeds and riders were o'erthrown,
And many breath'd their dying moan ;
While struggling in the fallen group
Some e'en regain'd their moving troop.
Bright swords and axes struck on steel—
The woods caught up the fatal peal—
The whistling shafts then cleav'd the sky,
And fell'd the victims—soon to die—
For Death rode on its sharp'ned barb,
It mark'd the soldier's under garb ;
The blood flew out a scarlet stream,
And sent him off in peaceful dream.
First Walbeck's men were driven back—
No force could stand the bold attack ;
He led in person fresh reserve,
Bold fighting men, with stubborn nerve.
The tide of war came rolling near,
Sir Godfrey's men were showing fear ;
He strove to lead his army on,
He found both hope and ardour gone ;

Then Walbeck's horsemen rais'd the cry
Of "Death to traitors—they shall die."
Sir Baldwick call'd his horsemen round,
As many then as could be found,
To charge the foe again once more,
And dye their steel in Walbeck's gore.
His soldiers swore to fight till death
Should snatch their life and steal their breath ;
Not sue for peace, nor turn the rein,
But yield their life in smarting pain.
He gave the word—they rode full speed—
Sir Baldwick's charger took the lead ;
Then Walbeck met the minstrel foe,
On whom he breath'd such direful woe.
" Die, thou vile traitor to our king,
" Receive thy death—'tis on its wing."
Sir Baldwick struck with all his might—
His sword broke short—he lost the fight ;
Then Walbeck made a dreadful wound,
The pain was great—Sir Baldwick swoon'd ;
And ev'ry man lay lifeless there,
A pale white corpse with ghastly stare,
Who join'd Sir Baldwick's noble side.
Dashing along with manly pride,

They met their fate with sword in air,

A faithful picture of despair.

But Walbeck kept the sanguine field,

Though ringing blows had struck his shield,

And spouting gore had died his mail,

From human flesh, once strong and hale ;

But like the lion's dreadful roar,

His savage voice cried out for more.

Sir Baldwick weak and faint was found,

Helpless, extended on the ground ;

They took him through the castle yard,

The gates they clos'd, and strongly barr'd ;

His friends stood motionless with fright—

His soul was near the realms of night.

“ I've saved thy life—its cost be mine—

“ My strength and spirits both decline ;

“ The priest must say the solemn mass,

“ To bless my soul, and let it pass ;

“ And monks shall chant the fun'ral dirge,

“ To cleanse the soul, my sins to purge.

“ Keep up the cause, and banish fear,

“ The fight has cost Sir Baldwick dear.”

He wish'd to speak a sentence more—

His breath was gone—his life was o'er.

Then soldiers caught an ardent zeal,
Their eyes grew bright, they clench'd their steel ;
And one by one they dipp'd their blade
In Baldwick's blood, and bless'd his shade.
The oath they took all vow'd to keep
In voices grave, so solemn, deep,
And anger rooted in each breast,
While they gazed on the Hero's crest.

CANTO IV.

THE castle wore a chilling gloom,
Each feature lost its healthful bloom ;
The walls were hid from mortal sight,
For mourning hung as black as night ;
And tears were seen to stain the cheek
Amadelade bent down so meek.
For one was gone, so good and kind,
Who'd spent his life for those behind.
Then Radley spoke :—" Oh ! weight of woe,
" Why seek to press our hopes so low ?
" My brother's heart had ceas'd to beat
" Before you made the grand retreat.
" The casque had fallen off his head,
" And lying wounded, thus he said,
" ' Forgive me,' and I'll count thee brave,
" To pardon one so near the grave.

“ We stole Amadelade through fraud,
 “ My conscience has for ever gnaw’d.
 “ Foul spirits hurry—will not rest—
 “ They guard the souls of those unblest’d,
 “ And goad the will from bad to worse,
 “ Then bind them down beneath their curse.
 “ A spasm shot through Austin’s chest,
 “ And left his form in lifeless rest.
 “ Ah ! cruel scythe, that takes alike
 “ Old age and beauty : is that right ?
 “ Deceiving men with length of days,
 “ Then stop his course, and life decays.”
 Sir Godfrey’s form was tall and straight,
 His shoulders broad, and made for weight,
 Standing firm as the mountain’s base,
 When angry storms blow o’er its face.
 The thunder rolls its heavy sound,
 And echoes in the chasms round ;
 Peal after peal succeeding play,
 And rocky caverns snatch away
 The awful note, and then confine
 Its solemn sound in rumbling line.
 So with Godfrey : he stood erect,
 And rolling war did not deject

This vet'ran chief. " Behold the blood
 " Of one just bursting through life's bud ;
 " 'Tis true he's lost with all his band,
 " But fighting fell with sword in hand.
 " The cause I've taken I'll defend,
 " Unflinching spirits cannot bend,
 " Behold ! Sir Hugh, what I declare,
 " My pointed spur shall never wear
 " My charger's side in dread defeat,
 " Nor will I sound the quick retreat.
 " A savage horseman struck me low—
 " I felt the smarting tingling blow—
 " My knees gave way—the axe let fall,
 " And fainting fell—nor was that all—
 " My senses came. I do declare
 " My friends were gone, the foe was there ;
 " But had that blow been miss'd or spar'd,
 " Baldwick's fate I would have shared."
 Then Andrew rose to speak a word,
 Desiring that he might be heard.
 " You've seen the host of mortals slain,
 " That sent their blood through ev'ry vein ;
 " They speak whole volumes in our praise,
 " Though death has set their steadfast gaze :

“ For thrice our number ’s on their side—
 “ But plunder is their only guide.
 “ They fought like fiends, with demon yell
 “ Echoing through the woods, and fell
 “ With wild expression, on the heart,
 “ The hills resounding it in part.
 “ More lordly barons dare oppose
 “ The monarch’s will, and swell his woes.
 “ And hurl defiance at his crown,
 “ To join the charter’s high renown.”
 The king had heard the country’s will,
 His wrath was great, though stubborn still.
 “ I’ll rule alone,” one day he said,
 “ And not by subjects law be led.
 “ We’ll curb their wishes—strike a blow—
 “ ’Twill murmur in the shades below.
 “ No martial throng, nor steel-clad knight,
 “ Shall take from me my kingly right.”
 “ Though all should leave thee one by one,
 “ You will not say that Pembroke’s gone ;
 “ My life and fortune I’ll devote
 “ To thee my liege. My hall and moat
 “ Could well protect a lord or king
 “ From battle’s wild and deaf’ning ring ;

“ The walls are strong, and castle high,
“ A raging foe it could defy;
“ But Walbeck’s beaten Godfrey’s pride,
“ And in their walls they gladly hide—
“ The news has come that Baldwick’s dead.”
The king then spoke these words—he said,
“ Oh, cease to speak of one so dear ;
“ All hopes are fled—my heart is sear.
“ No fright could shake his youthful nerve,
“ Nor from his cause would Baldwick swerve.
“ The barons heard of Belton siege,
“ How well they fought against their liege.
“ Fitzwalter sent a slight relief
“ To save the castle and its chief.
“ Amadelade, oh ! stem thy grief,
“ And hear my words—they bring relief,
“ Like clouded mist in summer’s morn,
“ The sun breaks through and makes us warm ;
“ It dries the vapour in our view,
“ That loaded nature with its dew.
“ The chill, cold air has spent its time,
“ Then brighten up and cease to pine,
“ For welcome days are drawing near,
“ To chase thy grief and dry thy tear.

“ The springs are full, they cannot dry,
 “ And gushing waters flood the eye.”
 “ Brave Sir Baldwick ! thy life was short,
 “ No empty honours have you sought ;
 “ Thy name is bless'd by knight and squire,
 “ Who rank thee equal with thy sire.”
 “ Do you then promise happy days,
 “ That time will soon destroy this haze ?
 “ What sun can make these floods retire,
 “ And melt my anguish by its fire ?
 “ Has any one the gift to bind
 “ A bleeding heart or painful mind ?
 “ If so he'll try the healing heart,
 “ And soothe the long distracted part.”
 He plac'd his hand upon her own,
 She saw the ring and prec'ous stone.
 Then Radley spoke—his words were clear—
 The maid she bent a willing ear :
 “ No other hand shall ever wear
 “ This prize so prec'ous and so rare.
 “ A truth is found within this cell—
 “ My tongue is guarded—dare not tell ;
 “ Suffice to know I've found of late
 “ A change is coming o'er my fate.

“ A time may come when I may share
 “ Thy greatest joy and gravest care.”

Proud Walbeck's host had left the scene
 Where war and fury late had been.

“ Flush'd with vict'ry, our arms and fire

“ Shall make you traitors soon retire.

“ Behold! my men, now view their lair,

“ The castle walls are almost bare;

“ Its halls are wrapp'd in dismal gloom—

“ A chief has died while yet in bloom.

“ Ah! weep thou fair one, watch his bier,

“ And shed thy bright and pearly tear,

“ 'Twill humble thy too haughty mein—

“ You'll fear me yet—my rage is keen.”

But Walbeck was ambition's tool—

A worthy member of his school;

No single virtue could he count,

His sins were swell'd to great amount.

A soldier rode through summer's night,

His only guide the moon's pale light,

To tell the court that they had won,

And Belton's chief was quite undone.

The news had gone with greater speed,

For busy rumour took the lead,

But jingling armour soon he heard,
 And then he thought it was absurd.
 The moon had cast deep shadows down
 On lonely hills of great renown ;
 And next he heard the convent bell,
 His timid fear he strove to quell ;
 His soul was dead to all that's good,
 But soon he saw dark Faden's wood.
 He urg'd his steed to quicker pace
 When he drew near some lonely place,
 For gliding shapes were often seen,
 With ghost-like features long and lean.
 Loud screaming voices often sound
 In Cowden's fields and heath around :
 Fine Ownsby church was in his rear,
 And foaming steeds were marching near.
 The moon burst through the snow-white cloud,
 The moving troop look'd justly proud ;
 Their naked steel caught gleams of light,
 That flash'd abroad at dead of night.
 Who art thou, stranger ? why out here ?
 Then Melfan spoke with meaning leer :
 " I'm speeding to the king's high court,
 " For he must know our true report—

“ How we have fought on Belton plain,
 “ And strown the field with lifeless slain.
 “ We drove them in, and now they hide
 “ Behind their walls so long and wide.”
 “ Then thou art one of Walbeck’s staff—
 “ Right soon we’ll change thy meaning laugh—
 “ So face about and show the road
 “ To Belton, and the knight’s abode ;
 “ And hear my words, whoe’er you be,
 “ Thy cars shall mark some stately tree :
 “ If you misguide, so pray beware
 “ That you don’t lose your useful pair.”
 “ I’m no coward ; and this I’ll stake,
 “ For ringing blows I’ll give and take.
 “ Honour the brave ; indeed they earn
 “ Their country’s praise ; perhaps to learn
 “ That laurels fade without they gain
 “ Some praising dew or golden rain.”
 “ Thy words are big and full of zeal ;
 “ You probe a wound you cannot heal.”
 “ Loose him, my friends, on yonder plain,
 “ And then make haste to me again.”
 They bent their way through Calcy’s pass,
 And left behind that frowning mass ;

Then Dennis Heath appall'd the sight,
 Where men ne'er trod in lonely night ;
 And then the stranger quickly found
 He stepp'd alone on frightful ground.
 He tried to gain the beaten road,
 Or find a hut where men abode.
 Alas ! too late, the time was near
 When dreadful scenes he'd see and hear.
 A church he saw at distance great—
 St. Mary's name—the time was late ;
 A light was seen, he gain'd the pile,
 And enter'd up the holy aisle.
 A female figure mourn'd aloud—
 Some spirit form in bridal shroud—
 Her train was long, it swept the ground,
 Although her movements made no sound ;
 And then was heard the measur'd tread
 Of manly feet no longer dead.
 The bride she fell upon her knees,
 To own her guilt and wrath appease ;
 A face once lovely, then so white,
 Look'd awful in that lurid light.
 The knight then rais'd his vizer high,
 And thus he spoke :—“ Matilda, why

" Did you accept my offer'd hand,
 " Then wed a knight of foreign land ?
 " A vow you took—thy faith you broke—
 " My restless spirit why provoke ?
 " My shade, I've said, should haunt thy grave—
 " Depart from hence, and leave this nave ;
 " My soul is yet in cleansing flame,
 " Through faults I've done where you're to blame.
 " My love was great in mortal clay,
 " You threw my constant hope away ;
 " And now I hate with dreadful force—
 " My bitter wrath you can't divorce.
 " I'll follow thee where'er you glide—
 " A phantom steed shall be my guide."

Her shrieks were borne across the heath,
 And Melfan couldn't stay his teeth ;
 So timid had he then become,
 His nerves were weak, his tongue was dumb ;
 The trembling lips began to pray—
 He long'd to see the distant day.
 Then Melfan left the haunted plain,
 And soon he gain'd a beaten lane ;
 But ev'ry time he heard the wind,
 He trembl'd as he look'd behind.

The men return'd to join their chief,
Their breath they drew with more relief,
And on they rode for Belton home,
'Midst heating sweat and dropping foam.

CANTO V.

“BRUTUS, Brutus, why that growl?
“Thy handsome forehead wears a scowl,
“And anger rules that faithful eye—
“No lurking footstep is too nigh.
“Then hush that bark so loud and deep,
“And stretch thy sides for happy sleep.”

Young Radley's mind was not at rest,
His arms were folded on his breast ;
The oil shone bright within his lamp,
Yet o'er his heart was cast a damp.
Glitt'ring arms were round his sight,
That hung at rest throughout the night ;
A helmet caught his shifting glance,
'Twas poiz'd upon a lonely lance,
A stain of blood was on its crest—
The captive lion lay at rest.

"Hear me, Sir Baldwick's hov'ring shade,
 "Yon boasting chief shall feel my blade ;
 "Or singing arrow strike a part,
 "'Twill make him feel the rankling dart."

Then whisp'ring men and well-shod hoof
 Were plainly heard ; each vaulted roof
 Caught up the sound in mimic play,
 Until each voice had died away.

Then pond'rous doors were open'd wide,
 And men came in a friendly tide ;
 Then Jeftan told his winding rout,
 And why their friends had sent them out :—

"Three youthful knights are in my train,
 "They've noble blood in ev'ry vein ;
 "The spur is shining on the heal,
 "And swelling pride they justly feel."

Sir Godfrey thank'd the barons' care,
 Then bid his friends the meal prepare.

Young Radley left his lone retreat
 To welcome friends he ought to greet ;
 But Jeftan gaz'd with earnest stare,
 He'd seen him in the robbers' lair :

"I knew thee, friend, in former time—
 "You've still the feature, ev'ry line ;

" That form was in a savage gang—
 " My heart receiv'd a sudden pang.
 " Thy tender age three years ago
 " Was then too young to bend the bow,
 " Yet I know thee : come, pray explain
 " Why thou art here—is it for gain?"
 Then Radley spoke these words, he said—
 (His cheeks were died a lovely red) :—
 " I've never known a mother dear,
 " No tender father dried my tear ;
 " My childish limbs they oft would tire—
 " I rested by the outlaw's fire.
 " A fierce old woman, ' Bess,' by name,
 " Took me in hand my mind to train ;
 " Brought up in danger's daring school,
 " They soon taught me its simple rule.
 " Once sitting in our hollow cave,
 " The hag spoke thus, a look she gave :—
 " ' The eagle swoops upon its prey,
 " ' And drives the howling wolf away ;
 " ' The cub knows not its cruel fate—
 " ' The eagle flies at rapid rate—
 " ' Nothing could give it timely aid,
 " ' So in the rocky nest its laid.

“ ‘ Go join,’ she said, ‘ Sir Godfrey’s men,
 “ ‘ In future time we meet again.
 “ ‘ Ah! Walbeck, now I’ll spite thee more
 “ ‘ Than spleen has ever done before ;
 “ ‘ You once did rule this forest wide
 “ ‘ When I, the queen, sat by thy side,
 “ ‘ And now you’ve left me here alone,
 “ ‘ My sighs are lost in forest moan ;
 “ ‘ Ambition guides the heated brain,
 “ ‘ Thy star of fortune’s on its wane ;
 “ ‘ And when its lost in shades of night,
 “ ‘ Then hidden truth shall come to light
 “ ‘ To see thy hope, but not to gain,
 “ ‘ Will be thy fate ; for certain aim
 “ ‘ Shall cut thee down e’er you can hold
 “ ‘ Its well known wealth in untold gold :
 “ ‘ But when ambition’s at thy feet
 “ ‘ This subject we’ll again repeat.’ ”
 Sir Godfrey trembling rose to speak,
 His words were low and accent weak ;
 His colour went from red to white,
 As this sad story came to light :—
 “ Respect him as you would my own,
 “ No braver man nor truer bone

“ Is in our cause ; now mark him well !
 “ Of buried years I wish to tell.
 “ A boy was born within these walls—
 “ We’d festive scenes and gliding balls—
 “ The father proud, such was his lot,
 “ To have an heir lie in his cot.
 “ Two years went by at rapid rate,
 “ A beggar came—she swung the gate—
 “ To tell good fortune to some maid ;
 “ The sun had set, and nightly shade
 “ Was hiding objects in its veil,
 “ And drawing night o’er hill and dale ;
 “ She told the girl of lovers true,
 “ And many would their charmer sue,
 “ To make them happy all their life,
 “ Each one wishing her for wife.
 “ The babe was next to have its share
 “ Of tender praise : how fresh and fair—
 “ What laughing eyes—good temper too—
 “ I’m sure he’s copied this from you :
 “ Our nature loves to meet with praise
 “ From infant life to older days.
 “ The hag took up my playful boy
 “ While giving him a painted toy ;

“ The child did scream with all its might,
 “ The gipsy took to hasty flight.
 “ Radley first knew the caverns deep
 “ As his lone spot for rest and sleep ;
 “ When wind or storm did cloud the day,
 “ In earth’s warm bosom there he lay ;
 “ The low, hard roof and rugged stone
 “ Was then his rest, he seems to own ;
 “ But time perhaps will let us know
 “ A better insight : now the foe
 “ Their daring chief will try to scale
 “ Our walls, with men both stout and hale ;
 “ But much depends upon our aim,
 “ Let ev’ry man then wish for fame.”

Walbeck was making all secure
 To win the place and hearts allure ;
 He prais’d his men for what they’d done,
 Their bloody deeds the battle won.
 He turn’d aside in gloomy thought,
 For conscience oft with passion fought ;
 The wine cup was his best desire—
 The only way to quench this fire.
 The branches moan’d in silence drear,
 He fear’d some dreadful scene was near,

For human voice no more was heard ;
 The screech-owl was the only bird
 That flutter'd o'er the tuneful grove,
 In search of food he chose to rove.
 " Why haunt me ? shades of dismal night,
 " Ye spirits wrapp'd in floating white ;
 " Go to the place from whence you come.
 " Why seek to haunt my lofty aim ?
 " Thy forms are dreadful to behold :
 " My blood once hot now freezes cold.
 " That hollow laugh and mocking scorn
 " Blasts all my hopes. Ah ! truce till morn."

As soon as day began to peep
 Brave men broke through their drowsy sleep ;
 The trees were tipp'd a golden hue,
 Like crystal shone the sparkling dew,
 And birds carolled with great delight,
 To welcome morn so clear and bright.
 Young Radley rose—he'd gain'd no rest—
 In search of one he went in quest,
 He found her like the lily pale
 That decks alone the quiet vale.
 " Amadelade, you look unwell—
 " You're ill at ease—has aught befel

" That causes you to feel so hurt ?
 " A trusty blade by me is girt,
 " I'd use it freely for your sake,
 " And mortal life I'll wound or take.
 " Does slander drive its killing breath ?
 " It stings the victim unto death ;
 " The lurking poison fills the ear,
 " And spreads its evil far and near."
 " 'Tis other thoughts that fill my brain,
 " For those I love may swell the slain ;
 " And then the foe again would seize
 " Their longing prize with greatest ease."
 " Adieu ! for we must haste away,
 " And keep these bloodhounds still at bay."

He chose his darts to use in fight,
 And pour out souls in realms of night.
 Sir Godfrey saw the coming shock,
 And stood erect, like some proud rock
 That braves the surge of rolling sea :
 He fought to die or still be free.
 Strong marching columns first advance
 With well bent bow and bristling lance ;
 They took their aim exact and true,
 The flying shaft did life pursue,

And sounding strings flew back with force,
The arrow cleav'd its certain course;
Strong massive gates then open'd wide,
And Jeftan's men did proudly ride :
The scheme was good—it took their flank—
The foe sped back in broken rank ;
Walbeck's stout horse came up to save,
Their pointed weapons grandeur gave,
Their swords were drawn, and blows were dealt,
Fresh smarting wounds by some were felt,
And scatter'd bucklers lay around
As useless armour o'er the ground.
But Jeftan found he ne'er could stand
Their mighty number hand to hand ;
His men drew back in slow retreat—
The foe press'd on with madd'ning heat—
The soldiers strove to scale the wall,
But headlong down were seen to fall ;
At last they cried with grim delight,
“ The place is ours—we've scal'd their height.”
Sir Godfrey drew his flashing steel
To strike such blows that ne'er could heal,
He drew his breath with sullen hope,
And strode away with them to cope.

The eagle was his nodding crest,
His shield did guard his manly breast.
Brave Radley dropp'd his daring bow
For closer conflict with the foe ;
He drew his blade so sharp and keen,
In midst of fight that youth was seen,
Like some young lion, fierce with rage,
He show'd his front a war to wage ;
He carried terror with his strength,
And heaps of foes were down full length.
“ Advance again,” was Walbeck's cry,
His sounding voice rung loud and high ;
Their chief then led the onward way
To rouse anew this hot affray.
Sir Godfrey mingl'd here and there :
“ Fight on, my men,” his only pray'r,
“ And prove to those what they have said,
“ That braver men have ne'er been led
“ Than those that watch in Belton air
“ Do guard that name with jealous care.”
Then Radley met the tyrant foe,
And struck with force a well-aimed blow ;
But Walbeck saw the certain aim
And check'd the stroke before it came,

Then plac'd himself in best defence—

His gaze was ardent and intense.

“ Why seek to tempt my arm to fight ?

“ Thy soul shall leave this world of light.

“ My ear shall catch thy dying moan.

“ The birds shall strip thy youthful bone.

“ I seek a brave and stronger hand

“ To give him battle, and to stand.

“ I'll find him out—'tis my request—

“ Let fortune crown which she thinks best.”

“ Fortune ! she's blind, 'tis often said,

“ But when you speak her cheeks die red.

“ Thy fate is near, and you must die,

“ Nor will you leave a tearful eye :

“ No friend to bless thee when you're gone,

“ Nor point out virtues that have shone.”

Each took the blows upon his shield,

And strove to make his rival yield ;

They stopp'd awhile to take their breath,

And paus'd upon their work of death.

Again they fought with magic skill,

For ardour back'd each soldier's will ;

At length our hero spied a place

To thrust his steel and blade encase.

Then Radley struck with might and main,
 And Walbeck reel'd and fell through pain.

“ Behold thy death, unhappy man,

“ Ambition now no more will fan

“ The burning flame within thy breast ;

“ Thy soul must leave for woe or rest,

“ And cherish'd hopes will soon give way—

“ The world to thee must now decay.”

“ Lead on, my comrades ! stand till death,”

These words he said with failing breath.

“ My blood is rusting on this blade :

“ Behold the stain ! be not afraid.

“ Advance ! my friends, to greater deeds :

“ Aye ! follow on where glory leads,

“ And thy ne'er daunted valour show

“ To saints above and shades below.”

He sunk again, no more to rise,

Though life still lit his dying eyes.

Sir Godfrey's form and shining crest

Was tow'ring high above the rest,

Like a tall pine, its lofty make

Above the rest is seen to shake

The pride of those that grow in sight.

They oft admire its stately height :

Its graceful shape and waving green
Looks noble in the forest scene.
Then shouts of vict'ry fill'd the sky ;
The distant hills and woods reply,
As if to thank the daring hand
That loosens freedom o'er the land.
The foe fell back in sad dismay,
All hopes were gone, nor could they stay ;
They gaz'd with terror as they fled :
Their chief his latest words then said :—
“ This fatal wound my life has cost.
“ My prize is gone—the battle lost !”
His men long watch'd the gilded west,
They saw the sun sink down to rest,
That clouds may veil its beaming light,
And then retire in silent night ;
For broken hopes and sad disgrace
Had left a ruin in each face.
Amadelade had heard the cry
Of victory—“ they fly, they fly,”
And trembling like the autumn leaf,
She thought of Radley and the chief ;
Then left her beads—she ceas'd to pray—
And wonder'd at her sire's delay.

She met the knight on his return,
His features wore a look so stern,
Her cheeks were pale, yet forc'd a smile,
She saw the dead a mountain pile ;
And tears stole down that feeling face,
Nor did they wander out of place.
The eagles' and the raven's cry
Caught up the scent of carnage nigh,
A feast of blood they found was near—
Well might the maiden shed a tear.
Young Radley stood beside the foe,
Whose giant strength and form lay low.
“ Behold ! Sir Baldwick, here I've made
“ A victim to thy mighty shade ;
“ Accept the vow thy friend has kept—
“ Think not that you have died unwept ;
“ His arms shall grace thy youthful grave,
“ A lasting tribute to the brave.”
Black night had roll'd along the plain,
And stillness held her reign again ;
The beaten army left the spot—
Shagreen had been their only lot.
No word was spoken but command,
The cooling breeze their temples fann'd ;

Their weary limbs long wish'd for rest,
 And eyelids begg'd the like request.
 Lord Dalon was a comely youth
 Of graceful mein ; to love forsooth
 Was what he never yet had done,
 So no fair damsel had he won :
 Of all the beauties that he'd seen,
 There was not one should be his queen.
 Amadelade had met his eye,
 He durst not let her hear his sigh.
 A youth is lov'd, so he'd been told—
 She loves him not for rank or gold—
 A truer friend or sharper foe
 Ne'er parted arrow from his bow.
 A banquet met the ready taste,
 They all sat down with seeming haste,
 And pledg'd success to barons' right :
 The passing hours went swift and light.
 A woman stood in lowly dress,
 It was the gipsy, haggard " Bess."
 Sir Godfrey was the first to speak :—
 " Who is it, woman, here you seek ?"
 " But when ambition's seen to fall,
 " Oh ! then, brave youth, I'll tell thee all."

Young Radley turn'd to meet the sound—
 His dizzy brain went whirling round—
 The truth was striking on his heart,
 She made all doubt in haste depart.
 “ Sir Godfrey Belton here in sight
 “ Thy son has feasted on this night,
 “ I stole him in his infant days—
 “ Revenge had kindl'd up a blaze.
 “ You gave me once a seeming wrong,
 “ I've blighted hopes and peace too long ;
 “ We've taught him well to train the steed,
 “ In daring rides he'll take the lead ;
 “ Or guide the horse o'er chasm steep—
 “ The steed ne'er balk'd, but took the leap—
 “ And wield the sword, or use the bow :
 “ In manly arts was never slow.
 “ Another youth we taught the same,
 “ And call'd them both by one surname.
 “ We bred them up that they might pay
 “ Our trouble in a future day.
 “ Now Welbeck's dead I dare to tell,
 “ His pride and wrath together fell.
 “ Behold him sitting by thy side,
 “ With Walbeck's blood his steel is dyed ;

“ He’s won for thee a mighty name,
“ His own is bright with lofty fame ;
“ He’s worthy of his daring sire,
“ The first to lead but ne’er retire.
“ Three spots are on his shoulder blade,
“ Like perfect stars in form are made ;
“ We found them on the fatal night
“ I stole the infant from thy sight.”
“ My son, my son,” the father said,
“ We long have counted thee as dead ;
“ I once had hopes that we should see
“ Our line shown to posterity.
“ At last a son to me is born,
“ To bless my life and house adorn :
“ Thou art the last and only link,
“ In thee our race will rise or sink.”
“ Father ! how strange to me that sound,
“ My heart beats fast with hasty bound ;
“ The word is new to thy son’s ear,
“ I scarce can hold the briny tear :
“ Heaven has bless’d thy mighty soul,
“ And bid good fortune hither roll,
“ To lead thee and thy daring band
“ To break the chain that binds the land.”

“ Happy father, O gallant son,
 “ Thy evil days their course have run.”
 Jeftan then rose when all was still,
 And bid his friends the goblet fill.
 “ Where’s now the host that did oppose,
 “ And press’d upon us weighty woes?
 “ They skulk away in yonder trees—
 “ There let them rest, their wrath appease,
 “ To brighter scenes we wish to turn,
 “ Where glowing hearts with fervour burn.
 “ We see the heir to Belton Hall,
 “ And merry shout shall pierce her wall;
 “ And may he live till whiten’d age
 “ Has cast upon him wisdom sage—
 “ Like the high mountain tipp’d with snow
 “ Admir’d by all who view below—
 “ It long hath stood the howling storm,
 “ The zephyr breeze, and summer warm,
 “ And yet it rears its hoary head—
 “ No length of time it seems to dread.”
 Then Alfred left the banquet gay,
 No longer did he wish to stay.
 Amadelade the youth then found,
 He told her all—his life unwound:—

“ The sun shines through the misty sky,
 “ The vapour’s gone, the air is dry ;
 “ My heart is gay, the soul is light,
 “ For I’m thy brother from this night.”
 The fair one spoke these words, she said,
 (Her cheeks were mantl’d lovely red):—
 “ Since first I saw thee thoughts I’ve found
 “ That held my love a captive bound ;
 “ My love shall not the least decrease,
 “ Nor will I even yours release.
 “ Sir Godfrey would have lost our name
 “ Had not good fortune hither came
 “ To point out one of Belton race
 “ Whose worthy of the knighthood’s place.”
 “ Amadelade, you smooth my life,
 “ For mine is one of war and strife ;
 “ ’Tis not for me to live in ease,
 “ Life was given my foes to tease ;
 “ But love suits best the peaceful mind,
 “ And fits the nature more refin’d.
 “ My breast is like the ocean’s swell,
 “ The raging passions oft rebel,
 “ And then they burst their proper bound—
 “ All kinder feelings soon are drown’d ;

" But when the rolling waves subside
 " Calm love shall be my only guide."
 Lord Dalon sought the sylph-like maid—
 He ne'er had seen Amadelade—
 A dark moustache grew on his lip,
 The sword was belted on his hip ;
 His life had gone so smooth and fast,
 His head was of the Grecian cast,
 More like Apollo's well-made head,
 The eyes they spoke whate'er he said ;
 When in the field he'd boldly rush—
 Before a maid he oft would blush.
 Amadelade was left alone ;
 She lov'd to hear the rippling tone,
 The winding stream went gliding past ;
 And next she view'd the forest vast ;
 The distant glen she well could see
 Where oft was found the roaving bee.
 She mus'd in thought, then breath'd a sigh—
 The baron made the same reply—
 She startl'd like the bounding roe,
 That flies before it seems to know
 What sound it heard to cause such fright—
 It trusts to ear, and not to sight.

Her flaxen hair in ringlets hung,
 And kiss'd her neck so fair and young ;
 Her azure eyes were soft and bright,
 With lashes long to weaken light ;
 And when she smil'd he well could see
 An even row of ivory.

Her slender figure, half reclin'd,
 Was fann'd by gusts of evening wind.

Again she heard the stiff'd sigh—
 The baron's footstep then was nigh—

A rose-like hue suffus'd her face,
 The stranger told his ancient race:—

“ My name is Dalon. Solway tide
 “ Throws its foam on my castle's side,
 “ The strong old walls have often been
 “ A witness to some bloody scene :
 “ Faden Castle could also tell
 “ Of brighter scenes it knows as well.
 “ Our northern foes they oft have tried
 “ To make a breach on ev'ry side.
 “ We left the castle and its tide,
 “ To save thy home we hither hied,
 “ To help the knight in his good cause,
 “ And win our share of loud applause.

" We came along at nimble pace
 " To save the last of Godfrey's race.
 " Thy beauty's known throughout the isle,
 " And steel-clad knights to win a smile
 " Would throw their laurels at thy feet ;
 " The challenge oft they would repeat
 " To youthful lord or spearing knight,
 " To risk his love in jarring fight ;
 " His heart would beat with human pride
 " If he could count thee as his bride."

She heard his voice—she lik'd the sound—
 And love's soft meshes round her wound.
 The bubbling stream that steals along
 The woody marsh makes forest song ;
 Its murmurs, solemn as the place,
 Blend harmony with wildest grace ;
 So like enchantment is the scene,
 Or roving thoughts of forest dream :
 So with Amadelade, his tongue
 Was sounding words that sweetly sung,
 His voice was solemn as the stream,
 And pleasure lent its sweetest gleam,
 To show how love lights up the orb,
 All tender feelings to absorb.

“ You speak, my lord, with charming ease,
 “ And wond’rous ways you have to please ;
 “ Some gallant youths possess the art
 “ To sprinkle poison on the dart :
 “ The frightful wound no rest can cure,
 “ The injur’d breast must pain endure ;
 “ Their honey’d words they speak at will,
 “ The chosen prey ’tis sure to kill ;
 “ And many sigh and boast of deeds
 “ In changing war while virtue bleeds,
 “ For thoughts they vary as the wind,
 “ And plighted vows blow o’er the mind ;
 “ Their breasts are cold—no pain they feel—
 “ The lips are clos’d, they’ll ne’er reveal
 “ The workings of the sinful brain,
 “ Lest others feel for them a shame.”
 “ Amadelade, you are unkind,
 “ If in thy soul such thoughts you find ;
 “ I ne’er have utter’d e’en my hope,
 “ Nor yet have tried with love to cope.
 “ No graceful form nor shining eye
 “ Has bound me down ’neath woman’s sigh
 “ Until thine own, so soft and bright,
 “ Have bound me captive on this night.

" O yoke me to thy slightest will,
 " Through all my veins I feel a thrill
 " Of ardour : may the tongue say more,
 " 'Twould be to own that I adore.
 " Listen, Amadelade, to me,
 " I'll tell thee all my history :—
 " Our sires were of the Saxon line,
 " From whence we sprung I can't define,
 " But Dalon was in high repute
 " In northern troubles and dispute ;
 " Our square-built towers proudly stand
 " A masterpiece of Vella's hand.
 " We've lost all trace for ninety years—
 " Dalon, before the world appears,
 " A Norman lady took his name,
 " And Marg'ret was a haughty dame ;
 " Her chief his mighty foes had awed—
 " The cross was on his shoulder broad.
 " He left his home for Asia's soil—
 " Ne'er did he from their blows recoil.
 " His eldest son did him succeed,
 " Of northern harps his took the lead ;
 " He cast aside the cutting steel,
 " With softer notes he thought to deal ;

“ His arms forgotten lay in dust
“ Mid foreign spoil and coating rust.
“ Young Edwin’s fingers touch’d the string,
“ And made such notes that none could ring ;
“ Oft he play’d on the sounding shore,
“ The notes were drown’d in dismal roar.
“ The mew skims o’er the whitning wave,
“ And of the sea gull stops to lave,
“ And then pursue its onward course—
“ Its cry is lost in billows hoarse.
“ Leolla’s heart young Edwin won
“ Before the summer’s sun had run.
“ She listen’d to the wild harp’s strain,
“ It spoke his soul her heart to gain—
“ More winning than the flippant tongue
“ Love round its strings had softly hung
“ A hidden charm that held its reign,
“ One felt alike both bliss and pain.
“ In summer’s eve he lov’d to ride—
“ Leolla sat by Edwin’s side—
“ They mov’d so gently on the deep
“ When storms were hush’d in silent sleep ;
“ Softly he play’d, and sweet the air,
“ That won the heart of one so fair,

“ ’Twas more the sound of nymph-like song,
“ Its notes were soft, so full and long,
“ And when he struck a louder strain
“ The music wafted o’er the main
“ And rested on the distant shore,
“ To break the stillness then no more.
“ Alas ! this truth I can evince,
“ So silent has it been e’er since
“ His hand has ceas’d to make it speak ;
“ It stands alone, for none dare seek
“ To tune its chords to ancient lay—
“ Their stroke is harsh—its naught to say.
“ It mourns its lover dead and gone,
“ And yet in silence lingers on.
“ I’ve known the wind with sudden gust
“ Breathe on the strings and drive the dust,
“ To wake a note that long has been
“ Reposing in past ages’ dream.
“ The next who reign’d o’er Faden’s men
“ Took up his arms for war again.
“ Phillip was Edwin’s second son—
“ The eldest soon his course had run—
“ Thrown from his wild and plunging steed,
“ He lay quite dead—his soul was freed.

“ Good Phillip then was my grandsire,
 “ All holy things he did admire ;
 “ A right good convent did he build,
 “ To Austinfriars was it will'd ;
 “ The monks pray'd o'er my grandsire's grave
 “ To bless his soul—his spirit save.
 “ And Henry was my father's name,
 “ Who lost his life in Richard's reign.
 “ Hugh is mine—I'm his eldest son—
 “ But then my life had scarce begun
 “ When in his tomb, or silent grave,
 “ They laid him by his sires so brave.
 “ I love to tame the quick-eyed hawk,
 “ And seldom does its victim baulk ;
 “ Its rapid wings cleave through the air—
 “ The bird wings on, but in despair ;
 “ Or else the sportive greyhounds play,
 “ And course the hare in early day,
 “ To see the timid creature caught,
 “ So soon another then is sought.”

The ev'ning hours had pass'd away,
 And sleep was holding fast its sway,
 Then Dalon left, but heav'd a sigh—
 Repose soon press'd the lover's eye.



CANTO VI.

THE foe had left, and danger o'er,
Their strength was wanted there no more ;
They all prepar'd to haste away,
With spirits buoyant, light, and gay,
Save one, whose name I need not tell ;
His heart ne'er knew the mighty swell
Of love, that beats the human breast,
To vanquish peace and banish rest,
Till then : it triff'd with his fate,
And sports with manhood's future state.
“ Ah ! must we leave thee, and so soon,
“ And parted be to day at noon.
“ A tinge is deep'ning on thy cheek,
“ A roseate hue from colour weak ;
“ My fingers twine thy flaxen hair—
“ The eyelash beats the lid so fair ;

“ Those orbs are restless—must I stay—
 “ Or do they wish me far away ?”
 “ O cease to tease my flutt’ring heart,
 “ Our country calls thee—quick—depart,
 “ And join the ranks that strive to make
 “ The despot’s throne and sceptre shake.”
 He took his leave, a sigh he gave,
 Then join’d his friends so bold and brave :
 When all the rest were lost to view,
 He stood alone to bid adieu.
 He saw the hall fade in the west,
 Then loos’d the rein to join the rest
 O’er ranging hills and fertile plain ;
 And then the leafy forest came,
 And floating banners here and there
 Wav’d their folds in the southern air.
 They near’d the spot, and heard the cry
 Of “ Godfrey’s flag is drawing nigh,”
 And then the crouching leopard view—
 ’Twas Dalon’s crest, and that they knew.
 Our country’s richest blood they found,
 From northern blast to southern bound ;
 And strange devices did they wear,
 From crocodile to Polar bear.

Then Canterbury's bishop came,
 With Pembroke, Marshall was his name.
 The barons show'd their lawful rights—
 'Twas back'd by fierce and sturdy knights
 Who ne'er would flinch from what they'd said—
 The country's cause their conscience led.
 These laws were held in Edward's reign,
 And in King Henry's too the same.
 The monarch saw the schedule read,
 Their firm demands his anger fed ;
 He cast the parchment from his sight—
 " Why talk to me of subjects' right,
 " They have but one—'tis to obey—
 " And mine to rule the sceptre's sway."
 He swore that nought should force his hand
 To sign such freedom o'er the land.
 " Tell them," at length the monarch broke,
 " All you have heard—I'll ne'er revoke.
 " My binding oath you all well know :
 " Tell them my words—prepare to go."
 The king retir'd, and left alone,
 Pensive and sad, a stifled moan
 Came from the caverns of his breast :
 He knew no peace nor blissful rest.

“ My people leave me ; is it true
 “ That none support me but a few ?
 “ Though numbers flock when favours fly
 “ To catch a notice from my eye,
 “ Now join this army of renown,
 “ To win my sceptre and my crown.”

The barons then in council form'd,
 And mighty chiefs the place adorn'd ;
 Then each one spoke his guiding view—
 'Twas Alfred's turn, his time was due :—
 “ Most noble vet'rans, 'tis my will
 “ That we pursue this contest still ;
 “ The rights of freedom have been known
 “ To bless the subject's castle home ;
 “ Let's leave to those of distant day,
 “ Who'll rule the soil when we decay,
 “ A land where freedom lives unbound—
 “ She'll soon possess fair Britain's ground ;
 “ Her sons will point with blushing pride
 “ To chieftains lying side by side,
 “ As heroes worthy of their praise,
 “ And monuments to valor raise.
 “ We'll pour upon the king such strength
 “ 'Twill make him yield to us at length,

" For lawful right is Godfrey's aim,
 " He'll not give up our honest claim."
 He said no more, but took his seat,
 While chiefs approv'd with hands and feet,
 'Till one De Gulo soon did rise
 To catch the vast assembl'd eyes :—
 " Behold ! my friends, how's this we find
 " A youth possess'd of manhood's mind ;
 " His words are wise, and have great weight,
 " They carry well in this debate ;
 " Like Ulysses, in pagan time,
 " Who'd wisdom from the gods divine,
 " His voice leads all to one belief
 " From lowest serf to greatest chief.
 " I'll never live a tyrant's slave
 " While I've a hand my rights to save."
 The king beheld with searching eye
 A dreadful force assembled nigh ;
 He wish'd to choose an equal side,
 But this the barons all denied ;
 He took his pen with sullen will,
 To crush his pride and av'rice kill.
 She's bless'd our isle e'en from that day,
 And oft to glory's led the way ;

She's built for us a lasting name,
We've roll'd our wealth o'er ev'ry main ;
She's stretch'd her wing to shelter those
Whose nation counts them but as foes.
No other land that breaks the sea
Can count her children half so free.
A noble youth was seen to ride,
And cool his horse by some brook-side,
Then us'd the spur and shook the rein,
A loss of time he thought to gain.
Amadelade took up her lute—
Her father sat so grave and mute—
For oft in ev'ning did she play,
When noon-tide heat had died away.
'Twas on a lovely night in June,
Her lute drew forth seraphic tune,
The sun had spent his latest ray,
And twilight took the place of day,
Those orbs did watch the distant sky,
And oft the maiden breath'd a sigh ;
Her heart beat loud, she gaz'd intent,
A knight his charger's head had bent
To gain the castle's dusky form,
And rest his beast with sides so warm :—

“ Amadelade, why out so late ?

“ Oh! do you with the stars debate ?

“ Or is some lover then so near

“ That thou wouldst wake thy youthful ear ?

“ Thy tremour fain would hide a thought—

“ A parent’s gaze the truth has caught.”

The sprightly rider left his seat,

And soon was seen with mail-clad feet,

The tunic o’er his armour fell,

And by this means the knight could tell

That it was Dalon’s well-known form

Who’d brav’d the heat of day so warm.

He told them all, and who he’d seen

In council form’d on meads so green,

And how they did the charter gain—

Seven were all the monarch’s train.*

He rode in silence back to town

To hold again the trembling crown.

He told Sir Godfrey all he knew :—

“ And now again I’m come to view

* “ Thus one of the greatest sovereigns of Christendome was now become the twenty-sixt petty king in his own dominions; as appeared that very night when all the rest following the pompous streame of the new up-start kings left their soveraigne onely with seaven gentlemen to attend him.”—See *Speed’s Britaine*, p. 867.

“ This magic spot to me so dear,
 “ I love with truth, yet hope with fear.”
 Sir Godfrey bent his smiling eye,
 It well could trace a blushing die,
 For love had spread a deep’ning shade
 Upon thy face, Amadelade.
 “ I scan thy thoughts, and know thy mien—
 “ The like before I oft have seen
 “ In one I’ll love, aye, e’en in death
 “ Her name shall fill my latest breath.
 “ Akelda came from fertile Spain,
 “ Her sire had join’d king Phillip’s train ;
 “ A right good soldier too was he,
 “ The pride and boast of chivalry.
 “ Her mother was of Saxon race,
 “ With bright blue eyes and smiling face.
 “ Akelda was by nature vain,
 “ And lov’d to give her suitors pain :
 “ Of all the knights who ventur’d there
 “ Mine was the lot her love to share.
 “ I’ve told her of the awful fight
 “ When Saladin and western knight
 “ Were struggling with a mortal hate
 “ That ne’er would slacken or abate ;

“ And some I’ve found with locks of hair
 “ They’d stolen from their ladies fair,
 “ Or given by soft beauty’s hand
 “ Till their return from Holy land.
 “ I’ve seen them die, and kisses press
 “ Upon the gift they’ve lov’d no less
 “ Than blissful life ; and oft they pray’d
 “ To calm their souls—then death obey’d.
 “ Pelata saw me once with her—
 “ A Spanish chieftain some aver—
 “ Dark passion mov’d within his breast,
 “ And jealousy gave him no rest ;
 “ His anger shot through eyes of jet :
 “ That venom flame I’ll ne’er forget.
 “ I read thy thoughts.” Akelda spoke,
 She was the first that silence broke :—
 “ This man would love me, and of late
 “ I’m not so hard upon his fate,
 “ But if you fight, hear what I say,
 “ Our friendship ends upon that day :
 “ No blood shall flow to gain this throne,
 “ Nor in my heart to stand alone.”
 “ Thy words, Akelda, ever just,
 “ Suit well thy finely-moulded bust ;

" A man to win thee must submit
 " Until the day that you think fit
 " To yield thyself his captive bound,
 " And bridegroom cast his meshes round.
 " My sword in fragments here shall lie
 " E'er with Pelata's strength I'll vie ;
 " It's been a good, though silent friend,
 " And many quarrels sought to mend ;
 " For thrice my honour rested there,
 " And kept the treasure in its care ;
 " Much as I've lov'd thee yet must say
 " I grieve to throw my steel away."

One night Sir Godfrey, deep in thought,
 Was startl'd, and in ambush caught ;
 A man stood forth in full relief,
 'Twas Pilata, the Spanish chief,
 And like a statue there he stood,
 Nor did he meet for aught that's good :—
 " Warrior knight! who'er ye be,
 " Thy life is lost for certainty,
 " Unless the shining steel you shake,
 " Thy veins shall pour a liquid lake :
 " A dagger when you least expect
 " Would end thy hopes, and mine effect.

“ Akelda once did use me kind,

“ Our thoughts in unison combin'd,

“ Until you came from eastern clime,

“ Akelda, I could call you mine.

“ This is my last and only source

“ To which my hand can have recourse.

“ Ah! burning youth can ne'er restrain.”

Sir Godfrey felt a proud disdain,

And anger flew with vivid flame,

It darted from each rival's brain.

“ Then do you force me to comply?”

“ Not force thee, if you'd sooner lie

“ An easy victim to my threat—

“ Her foreign boy she'll soon forget.

“ I'll meet thee in the morning air,

“ To this lone spot we'll both repair.

Sir Godfrey knew that all was o'er,

And he must love the maid no more,

For if he broke his solemn word,

His good defence would not be heard.

Pale morning light had lit the hill,

The castle slept in silence still,

Sir Godfrey left his chamber grey

To meet Pelata e'er 'twas day.

His youthful weapon next he took,
Then gave a last and farewell look,
While mutt'ring words that none could hear,
And yet they caus'd the scalding tear
To trickle down his boyish face,
And then he hurried on his pace ;
He found his rival waiting there,
His sword he held, the blade was bare ;
He greeted him in Britain's tongue,
And then their armour loudly rung.
Pelata spied a sudden chance,
And quickly did his steel advance ;
He made a wound in Godfrey's arm,
But gave the knight no great alarm.
Again the chieftain aimed a blow
But miss'd the mark, the stroke fell low ;
It gave Sir Godfrey much the best—
His sword drove through the Spanish breast.
He left the spot and went away—
The sun had sent his downward ray.
Akelda's lone and fav'rite ride
Was wending o'er the Rhone's fair side ;
Her tresses caught the playful breeze—
A youth at distance great she sees—

She knew 'twas Godfrey's manly gait,
 And drove her steed at quicker rate,
 Then slacken'd pace, for soon she found
 The blood was flowing from his wound,
 And truth was hov'ring round her sight—
 The blooming cheeks went palest white :
 " Sir Godfrey, is it thus you keep
 " Your promis'd word, so solemn, deep ?
 " Go," she said, " to the war repair,
 " Thy word is naught but empty air ;
 " Or seek out one who will bestow
 " Her hand upon my British foe."
 " Akelda, would that you might hear
 " The knight's defence while he is near.
 " I'd tell thee who the contest won,
 " For I'm not wrong in what I've done.
 " Adieu ! Akelda, ever more,
 " My heart will feel the rankling sore ;
 " No mortal vision will efface—
 " No changing scenc, nor welcome place,
 " Will banish this impression made—
 " The vivid scene will never fade.
 " And must some other wear the wreath
 " That fancy found in my belief ?

“ The youthful mind is oft intent
 “ In making scenes that soon are rent ;
 “ Delusion paints its figures grand,
 “ But time pursues with truthful hand
 “ To drive away his thoughts of bliss.
 “ Why chase such hope—such love as this ?
 “ Akelda, should you ever know,
 “ When I’m laid in the earth so low,
 “ That thy Pelata made the wound
 “ For which the western knight is doom’d.
 “ Forgive me, fair one ! o’er me weep—
 “ My promis’d word I strove to keep.”
 She gaz’d upon him till at last
 Her eye was lost in nature vast ;
 And then she rode to overtake,
 And urg’d the steed for Godfrey’s sake.
 Alas ! Akelda was too late,
 While love in council held debate,
 She hurry’d on the knight to save,
 Her heart was bound affection’s slave,
 Though she did not e’en once believe
 That tranquil peace was on its eve.
 But lovely maid, I grieve to say,
 That pride makes beauty oft decay.

They struggle hard with fate awhile,
 And e'en at times they force a smile :
 'Tis like the sun when clouds obscure
 His genial heat, so warm and pure ;
 His rays are lost to nature green,
 And then at last his form is seen
 To drive the vapour o'er the sky,
 Which soon again his light defy.
 The man was found, his wound severe,
 And yet their words gave him no fear ;
 He bid them go, Akelda send,
 That she might view Pelata's end.
 She came in haste, the chieftain saw,
 His face gave way to inward awe ;
 He told her all as best he could—
 Akelda spoke not, silent stood,
 Her heart was sway'd by mighty woe,
 And soon it told who was her foe :—
 “ Oh, must I know, like autumn breeze,
 “ That sends a wail through shady trees,
 “ I sorrow o'er the summer gone,
 “ And yet its beauties linger on—
 “ A forest rudely stripp'd of life,
 “ By chilling frost or ruthless strife,

“ Till spring’s return, with sunny smile,

“ To breathe her perfume o’er the isle.

“ The nipping frost and winter’s rain

“ Strike on the heart—I strive in vain—

“ And trouble gathers thick and fast

“ To weigh me down ’neath northern blast ;

“ But will that season e’er arrive

“ To warm my heart and winter drive ?

“ O Godfrey, Godfrey, would that I

“ Might win thee back, or with thee die.”

He rode apace, and found the coast,

Then fill’d the sails to join the host.

Two years roll’d past, the father came

With warlike nobles in his train—

All suitors for this dazzling star,

Whose matchless claims were known afar.

Gay feast and mirth first took the lead,

Then out-door sports did these succeed :

Her sire proclaim’d a certain day,

When one should bear the prize away.

The games were held, that fate might choose

The one to win, the rest to lose.

There came a knight that no one knew—

He spoke but little, and to few—

His age was young, his figure strong,
To Britain's isle did he belong.
The games were held : first came the race,
And steeds were urg'd to utmost pace ;
But first they rode o'er sloping ground,
And then o'er hills the chargers bound ;
Then next they leapt with alt'ring speed—
The unknown rider kept the lead—
Luke Horton was this chieftain's name,
The hard-won race he seem'd to claim.
Broyen, the first to bend his bow,
Had let his shaft its journey go,
It struck the target just outside
The centre, and the field defied ;
Then each in turn drew tight the string,
But none could strike the centre ring,
Till Horton took a bowman's place,
And drew his shaft from leathern case,
He pull'd the string, and loos'd the dart,
It struck inside the centre part.
Then games and feats did quick succeed,
But still good fortune him decreed
To win the games all in their turn,
Which made his rivals' anger burn.

Caletsa sought with father's pride
 The victor knight and lovely bride ;
 The Briton gaz'd, and trembl'd too,
 Beneath those orbs of brightest blue ;
 A dark moustache and bearded cheek
 Was not the youth that once did seek
 To win her hand in wedlock's tie.
 Oh! would that he could now draw nigh.

“ Akelda, hear me, well I know
 “ The knight who left two years ago,
 “ In dreadful charge he leads the first,
 “ Whole ranks give way, and order burst ;
 “ He speaks thy name when he's alone—
 “ His thoughts fly back to beauty's home.
 “ Behold ! Akelda, here you see
 “ Thy former knight again near thee.
 “ I left the field to strive once more
 “ To gain the love I've held before ;
 “ With Horton's name I wore disguise
 “ To blind Akelda's searching eyes.
 “ I join'd thy father's noble train—
 “ To win thee is my lofty aim.”

He took his bride, the sea they cross'd,
 And waves roll'd high, the vessel toss'd ;

They stept on London's welcome pier—
He bless'd the soil to him so dear.
At last they saw proud Belton's form—
The summer sky was clear and warm,
The woods were full of stately trees,
No sounding axe disturb'd the breeze.
Amadelade, our infant child,
First made her notes to echo wild ;
She oft would speak some well-known name,
And then soft echo did the same,
It took the note through chambers round,
And then caught up some other sound.
Next Alfred came, my only son,
And long before the child could run
His mother sunk within the tomb—
She's buried in the earth's dark womb.
A noise was heard, for steeds drew near,
And Brutus lent a willing ear ;
'Twas Alfred's voice and manly gait
That hasten'd there at nimble rate.
The sire beheld, with human pride,
His only son rest by his side ;
His arms were hung in ancient placè,
'Mid rusty steel of former race.

Amadelade was up next day
Before the birds woke up their lay ;
She bent her steps through forest ground,
But soon she heard another's sound,
'Twas Dalon's foot that hasten'd there
To gain an answer from the fair.
The baron spoke :—" Oh, cease to pain
" A soul that pines thy love to gain ;
" Thy image haunts my weary breast—
" Thy floating form gives me no rest.
" When slumber steals upon my sight,
" In gloomy stillness of the night,
" I see thy vision float in air,
" For angels smile on one so fair ;
" Thy hair play'd loosely on the neck,
" Its wanton revels knew no check ;
" Thy snowy garments mov'd along,
" For thou wert borne by angels' song ;
" I've seen them flutter o'er thy make,
" And jewels from their crowns they take
" To stud thy dress of purest white,
" That hurt my weak and mortal sight.
" Flowers I've seen of choicest hue,
" That dropp'd their sweet and fragrant dew,

“ They plac’d them on thy ruby lip,
 “ ’Tis virgin’s food its flavour sip ;
 “ It gives to youth much brighter charms,
 “ They grow beneath our holy psalms ;
 “ Then they cull’d the brightest flowers
 “ Angels grew on lofty bowers,
 “ And chaplets work’d of ev’ry shade
 “ With fragrant leaves that ne’er can fade.
 “ Then next a throne they did prepare,
 “ ’Twas made with skill and choicest care,
 “ And form’d of wreaths that each had made—
 “ No eye could trace the countless shade ;
 “ The lilies lay on leaves so green,
 “ The op’ning rosebud next was seen,
 “ And flow’rs unknown to mortal sight
 “ I plainly saw refulgent bright.
 “ A plant I view’d, with star-like form,
 “ The centre of the throne adorn :
 “ Its hue was of a purple cast,
 “ And veins of purest gold thou hast,
 “ And on each leaf I well could see
 “ A fringe hung down so carelessly ;
 “ It had all dyes that earth could boast,
 “ And mingling shades a countless host ;

“ And in the centre petals grew
 “ Of crystal form, transparent too,
 “ Its fragrant smell I can’t describe
 “ Although the scent I did imbibe ;
 “ And then they plac’d thee on this seat,
 “ With stands of gold to rest thy feet ;
 “ Bright seraphs flutter’d by thy side,
 “ For thou wert then an angel’s bride.
 “ This scene grew faint—at last ’twas gone—
 “ And other dreams came crowding on :
 “ ’Tis thus the night goes rolling by
 “ Until the day approaches nigh ;
 “ I wake to find ’tis no such thing—
 “ Delusive fancy takes to wing.”
 Amadclade, with beaming eye,
 No longer could his love defy ;
 She gave consent to be his bride,
 Then Dalon press’d her to his side.
 Sir Godfrey next the baron found—
 He gave his word—his promise bound.

THE END.



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