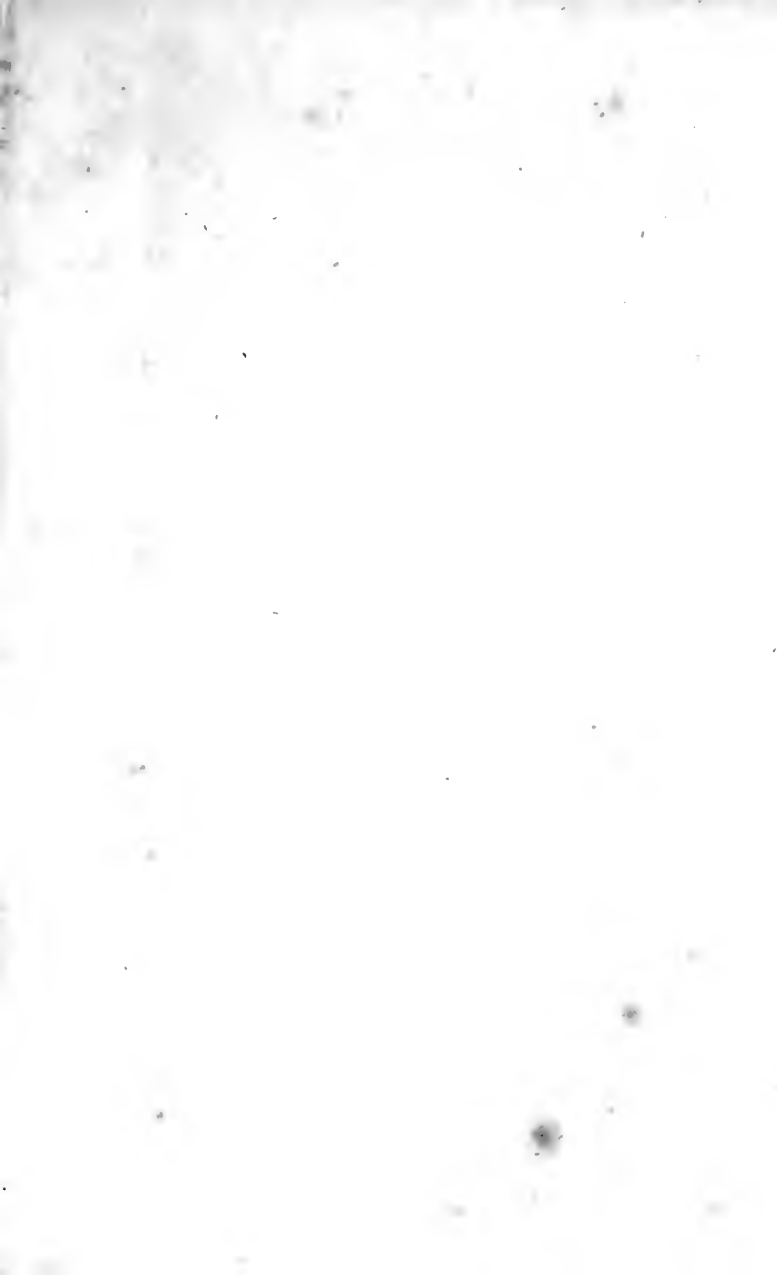






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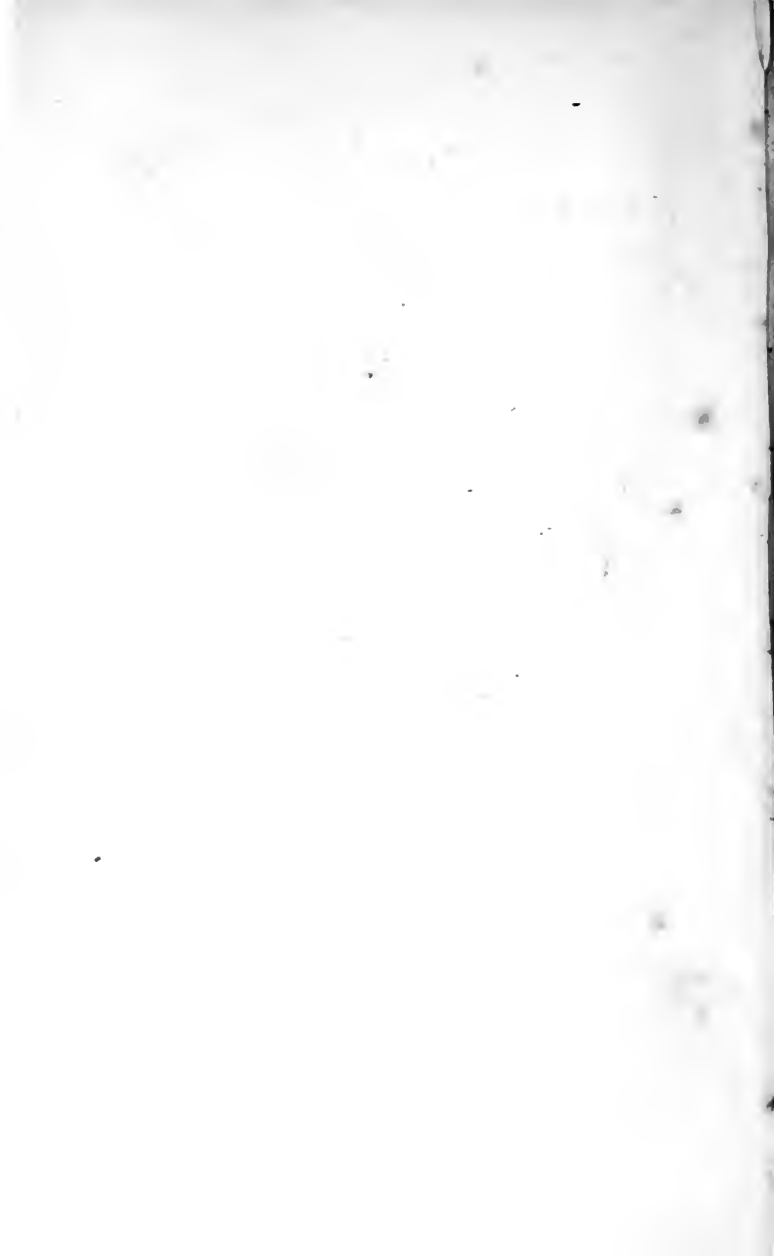
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THE
LAST DAYS OF FRANCIS THE FIRST.



The foundation of this Poem is the well-known anecdote of Francis the First (while residing at his favourite palace of Chambord with his sister Margaret of Navarre) writing on the window-pane the lines—

“ Souvent femme varie,
Bien fol qui s’y fie ;”

thinking most likely at the time of his faithless mistress the Duchesse d'Etampes. Francis died in 1547, only fifty-three years old ; but his intemperate habits had brought on premature age. Margaret attended him through his illness, and was so afflicted at his death that she soon followed him to the grave.

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THE
LAST DAYS OF FRANCIS THE FIRST.

I.

'TWAS in Chambord's beloved retreat,
With ermine clad, on velvet seat,
King Francis sate that day,
While, far beneath his royal glance,
The vine-clad hills of sunny France
In smiling beauty lay.

II.

The aged monarch's eyes were dim,
His ears were heavy, and for him
The harp was strung in vain ;
Fair Chateaubriand's tale of love
No more his withered heart could move,
Nor Marot's gentle strain.

III.

No more the crowd of courtiers stand,
With fawning voice and ready hand,
 Round his declining throne ;
For they whom once his bounty fed,
In sorrow's hour have basely fled,
 And left their lord alone.

IV.

Can this be he, whose step of pride
Once led by royal Henry's side,
 The pageant's gaudy train ;
Who, decked in velvet's crimson fold,
In silken vest and " cloth of gold,"
 Swept Ardre's tented plain ?

V.

Can this be he whose royal lance
Oft won in those proud lists a glance
 From Love's approving eyes ?
And oft, at tilt and tournament,
Before the Queen of Beauty bent,
 And nobly wore the prize ?

VI.

Is this forsaken monarch he
To whom the flower of chivalry
 Due homage once did pay ;
For whose fair brow Fame's fickle breath
Has twined its last, its brightest wreath—
 Has sung its sweetest lay ?¹

VII.

Say, where is now his haughty frown,
When basely forced the imperial crown
 To rival hands to yield ?
Where knighthood's budding honours now,
When Bayard touched his blushing brow
 On Marignano's field ?²

VIII.

Alas ! how sadly changed the scene,
From what in by-gone days had been
 That monarch's chief employ !
When festive masque and ceaseless dance
Held in the giddy court of France
 Their reign of love and joy !

IX.

He mourned o'er former friends now gone,
The early death of darling son,
 O'er troops dispersed and slain ;
While that false prince, his ancient foe,
Prepared once more a treacherous blow,
 And threatened war again.

X.

'Twas thus, as he the past reviewed,
In sickness, grief, and solitude,
 The dreary days went by ;
While every deed of shame or sin
Rose up his guilty soul within,
 And told him—he must die.

XI.

And he, whose lust all means had tried,
Whose every wish was gratified
 That wealth or power could gain,
Now wept to feel (alas ! too late)
That sensual, cold, and desolate,
 His heart must still remain.

XII.

Beside him in this sullen mood
(So runs the tale) fair Margaret stood,
 Who caught each word that fell ;
The sister to whose willing ear
The thoughts that none but she might hear,
 A brother loved to tell.

XIII.

And as they gazed on Chambord's plain
From that high window, on the pane
 He wrote with diamond ring,
“ The love of woman's oft untrue,
The fool who trusts her's sure to rue ;”³
 So says the unhappy king.

XIV.

And then, as if in scorn, to prove
The worthlessness of woman's love,
 He pointed there and sighed ;
To which his thoughtful sister-queen,
Who felt how false that taunt had been,
 In sorrow thus replied :

XV.

“ And dost thou woman’s heart then deem
Shallow as yonder summer stream,
 And fickle as the wind ?
Her love unholy and impure,
As lust of guilty paramour,
 Which leaves a sting behind ?

XVI.

“ Such sickly plant may bloom awhile
Beneath the sun of royal smile,
 But must too soon decay ;
And, like a fair but faded flower,
The plaything of an idle hour,
 Be rudely cast away.⁴

XVII.

“ Oh ! thou wilt never dare to claim
Devotion’s pure and spotless name
 For those unhallowed joys,
Which, soon as passion’s power is past,
The faintest breath of sorrow’s blast
 But withers and destroys.

XVIII.

“ And canst thou then so soon forget
Thine own devoted Margaret,
 Still ready at thy side
To whisper peace in hours of ill,
To curb thy weak and wayward will,
 Thy lighter faults to chide ?

XIX.

“ Hast thou forgot that fatal day
When first thy sword in deadly fray
 With thy stern foes was crossed ;
When thou wast forced, on Pavia's field,
To Bourbon's treacherous arms to yield,
 And ‘ all save honour lost ?’⁵

XX.

“ Hast thou forgot, when that sad blow
Fill'd France with grief, despair, and woe,
 Who to thy comfort came,
When he who stood beside thee fled,
For whom a wife no tears could shed,
 And scorned to bear his name ?⁶

XXI.

“ A captive, friendless and forlorn,
By sickness bowed, by sorrow worn,
 Who lightened first thy chain ?
Who came, in hour of utmost need,
Thy hopes to raise, thy cause to plead,
 With the proud King of Spain ? ”

XXII.

“ Thou know’st this hand, its truth to prove,
(The tyrant’s cruel heart to move,)
 Had been most freely given ;
Thou know’st how, threatened and abused,
(The proffered ransom oft refused)
 Thy sister thence was driven.

XXIII.

“ O say—can all that I have done
No better thanks than this have won ?
 Is such reproach my due ?
Oh ! no—thy heart is too sincere
To deem the taunt recorded here
 To thine own Margaret true.

XXIV.

“ Most bitterly must thou have sighed,
When forced this fair realm to divide,
 Thy liberty to gain ;
When thy stern foe bade thee resign
Those lands which came to Capet’s line
 From mighty Charlemagne.

XXV.

“ Thy friends—oh ! where, alas ! are they,
Whose lips in fortune’s brighter day
 For ever wore a smile ?
Why did the royal Henry send
No aid his brother to befriend
 From England’s haughty isle ?

XXVI.

“ Too well did’st thou, a prisoner, prove
The depth of thy paternal love,
 On Bidassoa’s wave,
When to thy throbbing heart was pressed,
With tears in that sad hour caressed,
 Thy son a hostage slave !⁸

XXVII.

“ And when our mother, d’Angoulême,
With France’s fairest daughters came
 To meet thee at Bayonne,
What tears of grateful joy then showed
How their fond hearts with rapture glowed
 Who brought their sovereign home !

XXVIII.

“ ’Twas then I warned thee to beware
Of one as false as she is fair,
 Accomplish’d, witty, young ;
Who, like the noxious plants that twine
Their tendrils round an aged vine,
O’er the dim years of thy decline
 A baleful cloud has hung.

XXIX.

“ For know’st thou in that shameful hour,
When thou didst feel thy rival’s power,
 And sued for life again ;
When coward crowds in terror fled
From those victorious troops which led
 Their banners to the Seine ;⁹—

XXX.

“ Know’st thou (those troops from death to save)
Whose traitor-hand protection gave,
To France and thee untrue ?
Whose baseness showed thy foe the way
To Spain’s curst shores from Epernai ?
Thine own Anne de Pisseleu.

XXXI.

“ Oh ! Francis ! hast thou then forgot
How Margaret’s voice was heeded not,
How oft she wept and prayed,
And warned thee that those hearts which cling
For comfort to so mean a thing,
Must find their love betrayed ?

XXXII.

“ Think not I’d screen my friend from shame,
Who stains (they say) de Lagny’s name,¹⁰
By love for low-born slave ;
A few short days, I trust, will show
How little of her heart they know
Who came a life to save.

XXXIII.

“ Say, Brother, dost not thou regret
Their blood which cries for vengeance yet—
 The malison of heaven ;
The righteous blood in torrents poured
Of thousands by the fire and sword,
 From Vaudois’ valleys driven ?¹¹

XXXIV.

“ Not mine—the mournful tale to tell,
How many guiltless victims fell
 By thy curst mandate there ;
Where night no kindly shelter lent,
To shield the wandering innocent
 In hapless Cabrières.

XXXV.

“ ’Twould seem, as if the offended God,
In whose pure name the scourge and rod
 That nation’s life-blood shed ;
His hatred of that crime to show,
Requites this unforgotten blow
 Upon their murderer’s head !

XXXVI.

“ Like those blest souls, whom prophet’s eye
Beheld beneath God’s altar lie,
Which for His Word were slain,
And with sad voice, “ O Lord, how long
Dost Thou not judge—avenge our wrong,”
Unceasingly complain.¹²

XXXVII.

“ Yet ne’er mayst thou (whom nought could move,
Not e’en thy weeping Margaret’s love,
Those martyred souls to spare ;)
God’s pardoning mercy vainly crave,
Or, find like them, thou wouldst not save,
Unheeded now thy prayer.

XXXVIII.

“ My heart, dear Francis, shudders still,
To think what grievous weight of ill
I might ere this have borne,
Had I sought Henry’s blood-stained throne,
And basely wished to wear the crown
His injured Queen had worn.¹³

XXXIX.

“ For sad as seems poor Anna’s fate,
Where love so soon was turned to hate,
Too well she earned that doom,
Who had, “ As Percy’s Countess, been
Far happier than false Henry’s Queen ;”
Nor now within her tomb.¹⁴

XL.

“ When next thy taunting jest would prove
The fickleness of woman’s love,
Oh ! think of Henry’s Queen.
How long neglect, unjust disgrace,
Could never from her mind efface
That she his wife had been.¹⁵

XLI.

“ Oh ! think how short the path that led
To prison from his bridal bed,
To scaffold from his throne.
Oh ! shame that slaves should thus fulfil
That tyrant’s wild capricious will,
Nor hurl the monster down !

XLII.

“ Then write no more with bitter pen
That woman’s love, compared with men,
 Must be but lightly prized.
While murder, lust, and darkest crime,
Shall make his name through endless time
 Detested and despised.

XLIII.

“ Oh! think, since he unwept is gone
To his account, the elder one,
 How soon thy turn shall come,
And to thy Saviour humbly pray
That he would wash thy guilt away,
 And guide thee safely home.¹⁶

XLIV.

“ That so, e’er thy warm heart grow cold,
Thine eye, by passion uncontrolled,
 May all the past review,
And find, though other friends forget,
A woman’s heart can love thee yet
(Thine own devoted Margaret)
 With love unchanged and true.”

NOTES

TO "THE LAST DAYS OF FRANCIS I."

¹ The age of chivalry was now on the decline. "The field of the cloth of gold" is almost the last of which we have any record.—Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*.

² On the death of the Emperor Maximilian, 1519, Charles V. having obtained the imperial crown, gave great offence to Francis, his rival, and laid the foundation of that hostility which continued between them through life.

It was immediately after the battle of Marignano, 1515, (the year that Francis came to the throne,) that he was knighted by the celebrated Chevalier Bayard.—See D'Anquetil.

³ "Souvent femme varie,
Bien fol qui s'y fie."

⁴ The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Has lost its charm by being caught.

⁵ After the fatal battle of Pavia (1525), Francis wrote home to his mother, "Tout est perdu fors l'honneur."

⁶ Margaret's first husband was the Duc d'Alençon, who disgraced himself by running away at the battle of Pavia, and died soon after. She then married Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, by which name she is known.

⁷ See D'Anquetil, vol. vi.

⁸ After signing the humiliating treaty of Madrid, in order to obtain his liberty, Francis was forced to leave his two sons in Spain as hostages for its fulfilment. See the affecting account of their parting in D'Anquetil.

⁹ When Charles V. invaded France, and advanced within sight of Paris (1544), it was the treachery of Anne de Pis-seleu (Francis' mistress, better known as Duchesse d'Etampes) which saved his army from destruction, and provided his starving troops with provisions, and a safe retreat to Spain.

¹⁰ It was with reference to this lady, Emilie de Lagny, that Francis is said to have written the lines on the window. This virtuous lady, when her husband was imprisoned for supposed treason, after visiting him daily, was said to have eloped with his page. Francis having given this as an instance of woman's fickleness, Margaret, provoked by the taunt, pledges herself to prove her friend's innocence. Soon after, the imprisoned Knight proved to be Emilie herself, who had thus contrived her husband's escape and taken his place; he was soon after restored to favour, and Francis breaks the window on which he had written the lines.

¹¹ The horrid persecution of the Vaudois took place by order of Francis, 1545, a short time before his death. Margaret was herself inclined to Calvinism, and protected many of the reformers in France. For an account of the cruelties practised on the Vaudois, see d'Anquetil, vol. iv.

¹² Rev. vi. 9, 10.

¹³ Soon after Henry's divorce from Queen Katherine, proposals were made to Margaret, to which she nobly replied, "That if she had no other objection, she knew that listening to such a proposal would break the heart of Queen Katherine, and she would none of it."

¹⁴ Anne Boleyn spent the early part of her life in the Court of Francis, and in the service of Queen Margaret. The story of her attachment to Percy is well known. It was Lord Herbert who said "That she had better have been Percy's Countess than Henry's Queen."

¹⁵ The firmness and sweet disposition of Katherine of Arragon are well known. When repeatedly asked to consent to a divorce, and after suffering every species of indignity, she replied : " Go where I may, I am his wife, and for him will I pray."

¹⁶ Francis, when informed of Henry's death, which happened a few months before his own, said : " Mon ainé est parti, mon tour ne tardera pas."





LA LUCCIOLA.



The brilliant illumination caused by the Lucciola, or fire-fly, in Italy, has a beautiful effect. "It seems uncertain how far this phosphorescent light is connected with the vital principle, but the insect will cease shining on a sudden fright. Phosphorescent animals are sometimes serviceable to man in directing his steps through the darkness, they have been tied to a stick as a torch, or placed in a lamp by the Indians. The lantern carrier is the most beautiful, a native of Surinam, used by the women as an ornament for the hair."

Church of England Magazine, vol. v. p. 331.



LA LUCCIOLA.

1.

A MALFIS' mountain-path was passed,
I stood by Saruo's stream,
O'er which a thousand fireflies cast
Their bright phosphoric beam,
That glimmered through the cypress bough,
Where fancy sees them sporting now.

11.

Glad revellers ! in that joyous clime
Where life seems doubly blessed,
How oft at evening's stilly time,
When nature sank to rest,
Ye, welcome pilots, came to guide
Our bark, that lingered on the tide.

III.

How oft at summer's twilight hour
I've watched your insect throng,
Now hurrying, dart in golden shower,
Now circling, sweep along
Thy shores, Salerno, 'neath the shade,
By arbutus and myrtle made ;

IV.

Now in far distance lost, the eye
Scarce marks their devious line,
Now starts to find, more bright, more nigh,
Their living lustre shine ;
Like myriad twinkling stars of light
Gleaming amidst the clouds of night !

V.

Have ye, bright insects, o'er the wild,
Like watchful Peri come,
To save from harm the truant child,
And bring the lost one home ?
Fit emblems of that heavenly light,
Which leads repentant sinners right ?

VI.

Say, did ye with Titania sport,
With Oberon range the dell,
Where elves and fairies held high court,
And bound with charm and spell,
The wanderers of the woods to be
Companions in their revelry ?

VII.

Or did ye blend your balmy light
With many a heathen fount,
And mingle in the mystic rite
Of Delphi's hallowed mount ?
Or cluster round that sacred tree.
The god of their idolatry ?

VIII.

Perhaps ye've played a nobler part.
To man's assistance given,
Have glanced upon the enlightened heart
With ray derived from heaven—
From crystal globe have shed your beam
On sage's thought, or poet's dream :

IX.

Or borne upon the spicy air
Of Comorin's moonlit sea,
Have decked with radiant wreath the hair
Of Indian beauty free ;
Than flower more fair, more pure than gem—
Nature's unsullied diadem !

X.

Most fair, most frail ! blessed insects born
Beneath that eastern sky,
Ye shine to-night—to-morrow's morn
Ye flutter, fall, and die.
While every breeze and bough is rife
With evanescent forms of life.

XI.

Oh ! well may He who bade you shine,
With most benignant aim,
Thus teach this thoughtless heart of mine,
His providence the same,
Which kindles with the beam of love,
The worm below, the stars above.

XII.

Though brief and tremulous the ray
Which lights a form so frail ;
That father's care whom all obey,
Forbids this light to fail ;
Until the shades of night are passed,
That beam shall glow—that lustre last.

XIII.

But should thy hand, this child of light,
A prisoner once retain,
No more its wings shall dare the flight,
Nor soar from earth again.
So prostrate falls the soul, when sin
Obscures the heavenly spark within.

XIV.

The Christian, hence, in every toil,
This useful lesson learns ;
While faith supplies his lamp with oil,
Undimmed, unquenched, it burns,
Till all his earthly troubles o'er,
He needs the holy light no more.



ARCO D'ELIA, MONTE ST. ANGELO.



The Arco d'Elia is a beautiful natural arch very picturesquely situated near Amalfi, through which is an extensive view over the bay and the distant coast, stretching away towards Salerno ; on the left are the high cliffs which terminate in the mountain of St. Angelo, on the top of which is a small ancient chapel, which the Devil, when conquered by St. Michael on this spot, was compelled to build, from which tradition the mountain derived its name.

The Sireni are three small islands immediately below the Arco d'Elia.



ARCO D'ELIA, MONTE ST. ANGELO.

BAY OF SALERNO.

I.

'TIS twilight on Salerno's deep,
The noonday breeze is still ;
The sun's last purple blushes sleep
On Positano's hill,
While gazing o'er that landscape stands
A wanderer from remotest lands.

II.

Beneath him float in splendour lone,
Enwreathed by ocean's smiles,
Like pearls upon an azure zone,
The Siren's magic isles.
False nymphs ! whose melody betrayed
The bark which winds had there conveyed.

III.

Oh! if there be one spot on earth
Moulded by angel-fingers,
The cradle-home of beauty's birth,
Where her sweet spirit lingers,
'Tis here, where shores and seas combine
To form a paradise divine!

IV.

And if there be an hour more blessed
To calm devotion given,
'Tis when (the busy world at rest)
Man turns his mind to heaven,
To read in those deep stars above
The same glad tale—a Maker's love.

V.

Above, unwrought by human art,
A fabric meets the eye,
Whose darker shades of outline part
The everlasting sky;
Through whose gigantic gates are seen
Amalfi's towers, the ocean-queen!

VI.

So frail the arch—so slight the span—
Thus poised aloft in air,
It seems, no foot of daring man
Nor bird might venture there ;
For avalanche-like, the lightest breath
Might plunge it in the gulf beneath !

VII.

With heaven's fair host upon this height,
(So old traditions tell)
The evil spirit dared the fight,
And when he vanquished fell,
His captive hands were forced to rear
A shrine to mark his downfall here.

VIII.

That temple's wondrous task was done
Ere morning's light arose,
The foe was chained—the battle won—
Secured was earth's repose.
When on that arch the angel stood,
Blessed the bright scene, and called it good.

IX.

But words are all too weak to tell
 Yon pilgrim's raptured thought,
Watching from rocky pinnacle
 The lengthening shadows brought
O'er that calm bay—those cities fair,
In golden sunset sleeping there !

X.

Say, why that dark and cloudy wreath
 Hangs o'er the mountain brow ?
To tell thee that the fires of death,
 Though quenched, are burning now ;
That oft the pent volcano's womb
Has proved a nation's living tomb.

XI.

Say, canst thou gaze upon the plain,
 Which smiles with peace and joy ;
Nor weep to think how soon again
 That fire-flood may destroy
A world whose thoughtless thousands tread
O'er the dim cities of the dead ?

XII.

Look forth once more—the sun has set,
The wave is dark below,
A tinge of twilight lingers yet
On proud St. Angelo ;
And Capri's peaks still faintly shine,
Lost in the horizon's misty line.

XIII.

'Twould task the bold Salvator's skill,
Or Tasso's gifted hand—
The hues to paint, the page to fill,
From that romantic land ;
Their art might every feature trace,
But miss the soul in beauty's face !

XIV.

Yet would the stranger still recall
Remembrance of that scene
Where he hath lingered long, where all
His brightest hours have been ;
Would bid departed visions come,
The spirit-forms of that bright home :

XV.

Thus would he wake the past again,
 (While years are on the wing)
Content, if he can still retain
 Some freshness of the spring,
Some influence from that lovely spot,
Which, though unseen, is ne'er forgot ;

XVI.

Content, if this his farewell lay,
 Breathed from Campania's shore,
May lead the pilgrim's thoughts to stray
 Where he shall roam no more ;
May cheer the home that he hath won,
Whose wandering, and whose song is done.



“ THE CONVERT-WORSHIPPER.”

LINES WRITTEN ON SEEING AN INDIAN SEPOY, A
CHRISTIAN CONVERT, IN AYLSHAM CHURCH.

JULY 10, 1843.

I.

'TIS Sabbath morn ; the sun shines bright
The fretted windows through,
And pours its flood of mellowed light
O'er carvèd seat and pew ;
And mid the worshippers is one
Of burning India's swarthy sons.

II.

'Tis strange within that church to see
That Christian stranger stand,
With Christian brothers bend the knee,
And clasp his tawny hands ;
To know that he with us can claim
An interest in the Saviour's name.

III.

For such poor wanderers by the way
We pass, and heed no more ;
But those who turn with us to pray—
The God we serve adore—
Can ne'er before His footstool kneel,
And we no warm emotions feel.

IV.

It seem'd as if that outcast lone
With saddened heart might say,
“ This house, which God hath called His own,
I'll make my home to-day,
And seek within its holy ground
That rest which is not elsewhere found.

V.

“ What though the world be dark and cold,
Though friends ne'er smile on me,
Yet here, within the Christian fold,
The slave may still be free ;
For God looks down from heaven, and smiles
On all who tread his temple-aisles.

VI.

“ And Thou who read'st the heart alone—
Who heed'st the suppliant's call—
To whose attentive ear are known
The wants and woes of all ;
This contrite heart I know wilt prize
Far more than costliest sacrifice !”

VII.

Thus as I viewed his heaving breast,
And marked his ebon brow,
His knees, in suppliant posture pressed,
Before the altar bow ;
I felt that convert's fervent prayer
Was heard, and had been answered there.

VIII.

But yet it was so strange a sight—
That figure dark and spare,
In Eastern robe and vesture bright,
Midst England's daughters fair—
I scarce could fancy him to be
A Christian worshipper with me !

IX.

As midst the forms in some bright hall
By sculptor wrought of old,¹
The startled eye, unused to fall
On one so stern and cold ;
Soon in those features learns to find
Creation's priceless gem—the mind.

X.

Or when, within some shady bower,
A lady's hand is pressed,
It may not be the gayest flower
That lady loves the best ;
For oft she twines in her bright hair
The darkest rose that blossoms there.

XI.

Lone wanderer ! whilst on thee I gaze,
To Fancy thou dost seem
The spirit-form of those glad days,
When childhood loved to dream
Of young Aladdin's lamp, that shone
On glittering gold and precious stone.

XII.

Again, to other scenes swift Thought
Unbidden spreads its wings,
And o'er the soul, with rapture fraught,
A brighter shadow flings
Of many an Eastern prophet-sage,
Recorded in the sacred page.

XIII.

I thought of Isaac's outcast son,
Who wandered forth alone—
His pilgrim's staff to rest upon—
His pillow but a stone ;
To whose blest gaze by God was given,
Bright visions of the gate of heaven.

XIV.

Again, I saw dark Sheba's queen
Pass by with courtly train ;
O ! would that I could paint the scene
When she turned home again ;
His wisdom, power, and wealth to tell,
The monarch-sage of Israel.

XV.

My vision changed—the star-led seers
From Eastern mountains came,
His birth to hail, in after years,
Who bore Messiah's name ;
Bringing sweet spice and costly gem
To the blest Babe of Bethlehem.

XVI.

Next came the Ethiopian sage,
Who sandy deserts trod,
That he might read the sacred page,
And worship Israel's God ;
The first who to Candace's shore
Glad tidings of salvation bore.

XVII.

For scarce were Gaza's gates passed by,²
(Where Samson dwelt of old)
When on the way a man drew nigh,
Who of a Saviour told ;
And water o'er the convert poured,
In memory of the ascended Lord.

XVIII.

And wilt not thou, poor pilgrim, say—
 (Like him who travelled there)
“ Rejoicing take thy homeward way,”
 And oft repeat this prayer ;
When toiling in thy burning clime
Thou hear'st no more this bell's sweet chime ?

XIX.

But tell not there our nation's sin,
 (Shouldst thou this tale relate)
How few our temples enter in,
 Of all that pass the gate ;
How many here thou well might'st shame,
Who ill deserve the Christian name !

XX.

I know not who the Gospel brought
 To thy remote abode ;
I ask not whose blest tongue first taught
 Thee where to seek thy God :
Enough to know that thou art free
From heathen's dark idolatry !

XXI.

If aught that man performs on earth
A recompense could gain—
'Tis his who leads the prisoners forth
From superstition's chain—
And, as he points the way to heaven,
Bids all "believe and be forgiven."

XXII.

Thus, when thy friends shall round thee bask
By Ganges' sunny stream,
The wonders of this land to ask—
How sweet thy task will seem,
With angel-voice His name to sing
Who blest thee in thy wandering!

XXIII.

Say—hadst thou marched with that brave band
Of Sepoys firm and true—
When treachery bared her bloody hand—
Her sword in vengeance drew—
When England's blood in torrents ran
Beneath the forts of wild Affghan :

XXIV.

Thou might'st have taught, in that dark strife,
The savage foe to spare ;
Or cheered the struggling throbs of life
By some soft-whispered prayer ;
Had'st thou been kneeling by their side,
When those, our Christian brothers, died !

XXV.

I ask not—if thy lot be low,
Or sad thy simple tale—
Whate'er it be, thy faith I know,
And gladly bid thee hail,
In *His* name, at whose cross we bend,
The Christian's Saviour—Father—Friend.

XXVI.

And, though within this church to pray
Thou ne'er again shouldst come,
May He that led thee on thy way
Still guide thee safely home ;
That thou and I at last may meet
In heaven, before His mercy seat.

NOTES

TO "THE CONVERT-WORSHIPPER."

¹ A black marble bust is very uncommon, but may occasionally be seen in some of the Continental galleries.

² Acts viii. 39.



LINES.

DECEMBER 1, 1838.

I.

AND can it be, that thou art gone
To thy long home—beloved one,
Companion—sister—friend ?
So soon departed—it might seem
The vision of a passing dream,
If such sad dreams could end.

II.

Alas! though gentle, pure, and young,
The silver cord of life's unstrung—
The golden bowl is broken—
Of all thou wast, to us alone
Is left to cherish as our own,
Love's latest dearest token.

III.

Methinks 'twould be a soothing joy
To treasure all which, when a boy,
 Thou hast to me confided ;
The nursery tales that charmed our ears
At twilight hours—the bitter tears
 We wept—when first divided !

IV.

Those arms, which oft with mine have clung
Around our mother—that sweet tongue—
 Which lisped with mine the prayer
Of childhood, in those guileless years,
When thou my feelings, hopes, and fears
 Wast ever wont to share.

V.

Now cold and lifeless ! for that voice
Which often bade the sad rejoice,
 Shall whisper joy no more :
And he that knew thee—loved thee best—
Shall in his weary hours of rest
 Thy early death deplore.

VI.

It seems but yesterday a bride
I saw thee, by thy husband's side,
 Before yon altar kneeling—
Where now, within that holy aisle,
The pall is waving o'er thee—while
 The bell is slowly pealing !

VII.

And those sweet sisters—where are they,
The handmaids of that bridal day,
 Thy form then fondly pressing ?
E'en here they own His love and power,
Who brought them thro' this dreary hour—
 And ask for thee a blessing.

VIII.

Those prayers are heard—thy soul is blest—
The pain-worn body sinks to rest,
 In that cold coffin sleeping—
Yet not for thee, whom we've resign'd,
But for the children left behind,
 Thy parents now are weeping.

IX.

But where is he—whose sudden grief
Has sought—but scarcely found relief :
Whose limbs are weak and shaking ?
His last look lingers on the bier—
He speaks no word—he sheds no tear—
The husband's heart is breaking !

X.

It shall not break ! for fervent prayer
Forbids the Christian to despair ;
Though all his hopes are buried, where
Sinks yonder vault of stone ;
Yet on his babes, shall One above
O'erpay a mother's fondest love—
Complete the work undone !

XI.

Though nature droops, still faith looks up,
Content to drink affliction's cup—
The pledge of sins forgiven—
Nor can his heart be desolate,
That feels secure of her blest state,
Thus saved and sealed for heaven !

XII.

But keenly must a husband mourn
In night's long hours a young wife torn
From his embrace—her child just born—
 The unconscious cause of woe—
His only source of comfort this—
To know, that in the world of bliss,
His infant feels a mother's kiss,
 A happy spirit too !

XIII.

Sister—if thou hast ever deemed
My heart unthinking as it seemed—
 Or wished thy brother fonder—
It was not that I loved thee less—
But I had others born to bless—
And many a source of happiness,
 Where I have chanced to wander.

XIV.

For memory oft would turn to thee,
When dwelling by that southern sea,
 I basked in sunny weather :
With feelings and affections warm,
As when we clasped a mother's arm—
 And laugh'd or wept together !

XV.

Forgive thy brother—if unkind
He ever pain'd thy gentle mind,
By words in anger spoken ;
Who mourns the dearest ties of life—
Of sister—parent—child and wife—
In one brief moment broken.

XVI.

Oh! that these lines could now recall
Each tone of thine—each feature small,
That formed the character—where all
Thy perfect self was seen !
And may thy children never know
The sad bereavement of the blow,
Which leaves but thy bright name—to show
How great their loss has been !

XVII.

For little thought I, at our last
Glad parting, that thy life was past—
That death was drawing nigh—
And much yet vainly did I yearn
To press thy hand once more, and learn
How Christians ought to die.

XVIII.

'Tis hard for erring flesh to bow
Beneath the rod which lays so low
Its fondest hopes—when all below
 Is clouded dark and dreary :
But love's unfailing fountain flows
For all who weep, their wounds to close,
To wipe their tears, and bless their woes,
 Whose souls with sin are weary.

XIX.

Then welcome be the blow that brings
To God the wayward soul, that clings
Too closely yet to earthly things—
 By the chastening hand of sorrow !
The fire by which He purifies
The trembling sinner's sacrifice,
The sun that sheds through stormy skies
 A brighter beam to-morrow.

XX.

While here I rest my pillowed head—
What dreams come gathering round this bed
 Where thy cold form was laid !
Thy spirit seems the space to fill,
And whispering bids thy brother still
 To pray, as thou hast prayed !

XXI.

Whenever death's dread hour shall come,
'Tis best beneath a father's home
 A kindred tomb to find ;
O may the blow like hers be mild,
(As slumber o'er a sinless child)
 Like hers my soul resigned.

XXII.

For guardian angels round the throne
Have welcomed back the saint—to crown
 The triumph, nobly won.
Not in her own, but His blest power
Who taught her in that trying hour
 To say—"Thy will be done."

XXIII.

Thus may her bright example cheer
The mourning friends, who linger here,
 To tread the path she trod ;
And guide them to that blissful shore
Where they shall meet to part no more,
 In presence of their God.







LINES,

WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF MY BROTHER,
OCTOBER, 1839.

I.

THE summer's sultry heat is done ;
More mildly now October's sun
O'er park and upland gleaming,
Its lustre to that mansion lent,
On gothic porch and battlement,
In golden glory streaming.

II.

How calm the scene ! the turtle dove
Repeats its tender tale of love
From yonder wooded hill ;
The swan still sails as proudly by,
The wild bird chaunts its lullaby,
And sings as sweetly still.

III.

Yet all in vain—the brightest ray
Ne'er chased the captive's gloom away,
 But mocks his bitter fate ;
The sweetest note that bird can sing,
To him no true delight can bring,
 Whose heart is desolate.

IV.

Then ask not why so sad the scene,
Where all my happiest hours have been,
 Where I have loved to roam ;
For thrice within this passing year
The hand of death has rested here
 Upon my father's home.

V.

'Tis that a brother loved and young,
By mourning friends is borne along,
 Beside that aged tree,
Beneath whose green and shady bough
I seem to see him sporting now,
 Elate with mirth and glee.

VI.

'Tis that each spot, each cherished flower,
Recalls the walk at twilight hour,
 And breathes a sad farewell ;
While he, his early, faithful friend,
With mournful hand now turns to tend
 The plants he loved so well.

VII.

When harmless jokes and mirth ran high,
How lightly glanced his merry eye !
 How joyous was his smile !
And yet withal so good and kind,
He never pained another's mind,
 But soothed his woes the while.

VIII.

Yet think not that the idle play
Of youth or childhood's winning way
 Alone demand my tears ;
'Tis that a brother ne'er shall bless,
Nor share with me the happiness
 Of life's advancing years.

IX.

In sweet communion passed the time,
From infancy to manhood's prime,
Like roses twain we grew ;
The first expanding softly spread
Its leaves about the younger's head,
Shielding the bud now withered
From suns and early dew.

X.

Alas! 'twas vain, though fresh and fair,
The worm had left its canker there,
It faded, drooped, and died !
And soon the full blown rose may fade,
Lose all its sweetness, and be laid
Close by its brother's side.

XI.

So closely twined around my heart,
I fancied that we ne'er should part,
Our love should never end !
Our parents mourn a son in thee,
But thou wert more than this to me,
A brother and a friend.

XII.

A few short months and thou wert there !
Thy tears were mingled with the prayer
 For those we lost before ;
While now I gaze upon that stone,
And feel that I must weep alone,
 And thou canst smile no more,

XIII.

For who the inward void can tell,
When on thy cheek my last farewell
 Was pressed unfelt, unspoken ;
It seemed as if the last best stay
Of earthly hope was swept away,
 Its firmest bond was broken.

XIV.

But no ! 'tis sinful to repine !
For are not wife and children mine,
 A father, sister, mother ;
Although this heart hath lost its claim
To fond affection's dearest name,
 In *thee*, my only brother ?

XV.

We doubt not that His high decree,
Severe as it may seem to be,
In mercy was ordained ;
Though now, while round thy bed we kneel,
Our present loss alone we feel,
Forget what thou hast gained.

XVI.

Thy death at first we scarce could deem
Ought but a visionary dream,
Without reality ;
But when I heard the passing bell,
Upon my ear this warning fell ;
“ Am I prepared to die ? ”

XVII.

Oh ! grant that we may so prepare,
By humble penitence and prayer,
To meet our final doom ;
That we may die, as they have died,
Who now are sleeping side by side
Within the silent tomb.

XVIII.

If pure unmixed delight can flow
From ought that man pursues below,
 'Tis found in the employ
Of Christian faith and hope, which brings
To those that watch in holy things
 An everlasting joy.

XIX.

If he is blessed whose heart can bleed
For earthly woes, who loves to feed,
 And take the hungered in,
More blessed is he to whom 'tis given
To lead the wanderer back to heaven,
 By conquering death and sin.

XX.

For when His cross was sealed with blood,
And Jesus with his followers stood
 On Tabor's sacred rock ;
This was his own, his last behest,
That he who loved his Saviour best,
 Should feed his chosen flock !

XXI.

Say, if such heavenly grace be shed
Unsparingly on his blessed head,
The anointed of the Lord ;
Can he, ordained to lead the way,
Himself become a castaway,
Unanswered and unheard ?

XXII.

Oh ! no, for shall not every prayer,
If asked in faith, its blessing bear
A sweet response of love ?
Thus, He who knew which lot was best,
His love hath shewn by giving rest
In that bright world above.

XXIII.

That Father's ear is open still,
His hand shall every wish fulfil,
Supply our every need ;
A faithful shepherd shall provide
To comfort those that mourn, and guide
The flock he loved to feed ;

XXIV.

To teach us that the world's cold chain
May be too closely knit again,
 Which now is snapt and riven ;
To lead us gently one by one,
By all those blessings that are gone,
 To turn our hopes to heaven.







THE CRUSADES.



In the following poem I have combined the first and second Crusade, and have introduced Peter the Hermit as contemporary with Richard, Philip, and Saladin. The poem opens with the rendezvous of the forces at Brindisi and Tarento, under Godfrey, Robert, &c. A. D. 1100, the crusaders under Richard assembled at Messina, A. D. 1190.



THE CRUSADES.

I.

HOW glorious was the proud array
That filled Tarento's sunny bay,
And swept the Adrian sea.
While northern fleets with ponderous sail,
And light feluccas wooed the gale
At ancient Brindisi.

II.

But think not I would now recount
The deeds of each high Duke and Count,
Or tell the titled name
Of every mighty potentate,
Who with his vassal serfs in state
To this great gathering came.

III.

The sturdy Norman—and the Gaul
Of sinewy frame and features small,
 The dark-eyed sons of Spain—
The fair-haired German's open brow—
All bound by a most solemn vow
 The Paynim land to gain.

IV.

On fiery steed in armour bright,
Came many a newly-belted knight,
 And many a squire and page.
Few lingered on that trysting day
In lady's bower—on upland grey—
 Or lonely hermitage.

V.

Richard, the lion-hearted King,
His best and bravest troops did bring
 Across the western main,
From England's feudal castle-holds,
From Cambria's hills, from Scotia's wolds,
 Guienne and Aquitaine.

VI.

There many a banner waved on high—
Proud Austria's Duke with eagle eye—
 And Philip's lily crest ;
Whose secret hate of Richard's power,
Betrayed in many a darker hour,
 His haughty looks confest.

VII.

Knights of the Temple, and St. John,
Whose dauntless deeds such fame have won
 'Gainst Moslem's mighty shock ;
The soldier-priests who long withstood
Unaided—that barbaric flood
 On Malta's barren rock.

VIII.

And far above them you might see
Upon the heights of Brindisi
 A holy hermit¹ stand—
With naked feet—with cope and gown,
His beard untrimmed—his wild hair grown—
 And crucifix in hand.

IX.

Oh! 'twas a solemn thing to hear
His voice in accents calm and clear
That people's sins confess,
And thus adjure that Sacred Name
(Whose chosen minister he came)
Those countless hosts to bless :

X.

“ I thank thee, gracious God of heaven,
Who thus a glad response hast given
To pilgrims' earnest prayer—
Whose hand has led man's wayward will,
Thy righteous purpose to fulfill,
This sacred cross to bear.

XI.

“ How dear to thee this welcome hour !
How blest shall be each sovereign power
Which at thy call has come ;
To drive the unbelieving host
To Mecca's shrine from Judah's coast,
And win the Saviour's home !

XII.

“ That Saviour’s eyes have wept too long,
From heaven to see the grievous wrong
 Which to His church is done.
Too long through apathy and sin
Your feeble arms have failed to win
 The land ye should have won !

XIII.

“ Too long His holy cross to wrest
From hands unhallowed and unblest
 The christians have delayed,
Too long, from Moslem’s threatening spears
Those weary pilgrims’ fruitless tears
 To us for help have prayed !

XIV.

“ Oh ! if there be one coward here
Whose craven heart through mortal fear
 Will not these pilgrims save,
I bid the recreant turn and fly
Unloved by all—that man shall die
 Unhonoured in the grave !

XV.

“ If there be one, whose soul would win
Remission for each darling sin,
 Would find his faults forgiven—
Let him this holy warfare join—
And march beneath the ‘ conquering sign ’²
 Which marks the way to heaven.

XVI.

“ As Israel’s seed in years long gone
Their promised rest through dangers won
 On Jordan’s fertile plain,
So now your arms that same blest land,
From Paynim curse, from heathen hand,
 Shall rescue once again.

XVII.

“ As then, the unquenched Schekinah’s light
Led God’s own people to the fight,
 Their arms with strength supplied ;
So now, this symbol of our faith
Shall shield each christian soul from death,
 And homeward safely guide.

XVIII.

“ The sacred cross, these banners bear,
Shall be a better safeguard there,
 Than helm or twisted mail ;
Before it, Saladin’s brave host
Shall prostrate fall, and kiss the dust—
 His crescent flag shall quail.

XIX.

“ Then gird each sword upon the thigh,
And bid the proud usurper fly
 To his desert home afar ;
While from the slaughtered troops you raise
A trophy worthy of His praise
 Who thus supports the war !

XX.

“ Where Arab scheiks and steeds now stray
Shall christian pilgrims wend their way,
 Beneath the palm-tree’s shade,
And of its leaves that shelter now
From rain and sun the Paynim foe,
 Shall victors’ crowns be made.

XXI.

“ Not fading like an earthly crown,
Those christian heroes' high renown
Through future years shall last,
And Godfrey's—Cœur de Lion's fame,
From tongues unborn shall honour claim,
Till time itself be past.

XXII.

“ For when these holy wars shall cease,
Their deeds enshrined in songs of peace
Shall with their names endure ;
On minstrels' harps shall live again,
Inspiring the provençal strain
Of gentle Troubadour !³

XXIII.

“ What though an Eastern monarch's spoil
With wealth repay the soldier's toil,
He scorns such empty prize ;
Content from that far land to bring
Some martyr's cross—some holy thing
Which there neglected lies.

XXIV.

“ Content with raptured eyes to see
The sacred shores of Galilee
By Christ’s own footsteps prest ;
From sacrilegious hands to save
The cross that bore Him, and the grave
Where once He deigned to rest !

XXV.

“ Let christians then with zeal arise
To battle with God’s enemies—
Defend His holy name,
Deeming their life as less than dross
To rescue their Redeemer’s cross
From infamy and shame.

XXVI.

“ And should their righteous blood be shed
Ere they within that city tread
Where once their Saviour trod ;
That blood shall not be shed in vain,
Assured a martyr’s crown to gain,
It is the will of God.”

XXVII.

He ceased—when thousand tongues sent forth
A shout that shook the solid earth,
 And made the mountains nod ;
While echoing far, from man to man,
That watchword through the army ran—
 “ It is the will of God.”

XXVIII.

'Tis past—and now that pilgrim-host,
With arms in supplication crost,
 Are kneeling on the sod ;
And many a heart with ardour glows
To smite the unbelieving foes,
 And do the will of God.

XXIX.

Anon uprising—forth they poured—
A motley crowd with spear and sword
 Upon the Thracian shore ;⁴
While marching proudly in the van,
Before the host—that aged man
 The sacred emblem bore.

XXX.

Yet wheresoe'er its shadow past,
The nations shrank as from the blast
Of Simoom's scorching wind ;
The plains of Thrace before them smiled
In fertile beauty—'twas a wild
Dark wilderness behind !⁵

XXXI.

As ruthless sword and withering flame,
Thus marked the path by which they came
To the Byzantine wave,
Alexis from his throne of towers⁶
Looked down with terror on those powers,
Nor dared their anger brave.

XXXII.

Thus did these warriors spread afar
The woes and miseries of war,
Beneath the cross of peace ;
And, like a mighty whirlwind, past
To Asia's woods and plains at last,
Across the Chersonese.

XXXIII.

There soon shall fever's parching breath,
Famine and feud, and bloody death,
 Their dense battalions thin ;
While those that live (a rabble-horde)
Shall fall beneath the glittering sword
 Of princely Saladin !

XXXIV.

As once, we read, proud Persia's king
His nations to those straits did bring,
 With hopes as wild as this ;
Whose countless thousands found a grave
By Æta's pass, and 'neath the wave
 Of rocky Salamis.⁷

XXXV.

Enthusiast stern ! could'st thou have seen
Time's path unveiled, how sunk had been
 With shame thy lofty brow,
For superstition's fondest dream
Ne'er yet devised a wilder scheme,
 Or a more fruitless vow.

XXXVI.

The tale were all too long to tell
Of what in those dread wars befell—
 What deeds of fame were done ;
How oft in feuds their arms were crossed,
And traitor-friends the trophies lost
 From foes too dearly won ;—

XXXVII.

Of that brave chief who nobly there
Refused the crown of gold to wear
 He might as king have worn ;
Too wise such idle pomp to show
Where once his Saviour's bleeding brow
 Had felt a crown of thorn ;⁸—

XXXVIII.

Of him, our own Plantagenet,
Whose matchless prowess mingles yet
 With childhood's early lay ;
Who with him brought his bridal-queen
—Partner unmeet for war, I ween—
 From Famagosta's bay.⁹

XXXIX.

Oh ! who shall say what pangs he felt
When on Judæa's hills he knelt,
 And bared his mailed head ;
With streaming eyes refused to view
That holy city, where he knew
 His feet should never tread.¹⁰

XL.

How sadly wept that lonely man,
When the best troops of Frangistan
 Were scattered all and slain,
Forsaken by his friends, to own
The seat of David's royal throne
 His sword should ne'er regain !

XLI.

The sun's last rays were shining yet
On Omar's gilded minaret
 When Richard turned away,
And left the glorious prize he sought,
So nearly won—so dearly bought—
 Beneath the Moslem sway.

XLII.

Ye know how dearly England paid
In blood, the price of that crusade ;
 Each mother, widow, bride,
Or orphan child of Norman line,
Who, when ye thought of Palestine,
 Have crossed yourselves and sighed.

XLIII.

The widow's eyes have long been dim
With weeping fruitless tears for him,
 A mother's only son,
Who, in the dawn of manhood, fell
Beneath the sword of Infidel,
 At sea-girt Ascalon.

XLIV.

'Tis sad to think what crimes, what woes
From these unrighteous wars arose,
 What penury and pride !
How few who sought that distant shore
Felt that His love, whose cross they bore,
 Their hearts should ever guide.

XLV.

How sad His name should thus be used,
(By man perverted and abused)
Despotic chains to bind ;
That Superstition's iron reign
From those blest shores fresh strength should gain
A subject world to blind !

XLVI.

Alas ! the martyr's whitening bone—
The treasured nail—the printed stone ¹¹—
But ill those toils repaid,
For which the Christian's noblest blood
On Syria's thirsty desert flowed
Through many a long crusade.

XLVII.

But now what cause for heavenly joy,
What songs of praise may well employ
Their children's grateful tongue !
For whom, from error's darkest night,
Religion's pure and holy light
In later years has sprung :

XLVIII.

Who know that to our favoured land
No more, with bigot sword and brand,
 Shall persecution come ;
Nor priestcraft call our sons afar,
To seek through all the crimes of war
 A Saviour's earthly home ?

XLIX.

No more with battle's fierce array,
To bid those Arab tribes obey,
 We seek that hostile shore ;
Than conquest ours a nobler aim ;
To teach His long-forgotten name—
 God's worship to restore.

L.

For this, fair Albion's friendly sail
Has thither sped with favouring gale,
 Not martyrs' bones to bring ;
But that, renewed by holy love,
Souls, won from sin, to God may prove
 A welcome offering.¹²

I.I.

Thus shall we show our love the best,
Who give this passing world the least,
 To God the greatest share ;
And conquering thus both self and sin,
A better recompense shall win
 Than proudest conqueror there.



NOTES

TO "THE CRUSADES."

¹ Mosheim, ii. 139.

² Peter the Hermit here refers to the celebrated vision of Constantine. "Hoc signo vinces."

³ The songs of the Troubadours derived their origin from the Crusade. Anquetil, vol. iii.

⁴ For an account of the expedition through Thrace, &c. under Peter the Hermit. See Hume, &c.

⁵ A fire devoureth before them; behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, behind them a desolate wilderness. Joel, chap. ii. verse 3.

⁶ Constantinople is surrounded by a triple wall of towers. Alexis Comnenus was the Greek Emperor who had applied to the Christians for succour against the Turks.

⁷ Mount Æta encloses the pass of Thermopylæ on the west, the sea on the east. The battle of Salamis took place B. C. 480.

⁸ When Jerusalem was taken by the *first* crusaders (1099), Godfrey de Bouillon was elected king; but when offered a crown of gold as a mark of his accession, he replied, "*That he would not wear a crown of gold in that city where the King of kings had been crowned with thorns.*"—Mosheim, vol. ii. p. 445.

⁹ When Richard's fleet was dispersed by a storm when coming from Messina to the Holy Land, it was at *Famagosta*, in the isle of Cyprus, that he rejoined his sister, and was there married to Berengaria, who landed with him at Acre May 1191.

¹⁰ When Richard arrived within sight of Jerusalem, but was unable to attack it through the treachery and jealousy of the Duke of Burgundy; when forced to turn back, one of his followers ran up to him and said, "Sire, come hither, and I will show you Jerusalem;" on which Richard, weeping, replied, "*Oh Lord God, I pray I may never see thy holy city, since I cannot deliver it from the hands of thy enemies.*"

¹¹ Amongst the very large collection of relics brought from the Holy Land, the most valuable were *the nails of the true cross*, and "*a white stone on which our Saviour had left the print of his feet,*" which was preserved by the Dominicans.—Mosheim, vol. ii. p. 453.

¹² Reference is here made to the late appointment of an English bishop at Jerusalem—a very interesting event, and which will, we trust, be ultimately successful.



LINES

ON HEARING A RED-BREAST SING IN BLICKLING
CHURCH. OCT. 1842.

I.

HOW sweetly with the village choir
Of this our hallowed fane,
Springs up in cadence, clearer, higher,
That songster's simple strain ;
As folding there his restless wing,
He joins his voice with ours to sing.

II.

So softly doth the music roll,
(By nature's bounty stored)
It seems as if his very soul
Were in that volume poured ;
And this, his grateful hymn of praise
For spring's bright flowers and summer-days !

III.

It seems (now that the waning year
 With leaves has strewed the ground)
As if he sought for shelter here—
 A home of refuge found ;
And thus the little wanderer came
To bless with us his Maker's name.

IV.

To teach us, when the world without
 Looks dreary, dark, and cold,
How best to calm all fear and doubt
 And feel our hearts consoled ;
To seek a home these walls within,
From storm of grief or blight of sin.

V.

The birds that reared their callow young
 In Salem's holy shrine,
Like thee, a grateful descant sung
 Beneath its roof divine,
Each shadowy eve, each brightening morn,
On circling clouds of incense borne.¹

VI.

Methought, when perched on chancel screen,
Where sculptured marbles shine,
And many an ancient helm is seen
Of Hobart's noble line ;
The little warbler seemed to say,
" These mighty warriors—where are they ?"

VII.

The crown that hangs there shrined in dust,
Once bound their martial brow,
The empty casque, long dimmed with rust.
Gives me a shelter now ;
For they have lived their little day,
And past, as I shall pass, away.

VIII.

Methought too, as he winged along
Above that latest tomb,
He paused, as if he deemed glad song
Unmeet for *his* sad doom ;
Pouring a soft and plaintive air
For him who sleeps in silence there !

IX.

It may be fancy—but when those
 We loved and honoured here,
Beneath our temple-roofs repose,
 Oh ! then they seem most dear ;
As if we still could with them hold,
Communion as in days of old.

X.

Oh ! this I've often fully felt
 For those of mine now gone ;
Whene'er I kneel where they have knelt,
 I feel not all alone ;
But deem with mine their spirits rise
To join a brother's sacrifice !

XI.

'Tis then a voice, however small,
 A note—a name—a word,
Will some forgotten scene recall ;
 Or touch some hidden chord.
As now this songster's tiny wing
Has set my fancy wandering.

XII.

For if—as some of old divined—
The disembodied soul
Be doomed an humbler form to find,
Could I the choice control
I would that those lost ones might be
Bright wandering birds of song like thee.

XIII.

For then, as years were gliding by,
Like angels they might come,
Unseen by mortal's darkened eye
To hover round their home ;
Or mingle their glad voice with ours
In calm devotion's sabbath-hours !

XIV.

Not like those halcyon birds who wing
From shore to shore their flight,
Where the blue Hellespont doth fling
Its billows morn and night,
Through countless ages doomed to flee
Unresting o'er the restless sea.²

XV.

Thus Fancy taught the heathen sage,
And tinged the poet's dream ;
But we who read the sacred page
Learn there a holier theme,
Where faith points upward to the sky
To tell us " we shall never die."

XVI.

Thus when at that blest feast I knelt,
On God's own table spread ;
And thy soft wings—fond bird—still felt,
Like angel's round my head ;
Methought some dear lost friend was there,
Unseen that sacred feast to share.

XVII.

But lo ! soon as the Autumn sun
Had glared o'er each dim pane,
The little songster's strain was done,
He sought the world again.
Gazed on his fellows there and prest
Against the bars his throbbing breast.

XVIII.

Fit emblem thou of restless man,
Whose heart too closely clings,
With all the powers that nature can,
To earth and earthly things ;
And still, with love unquenched, must yearn
For lost ones who shall ne'er return.

XIX.

Thanks, warbler ! then, for thy sweet song,
Which sabbath-hours has blest,
For which I'd leave life's busy throng
To seek with thee my rest :
Content, if I could all resign
With breast as pure and calm as thine !

NOTES

TO "LINES ON A RED-BREAST."

¹ The sparrow hath found her a house, and the swallow a nest, where she may lay her young, &c. Ps. lxxxiv. v. 3.

² On the Dardanelles the passing of the little brown birds, called the *Halcyons voyageurs* or *âmes damnées*, is incessant ; they never rest or pause in their course, but seem to pick their food as they skim over the waters. Yacht Voyage, Lady Grosvenor.

XXIV.

'Tis thus that history's every page
 Still proves God's promise true ;
 " That he will keep from age to age,
 Unchanged, a faithful few ;
 To guard with fearless heart and hand,
 His church in some devoted land."

XXV.

And now, within this village fane
 He condescends to dwell ;
 He whom the heavens cannot contain.
 Nor worlds his wisdom tell ;
 Yet here, within this sacred wall,
 He deigns to hear and answer all.

XXVI.

But think not that this carving rare,
 Or velvet's purple dye,
 Can make this house of His more fair.
 More pleasing in His eye ;
 Who values more the contrite heart
 Than noblest work of human art.

XXVII.

Oh! 'tis a solemn thought, to dwell
On all who've come and gone,
Since first was heard this village bell—
First consecrate this stone ;
To think how many feet have trod,
With joyful hope, this house of God !

XXVIII.

So sweetly too the preacher brought
That lesson on the ear,
“ That he whose voice the Truth then taught,
And we who came to hear,
Shall soon have lived our little day,
Forgotten in our graves as they.

XXIX.

“ Oh ! think of all those parted friends
Whose bodies *here* repose,
Who found that joy which never ends,
Who ended here their woes ;
How oft, from yonder home of rest,
Their souls these Sabbath hours have blessed.

XXX.

“ Would parents wish to train the young
In wisdom’s narrow way ?
Oh ! teach your infants’ lisping tongue
In Jesus’ name to pray ;
And bid them seek His saving grace
In this, His chosen dwelling-place.

XXXI.

“ Thus may this little flock still hold
God’s love and truth most dear ;
Nor ears grow dull, nor hearts grow cold,
Of those that worship here ;
Nor ever of this house be said,
‘ The Spirit of the Lord is fled.’

XXXII.

“ That so, when o’er *our* narrow home
Is heaped the crumbling sod,
Our children’s children here may come,
And love this house of God ;
While incense sweet of prayer and praise
Shall rise through endless Sabbath days.”

XXXIII.

'Tis thus the Christian scans the past,
God's mercies to recall,
Assured that, long as time shall last,
His church shall never fall ;
Until, redeemed in heaven, he stands
In courts not reared by human hands.

NOTES

TO "ERPINGHAM CHURCH."

¹ Gen. iv. 4.

² Gen. iv. 15.

³ Eccles. i. 1.



THE STAR OF HOPE.

I.

WHEN first 'neath Eden's shady bough
Our father's footsteps trod,
All freshly graven on his brow
The image of his God—
How fair, how glorious must have been
That perfect man, that heavenly scene!

II.

With every unformed wish supplied,
With one his bliss to share;
With nought that he could ask denied,
To make him happy there;
While God looked down from heaven, and smiled
In mercy on that sinless child.

III.

Man's heart, alas ! the tempter saw,
And spread dark wiles within ;—
He dared to break God's holy law,
And learned too soon to sin ;
And death, that fatal price, is paid
By all whom Satan has betrayed.

IV.

For ever lost, those Eden-bowers,
Where once they loved to stray,
In commune sweet, at twilight hours !
Like visions passed away ;
For from that spot they're driven forth,
Outcasts to wander o'er the earth !

V.

Thus early changed the world appears !
Thus marred the Maker's plan !
Condemned to toil through endless years,
The curse of fallen man,
Who learnt that law in Paradise,
‘ The soul that sinneth surely dies.’”

VI.

And though each sinner must fulfil
That law's eternal doom,
A ray of light is cheering still
His pathway to the tomb ;
The promised Star of Hope shall come
To guide him to his Father's home.

VII.

'Twas this met Israel's fading eyes,
And gladdened with the sight ;
Thus Balaam saw this sceptre rise
From Baal's idol-height ;
And many a prophet hailed from far
A Saviour in that herald-star.

VIII.

And thus, through all the lapse of years,
Was not this star the same
Which taught by faith those Eastern seers
To seek Messiah's name,
And led them onwards, till it staid
Above the spot where He was laid ?

IX.

So, when on that eventful night
The promised Son was given,
How glorious was the blaze of light
Around the hosts of heaven,
Proclaiming peace and joy to them
Who kept their flocks at Bethlehem !

X.

More brightly still was He revealed
On Patmos' favored shore,
And to that martyr who first sealed
With blood the name he bore,
While meekly kneeling down to pray
For those who took his life away.

XI.

Thus stands fulfilled the scheme of love,
That with the world began
When God descended from above
To die for guilty man,
That all his sins might be forgiven—
The lost on earth be saved in heaven.



LINES,

SUGGESTED BY THE RE-OPENING OF ERPINGHAM
CHURCH, JANUARY 8, 1843.

I.

HOW sweet a thing it is to see,
On welcome sabbath days,
A Christian people bend the knee
In thankful prayer and praise ;
Oft as the church her children calls
To holy fasts, or festivals.

II.

But sweeter sounds that village bell ;
More welcome is the word,
When they who love its tones so well,
That sound have seldom heard ;
When heaven's bright sun once more can smile
Benignant on that crowded aisle.

III.

Thus, when I sat on yonder seat ;
The sacred threshold trod,
Saw old and young delighted meet
Within the house of God ;
A stranger, yet I seemed to share
The joy that filled each bosom there.

IV.

'Twas then that I my present task
First felt a wish to try,
To catch the swelling thoughts that passed
Before my mental eye ;
Ere time the image could efface
Of that blessed hour, that holy place.

V.

Methought that generations gone,
In swift succession came ;
Long ere our infant church had won
A being, or a name ;
Back to the hour when sinless man
In Eden his first prayer began.

VI.

For when self-exiled from those bowers,
“ He by transgression fell,”
There still remained in darkest hours,
Of that lost land to tell,
One hallowed spot, one chosen place,¹
Where he might seek his Maker's face.

VII.

Alas! 'twas by that altar's side,
Where none but brothers stood,
That one, a guilty fratricide,
First stained his hands in blood ;
Then from God's *presence* wildly fled,²
With murder's curse upon his head.

VIII.

And when the children of the earth
Had gone so far astray,
That God's unsparing flood of wrath
Swept all that breathed away ;
There still remained a living spark
Of love unquenched within the ark.

IX.

Nor was His promise then forgot,
When those dark floods passed o'er,
That there should be one chosen spot,
Where man might pray once more ;
High over Noah's altar-stone,
The rainbow of his *presence* shone.

X.

The trees, that from the ebbing flood
Had sprung, were scarcely old,
When, like the perished giant-brood,
The sons of earth grew bold,
Building a Tower on Shinar's plain
With impious hands and labour vain.

XI.

And thence, as o'er the earth they spread,
The eye of faith grew dim ;
Its fire waxed low, its spirit fled,
'Till it revived in him,
The patriarch sire to Canaan sent,
God's own appointed instrument.

XII.

And when to Jacob, travel-worn,
The Lord in dreams appeared,
His pious hands at early morn,
Fair Bethel's altar reared ;
That He might never be forgot,
Whose *presence* blest that hallowed spot.

XIII.

When Israel's sons, a nation now,
From Egypt's bondage came,
The Holy One from Sinai's brow
Once more revealed his name ;
In fire by night, in cloud by day,
Guiding the wanderers on their way.

XIV.

Again, when that unthankful race
Had found their promised rest ;
And Shiloh was the chosen place,
By God's Shekinah blessed ;
'Thither He came once more to tell
His will to infant Samuel.

XV.

Again, when that first temple sprung,
So wondrous was its birth ;
Far more than Dian's fane was sung
Its praise throughout the earth ;
More fair a form, more perfect plan,
Than ought devised by mortal man.

XVI.

Oh ! who within that temple knelt,
And heard " the preacher's " ³ prayer ;
But in that solemn season felt
Jehovah's *presence* there ;
As from its golden courts did rise
The assembled nation's sacrifice.

XVII.

The prayer had ceased, from that vast crowd
No murmur met the ear ;
Such glory filled the burning cloud,
That none dared venture near,
While gleamed on high the sacred fire
That never should on earth expire.

XVIII.

And when that fire was well nigh lost
In Baal's feasts of blood,
And midst that unbelieving host
Alone the prophet stood ;
God's *presence* on his altar fell,
To warn his people Israel.

XIX.

So, when Chaldæa's "impious king"
Swept Judah's pleasant land,
And touched her temple's sacred things
With sacrilegious hand ;
On Bel's proud walls a hand of flame
Did God's high *presence* there proclaim.

XX.

Again, when for Judæa's sin
Her temple was o'erthrown ;
And none were left those courts within
Whom God could call his own ;
His Son, so long foretold, was born
A nobler temple to adorn.

XXI.

Thus when His cross the price had paid,
Which brings the soul to heaven :
And that dear Saviour's promised aid
To the infant church was given ;
His spirit to that temple came
In cloven tongues of living flame.

XXII.

And when the Christian faith had spread
O'er Rome's imperial world,
And distant tribes were gathered
Beneath her flag unfurled ;
The cross became the "conquering sign,"
Which led the Hosts of Constantine.

XXIII.

In later years, when His pure faith
Had sunk in long repose,
To save those sleeping souls from death
Another prophet rose,
Bursting the slumber and the chain
Of Fraud and Error's ancient reign.

XII.

What though that herald-star be set,
And Eden lost to view,
Faith sees Him watching o'er us yet,
And knows his promise true,
“ That those who love Him here, shall rise
To live with Him in Paradise.”





LINES FOR MUSIC.

WRITTEN FOR A PIC-NIC PARTY TO A SPOT CALLED
“LADY'S BOWER,” ON THE RIVER BURE,
NORFOLK. AUG. 1840.

I.

HOW sweetly smiles the summer morn !
The breeze is light—the bark is sure ;
And precious is the burthen borne
Along the bonnie banks of Bure.

II.

Let others bask in southern skies,
Or gaze upon the castled Rhine ;
We ask not fairer, brighter eyes
Than those that now around us shine.

III.

May all that dwell on foreign shores
Be blest with hearts as kind and pure
As these fair friends, whose bark is moored
Beside the bonnie banks of Bure !

IV.

A warmer welcome I would sing,
Had I that minstrel's magic power,
Who loved, in days gone by, to bring
Soft music to this "Ladies Bower."

V.

Nor are your charms than hers less bright,
Less witching at the evening hour,
To him, your own devoted knight,
Now resting in his "Lady's bower."

VI.

Dear ladies ! thus our thanks we pay,
And drink a health to you and yours,
In memory of the pleasant day
We passed upon the banks of Bure !



FAREWELL, CAMPANIA.



The following poem was written during a residence in Italy, and chiefly towards the close of a most delightful summer and autumn, passed at Sorrento, and on the shores of the bay of Naples. Its only recommendation consists in its being a faithful representation of the scenery, both natural and artificial, constantly before my eyes, which was thus recorded while the impressions made by it were fresh and unfaded. The few remarks I have ventured to make on the present political and religious state of the Neapolitan dominions and Italy generally are written, I trust, in no unkind or unchristian spirit; the conclusions I have drawn may be erroneous, but the reflections are such as are naturally suggested to every thinking mind. There are a few stanzas to the memory of a dear friend, my companion in Italy, since dead; and the concluding stanzas were written on my return to England in 1837.



FAREWELL, CAMPANIA !

I.

FAREWELL, Campania! to thy shore,
Where I have lingered till the last
Bright sun is set, and all is o'er,
Save the remembrance of the past,
Which I would treasure, lest too fast
These feelings fade, like yonder beam
Of sunlight o'er that valley cast,¹
From whose delightful groves and shadowy
stream,
Where once I strayed, I would these passing
thoughts redeem.

II.

Oh ! well may they whose lot has been
Ordained in colder climes to dwell,
Enjoyment find in this glad scene,
Where sunshine is perpetual !
Where Nature lures us with a spell
So soft and winning, that the mind,
Awhile released, can scarcely quell
A wish to spread its wings before the wind,
And range the world at will, unwearied, uncon-
fined.

III.

Come, stand with me upon the height
Of fair Airòla,² thence to view
The glories of approaching night,
Blending each tint of lighter hue
With distant ocean's deeper blue ;
While darkly heaves the wave below ;
And Ischia's peaks are gleaming through
The far horizon, steeped in that bright glow,
Which none but southern climes and southern
sunsets show.

IV.

Can skies and seas and shores combine,
Through all the worlds that suns survey,
To make a region more divine?
And shall not traveller love to stray
Where tenfold raptures still repay
His weary toils,—where Nature's kiss
Of beauty dimples o'er that bay,
Which mirrors back such matchless forms as this.
Thy lofty wave-encircled throne, Neapolis!

V.

How brightly glow yon burnished skies!
As if ten thousand hosts of air
Blended their several sacrifice;
Slow sinks the orb in glory there,
Descending to his ocean-lair;
While his contracting circle throws
A farewell glance of gladness, ere
The waves divide and quench his burning brow.
The waters o'er him close—the heavens are sunless
now.³

VI.

Thus glorious was the day-god, where
The untutored heathen turned to bow,
And bless his brightness ;—and the prayer,
Though erring, doth the impulse show
Of minds untaught, which yearned to know
Some promised land, beyond the sea,
Where fancy dreamt that sun should glow
In whose unfailing light they learnt to see
Earth's only perfect emblem of eternity !

VII.

How oft, at these calm hours of even,
We watched the twilight stealing on,
While through the darkening dome of heaven
The stars came glimmering, one by one,
To see if gaudy day were gone ;
And half avowed, and half re-pret
A wish, from selfish feelings won,
That we might find our peaceful home of rest
Beneath these balmy skies, where life is ever
blest.

VIII.

But, though Sorrento's sunny shore
Teem with the olive, corn, and vine,
Till Nature scarce could lavish more
In bounty to this genial clime ;
To us 'twould be an empty shrine,
Without those many dearer ties
Affection only knows to twine ;
For how can strangers feel or sympathize
In blessings we neglect—in friends we sacrifice ?

IX.

Well may Italia's cloudless skies
To us so blue and balmy seem !
Her garden-groves a paradise !
Her waves a sleep—her land a dream !
But shall regret ne'er intervene—
Obscure those scenes—their beauty mar—
Point where our former joys have been—
Our sphere appointed in that home afar,
Where all our hopes should be, as all our duties
are,⁴

X.

Awhile forgotten, midst that dream
Of wild excitement, and the throng
Of idlers on life's busy stream,
Whose homeward barks have strayed too long.
Lulled by temptation's siren-song,
Which woos the weary to recline
At listless ease, or stroll along
Those shady vales, whose fragrant myrtles twine
In waving clusters o'er the loftier Apennine ?

XI.

But can we, unconcerned, have trod
Amalfi's heights and Capri's isle,
Nor ever turned from these to God,
Who bade this fair creation smile
For one so thoughtless and so vile ?
Shame to the man who can forget
The Hand which blessed his being, while
Each hour augments the unrequited debt
Of gratitude which flows for thankless mortals yet !

XII.

Yet how shalt thou, ungrateful man,
Abuse the gifts by Mercy given ;
Unpunished, mar thy Maker's plan,
And 'scape the righteous wrath of Heaven ?
Behold it, in those passions driven
To mad excess ; behold thy race
Despised, degraded, unforgiven—
Whose ignorance and folly quite efface
The light which once was shed around thy dwell-
ing-place,

XIII.

But now, alas ! obscured and dim,
Lest thoughts forbidden should engage
The awakened consciousness of him,
Who turns to read the darker page
Of his benighted pilgrimage,
In climes “ where all but man is free ;”
And weeps to think how many an age
Must pass away ere he shall cease to be
The slave of priestly power—of blind idolatry !

XIV.

'Tis thus religion, pure when first
Implanted in the anxious breast,
By man corrupted, hath but cursed
The creature whom it might have blessed ;
Else were those graver crimes repressed
Which still disgrace, and must destroy
The unconscious soul, compelled to rest
On crafty creeds, delusion's gilded toy—
Deceit its only trust, repose its only joy !

XV.

Misguided mortals ! ye must err
Who cling to hopes as vain as these ;
Build up an empty sepulchre ;
From broken cisterns drain the lees,
The leaven of your Pharisees ;
So darkly wise, so deeply blind,
To lull a purchased soul to ease,
And drop the veil, lest Truth should chance to
find
That all so fair to view is guilt and death behind.

XVI.

Deluded man! who bade thee dwell
In desert, cave, or mountain-height?
The day's long task thy beads to tell,
Or watch the weary stars of night,
A misanthropic Eremite?
Alas! that lifeless forms should gain
The self-tormenting proselyte,
Who fondly thinks that penance can obtain
The martyr's holy crown, which others seek in
vain!

XVII.

Say, is not this the fearful time,
So long foretold, when the blest tie
Of marriage is condemned as crime;
When priests can screen from human eye
Their deeds of dark iniquity?
When none dare tell the secret wile
Which tempts to sin; when traitors ply
Each guilty lust, each passion, to beguile
The unsuspecting soul which heeds their hollow
smile?

XVIII.

Oh ! why were voice and utterance given
To man, if thus forbade to tell
His wants on earth, his thanks to Heaven ?
Deem you yon tinkling silver bell
Makes silence more acceptable ?
Alas ! that fraud should blind the sight
With superstitious miracle ;
Obscure the Word, lest man should read aright,
Then hold its taper up, and call the darkness light !

XIX.

For freedom is an empty sound,
And reason's voice is raised in vain,
Where every thought and wish are bound
(The hope of bliss—the fear of pain)
Beneath the bigot's galling chain,
Too firmly fettered on the soul
For it to burst its bonds again,
Or dare to spurn the thralldom and control
Of tyrants' wild caprice, or priesthood's purple
stole !

XX.

Parthenope ! Thy city lies,
A gem set in a golden ring,
A nest within a paradise ;
Where stranger-birds may rest their wing,
And pause amid their wandering
To gaze the hours away, and bask
Beneath thy sun, whose bright rays bring,
Without laborious toil or weary task,
The food that Nature needs, and more than man
can ask !

XXI.

I deemed at first that life must be
Contented here ; till wandering through
Those homes of want and misery,
(Which told, alas ! that all untrue
The picture playful Fancy drew
Of southern climes, which should recall
Utopian dreams,) I wept to view
This second Eden withered by the fall
Of those unworthy men, whose guilt had marr'd
it all.

XXII.

Resounds the ceaseless buzz of life,
As of a camp, within those walls ;
The merry song—the sudden strife,
And laughter louder far than all,
Whene'er shrill Pulcinello calls
His crowd of idle gazers forth,
Or the Acquaiuolo's gilded stall
Gathers the restless murmurs, and the mirth
Like hum of summer bees, just bursting into
birth.

XXIII.

Oft have we watched the countless throng
Intent on business, pleasure, gain ;
The priests that slowly wind along,
With gaudy idols in their train ;
Or listened to the stirring strain
Of wild Rinaldo, on the shore
Of Mergellin, and turned again
By yonder chapel, with its sacred store
Of charms, that saints have blest and sinners still
adore.

XXIV.

'Tis in this varied, changing scene—
The shrine, the mart, the crowded space,
Where bloody tumults oft have been,
And still may be,—we learn to trace
The feelings, passions of a race
Too thoughtless, idle, wild, and gay
That time should e'er their faults efface ;
Their life one long continued holiday,
Their years in pleasure passed, their last hours
left to pray !

XXV.

Those beggars basking in the sun,
A famished crew, unwashed, undressed,
Too plainly tell what vice has done
In climes that woo to slothful rest :
Behold it in you guilty nest
Of hardened crime, that scorns to own
One softer feeling in the breast ;
Whence murder marks its prey, and fierce eyes
glare
Round Itri's dreary pass—the bandit's mountain
lair !

XXVI.

Yet well mayst thou, sad child of woe,
(Whom all despise and none console,)
Curse the stern hand that made thee so,
And now strives weakly to control
Each impulse of thy generous soul,
Which, roused to hope, would soon redeem
Its former prowess, in that goal
Thy fathers won, whose free-born spirits seem
To breathe volcanic air, and quaff the lava stream.

XXVII.

Shall we, who in those sunny climes
So long have lingered, fail to find
That warning which a nation's crimes
Should stamp upon the observer's mind,
Which must be thoughtless, wilful, blind,
To trace not an Almighty hand
In "lying wonders" which mankind
Believe, and trembling kiss the priestly wand
That blights, like Moses' rod, Italia's fruitful
land?

XXVIII.

Yet while we pity, pardon them
Over whose minds Delusion throws
Its deadly thrall, we must condemn
Their false advisers, secret foes
Of Reason's light, who dare to close
That sacred Book, which sanctifies
The humble Christian's joys and woes ;
Who dare destroy with superstitious lies
The sinner's only hope—a Saviour's sacrifice !

XXIX.

'Twas thus those Eastern churches fell
From their high state, and blindly lost
The faith their fathers kept so well.
Say, is there now one martyr's cross
At Antioch or at Pergamos ?
Can Sardis boast one crumbling sod
To mark where once her temple was ?
O'er which the Moslem hosts have madly trod,
And Pagan hands profaned the altars of our God !

XXX.

'Tis sad to trace, in crimes, the cause
Of their decline, who knew His will,
Yet, knowing, have despised His laws.
Are not those outcast nations still
A bye-word and a miracle,
With scarce a country or a home ?
Does not each passing hour fulfil
The threatened curse of pestilence and gloom
Which blights the broad Campagna—the garden
once of Rome ?

XXXI.

'Tis Nature's death ! more sad, more drear
Than when November's wintry screen
Has wrapt in clouds the closing year ;
That listless apathy, thus seen
To numb thy soul, deserted queen
Of nations ! in thy fall revealing
How great thy former power has been ;
How lovely still, although decay is stealing
O'er that imperial throne where conquerors once
were kneeling.

XXXII.

'Twas when thy church, once pure and chaste,
 Had long been sunk in the repose
 Of self-indulgence, and debased
 By foul corruptions, Luther rose,
 With noblest daring to oppose
 Thy fatal errors, and stood forth
 To warn the wicked of the woes
 Denounced against those idol-lusts, whose birth
 Had curst thy sons with crime,—with barrenness
 the earth.

XXXIII.

When Israel sinned, their prophet prayed
 Between the hosts as death began ;
 The prayer was heard—the plague was stayed :
 So midst a sinful church that man
 Undaunted stood ; he braved the ban
 Of priestly curse ; alone defied
 The thunders of the Vatican ;
 The first to stem corruption's downward tide—
 Champion of holiest Truth for which he lived and
 died.⁵

XXXIV.

Next Albion caught the fire that fell
From the high altar ; fanned the flame
Of energy unquenchable :
Oh ! may her children ever claim
That proudest birthright of their name,
Whose warlike voice once only hurled
Its thunder forth ;—for nobler aim
Than conquest now her sails shall be unfurled,
To bear the words of peace through a benighted
world !

XXXV.

Oh ! may the erring heathen hail
Those who are conquerors but to win
A world from death ; who lift the veil
Of moral darkness, and let in
The blaze of gospel light within
The awakened soul ; who burst the ties
Of Satan's slaves ; cast all their sin
On their Redeemer's blood, and bid them rise
Triumphant to their Father's mansion in the skies.

XXXVI.

On these fair shores may still be found
 A remnant willing to maintain
 Inviolate that faith which crown'd
 With holy confidence the train
 Of martyred saints; which lulled the pain
 Of parting life; forbade to fear
 Stern persecution's iron chain;
 Foretold how freedom on their graves should
 rear
 A church which tongues unknown should cherish
 and revere!

XXXVII.

But whither doth my fancy stray?
 That dream is past, those joys are gone;
 No more I watch, at close of day,
 From loved Sorrento, the bright sun
 In glory sink, his journey run;
 The silvery moon behold no more
 Dance o'er those waves, as I have done,
 Nor seek at sultry noon the shady shore,
 Where every step invites to wonder, love, adore;

XXXVIII.

Where I have lingered long, and spent
Delightful hours, yet are not all
Unclouded as that firmament ;
For much is left there to recal
Regret for thy untimely fall,
Dear friend ! with whom I wandered on
Salerno's strand, and trod the wall
Of ancient Rome ; whom I much loved, as one
Of kindred soul to mine,—almost a father's son.

XXXIX.

How little did thy spirits seem
To warn us that the blow was near ;
When death's dark hand dispelled the dream
Of friendship I had formed to cheer
The course of many a future year,
(This dreary moment unforeseen ;)
For little thought I that the tear
I've shed for thee should thus obscure the scene
Where all our lightest hours, our last adieus have
been.

XL.

There too I saw thee, youthful bride !
(Alas ! a widowed mother now)
Reclining by thy husband's side :
Hast thou, dear mourner, learnt to know
The hand of Mercy, in that blow
Which crushed thy hopes, yet deigned to spare
The babe which blest thy marriage-vow ;
A love-pledge left to guide thy spirit where
Is hushed the orphan's cry, is heard the widow's
prayer !

XLI.

Oh ! if fond thoughts of earth engage
Those beings now in happiness,
Reposing from life's pilgrimage,—
Thy lost one will return to bless
A widow in her loneliness ;
Will yearn to call thee his once more,
And to his faithful bosom press
Thy head, which has reposed there oft before,
Where love is perfect now, all sin and sorrow o'er.

XLII.

Still there is one that seems to claim
Remembrance here, whom idlesse brought
To that far land, to seek the same
Pursuits and pleasures that I sought ;
Whose ardent soul was fully fraught
With taste and feeling, and that true
Delight for Nature's works, which taught
His hand to trace, and others eyes to view,
Creation's wondrous world in forms and colours
new.

XLIII.

None but congenial souls can share
The rapture which true poets find,
In all that wins our worship there ;
Which were untold and undefined,
(Though stern Salvator's master-mind
With hand obedient to his will,
Had there his richest tones combined)
Unless the sister-art her poet's breast could fill
With those undying thoughts which mock the
painter's skill.

XLIV.

For where is he whose pencil gave,
Or e'er shall give, the ruddy glow
As morning wakes on Capri's wave,
When the first streaks of sunlight throw
Dim shadows o'er the world below?
The glorious vision, which we viewed
From thy bold peak, St. Angelo!
By that lone shrine where we together stood,
In silence gazing o'er the mountain solitude.⁶

XLV.

'Twas whilst we rested on the sod
By that rude temple's lofty stone,
We turned to worship nature's God,
In this most fair creation shown;
So vast the scene, so wild, so lone,
Man's might seemed feeble as the worm's
That fluttered round that mountain-throne,
Where, dimly ranged, the beech trees' giant forms
Flung their seared arms abroad, and battled with
the storms.⁷

XLVI.

Blest hour! for ever unforgot!
Pale silvery moon and twilight grey!
Ye hallow still that lovely spot,
Which, while the vale in slumber lay,
Caught the first beam of early day;
Though now no more our light steps climb
The cliff that parts each sister-bay,
Our thoughts oft turn to that sweet summer time,
The pleasant months we passed in bright Cam-
pania's clime.⁸

XLVII.

For think not, now that home is won,
The sunset hour, the moonlit scene,
So soon forgotten,—though not one
Again shall be as it hath been,—
When sober years shall intervene
To quench the restless element
Of youthful energy; to wean
The soul from those delusive dreams which lent
A lovelier lustre once to that fair firmament!

XLVIII.

Though pleasure woos us softly yet
To orange grove and vine-clad hill,
Shall we those past delights regret?
'Twere well perhaps, could we fulfil
Our duty there—our Maker's will;
Or find a lasting happiness,
Where we must be but strangers still;
The rose may bloom ungathered, nor may bless
The weary wanderers in a foreign wilderness.

XLIX.

For when long years have passed, and age
Has left no friend, no kindred-ties
To cheer our lonely pilgrimage,
How sad will seem the sacrifice!
How false that fancied paradise
Of joys, which we had deemed unknown,
Unless beneath Italian skies,
Whose sun may smile above us as we roam,
Yet fail to warm a heart which sighs again for
home!

L.

So well remembered still, with all
Its lost endearments, oft as Time
May childhood's early scenes recall ;
The village church, the bells' soft chime,
The seat beneath the ancient lime ;
All these would make the heart feel lone,
To think our children ne'er shall climb,
Or prattle round the solitary stone
Which stranger-hands shall lay on our forgotten
bones !

LI.

Oh ! sigh not then to tread again
Those scenes, so lately left behind ;
Nor wrestle with the gentle chain
By which affection loves to bind
The lighter passions of the mind ;
For much to comfort and to cheer,
In home's domestic joys thou'lt find,
As children's sweet attractions, year by year,
Draw closer each new tie, and make that home
more dear.

LII.

To thee, dear partner of the past,
I would inscribe this rambling theme,
To thee, so fondly loved, though last
Remembered here, it will not seem
A wild or unconnected dream ;
This lay, which well employed my hours
When, lingering by some sunny stream,
I twined for thee, from those Italian flowers,
A poet's wreath, to deck this happy home of ours.

LIII.

What though these flowers bloom here no more,
Though empty seem, as wave-worn shell,
The thoughts I've culled on that far shore
Yet thou the intrinsic worth canst tell
Of this most simple chronicle ;
Which, if it has recalled but one
Of scenes to which we've bid farewell,
A record still shall be of pleasures gone,
“ Like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is
done.”

NOTES

TO "FAREWELL, CAMPANIA."

¹ I can never forget the brilliant glow of sunset which lit up the valley of Sorrento the last evening we passed there; perhaps it was not more lovely or more brilliant than many which we had seen from thence, where all were so beautiful and indescribable, but it appeared so to us, as connected with a scene on which we looked for the last time, where we had spent so many happy days, on which we must always look back with pleasure and regret, and which can never be effaced from the mind's eye.

² Airóla is a small village on the ascent to St. Angelo, looking down on the plain of Sorrento, and commanding a fine view of the Bay of Naples and the opposite coast, with Procida and Ischia in the distance, behind which we used so often to watch the sun setting in the Mediterranean, bringing out their picturesque outline darkly against the golden sky.

³ A sunset in the Mediterranean is one of those beauties of nature which no pen can adequately describe, nor pencil delineate. A fine autumn evening in England sometimes approaches it; but those only who have resided in Italy can form any idea of its glory and magnificence.

⁴ Since writing the above, I have met with some beautiful lines by Trench, in which a similar idea is expressed:—

“ They are but selfish visions at the best,
Which tempt us to desire that we were free
From the dear ties that bind us unto Thee,

That so we might take up our lasting rest
 Where some delightful spot, some hidden nest,
 In brighter lands has pleased our phantasy," &c.

⁵ "And Aaron ran into the midst of the congregation, and behold the plague was begun: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people; and he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed." Numbers xvi. 47, 48.

⁶ The view at sunrise from the summit of St. Angelo is one of those things which can neither be conceived nor described; no words of mine can do it justice; once seen, it can never be forgotten. There is a small deserted chapel on the highest point, which tradition says was built by the Devil, after being conquered by St. Michael on this spot, which gave the mountain its name.

⁷ By the "fluttering worms," I here mean the *luciole*, (fire-flies or glow-worms,) which are so abundant in Italy, and which add so much to the beauty of the ascent at night; while the brilliant moon, shining on the white and cragged stems of the magnificent beech trees near the summit, reminded us of Salvator's pictures; and from hence, indeed, he is said to have taken his finest studies.

⁸ "The cliff that parts each sister-bay."

The plain of Sorrento, with the high ridge behind it, extending to the bold headland opposite Capri, forms the promontory, of which Monte St. Angelo is the base and the highest point, which divides the two bays of Naples and Salerno; and there is perhaps no part of the world where the traveller may in the same space enjoy such varied and picturesque scenery as in the short excursion from Castell a Mare, by Vico Sorrento and Meta, including the magnificent island of Capri, by the coast of Amalfi to Salerno.

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