

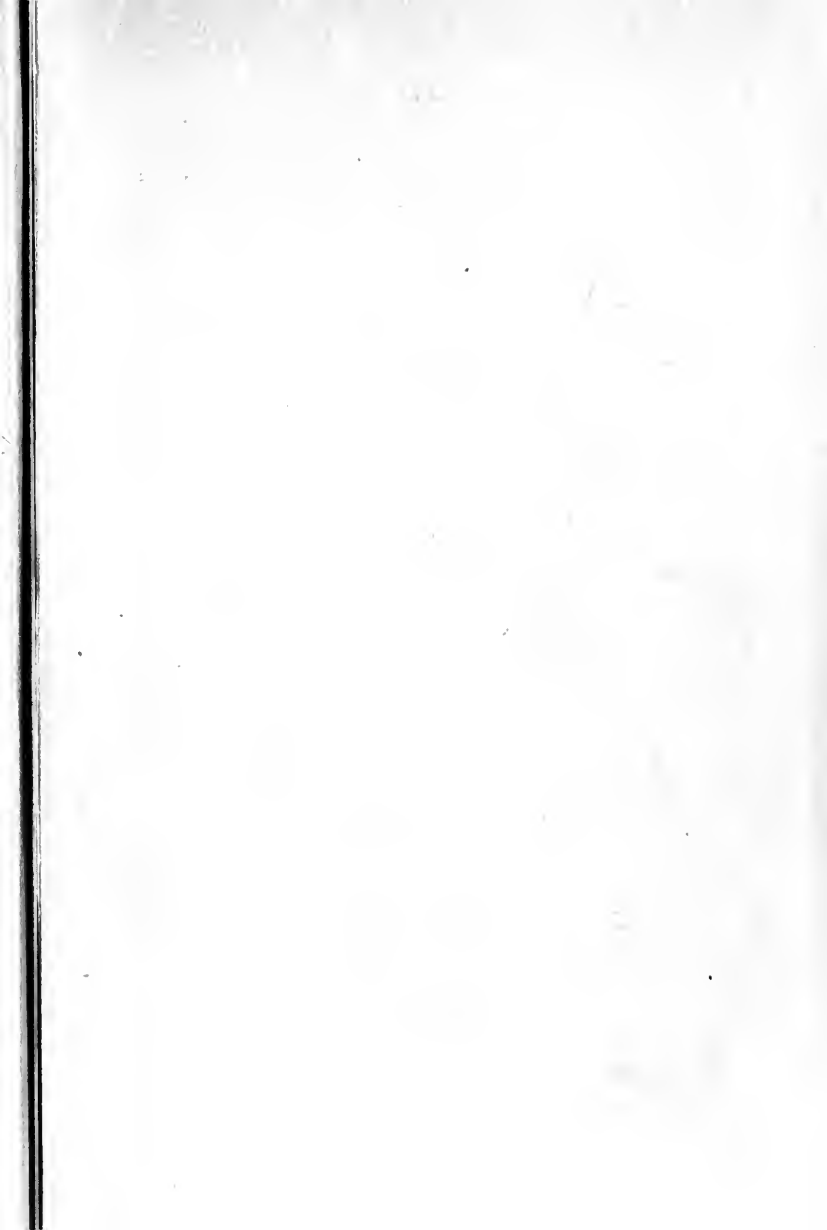


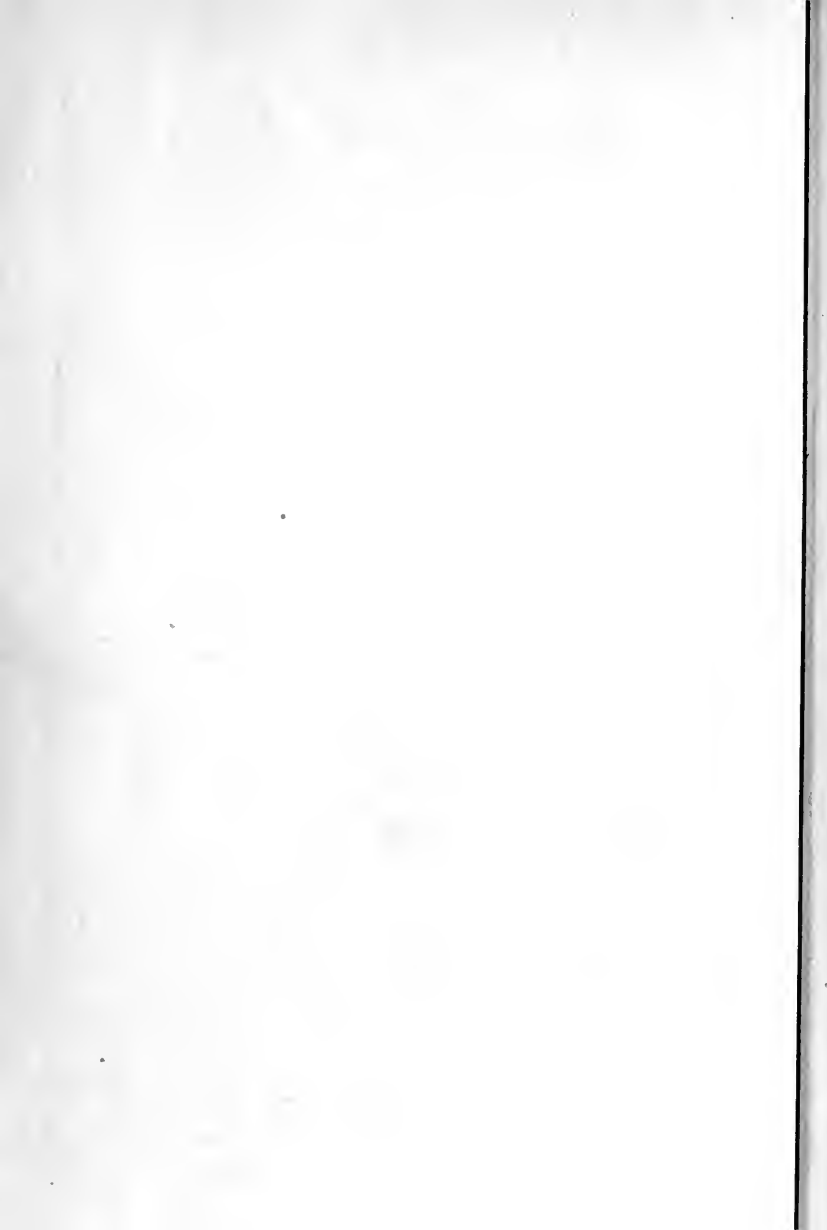
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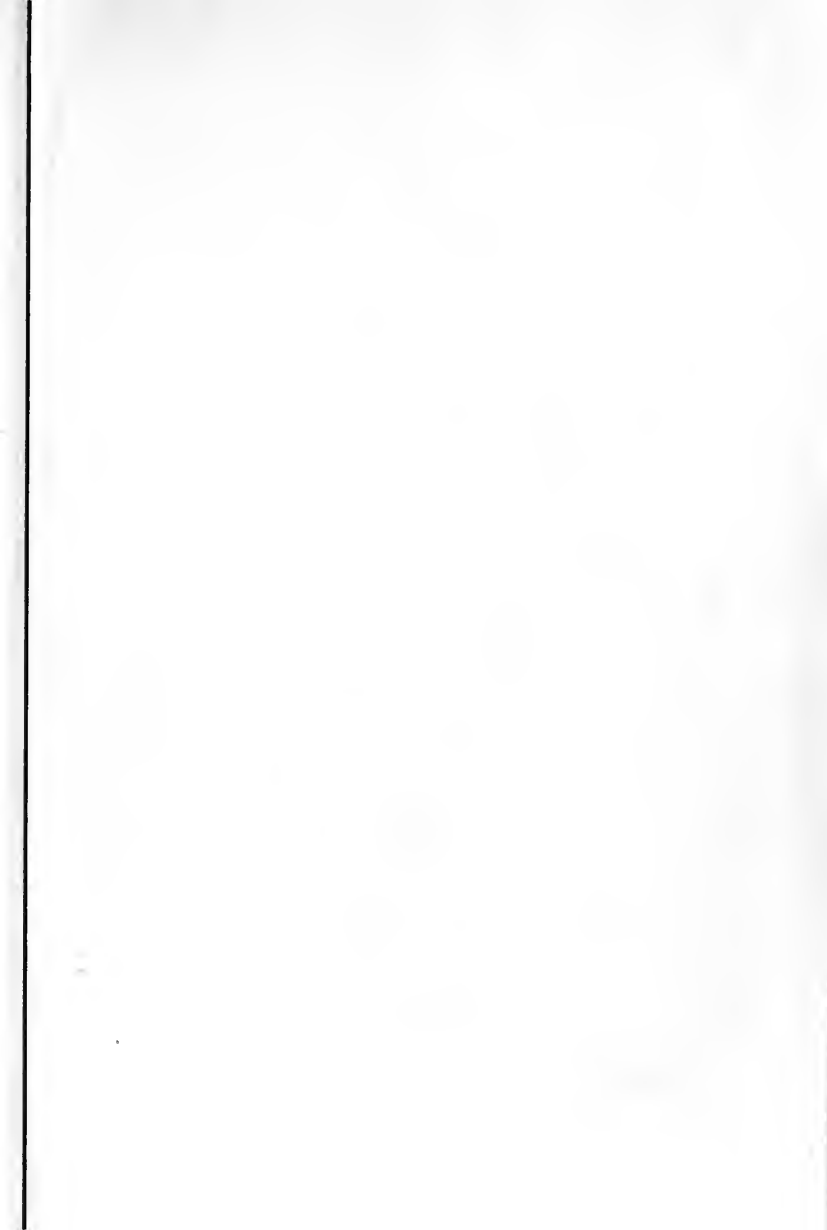
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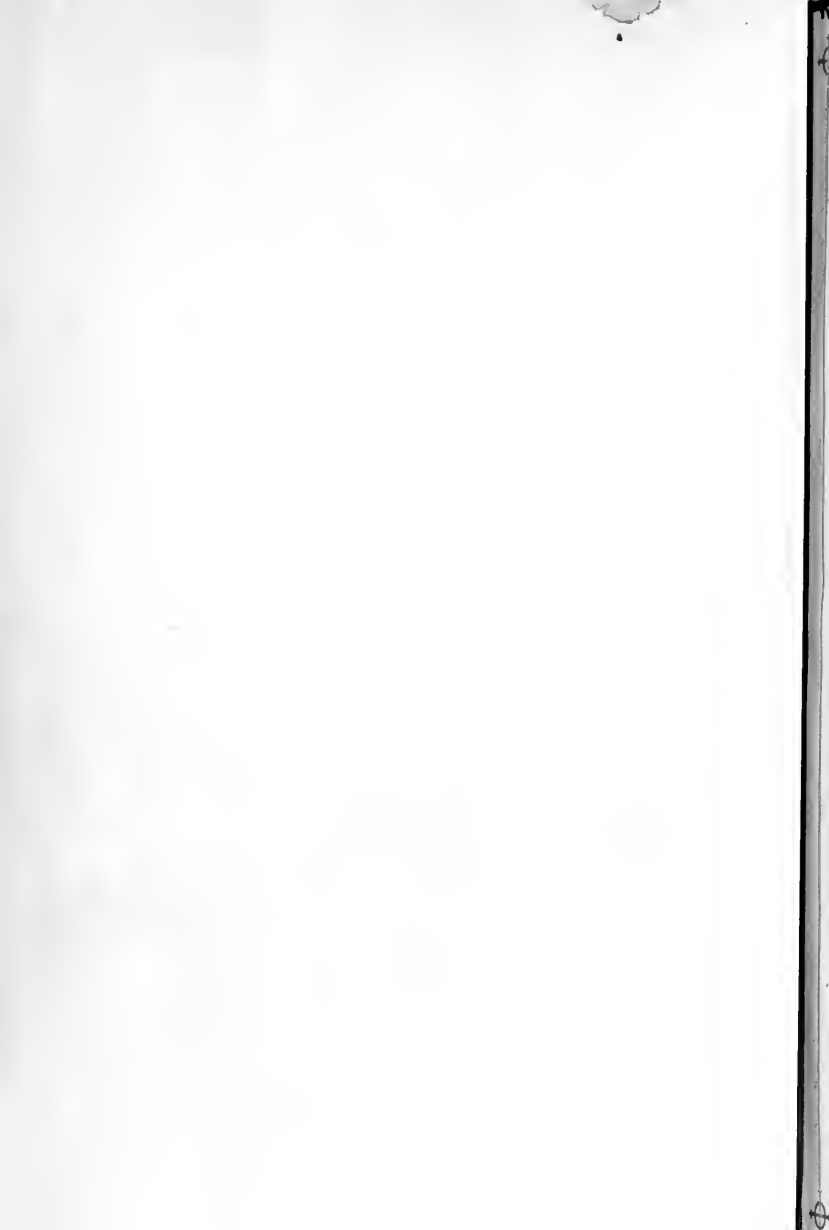


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THE
 POETICAL WORKS
 OF
 WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

“The child of Fancy oft in silence broods
 O'er the mixt treasures of his pregnant breast
 With conscious pride. From these he oft resolves
 To frame he knows not what excelling things,
 And win he knows not what sublime reward
 Of praise and wonder.”

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY BIRKET FOSTER

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PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

NEVER were the predictions of a prophet more fully verified than the anticipations of ultimate fame entertained by William Wordsworth. Through half a century he bravely and perseveringly contended against the bitter animadversions of the most highly esteemed critic of the age and the chilling neglect of the public; trusting to the genius which inspired him, and confiding in the certain triumph of the truthful and the beautiful;—never did the lamp even flicker, but burnt steadily, brightly, intensely on. Whilst living, he had little more than the gratification of seeing his works appreciated by the discerning few; but, with the never-failing power of that which is really good, the circle is now so far extended that he has a hundred readers where, five-and-twenty years ago, he had one.

In compliance with this vastly increased demand, we put forth a cheap edition of his Poetry, availing ourselves of every piece which expired copyright places within our reach.

FARRINGTON STREET,
April, 1858.



THE LIFE OF WORDSWORTH.

WHY should the life of a poet be written? May it not be said as Atterbury asserted, when it was decided by the assembled wits to place the best epitaph upon a tomb that ever was chiselled,—“‘Dryden’ is enough; they who know his works want no more, they who do not know them would not be enlightened by the most eloquent eulogy?” May it not be observed, I say, that in the poetry posterity will have all it will desire to know of the Poet? In a great measure it is so; but still there is a praiseworthy curiosity to learn how “he lived, and moved, and had his being,” who has so greatly contributed to our pleasure and instruction. The battles of the Hero may be compared to the poems of the Poet; we are anxious to follow the former to his hearth-stone, and see how he looked in his *robe de chambre*, among the ties that bind common men; why then should we not have the same feeling towards the Poet? His poems may become as famous as the battles, and exercise as much influence over his race. Where would the memory of the heroes of the Iliad now be without the songs of Homer?

Lord Byron, in one of his letters to Moore, says, “I cannot get people to understand that poetry is the expression of *excited* passion; and that there is no such thing as a life of passion any more than of a continuous earthquake or an eternal fire;” which would imply, that a life could not be all poetry. To this opinion his lordship’s own life was a partial contradiction, and that of Wordsworth a complete one. Poetry was the very “essence of his being;” in it he lived and breathed. Like the philosopher in “Rasselas,” he thought that “nothing could be useless to the poet. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little.” From the great and beautiful objects of nature, the mighty ocean, the glorious rising and setting sun, the imposing mountain, the cataract or gently-gliding stream, the sweet flower, even to the meanest utensil or tool, the pail or spade, nothing with him was void of poetry: he was “of imagination all compact;” and as Shakespeare’s banished duke found “good in everything,” so did

Wordsworth's poetic mind find that for which his spirit always thirsted, in objects which to others would seem prosaic and barren: he wrote as he lived, he lived as he wrote.

This life, then, was the "passion" which Byron falsely pronounced to be impossible to be continuous, as Wordsworth proved himself, when he says:

"The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms were then to me
 An appetite, a feeling, and a love."

But, in addition to this, Wordsworth's was a metaphysical as well as an imaginative mind, and the two faculties worked constantly together. He says he "employed them upon the worthiest objects,—the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of man, the natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance."

With most of us poetry is a luxury, to be indulged in occasionally only, for fear of being cloyed; but with Wordsworth it was common food, the very "daily bread" he prayed for. Throughout life he directed all his views, all his energies, to this one object, more persistently, more continuously, than even the most ambitious have pursued wealth and honours. He always contrived to reside in romantic spots, rich in the beauties of nature; he made tours in all directions to store his mind with imagery, travelling (as Rousseau tells us all should who wish to observe or learn) on foot; he formed friendships only with men of the same tone of mind, and was happy to meet in Coleridge, Lamb, and, in a degree, in Southey, with responding sympathies. But his sister was, undoubtedly, the star of his destiny. She was not only the blood relation, she was even more than a kindred spirit,—she was an inspiring influence. I will even venture to say that to her he owes most of the elevation and depth of his poetry: his own genius might have confined him to the metaphysical, to the poetry of the pretty, the little, the odd; it was hers that raised it to the deeply-feeling, the beautiful, and the sublime. His poems may be said to be the emanations of two minds more completely than any other union of the kind in the history of literature. Let the reader only peruse a few of Miss Wordsworth's letters, or portions of her diaries, and then judge if I am not right. For a man of Wordsworth's temperament, it is almost impossible to limit the influence of such an association. An object of respect and warm affection, always with him, talking with him, reading with him, making pedestrian tours with him, in

search of common objects, exchanging every thought with him, communicating every idea; and add to this the charm of her being a woman, whose delicacy throws a glowing but a refining tint over everything, and, in her case, without the intervention of passion—let us, I say, reflect upon this, and we must be convinced that Dora Wordsworth was to her brother William a benign genius, a guiding angel. She was never married; and though occasionally absent from him in early life, he, as he expressed it, was restored to his “sole sister” in 1794, and they after that never parted till death forced them asunder. Even when married, and happily married, his sister is his *companion*, it appears to us, more than his wife. He did not effect anything of consequence before this union took place, and, after that, his muse was never idle: it is almost impossible to conceive a man so constantly occupied in writing poetry. The most common occurrence, the most apparently insignificant meeting with person or thing, the flattest every-day-life incident,—all served as subjects for poetry. To minds tuned up to the full bent, this may have been delicious fairy life, but we greatly fear that to men and women of the working-day world it would soon become intolerable. This sort of abstraction, or concentration rather of powers to one object, produced its natural consequence of egotism. Out of his own peculiar clique, Wordsworth undervalued the talents of others, and certainly, however we may admire him, and however satisfied we may be that his reputation is becoming daily greater, we cannot escape the conviction that his genius and its productions will never stand so high in the estimation of any one as they did in his own. It was a favourite idea with himself and Coleridge, to draw comparisons between him and Milton; whereas, with the exception of Milton’s sonnets, it is impossible to institute any. Wordsworth is a great poet, one who will, perhaps, live for ages—but he is not a John Milton.

In his admirable essay, he says, “In the higher poetry, an enlightened critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them: Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon simplicity, of her own, to regulate her ornaments.” In this we find not only the grounds of his beauties, but what I conceive to be his error. Whether I mistake his sense of the word, or not, I cannot tell, but he seems to overrate *simplicity*; from deeming simplicity a necessary ornament to higher qualities, he raised it to the rank of the principal; and where he found simplicity, he found all other beauties. It requires a mind to be deeply perceptive to do this; and hence the length of time necessary to bring him the reputation that is his due: for he did really find subject for profoundest reflection and sympathies in

whom, during a severe illness, he attended with affectionate assiduity, died, and left him a legacy of £900, solely and expressly from a belief that Wordsworth would distinguish himself, and that this money should prevent his being cramped in his aspirations by poverty. From this period his life may be looked upon as an exception to the general fate of poets; for the current ran as smoothly as human nature has reason to expect. It is true he never derived much advantage from his poetical works, that is, in comparison with some of his contemporaries; but, before the £900 were spent, the tenacious Lord Lonsdale died, and the contested claims were satisfied. By the influence of the second earl, in 1813, he obtained the appointment of distributor of stamps for the county of Westmoreland, a post which, with a good income, allowed him plenty of leisure for his darling pursuit. Soon after this appointment, Mr. John Carter came to him, as clerk, and proved a great acquisition as an amanuensis, corrector of the press, and a discerning critic and companion.

But the stream of the poet's prosperity has carried me on rather too fast. With the acquisition of the £900 came on Wordsworth's true poetical life. He almost immediately settled with his sister at Racedown, near Crewkerne, in Dorsetshire. In 1796 he wrote his tragedy of "The Borderers," which he was led to believe would be played at Covent Garden: but it was rejected, and not published till many years after. His friend Coleridge likewise wrote a tragedy with the same fate, at the time, but which was played sixteen years later with comparative success, under the title of "The Remorse."

But now, settled with his sister, he went seriously to work, and poetry must have been their daily and nightly vocation. Had poverty been knocking at the door or attempting to get in at the window, they could not have laboured more earnestly to keep her out than they did in this task of love: nothing was too high for the Muse to soar to, or too humble for her to stoop to: the most glorious objects of nature, or the lowest dregs of humanity, equally afforded subjects for verse. In 1797, he and his sister removed to a village in Somersetshire, to be near Coleridge, where he resided a year, and wrote a great deal. The three performed a delightful pedestrian tour in Devonshire, during which the "Ancient Mariner" was begun. They, at first, agreed to write it conjointly, but soon had the good sense to perceive that though they might think alike, they had very different modes of putting their thoughts upon paper, and it was given over to Coleridge.

In 1798, the first volume of the "Lyrical Ballads" was published, the "Ancient Mariner" being the opening piece. Their friend Cottle, of Bristol, was the publisher: it was in one small volume, and only 500 copies were printed. The success it met with may be

judged of by the circumstance that when Cottle, some time after, made over his business to Longmans, the copyright was valued at nothing, and returned to Cottle, who presented it to the authors. It may seem strange that poems which are now so universally admired, should meet with such a cold reception. But, independently of the style being new, Mr. Wordsworth certainly did not choose attractive subjects. By his genius he has proved his power of not only giving value to trifles, but likewise that great poetical beauty is to be found in these trifles. Such a volume, from unknown hands, would not even now, with all our enlarged perceptions, meet with a remunerative sale. "The Ancient Mariner," notwithstanding its acknowledged beauties, its depths of thought, its flights of imagination, and its mysterious power over most readers, does not, at this moment, escape the ridicule of some, and they sensible men too.

In 1798, Wordsworth and his sister went to Germany for the sake of studying the language. They resided at Goslar during many months. They here met with Klopstock, who, though old, must have been in the zenith of his fame, if we may judge by the manner in which Goethe had not long before spoken of him in "Werter."

On their return to England in 1799, Wordsworth and Coleridge visited the Lake Country, which was the first time Coleridge had been there. From that tour, perhaps, originated the great partiality which both constantly evinced for that beautiful region. In the winter of 1799, Wordsworth and his sister settled at Grasmere, where they remained eight years. In 1800 the second volume of the "Lyrical Ballads" was published, with little more success than the first. But, nothing daunted, true to the "mind that burned within him," confident in the future, he still wrote poetry upon all and everything. It is impossible, indeed, in my limited space, to follow him or even name the various productions of his muse. He was not pinched by want; his residence and its neighbouring scenery teemed with poetry, and above all, he had in his sister the society of that kindred spirit which is so necessary for the enjoyment of every pleasure. How beautifully does he, himself, express his sense of this blessing:—

"A little prattler among men,
The blessing of my later years,
Was with me when a boy.
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares, and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
And love, and thought, and joy."

Wordsworth shared the lot of humanity—he had his griefs—he

lost two children when young, and, living to an advanced age, he lost even the daughter that was dearest to him; but, though he could not boast of the extraordinary good fortune in every way of an Izaak Walton, his was, upon the whole, a happy life. In 1802, after a visit to London, and a trip to France in company with his sister, he drew a prize in the great lottery of life, and married an amiable woman. The journey to London, made by both himself and his sister on the *outside* of the Dover coach, proves what I have asserted, that, when together, everything was rich in poetry. It was while entering London, on that occasion, that he composed one of his most felicitous pieces: "Crossing Westminster Bridge at four in the morning." It even stands in its title, "Composed on the outside of the Dover coach." Who shall say how much of that exquisite piece owed its charm to the spiritual being who accompanied him?

On Monday, October 4, 1802, Wordsworth was married at Brompton Church, near Scarborough, to Mary Hutchinson, and went directly home to Grasmere. Of this marriage the best idea may be formed from his writing—he who found poetry in the commonest events of life, was not likely to neglect it in this. In the lines "Farewell," &c., when he and his sister went to fetch his wife home, we can perceive the disposition in which he entered the holy state; and, in the most perfect of all his compositions, written three years after, we can learn with gratification, that even the poet's anticipations were not disappointed. He says, at first, "She was a phantom of delight," but that after this three years' union, he could see,

"With eye serene,
The very pulse of the machine.—
A perfect woman, nobly plann'd,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light."

By this happy marriage he had five children, two of whom died when young.

In 1803, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Miss Wordsworth made a tour in Scotland, to which the Scotch poems in the collection are due. They here met with Mr. Scott, afterwards Sir Walter, who did the honours of his native country to his brother poets. Opposites, it is said, sometimes agree better than those with similar tastes. Mr. Scott, perhaps, loved poetry nearly as well as the two Lakers, but no persons could differ from each other more widely in the utterance of their inspirations. In February, 1803, he, to his deep regret, lost his brother John, captain of the *Earl of Abergavenny*, wrecked on the shambles of the Bolt of Portland.

It may be said that at Grasmere there was *nulla dies sine carmine*, so prolific was the growth of verse in that romantic abode. In 1807, two volumes of these were collected and published, but again without much success. In 1809, he wrote his celebrated Essay upon the Convention of Cintra. The liberal views of the young poet had now become very much modified, but still his natural urbanity and love of his fellow-creatures were apparent. The year 1813 was an important epoch in his life—he obtained his appointment of distributor of stamps, and removed to the residence he has immortalized at Rydal Mount, where he remained till his death. In the following year, he completed and published his long labour of love, “The Excursion.” In this great work he appears in his full character of the metaphysical poet. Life and inanimate nature are viewed and treated of in the spirit of deep, contemplative genius, combined with the aspirations of goodness, rich pictures of imagination, and even brilliant flights of fancy. He was unfortunate in the time of publication; Byron, Moore, Scott, Campbell, and Rogers, were then in their meridian; and a poet who required reflection before he could be even understood, could not be expected to be enjoyed by readers luxuriating in such exciting mental food as this brilliant period furnished. An edition of 500 of this fine poem satisfied the public six years. It was very severely criticised, and one Aristarchus even boasted that he had *crushed* “The Excursion.” “He crush ‘The Excursion,’” exclaimed Southey, “he might as well fancy he could crush Skiddaw!” “The White Doe of Rylstone” shortly followed, with a graceful dedication to his wife. It was quite one of his poems; too meditative to become suddenly popular, but containing much that will secure it a long after-life. Notwithstanding the vast merit of “The Excursion” and “The White Doe,” a merit that is becoming every year better understood and more prized, I cannot but fancy Wordsworth will maintain his hold upon the public longer by his smaller pieces than by these two more pretentious works. Doctor Johnson said, “every reader was glad when he had finished ‘Paradise Lost;’” and may not this be said of every long poem, however animated and embellished by genius? In fact, the finer the poem the more it keeps the faculties on the stretch; and this cannot be borne continuously with pleasure. But Wordsworth’s small poems are exquisite gems. If I were collecting the very choicest specimens of English poetry some of them would stand in very early pages. I shall never forget hearing a poet, and no mean one, read to me, for the first time, the sonnet on “Crossing Westminster Bridge.” When he came to the line,

“Dear God! the very houses seem asleep!”

my flesh crawled, my hair stirred, I trembled with agitation.

As Wordsworth loved his muse, there can be no doubt that his life from this period was a happy one. He certainly felt annoyed by public neglect, and what he thought the criticism of enemies ; but he had a reliance on himself, his purposes, and the good sense of human nature, which told him that his time would come. In addition to this, admirer as I am, I must confess that he was not deficient in vanity. A poet who could flatter himself that he should some day take rank by the side of Milton, can dispense with a little temporary obloquy.

One of his favourite relaxations, if so they may be called, was the number of tours he, his sister and friends performed. Holland, North Wales, the Rhine, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, were all in turn visited, and all afforded their share of supply to the poetical garner of Rydal Mount.

He continued to write and publish, never with great success, but yet with an increasing reputation. Though readers did not take off his copies by thousands, he met with due estimation in discerning quarters : the University of Oxford conferred the degree of D.C.L. upon him, and in 1843 he was made Poet Laureate.

In 1834, he lost his most cherished friend, Coleridge ; and his darling daughter Dora (who had married Mr. Quillinan in 1841), to the inexpressible grief of himself and her friends, died in 1847.

After attaining the extraordinary age of eighty years, he expired tranquilly and painlessly, on the 23rd of April, 1850, the anniversary of the death of Shakespeare, his beloved wife whispering in his ear, " William, you are going to Dora !" surrounded by friends and relatives—and was followed to his rustic grave by the admiration, respect, and regret of all who had the good fortune to know him—truly the end of a great and good man !

It would be impossible to enter upon the merits of such a vast body of poetry as Wordsworth has left us, in the limits of a short biographical notice like this—suffice it to say that his predictions as to his after-fame have proved true ; thousands of copies are now required where hundreds could not be sold during his lifetime, and posterity is doing him ample justice for the neglect of his contemporaries.

W. R.

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WORDSWORTH'S POETICAL WORKS

Poems referring to the Period of Childhood.

MY heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man ;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die !
The child is father of the man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
A little longer stay in sight !
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy !
Float near me ; do not yet depart !
Dead times revivo in thee :
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
A solemn image to my heart,
My father's family !
Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time, when in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly !
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs
I follow'd on from brake to bush ;
But she, God love her ! fear'd to brush
The dust from off its wings.

FORESIGHT,

OR THE CHARGE OF A CHILD TO HIS YOUNGER COMPANION.

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
Do as Charles and I are doing !
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
We must spare them—here are many ;

Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any :
 Do not touch it ! summers two
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can.
 —Here are daisies, take your fill !
 Pansies, and the cuckow-flower :
 Of the lofty daffodil
 Make your bed, and make your bowet ;
 Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;
 Only spare the strawberry-blossom.

Primroses, the Spring may love them—
 Summer knows but little of them ;
 Violets, a barren kind,
 Wither'd on the ground must lie ;
 Daisies leave no fruit behind
 When the pretty flow'rets die ;
 Pluck them, and another year
 As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
 To the favour'd strawberry-flower.
 When the months of spring are fled,
 Hither let us bend our walk ;
 Lurking berries, ripe and red,
 Then will hang on every stalk,
 Each within its leafy bowet ;
 And for that promise spare the flower !

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild ;
 And innocence hath privilege in her
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes,
 And feats of cunning ; and the pretty round
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
 And, as a fagot sparkles on the hearth,
 Not less if unattended and alone,
 Than when both young and old sit gather'd round
 And take delight in its activity,
 Even so this happy creature of herself
 Is all-sufficient : solitude to her
 Is blithe society, who fills the air
 With gladness and involuntary songs.
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couch'd ;
 Unthought-of, unexpected as the stir
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow flowers ;
 Or from before it chasing wantonly
 The many-colour'd images impress'd
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

ADDRESS TO A CHILD, DURING A BOISTEROUS
WINTER EVENING.

BY A FEMALE FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

WHAT way does the wind come? What way does he go?
He rides over the water, and over the snow,
Through wood, and through vale; and o'er rocky height
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding flight.
He tosses about in every bare tree,
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;
But how he will come, and whither he goes,
There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,
And rings a sharp larum;—but if you should look,
There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow,
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,
And softer than if it were cover'd with silk.
Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;
—Yet seek him—and what shall you find in the place!
Nothing but silence and empty space,
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,
That he's left for a bed for beggars or thieves!

As soon as 'tis daylight, to-morrow, with me
You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see
That he has been there, and made a great rout,
And cracked the branches, and strewn them about;
Heaven grant that he spare but that one upright twig
That look'd up at the sky so proud and big
All last summer, as well you know,
Studded with apples, a beautiful show!

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,
And growls as if he would fix his claws
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle
Drive them down, like men in a battle:
—But let him range round; he does us no harm,
We build up the fire, we're snug and warm;
Untouch'd by his breath see the candle shines bright,
And burns with a clear and steady light;
Books have we to read,—hush! that half-stifled knell,
Methinks 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock bell.

—Come, now we'll to bed! and when we are there
He may work his own will, and what shall we care;
He may knock at the door,—we'll not let him in,
May drive at the windows,—we'll laugh at his din;
Let him seek his own home wherever it be;
Here's a cozie warm house for Edward and me.

THE MOTHER'S RETURN.

BY THE SAME.

A MONTH, sweet little ones, is past
 Since your dear mother went away, —
 And she to-morrow will return ;
 To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings ! thought of joy !
 The eldest heard with steady glee ;
 Silent he stood ; then laugh'd amain, —
 And shouted, " Mother come to me ! "

Louder and louder did he shout
 With witless hope to bring her near ;
 " Nay, patience ! patience, little boy !
 Your tender mother cannot hear. "

I told of hills, and far-off towns,
 And long, long vales to travel through ; —
 He listens, puzzled, sore perplex'd,
 But he submits ; what can he do ?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast ;
 She wars not with the mystery
 Of time and distance, night and day,
 The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly ;
 She dances, runs without an aim,
 She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,
 And echoes back his sister's glee ;
 They hug the infant in my arms,
 As if to force his sympathy.

Then settling into fond discourse,
 We rested in the garden bower ;
 While sweetly shone the evening sun,
 In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done, —
 Our rambles by the swift brook's side
 Far as the willow-skirted pool,
 Where two fair swans together glide.

We talk'd of change, of winter gone,
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,
 Of birds that build their nests and sing,
 And " all since Mother went away ! "

To her these tales they will repeat,
 To her our new-born tribes will show,
 The goslings green, the ass's colt,
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

—But, see, the evening star comes forth!
 To bed the children must depart;
 A moment's heaviness they feel,
 A sadness at the heart:

'Tis gone—and in a merry fit
 They run up stairs in gamesome race;
 I too, infected by their mood,
 I could have join'd the wanton chase.

Five minutes past—and oh the change
 Asleep upon their beds they lie;
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,
 And closed the sparkling eye.

LUCY GRAY;

OR SOLITUDE.

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray:
 And, when I cross'd the wild,
 I chanced to see at break of day,
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade, Lucy knew;
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green;
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen.

“To-night will be a stormy night—
 You to the town must go;
 And take a lantern, child, to light
 Your mother through the snow.”

“That, father, will I gladly do!
 'Tis scarcely afternoon—
 The minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the moon.”

At this the father raised his hook
 And snapp'd a fagot band;
 He plied his work;—and Lucy took
 The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
 With many a wanton stroke
 Her feet disperse the powdery snow
 That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time
 She wander'd up and down:
 And many a hill did Lucy climb;
 But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night,
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on a hill they stood
That overlook'd the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

And, turning homeward, now they cried,
" In heaven we all shall meet !"
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge
They track'd the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone wall :

And then an open field they cross'd :
The marks were still the same ;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

They follow'd from the snowy bank
The footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

ALICE FELL.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
For threat'ning clouds the moon had drown'd ;
When suddenly I seem'd to hear
A moan, a lamentable sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,
I heard the sound—and more and more :
It seem'd to follow with the chaise,
And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy call'd out ;
He stopp'd his horses at the word ;
But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
Nor aught else like it could be heard.

The boy then smack'd his whip, and fast
The horses scamper'd through the rain ;
And soon I heard upon the blast
The voice, and bade him halt again.

Said I, alighting on the ground,
"What can it be, this piteous moan?"
And there a little girl I found,
Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

"My cloak!" the word was last and first,
And loud and bitterly she wept,
As if her very heart would burst ;
And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?" She sobb'd, "Look here!"
I saw it in the wheel entangled,
A weather-beaten rag as e'er
From any garden scarecrow dangled.

'Twas twisted betwixt nave and spoke ;
Her help she lent, and with good heed
Together we released the cloak ;
A wretched, wretched rag indeed !

"And whither are you going, child,
To-night along these lonesome ways?"
"To Durham," answer'd she half wild—
"Then come with me into the chaise."

She sate like one past all relief ;
Sob after sob she forth did send
In wretchedness, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham do you dwell!"
She check'd herself in her distress,
And said, "My name is Alice Fell ;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong."
And then, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong ;
And all was for her tatter'd cloak.

The chaise drove on ; our journey's end
Was nigh ; and sitting by my side,
As if she'd lost her only friend,
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern door we post ;
Of Alice and her grief I told ;
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell !

WE ARE SEVEN.

A SIMPLE child
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl:
She was eight years old she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That cluster'd round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
—Her beauty made me glad.

“Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And wondering look'd at me.

“And where are they? I pray you tell.”
She answer'd, “Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be?”

Then did the little maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.”

“You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

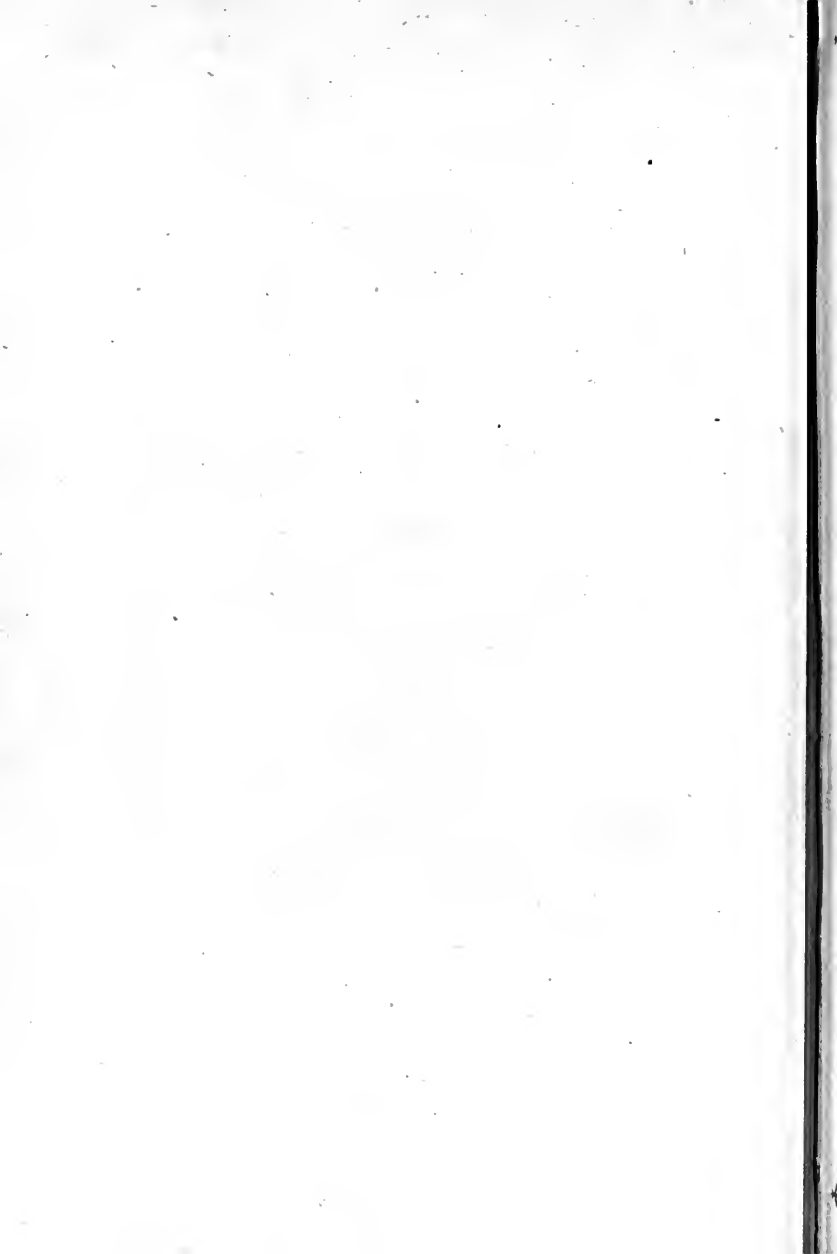
My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,



WE ARE SEVEN.

"And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there,"



I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper thereo.

The first that died was little Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

So in the churchyard she was laid ;
And all the summer dry,
Together round her grave we play'd,
My brother John and I.

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

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
The little maiden did reply,
"O master ! we are seven."

"But they are dead : those two are dead !
Their spirits are in Heaven !"

'Twas throwing words away : for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven !"

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS ;

SHOWING HOW THE PRACTICE OF LYING MAY BE TAUGHT.

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

One morn we stroll'd on our dry walk,
Our quiet home all full in view,
And held such intermitted talk
As we are wont to do.

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

A day it was when I could bear
To think—and think—and think again ;
With so much happiness to spare,
I could not feel a pain.

My boy was by my side, so slim >
And graceful in his rustic dress !
And oftentimes I talk'd to him,
In very idleness.

The young lambs ran a pretty race,
The morning sun shone bright and warm ;

"Kilve," said I, "was a pleasant place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My little boy, which like you more,"
I said, and took him by the arm—
"Our home by Kilve's delightful shore,
Or here at Liswyn farm ?

And tell me, had you rather be,"
I said, and held him by the arm,
"At Kilve's smooth shore by the green sea.
Or here at Liswyn farm ?"

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

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

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

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

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

Then did the boy his tongue unlock ;
And thus to me he made reply :
"At Kilve there was no weathercock,
And that's the reason why."

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

RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald Shore,
Three rosy-cheek'd schoolboys, the highest not more
Than the height of a counsellor's bag ;
To the top of GREAT HOW* did it please them to climb ;
And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
A man on the peak of the crag.

* GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road between Keewick and Ambleside.

They built him of stones gather'd up as they lay ;
 They built him and christen'd him all in one day,
 An urchin both vigorous and hale ;
 And so without scruple they call'd him Ralph Jones.
 Now Ralph is renown'd for the length of his bones ;
 The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,
 And, in anger or merriment, out of the north
 Coming on with a terrible pother,
 From the peak of the crag blew the giant away.
 And what did these schoolboys ?—The very next day
 They went and they built up another.

 THE PET LAMB.

A PASTORAL.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
 I heard a voice : it said, " Drink, pretty creature, drink !"
 And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
 A snow-white mount'ain lamb, with a maiden at its side.

No other sheep were near, the lamb was all alone,
 And by a slender cord was tether'd to a stone ;
 With one knee on the grass did the little maiden kneel,
 While to that mountain lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,
 Seem'd to feast with head and ears ; and his tail with pleasure shook.
 " Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said in such a tone,
 That I almost received her heart into my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare !
 I watch'd them with delight ; they were a lovely pair.
 Now with her empty can, the maiden turn'd away ;
 But ere ten yards were gone, her footsteps did she stay.

Towards the lamb she look'd ; and from that shady place
 I, unobserved, could see the workings of her face ;
 If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,
 Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little maid might sing—

" What ails thee, young one ? What ? Why pull so at thy cord ?
 Is it not well with thee ? Well both for bed and board !
 Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be ;
 Rest, little young one, rest ; what is't that aileth thee ?

" What is it thou wouldst seek ? What is wanting to thy heart !
 Thy limbs are they not strong ? And beautiful thou art :
 This grass is tender grass ; these flowers they have no peers ;
 And that green corn, all day, is rustling in thy ears !

" If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen chain,
 This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain ;
 For rain and mountain storms, the like thou need'st not fear ;—
 The rain and storm are things which scarcely can come here.

"Rest, little young one, rest ; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away :
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert own'd by none ;
And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

"He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee home :
A blessed day for thee ! then whither wouldst thou roam ?
A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that did thee yeau
Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could have been.

"Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee in this can
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran ;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is, and new.

"Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the plough ;
My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the wind is cold,
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

"It will not, will not rest !—poor creature, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in thee ?
Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor hear.

"Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green and fair !
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come there ;
The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

"Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky ;
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at thy chain ?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again !"

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;
And it seem'd, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one-half of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again did I repeat the song ;
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the *damsel* must belong,
For she look'd with such a look, and she spake with such a tone,
That I almost received her heart into my own."

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS ; OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE.*

A PASTORAL.

I.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never, never-ending song,
To welcome in the May :

* *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short, and for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

The magpie chatters with delight ;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest ;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food ;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.

II.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
It seems they have no work to do,
Or that their work is done.
On pipes of sycamore they play
The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
Or with that plant which in our dale
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
Their rusty hats they trim :
And thus, as happy as the day,
Those shepherds wear the time away.

III.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born ! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee ; and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal ;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

IV.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
" Down to the stump of yon old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race."
—Away the shepherds flew.
They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
" Stop ! " to his comrade Walter cries—
James stopp'd with no good will :
Said Walter then, " Your task is here,
"Twill keep you working half a year.

V.

" Now cross where I shall cross—come on,
And follow me where I shall lead"—
The other took him at his word ;

But did not like the deed.
 It was a spot, which you may see
 If ever you to Langdale go :
 Into a chasm a mighty block
 Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
 The gulf is deep below ;
 And in a basin black and small
 Receives a lofty waterfall.

VI.

With staff in hand across the cleft
 The challenger began his march ;
 And now, all eyes and feet, hath gain'd
 The middle of the arch.
 When list ! he hears a piteous moan—
 Again !—his heart within him dies—
 His pulse is stopp'd, his breath is lost,
 He totters, pale as any ghost,
 And, looking down, he spies
 A lamb, that in the pool is pent
 Within that black and frightful rent.

VII.

The lamb had slipp'd into the stream,
 And safe without a bruise or wound
 The cataract had borne him down
 Into the gulf profound.
 His dam had seen him when he fell,
 She saw him down the torrent borne ;
 And, while with all a mother's love
 She from the lofty rocks above
 Sent forth a cry forlorn,
 The lamb, still swimming round and round,
 Made answer to that plaintive sound.

VIII.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
 That sent this rueful cry, I ween,
 The boy recover'd heart, and told
 The sight which he had seen.
 Both gladly now deferr'd their task ;
 Nor was there wanting other aid ;—
 A Poet, one who loves the brooks
 Far better than the sages' books,
 By chance had thither stray'd ;
 And there the helpless lamb he found,
 By those huge rocks encompass'd round.

IX.

He drew it gently from the pool,
 And brought it forth into the light :
 The shepherds met him with his charge,

An unexpected sight !
 Into their arms the lamb they took,
 Said they, "He's neither maim'd nor scarr'd."
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,
 And placed him at his mother's side ;
 And gently did the Bard
 Those idle shepherd-boys upbraid,
 And bade them better mind their trade.

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
 Thou fairy voyager ! that dost float
 In such clear water, that thy boat
 May rather seem
 To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ;
 O blessed vision ! happy child !
 That art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when pain might be thy guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
 And grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.
 Oh ! too industrious folly !
 Oh ! vain and causeless melancholy !
 Nature will either end thee quite ;
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
 Not framed to undergo unkindly shocks ;
 Or to be trail'd along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives ;
 And no forewarning gives ;
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Tips in a moment out of life.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION
IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH :

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.*

WISDOM and spirit of the universe !
Thou soul, that art the eternity of thought !
And giv'st to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion ! not in vain,
By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul ;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,—
But with high objects, with enduring things,
With life and nature ; purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying by such discipline
Both pain and fear,—until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
With stinted kindness. In November days,
When vapours, rolling down the valleys, made
A lonely scene more lonesome ; among woods
At noon ; and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
Beneath the gloomy hills, I homeward went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine :
'Twas mine among the fields both day and night,
And by the waters all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
The cottage windows through the twilight blazed,
I heeded not the summons ;—happy time
It was indeed for all of us ; for me
It was a time of rapture !—Clear and loud
The village clock toll'd six—l wheel'd about,
Proud and exulting, like an untired horse
That cares not for its home.—All shod with steel,
We hiss'd along the polish'd ice, in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud-bellowing, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle : with the din
Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tingled like iron ; while the distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound

* This extract is reprinted from "THE FRIEND."

Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars,
Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay,—or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the image of a star,
That gleam'd upon the ice ; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopp'd short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheel'd by me—even as if the earth had roll'd
With visible motion her diurnal round !
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watch'd
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRESIDE.

NOW we are tired of boisterous joy,
We've romp'd enough, my little Boy !
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
And you shall bring your stool and rest ;
This corner is your own.

There ! take your seat, and let me see
That you can listen quietly ;
And, as I promised, I will tell
That strange adventure which befell
A poor Blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy !—why call him so ?
Because, my darlings, ye must know,
In land where many a mountain towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours !
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight ;
The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither droop'd nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind ;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend, and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His mother, too, no doubt, above
 Her other children him did love :
 For, was she here, or was she there,
 She thought of him with constant care,
 And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
 In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
 And bonnet with a feather gay,
 To kirk he on the Sabbath-day
 Went hand in hand with her.

A dog, too, had he ; not for need,
 But one to play with and to feed ;
 Which would have led him, if bereft
 Of company or friends, and left
 Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow ;
 And thus from house to house would go,
 And all were pleased to hear and see ;
 For none made sweeter melody
 Than did the poor Blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;
 Both when he heard the eagles scream,
 And when he heard the torrents roar,
 And heard the water beat the shore
 Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
 Not small, like ours, a peaceful flood,
 But one of mighty size, and strange,
 That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
 And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
 The great sea-water finds its way
 Through long, long windings of the hills,
 And drinks up all the pretty rills,
 And rivers large and strong ;

Then hurries back the road it came—
 Returns on errand still the same :
 This did it when the earth was new,
 And this for evermore will do,
 As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
 Come boats and ships, that sweetly ride
 Between the woods and lofty rocks ;
 And to the shepherds with their flocks
 Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
 The Blind Boy always had his share ;
 Whether of mighty towns, or vales
 With warmer suns and softer gales,
 Or wonders of the deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirr'd,
When, from the water-side he heard
The shouting and the jolly cheers,
The bustle of the mariners,
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail ?
For he must never handle sail ;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship or fisher's boat
Upon the rocking waves.

His mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this : " My son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone ;
The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side,
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
Till he was ten years old.

When, one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befell)
He's in a vessel of his own,
On the swift water hurrying down
Towards the mighty sea.

In such a vessel, never more
May human creature leave the shore !—
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind mariner !
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright,
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen :
Each hut, perchance, might have its own,
And to the boy they all were known ;
He knew and prized them all.

And one, the rarest, was a shell
Which he, poor child, had studied well ;
The shell of a green turtle, thin
And hollow ; you might sit therein,
It was so wide and deep.

'Twas even the largest of its kind,
Large, thin, and light, as birch-tree rind,
So light a shell that it would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little Blind Boy knew :
 And he a story strange, yet true,
 Had heard, how in a shell like this
 An English boy, O thought of bliss !
 Had stoutly launch'd from shore ;

Launch'd from the margin of a bay
 Among the Indian isles, where lay
 His father's ship, and had sail'd far
 To join that gallant ship of war,
 In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
 The house which held this prize ; and, led
 By choice or chance, did thither come,
 One day, when no one was at home,
 And found the door unbarr'd.

While there he sat, alone and blind,
 That story flash'd upon his mind,—
 A bold thought roused him, and he took
 The shell from out its secret nook,
 And bore it in his arms.

And with the happy burthen hied,
 And push'd it from Loch Leven's side,—
 Stepp'd into it ; and, without dread,
 Following the fancies in his head,
 He paddled up and down.

Awhile he stood upon his feet ;
 He felt the motion—took his seat ;
 And dallied thus, till from the shore
 The tide retreating more and more
 Had suck'd, and suck'd him in.

And there he is, in face of heaven,—
 How rapidly the child is driven !
 The fourth part of a mile I ween
 He thus had gone, ere he was seen
 By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me,
 What shrieking and what misery !
 For many saw : among the rest
 His mother, she who loved him best,
 She saw her poor Blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
 It is the triumph of his joy !
 The bravest traveller in balloon,
 Mounting as if to reach the moor,
 Was never half so bless'd.

And let him, let him go his way,
 Alone, and innocent, and gay !
 For, if good angels love to wait
 On the forlorn unfortunate,
 This child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly, with a silent crew,
A boat is ready to pursue ;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the Blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
So have ye seen the fowler chase,
Or Grasmere's clear unruffled breast,
A youngling of the wild duck's nest,
With deftly lifted oar.

Or, as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell,
Erewhile, within the dancing shell,
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near ;
But in his darkness he can hear,
And guesses their intent.

"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha !*"—then did he cry
"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha !*"—most eagerly ;
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
And what he meant was, "Keep away,
And leave me to myself!"

Alas ! and when he felt their hands—
You've often heard of magic wands,
That with a motion overthrow
A palace of the proudest show,
Or melt it into air.

So all his dreams, that inward light
With which his soul had shone so bright,
All vanish'd ;—'twas a heartfelt cross
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
As he had ever known.

But hark ! a gratulating voice
With which the very hills rejoice :
'Tis from the crowd, who, tremblingly,
Had watch'd the event, and now can see
That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
Full sure they were a happy band,
Which, gathering round, did on the banks
Of that great water give God thanks,
And welcomed the poor child.

And in the general joy of heart
 The Blind Boy's little dog took part ;
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,
 With sound like lamentation .

But most of all, his mother dear,
 She who had fainted with her fear,
 Rejoiced when, waking, she espies
 The child ; when she can trust her eyes,
 And touches the Blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
 When he was in the house again :
 'Tears flow'd in torrents from her eyes ;
 She could not blame him or chastise :
 She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved
 The perilous deep, the Boy was saved ;
 And, though his fancies had been wild,
 Yet he was pleased and reconciled
 To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
 Still do they keep the turtle shell ;
 And long the story will repeat
 Of the Blind Boy's adventurous feat,
 And how he was preserved.

Juvenile Pieces.

EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED UPON
 LEAVING SCHOOL.

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

Thus, when the sun, prepared for rest,
 Hath gain'd the precincts of the west,
 Though his departing radiance fail
 To illuminate the hollow vale,
 A lingering light he fondly throws
 On the dear hills where first he rose.

AN EVENING WALK.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

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

FAR from my dearest friend, 'tis mine to rove
 Through bare grey dell, high wood, and pastoral cove;
 His wizard course where hoary Derwent takes,
 Through crags and forest glooms and opening lakes,
 Staying his silent waves, to hear the roar
 That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore;
 Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island leads,
 To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald meads;
 Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cottaged grounds,
 Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland bounds;
 Where bosom'd deep, the shy Winander* peeps
 'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled steepes;
 Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's shore,
 And memory of departed pleasures, more.

Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy child,
 The echoes of your rocks my carols wild;
 Then did no ebb of cheerfulness demand
 Sad tides of joy from Melancholy's hand,
 In youth's wild eye the livelong day was bright,
 The sun at morning, and the stars at night,
 Alike when first the vales the bittern fills,
 Or the first woodcocks† roam'd the moonlight hills.

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,
 And hope itself was all I knew of pain;
 For then, even then, the little heart would beat
 At times, while young Content forsook her seat,
 And wild Impatience, pointing upward, show'd,
 Where, tipp'd with gold, the mountain summits glow'd.
 Alas! the idle tale of man is found
 Depicted in the dial's moral round;
 With hope reflection blends her social rays,
 To gild the total tablet of his days:
 Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,
 He knows but from its shade the present hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain?
 To show her yet some joys to me remain,
 Say will my friend, with soft affection's ear,
 The history of a poet's evening hear?

When, in the south, the wan noon, brooding still,
 Breathed a pale steam around the glaring hill,

* These lines are only applicable to the middle part of that lake.

† In the beginning of winter, these mountains are frequented by woodcocks, which in dark nights retire into the woods.

And shades of deep-embattled clouds were seen,
 Spotting the northern cliffs with lights between ;
 Gazing the tempting shades to them denied,
 When stood the shorten'd herds amid the tide,
 Where from the barren wall's unshelter'd end
 Long rails into the shallow lake extend.
 When school-boys stretch'd their length upon the green ;
 And round the humming elm, a glimmering scene,
 In the brown park, in flocks the troubled deer
 Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancing ear ;
 When horses in the wall-girt intake* stood,
 Unshaded, eying far below the flood,
 Crowded behind the swain, in mute distress,
 With forward neck the closing gate to press—
 Then, as I wander'd where the huddling rill
 Brightens with water-breaks, the hollow ghyll,†
 To where, while thick above the branches close,
 In dark brown basin its wild waves repose,
 Inverted shrubs, and moss of darkest green,
 Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weeds between
 Save that aloft the subtile sunbeams shine
 On wither'd briars that o'er the crags recline ;
 Sole light admitted here, a small cascade,
 Illumes with sparkling foam the twilight shade ;
 Beyond, along the vista of the brook,
 Where antique roots its bustling path o'erlook,
 The eye reposes on a secret bridge,‡
 Half grey, half snagged with ivy to its ridge.

Sweet rill, farewell ! To-morrow's noon again
 Shall hñde me, wooing long, thy wildwood strain ;
 But now the sun has gain'd his western road,
 And eve's mild hour invites my steps abroad.

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

How pleasant, as the yellowing sun declines,
 And with long rays and shades the landscape shines ;
 To mark the birches' stems all golden light,
 That lit the dark slant woods with silvery white ;
 The willow's weeping trees, that twinkling hoar,
 Glanced oft upturn'd along the breezy shore,
 Low bending o'er the colour'd water, fold
 Their moveless boughs and leaves like threads of gold ;

* The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain inclosure.

† Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country : ghyll and dingle have the same meaning.

‡ The reader who has made the tour of this country, will recognize, in this description, the features which characterize the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

The skiffs with naked masts at anchor laid,
 Before the boat-house peeping through the shade ;
 The unwearied glance of woodman's echoed stroke ;
 And curling from the trees the cottage smoke.

Their pannier'd train a group of potters goad,
 Winding from side to side up the steep road ;
 The peasant from yon cliff of fearful edge
 Shot, down the headlong path darts with his sledge ;
 Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse illumed,
 Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green rings"* and broom ;
 While the sharp slope the slacken'd team confounds,
 Downward the ponderous timber-wain resounds ;
 In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,
 Dash'd down the rough rock, lightly leaps along ;
 From lonesome chapel at the mountain's feet,
 Three humble bells their rustic chime repeat ;
 Sounds from the water-side the hammer'd boat ;
 And *blasted* quarry thunders heard remote !

Even here, amid the sweep of endless woods,
 Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs and falling floods,
 Not undelightful are the simplest charms,
 Found by the glassy door of mountain farms.

Sweetly ferocious,† round his native walks,
 Pride of his sister wives, the monarch stalks ;
 Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his tread ;
 A crest of purple tops his warrior head.
 Bright sparks his black and rolling eyeball hurls
 Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls ;
 On tiptoe rear'd, he strains his clarion throat,
 Threaten'd by faintly answering farms remote.

Bright'ning the cliffs between where sombrous pine
 And yew-trees o'er the silver rocks recline ;
 I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,
 Dwarf pannier'd steeds, and men, and numerous wains :
 How busy the enormous hive within,
 While Echo dallies with the various din !
 Some (hardly heard their chisels' clinking sound)
 Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf profound ;
 Some, dim between th' aerial cliffs descried,
 O'erwalk the slender plank from side to side ;
 These, by the pale blue rocks that ceaseless ring,
 Glad from their airy baskets hang and sing.

Hung o'er a cloud above the steep that rears
 Its edge all flame, the broadening sun appears ;
 A long blue bar its ægis orb divides,
 And breaks the spreading of its golden tides ;
 And now it touches on the purple steep
 That flings his shadow on the pictured deep.

* "Vivid rings of green."—*Greenwood's Poem on Shooting.*

† "Dolcemente ferocce."—*Tasso.*—In this description of the cock, I remembered a spirited one of the same animal in "*L'Agriculture, ou Les Géorgiques Françaises,*" of M. Rousseau.

'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs aspire,
 With towers and woods, a "prospect all on fire;"
 The coves and secret hollows, through a ray
 Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.
 The gilded turf arrays in richer green
 Each speck of lawn the broken rocks between,
 Deep yellow beams the scatter'd boles illumine,
 Far in the level forest's central gloom :
 Waving his hat, the shepherd, in the vale,
 Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,—
 That barking, busy 'mid the glittering rocks,
 Hunts, where he points, the intercepted flocks.
 Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance shoots
 On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted roots ;
 The druid-stones their lighted fane unfold,
 And all the babbling brooks are liquid gold ;
 Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still,
 Gives one bright glance, and drops behind the hill.*

In these lone vales, if aught of faith may claim,
 Their silver hairs, and ancient hamlet fame,
 When up the hills, as now, retreats the light,
 Strange apparitions mock the village sight.

A desperate form appears that spurs his steed
 Along the midway cliffs with violent speed ;
 Unhurt pursues his lengthen'd flight, while all
 Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.
 Anon, in order mounts, a gorgeous show
 Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro ;
 And now the van is gilt with evening's beam ;
 The rear through iron brown betrays a sullen gleam,
 While silent stands the admiring crowd below,
 Lost gradual o'er the heights in pomp they go,
 Till, but the lonely beacon, all is fled
 That tips with eve's latest gleam his spiry head.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows sail,
 On red slow-waving pinions, down the vale ;
 How pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray
 Where winds the road along a secret bay,
 In all the majesty of ease divides,
 And glorying looks around the silent tides ;
 Along the "wild meandering shore" to view,
 Obsequious grace the winding swan pursue ;
 He swells his lifted chest and backward flings
 His bridling neck between his towering wings ;
 By rills that tumble down the woody steep,
 And run in transports to the dimpling deeps ;
 On as he floats, the silver'd waters glow,
 Proud of the varying arch and moveless form of snow,
 While tender cares and mild domestic loves
 With furtive watch pursue her as she moves,
 The female with a meeker charm succeeds,

* From Thomson.

And her brown little ones around her leads,
 Nibbling the water-lilies as they pass,
 Or playing wanton with the floating grass.
 She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride
 Forgets, unwearied watching every side ;
 She calls them near, and with affection sweet,
 Alternately relieves their weary feet.
 Alternately they mount her back, and rest,
 Close by her mantling wings' embraces press'd.

Long may they roam these hermit waves, that sleep
 In birch-besprinkled cliffs embosom'd deep,
 These fairy holms untrodden, still, and green,
 Whose shades protect the hidden wave serene,
 Whence fragrance scents the water's desert gale,
 The violet and lily of the vale !
 Where, though her far-off twilight ditty steal,
 They not the trip of harmless milkmaid feel ;
 Yon tuft conceals their home, their cottage bower ;
 Fresh water-rushes strew the verdant floor ;
 Long grass and willows form the woven wall,
 And swings above the roof the poplar tall.
 Thence issuing oft unwieldy as they stalk,
 They crush with broad black feet their flowery walk ;
 Safe from your door ye hear at breezy morn
 The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow horn ;
 No ruder sound your desert haunts invades
 Than waters dashing wild, or rocking shades ;
 Ye ne'er, like hapless human wanderers, throw
 Your young on winter's winding-sheet of snow.

Fair Swan ! by all a mother's joys caress'd,
 Haply some wretch has eyed, and call'd thee bless'd ;
 I see her now, denied to lay her head,
 On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built shed,
 Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,
 By pointing to a shooting star on high.
 —When low-hung clouds each star of summer hide,
 And fireless are the valleys far and wide,
 Where the brook brawls along the public road,
 Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching broad,
 Oft has she taught them on her lap to play
 Delighted with the glowworm's harmless ray,
 Toss light from hand to hand, while on the ground
 Small circles of green radiance gleam around.

Oh ! when the bitter showers her path assail,
 And roars between the hills the torrent gale ;
 No more her breath can thaw their fingers cold,
 Their frozen arms her neck no more can fold ;
 Weak roof a cowering form two babes to shield,
 And faint the fire a dying heart can yield !
 Press the sad kiss, fond mother ! vainly fears
 Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its tears ;
 No tears can chill them, and no bosom warms,
 Thy breast their death-bed, coffin'd in thine arms !

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from afar,
 Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding star,
 Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling sedge,
 And feeding pike starts from the water's edge,
 Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and bill
 Wetting, that drip upon the water still ;
 And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,
 Shoots upward, darting his long neck before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell light
 Blends with the solemn colouring of the night ;
 'Mid groves of clouds that crest the mountain's brow,
 And round the west's proud lodge their shadows throw,
 Like Una shining on her gloomy way,
 The half-seen form of Twilight roams astray ;
 Shedding, through paly loopholes mild and small,
 Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom fall ;
 Beyond the mountain's giant reach that hides
 In deep determined gloom his subject tides ;
 Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale,
 Tracking the fitful motions of the gale.
 With restless interchange at once the bright
 Wins on the shade, the shade upon the light.
 No favour'd eye was e'er allow'd to gaze
 On lovelier spectacle in fairy days ;
 When gentle spirits urged a sportive chase,
 Brushing with lucid wands the water's face ;
 While music, stealing round the glimmering deeps,
 Charm'd the tall circle of th' enchanted steeps.
 —The lights are vanish'd from the watery plains :
 No wreck of all the pageantry remains.
 Unheeded night has overcome the vales :
 On the dark earth the baffled vision fails ;
 The latest lingerer of the forest train,
 The lone black fir, forsakes the faded plain ;
 Last evening sight, the cottage smoke no more,
 Lost in the thicken'd darkness, glimmers hoar ;
 And, towering from the sullen dark-brown mere,
 Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps appear.
 —Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we feel
 A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,
 And ever, as we fondly muse, we find
 The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil mind.
 Stay ! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay !
 Ah no ! as fades the vale, they fade away :
 Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains ;
 Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear retains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light to thread
 Silent the hedge or steaming rivulet's bed,
 From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon
 Salute with boding note the rising moon,
 Frosting with hoary light the pearly ground,
 And pouring deeper blue to æther's bound ;

And pleased, her solemn pomp of clouds to fold
In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

See o'er the eastern hill, where darkness broods
O'er all its vanish'd dells, and lawns, and woods ;
Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,
She lifts in silence up her lovely face ;
Above the gloomy valley flings her light,
Far to the western slopes with hamlets white ;
And gives, where woods the chequer'd upland strew
To the green corn of summer, autumn's hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn
Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's own morn,
Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer
The weary hills, impervious, blackening near ;
Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the while
On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

Even now she decks for me a distant scene,
For dark and broad the gulf of time between),
Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my way ;
How fair its lawns and sheltering woods appear !
How sweet its streamlet murmurs in mine ear !)
Where we, my friend, to happy days shall rise,
Till our small share of hardly-paining sighs
(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)
Creep hush'd into the tranquil breast of death.

But now the clear bright moon her zenith gains,
And, rimy without speck, extend the plains :
The deepest cleft the mountain's front displays
Scarce hides a shadow from her searching rays ;
From the dark blue faint silvery threads divide
The hills, while gleams below the azure tide ;
The scene is waken'd, yet its peace unbroke
By silver'd wreaths of quiet charcoal smoke,
That o'er the ruins of the fallen wood,
Steal down the hill, and spread along the flood.

The song of mountain streams, unheard by day,
Now hardly heard, beguiles my homeward way.
All air is like the sleeping water, still,
List'ning the aerial music of the hill,
Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,
Or shout that wakes the ferryman from sleep,
The echoed hoof approaching the far shore.
Soon follow'd by his hollow parting oar ;
Sound of closed gate, across the water borne,
Hurrying the feeding hare through rustling corn ;
The tremulous sob of the complaining owl ;
And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl ;
The distant forge's swinging thump profound ;
Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely hound.

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES ;

TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR AMONG THE ALPS,

No sad vacuities his heart annoy ;—
 Blows not a zephyr but it whispers joy ;
 For him lost flowers their idle sweets exhale ;
 He tastes " the meanest note that swells the gale ;"
 For him sod seats the cottage-door adorn,
 And peeps the far-off spire, his evening bourn !
 Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,
 And dear the green-sward to his velvet tread :
 Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye ?
 Upward he looks—" and calls it luxury ;"
 Kind Nature's charities his steps attend ;
 In every babbling brook he finds a friend ;
 Whilst chast'ning thoughts of sweetest use, bestow'd
 By Wisdom, moralize his pensive road.
 Host of his welcome inn, the noontide bower,
 To his spare meal he calls the passing poor ;
 He views the sun uplift his golden fire,
 Or sink, with heart alive, like Memnon's* lyre ;
 Blesses the moon that comes with kindest ray,
 To light him shaken by his viewless way ;
 With bashful fear no cottage children steal
 From him, a brother at the cottage meal ;
 His humble looks no shy restraint impart,
 Around him plays at will the virgin heart.
 While unsuspending wheels the village dance,
 The maidens eye him with inquiring glance,
 Much wondering what sad stroke of crazing care
 Or desperate love could lead a wanderer there.

I sigh at hoary Chartreuse' doom,
 Where now is fled that Power whose frown severe
 Tamed " sober Reason " till she crouch'd in fear ?
 That breathed a death-like peace around these woods.

* * * * *
 The cloister startles at the gleam of arms,
 And blasphemy the shuddering fane alarms ;
 Not the cloud-piercing pines their troubled heads :
 Spires, rocks, and lawns, a browner night o'erspreads.
 Strong terror checks the female peasant's sighs,
 And start the astonish'd shades at female eyes.
 The thundering tube the aged angler hears,
 And swells the groaning torrent with his tears.
 From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted jay,
 And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.
 The cross, † with hideous laughter demons mock,
 By angels planted on the aerial rock.

* The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

† Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the spiry rocks of Chartreuse, which have every appearance of being inaccessible.

The "parting genius" sighs with hollow breath
 Along the mystic streams of Life and Death.*
 Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds
 Portentous through her old woods' trackless bounds,
 Vallombre,† 'mid her falling fanes, deplores,
 For ever broke, the Sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden margin roves
 Of Como, bosom'd deep in chesnut groves.
 No meadows thrown between, the giddy steeps
 Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow deeps.
 To towns, whose shades of no rude sound complain,
 To ringing team unknown and grating wain,
 To flat-roof'd towns, that touch the water's bound,
 Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,
 Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,
 And o'er the whiten'd wave their shadows fling ;
 Wild round the steeps the little pathway twines,
 And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.
 The viewless lingerer hence, at evening, sees
 From rock-hewn steps the sail between the trees ;
 Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-eyed maids
 Tend the small harvest of their garden glades,
 Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to view
 Stretch, o'er the pictured mirror, broad and blue,
 Tracking the yellow sun from steep to steep,
 As up the opposing hills, with tortoise foot they creep.
 Here, half a village shines, in gold array'd,
 Bright as the moon, half hides itself in shade.
 From the dark sylvan roofs the restless spire,
 Inconstant glancing, mounts like springing fire.
 There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw
 Rich golden verdure on the waves below.
 Slow glides the sail along the illumined shore,
 And steals into the shade the lazy oar ;
 Soft bosoms breathe around contagious sighs,
 And amorous music on the water dies.

How bless'd, delicious scene ! the eye that greets
 Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats ;
 The unwearied sweep of wood thy cliffs that scales ;
 The never-ending waters of thy vales ;
 The cots, those dim religious groves embower,
 Or, under rocks that from the water tower
 Insinuated, sprinkling all the shore ;
 Each with his household boat beside the door,
 Whose flaccid sails in forms fantastic droop,
 Brightening the gloom where thick the forests stoop ;
 —Thy torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 Thy towns, like swallows' nests that cleave on high,
 That glimmer hoar in eve's last light, descried,
 Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,
 Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted woods

* Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.
 † Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods,
 While Evening's solemn bird melodious weeps,
 Heard, by star-spotted bays, beneath the steeps;
 —Thy lake, 'mid smoking woods, that blue and grey
 Gleams, streak'd or dappled, hid from morning's ray,
 Slow travelling down the western hills, to fold
 Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold;
 From thickly-glittering spires, the matin bell
 Calling the woodman from his desert cell,
 A summons to the sound of oars, that pass,
 Spotting the steaming deeps, to early mass;
 Slow swells the service, o'er the water born,
 While fill each pause the ringing woods of morn.

Now, passing Urseren's open vale serene,
 Her quiet streams, and hills of downy green,
 Plunge with the Russ embrown'd by Terror's breath,
 Where danger roofs the narrow walks of death;
 By floods, that, thundering from their dizzy height,
 Swell more gigantic on the steadfast sight;
 Black drizzling crags, that, beaten by the din,
 Vibrate, as if a voice complain'd within;
 Bare steeps, where Desolation stalks, afraid,
 Unsteadfast, by a blasted yew upstay'd;
 By cells* whose image, trembling as he prays,
 Awe-struck, the kneeling peasant scarce surveys;
 Loose-hanging rocks the day's bless'd eye that hide,
 And crosses† rear'd to Death on every side,
 Which with cold kiss Devotion planted near,
 And, bending, water'd with the human tear,
 That faded "silent" from her upward eye,
 Unmoved with each rude form of Danger nigh,
 Fix'd on the anchor left by him who saves
 Alike in whelming snows and roaring waves.

On as we move, a softer prospect opes,
 Calm huts, and lawns between, and sylvan slopes.
 While mists, suspended on th' expiring gale,
 Moveless o'erhang the deep secluded vale,
 The beams of evening, slipping soft between,
 Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene;
 Winding its dark green wood and emerald glade,
 The still vale lengthens underneath the shade;
 While in soft gloom the scattering bowers recede,
 Green dewy lights adorn the freshen'd mead,
 On the low‡ brown wood-huts delighted sleep
 Along the brighten'd gloom reposing deep.
 While pastoral pipes and streams the landscape hull,
 And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,
 In solemn shapes before the admiring eye
 Dilated hang the misty pines on high,

* The Catholic religion prevails here; these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like the Roman tombs, along the roadside.

† Crosses commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow and other accidents, very common along this dreadful road.

‡ The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all built of wood.

Huge convent domes with pinnacles and towers,
And antique castles seen through drizzling showers.

From such romantic dreams my soul awake,
Lo ! Fear looks silent down on Uri's lake,
Where, by the unpathway'd margin, still and dread,
Was never heard the plodding peasant's tread.
Tower like a wall the naked rocks, or reach
Far o'er the secret water dark with beech ;
More high, to where creation seems to end,
Shade above shade, the desert pines ascend,
Yet with his infants, man undaunted creeps
And hangs his small wood hut upon the steep.
Where'er below, amid the savage scene,
Peeps out a little speck of smiling green.
A garden plot the mountain air perfumes,
'Mid the dark pines a little orchard blooms,
A zig-zag path from the domestic skiff,
Threading the painful crag, surmounts the cliff.
—Before those hermit doors, that never know
The face of traveller passing to and fro,
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell
For whom at morning toll'd the funeral bell ;
Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark foregoes,
Touch'd by the beggar's moan of human woes ;
The grassy seat beneath their casement shade
The pilgrim's wistful eye hath never stay'd.
—There, did the iron genius not disdain
The gentle power that haunts the myrtle plain,
There, might the love-sick maiden sit, and chide
The insuperable rocks and severing tide ;
There, watch at eve her lover's sun-gilt sail
Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale ;
There, list at midnight, till is heard no more,
Below, the echo of his parting oar ;
There, hang in fear, when growls the frozen stream,
To guide his dangerous tread, the taper's gleam.

'Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,
Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry,
Where hardly given the hopeless waste to cheer,
Denied the bread of life, the foodful ear,
Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,
And apple sickens pale in summer's ray ;
Even here Content has fix'd her smiling reign
With Independence, child of high Disdain.
Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,
Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,
And often grasps her sword, and often eyes :
Her crest a bough of winter's bleakest pine,
Strange "weeds" and Alpine plants her helm entwines,
And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,
While thrills the "Spartan fife," between the blast.

'Tis storm ; and, hid in mist from hour to hour.
All day the floods a deepening murmur pour .

The sky is veil'd, and every cheerful sight :
 Dark is the region as with coming night ;
 But what a sudden burst of overpowering light ;
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,
 Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form ;
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
 The wood-crown'd cliffs that o'er the lake recline ;
 Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,
 At once to pillars turn'd that flame with gold :
 Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun
 The west, that burns like one dilated sun,
 Where, in a mighty crucible, expire
 The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire.
 —And sure there is a secret Power that reigns
 Here, where no trace of man the spot profanes,
 Nought* but the herds that, pasturing, upward creep,
 Hung dim-discover'd from the dangerous steep,
 Or summer hamlet, flat and bare, on high
 Suspended, 'mid the quiet of the sky.
 How still ! no irreligious sound or sight
 Rouses the soul from her severe delight ;
 An idle voice the sabbath region fills
 Of deep that calls to deep across the hills.
 Broke only by the melancholy sound
 Of drowsy bells for ever tinkling round ;
 Faint wail of eagle melting into blue
 Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods' steady *sough* ; †
 The solitary heifer's deepen'd low ;
 Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling snow ;
 Save that, the stranger seen below, the boy
 Shouts from the echoing hills with savage joy.

When warm from myrtle bays and tranquil seas,
 Comes on, to whisper hope, the vernal breeze,
 When hums the mountain bee in May's glad ear,
 And emerald isles to spot the heights appear,
 When shouts and lowing herds the valley fill,
 And louder torrents stun the noontide hill,
 When fragrant scents beneath the enchanted tread
 Spring up, his choicest wealth around him spread,
 The pastoral Swiss begins the cliffs to scale,
 To silence leaving the deserted vale,
 Mounts, where the verdure leads, from stage to stage,
 And pastures on, as in the patriarchs' age :
 O'er lofty heights serene and still they go,
 And hear the rattling thunder far below.
 They cross the chasmy torrent's foam-lit bed,
 Rock'd on the dizzy larch's narrow tread ;
 Or steal beneath loose mountains, half deterr'd,
 That sigh and shudder to the lowing herd.
 —I see him, up the midday cliff he creeps
 To where a scanty knot of verdure peeps ;

* This picture is from the middle region of the Alps.

† "Sough," a Scotch word, expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

Thence down the steep a pile of grass he throws,
 The fodder of his herds in winter snows.
 Far different life to what tradition hoar
 Transmits of days more blest in times of yore :
 Then summer lengthen'd out his season bland,
 And with rock-honey flow'd the happy land.
 Continual fountains welling cheer'd the waste,
 And plants were wholesome, now of deadly taste,
 Nor winter yet his frozen stores had piled,
 Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled ;
 Nor hunger forced the herds from pastures bare,
 "Or scanty food the treacherous cliffs to dare.
 Then the milk-thistle bade those herds demand
 Three times a day the pail and welcome hand.
 But human vices have provoked the rod
 Of angry Nature to avenge her God.
 Thus does the father to his sons relate,
 On the lone mountain-top, their changed estate.
 Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts
 Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.
 When downward to his winter hut he goes,
 Dear and more dear the lessening circle grows ;
 That hut which from the hills his eyes employs
 So oft, the central point of all his joys.
 Where, safely guarded by the woods behind,
 He hears the chiding of the baffled wind.
 Hears winter, calling all his terrors round,
 Rush down the living rocks with whirlwind sound.
 Through Nature's vale his homely pleasures glide,
 Unstain'd by envy, discontent, and pride,
 The bound of all his vanity to deck,
 With one bright bell a favourite heifer's neck ;
 Content upon some simple annual feast,
 Remember'd half the year and hoped the rest,
 If dairy produce, from his inner hoard
 Of thrice ten summers consecrate the board.

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song resume !
 Fair smiling lights the purpled hills illumine !
 Soft gales and dews of life's delicious morn,
 And thou, lost fragrance of the heart, return !
 Soon flies the little joy to man allow'd,
 And grief before him travels like a cloud :
 For come diseases on and penury's rage,
 Labour, and Care, and Pain, and dismal Age,
 Till, hope-deserted, long in vain his breath
 Implores the dreadful untried sleep of death.
 —Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow that shine
 Between interminable tracts of pine,
 A temple stands ; which holds an awful shrine,
 By an uncertain light reveal'd, that falls
 On the mute image and the troubled walls :
 Pale, dreadful faces round the shrine appear,
 Abortive joy, and hope that works in fear ;

While strives a secret power to hush the crowd,
Pain's wild rebellious burst proclaims her rights aloud.

Oh ! give me not that eye of hard disdain
That views undimm'd Ensiedlen's* wretched fane.
'Mid muttering prayers all sounds of torment meet,
Dire clap of hands, distracted chafe of feet ;
While loud and dull ascends the weeping cry,
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die.
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear
One flower of hope—Oh, pass and leave it there.

THE FEMALE VAGRANT.

MY father was a good and pious man,
An honest man by honest parents bred ;
And I believe, that, soon as I began
To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,
And in his hearing there my prayers I said ;
And afterwards, by my good father taught,
I read, and loved the books in which I read ;
For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

The suns of twenty summers danced along,—
Ah ! little mark'd how fast they roll'd away ;
Then rose a stately hall our woods among,
And cottage after cottage own'd its sway.
No joy to see a neighbouring house, or stray
Through pastures not his own, the master took :
My father dared his greedy wish gainsay ;
He loved his old hereditary nook,
And ill could I the thought of such sad parting brook.

But, when he had refused the proffer'd gold,
To cruel injuries he became a prey,
Sore traversed in whate'er he bought and sold :
His troubles grew upon him day by day,
And all his substance fell into decay.
They dealt most hardly with him, and he tried
To move their hearts—but it was vain—for they
Seized all he had ; and, weeping side by side,
We sought a home where we uninjured might abide.

It was in truth a lamentable hour
When, from the last hill-top my sire survey'd,
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower
That on his marriage-day sweet music made,
Till then he hoped his bones might there be laid,
Close by my mother, in their native bowers ;
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and pray'd—
I could not pray :—through tears that fell in showers.
I saw our own dear home, that was no longer ours.

* This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions.

There was a youth whom I had loved so long,
 That when I loved him not I cannot say.
 Mid the green mountains many and many a song
 We two had sung, like gladsome birds in May.
 When we began to tire of childish play,
 We seem'd still more and more to prize each other ;
 We talk'd of marriage and our marriage-day ;
 And I in truth did love him like a brother ;
 For never could I hope to meet with such another.

Two years were past, since to a distant town
 He had repair'd to ply the artist's trade.
 What tears of bitter grief, till then unknown —
 What tender vows our last sad kiss delay'd !
 To him we turn'd : we had no other aid.
 Like one revived, upon his neck I wept :
 And her whom he had loved in joy, he said
 He well could love in grief : his faith he kept ;
 And in a quiet home once more my father slept.

We lived in peace and comfort ; and were blest
 With daily bread, by constant toil supplied.
 Three lovely infants lay upon my breast ;
 And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I sigh'd,
 And knew not why. My happy father died
 When sad distress reduced the children's meal ;
 Thrice happy ! that from him the grave did hide
 The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent wheel,
 And tears that flow'd for ills which patience could not heal

'Twas a hard change, an evil time was come ;
 We had no hope, and no relief could gain.
 But soon, day after day, the noisy drum
 Beat round to sweep the streets of want and pain.
 My husband's arms now only served to strain
 Me and his children hungering in his view :
 In such dismay my prayers and tears were vain :
 To join those miserable men he flew :
 And now to the sea-coast, with numbers more we drew.

There, long were we neglected, and we bore
 Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weigh'd ;
 Green fields before us and our native shore,
 We breathed a pestilential air that made
 Ravage for which no knell was heard. We pray'd
 For our departure ; wish'd and wish'd—nor knew
 'Mid that long sickness, and those hopes delay'd,
 That happier days we never more must view :
 The parting signal stream'd, at last the land withrew.

But the calm summer season now was past.
 On as we drove, the equinoctial deep
 Ran mountains high before the howling blast ;
 And many perish'd in the whirlwind's sweep.
 We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,
 Untaught that soon such anguish must ensue.

Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,
That we the mercy of the waves should rue.
We reach'd the Western World, a poor, devoted crew.

The pains and plagues that on our heads came down,
Disease and famine, agony and fear,
In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
It would thy brain unsettle, even to hear.
All perish'd—all, in one remorseless year,
Husband and children! one by one, by sword
And ravenous plague, all perish'd: every tear
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored.

Peaceful as some immeasurable plain
By the first beams of dawning light impress'd,
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main:
The very ocean has its hour of rest.
I too was calm, though heavily distress'd!
Oh me, how quiet sky and ocean were!
My heart was hush'd within me, I was bless'd,
And look'd, and look'd along the silent air,
Until it seem'd to bring a joy to my despair.

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

At midnight once the storming army came,—
Yet do I see the miserable sight,
The bayonet, the soldier, and the flame
That follow'd us and faced us in our flight:
When rape and murder by the ghastly light
Seized their joint prey, the mother and the child!
But I must leave these thoughts.—From night to night,
From day to day, the air breathed soft and mild;
And on the gliding vessel Heaven and ocean smiled.

Some mighty gulf of separation past,
I seem'd transported to another world:—
A thought resign'd with pain, when from the mast
The impatient mariner the sail unfurl'd,
And whistling, call'd the wind that hardly curl'd
The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home,
And from all hope I was for ever hurl'd.
For me—farthest from earthly port to roam
Was best, could I but shun the spot where man might come.

And oft I thought (my fancy was so strong)
That I at last a resting-place had found;
Here will I dwell, said I, my whole life long,

Roaming the illimitable waters round :
 Here will I live :—of every friend disown'd,
 And end my days upon the ocean flood.—
 To break my dream the vessel reach'd its bound :
 And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,
 And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.

By grief enfeebled was I turn'd adrift,
 Helpless as sailor cast on desert rock ;
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,
 Nor dared my hand at any door to knock.
 I lay, where with his drowsy mates, the cock,
 From the cross timber of an out-house hung ;
 Dismally toll'd, that night, the city clock !
 At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely stung,
 Nor to the beggar's language could I frame my tongue.

So pass'd another day, and so the third ;
 Then did I try in vain the crowd's resort.
 —In deep despair by frightful wishes stirr'd,
 Near the sea-side I reach'd a ruin'd fort :
 There, pains which nature could no more support,
 With blindness link'd, did on my vitals fall,
 And I had many interruptions short
 Of hideous sense ; I sank, nor step could crawl,
 And thence was carried to a neighbouring hospital.

Recovery came with food ; but still, my brain
 Was weak, nor of the past had memory.
 I heard my neighbours, in their beds, complain
 Of many things which never troubled me :
 Of feet still bustling round with busy glee ;
 Of looks where common kindness had no part ;
 Of service done with careless cruelty,
 Fretting the fever round the languid heart ;
 And groans, which, as they said, might make a dead man start.

These things just served to stir the torpid sense,
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.
 My memory and my strength return'd ; and thence
 Dismiss'd, again on open day I gazed
 At houses, meæ, and common light, amazed,
 The lanes I sought, and as the sun retired,
 Came, where beneath the trees a fagot blazed ;
 The travellers saw me weep, my fate inquired,
 And gave me food, and rest, more welcome, more desired.

My heart is touch'd to think that men like these,
 Wild houseless wanderers, were my first relief :
 How kindly did they paint their vagrant ease !
 And their long holiday that foar'd not grief !
 For all belong'd to all, and each was chief.
 No plough their sinews strain'd ; on grating road
 No wain they drove ; and yet the yellow sheaf
 In every vale for their delight was stow'd ;
 In every field, with milk their dairy overflow'd.

They with their pannier'd asses semblance made
 Of potters wandering on from door to door :
 But life of happier sort to me portray'd,
 And other joys my fancy to allure ;
 The bagpipe dinning on the midnight moor
 In barn uplighted, and companionous boon
 Well met from far, with revelry secure,
 Among the forest glades, when jocund June
 Roll'd fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

But ill they suited me ; those journeys dark
 O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch !
 To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,
 Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch ;
 The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,
 The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill,
 And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
 Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill :
 Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding still.

What could I do, unaided and unblest ?
 My father ! gone was every friend of thine :
 And kindred of dead husband are at best
 Small help ; and, after marriage such as mine,
 With little kindness would to me incline.
 Ill was I then for toil or service fit :
 With tears whose course no effort could confine,
 By the road-side forgetful would I sit
 Whole hours, my idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

I led a wandering life among the fields ;
 Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,
 I lived upon what casual bounty yields,
 Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
 The ground I for my bed have often used :
 But, what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth
 Is, that I have my inner self abused,
 Foregone the home delight of constant truth,
 And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

Three years thus wandering, often have I view'd,
 In tears, the sun towards that country tend
 Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :
 And now across this moor my steps I bend—
 Oh ! tell me whither—for no earthly friend
 Have I.—She ceased, and weeping turn'd away,
 As if because her tale was at an end
 She wept ; because she had no more to say
 Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay.

Poems founded on the Affections.

THE BROTHERS.*

"THESE tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must live
 A profitable life: some glance along,
 Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
 And they were butterflies to wheel about
 Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,
 Upon the forehead of a jutting crag
 Sit perch'd, with book and pencil on their knee,
 And look and scribble, scribble on and look,
 Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
 Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.
 But, for that moping son of idleness—
 Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our churchyard
 Is neither epitah nor monument,
 Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
 And a few natural graves." To Jane, his wife,
 Thus spake the homely priest of Ennerdale.
 It was a July evening; and he sate
 Upon the long stone seat beneath the eaves
 Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
 Employ'd in winter's work. Upon the stone
 His wife sat near him, teasing matted wool,
 While, from the twin cards, tooth'd with glittering wire,
 He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
 Who turn'd her large round wheel in the open air
 With back and forward steps. Towards the field
 In which the parish chapel stood alone,
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
 Many a long look of wonder; and at last,
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled,
 He laid his implements with gentle care,
 Each in the other lock'd; and, down the path
 Which from his cottage to the churchyard led,
 He took his way, impatient to accost
 The stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,
 A shepherd-lad;—who ere his sixteenth year,
 Had left that calling, tempted to intrust
 His expectations to the fickle winds
 And perilous waters,—with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner,—and so had farod

* This poem was intended to conclude a series of pastorals, the scene of which was laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. I mention this to apologise for the abruptness with which the poem begins.

Through twenty seasons ; but he had been rear'd
 Among the mountains, and he in his heart
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees :—and when the regular wind
 Between the tropics fill'd the steary sail,
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless main, he in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And, while the broad green wave and sparkling foam
 Flash'd round him images and hues that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
 Bclow him in the bosom of the deep,
 Saw mountains,—saw the forms of sheep that grazed
 On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
 And shepherds clad in the same country grey
 Which he himself had worn.*

And now at last
 From perils manifold, with some small wealth,
 Acquired by traffic in the Indian isles,
 To his parental home he is return'd,
 With a determin'd purpose to resume
 The life which he lived there ; both for the sake
 Of many darling pleasures, and the love
 Which to an only brother he has borne
 In all his hardships, since that happy time
 When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
 Were brother shepherds on their native hills.
 —They were the last of all their race : and now,
 When Leonard had approach'd his home, his heart
 Fail'd in him ; and, not venturing to inquire
 Tidings of one whom he so dearly loved,
 Towards the churchyard he had turn'd aside,—
 That as he knew in what particuar spot
 His family were laid, he thence might learn
 If still his brother lived, or to the file
 Another grave was added. He had found
 Another grave,—near which a full half-hour
 He had remain'd : but, as he gazed, there grew
 Such a confusion in his memory,
 That he began to doubt ; and he had hopes
 That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
 That it was not another grave ; but one
 He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
 As up the vale, that afternoon, he walk'd
 Through fields which once had been well known to him :
 And oh ! what joy, the recollection now

* This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of "The Hurricane."

Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,
 And looking round, imagined that he saw
 Strange alteration wrought on every side
 Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,
 And the eternal hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come
 Unseen by Leonard, at the churchyard gate
 Stopp'd short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb,
 Perused him with a gay complacency.
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
 'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
 Of the world's business to go wild alone :
 His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
 The happy man will creep about the fields,
 Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
 Tears down his cheeks, or solitary smiles
 Into his face, until the setting sun
 Write fool upon his forehead. Planted thus
 Beneath a shed that over-arch'd the gate
 Of this rude churchyard, till the stars appear'd,
 The good man might have communed with himself,
 But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
 Approach'd ; he recognized the Priest at once,
 And, after greetings interchanged, and given
 By Leonard to the Vicar, as to one
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

LEONARD.

You live, sir, in these dales, a quiet life :
 Your years make up one peaceful family ;
 And who would grieve and fret, if welcome come
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
 They cannot be remember'd ? Scarce a funeral
 Comes to this churchyard once in eighteen months ;
 And yet some changes must take place among you :
 And you who dwell here, even among these rocks
 Can trace the finger of mortality,
 And see, that with our threescore years and ten,
 We are not all that perish.—I remember,
 For many years ago I pass'd this road,
 There was a footway all along the fields
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had.

PRIEST.

Nay, sir, for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same—

LEONARD.

But, surely, yonder—

PRIEST.

Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
 That does not play you false.—On that tall pike

(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
 There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
 As if they had been made that they might be
 Companions for each other : ten years back,
 Close to those brother fountains, the huge crag
 Was rent with lightning,—one is dead and gone,
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.*—
 For accidents and changes such as these,
 We want not store of them !—a waterspout
 Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast
 For folks that wander up and down like you
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
 One roaring cataract :—a sharp May storm,
 Will come with loads of January snow,
 And in one night send twenty score of sheep
 To feed the ravens ; or a shepherd dies
 By some untoward death among the rocks :
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge—
 A wood is fell'd :—and then for our own homes !
 A child is born or christen'd, a field plough'd,
 A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
 The old house clock is deck'd with a new face ;
 And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
 'To chronicle the time, we all have here
 A pair of diaries,—one serving, sir,
 For the whole dale, and one for each fireside—
 Yours was a stranger's judgment : for historians,
 Commend me to those valleys !

LEONARD.

Yet your churchyard
 Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
 To say that you are heedless of the past ;
 An orphan could not find his mother's grave :
 Here's neither head nor foot stone, plate of brass,
 Cross-bones or skull,—type of our earthly state
 Or emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture field.

PRIEST.

Why, there, sir, is a thought that's new to me !
 The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
 If every English churchyard were like ours ;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :
 We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
 We talk about the dead by our firesides.
 And then, for our immortal part ; *we* want
 No symbols, sir, to tell us that plain tale :
 The thought of death sits easy on the man
 Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

LEONARD.

Your dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts

* This actually took place upon Kidstow Pike at the head of Hawes Water.

Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
 You, sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves ?

PRIEST.

For eight-score winters past,
 With what I've witness'd, and with what I've heard,
 Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter's evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, sir, through a strange round ;
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
 Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—
 It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
 Died broken-hearted.

LEONARD.

'Tis a common case.
 We'll take another : who is he that lies
 Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
 It touches on that piece of native rock
 Left in the churchyard wall.

PRIEST.

That's Walter Ewbank.
 He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
 As ever were produced by youth and age
 Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
 Through five long generations had the heart
 Of Walter's forefathers o'erflow'd the bounds
 Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
 You see it yonder ; and those few green fields.
 They toil'd and wrought, and still from sire to son,
 Each struggled, and each yielded as before
 A little—yet a little—and old Walter,
 They left to him the family heart and land
 With other burthens than the crop it bore.
 Year after year the old man still kept up
 A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,
 Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
 And went into his grave before his time.
 Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurr'd him,
 God only knows, but to the very last
 He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
 His pace was never that of an old man :
 I almost see him tripping down the path
 With bis two grandsons after him :—but you,
 Unless our landlord be your host to-night,
 Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths
 Even in the longest day of midsummer—

LEONARD.

But those two orphans

PRIEST.

Orphans!—Such they were—
 Yet not while Walter lived :—for, though their parents
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
 The old man was a father to the boys,
 Two fathers in one father : and if tears,
 Shed when he talk'd of them where they were not.
 And hauntings from the infirmity of love,
 Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,
 This old man, in the day of his old age,
 Was half a mother to them.—If you weep, sir,
 To hear a stranger talking about strangers,
 Heaven bless you when your are among your kindred
 Ay—You may turn that way—it is a grave
 Which will bear looking at.

LEONARD.

These boys—I hope
 They loved this good old man?—

PRIEST.

They did—and truly :
 But that was what we almost overlook'd,
 They were such darlings of each other. For
 Though from their cradles they had lived with Walter,
 The only kinsman near them, and though he
 Inclined to them by reason of his age,
 With a more fond, familiar tenderness,
 They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,
 And it all went into each other's hearts.
 Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,
 Was two years taller : 'twas a joy to see,
 To hear, to meet them !—From their house the school
 Was distant three short miles—and in the time
 Of storm and thaw, when every watercourse
 And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed
 Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
 Was swollen into a noisy rivulet,
 Would Leonard then, when elder boys perhaps
 Remain'd at home, go staggering through the fords,
 Bearing his brother on his back. I've seen him,
 On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,
 Ay, more than once I've seen him mid-leg deep,
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone
 Upon the hither side : and once I said,
 As I remember, looking round these rocks
 And hills on which all of us were born,
 That God who made the great book of the world
 Would bless such piety—

LEONARD.

It may be then—

PRIEST.

Never did worthier lads break English bread ;

The finest Sunday that the autumn saw,
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,
 Could never keep these boys away from church,
 Or tempt them to an hour of Sabbath breach.
 Leonard and James! I warrant, every corner
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place
 Where foot could come, to one or both of them
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roebucks they went bounding o'er the hills :
 They play'd like two young ravens on the crags :
 Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well
 As many of their betters—and for Leonard !
 The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A Bible, and I'd wager twenty pounds,
 That, if he is alive, he has it yet.

LEONARD.

It seems, these brothers have not lived to be
 A comfort to each other.—

PRIEST.

That they might
 Live to such end, is what both old and young,
 In this our valley, all of us have wish'd,
 And what, for my part, I have often pray'd :
 But Leonard—

LEONARD.

Then James still is left among you !

PRIEST.

'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking :
 They had an uncle ;—he was at that time
 A thriving man, and traffick'd on the seas :
 And, but for that same uncle, to this hour
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud.
 For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;
 And, though of unripe years, a stripling only,
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.
 But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
 To strive with such a torrent ; when he died,
 The estate and house were sold ; and all their sheep,
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years :—
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute ;
 And Leonard, chiefly for his brother's sake,
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
 'Tis now twelve years since we had tidings from him.
 If there was one among us who had heard
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
 From the Great Gavel,* down by Leeza's banks,

* The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale. The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale : on issuing from the lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
 The day would be a very festival ;
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see—
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good sir !
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little
 That would bring down his spirit ; and no doubt,
 Before it ended in his death, the youth
 Was sadly cross'd—Poor Leonard ! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand and said to me,
 If ever the day came when he was rich,
 He would return, and on his father's land
 He would grow old among us.

LEONARD.

If that day
 Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him ;
 He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
 As any that should meet him—

PRIEST.

Happy ! Sir—

LEONARD.

You said his kindred all were in their graves,
 And that he had one brother—

PRIEST.

That is but
 A fellow tale of sorrow. From his youth
 James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
 And Leonard being always by his side,
 Had done so many offices about him,
 That, though he was not of a timid nature,
 Yet still the spirit of a mountain boy
 In him was somewhat check'd ; and when his brother
 Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
 The little colour that he had was soon
 Stolen from his cheek ; he droop'd, and pined, and pined—

LEONARD.

But these are all the graves of full-grown men !

PRIEST.

Ay, sir, that pass'd away : we took him to us ;
 He was the child of all the dale—he lived
 Three months with one, and six months with another :
 And wanted neither food, or clothes, nor love :
 And many, many happy days were his.
 But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief
 His absent brother still was at his heart.
 And, when he lived beneath our roof, we found
 (A practice till this time unknown to him)

That often, rising from his bed at night,
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
 He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved!
 Forgive me, sir: before I spoke to you,
 I judged you most unkindly.

LEONARD.

But this youth,
 How did he die at last?

PRIEST.

One sweet May morning
 (It will be twelve years since when spring returns)
 He had gone forth among the new-dropp'd lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom it chanced
 Some further business summon'd to a house
 Which stands at the dale-head. James, tired perhaps,
 Or from some other cause, remain'd behind.
 You see yon precipice; it almost looks
 Like some vast building made of many crags;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is call'd THE PILLAR.
 James pointed to its summit, over which
 They all had purposed to return together,
 And told them that he there would wait for them;
 They parted, and his comrades pass'd that way
 Some two hours after, but they did not find him
 Upon the summit—at the appointed place.
 Of this they took no heed: but one of them,
 Going by chance, at night, into the house
 Which at that time was James's home, there learn'd
 That nobody had seen him all that day:
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of:
 The neighbours were alarm'd, and to the brook
 Some went, and some towards the lake: ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock—
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after,
 I buried him, poor youth, and there he lies!

LEONARD.

And that then 's his grave? Before his death
 You said that he saw many happy years?

PRIEST.

Ay, that he did—

LEONARD.

And all went well with him?—

PRIEST.

If he had one, the youth had twenty homes.

LEONARD.

And you believe, then, that his mind was easy?—

PRIEST.

Yes, long before he died he found that time
Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
His thoughts were turn'd on Leonard's luckless fortune,
He talk'd about him with a cheerful love.

LEONARD.

He could not come to an unhallow'd end !

PRIEST.

Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I mention'd
A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectur'd
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
Upon the grass,—and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walk'd, and from the summit had fallen headlong ;
And so no doubt he perish'd : at the time,
We guess, that in his hands he must have had
His shepherd's staff ; for midway in the cliff
It had been caught ; and there for many years
It hung—and moulder'd there.

The Priest here ended—

The stranger would have thank'd him, but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away
The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;
And Leonard, when they reach'd the churchyard gate,
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turn'd round,—
And, looking at the grave, he said, "My Brother."
The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,
Pointing towards the cottage, he entreated
That Leonard would partake his homely fare :
The other thank'd him with a fervent voice ;
But added, that, the evening being calm,
He would pursue his journey. So they parted.
It was not long ere Leonard reach'd a grove
That overhung the road : he there stopp'd short,
And, sitting down beneath the trees, review'd
All that the Priest had said : his early years
Were with him in his heart : his cherish'd hopes,
And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
All press'd on him with such a weight, that now
This vale, where he had been so happy, seem'd
A place in which he could not bear to live :
So he relinquish'd all his purposes.
He travell'd on to Egremont : and thence,
That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
Reminding him of what had pass'd between them ;
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
That it was from the weakness of his heart
He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
A seaman, a grey-headed mariner.

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
 Those bright blue eggs together laid !
 On me the chance-discover'd sight
 Gleam'd like a vision of delight.—
 I started—seeming to espy
 The home and shelter'd bed,—
 The sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
 My father's house, in wet or dry,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

She look'd at it as if she fear'd it ;
 Still wishing, dreading to be near it :
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little prattler among men.
 The blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

I'VE watch'd you now a full half-hour
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
 And, little butterfly, indeed,
 I know not if you sleep or feed.
 How motionless !—not frozen seas
 More motionless ; and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard ground is ours ;
 My trees they are, my sister's flowers ;
 Here rest your wings when they are weary—
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song ;
 And summer days when we were young ;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.

A FAREWELL.*

FAREWELL, thou little nook of mountain ground,
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare ;
 Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
 Farewell !—we leave thee to Heav'n's peaceful care,
 Thee, and the cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchor'd by the shore,
 And safely she will ride when we are gone ;
 The flowering shrubs that decorate our door
 Will prosper, though untended and alone :
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none ;
 These narrow bounds contain our private store
 Of things earth makes and sun doth shine upon,
 Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought ;
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
 Whom from the borders of the lake we brought,
 And placed together near our rocky well.

We go for one to whom ye will be dear ;
 And she will prize this bower, this Indian shed,
 Our own contrivance, building without peer !
 —A gentle maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
 She'll come to you,—to you herself will wed,—
 And love the blessed life which we lead here.

Dear spot ! which we have watch'd with tender heed,
 Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
 Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
 Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
 Making all kindness register'd and known ;
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle place,
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
 To them who look not daily in thy face ;
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
 And say'st when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"
 Thou easy-hearted thing, with thy wild race

* Composed in the year 1802.

Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,—
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell her tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring the best beloved and best.
Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
Here, throng'd with primroses, the steep rock's breast
Glitter'd at evening like a starry sky ;
And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sung one song that will not die.

O happy garden ! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
Two burning months let summer overleap,
And, coming back with her who will be ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET COPY OF THOMSON'S "CASTLE OF
INDOLENCE."

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt one
Whom without blame I may not overlook ;
For never sun on living creature shone
Who more devout enjoyment with us took :
Here on his hours he hung as on a book ;
On his own time here would he float away,
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
But go to-morrow—or belike to-day—
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home,
And find elsewhere his business or delight ;
Out of our valley's limits did he roam :
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
His voice came to us from the neighbouring height :
Oft did we see him driving full in view,
At mid-day, when the sun was shining bright ;
What ill was on him, what he had to do,
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this man
When he came back to us, a wither'd flower,
Or, like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
Look at the common grass from hour to hour :
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,

Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away .

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
Whenever from our valley he withdrew ;
For happier soul no living creature has
Than he had, being here the long day through.
Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :
Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong :
But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
And his own mind did like a tempest strong
Come to him thus, and drove the weary wight along.

With him there often walk'd in friendly guise,
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seem'd undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be ;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Depress'd by weight of musing phantasy ;
Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
Yet some did think that he had little business here :

Sweet heaven forfend ! his was a lawful right ;
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
His limbs would toss about him with delight,
Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
Nor lack'd his calmer hours device or toy
To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
He would have taught you how you might employ
Yourself ; and many did to him repair,—
And, certes, not in vain ; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
Long blades of grass, pluck'd round him as he lay,
Made—to his ear attentively applied—
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play—
Glasses he had, that little things display,—
The beetle with his radiance manifold,
A mail'd angel on a battle-day ;
And cups of flowers, and herbage green and gold ;
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other man to hear
His music, and to view his imagery :
And, sooth, these two did love each other dear,
As far as love in such a place could be ;
There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,
As happy spirits as were ever seen :
If but a bird, to keep them company,
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
As pleas'd as if the same had been a maiden queen.

ELLEN IRWIN ; OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLE.*

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
 Upon the Braes of Kirtle,
 Was lovely as a Grecian maid
 Adorn'd with wreaths of myrtle.
 Young Adam Bruce beside her lay ;
 And there did they beguile the day
 With love and gentle speeches,
 Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
 The Bruce had been selected ;
 And Gordon, fairest of them all,
 By Ellen was rejected.
 Sad tidings to that noble youth !
 For it may be proclaim'd with truth,
 If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
 That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what is Gordon's beauteous face,
 And what are Gordon's crosses
 To them who sit by Kirtle's Braes
 Upon the verdant mosses ?
 Alas that ever he was born !
 The Gordon, couch'd behind a thorn,
 Sees them and their caressing,
 Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon cannot bear the thoughts
 That through his brain are travelling,—
 And, starting up, to Bruce's heart,
 He launch'd a deadly javelin !
 Fair Ellen saw it when it came,
 And, stepping forth to meet the same,
 Did with her body cover
 The youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
 Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
 Thus from the heart of her true love
 The mortal spear repelling.
 And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
 The Gordon, sail'd away to Spain ;
 And fought, with rage incessant,
 Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,
 And many years ensuing,
 This wretched knight did vainly seek
 The death that he was wooing :
 And, coming back across the wave,
 Without a groan on Ellen's grave

* The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on whose banks the events here related took place.

His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkonnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen :
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn HIC JACET !

STRANGE fits of passion I have known
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved was strong and gay,
And like a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath the evening moon.

Upon the moon I fix'd my eye,
All over the wide lea :
My horse trudged on—and we drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reach'd the orchard plot ;
And, as we climb'd the hill,
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot
The moon descended still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
And, all the while, my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised and never stopp'd :
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once the bright moon dropp'd.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head !—
“ O mercy ! ” to myself I cried,
“ If Lucy should be dead ! ”

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !

Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me !

I TRAVELL'D among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England ! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherish'd turn'd her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings show'd, thy nights conceal'd
The bowers where Lucy play'd ;
And thine is too the last green field
That Lucy's eyes survey'd.

LOUISA.

I MET Louisa in the shade ;
And, having seen that lovely maid,
Why should I fear to say
That she is ruddy, fleet, and strong ;
And down the rocks can leap along,
Like rivulets in May ?

And she hath smiles to earth unknown ;
Smiles, that with motion of their own
Do spread, and sink, and rise ;
That come and go with endless play,
And ever, as they pass away,
Are hidden in her eyes.

She loves her fire, her cottage home ;
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
In weather rough and bleak ;
And, when against the wind she strains,
Oh ! might I kiss the mountain rains
That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"
If I with her but half a noon
May sit beneath the walls
Of some old cave, or mossy nook,
When up she winds along the brook,
To hunt the waterfalls.

"Tis said, that some have died for love :
 And here and there a churchyard grave is found
 In the cold North's unhallow'd ground,—
 Because the wretched man himself had slain,
 His love was such a grievous pain.
 And there is one whom I five years have known ;
 He dwells alone
 Upon Helvellyn's side :
 He loved—the pretty Barbara died,
 And thus he makes his moan :
 Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid,
 When thus his moan he made :

"Oh, move, thou cottage, from behind that oak !
 Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
 That in some other way yon smoke
 May mount into the sky !
 The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :
 I look—the sky is empty space ;
 I know not what I trace ;
 But, when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

"O, what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves,
 When will that dying murmur be suppress'd ?
 Your sound my heart of peace bereaves,
 It robs my heart of rest.
 Thou thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,
 Into yon row of willows flit,
 Upon that alder sit ;
 Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

"Roll back, sweet rill ! back to thy mountain bounds,
 And there for ever be thy waters chain'd !
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
 That cannot be sustain'd ;
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,
 Oh let it then be dumb !—
 Be anything, sweet rill, but that which thou art now.

"Thou eglantine, whose arch so proudly towers
 (Even like a rainbow spanning half the vale),
 Thou one fair shrub—oh, shed thy flowers,
 And stir not in the gale !
 For thus to see thee nodding in the air,—
 To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
 Thus rise and thus descend,—
 Disturbs me, till the sight is more than I can bear."

The man who makes this feverish complaint
 Is one of giant stature, who could dance
 Equipp'd from head to foot in iron mail.

Ah gentle love ! if ever thought was thine
 To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
 Turn from me, gentle love ! nor let me walk
 Within the sound of Emma's voice, or know
 Such happiness as I have known to-day.

THE COMPLAINT OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

(When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he is unable to follow or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert ; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work, *Hearne's Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*. In the high Northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the Northern Lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise. This circumstance is alluded to in the first stanzas of the following Poem.)

BEFORE I see another day,
 Oh let my body die away !
 In sleep I heard the Northern gleams ;
 The stars were mingled with my dreams ;
 In sleep did I behold the skies,
 I saw the crackling flashes drive ;
 And yet they are upon my eyes,
 And yet I am alive.
 Before I see another day,
 Oh let my body die away !

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
 Yet is it dead, and I remain.
 All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
 And they are dead, and I will die.
 When I was well, I wish'd to live,
 For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;
 But they to me no joy can give,
 No pleasure now, and no desire.
 Then here contented will I lie !
 Alone I cannot fear to die.

Alas ! ye might have dragg'd me on
 Another day, a single one !
 Too soon I yielded to despair ;
 Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
 When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;
 And oh how grievously I rue,
 That, afterwards, a little longer,
 My friends, I did not follow you !
 For strong and without pain I lay,
 My friends, when ye were gone away.

My child ! they gave thee to another,
 A woman who was not thy mother.
 When from my arms my babe they took,
 O me how strangely did he look !

Through his whole body something ran ;
 A most strange working did I see ;
 —As if he strove to be a man,
 That he might pull the sledge for me.
 And then he stretch'd his arms, how wild !
 Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

My little joy ! my little pride !
 In two days more I must have died.
 Then do not weep and grieve for me ;
 I feel I must have died with thee.
 Oh wind, that o'er my head art flying
 The way my friends their course did bend,
 I should not feel the pain of dying,
 Could I with thee a message send !
 Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;
 For I had many things to say.

I'll follow you across the snow ;
 Ye travel heavily and slow ;
 In spite of all my weary pain,
 I'll look upon your tents again.
 —My fire is dead, and snowy white
 The water which beside it stood ;
 The wolf has come to me to-night,
 And he has stolen away my food.
 For ever left alone am I,
 Then wherefore shall I fear to die !

THE LAST OF THE FLOCK.

In distant countries have I been,
 And yet I have not often seen
 A healthy man, a man full grown,
 Weep in the public roads alone.
 But such a one, on English ground,
 And in the broad highway, I met ;
 Along the broad highway he came,
 His cheeks with tears were wet ;
 Sturdy he seem'd, though he was sad ;
 And in his arms a lamb he had.

He saw me, and he turn'd aside,
 As if he wish'd himself to hide :
 Then with his coat he made essay
 To wipe these briny tears away.
 I follow'd him, and said, " My friend,
 What ails you—wherefore weep you so ?"
 —" Shame on me, sir ! this lusty lamb,
 He makes my tears to flow.
 To-day I fetch'd him from the rock ;
 He is the last of all my flock.

" When I was young, a single man,
 And after youthful follies ran,

Though little given to care and thought,
Yet, so it was, a ewe I bought ;
And other sheep from her I raised,
As healthy sheep as you might see ;
And then I married, and was rich
As I could wish to be ;
Of sheep I number'd a full score,
And every year increased my store.

“ Year after year my stock it grew ;
And from this one, this single ewe,
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
As sweet a flock as ever grazed !
Upon the mountain did they feed,
They throve, and we at home did thrive.
—This lusty lamb, of all my store,
Is all that is alive ;
And now I care not if we die,
And perish all of poverty.

“ Six children, sir ! had I to feed ;
Hard labour in a time of need !
My pride was tamed, and in our grief
I of the parish ask'd relief.
They said I was a wealthy man ;
My sheep upon the mountain fed,
And it was fit that thence I took
Whereof to buy us bread.
'Do this : how can we give to you,'
They cried, ' what to the poor is due ?'

“ I sold a sheep, as they had said,
And bought my little children bread,
And they were healthy with their food ;
For me,—it never did me good.
A woeful time it was for me,
To see the end of all my gains,
The pretty flock which I had rear'd
With all my care and pains,
To see it melt like snow away !
For me it was a woeful day.

“ Another still ! and still another !
A little lamb, and then its mother
It was a vein that never stopp'd—
Like blood-drops from my heart they dropp'd.
Till thirty were not left alive,
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one,
And I may say, that many a time
I wish'd they all were gone :
They dwindled one by one away ;
For me it was a woeful day.

“ To wicked deeds I was inclined,
And wicked fancies cross'd my mind ;
And every man I chanced to see,
I thought he knew some ill of me.

No peace, no comfort could I find,
 No ease, within doors or without ;
 And crazily, and wearily,
 I went my work about.
 Oft-times I thought to run away ;
 For me it was a woeful day.

"Sir ; 'twas a precious flock to me,
 As dear as my own children be ;
 For daily, with my growing store,
 I loved my children more and more.
 Alas ! it was an evil time ;
 God cursed me in my sore distress ;
 I pray'd, yet every day I thought
 I loved my children less ;
 And every week and every day,
 My flock it seem'd to melt away.

"They dwindled, sir, sad sight to see !
 From ten to five, from five to three,
 A lamb, a wether, and a ewe —
 And them, at last, from three to two ;
 And, of my fifty, yesterday
 I had but only one ;
 And here it lies upon my arm,
 Alas ! and I have none ;—
 To-day I fetch'd it from the rock ;
 It is the last of all my flock."

A COMPLAINT.

THERE is a change—and I am poor ;
 Your love hath been, nor long ago,
 A fountain at my fond heart's door,
 Whose only business was to flow ;
 And flow it did ; not taking heed
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count !
 Bless'd was I then, all bliss above !
 Now, for this consecrated fount
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
 What have I—shall I dare to tell ?
 A comfortless and hidden WELL.

A well of love—it may be deep ;
 I trust it is,—and never dry ;
 What matter ? if the waters sleep
 In silence and obscurity.
 —Such change, and at the very door
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

RUTH.

WHEN Ruth was left half-desolate,
Her father took another mate ;
And Ruth, not seven years old,
A slighted child, at her own will
Went wand'ring over dale and hill,
In thoughtless freedom bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And from that oaten pipe could draw
All sounds of winds and floods ;
Had built a bower upon the green,
As if she from her birth had been
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone
She seem'd to live ; her thoughts her own ;
Herself her own delight :
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay,
She pass'd her time ; and in this way
Grew up to woman's height.

There came a youth from Georgia's shore,—
A military casque he wore
With splendid feathers dress'd ;
He brought them from the Cherokees ;
The feathers nodded in the breeze,
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :
Ah ! no, he spake the English tongue
And bore a soldier's name ;
And, when America was free
From battle and from jeopardy,
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek,
In finest tones the youth could speak.
—While he was yet a boy,
The moon, the glory of the sun,
And streams that murmur as they run,
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely youth ! I guess
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he ;
And, when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought ;
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear ;
Such tales as, told to any maid
By such a youth, in the green shade.
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls, a happy rout !
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
 Their pleasant Indian town,
 To gather strawberries all day long ;
 Returning with a choral song
 When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants divine and strange
 That every hour their blossoms change,
 Ten thousand lovely hucs !
 With budding, fading, faded flowers,
 They stand the wonder of the bowers,
 From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia,* spread
 High as a cloud, high over head !
 The cypress and her spire,
 —Of flowers† that with one scarlet gleam
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
 To set the hills on fire.

The youth of green savannahs spake
 And many an endless, endless lake,
 With all its fairy crowds
 Of islands, that together lie
 As quietly as spots of sky
 Among the evening clouds.

And then he said, "How sweet it were
 A fisher or a hunter there,
 A gard'ner in the shade,
 Still wandering with an easy mind
 To build a household fire, and find
 A home in every glade !

"What days and what sweet years ! Ah me !
 Our life were life indeed, with thee
 So pass'd in quiet bliss,
 And all the while," said he, "to know
 That we were in a world of woe,
 On such an earth as this !"

And then he sometimes interwove
 Dear thoughts about a father's love ;
 "For there," said he, "are spun
 Around the heart such tender ties,
 That our own children to our eyes
 Are dearer than the sun.

"Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me
 My helpmate in the woods to be,
 Our shed at night to rear ;
 Or run, my own adopted bride,
 A sylvan huntress at my side,
 And drive the flying deer !

* *Magnolia grandiflora*.

† The splendid appearance of these scarlet flowers, which are scattered with such profusion over the hills in the southern parts of North America, is frequently mentioned by Bartram in his travels.

“ Beloved Ruth ! ”—No more he said.
Sweet Ruth alone at midnight shed
A solitary tear ;
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

“ And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife.”
Even so they did ; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That, on those lonesome floods,
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
This stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And with his dancing crest
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roam'd about with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the west.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a youth to whom was given
So much of earth—so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seemed allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of Nature wrought,
Fair trees and lovely flowers ;
The breezes their own languor lent ;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those gorgeous bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent :
For passions link'd to forms so fair
And stately, needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw
 With men to whom no better law
 Nor better life was known ;
 Deliberately, and undeceived,
 Those wild men's vices he received,
 And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame
 Were thus impair'd, and he became
 The slave of low desires :
 A man who without self-control
 Would seek what the degraded soul
 Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feign'd delight
 Had woo'd the maiden, day and night
 Had loved her, night and morn :
 What could he less than love a maid
 Whose heart with so much nature play'd ?
 So kind and so forlorn !

But now the pleasant dream was gone ;
 No hope, no wish remain'd, not one,—
 They stirr'd him now no more ;
 New objects did new pleasure give,
 And once again he wish'd to live
 As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
 They for the voyage were prepared,
 And went to the sea-shore ;
 But, when they thither came, the youth
 Deserted his poor bride, and Ruth
 Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she had
 That she in half a year was mad
 And in a prison housed ;
 And there, exulting in her wrongs,
 Among the music of her songs,
 She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
 Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
 Nor pastimes of the May,
 —They all were with her in her cell ;
 And a wild brook, with cheerful knell,
 Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
 There came a respite to her pain ;
 She from her prison fled ;
 But of the vagrant none took thought ;
 And where it liked her best she sought
 Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again :
 The master current of her brain
 Ran permanent and free ;
 And, coming to the banks of Tone,*
 There did she rest ; and dwell alone
 Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
 That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
 And airs that gently stir
 The vernal leaves, she loved them still,
 Nor ever tax'd them with the ill
 Which had been done to her.

A barn her winter bed supplies ;
 But, till the warmth of summer skies
 And summer days is gone
 (And all do in this tale agree),
 She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
 And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !
 And Ruth will, long before her day,
 Be broken down and old.
 Sore aches she needs must have ! but less
 Of mind, than body's wretchedness,
 From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is press'd by want of food,
 She from her dwelling in the wood
 Repairs to a road-side ;
 And there she begs at one steep place,
 Where up and down with easy pace
 The horseman-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
 Or thrown away ; but with a flute
 Her loneliness she cheers :
 This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
 At evening in his homeward walk
 The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have pass'd her on the hills
 Setting her little water-mills
 By spouts and fountains wild—
 Such small machinery as she turn'd
 Ere she had wept, ere she had mourn'd,
 A young and happy child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,
 Ill-fated Ruth ! in hallow'd mould
 Thy corpse shall buried be ;

* The Tone is a river of Somersetshire at no great distance from the Quantock Hills. These hills, which are alluded to a few stanzas below, are extremely beautiful, and in many places richly covered with coppice woods.

For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
 And all the congregation sing
 A Christian psalm for thee.

THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT.

BY A FEMALE FRIEND.*

THE days are cold, the nights are long,
 The north wind sings a doleful song ;
 Then hush again upon my breast ;
 All merry things are now at rest,
 Save thee, my pretty love !

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,
 The crickets long have ceased their mirth ;
 There's nothing stirring in the house
 Save one *wee*, hungry, nibbling mouse,
 Then why so busy thou ?

Nay ! start not at that sparkling light ;
 'Tis but the moon that shines so bright
 On the window-pane bedropp'd with rain :
 Then, little darling ! sleep again,
 And wake when it is day.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

ONE morning (raw it was and wet,
 A foggy day in winter time)
 A woman on the road I met,
 Not old, though something past her prime :
 Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;
 And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
 Old times, thought I are breathing there ;
 Proud was I that my country bred
 Such strength, a dignity so fair :
 She begg'd an alms, like one in poor estate ;
 I look'd at her again, nor did my pride abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
 With the first word I had to spare,
 I said to her, " Beneath your cloak,
 What's that which on your arms you bear ?"
 She answer'd, soon as she the question heard,
 " A simple burthen, Sir, a little singing-bird."

And thus continuing, she said,
 " I had a son, who many a day
 Sail'd on the seas ; but he is dead ;

* See page 2.

In Denmark he was cast away ;
 And I have travell'd far as Hull, to see
 What clothes he might have left, or other property.

"The bird and cage they both were his"
 'Twas my son's bird ; and neat and trim
 He kept it : many voyages
 His singing-bird hath gone with him ;
 When last he sail'd he left the bird behind,
 As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

"He to a fellow-lodger's care
 Had left it, to be watch'd and fed,
 Till he came back again ; and there
 I found it when my son was dead ;
 And now—God help me for my little wit—
 I trail it with me, sir ! he took so much delight in it."

THE CHILDLESS FATHER.

"UP, Timothy, up, with your staff, and away !
 Not a soul in the village this morning will stay ;
 The hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds,
 And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,
 On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen ;
 With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as snow,
 The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

The basin of boxwood,* just six months before,
 Had stood on the table at Timothy's door ;
 A coffin through Timothy's threshold had pass'd ;
 One child did it bear, and that child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,
 The horse and the horn, and the "hark ! hark away !"
 Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut,
 With a leisurely motion, the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said,
 "The key I must take, for my Helen is dead."
 But of this in my ears not a word did he speak,
 And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

* In several parts of the north of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of boxwood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this boxwood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET — OF —

WHERE art thou, my beloved son,
 Where art thou, worse to me than dead?
 Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
 Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
 Why am I ignorant of the same,
 That I may rest; and neither blame
 Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received
 No tidings of an only child;
 To have despair'd, and have believed,
 And be for evermore beguiled;
 Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss,
 I catch at them, and then I miss;
 Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,
 An object beauteous to behold;
 Well born, well bred; I sent him forth
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:
 If things ensued that wanted grace,
 As hath been said, they were not base;
 And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the young one dream,
 When full of play and childish cares,
 What power hath even his wildest scream,
 Heard by his mother unawares!
 He knows it not, he cannot guess:
 Years to a mother bring distress;
 But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me! no, I suffer'd long
 From that ill thought, and, being blind,
 Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong:
 Kind mother have I been, as kind
 As ever breathed:" and that is true;
 I've wet my path with tears like dew,
 Weeping for him when no one knew.

My son, if thou be humbled, poor,
 Hopeless of honour and of gain,
 Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
 Think not of me with grief and pain:
 I now can see with better eyes;
 And worldly grandeur I despise,
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;
 They mount, how short a voyage brings

The wanderers back to their delight !
 Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be
 All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
 Maim'd, mangled by inhuman men ;
 Or thou upon a desert thrown
 Inheritest the lion's den ;
 Or hast been summon'd to the deep,
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
 An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts, but none will force
 Their way to me ; 'tis falsely said
 That there was ever intercourse
 Betwixt the living and the dead ;
 For, surely, then I should have sight
 Of him I wait for day and night,
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
 I dread the rustling of the grass ;
 The very shadows of the clouds
 Have power to shake me as they pass :
 I question things, and do not find
 One that will answer to my mind ;
 And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie
 My troubles, and beyond relief :
 If any chance to heave a sigh,
 They pity me, and not my grief.
 Then come to me, my son, or send
 Some tidings that my woes may end ;
 I have no other earthly friend.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourn'd,
 In which a lady driven from France did dwell ;
 The big and lesser griefs, with which she mourn'd,
 In friendship she to me would often tell.
 This lady, dwelling upon English ground,
 Where she was childless, daily did repair
 To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I found,
 For sake of a young child whose home was there.

Once did I see her clasp the child about,
 And take it to herself ; and I, next day,
 Wish'd in my native tongue to fashion out
 Such things as she unto this child might say :
 And thus, from what I knew, had heard, and guess'd,
 My song the workings of her heart express'd.
 " Dear babe, though daughter of another,
 One moment let me be thy mother !

An infant's face and looks are thine ;
 And sure a mother's heart is mine :
 Thy own dear mother's far away,
 At labour in the harvest-field :
 Thy little sister is at play ;—
 What warmth, what comfort would it yield
 To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
 One little hour a child to me !

“ Across the waters I am come,
 And I have left a babe at home :
 A long, long way of land and sea !
 Come to me—I'm no enemy :
 I am the same who at thy side
 Sate yesterday, and made a nest
 For thee, sweet baby !—thou hast tried,
 Thou know'st, the pillow of my breast ;
 Good, good art thou ;—alas ! to me
 Far more than I can be to thee.

“ Here, little darling, dost thou lie ;
 An infant thou, a mother I !
 Mine wilt thou be—thou hast no fears ;
 Mine art thou, spite of these my tears.
 Alas ! before I left the spot,
 My baby and its dwelling-place,
 The nurse said to me, ‘ Tears should not
 Be shed upon an infant's face,
 It was unlucky ’—no, no, no ;
 No truth is in them who say so !

“ My own dear little one will sigh,
 Sweet babe ! and they will let him die.
 ‘ He pines,’ they'll say, ‘ it is his doom,
 And you may see his hour is come.’
 Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
 Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,
 Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
 And countenance like a summer's day,
 They would have hopes of him—and then
 I should behold his face again !

“ 'Tis gone—forgotten—let me do
 My best—there was a smile or two ;
 I can remember them : I see
 The smiles, worth all the world to me.
 Dear baby ! I must lay thee down ;
 Thou troublest me with strange alarms ;
 Smiles hast thou, sweet ones of thy own ;
 I cannot keep thee in my arms,
 For they confound me : as it is—
 I have forgot those smiles of his.

“ Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
 Together here this one half-day.

My sister's child, who bears my name,
 From France across the ocean came ;
 She with her mother cross'd the sea ;
 The babe and mother near me dwell :
 My darling, she is not to me
 What thou art ! though I love her well :
 Rest, little stranger, rest thee here !
 Never was any child more dear !

—“ I cannot help it—ill intent
 I've none, my pretty innocent !
 I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
 These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
 Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
 How cold it is ! but thou art good ;
 Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
 I think, to help me if they could.
 Blessings upon that quiet face,
 My heart again is in its place !

“ While thou art mine, my little love,
 This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
 Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
 I seem to find them all in thee.
 Here's grass to play with, here are flowers ;
 I'll call thee by my darling's name ;
 Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
 Thy features seem to me the same ;
 His little sister thou shalt be :
 And, when once more my home I see,
 I'll tell him many tales of thee.”

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,
 The sun has burnt her coal-black hair,
 Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,
 And she came far from o'er the main.
 She has a baby on her arm,
 Or else she were alone ;
 And underneath the haystack warm,
 And on the greenwood stone,
 She talk'd and sung the woods among,
 And it was in the English tongue.

“ Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,
 But nay, my heart is far too glad ;
 And I am happy when I sing
 Full many a sad and doleful thing ;
 Then, lovely baby, do not fear !
 I pray thee have no fear of me,
 But, safe as in a cradle here,
 My lovely baby ! thou shalt be :
 To thee I know too much I owe ;
 I cannot work thee any woo.

“ A fire was once within my brain ;
 And in my head a dull, dull pain ;
 And fiendish faces, one, two, three,
 Hung at my breasts, and pull'd at me.
 But then there came a sight of joy ;
 It came at once to do me good ;
 I waked, and saw my little boy,
 My little boy of flesh and blood ;
 Oh joy for me that sight to see !
 For he was here, and only he

“ Suck, little babe, oh suck again !
 It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;
 Thy lips I feel them, baby ! they
 Draw from my heart the pain away
 Oh ! press me with thy little hand,
 It loosens something at my chest ;
 About that tight and deadly band
 I feel thy little fingers press'd.
 The breeze I see is in the tree ;
 It comes to cool my babe and me.

“ Oh ! love me, love me, little boy !
 Thou art thy mother's only joy ;
 And do not dread the waves below,
 When o'er the sea-rocks' edge we go ;
 The high crag cannot work me harm,
 Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;
 The babe I carry on my arm,
 He saves for me my precious soul :
 Then happy lie, for bless'd am I ;
 Without me my sweet babe would die.

“ Then, do not fear, my boy ! for thee
 Bold as a lion I will be ;
 And I will always be thy guide
 Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
 I'll build an Indian bower ; I know
 The leaves that make the softest bed ;
 And, if from me thou wilt not go,
 But still be true till I am dead,
 My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing
 As merry as the birds in spring.

“ Thy father cares not for my breast,
 'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest :
 'Tis all thine own !—and, if its hue
 Be changed, that was so fair to view,
 'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !
 My beauty, little child, is flown ;
 But thou wilt live with me in love,
 And what if my poor cheek be brown ?
 'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
 How pale and wan it else would be.

“ Dread not their taunts, my little life,
 I am thy father's wedded wife ;

And underneath the spreading tree
 We two will live in honesty.
 If his sweet boy he could forsake,
 With me he never would have stay'd :
 From him no harm my babe can take,
 But he, poor man ! is wretched mado ;
 And every day we two will pray
 For him that's gone and far away.

" I'll teach my boy the sweetest things ;
 I'll teach him how the owlet sings.
 My little babe ! thy lips are still,
 And thou hast almost suck'd thy fill.
 — Where art thou gone, my own dear child ?
 What wicked looks are those I see ?
 Alas ! alas ! that look sô wild,
 It never, never came from me :
 If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
 Then I must be for ever sad.

" Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !
 For I thy own dear mother am.
 My love for thee has well been tried :
 I've sought thy father far and wide.
 I know the poisons of the shade,
 I know the earth-nuts fit for food ;
 Then, pretty dear, be not afraid ;
 We'll find thy father in the wood.
 Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !
 And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

THE IDIOT BOY.

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,
 The moon is up—the sky is blue,
 The owlet in the moonlight air,
 He shouts from nobody knows where ;
 He lengthens out his lonely shout,
 Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo !

— Why bustle thus about your door,
 What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?
 Why are you in this mighty fret ?
 And why on horseback have you set
 Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ?

Beneath the moon that shines so bright,
 Till she is tired, let Betty Foy
 With girth and stirrup *fiddle-faddle* ;
 But wherefore set upon a saddle
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ?

There's scarce a soul that's out of bed ;
 Good Betty, put him down again
 His lips with joy they burr at you ;

But, Betty ! what has he to do
 With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?
 The world will say 'tis very idle,
 Bethink you of the time of night ;
 There's not a mother, no not one,
 But when she hears what you have done,
 O Betty, she'll be in a fright.

But Betty's bent on her intent ;
 For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,
 Old Susan, she who dwells alone,
 Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,
 As if her very life would fail.

There's not a house within a mile,
 No hand to help them in distress :
 Old Susan lies abed in pain,
 And sorely puzzled are the twain,
 For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,
 Where by the week he doth abide,
 A woodman in the distant vale ;
 There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;
 What must be done—what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetch'd
 Her pony, that is mild and good,
 Whether he be in joy or pain,
 Feeding at will along the lane,
 Or bringing fagots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—
 And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy
 Has up upon the saddle set
 (The like was never heard of yet)
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay
 Across the bridge that's in the dale,
 And by the church, and o'er the down,
 To bring a doctor from the town,
 Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,
 There is no need of whip or wand ;
 For Johnny has his holly-bough,
 And with a hurly-burly now
 He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told
 The boy, who is her best delight,
 Both what to follow, what to shun,
 What do, and what to leave undone,
 How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge
 Was, "Johnny ! Johnny ! mind that you

Come home again, nor stop at all,—
Come home again, whate'er befall,
My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,
Both with his head and with his hand,
And proudly shook the bridle too ;
And then ! his words were not a few,
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,
She gently pats the pony's side,
On which her Idiot Boy must ride,
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the pony moved his legs,
Oh ! then for thee, poor Idiot Boy !
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,
For joy his head and heels are idle,
He's idle all, for very joy.

And while the pony moves his legs,
In Johnny's left hand you may see
The green bough 's motionless and dead :
The moon that shines above his head
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee,
That till full fifty yards were gone,
He quite forgot his holly whip,
And all his skill in horsemanship ;
Oh, happy, happy, happy John !

And Betty's standing at the door,
And Betty's face with joy o'erflows ;
Proud of herself, and proud of him,
She sees him in his travelling trim ;
How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart !
He's at the guide-post—he turns right,
She watches till he's out of sight,
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,
As loud as any mill, or near it ;
Meek as a lamb the pony moves,
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,
And Betty listens glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale :
And Johnny's in a merry tune ;
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,—
And on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree,
 For of this pony there's a rumour,
 That, should he lose his eyes and ears,
 And should he live a thousand years,
 He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks !
 And when he thinks his pace is slack ;
 Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
 Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
 What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,
 And far into the moonlight dale,
 And by the church, and o'er the down,
 To bring a doctor from the town,
 To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,
 Is in the middle of her story.
 What comfort Johnny soon will bring,
 With many a most diverting thing,
 Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty's still at Susan's side :
 By this time she's not quite so flurried :
 Demure with porringer and plate
 She sits, as if in Susan's fate
 Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman ! she—
 You plainly in her face may read it,—
 Could lend out of that moment's store
 Five years of happiness or more
 To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then
 With Betty all was not so well,
 And to the road she turns her ears,
 And thence full many a sound she hears,
 Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
 " As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
 Cries Betty, " he'll be back again ;
 They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—
 They'll both be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
 The clock gives warning for eleven ;
 'Tis on the stroke—" If Johnny's near,"
 Quoth Betty, " he will soon be here,
 As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
 And Johnny is not yet in sight,
 —The moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,
 But Betty is not quite at ease ;
 And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,
 On Johnny vile reflections cast :
 "A little idle sauntering thing !"
 With other names an endless string,
 But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,
 That happy time all past and gone,
 "How can it be he is so late ?
 The doctor—he has made him wait,
 Susan ! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,
 And Betty's in a sad quandary ;
 And then there's nobody to say
 If she must go or she must stay !
 —She's in a sad quandary.

The clock is on the stroke of one ;
 But neither doctor nor his guide
 Appear along the moonlight road ;
 There's neither horse nor man abroad,
 And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan she begins to fear
 Of sad mischances not a few,
 That Johnny may perhaps be drown'd,
 Or lost, perhaps, and never found ;
 Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this
 With, "God forbid it should be true !"
 At the first word that Susan said,
 Cried Betty, rising from the bed,
 "Susan, I'd gladly stay with you.

"I must be gone, I must away,
 Consider, Johnny's but half-wise ;
 Susan, we must take care of him,
 If he is hurt in life or limb"—
 "Oh God forbid !" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do ?" says Betty, going,
 "What can I do to ease your pain ?
 Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay ;
 I fear you're in a dreadful way,
 But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go ! good Betty, go !
 There's nothing that can ease my pain."
 Then off she hies ; but with a prayer
 That God poor Susan's life would spare
 Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,
 And far into the moonlight dale :
 And how she ran, and how she walk'd,
 And all that to herself she talk'd,
 Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,
 In great and small, in round and square,
 In tree and tower, was Johnny seen,
 In bush and brake, in black and green,
 'Twas Johnny, Johnny, everywhere.

She's past the bridge that's in the dale ;
 And now the thought torments her sore,
 Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
 To hunt the moon that's in the brook,
 And never will be heard of more.

And now she's high upon the down,
 Alone amid a prospect wide ;
 There's neither Johnny nor his horse
 Among the fern or in the gorse ;
 There's neither doctor nor his guide.

" Oh saints ! what is become of him ?
 Perhaps he's climb'd into an oak,
 Where he will stay till he is dead ;
 Or, sadly he has been misled,
 And join'd the wandering gipsy-folk.

" Or him that wicked pony's carried
 To the dark cave, the goblin's hall ;
 Or in the castle he's pursuing,
 Among the ghosts, his own undoing ;
 Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she rail'd,
 While to the town she posts away ;
 " If Susan had not been so ill,
 Alas ! I should have had him still,
 My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
 The doctor's self would hardly spare ;
 Unworthy things she talk'd, and wild ;
 Even he, of cattle the most mild,
 The pony had his share.

And now she's got into the town,
 And to the doctor's door she hies ;
 'Tis silence all on every side ;
 The town so long, the town so wide,
 Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the doctor's door,
 She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap ;
 The doctor at the casement shows
 His glimmering eyes that peep and *dose* !
 And one hand rubs his old nightcap.

" Oh doctor ! doctor ! where's my Johnny ?"
 " I'm here, what is't you want with me !"
 " Oh sir ! you know I'm Betty Foy,
 And I have lost my poor dear boy,
 You know him—him you often see ;

"He's not so wise as some folk be."
 "The devil take his wisdom," said
 The doctor, looking somewhat grim,
 "What, woman, should I know of him?"
 And, grumbling, he went back to bed.

"O woe is me! O woe is me!
 Here will I die; here will I die!
 I thought to find my Johnny here;
 But he is neither far or near;
 Oh! what a wretched mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;
 Which way to turn she cannot tell.
 Poor Betty! it would ease her pain
 If she had heart to knock again;
 —The clock strikes three—a dismal knell!

Then up along the town she hies,
 No wonder if her senses fail,
 This piteous news so much it shock'd her,
 She quite forgot to send the doctor
 To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,
 And she can see a mile of road;
 "Oh cruel! I'm almost threescore;
 Such night as this was ne'er before,
 There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear
 The foot of horse, the voice of man;
 The streams with softest sounds are flowing,
 The grass you almost hear it growing,
 You hear it now if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night
 Are shouting to each other still:
 Fond lovers! yet not quite hob-nob,
 They lengthen out the tremulous sob,
 That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,
 Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin:
 A green-grown pond she just has pass'd,
 And from the brink she hurries fast,
 Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;
 Such tears she never shed before;
 "Oh dear, dear pony! my sweet joy!
 Oh carry back my idiot boy!
 And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:
 "The pony he is mild and good,
 And we have always used him well:
 Perhaps he's gone along the dell,
 And carried Johnny to the wood."

Then up she springs as if on wings ;
 She thinks no more of deadly sin ;
 If Betty fifty ponds should see,
 The last of all her thoughts would be
 To drown herself therein.

O reader ! now that I might tell
 What Johnny and his horse are doing !
 What they've been doing all this time,
 Oh could I put it into rhyme,
 A most delightful tale pursuing !

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought !
 He with his pony now doth roam
 The cliffs and peaks so high that are,
 To lay his hands upon a star,
 And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turn'd himself about,
 His face unto his horse's tail,
 And, still and mute, in wonder lost,
 All like a silent horseman ghost,
 He travels on along the vale.

And now, perhaps, he's hunting sneep,
 A fierce and dreadful hunter he ;
 Yon valley, that's so trim and green,
 In five months' time, should he be seen,
 A desert wilderness will be !

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,
 And like the very soul of evil,
 He's galloping away, away ;
 And so he'll gallop on for aye,
 The bane of all that dread the devil !

I to the muses have been bound
 These fourteen years, by strong indentures ;
 O gentle muses ! let me tell
 But half of what to him befell,
 He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle muses ! is this kind ?
 Why will ye thus my suit repel ?
 Why of your further aid bereave me ?
 And can ye thus unfriended leave me ;
 Ye muses ! whom I love so well ?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,
 Which thunders down with headlong force,
 Beneath the moon yet shining fair,
 As careless as if nothing were,
 Sits upright on a feeding horse ?

Unto his horse, that's feeding free,
 He seems, I think, the rein to give ;
 Of moon or stars he takes no heed ;
 Of such we in romances read :
 —'Tis Johnny ! Johnny, as I live !

And that's the very pony too !
 Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?
 She hardly can sustain her fears ;
 The roaring waterfall she hears,
 And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your pony's worth his weight in gold :
 Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !
 She's coming from among the trees,
 And now all full in view she sees
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the pony too :
 Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?
 It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,
 'Tis he whom you so long have lost,
 He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—
 She screams—she cannot move for joy :
 She darts as with a torrent's force,
 She almost has o'erturn'd the horse,
 And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud,
 Whether in cunning or in joy
 I cannot tell ; but while he laughs
 Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs
 To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the pony's tail,
 And now she's at the pony's head,—
 On that side now, and now on this ;
 And, almost stifled with her bliss,
 A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;
 She's happy here, she's happy there,
 She is uneasy everywhere ;
 Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the pony, where or when
 She knows not, happy Betty Foy !
 The little pony glad may be,
 But he is milder far than she.
 You hardly can perceive his joy.

" Oh ! Johnny, never mind the doctor ;
 You've done your best, and that is all."
 She took the reins, when this was said,
 And gently turn'd the pony's head
 From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,
 The moon was setting on the hill,
 So pale you scarcely look'd at her :
 The little birds began to stir,
 Though yet their tongues were still.

The pony, Betty, and her boy,
 Wind slowly through the woody dale ;
 And who is she, betimes abroad,
 That hobbles up the steep rough road ?
 Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

Long Susan lay deep lost in thought,
 And many dreadful fears beset her.
 Both for her messenger and nurse ;
 And as her mind grew worse and worse,
 Her body it grew better.

She turn'd, she toss'd herself in bed,
 On all sides doubts and terrors met her
 Point after point did she discuss ;
 And while her mind was fighting thus,
 Her body still grew better.

" Alas ! what is become of them ?
 These fears can never be endured,
 I'll to the wood."—The word scarce said,
 Did Susan rise up from her bed,
 As if by magic cured.

Away she posts up hill and down,
 And to the wood at length is come ;
 She spies her friends, she shouts a greeting ;
 Oh me ! it is a merry meeting
 As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,
 While our four travellers homeward wend ;
 The owls have hooted all night long,
 And with the owls began my song,
 And with the owls must end.

For, while they all were travelling home,
 Cried Betty, " Tell us, Johnny, do,
 Where all this long night you have been,
 What you have heard, what you have seen,
 And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now, Johnny all night long had heard
 The owls in tuneful concert strive ;
 No doubt, too, he the moon had seen ;
 For in the moonlight he had been
 From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he
 Made answer, like a traveller bold
 (His very words I give to you),
 " The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
 And the sun did shine so cold."
 —Thus answer'd Johnny in his glory,
 And that was all his travel's story.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

IF from the public way you turn your steps
 Up to the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
 You will suppose that with an upright path,
 Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
 But, courage ! for beside that boist'rous brook
 The mountains have all open'd out themselves,
 And made a hidden valley of their own.
 No habitation there is seen ; but such
 As journey thither find themselves alone
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
 That overhead are sailing in the sky.
 It is in truth an utter solitude ;
 Nor should I have made mention of this dell
 But for one object which you might pass by,
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 There is a straggling heap of unhewn stones !
 And to that place a story appertains,
 Which, though it be ungarnish'd with events,
 Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first,
 The earliest of those tales that spake to me
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved—not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this tale, while I was yet a boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects led me on to feel
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
 There dwelt a shepherd, Michael was his name ;
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been, from youth to age,
 Of an unusual strength ; his mind was keen,
 Intense and frugal, apt for all affairs,
 And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.
 Hence he had learn'd the meaning of all winds,

Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, he heard the south
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say :
 "The winds are now devising work for me !"
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summon'd him
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him and left him on the heights.
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past ;
 And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks
 Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
 The common air ; the hills, which he so oft
 Had climb'd with vigorous steps ; which had impress'd
 So many incidents upon his mind .
 Of hardship, skill, or courage, joy, or fear ;
 Which like a book preserved the memory
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
 Had fed or shelter'd, linking to such acts,
 So grateful in themselves, the certainty
 Of honourable gain ; these fields, these hills,
 Which were his living being, even more
 Than his own blood—what could they less ? had laid
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been pass'd in singleness :
 His helpmate was a comely matron, old—
 Though younger than himself full twenty years.
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
 Of antique form, this large for spinning wool,
 That small for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,
 It was because the other was at work.
 The pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only son,
 With two brave sheep-dogs, tried in many a storm,
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say,
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone,
 And from their occupations out of doors
 The son and father were come home, even then
 Their labour did not cease ; unless when all
 Turn'd to their cleanly supper-board, and there,

Each with a mess of pottage and skimm'd milk,
 Sat round their basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when their meal
 Was ended, Luke (for so the son was named)
 And his old father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ
 Their hands by the fireside ; perhaps to card
 Wool for the housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
 Which in our ancient uncouth country style,
 Did with a huge projection overbrow
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim, the housewife hung a lamp,
 An aged utensil, which had perform'd
 Service beyond all others of its kind.

• Early at evening did it burn and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had found
 And left the couple neither gay, perhaps,
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.
 And now, when Luke was in his eighteenth year,
 There by the light of this old lamp they sat,
 Father and son, while late into the night
 The housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
 This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life
 The thrifty pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmal-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake ;
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the house itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named the "Evening Star.

Thus living on through such a length of years,
 The shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear,—
 Effect which might perhaps have been produced
 By that instinctive tenderness, the same
 Blind spirit, which is in the blood of all—
 Or that a child, more than all other gifts,
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.

From such, and other causes, to the thoughts

Of the old man his only son was now
 The dearest object that he knew on earth.
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For dalliance and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rock'd
 His cradle with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love
 (Albeit of a stern, unbending mind)
 To have the young one in his sight, when he
 Had work by his own door, or when he sat
 With sheep before him on his shepherd's stool.
 Beneath that large old oak, which near their door
 Stood,—and, from its enormous breadth of shade,
 Chosen for the shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was call'd
 The "Clipping Tree,"* a name which yet it bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the shade,
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestow'd
 Upon the child, if he disturb'd the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
 A healthy lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old,
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hoop'd
 With iron, making it throughout, in all
 Due requisites, a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the boy; wherewith equip'd
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
 And, to his office prematurely call'd,
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
 Something between a hindrance and a help;
 And for this cause not always, I believe,
 Receiving from his father hire of praise;
 Though nought was left undone which staff or voice,
 Or looks, or threat'ning gestures could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,
 Not fearing toil nor length of weary ways,
 He with his father daily went, and they
 Were as companions, why should I relate

* "Clipping" is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

That objects which the shepherd loved before
 Were dearer now? that from the boy there came
 Feelings and emanations—things which were
 Light to the sun and music to the wind;
 And that the old man's heart seem'd born again?

Thus in his father's sight the boy grew up:
 And now when he had reach'd his eighteenth year
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time
 Of which I speak, the shepherd had been bound
 In surety for his brother's son, a man
 Of an industrious life, and ample means,—
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
 Had press'd upon him,—and old Michael now
 Was summon'd to discharge the forfeiture,
 A grievous penalty, but little less
 Than half his substance. This unlock'd-for claim,
 At the first hearing, for a moment took
 More hope out of his life than he supposed
 That any old man ever could have lost.
 As soon as he had gather'd so much strength
 That he could look his trouble in the face,
 It seem'd that his sole refuge was to sell
 A portion of his patrimonial fields,
 Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
 And his heart fail'd him. "Isabel," said he,
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,
 "I have been toiling more than seventy years,
 And in the open sunshine of God's love
 Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot; the sun itself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I,
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and make an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us; and, if he were not false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him—but
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.
 When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel: the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;
 He shall possess it free as is the wind
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
 Another kinsman—he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,
 And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 May come again to us. If here he stay,
 What can be done? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained?" At this the old man paused,
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
 Was busy, looking back into past times.
 "There's Richard Bateman," thought she to herself,
 "He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
 They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence,
 And half-pennies, wherewith the neighbours bought
 A basket, which they fill'd with pedlar's wares;
 And with this basket on his arm, the lad
 Went up to London, found a master there,
 Who out of many chose the trusty boy
 To go and overlook his merchandise
 Beyond the seas, where he grew wondrous rich,
 And left estates and moneys to the poor,
 And at his birthplace built a chapel floor'd
 With marble, which he sent from foreign lands."
 These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
 Pass'd quickly through the mind of Isabel,
 And her face brighten'd. The old man was glad,
 And thus resumed: "Well, Isabel, this scheme
 These two days has been meat and drink to me.
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
 —We have enough—I wish indeed that I
 Were younger,—but this hope is a good hope.
 Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
 Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
 —If he could go, the boy should go to-night."
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
 With a light heart. The housewife for five days
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
 Things needful for the journey of her son.
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work; for, when she lay
 By Michael's side, she through the two last nights
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
 And when they rose at morning she could see
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
 Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go;
 We have no other child but thee to lose,
 None to remember—do not go away.
 For if thou leave thy father, he will die."
 The youth made answer with a jocund voice;
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
 Recover'd heart. That evening her best fare
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

Next morning Isabel resumed her work;

And all the ensuing week the house appear'd
 As cheerful as a grove in spring; at length
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,
 With kind assurances that he would do
 His utmost for the welfare of the boy;
 To which requests were added that forthwith
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
 The letter was read over; Isabel
 Went forth to show it to the neighbours round;
 Nor was there at that time on English land
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
 Had to her house return'd, the old man said,
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
 The housewife answer'd, talking much of things
 Which, if at such short notice, he should go,
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
 In that deep valley, Michael had design'd
 To build a sheepfold; and, before he heard
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,
 For this same purpose he had gather'd up
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walk'd;
 And soon as they had reach'd the place he stopp'd,
 And thus the old man spake to him:—"My son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should speak
 Of things thou canst not know of. After thou
 First cam'st into the world—as it befalls
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
 Two days, and blessings from thy father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day pass'd on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
 Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune;
 When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
 Sing at thy mother's breast. Month follow'd month,
 And in the open fields my life was pass'd,
 And on the mountains, else I think that thou
 Hadst been brought up upon thy father's knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke: among these hills,
 As well thou know'st, in us the old and young
 Have play'd together, nor with me didst thou
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
 Luke had a manly heart; but at these words

He sobb'd aloud. The old man grasp'd his hand,
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
 That these are things of which I need not speak.
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee
 A kind and a good father; and herein
 I but repay a gift which I myself
 Received at others' hands; for, though now old
 Beyond the common life of man, I still
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.
 Both of them sleep together; here they lived,
 As all their forefathers had done; and when
 At length their time was come, they were not loth
 To give their bodies to the family mould.
 I wish'd that thou shouldst live the life they lived.
 But 'tis a long time to look back, my son,
 And see so little gain from sixty years.
 These fields were burthen'd when they came to me;
 Till I was forty years of age, not more
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.
 I toil'd and toil'd; God bless'd me in my work,
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.
 —It looks as if it never could endure
 Another master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou shouldst go." At this the old man paused;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
 "This was a work for us; and now, my son,
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
 Nay, boy, be of good hope!—we both may live
 To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and stout;—do thou thy part,
 I will do mine—I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resign'd to thee;
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
 Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face. Heaven bless thee, boy!
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
 With many hopes—It should be so—Yes—yes—
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
 To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to me
 Only by links of love: when thou art gone,
 What will be left to us! But I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
 When thou art gone away, should evil men
 Be thy companions, think of me, my son,
 And of this moment; hither turn thy thoughts,
 And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
 Mayst bear in mind the life thy fathers lived,
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause

Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
 A work which is not here : a covenant
 'Twill be between us. But, whatever fate
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The shepherd ended here ; and Luke stoop'd down,
 And, as his father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the sheepfold. At the sight
 The old man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
 He press'd his son, he kiss'd him and wept ;
 And to the house together they return'd
 —Hush'd was that house in peace, or seeming peace,
 Ere the night fell : with morrow's dawn the boy
 Began his journey, and when he had reach'd
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbours as he pass'd their doors
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
 That follow'd him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their kinsman come,
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
 Which, as the housewife phrased it, were throughout
 "The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
 So, many months pass'd on : and once again
 The shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
 He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the sheepfold. Meantime Luke began
 To slacken in his duty ; and at length
 He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing enduring, which else
 Would break the heart :—old Michael found it so
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember'd the old man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still look'd up upon the sun,
 And listen'd to the wind ; and as before
 Perform'd all kinds of labour for his sheep,
 And for the land, his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time
 Did he repair, to build the fold of which
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart

For the old man—and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went,
 And never lifted up a single stone.
 There, by the sheepfold, sometimes was he seen
 Sitting alone, with that his faithful dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years from time to time
 He at the building of this sheepfold wrought,
 And left the work unfinish'd when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her husband : at her death th' estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The cottage which was named "The Evening Star"
 Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood : great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighbourhood : yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains
 Of the unfinish'd sheepfold may be seen
 Beside the boist'rous brook of Greenhead Ghyll.

 LAODAMIA.

"WITH sacrifice, before the rising morn
 Perform'd, my slaughter'd lord have I required ;
 And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
 Him of the infernal gods have I desired :
 Celestial pity I again implore ;—
 Restore him to my sight, great Jove, restore !"

So speaking, and by fervent love endow'd
 With faith, the suppliant heavenward lifts her hands ;
 While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
 Her countenance brightens—and her eye expands,
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows,
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ? O joy !
 What doth she look on—whom doth she behold ?
 Her hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
 His vital presence—his corporeal mould ?
 It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis he !
 And a god leads him—wing'd Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake, and touch'd her with his wand
 That calms all fear : "Such grace hath crown'd thy prayer,
 Laodamia, that at Jove's command
 Thy husband walks the paths of upper air :
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours' space ;
 Accept the gift ; behold him face to face !"

Forth sprang the impassion'd queen her lord to clasp
 Again that consummation she essay'd ;
 But unsubstantial form eludes her grasp

As often as that eager grasp was made.
The phantom parts—but parts to reunite,
And reassume his place before her sight.

“Protesilaus, lo ! thy guide is gone !
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice :
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne ;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestow'd
This precious boon,—and bless'd a sad abode.”

“Great Jove, Laodamia, doth not leave
His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive,
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain ;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

“Thou know'st, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touch'd the Trojan strand
Should die ; but me the threat did not withhold :
A generous cause a victim did demand ;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.”

“Supreme of heroes—bravest, noblest, best !
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
That then, when tens of thousands were depress'd
By doubt, propell'd thee to the fatal shore ;
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here thou art—
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

“But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;
And He, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
That thou shouldst cheat the malice of the grave ;
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enrich'd Thessalian air.

“No spectre greets me,—no vain shadow this :
Come, blooming hero, place thee by my side !
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day a second time thy bride !”
Jove frown'd in heaven : the conscious Parcæ throw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“This visage tells thee that my doom is past :
Know, virtue were not virtue if the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish.—Earth destroys
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains :
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

“Be taught, O faithful consort, to control
Rebellious passion : for the gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult of the soul ;
The fervour—not the impotence of love.

Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn——”

“ Ah, wherefore ?—Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian monster of the tomb
Alceſtis, a reanimated corſe,
Given back to dwell on earth in beauty's bloom !
Medea's ſpells diſperſed the weight of years,
And Æſon ſtood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

“ The gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent : for mightier far
Than ſtrength of nerve and ſinew, or the ſway
Of magic, potent over ſun and ſtar,
Is love—though oft to agony diſtreſſ'd ;
And though his favourite ſeat be feeble woman's breaſt.

“ But if thou go'ſt, I follow——” “ Peace !” he ſaid—
She look'd upon him and was calm'd and cheer'd ;
The ghastly colour from his lips had fled ;
In his deportment, ſhape, and mien, appear'd
Elyſian beauty—melancholy grace—
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He ſpake of love, ſuch love as ſpirits feel
In worlds whoſe courſe is equable and pure ;
No fears to beat away—no ſtrife to heal—
The paſt unſigh'd for, and the future ſure ;
Spake, as a witness, of a ſecond birth
For all that is moſt perfect upon earth :

Of all that is moſt beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty ; more pellucid ſtreams,
An ampler æther, a diviner air,
And fields inveſted with purpureal gleams ;
Climes which the ſun, who ſheds the brighteſt day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to ſurvey.

Yet there the ſoul ſhall enter which hath earn'd
That privilege by virtue.—“ Ill,” ſaid he,
“ The end of man's exiſtence I diſcern'd,
Who from ignoble games and revelry*
Could draw, when we had parted, vaſt delight
While tears were thy beſt paſtime,—day and night :

“ And while my youthful peers, before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent),
Prepared themſelves for glorious enterpriſe
By martial ſports,—or, ſeated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detain'd ;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchain'd.

“ The wiſh'd-for wind was given :—I then revolv'd
Our future courſe, upon the ſilent ſea :
And, if no worthier led the way, reſolv'd
That, of a thouſand veſſels, mine ſhould be

* For this feature in the character of Proteſſaus, ſee the “ Iphigenia in Aulis ” of Euripides.

The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

“Yet bitter, oftentimes bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved wife ;
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—
The paths which we had trod—these fountains—flowers ;
My new-plann'd cities, and unfinish'd towers.

“But should suspense permit the foe to cry,
‘Behold they tremble !—haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die!’—
In soul I swept the indignity away :
Old frailties then recurr'd :—but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

“And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow ;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our bless'd reunion in the shades below.
Th' invisible world with thee hath sympathized ;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

“Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend
Towards a higher object :—Love was given,
Encouraged, sanction'd, chiefly for this end :
For this the passion to excess was driven—
That self might be annull'd ; her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”

Aloud she shriek'd—for Hermes reappears !
Round the dear shade she would have clung—'tis vain :
The hours are past,—too brief had they been years ;
And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way—
And on the palace floor a lifeless corse she lay.

Al, judge her gently who so deeply loved !
Her, who, in reason's spite, yet without crime,
Was in a trance of passion thus removed ;
Deliver'd from the galling yoke of time,
And these frail elements—to gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourn'd by man, and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertain'd)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;
And ever, when such stature they had gain'd
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits wither'd at the sight ;
A constant interchange of growth and blight !

Poems of the Fancy.

TO THE DAISY.

In youth from rock to rock I went,
 From hill to hill, in discontent
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,
 Most pleased when most uneasy
 But now my own delights I make,—
 My thirst at every rill can slake,
 And gladly Nature's love partake
 Of thee, sweet Daisy!

When soothed a while by milder airs,
 Thee Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly shades his few grey hairs;
 Spring cannot shun thee;
 Whole summer fields are thine by right;
 And Autumn, melancholy wight!
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;
 If welcomed once, thou count'st it gain;
 Thou art not daunted,
 Nor car'st if thou be set at naught:
 And oft alone in nooks remote
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
 The flowers the wanton zephyrs choose;
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling;
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame;
 Thou art indeed, by many a claim,
 The poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
 Or, some bright day of April sky,
 Imprison'd by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
 And wearily at length should fare;
 He need but look about, and there
 Thou art!—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
 Ere thus I have lain couch'd an hour,
 Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension;

Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy, wrong or right,
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to thee should turn,
 I drink, out of an humbler urn,
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life, our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

When, smitten by the morning ray,
 I see thee rise, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews oppress'd,
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going :

Child of the year ! that round dost run
 Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
 And cheerful when the day's begun
 As morning leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise* thou shalt regain ;
 Dear thou shalt be to future men,
 As in old time ;—thou not in vain,
 Art Nature's favourite.

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
 Rush'd o'er the wood with startling sound :
 Then, all at once, the air was still,
 And showers of hailstones patter'd round.
 Where leafless oaks tower'd high above,
 I sat within an undergrove
 Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;
 A fairer bower was never seen.
 From year to year the spacious floor
 With wither'd leaves is cover'd o'er,
 You could not lay a hair between :

See, in Chaucer and the elder poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower

And all the year the bower is green.
 But see! where'er the hailstones drop,
 The wither'd leaves all skip and hop,
 There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
 Yet here, and there, and everywhere
 Along the floor, beneath the shade
 By those embowering hollies made,
 The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
 As if, with pipes and music rare,
 Some Robin Goodfellow were there,
 And all those leaves, in festive glee,
 Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky,
 How silently, and with how wan a face! *
 Where art thou? Thou whom I have seen on high
 Running among the clouds a wood-nymph's race!
 Unhappy nuns, whose common breath's a sigh
 Which they would stifle, move at such a pace!
 The northern wind, to call thee to the chase,
 Must blow to-night his bugle-horn. Had I
 The power of Merlin, goddess! this should be:
 And all the stars now shrouded up in heaven,
 Should sally forth, to keep thee company.
 What strife would then be yours, fair creatures, driven,
 Now up, now down, and sparkling in your glee!
 But, Cynthia, should to thee the palm be given,
 Queen, both for beauty and for majesty.

THE GREEN LINNET.

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequester'd nook how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!
 And flowers and birds once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together.
 One have I mark'd, the happiest guest
 In all this covert of the blest:
 Hail to thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion.
 Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
 Presiding spirit here to-day,
 Dost lead the revels of the May,
 And this is thy dominion.
 While birds, and butterflies, and flowers
 Make all one band of paramours,

* FROM A SONNET OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment ;
 A life, a presence like the air,
 Scattering thy gladness without care,
 Too blest with any one to pair,
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
 Behold him perch'd in ecstasies,
 Yet seeming still to hover ;
 There ! where the flutter of his wings
 Upon his back and body flings
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
 A brother of the leaves he seems ;
 When in a moment forth he teems
 His little song in gushes :
 As if it pleased him to disdain
 And mock the form which he did feign,
 While he was dancing with the train
 Of leaves among the bushes.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.*

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ;
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !
 'M as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little flower !—I'll make a stir
 Like a great astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know ;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

* Common pilewort.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about its nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call,
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless prodigal ;
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none

Poets, vain men in their mood !
 Travel with the multitude ;
 Never heed them ; I aver
 That they all are wanton wooers.
 But the thrifty cottager,
 Who stirs little out of doors,
 Joys to spy thee near her home :
 Spring is coming—thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
 Kindly, unassuming spirit !
 Careless of thy neighbourhood,
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face
 On the moor, and in the wood,
 In the lane—there's not a place,
 Howsoever mean it be,
 But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
 Children of the flaring hours !
 Buttercups, that will be seen,
 Whether we will see or no ;
 Others, too, of lofty mien ;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine,
 Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Scorn'd and slighted upon earth !
 Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Singing at my heart's command,
 In the lanes my thoughts pursuing
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet :
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad ;
 All unheard of as thou art,
 Thou must needs, I think, have had
 Celandine ! and long ago,
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
Whosoe'er the man might be,
Who the first with pointed rays,
(Workman worthy to be sainted)
Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the risen sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking kerchief-pots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny squaro.

Often have I sigh'd to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sigh'd to think, I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me ;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek ;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slipp'st into thy shelter'd hold ;
Bright as any of the train
When ye all are out again.

Thou art not beyond the moon,
But a thing " beneath our shoon : " *
Let, as old Magellan did,
Others roam about the sea ;
Build who will a pyramid ;
Praise it is enough for me,
If there be but three or four
Who will love my little flower.

THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.

" BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous elf,"
Exclaim'd a thundering voice,
" Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice ! "
A falling Water swoln with snows
Thus spake to a poor Brier-rose,
That, all bespatter'd with his foam,

* Scottish shoes.

And dancing high, and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home.

“Dost thou presume my course to block
Off, off! or, puny thing!
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
To which thy fibres cling.”
The flood was tyrannous and strong;
The patient Brier suffer'd long,
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
Hoping the danger would be past:
But, seeing no relief, at last
He ventured to reply.

“Ah!” said the Brier, “blame me not;
Why should we dwell in strife?
We who in this, our natal spot,
Once lived a happy life!
You stir'd me on my rocky bed—
What pleasure through my veins you spread!
The summer long, from day to day,
My leaves you freshen'd and bedew'd;
Nor was it common gratitude
That did your cares repay.

“When Spring came on with bud and bell,
Among these rocks did I
Before you hang my wreaths, to tell
That gentle days were nigh!
And, in the sultry summer hours,
I shelter'd you with leaves and flowers;
And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
The linnet lodged, and for us two
Chanted his pretty songs, when you
Had little voice or none.

“But now proud thoughts are in your breast—
What grief is mine you see.
Ah! would you think, even yet how blest
Together we might be!
Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
Some ornaments to me are left—
Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
With which I, in my humble way,
Would deck you many a winter's day,
A happy Eglantine!”

What more he said I cannot tell:
The torrent thunder'd down the dell
With unabating haste:
I listen'd, nor ought else could hear;
The Brier quaked—and much I fear
Those accents were his last.

THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

His simple truths did Andrew glean
Beside the babbling rills ;
A careful student he had been
Among the woods and hills.
One winter's night, when through the trees
The wind was thundering, on his knees
His youngest born did Andrew hold :
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This tale the shepherd told.

" I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat !
Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—
The thaw-wind with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-west :
When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus address'd :

' Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain's edge,
The frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up ! and think, above your head
What trouble surely will be bred ;
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
The splinters took another road—
I see them yonder—what a load
For such a thing as you !

' You are preparing, as before,
To deck your slender shape ;
And yet, just three years back—no more—
You had a strange escape.
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;
It came, you know, with fire and smoke,
And hitherward it bent its way :
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'Tis hanging to this day !

' The thing had better been asleep,
Whatever thing it were,
Or breeze, or bird, or dog, or sheep,
That first did plant you there.
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy
To come and slumber in your bower ;

And, trust me, on some sultry noon,
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon!
Will perish in one hour.

'From me this friendly warning take'—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus to keep herself awake
Did gently interpose:
'My thanks for your discourse are due;
That it is true, and more than true,
I know, and I have known it long;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, be we young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

'Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small;
And he is oft the wisest man
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam!
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage;
My father, many a happy year,
Here spread his careless blossoms, here
Attain'd a good old age.

'E'en such as his may be my lot.
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors! Am I not
In truth a favour'd plant!
On me such bounty Summer pours,
That I am cover'd o'er with flowers;
And, when the frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This plant can never die.

'The butterfly, all green and gold,
To me hath often flown,
Here in my blossoms to behold
Wings lovely as his own.
When grass is chill with rain or dew,
Beneath my shade, the mother ewe
Lies with her infant lamb; I see
The love they to each other make,
And the sweet joy, which they partake,
It is a joy to me.'

"Her voice was blithe, her heart was light;
The Broom might have pursued
Her speech, until the stars of night
Their journey had renew'd:
But in the branches of the Oak
Two ravens now began to croak
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air;
And to her own green bower the breeze

That instant brought two stripling bees,
To rest and murmur there.

“ One night, my children, from the North
There came a furious blast ;
At break of day I ventured forth,
And near the cliff I pass'd.
The storm had fall'n upon the Oak,
And struck him with a mighty stroke,
And whirl'd, and whirl'd him far away ;
And, in one hospitable cleft,
The little careless Broom was left
To live for many a day.”

THE REDBREAST AND THE BUTTERFLY.

ART thou the bird whom man loves best,
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
Our little English Robin ;
The bird that comes about our doors
When autumn winds are sobbing ?
Art thou the Peter of Norway boors ?
Their Thomas in Finland,
And Russia far inland ?

The bird, whom by some name or other,
All men who know thee call their brother,
The darling of children and men ?
Could Father Adam* open his eyes,
And see this sight beneath the skies,
He'd wish to close them again.

If the butterfly knew but his friend,
Hither his flight he would bend ;
And find his way to me.
Under the branches of the tree,
In and out, he darts about ;
Can this be the bird, to man so good,
That, after their bewildering,
Did cover with leaves the little children,
So painfully in the wood ?

What ail'd thee, Robin, that thou couldst pursue
A beautiful creature,
That is gentle by nature ?
Beneath the summer sky
From flower to flower let him fly ;
'Tis all that he wishes to do.
The cheerer thou of our in-door sadness,
He is the friend of our summer gladness :
What hinders, then, that ye should be
Playmates in the sunny weather,

* Paradise Lost, Book XL, where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the eagle chasing "two birds of wayest plume," and the gentle hart and hind pursued by their enemies.

And fly about in the air together ;
 His beautiful wings in crimson are dress'd,
 A crimson as bright as thine own !
 If thou wouldst be happy in thy nest,
 O pious bird ! whom man loves best,
 Love him, or leave him alone !

TO THE DAISY.

With little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be
 Sweet Daisy ! oft I talk to thee,

For thou art worthy :
 Thou unassuming common-place
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace,
 Which love makes for thee !

Oft do I sit by thee at ease,
 And weave a web of similes,
 Loose types of things through all degrees,

Thoughts of thy raising :
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,
 As is the humour of the game,
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly pert ;
 Or sprightly maiden of love's court,
 In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations ;

A queen in crown of rubies dress'd ;
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;
 Are all, as seem to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
 Staring to threaten and defy—
 That thought comes next—and instantly
 The freak is over.

The shape will vanish, and behold !
 A silver shield with boss of gold,
 That spreads itself, some fairy bold
 In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar ;—
 And then thou art a pretty star ;
 Not quite so fair as many are
 In heaven above thee !

Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air, thou seem'st to rest ;
 May peace come never to his nest,
 Who shall reprove thee !

Sweet flower ! for by that name at last,
 When all my reveries are past,

I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent creature !
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wight, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature !

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

BRIGHT flower, whose home is everywhere !
 A pilgrim bold in Nature's care,
 And all the long year through, the heir
 Of joy or sorrow,
 Methinks that there abides in thee
 Some concord with humanity,
 Giv'n to no other flower I see
 The forest thorough !

Is it that man is soon depress'd ?
 A thoughtless thing ! who, once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And thou wouldst teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind,
 And every season ?

Thou wanderest the wide world about,
 Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ;
 Meek, yielding to th' occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

TO A SKY-LARK.

Up with me ! up with me, into the clouds !
 For thy song, Lark, is strong ;
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
 Singing, singing,
 With all the heavens about thee ringing.
 - Lift me, guide me till I find
 That spot which seems so to thy mind !
 I have walk'd through wildernesses dreary,
 And to-day my heart is weary ;
 Had I now the wings of a fairy,
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine ;
 Up with me, up with me, high and high,
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky !
 Joyous as morning,

Thou art laughing and scorning ;
 Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest :
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark ? thou wouldst be loth

To be such a traveller as I.

Happy, happy liver !

With a soul as strong as a mountain river,
 Pouring out praise to th' Almighty Giver,

Joy and jollity be with us both !

Hearing thee, or else some other,

As merry a brother,

I on the earth will go plodding on,

By myself, cheerfully, till the day is done.

TO A SEXTON.

LET thy wheelbarrow alone—
 Wherefore, Sexton, piling still
 In thy bonehouse, bone on bone ?
 'Tis already like a hill
 In a field of battle made,
 Where three thousand skulls are laid.
 —These died in peace each with the other
 Father, sister, friend, and brother,

Mark the spot to which I point !
 From this platform, eight feet square,
 Take not even a finger-joint :
 Andrew's whole fireside is there.
 Here, alone, before thine eyes,
 Simon's sickly daughter lies,
 From weakness, now, and pain defended,
 Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—
 How he glories, when he sees
 Roses, lilies, side by side,
 Violets in families !
 By the heart of man, his tears,
 By his hopes and by his fears,
 Thou, old grey-beard ! art the warden
 Of a far superior garden.

Thus, then, each to other dear,
 Let them all in quiet lie,
 Andrew there, and Susan here,
 Neighbours in mortality.
 And, should I live through sun and rain,
 Seven widow'd years without my Jane,
 O Sexton, do not then remove her,
 Let one grave hold the loved and lover !

WHO fancied what a pretty sight
 This rock would be if edged around
 With living snowdrops—circlet bright ?
 How glorious to this orchard ground !
 Who loved the little rock and set
 Upon its head this coronet ?

Was it the humour of a child ?
 Or rather of some love-sick maid,
 Whose brows, the day that she was styled
 The shepherd queen, were thus array'd !
 Of man mature, or matron sage !
 Or old man toying with his age ?

I ask'd—'twas whisper'd, the device
 To each or all might well belong :
 It is the spirit of paradise
 That prompts such work, a spirit strong,
 That gives to all the self-same bent
 Where life is wise and innocent.

 SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW.

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains
 Roar down many a craggy steep,
 Yet they find among the mountains
 Resting-places, calm and deep.

Though, as if with eagle pinion,
 O'er the rocks the chamois roam,
 Yet he has some small dominion
 Where he feels himself at home.

If on windy days the raven
 Gambol like a dancing skiff,
 Not the less he loves his haven
 In the bosom of the cliff.

Though the sea-horse in the ocean
 Own no dear domestic cave,
 Yet he slumbers without motion
 On the calm and silent wave.

Day and night my toils redouble !
 Never nearer to the goal ;
 Never—never does the trouble
 Of the wanderer leave my soul.

THE SEVEN SISTERS; OR, THE SOLITUDE OF
BINNORIE.

SEVEN daughters had Lord Arohibald,
All children of one mother;
I could not say in one short day
What love they bore each other.
A garland of seven lilies wrought!
Seven Sisters that together dwell;
But he, bold knight as ever fought,
Their father, took of them no thought,
He loved the wars so well.
Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The Solitude of Binnorie!

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,
And from the shores of Erin,
Across the wave, a rover brave
To Binnorie is steering:
Right onward to the Scottish strand
The gallant ship is borne;
The warriors leap upon the land,
And hark! the leader of the band
Hath blown his bugle-horn.
Sing mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Beside a grotto of their own,
With boughs above them closing,
The seven are laid, and in the shade
They lie like fawns reposing.
But now, upstarting with affright
At noise of man and steed,
Away they fly to left, to right—
Of your fair household, father knight,
Methinks you take small heed!
Sing mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,
And, over hill and hollow,
With menace proud, and insult loud,
The youthful rovers follow.
Cried they, "Your father loves to roan
Enough for him to find
The empty house when he comes home
For us your yellow ringlets comb,
For us be fair and kind!"
Sing mournfully, oh! mournfully,
The Solitude of Binnorie.

Some close behind, some side by side,
Like clouds in stormy weather,
They run and cry, "Nay let us die,
And let us die together."

A lake was near ; the shore was steep ;
 There never foot had been ;
 They ran, and with a desperate leap
 Together plunged into the deep,
 Nor ever more were seen.
 Sing mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The Solitude of Binnorie.

The stream that flows out of the lake,
 As through the glen it rambles,
 Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,
 For those seven lovely Campbells.
 Seven little islands, green and bare,
 Have risen from out the deep :
 The fishers say, those sisters fair
 By fairies are all buried there,
 And there together sleep.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The Solitude of Binnorie.

—“ *Pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts, to be claim'd by whoever shall find.*”

By their floating mill,
 Which lies dead and still,
 Behold yon prisoners three !
 The miller with two dames, on the breast of the Thames ;
 The platform is small, but there's room for them all ;
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
 To their mill where it floats,
 To their house and their mill tether'd fast ;
 To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile,
 They from morning to even take whatever is given ;
 And many a blithe day they have pass'd.

In sight of the spires,
 All alive with the fires
 Of the sun going down to his rest,
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
 They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,
 While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and maidens wheel,
 They themselves make the reel,
 And their music's a prey which they seize ;
 It plays not for them,—what matter ! 'tis theirs ;
 And if they had care, it has scatter'd their cares,
 While they dance, crying, “ Long as ye please !”

They dance not for me,
 Yet mine is their glee !
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts, to be claim'd by whoever shall find ;

Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the Spring
 Rouse the birds, and they sing ;
 If the wind do but stir for his proper delight
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;
 Each wave, one and t'other, speeds after his brother ;
 They are happy, for that is their right !

THE KITTEN, AND THE FALLING LEAVES.

THAT way look, my infant, lo !
 What a pretty baby-show !
 See the kitten on the wall,
 Sporting with the leaves that fall,
 Wither'd leaves—one—two—and three—
 From the lofty elder-tree !
 Through the calm and frosty air
 Of this morning bright and fair,
 Eddying round and round they sink,
 Softly, slowly : one might think,
 From the motions that are made,
 Every little leaf convey'd
 Sylph or fairy hither tending,—
 To his lower world descending,
 Each invisible and mute,
 In this wavering parachute.
 —But the kitten how she starts,
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts !
 First at one, and then its fellow
 Just as light and just as yellow ;
 There are many now—now one—
 Now they stop ; and there are none—
 What intensesness of desire
 In her upward eye of fire !
 With a tiger-leap half-way
 Now she meets the coming prey,
 Lets it go as fast, and then
 Has it in her power again :
 Now she works with three or four,
 Like an Indian conjuror ;
 Quick as he in feats of art,
 Far beyond in joy of heart.
 Were her antics play'd in the eye
 Of a thousand standers-by,
 Clapping hands with shout and stare,
 What would little Tabby care
 For the plaudits of the crowd ;
 Over happy to be proud,
 Over wealthy in the treasure
 Of her own exceeding pleasure !

'Tis a pretty baby-treat ;
 Nor, I deem, for me unmeet ;
 Here, for neither babe nor me,
 Other playmate can I see.
 Of the countless living things,
 That with stir of feet and wings
 (In the sun, or under shade,
 Upon bough or grassy blade),
 And with busy revellings,
 Chirp and song, and murmurings,
 Made this orchard's narrow space,
 And this vale, so blithe a place ;
 Multitudes are swept away,
 Never more to breathe the day :
 Some are sleeping ; some in bands
 Travell'd into distant lands ;
 Others slunk to moor and wood,
 Far from human neighbourhood ;
 And, among the kinds that keep
 With us closer fellowship,
 With us openly abide,
 All have laid their mirth aside.
 — Where is he that giddy sprite,
 Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
 Who was blest as bird could be,
 Feeding in the apple-tree ;
 Made such wanton spoil and rout,
 Turning blossoms inside out ;
 Hung with head towards the ground,
 Flutter'd, perch'd, into a round
 Bound himself, and then unbound ;
 Lithest, gaudiest harlequin !
 Prettiest tumbler ever seen !
 Light of heart, and light of limb,
 What is now become of him ?
 Lambs, that through the mountains went
 Frisking, bleating merriment,
 When the year was in its prime,
 They are sober'd by this time.
 If you look to vale or hill,
 If you listen, all is still,
 Save a little neighbouring rill,
 That from out the rocky ground
 Strikes a solitary sound.
 Vainly glitter hill and plain,
 And the air is calm in vain ;
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure
 Of a sky serene and pure ;
 Creature none can she decoy
 Into open sign of joy :
 Is it that they have a fear
 Of the dreary season near ?
 Or that other pleasures be
 Sweeter e'en than gaiety ?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
 In the impenetrable cell
 Of the silent heart which Nature
 Furnishes to every creature ;
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know
 Too sedate for outward show—
 Such a light of gladness breaks,
 Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—
 Spreads with such a living grace
 O'er my little Laura's face ;
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
 Thee, baby, laughing in my arms,
 That almost I could repine
 That your transports are not mine,
 That I do not wholly fare
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !
 And I will have my careless season,
 Spite of melancholy reason.
 Will walk through life in such a way
 That, when time brings on decay,
 Now and then I may possess
 Hours of perfect gladness.
 —Pleased by any random toy ;
 By a kitten's busy joy,
 Or an infant's laughing eye
 Sharing in the ecstasy ;
 I would fare like that or this,
 Find my wisdom in my bliss ;
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought ;
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with life's falling leaf.

A FRAGMENT.

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills
 There is a spot that seems to lie
 Sacred to flow'rets of the hills,
 And sacred to the sky.
 And in this smooth and open dell
 There is a tempest-stricken tree ;
 A corner-stone by lightning cut,
 The last stone of a cottage hut ;
 And in this dell you see
 A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
 The shadow of a Danish boy.
 In clouds above the lark is heard,—
 He sings his blithest and his best ;
 But in this lonesome nook the bird
 Did never build her nest.
 No beast, no bird hath here his home ;

The bees, borne on the breezy air,
 Pass high above those fragrant bells
 To other flowers, to other dells,
 Nor ever linger there.
 The Danish boy walks here alone :
 The lovely dell is all his own.

A spirit of noonday is he,
 He seems a form of flesh and blood ;
 Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
 Nor herd-boy of the wood.
 A regal vest of fur he wears,
 In colour like a raven's wing ;
 It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;
 But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue
 As budding pines in spring ;
 His helmet has a vernal grace,
 Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;
 He rests the harp upon his knee ;
 And there, in a forgotten tongue,
 He warbles melody.
 Of flocks upon the neighbouring hills
 He is the darling and the joy ;
 And often, when no cause appears,
 The mountain ponies prick their ears,
 —They hear the Danish boy,
 While in the dell he sits alone
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.

There sits he : in his face you spy
 No trace of a ferocious air,
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky
 So steady or so fair.
 The lovely Danish boy is blest
 And happy in his flowery cove :
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;
 And yet he warbles songs of war
 That seem like songs of love,
 For calm and gentle is his mien ;
 Like a dead boy, he is serene.
 * * * * *

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER,
 ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD ON
 THAT DAY.

—HAST thou then survived,
 Mild offspring of infirm humanity,
 Meek Infant ! among all forlornest things
 The most forlorn, one life of that bright star,
 The second glory of the heavens ? Thou hast—
 Already hast survived that great decay ;

That transformation through the wide earth felt,
 And by all nations. In that Being's sight
 From whom the race of human kind proceed,
 A thousand years are but as yesterday ;
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him
 Not less capacious than a thousand years.
 But what is time ? What outward glory ? Neither
 A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend
 Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet hail to thee,
 Frail, feeble monthling ?—by that name, methinks,
 Thy scanty breathing-time is portion'd out
 Not idly. Hadst thou been of Indian birth,
 Couch'd on a casual bed of moss and leaves,
 And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,
 Or to the churlish elements exposed
 On the blank plains,—the coldness of the night,
 Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face
 Of beauty, by the changing moon adorn'd,
 Would, with imperious admonition, then
 Have scored thine age, and punctually timed
 Thine infant history, on the minds of those
 Who might have wander'd with thee. Mother's love,
 Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,
 Will, among us warm clad and warmly housed,
 Do for thee what the finger of the heavens
 Doth all too often harshly execute
 For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds
 Where fancy hath small liberty to grace
 Th' affections, to exalt them or refine ;
 And the maternal sympathy itself,
 Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie
 Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.
 Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !
 Even now—to solemnize thy helpless state,
 And to enliven in the mind's regard
 Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,
 Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,
 Within the region of a father's thoughts,
 Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.
 And first ; thy sinless progress, through a world
 By sorrow darken'd and by care disturb'd,
 Apt likeness bears to hers through gather'd clouds
 Moving untouch'd in silver purity,
 And cheering oftentimes their reluctant gloom.
 Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :
 But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn
 With brightness !—leaving her to post along,
 And range about—disquitted in change,
 And still impatient of the shape she wears.
 Once up, once down the hill, one journey, babe,
 That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now
 Thou hast foreknowledge that such task is thine ;
 Thou travell'st so contentedly, and sleep'st
 In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon

Hath this conception, grateful to behold,
 Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er
 By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be
 A mournful labour, while to her is given
 Hope—and a renovation without end.
 —That smile forbids the thought ;—for on thy face
 Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,
 To shoot and circulate ; smiles have there been seen,—
 Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports
 The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers
 Thy loneliness ; or shall those smiles be call'd
 Feelers of love,—put forth as if t' explore
 This untried world, and to prepare thy way
 Through a strait passage intricate and dim ?
 Such are they,—and the same are tokens, signs,
 Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,
 Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt ;
 And reason's godlike power be proud to own.

Poems of the Imagination.

THERE was a boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
 And islands of Winander ! Many a time,
 At evening, when the earliest stars began
 To move along the edges of the hills,
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
 Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Press'd closely palm to palm and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him. And they would shout
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
 Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild
 Of mirth and jocund din ! And, when it chanced
 That pauses of deep silence mock'd his skill,
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
 Has carried far into his heart the voice
 Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene
 Would enter unawares into his mind
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.

Fair are the woods, and beauteous is the spot,
 The vale where he was born : the churchyard hangs
 Upon a slope above the village school ;
 And there, along that bank, when I have pass'd
 At evening, I believe that oftentimes
 A long half-hour together I have stood
 Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

TO THE CUCKOO.

O BLITHE new-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice :
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee bird,
 Or but a wandering voice ?

While I am lying on the grass,
 Thy loud note smites my ear !
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off and near !

I hear thee babbling to the vale
 Of sunshine and of flowers ;
 And unto me thou bring'st a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring !
 Even yet thou art to me
 No bird, but an invisible thing,
 A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my school-boy days
 I listen'd to ; that cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green ;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
 Still long'd for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ;
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be
 An unsubstantial, fairy place ;
 That is fit home for thee !

A NIGHT-PIECE.

—THE sky is overcast

With a continuous cloud of texture close,
 Heavy and wan, all whiten'd by the moon,
 Which through that vale is indistinctly seen,

A dull contracted circle, yielding light
 So feebly spread that not a shadow falls,
 Chequering the ground, from rock, plant, tree, or tower.
 At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam
 Startles the pensive traveller as he treads
 His lonesome path, with unobserving eye
 Bent earthwards ; he looks up—the clouds are split
 Asunder,—and above his head he sees
 The clear moon, and the glory of the heavens.
 There, in a black blue vault she sails along,
 Follow'd by multitudes of stars, that, small,
 And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss
 Drive as she drives. How fast they wheel away.
 Yet vanish not !—the wind is in the tree,
 But they are silent ; still they roll along
 Immeasurably distant ; and the vault,
 Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,
 Still deepens its unfathomable depth.
 At length the vision closes ; and the mind,
 Not undisturb'd by the delight it feels,
 Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
 Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

 YEW-TREES.

THERE is a yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
 Which to this day stands single, in the midst
 Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,
 Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
 Of Umfraville or Percy, ere they march'd
 To Scotland's heaths ; or those that cross'd the sea
 And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
 Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
 Of vast circumference and gloom profound
 This solitary tree !—a living thing
 Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
 Of form and aspect too magnificent
 To be destroy'd. But worthier still of note
 Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
 Join'd in one solemn and capacious grove ;
 Huge trunks !—and each particular trunk a growth
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine
 Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved,—
 Nor uninform'd with phantasy, and looks
 That threaten the profane ; a pillar'd shade,
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, deck'd
 With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes
 May meet at noontide—Fear and trembling Hope,
 Silence and Foresight—Death the skeleton

And Time the shadow,—there to celebrate,
 As in a natural temple scatter'd o'er
 With altars undisturb'd of mossy stone,
 United worship ; or in mute repose
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
 Murm'ring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

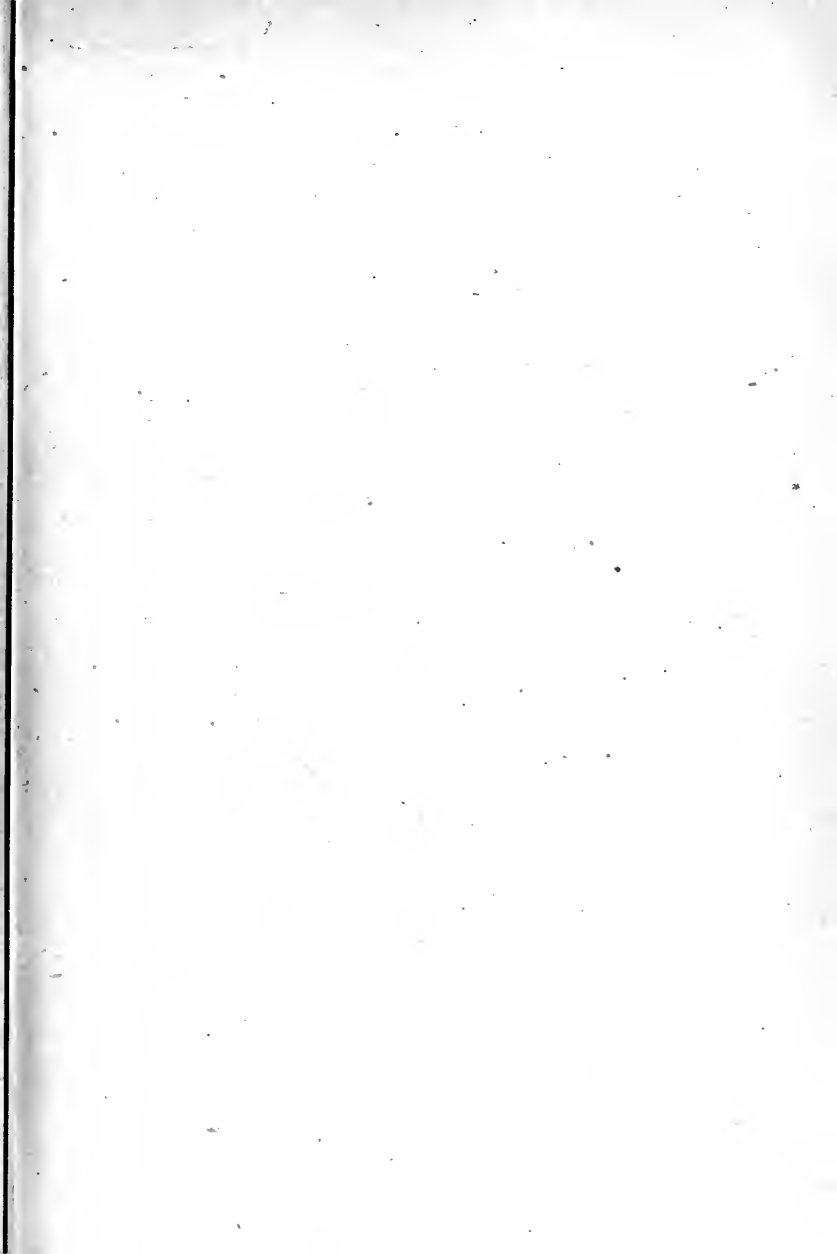
VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB,
 CUMBERLAND.

THIS height a ministering angel might select :
 For from the summit of Black Comb (dread name
 Derived from clouds and storms !) the amplest range
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
 That British ground commands : low dusky tracts,
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward ! Cambrian hill:
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;
 And, in a line of eye-sight link'd with these,
 The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth
 To Teviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde ;
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth,
 Gigantic mountains rough with crags ; beneath,
 Right at the imperial station's western base,
 Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretch'd
 Far into silent regions blue and pale ;
 And visibly engirding Mona's isle,
 That, as we left the plain, before our sight
 Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)
 Into clear view the cultured fields that streak
 Its habitable shores ; but now appears
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie
 At the spectator's feet. Yon azure ridge,
 Is it a perishable cloud—or there
 Do we behold the frame of Erin's coast ?
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd swain
 (Like the bright confines of another world)
 Not doubtfully perceived. Look homeward now !
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene
 The spectacle—how pure ! Of Nature's works,
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,
 A revelation infinite it seems ;
 Display august of man's inheritance,
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power.

NUTTING.

—————It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out),
 One of those heavenly days which cannot die ;
 When forth I sallied from our cottage-door,*
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,

* The house in which I was boarded during the time I was at school.





NUTTING.

" Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear,
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever."

A nutting-crook in hand, and turn'd my steps
Towards the distant woods, a figure quaint,
Trick'd out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been husbanded,
By exhortation of my frugal dame.
Motley accoutrement—of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and, in truth,
More ragged than need was. Among the woods,
And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my way,
Until, at length, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Droop'd with its wither'd leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation, but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung,
A virgin scene! A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet,—or beneath the trees I sat
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I play'd;
A temper known to those, who, after long
And weary expectation, have been bless'd
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons reappear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever,—and I saw the sparkling foam,
And with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,
Lay round me, scatter'd like a flock of sheep,
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragg'd to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage; and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deform'd and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being: and, unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past,
Even then, when from the bower I turn'd away
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees and the intruding sky.
Then, dearest maiden! move along these shades
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

SHE was a phantom of delight
 When first she gleam'd upon my sight ;
 A lovely apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
 Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;
 A dancing shape, an image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A spirit, yet a woman too !
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin liberty ;
 A countenance in which did meet
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
 A creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food,
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.
 And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine ;
 A being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A traveller betwixt life and death ;
 The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
 A perfect woman, nobly plann'd,
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;
 And yet a spirit still, and bright
 With something of an angel light.

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art
 A creature of ebullient heart :
 These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
 Thou sing'st as if the god of wine
 Had help'd thee to a valentine ;
 A song in mockery and despite
 Of shades, and dews, and silent night,
 And steady bliss, and all the loves
 Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a stock-dove sing or say
 His homely tale, this very day,
 His voice was buried among trees,
 Yet to be come at by the breeze ;
 He did not cease, but coo'd—and coo'd ;
 And somewhat pensively he woo'd :
 He sang of love with quiet blending,
 Slow to begin, and never ending ;
 Of serious faith and inward glee ;
 That was the song—the song for me !

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown :
This child I to myself will take :
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as 'the fawn,
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
E'en in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake. The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been
And never more will be.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
 I had no human fears :
 She seem'd a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
 She neither hears nor sees,
 Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course
 With rocks and stones and trees !

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE

WHEN the brothers reach'd the gateway,
 Eustace pointed with his lance
 To the horn which there was hanging ;
 Horn of the inheritance.
 Horn it was which none could sound,
 No one upon living ground,
 Save he who came as rightful heir
 To Egremont's domains and castle fair.

Heirs from ages without record
 Had the House of Lucie born,
 Who of right had claim'd the lordship
 By the proof upon the horn :
 Each at the appointed hour
 Tried the horn,—it own'd his power ;
 He was acknowledged : and the blast,
 Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,
 And to Hubert thus said he :
 "What I speak this horn shall witness
 For thy better memory.
 Hear, then, and neglect me not !
 At this time, and on this spot,
 The words are utter'd from my heart,
 As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going
 Life to risk by sea and land ;
 In which course if Christ our Saviour
 Do my sinful soul demand,
 Hither come thou back straightway,
 Hubert, if alive that day ;
 Return, and sound the horn, that we
 May have a living house still left in thee !"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert ;
 "As I am thy father's son,
 What thou askest, noble brother,
 With God's favour shall be done."

So were both right well content :
From the castle forth they went ;
And at the head of their array
To Palestine the brothers took their way.
Side by side they fought (the Lucies
Were a line for valour famed),
And where'er their strokes alighted,
There the Saracens were tamed.
Whence, then, could it come, the thought
By what evil spirit brought ?
Oh ! can a brave man wish to take
His brother's life, for land's and castle's sake !
"Sir," the ruffians said to Hubert,
"Deep he lies in Jordan flood."
Stricken by this ill assurance,
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.
"Take your earnings. Oh ! that I
Could have *seen* my brother die !"
It was a pang that vex'd him then !
And oft return'd—again, and yet again.
Months pass'd on, and no Sir Eustace
Nor of him were tidings heard.
Wherefore, bold as day, the murderer
Back again to England steer'd.
To his castle Hubert sped ;
He has nothing now to dread.
But silent and by stealth he came,
And at an hour which nobody could name.
None could tell if it were night-time,
Night or day, at even or morn ;
For the sound was heard by no one
Of the proclamation horn.
But bold Hubert lives in glee :
Months and years went smilingly ;
With plenty was his table spread ;
And bright the lady is who shares his bed
Likewise he had sons and daughters ;
And, as good men do, he sate
At his board by these surrounded,
Flourishing in fair estate.
And, while thus in open day,
Once he sate, as old books say,
A blast was utter'd from the horn,
Where, by the castle gate, it hung forlorn.
'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace !
He is come to claim his right :
Ancient castle, woods, and mountains
Hear the challenge with delight.
Hubert ! though the blast be blown,
He is helpless and alone :
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !
And there he may be lodged, and thou be lord.

Speak!—astounded Hubert cannot ;
 And if power to speak he had,
 All are daunted, all the household,
 Smitten to the heart and sad,
 'Tis Sir Eustace : if it be
 Living man, it must be he !
 Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,
 And by a postern gate he slunk away.
 Long, and long was he unheard of :
 To his brother then he came,
 Made confession, ask'd forgiveness,
 Ask'd it by a brother's name,
 And by all the saints in heaven ;
 And of Eustace was forgiven :
 Then in a convent went to hide
 His melancholy head, and there he died.
 But Sir Eustace, whom good angels
 Had preserved from murderers' hands,
 And from pagan chains had rescued,
 Lived with honour on his lands.
 Sons he had, saw sons of theirs :
 And through ages, heirs of heirs,
 A long posterity renown'd,
 Sounded the horn which they alone could sound.

GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

A TRUE STORY.

OH ! what's the matter—what's the matter ?
 What is't that ails young Harry Gill ?
 That evermore his teeth they chatter,
 Chatter, chatter, chatter still !
 Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,
 Good duffle grey, and flannel fine ;
 He has a blanket on his back,
 And coats enough to smother nine.
 In March, December, and in July,
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;
 The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
 At night, at morning, and at noon,
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;
 Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still !
 Young Harry was a lusty drover,
 And who so stout of limb as he ?
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover ;
 His voice was like the voice of three.
 Old Goody Blake was old and poor ;
 Ill fed she was, and thinly clad ;
 And any man who pass'd her door
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling ;
And then her three hours' work at night !
Alas ! 'twas hardly worth the telling,
It would not pay for candle-light.
This woman dwelt in Dorsetshire,—
Her hut was on a cold hill-side,
And in in that country coals are dear,
For they come far by wind and tide.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,
Two poor old dames, as I have known,
Will often live in one small cottage ;
But she, poor woman ! dwelt alone.
'Twas well enough when summer came,
The long, warm, lightsome summer day,
Then at her door the *canty* dame
Would sit, as any linnet gay.

But when the ice our streams did fetter,
Oh ! then how her old bones would shake,
You would have said, if you had met her,
'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.
Her evenings then were dull and dead !
Sad case it was, as you may think,
For very cold to go to bed ;
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

Oh joy for her ! whens'er in winter
The winds at night had made a rout ;
And scatter'd many a lusty splinter
And many a rotten bough about.
Yet never Lad she, well or sick,
As every man who knew her says,
A pile beforehand, wood or stick,
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,
And made her poor old bones to ache,
Could anything be more alluring
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake !
And, now and then, it must be said,
When her old bones were cold and chill,
She left her fire, or left her bed,
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected
This trespass of old Goody Blake ;
And vow'd that she should be detected,
And he on her would vengeance take.
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,
And to the fields his road would take ;
And there, at night, in frost and snow,
He watch'd to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,
Thus looking out did Harry stand :
The moon was full and shining clearly,

And crisp with frost the stubble land.
 He hears a noise—he's all awake—
 Again!—on tip-toe down the hill
 He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake;
 She's at the hedge of Harry Gill.

Right glad was he when he beheld her;
 Stick after stick did Goody pull:
 He stood behind a bush of elder,
 Till she had fill'd her apron full.
 When with her load she turn'd about,
 The by-road back again to take,
 He started forward with a shout,
 And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,
 And by the arm he held her fast,
 And fiercely by the arm he shook her,
 And cried, "I've caught you then at last!"
 Then Goody, who had nothing said,
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;
 And, kneeling on the sticks, she pray'd
 To God, that is the Judge of all.

She pray'd, her wither'd hand uprearing,
 While Harry held her by the arm—
 "God! who art never out of hearing,
 O may he never more be warm!"
 The cold, cold moon above her head,
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray,
 Young Harry heard what she had said:
 And icy cold he turn'd away.

He went complaining all the morrow
 That he was cold and very chill:
 His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow;
 Alas, that day for Harry Gill!
 That day he wore a riding-coat,
 But not a whit the warmer he:
 Another was on Thursday brought,
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,—
 And blankets were about him pinn'd;
 Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,
 Like a loose casement in the wind.
 And Harry's flesh it fell away;
 And all who see him say, 'tis plain,
 That, live as long as live he may,
 He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,
 Abed or up, to young or old;
 But ever to himself he mutters,
 "Poor Harry Gill is very cold."
 Abed or up, by night or day,
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill.

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:—
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
There's a thrush that sings loud—it has sung for three years:
Poor Susan has pass'd by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

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

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripp'd with her pail,
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

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

POWER OF MUSIC.

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus !—yes, Faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old ;—
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same,
In the street that from Oxford hath borrow'd its name.

His station is there ; and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly—what an empire is this !
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ;
The mourner is cheer'd, and the anxious have rest ;
And the guilt-burthen'd soul is no longer oppress'd.

As the moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,
So he, where he stands, is a centre of light ;
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-brow'd Jack,
And the pale-visaged baker, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'prentice was passing in haste—
What matter ! he's caught—and his time runs to waste—
The newsman is stopp'd, though he stops on the fret,
And the half-breathless lamplighter, he's in the net !

The porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;
The lass with her barrow wheels hither her store ;—
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;
She sees the musician, 'tis all that she sees !

He stands, back'd by the wall ; he abates not his din ;
His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the poorest—and there !
The one-pennied boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a band ;
I am glad for him, blind as he is !—all the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;
Can he keep himself still, if he would ? oh, not he !
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

There's a cripple who leans on his crutch ; like a tower
That long has lean'd forward, leans hour after hour !—
A mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream ;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

STEPPING WESTWARD.

While my fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Katrine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a hut where in the course of our tour we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward."

"What, you are stepping westward?"—"Yea."

—'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
If we, who thus together roam
In a strange land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of chance;
Yet who would stop, or fear t' advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
Behind, all gloomy to behold;
And stepping westward seem'd to be
A kind of *heavenly* destiny:
I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound
Of something without place or bound;
And seem'd to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake;
The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy;
Its power was felt; and while my eye
Was fix'd upon the glowing sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

GLEN-ALMAIN; OR, THE NARROW GLEN.

In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the "Narrow Glen;"
In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one:
He sang of battles, and the breath
Of stormy war, and violent death;
And should, methinks, when all was past,
Have rightfully been laid at last
Where rocks were rudely heap'd, and rent
As by a spirit turbulent;
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled;
In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet;
But this is calm; there cannot be
A more entire tranquillity.

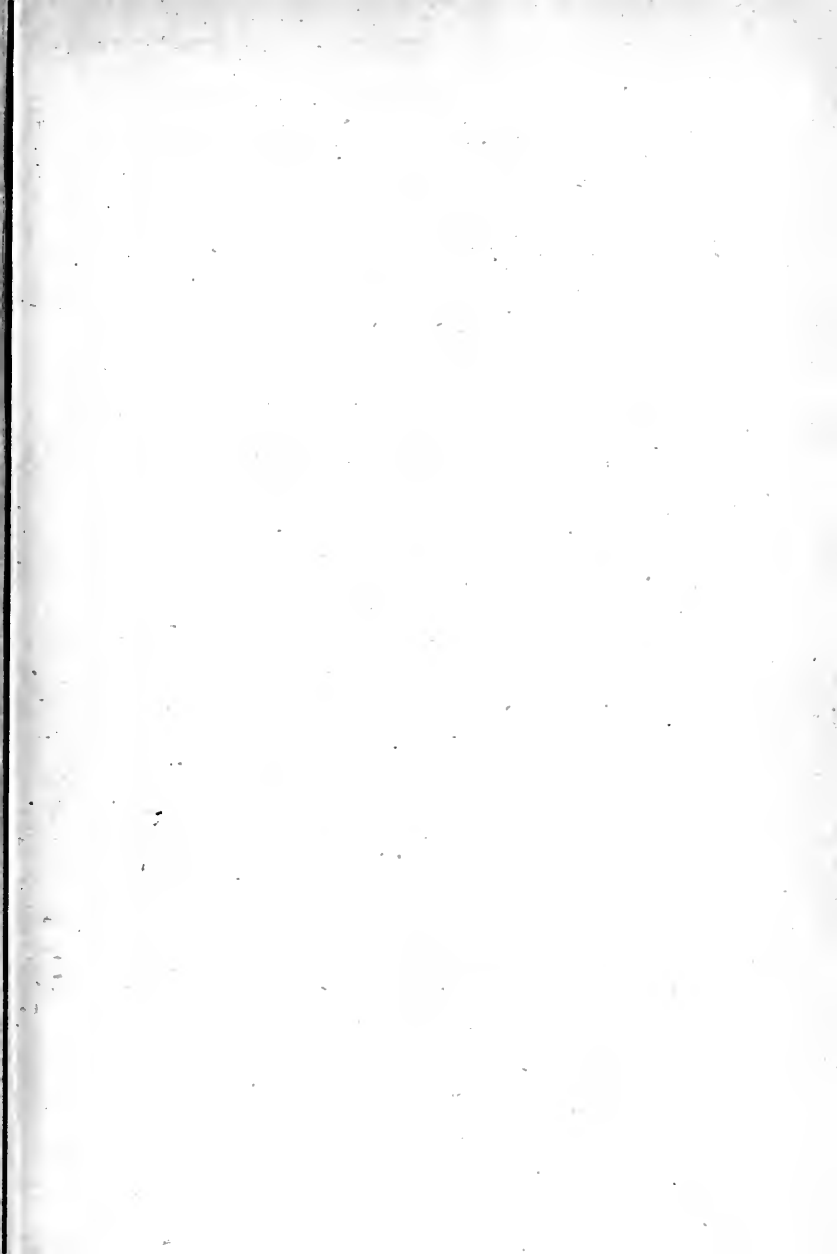
Does then the bard sleep here indeed !
 Or is it but a groundless creed !
 What matters it !—I blame them not
 Whose fancy in this lonely spot
 Was moved ; and in this way express'd
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell
 Would break the silence of this dell :
 It is not quiet, is not ease ;
 But something deeper far than these :
 The separation that is here
 Is of the grave ; and of austere
 And happy feelings of the dead :
 And, therefore, was it rightly said
 That Ossian, last of all his race !
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(AT INVERSNAIL, UPON LOCH LOMOND.)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
 Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
 Twice seven consenting years have shed
 Their utmost bounty on thy head ;
 And these grey rocks ; this household lawn ;
 These trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
 This fall of water, that doth make
 A murmur near the silent lake ;
 This little bay, a quiet road,
 That holds in shelter thy abode ;
 In truth together ye do seem
 Like something fashion'd in a dream ;
 Such forms as from their covert peep
 When earthly cares are laid asleep !
 Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
 I bless thee with a human heart !
 God shield thee to thy latest years !
 I neither know thee nor thy peers ;
 And yet my eyes are fill'd with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away :
 For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here, scatter'd like a random seed,
 Remote from men, thou dost not need
 The embarrass'd look of shy distress,
 And maidenly shamefacedness ;
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a mountaineer,
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Sweet looks, by human kindness bred !





THE HIGHLAND GIRL.

"As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall,
And thee, the spirit of them all."

And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts, that lie beyond the reach
 Of thy few words of English speech ;
 A bondage sweetly brook'd, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind,
 Thus beating up against the wind.
 What hand but would a garland cull
 For thee, who art so beautiful ?
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
 Adopt your homely ways and dress,
 A shepherd, thou a shepherdess !
 But I could frame a wish for thee
 More like a grave reality :
 Thou art to me but as a wave
 Of the wild sea ; and I would have
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,
 Though but of common neighbourhood.
 What joy to hear thee, and to see !
 Thy elder brother I would be,
 Thy father, anything to thee !
 Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
 Hath led me to this lonely place.
 Joy have I had ; and going hence
 I bear away my recompense.
 In spots like these it is we prize
 Our memory, feel that she hath eyes ;
 Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
 I feel this place was made for her ;
 To give new pleasure like the past,
 Continued long as life shall last.
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
 And thee, the spirit of them all !

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself.
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts, and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain.
 O listen ! for the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
 So sweetly to reposing bands
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 No sweeter voice was ever heard
 In spring-time from a cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago :
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day ?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again !

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;—
 I listen'd till I had my fill :
 And, as I mounted up the hill,
 The music in my heart I bore,
 Long after it was heard no more.

WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S
 WATER.

THE cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,
 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun ;
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest ;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising ;
 There are forty feeding like one !
 Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The plough-boy is whooping—anon—anon !
 There's joy in the mountains ;
 There's life in the fountains ;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing ;
 The rain is over and gone !

GIPSIES.

YET are they here—the same unbroken knot
 Of human beings, in the self-same spot !
 Men, women, children, yea the frame
 Of the whole spectacle the same !
 Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,
 Now deep and red, the colouring of night,
 That on their gipsy-faces falls,
 Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.
 Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours, are gone while I
 Have been a traveller under open sky,
 Much witnessing of change and cheer—
 Yet as I left I find them here !
 The weary sun betook himself to rest,
 Then issued vesper from the fulgent west,
 Outshining like a visible god
 The glorious path in which he trod.
 And now, ascending, after one dark hour,
 And one night's diminution of her power,
 Behold the mighty moon ! this way
 She looks as if at them—but they
 Regard not her. Oh, better wrong and strife,
 Better vain deeds, or evil, than such life !
 The silent heavens have goings-on ;
 The stars have tasks—but these have none !

BEGGARS.

SHE had a tall man's height, or more,
 No bonnet screen'd her from the heat ;
 A long drab-colour'd cloak she wore,
 A mantle reaching to her feet :
 What other dress she had I could not know ;
 (Only she wore a cap that was as white as snow.
 In all my walks, through field or town,
 Such figure had I never seen :
 Her face was of Egyptian brown :
 Fit person was she for a queen,
 To head those ancient Amazonian files :
 Or ruling bandit's wife, among the Grecian isles.
 Before me begging did she stand,
 Pouring out sorrows like a sea ;
 Grief after grief. On English land
 Such woes I knew could never be ;
 And yet a boon I gave her ; for the creature
 Was beautiful to see ; " a weed of glorious feature !"
 I left her, and pursued my way ;
 And soon before me did espy
 A pair of little boys at play,

Chasing a crimson butterfly ;
The taller follow'd with his hat in hand,
Wreath'd round with yellow flowers, the gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown,
With leaves of laurel stuck about :
And they both follow'd up and down,
Each whooping with a merry shout :
Two brothers seem'd they, eight and ten years old ;
And like that woman's face as gold is like to gold.

They bolted on me thus, and lo !
Each ready with a plaintive whine ;
Said I, " Not half an hour ago
Your mother has had alms of mine."
" That cannot be," one answer'd, " she is dead."
" Nay but I gave her pence, and she will buy you bread."
" She has been dead, sir, many a day."
" Sweet boys, you're telling me a lie ;
It was your mother, as I say—"
And in the twinkling of an eye,
" Come, come !" cried one ; and, without more ado,
Off to some other play they both together flew.

YARROW UNVISITED. 1803.

(See the various poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; the peculiar, the exquisite ballad of Hamilton, beginning—

" Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !"—)

FROM Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravell'd ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travell'd ;
And, when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my " winsome Marrow,"
" Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

" Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own,
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downwards with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

" There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
There's pleasant Teviotdale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

“What’s Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under !
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder.”
—Strange words they seem’d of slight and scorn ;
My true love sigh’d for sorrow ;
And look’d me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

“Oh ! green,” said I, “are Yarrow’s holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,*
But we will leave it growing.
O’er hilly path, and open strath,
We’ll wander Scotland thorough ;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

“Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
The swan on still Saint Mary’s Lake
Float double, swan and shadow !
We will not see them ; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There’s such a place as Yarrow.

“Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
It must, or we shall rue it :
We have a vision of our own ;
Ah ! why should we undo it ?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We’ll keep them, winsome Marrow !
For when we’re there, although ’tis fair,
’Twill be another Yarrow !

“If care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly,—
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy ;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
’Twill soothe us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow !”

YARROW VISITED.

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

AND is this Yarrow !—*this* the stream
Of which my fancy cherish’d,
So faithfully, a waking dream !
An image that hath perish’d !

* See Hamilton’s ballad as above.

O that some minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness !

Yet why ?—a silvery current flows
With uncontroll'd meanderings ;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted ;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow Vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness ;
Mild dawn of promise ! that excludes
All profitless dejection ;
Though not unwilling here t' admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding ?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding :
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The water-wraith ascended thrice,
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers :
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love ;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow !

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation :
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy ;
The grace of forest charms decay'd,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature ;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary !

The shatter'd front of Newark's towers,
Renown'd in border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
And age to wear away in !
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
It promises protection
To studious ease, and generous cares,
And every chaste affection !

How sweet on this autumnal day,
The wild wood's fruits to gather,
And on my true love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather !
And what if I enwreath'd my own !
'Twere no offence to reason ;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee !
Thy ever youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure ;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the heights,
They melt—and soon must vanish ;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought ! which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

STAR-GAZERS.

WHAT crowd is this—what have we here ? we must not pass it by ;
A telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky ;
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's waters float.

The showman chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's busy square ;
And he's as happy in his night, for the heavens are blue and fair ;
Calm, though impatient, is the crowd ; each is ready with the fee,
And envies him that's looking—what an insight must it be !

Yet showman, where can lie the cause ? Shall thy implement have
blame,

A boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and is put to shame ?
Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault ?

Their eyes, or minds ? or, finally, is this resplendent vault ?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have here ?
 Or gives a thing but small delight that never can be dear ?
 The silver moon, with all her vales, and hills of mightiest fame,
 Do they betray us when they're seen—and are they but a Lame ?

Or is it rather that conceit rapacious is and strong,
 And bounty never yields so much but it seems to do her wrong ?
 Or is it, that when human souls a journey long have had,
 And are return'd into themselves, they cannot but be sad ?

Or must we be constrain'd to think that these spectators rude,
 Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,
 Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore prostrate lie !
 No, no, this cannot be—men thirst for power and majesty !

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful mind employ
 Of him who gazes, or has gazed ? a grave and steady joy,
 That doth reject all show of pride, admits no outward sign,
 Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine !

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who pry and pore
 Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than before :
 One after one they take their turns, nor have I one espied
 That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
 The rain came heavily, and fell in floods ;
 But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;
 The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
 Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove broods ;
 The jay makes answer as the magpie chatters ;
 And all the air is fill'd with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
 The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
 The grass is bright with rain-drops ; on the moors
 The hare is running races in her mirth ;
 And with her feet she from the plashy earth
 Raises a mist ; which, glittering in the sun,
 Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a traveller then upon the moor ;
 I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;
 I heard the woods and distant waters roar,
 Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :
 The pleasant season did my heart employ ;
 My old remembrances went from me wholly ;
 And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy !

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
 Of joy in minds that can no farther go,
 As high as we have mounted in delight
 In our dejection do we sink as low ;
 To me that morning did it happen so,
 And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
 Dim sadness and blind thoughts I knew not, nor could name.

I heard the skylark singing in the sky ;
 And I bethought me of the playful hare .
 Even such a happy child of earth am I ;
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
 Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
 But there may come another day to me—
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
 As if life's business were a summer mood ;
 As if all needful things would come unsought
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
 But how can he expect that others should
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all !

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,
 The sleepless soul that perish'd in his pride ;
 Of him who walk'd in glory and in joy
 Behind his plough upon the mountain side :
 By our own spirits are we deified ;
 We poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
 But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell, that in this lonely place,
 When up and down my fancy thus was driven,
 And I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
 I saw a man before me unawares :
 The oldest man he seem'd that ever wore grey hairs.

My course I stopp'd as soon as I espied
 The old man in that naked wilderness :
 Close by a pond upon the further side
 He stood alone : a minute's space I guess
 I watch'd him, he continued motionless :
 To the pool's further margin then I drew,
 He being all the while before me full in view.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couch'd on the bald top of an eminence,
 Wonder to all who do the same espy
 By what means it could thither come, and whence,
 So that it seems a thing endowed with sense :
 Like a sea-beast crawl'd forth, which on a shelf
 Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself.

Such seem'd this man, not all alive nor dead,
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age :
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in their pilgrimage,
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propp'd, his body, limbs, and face,
 Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood ;

And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Beside the little pond or moorish flood,
Motionless as a cloud the old man stood ;
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirr'd with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conn'd,
As if he had been reading in a book :
And now such freedom as I could I took,
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
"This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old man make,
In courteous speech, which forth he slowly drew ;
And him with further words I thus bespake :
"What kind of work is that which you pursue ?
This is a lonesome place for one like you."
He answer'd me with pleasure and surprise,
And there was, while he spake, a fire about his eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
Yet each in solemn order follow'd each,
With something of a lofty utterance dress'd ;
Choice word, and measured phrase ; above the reach
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

He told me that he to this pond had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor
Employment hazardous and wearisome !
And he had many hardships to endure ;
From pond to pond he roam'd, from moor to moor,
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
And in this way he gain'd an honest maintenance.

The old man still stood talking by my side ;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard, nor word from word could I divide ;
And the whole body of the man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;
Or like a man from some far region sent
To give me human strength and strong admonishment.

My former thoughts return'd : the fear that kills,
And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;
And mighty poets in their misery dead.
But now, perplex'd by what the old man had said,
My question eagerly did I renew.
"How is it that you live, and what is it you do ?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
He travell'd ; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the ponds where they abide.

“Once I could meet with them on every side ;
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me ;
 In my mind's eye I seem'd to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renew'd.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully utter'd, with demeanour kind,
 But stately in the main ; and when he ended,
 I could have laugh'd myself to scorn, to find
 In that decrepit man so firm a mind.
 “God,” said I, “be my help and stay secure ;
 I'll think of the leech-gatherer on the lonely moor.”

THE THORN.

THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,
 In truth, you'd find it hard to say
 How it could ever have been young,
 It looks so old and grey.
 Not higher than a two years child,
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;
 No leaves it has, no thorny points ;
 It is a mass of knotted joints,
 A wretched thing forlorn.
 It stands erect, and like a stone
 With lichens it is overgrown.

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown
 With lichens to the very top,
 And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
 A melancholy crop :
 Up from the earth these mosses creep,
 And this poor Thorn they clasp it round.
 So close, you'd say that they were bent
 With plain and manifest intent
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And all had join'd in one endeavour
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

High on a mountain's highest ridge,
 Where oft the stormy winter gale
 Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds
 It sweeps from vale to vale ;
 Not five yards from the mountain path,
 This Thorn you on your left espy ;
 And to the left, three yards beyond,
 You see a little muddy pond
 Of water, never dry ;

I've measured it from side to side :
 'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

And, close beside this aged Thorn,
 There is a fresh and lovely sight,
 A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
 Just half a foot in height.

All lovely colours there you see,
 All colours that were ever seen ;
 And mossy net-work too is there,
 As if by hand of lady fair
 The work had woven been ;
 And cups, the darlings of the eye,
 So deep is their vermilion dye.

Ah me ! what lovely tints are there !
 Of olive-green and scarlet bright,
 In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
 Green, red, and pearly white.
 This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
 Which close beside the Thorn you see,
 So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
 Is like an infant's grave in size,
 As like as like can be :
 But never, never anywhere,
 An infant's grave was half so fair.

Now, would you see this aged Thorn,
 This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,
 You must take care and choose your time
 The mountain when to cross.
 For oft there sits between the heap
 That's like an infant's grave in size,
 And that same pond of which I spoke,
 A woman in a scarlet cloak,
 And to herself she cries,
 " Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! "

At all times of the day and night
 This wretched woman thither goes ;
 And she is known to every star,
 And every wind that blows ;
 And there, beside the Thorn, she sits
 When the blue daylight 's in the skies,
 And when the whirlwind 's on the hill,
 Or frosty air is keen and still,
 And to herself she cries,
 " Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! "

" Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,
 In rain, in tempest, and in snow,
 Thus to the dreary mountain-top
 Does this poor woman go ?
 And why sits she beside the Thorn
 When the blue daylight 's in the sky,

Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,
 Or frosty air is keen and still,
 And wherefore does she cry?—
 Oh wherefore—wherefore? tell me why
 Does she repeat that doleful cry?"

"I cannot tell; I wish I could;
 For the true reason no one knows;
 But if you'd gladly view the spot,
 The spot to which she goes;
 The heap that's like an infant's grave,
 The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey;
 Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—
 And, if you see her in her hut,
 Then to the spot away!—
 I never heard of such as dare
 Approach the spot when she is there."

"But wherefore to the mountain-top
 Can this unhappy woman go,
 Whatever star is in the skies,
 Whatever wind may blow?"
 "Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,
 I'll tell you everything I know;
 But to the Thorn and to the pond,
 Which is a little step beyond,
 I wish that you would go;
 Perhaps when you are at the place,
 You something of her tale can trace.

"I'll give you the best help I can,
 Before you up the mountain go,
 Up to the dreary mountain-top,
 I'll tell you all I know.
 'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
 Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
 Gave with a maiden's true good-will
 Her company to Stephen Hill;
 And she was blithe and gay,
 And she was happy, happy still
 Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

"And they had fix'd the wedding-day,
 The morning that must wed them both;
 But Stephen to another maid
 Had sworn another oath;
 And with this other maid to church
 Unthinking Stephen went.
 Poor Martha! on that woeful day
 A pang of pitiless dismay
 Into her soul was sent;
 A fire was kindled in her breast,
 Which might not burn itself to rest.

"They say, full six months after this,
 While yet the summer leaves were green,
 She to the mountain-top would go,

And there was often seen.
 'Tis said a child was in her womb,
 As now to any eye was plain ;
 She was with child, and she was mad ;
 Yet often she was sober sad
 From her exceeding pain.
 Oh me ! ten thousand times I'd rather
 That he had died, that cruel father !

“ Sad case for such a brain to hold
 Communion with a stirring child !
 Sad case, as you may think, for one
 Who had a brain so wild !
 Last Christmas when we talk'd of this,
 Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,
 That in her womb the infant wrought
 About its mother's heart, and brought
 Her senses back again :
 And when at last her time drew near,
 Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

“ No more I know, I wish I did,
 And I would tell it all to you ;
 For what became of this poor child
 There's none that ever knew ;
 And if a child was born or no,
 There's no one that could ever tell ;
 And if 'twas born alive or dead,
 There's no one knows, as I have said ;
 But some remember well,
 That Martha Ray about this time
 Would up the mountain often climb.

“ And all that winter, when at night
 The wind blew from the mountain-peak,
 'Twas worth your while, though in the dark,
 The churchyard path to seek :
 For many a time and oft were heard
 Cries, coming from the mountain-head :
 Some plainly living voices were ;
 And others, I've heard many swear,
 Were voices of the dead :
 I cannot think, whate'er they say,
 They had to do with Martha Ray.

“ But that she goes to this old Thorn,
 The Thorn which I've described to you,
 And there sits in a scarlet cloak,
 I will be sworn is true.
 For one day with my telescope,
 To view the ocean wide and bright,
 When to this country first I came,
 Ere I had heard of Martha's name,
 I climb'd the mountain's height :
 A storm came on, and I could see
 No object higher than my knee.

"'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain,
 No screen, no fence could I discover,
 And then the wind ! in faith it was
 A wind full ten times over.
 I look'd around, I thought I saw
 A jutting crag,—and off I ran,
 Head foremost, through the driving rain,
 The shelter of the crag to gain ;
 And, as I am a man,
 Instead of jutting crag, I found
 A woman seated on the ground.

"I did not speak—I saw her face ;
 Her face !—it was enough for me ;
 I turn'd about and heard her cry,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !'
 And there she sits, until the moon
 Through half the clear blue sky will go ;
 And, when the little breezes make
 The waters of the pond to shake,
 As all the country know,
 She shudders, and you hear her cry,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !'"

"But what's the Thorn—and what's the pond—
 And what's the hill of moss to her ?
 And what's the creeping breeze that comes
 The little pond to stir ?"

"I cannot tell ; but some will say
 She hang'd her baby on the tree ;
 Some say she drown'd it in the pond,
 Which is a little step beyond :
 But all and each agree,
 The little babe was buried there,
 Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

"I've heard the moss is spotted red
 With drops of that poor infant's blood.
 But kill a new-born infant thus,
 I do not think she could !
 Some say, if to the pond you go,
 And fix on it a steady view,
 The shadow of a babe you trace,
 A baby, and a baby's face,
 And that it looks at you ;
 Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain
 The baby looks at you again.

"And some had sworn an oath that she
 Should be to public justice brought ;
 And for the little infant's bones
 With spades they would have sought.
 But then the beauteous hill of moss
 Before their eyes began to stir !
 And for full fifty yards around,
 The grass,—it shook upon the ground !

But all do still aver
 The little babe is buried there,
 Beneath that hill of moss so fair.
 "I cannot tell how this may be,
 But plain it is, the Thorn is bound
 With heavy tufts of moss, that strive
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And this I know—full many a time
 When she was on the mountain high,
 By day, and in the silent night,
 When all the stars shone clear and bright,
 That I have heard her cry,
 'Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'"

HART-LEAP WELL,

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond, in Yorkshire and near the side of the road which leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second part of the following poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
 With the slow motion of a summer's cloud ;
 He turn'd aside towards a vassal's door,
 And "Bring another horse !" he cried aloud.

"Another horse !" that shout the vassal heard,
 And saddled his best steed, a comely grey ;
 Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third
 Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;
 The horse and horseman are a happy pair ;
 But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
 There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's hail,
 That as they gallop'd made the echoes roar ;
 But horse and man are vanish'd, one and all ;
 Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
 Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain,
 Brach, Swift, and Musio, noblest of their kind,
 Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight halloo'd, he chid and cheer'd them on
 With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;
 But breath and eyesight fail ; and one by one,
 The dogs are stretch'd among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?
 The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
 —This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;
 Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone

The poor Hart toils along the mountain side ;
 I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
 Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
 But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting then, he lean'd against a thorn ;
 He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy ;
 He neither smack'd his whip, nor blew his horn,
 But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter lean'd,
 Stood his dumb partner in this glorious act ;
 Weak as a lamb the hour that it is year'd ;
 And foaming like a mountain cataract.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretch'd :
 His nose half touch'd a spring beneath a hill,
 And with the last deep groan his breath has fetch'd
 The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
 (Was never man in such a joyful case !)
 Sir Walter walk'd all round, north, south, and west,
 And gazed and gazed upon that darling place.

And climbing up the hill (it was at least
 Nine roods of sheer ascent), Sir Walter found
 Three several hoof-marks which the hunted beast
 Had left imprinted on the verdant ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
 Such sight was never seen by living eyes :
 Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
 Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
 And a small arbour made for rural joy ;
 'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
 A place of love for damsels that are coy.

"A cunning artist will I have to frame
 A basin for that fountain in the dell !
 And they, who do make mention of the same
 From this day forth shall call it 'Hart-Leap Well.'

"And, gallant brute ! to make thy praises known,
 Another monument shall here be raised ;
 Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
 And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

"And in the summer time, when days are long,
 I will come hither with my paramour ;
 And with the dancers, and the mins' el's song,
 We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains fail,
 My mansion with its arbour shall endure ;—
 The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
 And them who dwell among the woods of Ure !"

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone dead,
 With breathless nostrils stretch'd above the spring.
 —Soon did the Knight perform what he had said,
 And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the moon into her port had steer'd,
 A cup of stone received the living well ;
 Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter rear'd,
 And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall,
 With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—
 Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
 A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,
 Sir Walter journey'd with his paramour ;
 And with the dancers, and the minstrel's song,
 Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
 And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
 But there is matter for a second rhyme,
 And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade :
 To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
 'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
 To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
 It chanced that I saw, standing in a dell,
 Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
 And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
 And, pulling now the rein, my horse to stop,
 I saw three pillars standing in a line,
 The last stone pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;
 Half-wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
 So that you just might say, as then I said,
 " Here, in old time, the hand of man hath been."

I look'd upon the hill both far and near,
 More doleful place did never eye survey ;
 It seem'd as if the spring-time came not here,
 And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood, in various thoughts and fancies lost,
 When one who was in shepherd's garb attired,
 Came up the hollow : him did I accost,
 And what this place might be I then inquired.

The shepherd stopp'd, and that same story told
 Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.

"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old !
But something ails it now ; the spot is cursed.

"You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

"The arbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;
But as to the great lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

"There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

"Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood ; but for my part,
I've guess'd, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

"What thoughts must through the creature's brain have pass'd !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, sir, at this last
—O master ! it has been a cruel leap.

"For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his deathbed near the well.

"Here on the grass, perhaps, asleep he sank,
Lull'd by this fountain in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank,
When he had wander'd from his mother's side.

"In April, here beneath the scented thorn,
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that selfsame spring.

"But now here's neither grass nor pleasant shade,
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees and stones, and fountain all are gone."

"Grey-headed shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourn'd by sympathy divine.

"The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom He loves.

"The pleasure-house is dust : behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;

But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

"She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

"One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows and what conceals,
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

SONG,

AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,

*Upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and
Honours of his Ancestors.*

HIGH in the breathless hall the minstrel sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the song.—
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long.

"From town to town, from tower to tower,
The red rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last ;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming :
Both roses flourish, red and white ;
In love and sisterly delight,
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended.—
Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster !
Behold her how she smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array !
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall ;
But, chiefly, from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful lord,
A Clifford to his own restored !

"They came with banner, spear, and shield ;
And it was proved in Bosworth field.
Not long the avenger was withstood—
Earth help'd him with the cry of blood :
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed angels crown'd the right.
Loud voice the land hath utter'd forth,
We loudest in the faithful North :
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
Our strong abodes and castles see
The glory of their royalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour—
 Though she is but a lonely tower !
 Silent, deserted of her best,
 Without an inmate or a guest,
 Knight, squire, or yeoman, page or groom ;
 We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
 How glad Pendragon—though the sleep
 Of years be on her !—She shall reap
 A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
 As in a dream her own renewing.
 Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
 Beside her little humble stream ;
 And she that keepeth watch and ward
 Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
 They both are happy at this hour,
 Though each is but a lonely tower :—
 But here is perfect joy and pride
 For one fair house by Emont's side,
 This day distinguish'd without peer ;
 To see her master and to cheer
 Him, and his lady mother dear !

“ Oh ! it was a time forlorn
 When the fatherless was born—
 Give her wings that she may fly,
 Or she sees her infant die !
 Swords that are with slaughter wild
 Hunt the mother and the child.
 Who will take them from the light ?
 — Yonder is a man in sight—
 Yonder is a house—but where ?
 No, they must not enter there.
 To the caves, and to the brooks,
 To the clouds of heaven she looks ;
 She is speechless, but her eyes
 Pray in ghostly agonies.
 Blissful Mary, mother mild,
 Maid and mother undefiled,
 Save a mother and her child !

“ Now who is he that bounds with joy
 On Carrock's side, a shepherd boy ?
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
 Light as the wind along the grass.
 Can this be he who hither came
 In secret, like a smother'd flame ?
 O'er whom such thankful tears were shed,
 For shelter, and a poor man's bread !
 God loves the child ; and God hath will'd
 That those dear words should be fulfill'd,
 'The lady's words, when forced away,
 The last she to her babe did say,
 'My own, my own, thy fellow-guest
 I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,
 For lowly shepherd's life is best !'

" Alas ! when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long.
 The boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
 And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
 And quit the flowers that summer brings
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs ;
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer
 Be turn'd to heaviness and fear.
 —Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !
 Hear it, good man, old in days !
 Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young bird that is distress'd ;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play,
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

" A recreant harp, that sings of fear
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear !
 I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long,
 A weak and cowardly untruth !
 Our Clifford was a happy youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.
 —Again he wanders forth at will,
 And tends a flock from hill to hill :
 His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien ;
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate
 Hath he, a child of strength and state !
 Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee,
 And a cheerful company,
 That learn'd of him submissive ways,
 And comforted his private days.
 To his side the fallow deer
 Came, and rested without fear ;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea,
 Stoop'd down to pay him fealty ;
 And both th' undying fish that swim
 Through Bowscale Tarn did wait on him,
 The pair were servants of his eye
 In their immortality ;
 They moved about in open sight,
 To and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which angels haunt
 On the mountains visitant ;
 He hath kenn'd them taking wing :
 And the caves where fairies sing
 He hath enter'd, and been told
 By voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 Face of thing that is to be ;
 And, if men report him right,
 He can whisper words of might.

—Now another day is come,
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom :
 He hath thrown aside his crook,
 And hath buried deep his book ;
 Armour rusting in his halls
 On the blood of Clifford calls ;—
 ‘Quell the Scot,’ exclaims the lance—
 ‘Bear me to the heart of France’
 Is the longing of the shield—
 Tell thy name, thou trembling field ;
 Field of death, where’er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory !
 Happy day, and mighty hour,
 When our shepherd, in his power,
 Mail’d and horsed, with lance and sword
 To his ancestors restored
 Like a re-appearing star,
 Like a glory from afar,
 First shall head the flock of war !”

Alas ! the fervent harper did not know
 That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
 Who, long compell’d in humble walks to go,
 Was soften’d into feeling, soothed and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,
 His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
 The silence that is in the starry sky,
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the race,
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :
 Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth ;
 The shepherd lord was honour’d more and more :
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,
 “The good Lord Clifford” was the name he bore.

THE ECHO.

YES ! full surely ’twas the echo,
 Solitary, clear, profound,
 Answering to thee, shcuting cuckoo !
 Giving to thee sound for sound.

Unsolicited reply
 To a babbling wanderer sent ;
 Like her ordinary cry,
 Like—but oh how different !

Hears not also mortal life ?
 Hear not we, unthinking creatures !
 Slaves of folly, love, or strife,
 Voices of two different natures ?

Have not we too!—Yes we have
 Answers, and we know not whence;
 Echoes from beyond the grave,
 Recognized intelligence!

Such within ourselves we hear
 Oftimes, ours though sent from far;
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear;
 For of God,—of God they are!

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS COMMENCEMENT.⁶

O, pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
 Upon our side, we who were strong in love!
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
 But to be young was very heaven! O, times!
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
 Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
 The attraction of a country in romance!
 When Reason seem'd the most to assert her rights,
 When most intent on making of herself
 A prime enchantress—to assist the work,
 Which then was going forward in her name!
 Not favour'd spots alone, but the whole earth,
 The beauty wore of promise—that which sets
 (To take an image which was felt no doubt
 Among the bowers of paradise itself)
 The budding rose above the rose full blown.
 What temper at the prospect did not wake
 To happiness unthought of? The inert
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
 They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
 The playfellows of fancy, who had made
 All powers of swiftness, subtility, and strength
 Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirr'd
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there
 As if they had within some lurking right
 To wield it;—they, too, who of gentle mood
 Had watch'd all gentle motions, and to these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild.
 And in the region of their peaceful selves;—
 Now was it that *both* found, the meek and lofty
 Did both find helpers to their heart's desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,—
 Were call'd upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia,—subterraneous fields,—
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
 But in the very world, which is the world
 Of all of us—the place where in the end
 We find our happiness, or not at all!

⁶ Republished from "THE FALLEN."

It is no spirit who from heaven hath flown
 And is descending on his embassy ;
 Nor traveller gone from earth the heavens t' espy !
 'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glittering crown,
 First admonition that the sun is down,—
 For yet it is broad daylight !—clouds pass by ;
 A few are near him still—and now the sky,
 He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.
 O most ambitious star ! an inquest wrought
 Within me when I recognized thy light ;
 A moment I was startled at the sight ;
 And, while I gazed, there came to me a thought
 That even I beyond my natural race
 Might step as thou dost now :—might one day trace
 Some ground not mine ; and, strong her strength above,
 My soul, an apparition in the place,
 Tread there, with steps that no one shall reprove !

LINES,

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING
 THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR.

FIVE years have pass'd ; five summers, with the length
 Of five long winters ! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain springs
 With a sweet inland murmur.*—Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
 Which on a wild secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard tufts,
 Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 Among the woods and copses, nor disturb
 The wild green landscape. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild ; these pastoral farms
 Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
 Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The hermit sits alone.

Though absent long,
 These forms of beauty have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,

* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
 Of unremember'd pleasure ; such, perhaps,
 As may have had no trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremember'd acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lighten'd ;—that serene and blessed mood,
 In which th' affections gently lead us on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
 And even the motion of our human blood,
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul :
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
 In darkness, and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye ! Thou wand'rer through the woods,
 How often has my spirit turn'd to thee !
 And now, with gleams of half-extinguish'd thought,
 With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
 The picture of the mind revives again :
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
 I came among these hills ; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever Nature led ; more like a man
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all. I cannot paint
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me

An appetite: a feeling and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, or any interest
 Unborrow'd from the eye. That time is past,
 And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
 Have follow'd, for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompense. For I have learn'd
 To look on Nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 Of eye and ear, both what they half create,*
 And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
 In Nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay;
 For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
 Of this fair river; thou, my dearest friend,
 My dear, dear friend, and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once,
 My dear, dear sister! And this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all

* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young, the exact expression of which I cannot recollect.

The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
 And let the misty mountain winds be free
 To blow against thee : and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations ! nor, perchance,
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love, oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake.

Poems proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection.

LINES

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

NAY, traveller ! rest. This lonely yew-tree stands
 Far from all human dwelling : what if here
 No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
 What if these barren boughs the bee not loves ?
 Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
 That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
 By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

Who he was
 That piled these stones, and with the mossy sod
 First cover'd o'er, and taught this aged tree
 With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
 I well remember. He was one who own'd

No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
 And led by Nature into a wild scene
 Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
 A favour'd being, knowing no desire
 Which genius did not hallow,—'gainst the taint
 Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy and hate,
 And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,
 All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,
 Owed him no service : wherefore he at once
 With indignation turn'd himself away,
 And with the food of pride sustain'd his soul
 In solitude. Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
 Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,
 The stone-chat, or the sand-lark, restless bird,
 Piping along the margin of the lake.
 And on these barren rocks, with juniper,
 And heath, and thistle, thinly sprinkled o'er,
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
 A morbid pleasure nourish'd, tracing here
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
 And lifting up his head, he then would gaze
 On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis
 Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
 The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor, that time,
 When Nature had subdued him to herself,
 Would he forget those beings, to whose minds,
 Warm from the labours of benevolence,
 The world, and man himself, appear'd a scene
 Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh
 With mournful joy, to think that others felt
 What he must never feel : and so, lost man !
 On visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye stream'd with tears. In this deep vale
 He died,—this seat his only monument.

If thou be one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger ! henceforth be warn'd ; and know, that pride,
 Howe'er disguised in his own majesty,
 Is littleness ; that he who feels contempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties
 Which he has never used ; that thought with him
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself, doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who might move
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, thou !
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to love,
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

WHO is the happy warrior ? Who is he
 Whom every man in arms should wish to be ?
 —It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought :
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That make the path before him always bright ;
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
 But makes his moral being his prime care ;
 Who, doom'd to go in company with pain,
 And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives ;
 By objects which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling, render'd more compassionate ;
 Is placable—because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice ;
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
 As tempted more ; more able to endure,
 As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
 —'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
 Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
 To evil for a guard against worse ill,
 And what in quality or act is best
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
 He fixes good on good alone, and owes
 To virtue every triumph that he knows ;
 . . . Who, if he rise to station of command,
 Rises by open means ; and there will stand
 On honourable terms, or else retire,
 And in himself possess his own desire ;
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
 And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
 For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
 Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
 Like showers of manna, if they come at all ;
 Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
 A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
 But who, if he be call'd upon to face
 Some awful moment to which Heaven has join'd
 Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
 Is happy as a lover ; and attired

With sudden brightness, like a man inspired ;
 And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
 In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
 Or if an unexpected call succeed,
 Come when it will, is equal to the need :
 —He who, though thus endued as with a sense
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,
 Is yet a soul whose master bias leans
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;
 Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
 Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
 It is his darling passion to approve ;
 More brave for this, that he hath much to love :
 'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
 Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
 Or left unthought of in obscurity,—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one
 Where what he most doth value must be won ;
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last,
 From well to better, daily self-surpass'd :
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
 Or he must go to dust without his fame,
 And leave a dead, unprofitable name,
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy warrior ; this is he
 Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known : his grave is near the head of Loch Katrine,
 in one of those small pinfold-like burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance,
 which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
 The English ballad-singer's joy !
 And Scotland has a thief as good,
 An outlaw of as daring mood ;
 She has her brave Rob Roy !
 Then clear the weeds from off his grave,
 And let us chant a passing stave
 In honour of that hero brave !
 Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart,
 And wondrous length and strength of arm ;
 Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
 Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;
 Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
 A poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave :
 As wise in thought as bold in deed :
 For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of books !
 Burn all the statutes and their shelves ;
 They stir us up against our kind ;
 And worse, against ourselves.

"We have a passion, make a law,
 Too false to guide us or control !
 And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

"And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
 Distinctions that are plain and few :
 These find I graven on my heart :
That tells me what to do.

"The creatures see of flood and field,
 And those that travel on the wind !
 With them no strife can last ; they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

"For why ?—because the good old rule
 Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
 That they should take who have the power,
 And they should keep who can.

"A lesson which is quickly learn'd,
 A signal this which all can see !
 Thus nothing here provokes the strong
 To wanton cruelty.

"All freakishness of mind is check'd ;
 He tamed, who foolishly aspires :
 While to the measure of his might
 Each fashions his desires.

"All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
 By strength of prowess or of wit :
 'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
 And who is to submit.

"Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
 And longest life is but a day ;
 To have my ends, maintain my rights,
 I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
 Through summer's heat and winter's snow :
 The eagle, he was lord above,
 And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been
 But through untowardness of fate ;
 For polity was then too strong ;
 He came an age too late.

Or shall we say an age too soon ?
 For, were the bold man living *now*,
 How might he flourish in his pride,
 With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
 Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
 Would all have seem'd but paltry things,
 Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never linger'd here,
 To these few meagre vales confined ;
 But thought how wide the world, the times
 How fairly to his mind.

And to his sword he would have said,
 " Do thou my sovereign will enact
 From land to land through half the earth !
 Judge thou of law and fact !

" 'Tis fit that we should do our part ;
 Becoming, that mankind should learn
 That we are not to be surpass'd
 In fatherly concern.

" Of old things all are over old,
 Of good things none are good enough :—
 We'll show that we can help to frame
 A world of other stuff.

" I, too, will have my kings that take
 From me the sign of life and death :
 Kingdoms shall shift about like clouds,
 Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfill'd,
 As *might* have been, then, thought of joy !
 France would have had her present boast,
 And we our brave Rob Roy !

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;
 I would not wrong thee, champion brave !
 Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all
 Here standing by thy grave.

For thou, although with some wild thoughts,
 Wild chieftain of a savage clan !
 Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love
 The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
 With us who now behold the light,
 Thou wouldst have nobly stirr'd thyself,
 And battled for the right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
 The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand !
 And all the oppress'd who wanted strength,
 Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
 Of thoughtful herdsman when he strays
 Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
 And by Loch Lomond's braes !

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
 Are faces that attest the same ;
 And kindle, like a fire new stirr'd,
 At sound of Rob Roy's name.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

ART thou a statesman, in the van
 Of public business train'd and bred ?
 —First learn to love one living man !
 Then mayst thou think upon the dead.

A lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh ;
 Go, carry to some other place
 The hardness of thy coward eye,
 The falsehood of thy sallow face.

Art thou a man of purple cheer,
 A rosy man, right plump to see ?
 Approach ; yet, doctor, not too near ;
 This grave no cushion is for thee.

Art thou a man of gallant pride,
 A soldier, and no man of chaff ?
 Welcome !—but lay thy sword aside,
 And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou ? One, all eyes,
 Philosopher ! a fingering slave,
 One that would peep and botanize
 Upon his mother's grave ?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
 O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
 That he below may rest in peace,
 That abject thing, thy soul, away.

—A moralist perchance appears ;
 Led, Heaven knows how, to this poor sod ;
 And he has neither eyes nor ears ;
 Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubb'd soul can cling
 Nor form, nor feeling, great nor small ;
 A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
 An intellectual all in all !

Shut close the door, press down the latch ;
 Sleep in thy intellectual crust :

Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is he with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown ?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew
Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has view'd ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,
—The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak, both man and boy,
Hath been an idler in the land :
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
Here stretch thy body at full length,
Or build thy house upon this grave.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

“ WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away ?

“ Where are your books !—that light bequeath'd
To beings else forlorn and blind !
Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

“ You look round on your mother earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you ;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you !”

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply :

“ The eye—it cannot choose but see ;
We cannot bid the ear be still ;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against, or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress ;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking ?

—"Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away."

THE TABLES TURNED ;

AN EVENING SCENE, ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

UP ! up ! my friend, and clear your looks ;
Why all this toil and trouble ?
Up ! up ! my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double.

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music ! on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !
He, too, is no mean preacher :
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

— One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Then all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :
—We murder to dissect.

Enough of science and of art ;
Close up these barren leaves :
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS, AFTER VISITING
THEIR FATHER'S GRAVE.

(AUGUST 14, 1803.)

YE now are panting up life's hill !
'Tis twilight time of good and ill,
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.

Strong-bodied if ye be to bear
Intemperance with less harm, beware !
But if your father's wit ye share,
Then, then indeed,
Ye sons of Burns ! for watchful care
There will be need.

For honest men delight will take
To show you favour for his sake,
Will flatter you ; and fool and rake
Your steps pursue :
And of your father's name will make
A snare for you.

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
Be independent, generous, brave !
Your father such example gave,
And such revere !
But be admonish'd by his grave,—
And think, and fear !

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND.

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING TOGETHER IN HIS
PLEASURE-GROUND.

SPADE ! with which Wilkinson hath till'd his lands,
And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,
Thou art a tool of honour in my hands ;
I press thee through the yielding soil with pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know ;
Long hast thou served a man to reason true
Whose life combines the best of high and low,
The toiling many and the resting few ;

Health, quiet, meekness, ardour, hope secure,
And industry of body and of mind ;
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure
As Nature is—too pure to be refined.

Here often hast thou heard the Poet sing
In concord with his river murmuring by ;

Or in some silent field, while timid spring
Is yet uncheer'd by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit thee when death has laid
Low in the darksome cell thine own dear lord ?
That man will have a trophy, humble spade—
A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword !

If he be one that feels, with skill to part
False praise from true, or greater from the less,
Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,
Thou monument of peaceful happiness !

With thee he will not dread a toilsome day,
His powerful servant, his inspiring mate !
And, when thou art past service, worn away,
Thee a surviving soul shall consecrate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn ;
An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou be :
High will he hang thee up, and will adorn
His rustic chimney with the last of thee !

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

I must apprise the reader that the stoves in North Germany generally have the *impression* of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick arms.

A FIG for your languages, German and Norse !
Let me have the song of the kettle ;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
That gallops away with such fury and force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

Our earth is no doubt made of excellent stuff ;
But her pulses beat slower and slower :
The weather in 'forty was cutting and rough,
And then, as Heaven knows, the glass stood low enough ;
And *now* it is four degrees lower.

Here's a fly, —a disconsolate creature ! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove ;
And, sorrow for him ! this dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ !
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, and now back to the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed ;
The best of his skill he has tried ;
His feelers methinks I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, and the south and the north ;
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

See his spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh ;
 His eyesight and hearing are lost ;
 Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws ;
 And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
 Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no friend has he near him—while I
 Can draw warmth from the cheek of my love ;
 As blest and as glad in this desolate gloom,
 As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
 And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless thing !
 Thy life I would gladly sustain
 Till summer comes up from the south, and with crowds
 Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst sound through the clouds
 And back to the forests again !

LINES

WRITTEN AT A SMALL DISTANCE FROM MY HOUSE, AND SENT BY MY
 LITTLE BOY TO THE PERSON TO WHOM THEY WERE ADDRESSED.

It is the first mild day of March,
 Each minute sweeter than before ;
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch
 That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
 Which seems a sense of joy to yield
 To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
 And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
 Now that our morning meal is done,
 Make haste, your morning task resign ;
 Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ; and pray,
 Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
 And bring no book : for this one day
 We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
 Our living calendar :
 We from to-day, my friend, will date
 The opening of the year.

Love, now an universal birth,
 From heart to heart is stealing,
 From earth to man, from man to earth :
 —It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
 Than fifty years of reason :
 Our minds shall drink at every pore
 The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts may make,
 Which they shall long obey ;

We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessèd power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
—And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS IN THE
COUNTRY.

DEAR child of nature, let them rail !
—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold,
Where thou, a wife and friend, shalt see
Thy own delightful days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd-boy,
As if thy heritage were joy,
And pleasure were thy trade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave ;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

LINES,

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd ;
 Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
 But the least motion which they made,
 It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
 To catch the breezy air ;
 And I must think, do all I can,
 That there was pleasure there.

If I these thoughts may not prevent,
 If such be of my creed the plan,
 Have I not reason to lament
 What man has made of man ?

SIMON LEE, THE OLD HUNTSMAN.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
 Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
 An old man dwells, a little man,—
 I've heard he once was tall.
 Of years he has upon his back,
 No doubt, a burthen weighty ;
 He says he is threescore and ten,
 But others say he's eighty.

A long blue livery coat has he,
 That's fair behind, and fair before ;
 Yet, meet him where you will, you see
 At once that he is poor.
 Full five-and-twenty years he lived
 A running huntsman merry ;
 And, though he has but one eye left,
 His cheek is like a cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
 And no man was so full of glee ;
 To say the least, four counties round
 Had heard of Simon Lee.
 His master's dead, and no one now
 Dwells in the hall of Ivor ;
 Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead :
 He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick,
 His dwindled body's half awry ;
 His ankles too are swollen and thick ;
 His legs are thin and dry.
 When he was young, he little knew
 Of husbandry or tillage,
 And now is forced to work, though weak,
 —The weakest in the village.

He all the country could outrun,
 Could leave both man and horse behind ;
 And often, ere the race was done,
 He reel'd and was stone-blind.

And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
Ho dearly loves their voices !

His hunting feats have him bereft,
Of his right eye, as you may see ;
And then, what limbs those feats have left
To poor old Simon Lee !
He has no son, he has no child ;
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

Old Ruth works out of doors with him,
And does what Simon cannot do ;
For she, not over stout of limb
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
Alas ! 'tis very little, all
Which they can do between them.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Inclosed when he was stronger ;
But what avails the land to them,
Which they can till no longer ?

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And I'm afraid that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
I hope you'll kindly take it :
It is no tale ; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer day I chanced to see
This old man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock totter'd in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour,

That at the root of the old tree
He might have work'd for ever.

"You're overtask'd, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool," to him I said ;
And, at the word, rightly gladly he
Received my proffer'd aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I sever'd,
At which the poor old man so long
And vainly had endeavour'd.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seem'd to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning,
Alas! the gratitude of men
Has oft'ner left me mourning.

ANDREW JONES.

"I HATE that Andrew Jones, he'll breed
His children up to waste and pillage :
I wish the press-gang or the drum
Would, with its rattling music, come
And sweep him from the village."

I said not this because he loves
Through the long day to swear and tittle ;
But for the poor dear sake of one
To whom a foul deed he has done,
A friendless man, a travelling cripple.

For this poor crawling, helpless wretch
Some horseman, who was passing by,
A penny on the ground had thrown ;
But the poor cripple was alone,
And could not stoop—no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground,
For it had long been droughty weather :
So with his staff the cripple wrought
Among the dust, till he had brought
The halfpennies together.

It chanced that Andrew pass'd that way
Just at the time ; and there he found
The cripple in the mid-day heat
Standing alone, and at his feet
He saw the penny on the ground.

He stoop'd and took the penny up :
And when the cripple nearer drew,
Quoth Andrew : "*Under half a crown,
What a man finds is all his own ;
And so, my friend, good day to you.*"

And hence, I say, that Andrew's boys
 Will all be train'd to waste and pillage :
 And wish'd the press-gang or the drum
 Would, with its rattling music, come
 And sweep him from the village.

In the school of ——— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the names of the several persons who have been schoolmasters there since the foundation of the school, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

If nature, for a favourite child
 In thee hath temper'd so her clay,
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,
 Yet never once doth go astray,
 Read o'er these lines ; and then review
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears
 In such diversity of hue
 Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame—
 Cypher and syllable—thine eye
 Has travell'd down to Matthew's name,
 Pause, with no common sympathy.

And if a sleeping tear should wake,
 Then be it neither check'd nor stay'd :
 For Matthew a request I make,
 Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew—all his frolics o'er—
 Is silent as a standing pool ;
 Far from the chimney's merry roar,
 And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
 Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
 The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
 Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
 Of still and serious thought went round,
 It seem'd as if he drank it up—
 He felt with spirit so profound.

Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
 Thou happy soul ! and can it be
 That these two words of glittering gold
 Are all that must remain of thee !

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

WE walk'd along, while bright and red
 Uprose the morning sun ;
 And Matthew stopp'd, he look'd, and said,
 "The will of God be done !"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the streaming rills,
We travell'd merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun ;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought ?"

A second time did Matthew stop,
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply :

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this, which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, coming to the church, stopp'd short
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang ; she would have been
A very nightingale !

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seem'd, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

"No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripp'd with foot so free ;
She seem'd as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine ;
I look'd at her, and look'd again,
And did not wish her mine."

Matthew is in his grave ; yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with his bough
Of wilding in his hand.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

WE talk'd with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew ! let us try to match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border song, or catch,
That suits a summer's noon.

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The grey-hair'd man of glee :

"Down to the vale this water steers ;
How merrily it goes !
"Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirr'd,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

"Thus fares it still in our decay ;
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird in the summer trees,
The lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife: they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free;

"But we are press'd by heavy laws,
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy because
We have been glad of yore.

"If there is one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains;

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee!"
At this he grasp'd my hand, and said,
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side,
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide,
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's Rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewilder'd chimes.

LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING.

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

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

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS.

WRITTEN UPON THE THAMES, NEAR RICHMOND.

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
 O Thames ! that other bards may see
 As lovely visions by thy side
 As now, fair river ! come to me.
 O glide, fair stream, for ever so !
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
 Till all our minds for ever flow,
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.
 Vain thought ! Yet be as now thou art,
 That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene !
 Such as did once the poet bless,
 Who, murmur'ing here a later* ditty,
 Could find no refuge from distress
 But in the milder grief of pity.
 Now let us, as we float along,
 For *him* suspend the dashing oar,
 And pray that never child of song
 May know that poet's sorrows more.
 How calm—how still ! the only sound,
 The dripping of the oar suspended !
 The evening darkness gathers round
 By virtue's holiest powers attended.

PERSONAL TALK.

I.

I AM not one who much or oft delight
 To season my fireside with personal talk,—
 Of friends who live within an easy walk,
 Or neighbours daily, weekly, in my sight :
 And, for my chance acquaintance, ladies bright,
 Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk ;
 These all wear out of me, like forms with chalk
 Painted on rich men's floors for one feast-night.
 Better than such discourse doth silence long,

* Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his lifetime. This Ode is also alluded to in another stanza.

Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
 To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
 In the loved presence of my cottage fire,
 And listen to the flapping of the flame,
 Or kettle, whisp'ring its faint undersong.

II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have seen and see,
 And with a living pleasure we describe ;
 And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
 The languid mind into activity.
 Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee,
 Are foster'd by the comment and the gibe."
 E'en be it so ; yet still, among your tribe,
 Our daily world's true worldlings, rank not me !
 Children are blest, and powerful ; their world less
 More justly balanced ; partly at their feet
 And part far from them : sweetest melodies
 Are those that are by distance made more sweet.
 Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
 He is a slave—the meanest we can meet !

III.

Wings have we—and as far as we can go,
 We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
 Which, with the lofty, sanctifies the low ;
 Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There do I find a never-failing store
 Of personal themes, and such as I love best ;
 Matter wherein right voluble I am :
 Two will I mention, dearer than the rest :
 The gentle lady married to the Moor ;
 And heavenly Una, with her milk-white lamb.

IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought :
 And thus, from day to day, my little boat
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares,
 The poets—who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
 Oh ! might my name be number'd among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

ON his morning rounds the master
 Goes, to learn how all things fare ;
 Searches pasture after pasture,
 Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;
 And, for silence or for talk,
 He hath comrades in his walk ;
 Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
 Distinguish'd, two for scent, and two for speed.

See, a hare before him started !
 —Off they fly in earnest chase ;
 Every dog is eager-hearted,
 All the four are in the race ;
 And the hare whom they pursue,
 Hath an instinct what to do :
 Her hope is near : no turn she makes,
 But like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted
 Thinly by a one night's frost ;
 But the nimble hare hath trusted
 To the ice, and safely cross'd ;
 She hath cross'd, and without heed
 They are following at full speed,
 When lo ! the ice so thinly spread,
 Breaks—and the greyhound Dart is over-head.

Better fate have Prince and Swallow—
 See them cleaving to the sport !
 Music has no heart to follow—
 Little Music she stops short.
 She hath neither wish nor heart,
 Hers is now another part :
 A loving creature she and brave !
 And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.
 From the brink her paws she stretches,
 Very hands as you would say !
 And afflicting moans she fetches,
 As he breaks the ice away.
 For herself she hath no fears,—
 Him alone she sees and hears,—
 Makes efforts and complainings ; nor gives o'er
 Until her fellow sinks, and reappears no more.

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMGRY OF THE SAME DOG.

LIE here sequester'd : be this little mound
 For ever thine, and be it holy ground !
 Lie here, without a record of thy worth,
 Beneath the cover^{ment} of the common earth !

It is not from unwillingness to praise,
 Or want of love, that here no stone we raise :
 More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can,
 Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
 Shall find thee through all changes of the year :
 This oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree
 Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

I pray'd for thee, and that thy end were past ;
 And willingly have laid thee here at last :
 For thou hadst lived, till everything that cheers
 In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
 Extreme old age had wasted thee away ;
 And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;
 Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees, —
 I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
 Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
 And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
 It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
 Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;
 Not only for a thousand thoughts that were
 Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share,
 But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
 Found scarcely anywhere in like degree.
 For love, that comes to all ; the holy sense,
 Best gift of God, in thee was most intense :
 A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind
 Not only to us men, but to thy kind :
 Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
 The soul of love, love's intellectual law :
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame ;
 Our tears from passion and from reason came,
 And therefore shalt thou be an honour'd name !

THE FORCE OF PRAYER ; OR, THE FOUNDLING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

▲ TRADITION.

“*What is good for a bootless bene ?*”
 With these dark words begins my tale ;
 And their meaning is, “*Whence can comfort spring,
 When prayer is of no avail ?*”

“*What is good for a bootless bene ?*”
 The falconer to the lady said ;
 And she made answer, “*Endless sorrow !*”
 For she knew that her son was dead.

She knew it by the falconer's words,
 And from the look of the falconer's eye ;
 And from the love which was in her soul
 For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden Woods
Is ranging high and low ;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

And the pair have reach'd that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride !
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is call'd "the Strid,"
A name which it took of yore :
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall, a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across "the Strid ?"

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep !
— But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And check'd him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long unspeaking sorrow :
Wharf shall be, to pitying hearts,
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death ;
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a farther-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately priory !"

The stately priory was rear'd,
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins join'd a mournful voice,
Nor fail'd at evensong.

And the lady pray'd in heaviness
That look'd not for relief!
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn and ask
Of Him to be our friend!

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox;
He halts and searches with his eyes
Among the scatter'd rocks:
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern;
And instantly a dog is seen
Glancing from that covert green.

The dog is not of mountain breed;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy;
With something, as the shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry:
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;
What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps till June December's snow;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn* below!
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land;
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lovely cheer;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere;
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
And mists that spread the flying shroud;
And sunbeams: and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past,
But that enormous barrier binds it fast,

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The shepherd stood; then makes his way
Towards the dog, o'er rocks and stones,
As quickly as he may;

* "Tarn" is a small mere or lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

Nor far had gone before he found
 A human skeleton on the ground ;
 The appall'd discoverer with a sigh
 Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
 The man had fallen, that place of fear !
 At length upon the shepherd's mind
 It breaks, and all is clear :
 He instantly recall'd the name,
 And who he was, and whence he came ;
 Remember'd, too, the very day
 On which the traveller pass'd this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
 This lamentable tale I tell !
 A lasting monument of words
 This wonder merits well.
 The dog, which still was hovering nigh,
 Repeating the same timid cry,
 This dog had been through three months' space
 A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that since the day
 On which the traveller thus had died
 The dog had watch'd about the spot,
 Or by his master's side :
 How nourish'd here through such long time
 He knows, who gave that love sublime,
 And gavo that strength of feeling, great
 Above all human estimate.

ODE TO DUTY

STERN daughter of the voice of God !
 O Duty ! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove ;
 Thou who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe ;
 From vain temptations dost set free ;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth :
 Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
 Who do thy work, and know it not :
 May joy be theirs while life shall last !
 And thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand fast !

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,

When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And blest are they who in the main
This faith, even now, do entertain :
Live in the spirit of this creed ;
Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust ;
Full oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd
The task imposed, from day to day ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ;
But in the quietness of thought ;
Me this uncharter'd freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance desires :
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose which ever is the same.

Stern lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face ;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds ;
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh ! let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ;
And, in the light of truth, thy bondman let me live !

Miscellaneous Sonnets.

PREFATORY SONNET.

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;
 And hermits are contented with their cells ;
 And students with their pensive citadels ;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest peak of Furness Fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :
 In truth, the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is : and hence to me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground :
 Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find short solace there, as I have found.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE.

PRaised be the art whose subtle power could stay
 Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape ;
 Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,
 Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the day ;
 Which stopp'd that band of travellers on their way
 Ere they were lost within the shady wood ;
 And show'd the bark upon the glassy flood
 For ever anchor'd in her sheltering bay.
 Soul-soothing art ! which morning, noontide, even
 Do serve with all their changeful pageantry !
 Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,
 Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast given
 To one brief moment, caught from fleeting time,
 The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

THE fairest, brightest hues of ether fade ;
 The sweetest notes must terminate and die ;
 O friend ! thy flute has breathed a harmony
 Softly resounded through this rocky glade ;
 Such strains of rapture as* the genius play'd
 In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high ;
 He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,
 Never before to human sight betray'd.
 Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening spread !
 The visionary arches are not there,
 Nor the green islands, nor the shining seas ;
 Yet sacred is to me this mountain's head,
 From which I have been lifted on the breeze
 Of harmony, above all earthly care.

* See the "Vision of Mirza" in the *Spectator*

"WEAK is the will of man, his judgment blind ;
 Remembrance persecutes, and hope betrays ;
 Heavy is woe ; and joy, for human kind,
 A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !"
 Thus might *he* paint our lot of mortal days
 Who wants the glorious faculty assign'd
 To elevate the more than reasoning mind,
 And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.
 Imagination is that sacred power,
 Imagination lofty and refined :
 'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine flower
 Of faith, and round the sufferer's temples bind
 Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,
 And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

HAIL Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour !
 Not dull art thou as undiscerning Night ;
 But studious only to remove from sight
 Day's mutable distinctions. Ancient power !
 Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower
 To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest
 Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest
 On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower
 Look'd ere his eyes were closed. By him was seen
 The selfsame vision which we now behold,
 At thy meek bidding, shadowy power, brought forth ;
 These mighty barriers, and the gulf between ;
 The floods,—the stars ; a spectacle as old
 As the beginning of the heavens and earth !

THE shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,
 "Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art bright !"
 Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether spread,
 And penetrated all with tender light,
 She cast away, and show'd her fulgent head
 Uncover'd ; dazzling the beholder's sight
 As if to vindicate her beauty's right,
 Her beauty thoughtlessly disparag'd.
 Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown aside,
 Went, floating from her, dark'ning as it went ;
 And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,
 Approach'd this glory of the firmament ;
 Who meekly yields, and is obscured ; content
 With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks
 The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood !
 An old place, full of many a lovely brood,
 Tall trees, green arbours, and ground flowers in flocks ;
 And wild rose tiptoe upon hawthorn stocks,
 Like to a bonny lass, who plays her pranks
 At wakes and fairs with wandering mountebanks,—
 When she stands cresting the clown's head, and mocks
 The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,
 Such place to me is sometimes like a dream
 Or map of the whole world : thoughts, link by link,
 Enter through ears and eyesight, with such gleam
 Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,
 And leap at once from the delicious stream.

WHERE lies the land to which yon ship must go !
 Festively she puts forth in trim array ;
 As vigorous as a lark at break of day :
 Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?
 What boots the inquiry ? Neither friend nor foe
 She cares for ; let her travel where she may,
 She finds familiar names, a beaten way
 Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
 Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?
 And, almost as it was when ships were rare,
 (From time to time, like pilgrims, here and there
 Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
 Of the old sea some reverential fear,
 Is with me at thy farewell, joyous bark !

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the stress
 Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp
 Sullenly glaring through sepulchral damp,
 So burns yon taper 'mid its black recess
 Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless :
 The lake below reflects it not ; the sky,
 Muffled in clouds, affords no company,
 To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.
 Yet round the body of that joyless thing,
 Which sends so far its melancholy light,
 Perhaps are seated in domestic ring
 A gay society with faces bright,
 Conversing, reading, laughing ; or they sing,
 While hearts and voices in the song unite.

MARK the concentred hazels that inclose
 Yon old grey stone, protected from the ray
 Of noontide suns : and even the beams that play
 And glance, while wantonly the rough wind blows,
 Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows
 Upon that roof—amid embowering gloom,
 The very image framing of a tomb,
 In which some ancient chieftain finds repose
 Among the lonely mountains. Live, ye trees !
 And thou, grey stone, the pensive likeness keep
 Of a dark chamber where the mighty sleep :
 For more than fancy to the influence bends
 When solitary Nature condescends
 To mimic Time's forlorn humanities,

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMILTON HILLS, YORKSHIRE,

DARK, and more dark, the shades of evening fell ;
 The wish'd-for point was reach'd—but late the hour ;
 And little could we see of all that power
 Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.
 The western sky did recompense us well
 With Grecian temple, minaret, and bower ;
 And, in one part, a minster with its tower
 Substantially express'd—a place for bell
 Or clock to toll from ! Many a glorious pile
 Did we behold, fair sights that might repay
 All disappointment ! and, as such, the eye
 Delighted in them : but we felt, the while,
 We should forget them : they are of the sky,
 And from our earthly memory fade away.

— “ they are of the sky,
 And from our earthly memory fade away.”

THESE words were utter'd in a pensive mood,
 Mine eyes yet lingering on that solemn sight ;
 A contrast and reproach to gross delight,
 And life's unspiritual pleasures daily woo'd !
 But now upon this thought I cannot brood ;
 It is unstable, and deserts me quite :
 Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,
 Disparaging man's gifts, and proper food.
 The grove, the sky-built temple, and the dome,
 Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,
 Find in the heart of man no natural home :
 The immortal mind craves objects that endure :
 These cleave to it ; from these it cannot roam,
 Nor they from it : their fellowship is secure.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.

DEGENERATE Douglas ! oh, th' unworthy lord !
 Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
 And love of havoc (for with such disease
 Fame taxes him) that he could send forth word
 To level with the dust a noble horde,
 A brotherhood of venerable trees,
 Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
 Beggar'd and outraged ! Many hearts deplored
 The fate of those old trees ; and oft with pain
 The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
 On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed :
 For shelter'd places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
 And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
 And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

TO THE POET JOHN DYER.

BARD of the fleece, whose skilful genius made
 That work a living landscape, fair and bright ;
 Nor hallow'd less with musical delight
 Than those soft scenes through which thy childhood stray'd,
 Those southern tracts of Cambria, " deep embay'd,
 By green hills fenced, by ocean's murmur lull'd ;"
 Though hasty fame hath many a chaplet cull'd
 For worthless brows, while in the pensive shade
 Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,
 Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek and still,
 A grateful few, shall love thy modest lay
 Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall stray
 O'er naked Snowdon's wide aerial waste ;
 Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill.

TO SLEEP.

O GENTLE Sleep ! do they belong to thee,
 These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost love
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding dove,
 A captive never wishing to be free.
 This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to me
 A fly, that up and down himself doth shove
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,
 Now on the water vex'd with mockery.
 I have no pain that calls for patience—no ;
 Hence I am cross and peevish as a child :
 And pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
 Yet ever willing to be reconciled :
 O gentle creature ! do not use me so,
 But once and deeply let me be beguiled !

TO SLEEP.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;
 I've thought of all by turns ; and still I lie
 Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees ;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :
 So do not let me wear to-night away :
 Without thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, blessed barrier betwixt day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

TO SLEEP.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;
 The very sweetest words that fancy frames
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !
 Dear bosom child we call thee, that dost steep
 In rich reward all suffering ; balm that tames
 All anguish ; saint that evil thoughts and aims
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone—
 I, surely not a man ungently made—
 Call thee worst tyrant by which flesh is cross'd !
 Perverse, self-will'd to own and to disown,
 Mere slave of them who never for thee pray'd,
 Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

WITH ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,
 Like stars in heaven, and joyously it show'd ;
 Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
 Some veering up and down, one knew not why.
 A goodly vessel did I then espay
 Come like a giant from a haven broad ;
 And lustily along the bay she strode,
 " Her tackling rich, and of apparel high."
 This ship was naught to me, nor I to her,
 Yet I pursued her with a lover's look ;
 This ship to all the rest did I prefer :
 When will she turn, and whither ? She will brook
 No tarrying ; where she comes the winds must stir ;
 On went she,—and due north her journey took.

TO THE RIVER DUDDON.

O MOUNTAIN stream ! the shepherd and his cot
 Are privileged inmates of deep solitude :
 Nor would the nicest anchorite exclude
 A field or two of brighter green, or plot
 Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
 Of stationary sunshine : thou hast view'd
 These only, Duddon ! with their paths renew'd
 By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
 Thee hath some awful spirit impell'd to leave,
 Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
 Though simple thy companions were and few ;
 And through this wilderness a passage cleave,
 Attended but by thy own voice, save when
 The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

YES ! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
 And I be undeluded, unbetray'd ;
 For if of our affections none find grace
 In sight of Heaven, then wherefore hath God made
 The world which we inhabit ? Better plea
 Love cannot have, than that in loving thee
 Glory to that eternal peace is paid,
 Who such divinity to thee imparts
 As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
 His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
 With beauty, which is varying every hour :
 But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the power
 Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,
 That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

FROM THE SAME.

TO THE SUPREME BEING.

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed,
 If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :
 My unassisted heart is barren clay,
 Which of its native self can nothing feed :
 Of good and pious works Thou art the seed,
 Which quickens only where Thou say'st it may
 Unless Thou show to us Thine own true way,
 No man can find it : Father ! Thou must lead.
 Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind
 By which such virtue may in me be bred
 That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread ;
 The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
 That I may have the power to sing of Thee,
 And sound Thy praises everlastingly.

FROM THE SAME.

No mortal object did these eyes behold
 When first they met the placid light of thine,
 And my soul felt her destiny divine,
 And hope of endless peace in me grew bold :
 Heaven-born, the soul a heav'nward course must hold ;
 Beyond the visible world she soars to seek
 (For what delights the sense is false and weak)
 Ideal form, the universal mould.
 The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
 In that which perishes : nor will he lend
 His heart to aught which doth on time depend.
 'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true love,
 Which kills the soul : Love better what is best,
 Even here below, but more in heaven above.

TO THE LADY BEAUMONT.

LADY ! the songs of spring were in the grove
 While I was framing beds for winter flowers ;
 While I was planting green unfading bowers,
 And shrubs to hang upon the warm alcove,
 And sheltering wall ; and still, as fancy wove
 The dream, to time and Nature's blended powers
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,
 A labyrinth, lady, which your feet shall rove,
 Yes ! when the sun of life more feebly shines,
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn gloom
 Or of high gladness, you shall hither bring ;
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring pines
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
 This sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours
 And are up-gather'd now like sleeping flowers ;
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
 It moves us not. Great God ! I'd rather be
 A pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.
 Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea,
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreath'd horn.

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH.

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.
 The kine are couch'd upon the dewy grass ;
 The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
 Is cropping audibly his later meal :
 Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal
 O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky,
 Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
 Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
 That grief for which the senses still supply
 Fresh food ; for only then, when memory
 Is hush'd, am I at rest. My friends ! restrain
 Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;
 Oh, leave me to myself ! nor let me feel
 The officious touch that makes me droop again.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1803.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This city now doth like a garment wear
 The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields and to the sky,
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

ÆLION and Ossa flourish side by side,
 Together in immortal books enroll'd ;
 His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;
 And that inspiring hill, which " did divide
 Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"
 Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;
 While not an English mountain we behold
 By the celestial muses glorified.
 Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds :
 What was the great Parnassus' self to thee,
 Mount Skiddaw ? In his natural sovereignty
 Our British hill is fairer far ; he shrouds
 His double-fronted head in higher clouds,
 And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

BROOK ! whose society the poet seeks
 Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;
 And whom the curious painter doth pursue
 Through rocky passes, among flowery creeks,
 And tracks thee dancing down thy water-breaks ;
 If I some type of thee did wish to view,
 Thee,—and not thee thyself, I would not do
 Like Grecian artists, give thee human cheeks,
 Channels for tears ; no Naiad shouldst thou be,
 Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints, nor hairs ;
 It seems the eternal soul is clothed in thee
 With purer robes than those of flesh and blood,
 And hath bestow'd on thee a better good—
 Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

 ADMONITION,

INTENDED MORE PARTICULARLY FOR THE PERUSAL OF THOSE WHO MAY
 HAVE HAPPENED TO BE ENAMOUR'D OF SOME BEAUTIFUL PLACE OF
 RETREAT IN THE COUNTRY OF THE LAKES.

YES, there is holy pleasure in thine eye !
 —The lovely cottage in the guardian nook
 Hath stirr'd thee deeply : with its own dear brook,
 Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !
 But covet not the abode—O do not sigh,
 As many do, repining while they look ;
 Sighing a wish to tear from Nature's book
 This oliv'ry leaf with harsh impiety.
 Think what the home would be if it were thine,
 Even thine, though few thy wants ! Roof, window, door,
 The very flowers, are sacred to the poor,
 The roses to the porch which they entwine :
 Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day
 On which it should be touch'd, would melt, and melt away !

“BELOVED Vale !” I said, “when I shall con
 Those many records of my childish years,
 Remembrance of myself and of my peers
 Will press me down ; to think of what is gone
 Will be an awful thought, if life have one.”
 But, when into the Vale I came, no fears
 Distress'd me ; I look'd round, I shed no tears ;
 Deep thought, or awful vision, I had none.
 By thousand petty fancies I was cross'd,
 To see the trees, which I had thought so tall,
 Mere dwarfs ; the brooks so narrow, fields so small,
 A juggler's balls old Time about him toss'd ;
 I look'd, I stared, I smiled, I laugh'd ; and all
 The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne
 Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—
 Nor view of who might sit thereon allow'd ;
 But all the steps and ground about were strown
 With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone
 Ever put on ; a miserable crowd,
 Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,
 "Thou art our king, O Death ! to thee we groan."
 I seem'd to mount those steps ; the vapours gave
 Smooth way ; and I beheld the face of one
 Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,
 With her face up to heaven ; that seem'd to have
 Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone ;
 A lovely beauty in a summer grave !*

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the wind
 I wish'd to share the transport—Oh, with whom
 But thee, long buried in the silent tomb !
 That spot which no vicissitude can find.
 Love, faithful love recall'd thee to my mind—
 But how could I forget thee?—Through what power,
 Even for the least division of an hour,
 Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
 To my most grievous loss ? That thought's return
 Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
 Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
 Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;
 That neither present time, nor years unborn,
 Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
 The holy time is quiet as a nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven is on the sea :
 Listen ! the mighty being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder everlastingly.
 Dear child ! dear girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear'st untouch'd by solemn thought,
 Thy nature therefore is not less divine :
 Thou liest "in Abraham's bosom" all the year ;
 And worshipp'st at the temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

* Prophetic of the death of the Princess Charlotte.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND, IN THE VALE
OF GRASMERE.

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribbons gay,
 These humble nuptials to proclaim or grace?
 Angels of love, look down upon the place,
 Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day!
 Even for such omen would the bride display
 No mirthful gladness. Serious is her face,
 Modest her mien; and she, whose thoughts keep pace
 With gentleness, in that becoming way
 Will thank you. Faultless does the maid appear,
 No disproportion in her soul, no strife:
 But, when the closer view of wedded life
 Hath shown that nothing human can be clear
 From frailty, for that insight may the wife
 To her indulgent lord become more dear.

ON APPROACHING HOME AFTER A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1803.

FLY, some kind spirit, fly to Grasmere Vale!
 Say that we come, and come by this day's light;
 Glad tidings!—spread them over field and height;
 But chiefly let one cottage hear the tale;
 There let a mystery of joy prevail,
 The kitten frolic with unruly might,
 And Rover whine, as at a second sight
 Of near approaching good that shall not fail;—
 And from that infant's face let joy appear;
 Yea, let our Mary's one companion child,
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
 With intimations manifold and dear,
 While we have wander'd over wood and wild,
 Smile on his mother now with bolder cheer.

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,
 Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,
 Rise, ———, rise; the gales of youth shall bear
 Thy genius forward like a winged steed.
 Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed
 In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of air,
 Yet a high guerdon waits on minds that dare,
 If aught be in them of immortal seed,
 And reason govern that audacious flight
 Which heav'nward they direct. Then droop not thou,
 Erroneously renewing a sad vow
 In the low dell 'mid Roslin's fading grove:
 A cheerful life is what the muses love,
 A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

CALVERT! it must not be unheard by them
 Who may respect my name, that I to thee
 Owed many years of early liberty.
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem :
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
 Where'er I liked ; and finally array
 My temples with the muse's diadem.
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth,
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,
 In my past verse,—or shall be, in the lays
 Of higher mood which now I meditate,—
 It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived youth !
 To think how much of this will be thy praise.

 Sonnets dedicated to Liberty.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

FAIR star of evening, splendour of the west,
 Star of my country !—on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
 On England's bosom ; yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
 Conspicuous to the nations. Thou, I think,
 Shouldst be my country's emblem ; and shouldst wink,
 Bright star, with laughter on her banners, dress'd
 In thy fresh beauty. There ; that dusky spot
 Beneath thee—it is England ! there it lies.
 Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory ! I with many a fear
 For my dear country, many heartfelt sighs,
 'Mong men who do not love her, linger here.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
 Or what is it that ye go forth to see ?
 Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
 Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and blind,
 Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
 With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
 In France, before the new-born majesty.
 'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind !
 A seemly reverence may be paid to power ;
 But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
 In haste, nor springing with a transient shower :
 When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
 What hardship had it been to wait an hour !
 Shame on you, feeble heads to slavery prone !

TO A FRIEND.

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARRÈS,
AUGUST 7, 1807.

JONES! when from Calais southward you and I
Travell'd on foot together, then this way
Which I am pacing now, was like the May
With festivals of new-born Liberty:
A homeless sound of joy was in the sky;
The antiquated earth, as one might say,
Beat like the heart of man: songs, garlands, play,
Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!
And now, sole register that these things were,
Two solitary greetings have I heard,
"Good morrow, Citizen!" a hollow word,
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair
I feel not: happy am I as a bird;
Fair seasons yet will come, and hopes as fair.

1801.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparte, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! for, who aspires
To genuine greatness but from just desires,
And knowledge such as *he* could never gain?
'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly and meek as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
By which true sway doth mount; this is the stalk
True power doth grow on; and her rights are these.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names:
This is young Buonaparte's natal day,
And his is henceforth an establish'd sway,
Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
Heaven grant that other cities may be gay!
Calais is not; and I have bent my way
To the seacoast, noting that each man frames
His business as he likes. Another time
That was, when I was here long years ago;
The senselessness of joy was then sublime!
Happy is he, who, caring not for pope,
Consul, or king, can sound himself to know
The destiny of man, and live in hope.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee ;
 And was the safeguard of the West : the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth—
 Venice, the eldest child of Liberty !
 She was a maiden city, bright and free ;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
 And, when she took unto herself a mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reach'd its final day :
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
 Of that which once was great is pass'd away.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

THE voice of song from distant lands shall call
 To that great King ; shall hail the crownèd youth
 Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
 By one example hath set forth to all
 How they with dignity may stand—or fall,
 If fall they must. Now, whither doth it tend ?
 And what to him and his shall be the end ?
 That thought is one which neither can appal
 Nor cheer him ; for the illustrious Swede hath done
 The thing which ought to be ; he stands *above*
 All consequences : work he hath begun
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve :
 The heroes bless him—him their rightful son.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 Whether the all-cheering sun be free to shed
 His beams around thee, or thou rest thy head
 Pillow'd in some dark dungeon's noisome den—
 O miserable chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
 Powers that will work for thee : air, earth, and skies ;
 There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonics,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

WE had a fellow-passenger who came
 From Calais with us, gaudy in array,—
 A negro woman like a lady gay,
 Yet silent as a woman fearing blame ;
 Dejected, meek, yea pitifully tame,
 She sat, from notice turning not away,
 But on our proffer'd kindness still did lay
 A weight of languid speech,—or at the same
 Was silent, motionless in eyes and face.
 She was a negro woman driven from France,
 Rejected like all others of that race,
 Not one of whom may now find footing there ;
 This the poor outcast did to us declare,
 Nor murmur'd at the unfeeling ordinance.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY, NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LANDING.

DEAR fellow-traveller, here we are once more !
 The cock that crows, the smoke that curls, that sound
 Of bells,—those boys who in yon meadow-ground
 In white-sleeved shirts are playing,—and the roar
 Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore,—
 All, all are English. Oft have I lookèd round
 With joy in Kent's green vales ; but never found
 Myself so satisfied in heart before.
 Europe is yet in bonds ; but let that pass,
 Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
 My country ! and 'tis joy enough and pride
 For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
 Of England once again, and hear and see,
 With such a dear companion at my side.

SEPTEMBER, 1802.

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
 The coast of France—the coast of France how near!
 Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
 I shrunk, for verily the barrier flood
 Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
 A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
 What mightiness for evil and for good !
 Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and power, and deity,
 Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
 Spake laws to them, and said that by the soul
 Only the nations shall be great and free.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

TWO voices are there—one is of the sea,
 One of the mountains—each a mighty voice :
 In both from age to age, thou didst rejoice,
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
 There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven,
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-soul'd maid, what sorrow would it be
 That mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful voice be heard by thee !

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd
 To think that now our life is only dress'd
 For show ; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom ! We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :
 No grandeur now, in Nature or in book,
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

LONDON, 1802.

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
 England hath need of thee : she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men :
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart :
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea ;
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ;
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on itself did lay.

GREAT MEN have been among us ; hands that penn'd
 And tongues that utter'd wisdom, better none :
 The later Sydney, Marvel, Harington,
 Young Vane and others who call'd Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend :
 They knew how genuine glory was put on ;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendour : what strength was, that would not bend
 But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
 Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road ;
 But equally a want of books and men !

IT is not to be thought of that the flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flow'd, "with pomp of waters unwithstood"—
 Road by which all might come and go that would,
 And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands ;
 That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish, and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible knights of old :
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakspeare spake—the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held. In everything we're sprung
 Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 I had, my country !—am I to be blamed ?
 But when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 But dearly must we prize thee ; we who find
 In thee a bulwark of the cause of men ;
 And I, by my affection, was beguiled.
 What wonder if a poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child.

OCTOBER, 1803.

ONE might believe that natural miseries
 Had blasted France, and made of it a land
 Unfit for men ; and that in one great band
 Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease,
 But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and breeze
 Shed gentle favours ; rural works are there ;
 And ordinary business without care ;
 Spot rich in all things that can soothe and please !
 How piteous, then, that there should be such dearth
 Of knowledge ; that whole myriads should unite
 To work against themselves such fall despite ;
 Should come in frenzy and in drunken mirth,
 Impatient to put out the only light
 Of liberty that yet remains on earth !

THERE is a bondage which is worse to bear
 Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,
 Pent in, a tyrant's solitary thrall :
 'Tis his who walks about in the open air,
 One of a nation who, henceforth, must wear
 Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
 Who, even the best, in such condition, free
 From self-reproach, reproach which he must share
 With human nature ? Never be it ours
 To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
 And know that noble feelings, manly powers,
 Instead of gathering strength must droop and pine,
 And earth, with all her pleasant fruits and flowers,
 Fade, and participate in man's decline.

OCTOBER, 1803.

THESE times touch money'd worldlings with dismay :
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
 With words of apprehension and despair :
 While tens of thousands, thinking on th' affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day
 And minds not stinted or untill'd are given,
 Sound, healthy children of the God of heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by hope's perpetual breath :
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death !

ENGLAND ! the time is come when thou shouldst wean
 Thy heart from its emasculating food ;
 The truth should now be better understood ;
 Old things have been unsettled ; we have seen
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
 But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou wouldst step between
 England, all nations in this charge agree !
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
 Far, far more abject is thine enemy :
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :
 Oh grief ! that earth's best hopes rest all with thee !

OCTOBER, 1803.

WHEN, looking on the present face of things,
 I see one man, of men the meanest too !
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,
 With mighty nations for his underlings,
 The great events with which old story rings
 Seem vain and hollow : I find nothing great ;
 Nothing is left which I can venerate ;
 So that almost a doubt within me springs
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God !
 I measure back the steps which I have trod,
 And tremble, seeing, as I do, the strength
 Of such poor instruments ; with thoughts sublime
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

TO THE MEN OF KENT, OCTOBER, 1803.

VANGUARD of liberty, ye men of Kent !
 Ye children of a soil that doth advance
 Its haughty brow against the coast of France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
 To France be words of invitation sent !
 They from their fields can see the countenance
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath :
 Confirm'd the charters that were yours before,
 No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath ;
 We all are with you now from shore to shore ;
 Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death !

OCTOBER, 1803.

SIX thousand veterans practised in war's game,
 Tried men, at Killicrankie were array'd
 Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
 Shepherds and herdsmen. Like a whirlwind came
 The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
 And Garry, thund'ring down his mountain-road,
 Was stopp'd, and could not breathe beneath the load
 Of the dead bodies. 'Twas a day of shame
 For them whom precept and the pedantry
 Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
 Oh ! for a single hour of that Dundee
 Who on that day the word of onset gave !
 Like conquest would the men of England see :
 And her foes find a like inglorious grave.

ANTICIPATION, OCTOBER, 1803.

SHOUT, for a mighty victory is won !
 On British ground the invaders are laid low ;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again !—the work is done.
 Come forth ye old men now, in peaceful show,
 And greet your sons ! drums beat and trumpets blow !
 Make merry, wives ! ye little children stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise !
 Clap, infants, clap your hands ! divine must be
 That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
 And e'en the prospect of our brethren slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart enjoys :
 In glory will they sleep, and endless sanctity.

NOVEMBER, 1806.

ANOTHER year ! another deadly blow !
 Another mighty empire overthrown !
 And we are left, or shall be left, alone ;
 The last that dares to struggle with the foe.
 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought :
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought,
 That we must stand unpropp'd, or be laid low.
 O dastard, whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
 Wise, upright, valiant ; not a venal band,
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
 And honour, which they do not understand.

Sonnets dedicated to Liberty,

FROM 1807 TO 1813.

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

A ROMAN master stands on Grecian ground,
 And to the concourse of the Isthmian games
 He, by his herald's voice, aloud proclaims
 "The liberty of Greece:"—the words rebound
 Until all voices in one voice are drown'd ;
 Glad acclamation by which air was rent !
 And birds, high flying in the element,
 Dropp'd to the earth, astonish'd at the sound !
 A melancholy echo of that noise
 Doth sometimes hang on musing Fancy's ear ;
 Ah ! that a conqueror's words should be so dear ;
 Ah ! that a boon could shed such rapturous joys !
 A gift of that which is not to be given
 By all the blended powers of earth and heaven.

UPON THE SAME EVENT.

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn
 The tidings pass'd of servitude repeal'd,
 And of that joy which shook the Isthmian field,
 The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.
 "Tis known," cried they, "that he who would adorn
 His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,
 Must either win, through effort of his own,
 The prize, or be content to see it worn
 By more deserving brows. Yet so ye prop,
 Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
 Your feeble spirits. Greece her head hath bow'd,
 As if the wreath of liberty thereon
 Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud
 Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's top !"

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE
 ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE, MARCH, 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :
 How toilsome, nay, how dire it was, by thee
 Is known—by none, perhaps, so feelingly ;
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
 Didst first lead forth this pilgrimage sublime,
 Hast heard the constant voice its charge repeat,
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
 First roused thee, O true yoke-fellow of time.
 With unabating effort, see, the palm
 Is won, and by all nations shall be worn !
 The bloody writing is for ever torn,
 And thou henceforth shalt have a good man's calm,
 A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find
 Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

A PROPHECY, FEBRUARY, 1807.

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come from you !
 Thus in your books the record shall be found,
 "A watchword was pronounced, a potent sound,
 ARMINIUS !—all the people quaked like dew
 Stirr'd by the breeze—they rose, a nation true,
 True to itself—the mighty Germany,
 She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,
 She rose,—and off at once the yoke she threw.
 All power was given her in the dreadful trance—
 Those new-born kings she wither'd like a flame."
 Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and shame
 To that Bavarian who did first advance
 His banner in accusèd league with France,
 First open traitor to a sacred name !

 COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A TRAGEDY
 OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION OF CINTEA, 1808.

NOT 'mid the world's vain objects that enslave
 The free-born soul,—that world whose vaunted skill
 In selfish interest perverts the will,
 Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave,—
 Not there ! but in dark wood and rocky cave,
 And hollow vale, which foaming torrents fill
 With omnipresent murmur as they rave
 Down their steep beds that never shall be still.
 Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sublime
 I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain ;
 For her consult the auguries of time,
 And through the human heart explore my way,
 And look and listen, gathering, where I may,
 Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

 COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE SAME OCCASION.

I DROPP'D my pen, and listen'd to the wind
 That sang of trees upturn and vessels toss'd :
 A midnight harmony, and wholly lost
 To the general sense of men by chains confined
 Of business, care, or pleasure, or resign'd
 To timely sleep. Thought I, th' impassion'd strain,
 Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,
 Like acceptance from the world will find.
 Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink
 A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows past,
 And to the attendant promise will give heed,
 The prophecy, like that of this wild blast,
 Which, while it makes the heart with sadness shrink,
 Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

HÖFFER.

OF mortal parents is the hero born
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?
 Or is it Tell's great spirit, from the dead
 Return'd, to animate an age forlorn ?
 He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn,
 When dreary darkness is discomfited :
 Yet mark his modest state !—upon his head,
 That simple crest—a heron's plume—is worn.
 O Liberty ! they stagger at the shock ;
 The murd'ers are aghast ; they strive to flee,
 And half their host is buried :—rock on rock
 Descends :—beneath this godlike warrior, see !
 Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock
 The tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

ADVANCE ! come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,
 Dear Liberty !—stern nymph of soul untamed,
 Sweet nymph, oh ! rightly of the mountains named !
 Through the long chain of Alps, from mound to mound,
 And o'er th' eternal snows, like Echo, bound,—
 Like Echo, when the hunter-train at dawn
 Have roused her from her sleep ; and forest lawn,
 Cliffs, woods, and caves her viewless steps resound,
 And babble of her pastime ! On, dread power,
 With such invisible motion speed thy flight,
 Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to height,
 Through the green vales and through the herdsman's bower,
 That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
 Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

THE land we from our fathers had in trust,
 And to our children will transmit, or die,—
 This is our maxim, this our piety,
 And God and Nature say that it is just.
 That which we *would* perform in arms—we must !
 We read the dictate in the infant's eye,
 In the wife's smile, and in the placid sky,
 And at our feet, amid the silent dust
 Of them that were before us. Sing aloud
 Old songs, the precious music of the heart !
 Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind !
 While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
 With weapons in the fearless hand, to assert
 Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

ALAS ! what boots the long, laborious quest
 Of moral prudence, sought through good and ill,
 Or pains abstruse, to elevate the will,
 And lead us on to that transcendent rest
 Where every passion shall the sway attest
 Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill.
 What is it but a vain and curious skill,
 If sapient Germany must lie depress'd
 Beneath the brutal sword ? Her haughty schools
 Shall blush ; and may not we with sorrow say,
 A few strong instincts and a few plain rules
 Among the herdsmen of the Alps have wrought
 More for mankind, at this unhappy day,
 Than all the pride of intellect and thought.

AND is it among rude untutor'd dales,
 There, and there only, that the heart is true ?
 And, rising to repel or to subdue,
 Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails ?
 Ah, no ! though Nature's dread protection fails,
 There is a bulwark in the *soul*. This knew
 Iberian burghers when the sword they drew
 In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
 Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was felt
 By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,
 Like him, of noble birth and noble mind ;
 By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear ;
 And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt
 The bread which, without industry, they find.

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
 Dwells in the affections and the soul of man
 A godhead, like the universal Pan,
 But more exalted, with a brighter train.
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
 Shower'd equally on city and on field,
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
 In these usurping times of fear and pain ?
 Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it, Heaven !
 We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws
 To which the triumph of all good is given,
 High sacrifice, and labour without pause,
 Even to the death : else wherefore should the eye
 Of man converse with immortality ?

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE.

IT was a *moral* end for which they fought ;
 Else how, when mighty thrones were put to shame,
 Could they, poor shepherds, have preserved an aim,
 A resolution, or enlivening thought ?
 Nor hath that moral good been *vainly* sought ;
 For in their magnanimity and fame
 Powers have they left—an impulse—and a claim
 Which neither can be overturn'd nor bought.
 Sleep, warriors, sleep ! among your hills repose !
 We know that ye, beneath the stern control
 Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquish'd soul ;
 And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,
 Europe breaks forth, then, shepherds, shall ye rise
 For perfect triumph o'er your enemies.

HAIL, Zaragoza ! if with unwet eye
 We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
 Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold ;
 Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
 These desolate remains are trophies high
 Of more than martial courage in the breast
 Of peaceful civic virtue : they attest
 Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
 Blood flow'd before thy sight without remorse ;
 Disease consumed thy vitals ; war upheaved
 The ground beneath thee with volcanic force ;
 Dread trials ! yet encounter'd and sustain'd,
 Till not a wreck of help or hope remain'd,
 And law was from *necessity* received.

SAY, what is Honour ? 'Tis the finest sense
 Of *justice* which the human mind can frame,
 Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
 And guard the way of life from all offence
 Suffer'd or done. When lawless violence
 A kingdom doth assault, and in the scale
 Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,
 Honour is hopeful elevation—whence
 Glory—and Triumph. Yet with politic skill
 Endanger'd states may yield to terms unjust,
 Stoop their proud heads—but not unto the dust,
 A foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil !
 Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
 Are forfeited ; but infamy doth kill !

THE martial courage of a day is vain—
 An empty noise of death the battle's roar—
 If vital hope be wanting to restore,
 Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
 Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain
 Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore
 A weight of hostile corpses : drench'd with gore
 Were the wide fields, the hamlets heap'd with slain.
 Yet see, the mighty tumult overpast,
 Austria a daughter of her throne hath sold !
 And her Tyrolean champion we behold
 Murder'd like one ashore by shipwreck cast,
 Murder'd without relief. Oh ! blind as bold,
 To think that such assurance can stand fast !

BRAVE Schill ! by death deliver'd, take thy flight
 From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest
 With heroes 'mid the Islands of the Blest,
 Or in the fields of empyrean light.
 A meteor wert thou in a darksome night ;
 Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,
 Stand in the spacious firmament of time,
 Fix'd as a star : such glory is thy right.
 Alas ! it may not be : for earthly fame
 Is fortune's frail dependant ; yet there lives
 A judge, who, as man claims by merit, gives ;
 To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,
 Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed ;
 In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,
 Who never did to fortune bend the knee ;
 Who slighted fear,—rejected steadfastly
 Temptation ; and whose kingly name and state
 Have “ perish'd by his choice, and not his fate ! ”
 Hence lives he, to his inner self endear'd ;
 And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
 He sits a more exalted potentate,
 Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven ordain
 That this great servant of a righteous cause
 Must still have sad or vexing thoughts t' endure,
 Yet may a sympathizing spirit pause,
 Admonish'd by these truths, and quench all pain
 In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

LOOK now on that Adventurer* who hath paid
 His vows to fortune ; who, in cruel slight
 Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
 Hath follow'd wheresoe'er a way was made
 By the blind goddess—ruthless, undismay'd ;
 And so hath gain'd at length a prosperous height,
 Round which the elements of worldly might
 Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
 O joyless power that stands by lawless force !
 Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn and hate,
 Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;
 And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
 Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
 By violent and ignominious death.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
 The captive Chieftain—by a tyrant's doom
 Forced to descend alive into his tomb,
 A dungeon dark !—where he must waste the year,
 And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear ;
 What time his injured country is a stage
 Whereon deliberate valour and the rage
 Of righteous vengeance side by side appear,—
 Filling from morn to night the heroic scene
 With deeds of hope and everlasting praise :
 Say can he think of this with mind serene
 And silent fetters ? Yes, if visions bright
 Shine on his soul, reflected from the days
 When he himself was tried in open light.

AH ! where is Palafox ? Nor tongue nor pen
 Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave !
 Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave ?
 Or is she swallow'd up—remote from ken
 Of pitying human nature ? Once again
 Methinks that we shall hail thee, champion brave,
 Redeem'd to baffle that imperial slave,
 And through all Europe cheer desponding men
 With new-born hope. Unbounded is the might
 Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
 Hark, how thy country triumphs ! Smilingly
 Th' Eternal looks upon her sword that gleams,
 Like His own lightning, over mountains high,
 On rampart, and the banks of all her streams.

* The fall of Buonaparte predicted.

IN due observance of an ancient rite,
 The rude Biscayans, when their children lie
 Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
 Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white ;
 And, in like sign of cloudless triumph bright,
 They bind the unoffending creature's brows
 With happy garlands of the pure white rose :
 This done, a festal company unite
 In choral song ; and, while the uplifted cross
 Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
 Uncover'd to his grave. Her piteous loss
 The lonesome mother cannot choose but mourn ;
 Yet soon by Christian faith is grief subdued,
 And joy attends upon her fortitude.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF THESE FUNERALS. 1610.

YET, yet Biscayans, we must meet our foes
 With firmer soul,—yet labour to regain
 Our ancient freedom ; else 'twere worse than vain
 To gather round the bier these festal shows !
 A garland fashion'd of the pure white rose
 Becomes not one whose father is a slave :
 Oh ! bear the infant cover'd to his grave !
 These venerable mountains now inclose
 A people sunk in apathy and fear.
 If this endure, farewell, for us, all good !
 The awful light of heavenly innocence
 Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier ;
 And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,
 Descend on all that issues from our blood.

THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

The ancient Oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his Account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the Church of Santa Marie de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following.

SUPPOSED ADDRESS OF THE SAME. 1810.

OAK of Guernica ! tree of holier power
 Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
 (So faith too forlornly deem'd) a voice divine,
 Heard from the depths of its aerial bower,
 How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour ?
 What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to thee,
 Or the soft breezes from th' Atlantic sea,
 The dews of morn, or April's tender shower ?
 —Stroke merciful and welcome would that be
 Which would extend thy branches on the ground,
 If never more within their shady round
 Those lofty-minded lawgivers shall meet,
 Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,
 Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

WE can endure that he should waste our lands,
 Despoil our temples,—and by sword and flame
 Return us to the dust from which we came ;
 Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :
 And we can brook the thought that by his hands
 Spain may be o'erpower'd, and he possess,
 For his delight, a solemn wilderness,
 Where all the brave lie dead. But when of bands,
 Which he will break for us, he dares to speak,—
 Of benefits, and of a future day
 When our enlighten'd minds shall bless his sway,
Then, the strain'd heart of fortitude proves weak :
 Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
 That he has power t' inflict what we lack strength to bear.

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind
 In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !
 I better like a blunt indifference
 And self-respecting slowness, disinclined
 To win me at first sight :—and be there join'd
 Patience and temperance with this high reserve,—
 Honour that knows the path and will not swerve ;
 Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind ;
 And piety towards God.—Such men of old
 Were England's native growth ; and, throughout Spain,
 Forests of such do at this day remain ;
 Then for that country let our hopes be bold ;
 For match'd with these shall policy prove vain,
 Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

1810.

O'ERWEENING statesmen have full long relied
 On fleets and armies, and external wealth :
 But from *within* proceeds a nation's health ;
 Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride
 To the paternal floor ; or turn aside,
 In the throng'd city, from the walks of gain,
 As being all unworthy to detain
 A soul by contemplation sanctified.
 There are who cannot languish in this strife,
 Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good
 Of such high course was felt and understood :
 Who to their country's cause have bound a life,
 Erewhile by solemn consecration given
 To labour and to prayer, to Nature and to Heaven.*

* See Laborde's character of the Spanish people ; from him the sentiment of these two last lines is taken.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS.

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast
 From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night
 Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height,
 These hardships ill sustain'd, these dangers past,
 The roving Spanish bands are reach'd at last,
 Charged, and dispersed like foam :—but as a flight
 Of scatter'd quails by signs do reunite,
 So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased
 With combinations of long-practised art
 And newly-kindled hope ; but they are fled,
 Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead ;
 Where now ?—Their sword is at the foeman's heart !
 And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,
 And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

SPANISH GUERRILLAS. 1811.

THEY seek, are sought ; to daily battle led,
 Shrink not, though far out-number'd by their foes :
 For they have learn'd to open and to close
 The ridges of grim war ; and at their head
 Are captains such as erst their country bred
 Or foster'd, self-supported chiefs,—like those
 Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose,
 Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.
 In one who lived unknown a shepherd's life
 Redoubted Viriatus breathes again ;
 And Mina, nourish'd in the studious shade,
 With that great leader vies, who, sick of strife
 And bloodshed, long'd in quiet to be laid
 In some green island of the Western main.

1811.

THE power of armies is a visible thing,
 Formal, and circumscribed in time and place ;
 But who the limits of that power can trace
 Which a brave people into light can bring
 Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating,
 By just revenge inflamed ? No foot can chase,
 No eye can follow to a fatal place,
 That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
 Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
 Within its awful caves. From year to year
 Springs this indigenous produce far and near ;
 No craft this subtle element can bind,
 Rising like water from the soil, to find
 In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

1811.

HERE pause ; the Poet claims at least this praise
 That virtuous liberty hath been the scope
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
 In the worst moment of these evil days ;
 From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
 For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.
 Never may from our souls one truth depart,
 That an *accursed* thing it is to gaze
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;
 Nor, touch'd with due abhorrence of *their* guilt
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
 And justice labours in extremity,
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !

 NOVEMBER, 1813.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,
 Our aged Sovereign sits to the ebb and flow
 Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
 Insensible ; he sits deprived of sight,
 And lamentably wrapp'd in twofold night,
 Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose mind ensued,
 Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
 Peace that should claim respect from lawless might.
 Dread King of kings, vouchsafe a ray divine
 To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace
 Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;
 Permit his heart to kindle, and embrace
 (Though were it only for a moment's space)
 The triumphs of this hour ; for they are *THINE* !

 Thanksgiving Odes.

 O D E

FOR THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL
 THANKSGIVING, JANUARY 18, 1816.

HAIL, universal source of pure delight !
 Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude
 On hearts how'er insensible or rude ;
 Whether thy orient visitations smite
 The haughty towers where monarchs dwell ;
 Or thou, impartial sun, with presence bright
 Cheer'st the low threshold of the peasant's cell.
 —Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky

In naked splendour, clear from mist or haze,
Or cloud approaching to divert the rays
Which, even in deepest winter, testify

Thy power and majesty,
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.
—Well does thine aspect usher in this day ;
As aptly suits therewith that timid pace,
Framed in subjection to the chains
That bind thee to the path which God ordains

That thou shalt trace,
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass away.
Nor less the stillness of these frosty plains—
Their utter stillness,—and the silent grace
Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,
Whose tranquil pomp, and spotless purity

Report of storms gone by
To us who tread below,
Do with the service of the day accord.
Divinest object which the uplifted eye
Of mortal man is suffer'd to behold ;
Thou, who upon yon snow-clad heights hast pour'd
Meek splendour, nor forgot'st the humble vale,
Thou who dost warm earth's universal mould,
And for thy beauty were not unadored

By pious men of old ;
Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee hail !
Bright be thy course to-day ; let not this promise fail !

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,
By feelings urged, that do not vainly seek
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
That stream in blithe succession from the throats
Of birds in leafy bower,

Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.
—There is a radiant but a short-lived flame,
That burns for poets in the dawning east,—
And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,
When the captivity of sleep had ceased ;
But He who fix'd immoveably the frame
Of the round world, and built, by laws as strong,

A solid refuge for distress,
The towers of righteousness ;
He knows that from a holier altar came
The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice—
Knows that the source is nobler whence doth rise
The current of this matin song,
That deeper far it lies
Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

Have we not conquer'd ? By the vengeful sword !
Ah, no !—by dint of magnanimity ;
That curb'd the baser passions, and left free
A loyal band to follow their liege lord,
Close-sighted Honour, and his staid compeers,

Along a track of most unnatural years,
 In execution of heroic deeds,
 Whose memory, spotless as the crystal beads
 Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,
 Shall live enroll'd above the starry spheres !
 Who to the murmurs of an earthly string
 Of Britain's acts would sing,
 He with enraptured voice will tell
 Of one whose spirit no reverse could quell :
 Of one that 'mid the failing never fail'd.
 Who paints how Britain struggled and prevail'd,
 Shall represent her labouring with an eye
 Of circumspect humanity ;
 Shall show her clothed with strength and skill,
 All martial duties to fulfil ;
 Firm as a rock in stationary fight ;
 In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam ;
 Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night
 To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream—
 Woe, woe to all that face her in the field !
 Appall'd she may not be, and cannot yield.

And thus is miss'd the sole true glory
 That can belong to human story !
 At which *they* only shall arrive
 Who through the abyss of weakness dive.
 The very humblest are too proud of heart :
 And one brief day is rightly set apart
 To Him who lifteth up and layeth low,
 For that Almighty God to whom we owe—
 Say not, that we have vanquish'd—but that we survive.

How dreadful the dominion of the impure !
 Why should the song be tardy to proclaim
 That less than power unbounded could not tame
 That soul of evil, which, from hell let loose,
 Had fill'd the astonish'd world with such abuse
 As boundless patience only could endure ?
 Wide-wasted regions—cities wrapp'd in flame—
 Who sees, and feels, may lift a streaming eye
 To Heaven,—who never saw may heave a sigh.
 But the foundation of our nature shakes,
 And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,
 When desolated countries, towns on fire,
 Are but the avow'd attire
 Of warfare urged with desperate mind
 Against the life of virtue in mankind ;
 Assaulting without ruth
 The citadels of truth ;
 While the old forest of civility
 Is doom'd to perish, to the last fair tree.
 A crushing purpose, a distracted will,
 Opposed to hopes that batten'd upon scorn,
 And to desires, whose ever-waxing horn
 Not all the light of earthly power could fill ;

Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient skill,
 And the celerities of inward force
 Which, spurning God, had flung away remorse,
 What could they gain but shadows of redress?
 —So bad proceeded, propagating worse;
 And discipline was passion's dire excess.
 Widens the fatal web—its lines extend,
 And deadliest poisons in the chalice blend:
 When will your trials teach you to be wise,
 O prostrate lands!—consult your agonies!

No more—the guilt is banish'd,
 And with the guilt the shame is fled,
 And with the guilt and shame the woe hath vanish'd,
 Shaking the dust and ashes from her head!
 —No more these lingerings of distress
 Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.
 What robe can Gratitude employ
 So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?
 What steps so suitable as those that move
 In prompt obedience to spontaneous measures
 Of glory, and felicity, and love,
 Surrendering the whole heart to sacred pleasures!

Land of our fathers! precious unto me
 Since the first joys of thinking infancy;
 When of thy gallant chivalry I read,
 And hugg'd the volume on my sleepless bed!
 O England! dearer far than life is dear,
 If I forget thy prowess, never more
 Be thy ungrateful son allow'd to hear
 Thy green leaves rustle, or thy torrents roar.
 But how can he be faithless to the past
 Whose soul, intolerant of base decline,
 Saw in thy virtue a celestial sign,
 That bade him hope, and to his hope cleave fast!
 The nations strove with puissance; at length
 Wide Europe heaved, impatient to be cast
 With *all* her living strength,
 With *all* her armed powers
 Upon the offensive shores.
 The trumpet blew a universal blast!
 But thou art foremost in the field; there stand--
 Receive the triumph destined to thy hand!
 All states have glorified themselves; their claims
 Are weigh'd by Providence in balance even;
 And now, in preference to the mightiest names,
 To thee the exterminating sword is given.
 Dread mark of approbation, justly gain'd!
 Exalted office, worthily sustain'd!

Imagination ne'er before content,
 But aye ascending, restless in her pride;
 From all that man's performance could present

Stoops to that closing deed magnificent,
And with the embrace is satisfied.

Fly, ministers of Fame,
Whate'er your means, whatever help ye claim,
Bear through the world these tidings of delight !
Hours, days, and months have borne them on the sight
Of mortals, travelling faster than the shower
That landward stretches from the sea,
The morning's splendour to devour ;
But their appearance scatter'd ecstasy—
And heart-sick Europe bless'd the healing power.
*"The shock is given, the adversaries bleed—
Lo, justice triumphs ! Earth is freed !"*
Such glad assurance suddenly went forth—
It pierced the caverns of the sluggish North ;

It found no barrier on the ridge
Of Andes ; frozen gulfs became its bridge ;
The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight ;
Upon the lakes of Asia 'tis bestow'd ;
The Arabian desert shapes a willing road
Across her burning breast,
For the refreshing incense from the West !
Where snakes and lions breed,
Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,
Wherever fruits are gather'd, or where'er
The upturn'd soil receives the hopeful seed—
While the sun rules, and 'cross the shades of night
The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight.
The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,
And in its sparkling progress read
How virtue triumphs, from her bondage freed !
Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,
And slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats are done !
Even the proud realm, from whose distracted borders
The messenger of good was launch'd in air,
France, conquer'd France—amid her wild disorders
Feels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,
That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,
And utter England's name with sadly plaintive voice.

Preserve, O Lord ! within our hearts
The memory of thy favour,
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savour.

Lodge it within us ! As the power of light
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,
Fix'd on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shines our thankfulness for ever bright !
What offering, what transcendent monument,
Shall our sincerity to thee present ?
—Not work of hands, but trophies that may reach
To highest Heaven—the labours of the soul ;
That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,
Upon the inward victories of each,

Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
 Yet, might it well become that city now,
 Into whose breast the tides of grandeur flow,
 To whom all persecuted men retreat ;
 If a new temple lift its votive brow
 Upon the shores of silver Thames—to greet
 The peaceful guest advancing from afar !
 Bright to the distant fabric, as a star
 Fresh risen—and beautiful within !—there meet
 Dependence infinite, proportions just ;
 A pile that grace approves, and time can trust.
 But if the valiant of the land,
 In reverential modesty, demand
 That all observance, due to them, be paid
 Where their severe progenitors are laid ;
 Kings, warriors, high-soul'd poets, saint-like sages,
 England's illustrious sons of long, long ages ;
 Be it not unordain'd that solemn rites
 Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,
 Shall be perform'd at pregnant intervals ;
 Commemoration holy, that unites
 The living generation with the dead ;
 By the deep soul-moving sense
 Of religious eloquence,—
 By visual pomp, and by the tie
 Of sweet and threatening harmony ;
 Soft notes, awful as the omen,
 Of destructive tempests coming
 And escaping from that sadness
 Into elevated gladness ;
 While the white-robed choir attendant,
 Under mould'ring banners pendent,
 Provoke all sympathies to raise
 Songs of victory and praise
 For them who bravely stood unhurt—or bled
 With medicable wounds—or found their graves
 Upon the battle-field, or under Ocean's waves ;
 Or were conducted home in single state
 And long procession, there to lie,
 Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,
 Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate !
 Nor will the God of peace and love
 Such martial service disapprove.
 He guides the pestilence—the cloud
 Of locusts travels on his breath ;
 The region that in hope was plough'd
 His drought consumes, His mildew taints with death
 He springs the hush'd volcano's mine ;
 He puts the earthquake on her still design ;
 Darkens the sun ; hath bade the forest sink,
 And, drinking towns and cities, still can drink
 Cities and towns. 'Tis Thou—the work is Thine !
 The fierce tornado sleeps within Thy courts—
 He hears the word—he flies—

And navies perish in their ports ;
 For Thou art angry with thine enemies !
 For these, and for our errors,
 And sins that paint their terrors,
 We bow our heads before Thee ; and we laud
 And magnify thy name, Almighty God !
 But thy most dreaded instrument,
 In working out a pure intent,
 Is man—array'd for mutual slaughter :
 Yea, Carnage is thy daughter ;
 Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling mail,
 And by thy just permission they prevail ;
 Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
 Of them who in thy law delight :
 Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful fight,
 Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts !

To THEE ! to THEE !

On this appointed day shall thanks ascend,
 That Thou hast brought our warfare to an end ;
 And that we need no further victory !

For a brief moment terrible,
 But to Thy sovereign penetration fair ;
 Before whom all things are, that were,
 All judgments that have been, or e'er shall be,
 Links in the chain of thy tranquillity !
 Along the bosom of this favour'd nation,
 Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undulation !

Let all who do this land inherit
 Be conscious of Thy moving spirit !
 Oh, 'tis a goodly ordinance ! the sight,
 Though sprung from bleeding war, is one of pure delight ;
 Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour arrive,
 When a whole people shall kneel down in prayer,
 And, at one moment, in one spirit, strive
 With lip and heart to tell their gratitude

For Thy protecting care,
 Their solemn joy—praising the eternal Lord
 For tyranny subdued,

And for the sway of equity renew'd,
 For liberty confirm'd, and peace restored !

But hark, the summons ! Down the placid lake
 Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower bells,
 Bright shines the sun, as if his beams might wake
 The tender insects sleeping in their cells ;
 Bright shines the sun—and not a breeze to shake
 The drops that point the melting icicles.

“O, enter now his temple gate !”

Inviting words—perchance already flung
 (As the crowd press devoutly down the aisle
 Of some old minster's venerable pile)
 From voices into zealous passion stung,
 While the tubed engine feels the inspiring blast,
 And has begun its clouds of sound to cast

Towards the empyreal heaven,
 As if the fretted roof were riven,
 Us humbler ceremonies now await ;
 But in the bosom with devout respect,
 The banner of our joy we will erect,
 And strength of love our souls shall elevate :
 For, to a few collected in His name,
 The heavenly Father will incline His ear,
 Hallowing Himself the service which they frame.
 Awake ! the majesty of God revere !

Go,—and with foreheads meekly bow'd,
 Present your prayer : go,—and rejoice aloud—
 The Holy One will hear !

And what 'mid silence deep, with faith sincere,
 Ye, in your low and undisturb'd estate,
 Shall simply feel, and purely meditate
 Of warnings—from the unprecedented might,
 Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed ;
 And of more arduous duties thence imposed
 Upon the future advocates of right ;

Of mysteries reveal'd,
 And judgments unrepeal'd,—
 Of earthly revolution,
 And final retribution,—

To his Omniscience will appear

As offering not unworthy to find place
 On this High Day of Thanks, before the throne of grace.

ODE.

COMPOSED IN JANUARY, 1816.

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed the latch
 Of the tired household of corporeal sense,
 And Fancy, in her airy bower, kept watch,
 Free to exert some kindly influence ;
 I saw—but little boots it that my verse
 A shadowy visitation should rehearse ;
 For to our shores such glory hath been brought,
 That dreams no brighter are than waking thought—
 I saw, in wondrous perspective display'd,
 A landscape richer than the happiest skill
 Of pencil ever clothed with light and shade ;—
 An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,
 Tower, town, and city, and suburban grove,
 And stately forest where the wild deer rove ;
 And, in a clouded quarter of the sky,
 Through such a portal as with cheerful eye
 The traveller greets in time of threaten'd storm,
 Issued, to sudden view, a radiant form !
 Earthward it glided with a swift descent ;
 Saint George himself this visitant may be ;

And ere a thought could ask in what intent
 He sought the regions of humanity,
 A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified
 My patriotic heart ; aloud it cried :
 " I, the guardian of this land,
 Speak not now of toilsome duty—
 Well obey'd was that command—
 Days are come of festive beauty ;
 Haste, virgins, haste !—the flowers which summer gave,
 Have perish'd in the field ;
 But the green thickets plenteously will yield
 Fit garlands for the brave,
 That will be welcome, if by you entwined.
 Haste, virgins, haste ! And you, ye matrons grave,
 Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,
 And gather what ye find
 Of hardy laurel, and wild holly boughs,
 To deck your stern defenders' modest brows ?
 Such simple gifts prepare,
 Though they have gain'd a worthier meed ;
 And in due time shall share
 Those palms and amaranthine wreaths
 Unto their martyr'd countrymen decreed,
 In realms where everlasting freshness breathes ! "

And lo ! with crimson banners proudly streaming,
 And upright weapons innocently gleaming,
 Along the surface of the spacious plain,
 Advance in order the redoubted bands,
 And there receive green chaplets from the hands
 Of a fair female train,
 Maids and matrons, dight
 In robes of purest white ;
 While from the crowd bursts forth a rapturous noise,
 By the cloud-capp'd hills retorted,—
 And a throng of rosy boys
 In loose fashion told their joys,—
 And grey-hair'd sires, on staffs supported,
 Look'd round, and by their smiling seem'd to say :
 " Thus strives a grateful country to display
 The mighty debt which nothing can repay. "

Anon, I saw, beneath a dome of state,
 The feast dealt forth with bounty unconfined,
 And while the vaulted roof did emulate
 The starry heavens through splendour of the show,
 It rang with music, and methought the wind
 Scatter'd the tuneful largess far and near,
 That they who ask'd not might partake the cheer,
 Who listen'd not could hear,
 Where'er the wild winds were allow'd to blow,
 That work reposing, on the verge
 Of busiest exultation hung a dirge,
 Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,

That kindled recollections
 Of agoniz'd affections ;
 And, though some tears the strain attended,
 The mournful passion ended
 In peace of spirit and sublime content !

But garlands wither,—festal shows depart
 Like dreams themselves ; and sweetest sounds,
 Albeit of effect profound,

It was—and it is gone.

Victorious England ! bid the silent art
 Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,
 Those high achievements,—e'en as she array'd
 With second life the deed of Marathon

Upon Athenian walls :

So may she labour for thy civic halls ;
 And be the guardian spaces
 Of consecrated places

Graced with such gifts as sculpture can bestow,
 When inspiration guides her pensive toil ;
 And let imperishable trophies grow
 Fix'd in the depths of this courageous soil !

Expressive records of a glorious strife,
 And competent to shed a spark divine
 Into the torpid heart of daily life ;
 Trophies on which the morning sun may shine,
 As changeful ages flow

With gratulations thoroughly benign !

And ye, Pierian sisters, sprung from Jove,
 And sage Mnemosyne,—full long debarr'd
 From your first mansions, exiled all too long
 From many a consecrated stream and grove,
 Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,
 Chanting for patriot heroes the reward
 Of never-dying song !

Now (for though truth descending from above
 The Olympian summit hath destroy'd for aye
 Your kindred deities, ye live and move,
 And exercise unblamed a generous sway),
 Now, on the margin of some spotless fountain,
 Or top serene of unmolested mountain,
 Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,
 And for a moment meet my soul's desires !
 That I, or some more favour'd bard, may hear
 What ye, celestial maids, have often sung
 Of Britain's acts,—may catch it with rapt ear,
 And give the treasure to our British tongue !
 So shall the character of that proud page
 Support their mighty theme from age to age ;
 And, in the desert places of the earth,
 When they to future empire have given birth,
 So shall the people gather and believe
 The bold report, transferr'd to every clime ;

And the whole world, not envious but admiring,
 And to the last aspiring,
 Own that the progeny of that fair Isle
 Had power as lofty actions to achieve
 As were performed in man's heroic prime;
 Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held
 Its even tenor and the foe was quell'd,
 A corresponding virtue, to beguile
 The hostile purpose of wide-wasting time;
 That not in vain they labour to secure
 For their great deeds perpetual memory,
 And fame, as largely spread as land and sea,
 —By works of spirit high and passion pure.

Miscellaneous Pieces.

DESCRIPTION FOR A NATIONAL MONUMENT IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
 BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

INTREPID sons of Albion, not by you
 Is life despised! Ah, no!—the spacious earth
 Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of birth,
 So many objects to which love is due:
 Ye slight not life—to God and Nature true;
 But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
 When duty bids you bleed in open war:
 Hence hath your prowess quell'd that impious crew.
 Heroes! for instant sacrifice prepared,
 Yet fill'd with ardour, and on triumph bent
 'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident—
 To you who fell, and you whom slaughter spared
 To guard the fall'n, and consummate the event—
 Your country rears this sacred monument!

OCCASIONED BY THE SAME BATTLE. FEBRUARY, 1816.

THE bard, whose soul is meek as dawning day,
 Yet train'd to judgments righteously severe;
 Fervent, yet conversant with holy fear,
 As recognizing one Almighty sway:
 He, whose experienced eye can pierce the array
 Of past events,—to whom, in vision clear,
 The aspiring heads of future things appear,
 Like mountain-tops whence mists have roll'd away;
 Assoil'd from all incumbrance of our time,
He only, if such breathe, in strain's devout
 Shall comprehend this victory sublime,
 And worthily rehearse the hideous rout,
 Which the blest angels, from their peaceful clime,
 Beholding, welcomed with a choral shout.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

O! FOR a kindling touch of that pure flame,
 Which taught the offering of song to rise
 From thy lone bower beneath the Italian skies,
 Great Felicia! * With celestial aim
 It rose—thy saintly rapture to proclaim,
 Then, when the imperial city stood released
 From bondage threaten'd by the embattled East,
 And Christendom respired : from guilt and shame
 Redeem'd—from miserable fear set free
 By one day's feat—one mighty victory.
 —Chant the deliverer's praise in every tongue!
 The cross shall spread, the crescent hath wax'd dim!
 He conquering—as in earth and heaven was sung—
 "He conquering through God, and God by him!"

SEPTEMBER, 1815.

WHILE not a leaf seems faded—while the fields,
 With ripening harvests prodigally fair,
 In brightest sunshine bask,—this nipping air
 Sent from some distant clime where Winter wields
 His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields
 Of bitter change—and bids the flowers beware ;
 And whispers to the silent birds, "Prepare
 Against the threatening foe your trustiest shields."
 For me, who, under kindlier laws, belong
 To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling dry,
 Through the green leaves, and yon crystalline sky,
 Announce a season potent to renew,
 'Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys of song—
 And nobler cares than listless summer knew.

NOVEMBER, 1, 1815.

HOW clear, how keen, how marvellously bright
 The effluence from yon mountain's distant head,
 Which, strown with snow as smooth as heaven can shed,
 Shines like another sun—on mortal sight
 Uprisen, as if to check approaching night,
 And all her twinkling stars. Who now would tread,
 If so he might, yon mountain's glittering head—
 Terrestrial—but a surface, by the flight
 Of sad mortality's earth-sullyng wing,
 Unswep't, unstain'd? Nor shall the aerial powers
 Dissolve that beauty—destined to endure
 White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,
 Through all vicissitudes—till genial spring
 Have fill'd the laughing vales with welcome flowers.

* See Felicia's canzone, addressed to John Sobieski, King of Poland, upon his raising the siege of Vienna.

TO B. R. HAYDON, ESQ.

HIGH is our calling, friend ! creative Art
 (Whether the instrument of words she use,
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues)
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,
 Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,
 Heroically fashion'd—to infuse
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely muse,
 While the whole world seems adverse to desert :
 And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,
 Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,
 Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,
 And in the soul admit of no decay,—
 Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness :
 Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

COMPOSED IN RECOLLECTION OF THE EXPEDITION OF THE FRENCH INTO
 RUSSIA. FEBRUARY, 1816.

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
 A fond reflection of her own decay,
 Hath painted Winter like a shrunken, old,
 And close-wrapt traveller, through the weary day
 Propp'd on a staff, and limping o'er the plain,
 As though his weakness were disturb'd by pain ;
 Or, if a juster fancy should allow
 An undisputed symbol of command,
 The chosen sceptre in a wither'd bough,
 Infirmly grasp'd within a palsied hand.
 This emblem suits the helpless and forlorn ;
 But mighty Winter the device shall scorn ;
 For he it was,—dread Winter !—who beset,
 Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,
 That host,—when from the regions of the Pole
 They shrunk, insane ambition's barren goal,
 That host,—as huge and strong as e'er defied
 Their God, and placed their trust in human pride !
 As fathers persecute rebellious sons,
 He smote the blossoms of the warlike youth ;
 He call'd on Frost's inexorable tooth
 Life to consume in manhood's firmest hold ;
 Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs ;
 For why—unless for liberty enroll'd,
 And sacred home—ah, why should hoary age be bold !

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,—
 But fleetier far the pinions of the wind,
 Which from Siberia's caves the monarch freed,
 And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,
 And bade the snow their ample backs bestride,
 And to the battle ride,—

No pitying voice commands a halt, —
 No courage can repel the dire assault, —
 Distracted, spiritless, benumb'd, and blind,
 Whole legions sink,—and, in an instant, find
 Burial and death : look for them—and descry,
 When morn returns, beneath the clear blue sky,
 A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy !

SONNET ON THE SAME OCCASION. FEBRUARY, 1816.

YE storms, resound the praises of your king !
 And ye mild seasons—in a sunny clime,
 Midway on some high hill, while Father Time
 Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,
 And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing !
 Sing ye, with blossoms crown'd, and fruits and flowers,
 Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety showers,
 And the dire flapping of his hoary wing !
 Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green grass,
 With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report your gain ;
 Whisper it to the billows of the main,
 And to the aërial zephyrs as they pass,
 That old decrepit Winter—he hath slain
 That host which render'd all your beauties vain !

ON THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE DUKE D'ENGLHIM.

DEAR reliques ! from a pit of vilest mould
 Uprisen—to lodge among ancestral kings ;
 And to inflict shame's salutary stings
 On the remorseless hearts of men grown old
 In a blind worship—men perversely bold
 Even to this hour ; yet at this hour they quake ,
 And some their monstrous idol shall forsake.
 If to the living truth was ever told
 By aught surrender'd from the hollow grave :
 O murder'd Prince ! meek, loyal, pious, brave !
 The power of retribution once was given ;
 But 'tis a rueful thought that willow bands
 So often tie the thunder-wielding hands
 Of Justice, sent to earth from higher heaven !

ODE.

WHO rises on the banks of Seine,
 And binds her temples with the civic wreath ?
 What joy to read the promise of her mien !
 How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings beneath !
 But they are ever playing,
 And twinkling in the light,
 And if a breeze be straying,
 That breeze will she invite ;

And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,
 And calls a look of love into her face—
 And spreads her arms—as if the genial air
 Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.
 —Melt, Principalities, before her, melt!
 Her love ye hail'd—her wrath have felt.
 But she through many a change of form hath gone,
 And stands amidst ye now, an armèd creature,
 Whose panoply is not a thing put on,
 But the live scales of a portentous nature,
 That, having wrought its way from birth to birth,
 Stalks round—abhorr'd by Heaven, a terror to the earth.

I mark'd the breathings of her dragon crest;
 My soul in many a midnight vision bow'd
 Before the meanings which her spear express'd;
 Whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,
 Threaten'd her foes—or, pompously at rest,
 Seem'd to bisect the orbit of her shield,
 Like to a long blue bar of solid cloud
 At evening stretch'd across the fiery west.

So did she daunt the earth, and God defy!
 And wheresoe'er she spread her sovereignty,
 Pollution tainted all that was most pure.
 —Have we not known—and have we not to tell
 That Justice seem'd to hear her final knell?
 Faith buried deeper in her own deep breast
 Her stores—and sigh'd to find them insecure!
 And hope was madden'd by the drops that fell
 From shades—her chosen place of short-lived rest,
 Which, when they first received her, she had bless'd:
 Shame follow'd shame—and woe supplanted woe.
 Is this the only change that Time can show?
 How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye patient Heavens, how long!
 Infirm ejaculation from the tongue
 Of nations wanting virtue to be strong
 Up to the measure of recorded might,—
 And daring not to feel the majesty of right!

Weak spirits are there—who would ask,
 Upon the pressure of a painful thing,
 The lion's sinews or the eagle's wing;
 Or let their wishes loose, in forest glade,
 Among the lurking powers
 Of herbs and lovely flowers,
 That man may be accomplish'd for a task
 Which his own nature hath enjoin'd—and why?
 If when that interference hath relieved him,
 He must sink down to languish
 In worse than former helplessness,—and lie
 Till the caves roar,—and imbecility,
 Again engendering anguish,
 The same weak wish returns—that had before deceived him.

But Thou, supreme Disposer ! mightst not speed
 The course of things, and change the creed
 Which hath been held aloft before man's sight,
 Since the first forming of societies !
 Whether, as bards have told in ancient song,
 Built up by soft seducing harmonies,—
 Or press'd together by the appetite,
 And by the power of wrong.

ELEGIAC VERSES.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

"REST, rest, perturbed Earth !
 O rest, thou doleful mother of mankind !"
 A spirit sang in tones more plaintive than the wind ;
 "From regions where no evil thing has birth
 I come—thy stains to wash away,
 Thy cherish'd fetters to unbind,
 To open thy sad eyes upon a milder day !
 —The heavens are throng'd with martyrs that have risen
 From out thy noisome prison ;
 The penal caverns groan
 With tens of thousands rent from off the tree
 Of hopeful life,—by battle's whirlwind blown
 Into the deserts of Eternity.
 Unpitied havoc—victims unlamented !
 But not on high, where madness is resented,
 And murder causes some sad tears to flow,
 Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
 The choirs of angels spread triumphantly augmented.

"False parent of mankind !
 Obdurate, proud, and blind,
 I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
 Thy lost maternal heart to reinfuse !
 Scattering this far-fetch'd moisture from my wings,
 Upon the act a blessing I implore,
 Of which the rivers in their secret springs,
 The rivers stain'd so oft with human gore,
 Are conscious ;—may the like return no more !
 May Discord—for a seraph's care
 Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—
 May she, who once disturb'd the seats of bliss,
 These mortal spheres above,
 Be chain'd for ever to the black abyss !
 And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and love,
 And merciful desires, thy sanctity approve !"

The spirit ended his mysterious rite,
 And the pure vision closed in darkness infinite.

Poems on the Naming of Places.

ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little incidents will have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such incidents, or renew the gratification of such feelings, names have been given to places by the author and some of his friends, and the following poems written in consequence.

I.

It was an April morning : fresh and clear
The rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed ; and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was soften'd down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves appear'd as if in haste
To spur the steps of June ; as if their shades
Of various green were hind'rances that stood
Between them and their object : yet, meanwhile,
There was such deep contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, seem'd as though the countenance
With which it look'd on this delightful day
Were native to the summer. Up the brook
I roam'd in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
Which I till then had heard, appear'd the voice
Of common pleasure : beast and bird, the lamb,
The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush,
Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
Which, while I listen'd, seem'd like the wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here ;
But 'twas the foliage of the rocks, the birch,
The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
With hanging islands of resplendent furze :
And on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,
A single mountain cottage might be seen.
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
" Our thoughts at least are ours ; and this wild nook,
My Emma, I will dedicate to thee."
— Soon did the spot become my other home,
My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.

And, of the shepherds who have seen me there,
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
 Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,
 When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
 May call it by the name of "Emma's Dell."

II.

TO JOANNA.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
 Your time of early youth ; and there you learn'd,
 From years of quiet industry, to love
 The living beings by your own fire-side
 With such a strong devotion, that your heart
 Is slow towards the sympathies of them
 Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
 And make dear friendships with the streams and groves,
 Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
 Dwelling, retired in our simplicity,
 Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
 Joanna ! and I guess, since you have been
 So distant from us now for two long years,
 That you will gladly listen to discourse
 However trivial, if you thence are taught
 That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
 Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
 Their ancient neighbour the old steeple tower,
 The vicar from his gloomy house hard by
 Came forth to greet me ; and when he had ask'd,
 "How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted maid !
 And when will she return to us ?" he paused ;
 And, after short exchange of village news,
 He with grave looks demanded, for what cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I like a Runic priest, in characters
 Of formidable size, had chisell'd out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
 Above the Rotha, by the forest side.
 —Now, by those dear immunities of heart
 Engender'd betwixt malice and true love,
 I was not loth to be so catechized,
 And this was my reply :—"As it befell,
 One summer morning we had walk'd abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself,
 'Twas that delightful season, when the broom,
 Full-flower'd, and visible on every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks ;
 And when we came in front of that tall rock

Which looks towards the east, I there stopp'd short,
 And traced the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit ; such delight I found
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by connecting force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
 — When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laugh'd aloud.
 The rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the lady's voice, and laugh'd again :
 That ancient woman seated on Helm Crag
 Was ready with her cavern : Hammar Scar,
 And the tall steep of Silver How, sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answer'd with a mountain tone :
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the lady's voice ; old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking trumpet ; back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the voice ;
 And Kirkstone toss'd it from his misty head.
 " Now whether," said I to our cordial friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face, " this were in simple truth
 A work accomplish'd by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touch'd
 With dreams and visionary impulses,
 Is not for me to tell ; but sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills :
 And, while we both were listening, to my side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wish'd
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chisell'd out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name upon the living stone.
 And I, and all who dwell by my fire-side,
 Have call'd the lovely rock, ' Joanna's Rock.' " *

 III.

THERE is an eminence,—of these our hills
 The last that parleys with the setting sun.
 We can behold it from our orchard-seat ;
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk

* In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several inscriptions upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic ; they are, without doubt, Roman.

Along the public way, this cliff, so high
 Above us, and so distant in its height,
 Is visible; and often seems to send
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
 The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
 The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
 And she who dwells with me, whom I have loved
 With such communion, that no place on earth
 Can ever be a solitude to me,
 Hath to this lonely summit given my name. *

IV.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
 A rude and natural causeway, interposed
 Between the water and a winding slope
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shore
 Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy.
 And there, myself and two beloved friends,
 One calm September morning, ere the mist
 Had altogether yielded to the sun,
 Saunter'd on this retired and difficult way.

Ill suits the road with one in haste, but we
 Play'd with our time; and, as we stroll'd along,
 It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had toss'd ashore,
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or wither'd bough,
 Each on the other heap'd, along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
 Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
 That skimm'd the surface of the dead calm lake,
 Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand!
 And starting off again with freak as sudden;
 In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its very playmate, and its moving soul.

And often, trifling with a privilege
 Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now
 And now the other, to point out, perchance
 To pluck, some flower or water weed, too fair
 Either to be divided from the place
 On which it grew, or to be left alone
 To its own beauty. Many such there are,
 Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall fern
 So stately, of the Queen Osmunda named

* At this was published in 1800, two years before he was married, the person alluded to must be his sister.

Plant lovelier in its own retired abode
On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the side
Of Grecian brook, or lady of the mere,
Sole sitting by the shores of old romance.
So fared we that sweet morning : from the fields,
Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth
Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
And, in the fashion which I have described,
Feeding unthinking fancies, we advanced
Along the indented shore ; when suddenly,
Through a thin veil of glittering haze, we saw
Before us, on a point of jutting land,
The tall and upright figure of a man
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
Angling beside the margin of the lake.
That way we turn'd our steps, nor was it long
Ere, making ready comments on the sight
Which then we saw, with one and the same voice
Did all cry out that he must be indeed
An idler, he who thus could lose a day
Of the mid-harvest, when the labourer's hire
Is ample, and some little might be stored
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time.
Thus talking of that peasant, we approach'd
Close to the spot where with his rod and line
He stood alone ; whereat he turn'd his head
To greet us—and we saw a man worn down
By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
That for my single self I look'd at them,
Forgetful of the body they sustain'd.
Too weak to labour in the harvest-field,
The man was using his best skill to gain
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
That knew not of his wants. I will not say
What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
With all its lovely images, was changed
To serious musing and to self-reproach.
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
What need there is to be reserved in speech,
And temper all our thoughts with charity.
Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
My friend, myself, and she who then received
The same admonishment, have call'd the place
By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
As e'er by mariner was given to bay
Or foreland, on a new-discover'd coast ;
And "Point Rash Judgment" is the name it bears.

V.

TO M. H.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees,
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path;
 But the thick umbrage, checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, on the soft green turf
 Beneath the branches, of itself had made
 A track, which brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone basin which the herdsman's hand
 Had shaped for their refreshment; nor did sun
 Or wind from any quarter ever come,
 But as a blessing, to this calm recess,
 This glade of water and this one green field.
 The spot was made by Nature for herself.
 The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 Unknown to them; but it is beautiful;
 And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal,
 He would so love it, that in his death hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts:
 And therefore, my sweet Mary, this still nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from you.

VI.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful vale,
 Sharp season follow'd of continual storm
 In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road were clogg'd
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unencumber'd floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast near me hopp'd; nor was I loth
 To sympathize with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,
 Lither repair'd. A single beech-tree grew
 Within this grove of firs; and, on the fork
 Of that one beech, appear'd a thrush's nest;
 A last year's nest, conspicuously built

At such small elevation from the ground
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
 Of nature and of love had made their home
 Amid the fir-trees all the summer long
 Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
 A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain flock,
 Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
 From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
 Some nook where they had made their final stand.
 Huddling together from two fears—the fear
 Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
 Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
 Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
 In such perplex'd and intricate array,
 That vainly did I seek, between their stems,
 A length of open space,—where to and fro
 My feet might move without concern or care :
 And, baffled thus, before the storm relax'd,
 I ceased that shelter to frequent,—and prized
 Less than I wish'd to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial spring return'd
 To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
 Meanwhile were mine ; till, one bright April day,
 By chance retiring from the glare of noon
 To this forsaken covert, there I found
 A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
 And winding on with such an easy line
 Along a natural opening, that I stood
 Much wondering at my own simplicity
 How I could e'er have made a fruitless search
 For what was now so obvious. At the sight,
 Conviction also flash'd upon my mind
 That this same path (within the shady grove
 Begun and ended) by my brother's steps
 Had been impress'd. To sojourn a short while
 Beneath my roof, he from the barren seas
 Had newly come—a cherish'd visitant !
 And much did it delight me to perceive
 That to this opportune recess allured,
 He had survey'd it with a finer eye,
 A heart more wakeful ; that, more loth to part
 From place so lovely, he had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot
 With which the sailor measures o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she is travelling through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,
 And taken thy first leave of those green hills,
 And rocks that were the playground of thy youth,
 Year follow'd year, my brother ! and we two,
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's minds were fashion'd ; and at length,

When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a school-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections. Nature there
 Was with thee ; she who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee ; and even so didst thou become
 A *silent* poet ; from the solitude
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 Back to the joyless ocean thou art gone ;
 And now I call the pathway by thy name,
 And love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
 Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
 Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong :
 And there I sit at evening, when the steep
 Of Silver How, and Grasmere's placid lake,
 And one green island, gleam between the stems
 Of the dark firs, a visionary scene ;
 And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
 Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
 Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
 My brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
 Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while thou,
 Muttering the verses which I mutter'd first
 Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
 Art pacing to and fro the vessel's deck
 In some far region, here, while o'er my head,
 At every impulse of the moving breeze,
 The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
 Alone I tread this path—for aught I know,
 Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
 Of undistinguishable sympathies,
 Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
 When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
 A second time, in Grasmere's happy vale.*

Inscriptions.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE-PENCIL, UPON A STONE, THE LARGEST
 OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY, UPON ONE OF
 THE ISLANDS AT RYDALE.

STRANGER! this hillock of misshapen stones
 Is not a ruin of the ancient time,
 Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the cairn
 Of some old British chief: 'tis nothing more

* This wish was not granted ; the lamented person, not long after, perished by ship
 wreck, in discharge of his duty, as commander of the Hon. East-India Company's vessel
 the *Earl of Abercromby*

Than the rude embryo of a little dome
 Or pleasure-house, once destined to be built
 Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
 But, as it chanced, Sir William having learn'd
 That from the shore a full-grown man might wade,
 And make himself a freeman of this spot
 At any hour he chose, the knight forthwith
 Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
 Are monuments of his unfinish'd task.
 The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
 Was once selected as the corner-stone
 Of the intended pile, which would have been
 Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
 So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
 And other little builders who dwell here,
 Had wonder'd at the work. But blame him not,
 For old Sir William was a gentle knight
 Bred in this vale, to which he appertain'd
 With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
 And for the outrage which he had devised
 Entire forgiveness! But if thou art one
 On fire with thy impatience to become
 An inmate of these mountains,—if, disturb'd
 By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
 Out of the quiet rock the elements
 Of thy trim mansion destined soon to blaze
 In snow-white splendour,—think again, and, taught
 By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
 Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose ;
 There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
 And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE-PENCIL, ON A STONE, ON THE SIDE OF
 THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB, CUMBERLAND.

STAY, bold adventurer ; rest awhile thy limbs
 On this commodious seat ! for much remains
 Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
 Of this huge eminence—from blackness named—
 And, to far-travell'd storms of sea and land,
 A favourite spot of tournament and war !
 But thee may no such boist'rous visitants
 Molest ; may gentle breezes fan thy brow :
 And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
 Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
 From centre to circumference, unveil'd !
 Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,
 That, on the summit whither thou art bound,
 A geographic labourer pitch'd his tent,
 With books supplied and instruments of art,
 To measure height and distance ; lonely task,
 Week after week pursued ! To him was given
 Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestow'd

On timid man) of Nature's processes
 Upon the exalted hills. He made report
 That once, while there he plied his studious work
 Within that canvas dwelling, suddenly
 The many-colour'd map before his eyes
 Became invisible ; for all around
 Had darkness fallen—unthreaten'd, unproclaim'd—
 As if the golden day itself had been
 Extinguish'd in a moment ; total gloom,
 In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,
 Upon the blinded mountain's silent top !

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR GEORGE
 BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

Th' embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine,
 Will not unwillingly their place resign ;
 If but the cedar thrive that near them stands,
 Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.
 One woo'd the silent Art with studious pains,—
 These groves have heard the other's pensive strains ;
 Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
 By interchange of knowledge and delight.
 May Nature's kindest powers sustain the tree,
 And love protect it from all injury !
 And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,
 Darken the brow of this memorial stone,
 And to a favourite resting-place invite,
 For coolness grateful and a sober light ;
 Here may some painter sit in future days,
 Some future Poet meditate his lays ;
 Not mindless of that distant age renown'd,
 When inspiration hover'd o'er this ground,
 The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
 In civil conflict met on Bosworth field ;
 And of that famous youth,* full soon removed
 From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self approved,
 Fletcher's associate, Jonson's friend beloved.

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

OFT is the medal faithful to its trust
 When temples, columns, towers are laid in dust ;
 And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
 That things obscure and small outlive the great :
 Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim
 Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
 And all its stately trees, are pass'd away,
 This little niche, unconscious of decay,
 Perchance may still survive. And be it known
 That it was scoop'd within the living stone,—

* Beaumont, the dramatic poet.

Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
 Of labourer plodding for his daily gains ;
 But by an industry that wrought in love,
 With help from female hands, that proudly strove
 To shape the work, what time these walks and bowers
 Were framed, to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.,
 AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE
 TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED AVENUE IN THE SAME
 GROUNDS.

YE lime-trees, ranged before this hallow'd urn,
 Shoot forth with lively power at spring's return ;
 And be not slow a stately growth to rear
 Of pillars, branching off from year to year,
 Till they at length have framed a darksome aisle ;—
 Like a recess within that awful pile
 Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,
 In the last sanctity of fame is laid.
 —There, though by right the excelling painter sleep
 Where death and glory a joint sabbath keep,
 Yet not the less his spirit would hold dear
 Self-hidden praise, and friendship's private tear :
 Hence, on my patrimonial grounds have I
 Raised this frail tribute to his memory,
 From youth a zealous follower of the art
 That he profess'd, attach'd to him in heart ;
 Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
 Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,
 Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground,
 Stand yet, but, stranger, hidden from thy view,
 The ivied ruins of forlorn Grace Dieu ;
 Erst a religious house, that day and night
 With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite :
 And when those rites had ceased, the spot gave birth
 To honourable men of various worth :
 There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
 Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child ;
 There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
 Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks ;
 Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
 Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams
 Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
 With which his genius shook the buskin'd stage.
 Communities are lost, and empires die,—
 And things of holy use unhallow'd lie ;
 They perish ; but the intellect can raise,
 From airy words alone, a pile that ne'er decays.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE WALL OF THE
HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE) ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE.

RUDE is this edifice, and thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintain'd
Proportions more harmonious, and approach'd
To somewhat of a closer fellowship
With the ideal grace. Yet as it is,
Do take it in good part: alas the poor
Vitruvius of our village had no help
From the great city; never, on the leaves
Of red morocco folio, saw display'd
The skeletons and pre-existing ghosts
Of beauties yet unborn—the rustic box,
Snug cot, with coach-house, shed, and hermitage.
Thou seest a homely pile—yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
The new-dropp'd lamb finds shelter from the wind.
And hither does one poet sometimes row
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
With plenteous store of heath and wither'd fern
(A lading which he with his sickle cuts
Among the mountains), and beneath this roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the sheep,
Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own household: nor, while from his bed
He through that door-place looks towards the lake
And to the stirring breezes, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy!

Poems referring to the Period of Old Age.

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

A DESCRIPTION.

The class of Beggars to which the old man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk;
And he was seated, by the highway side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone

That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag
 All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
 He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one ;
 And scann'd them with a fix'd and serious look
 Of idle computation. In the sun,
 Upon the second step of that small pile,
 Surrounded by those wild, unpeopled hills,
 He sat, and ate his food in solitude :
 And ever, scatter'd from his palsied hand,
 That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
 Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
 Fell on the ground ; and the small mountain birds,
 Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
 Approach'd within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known ; and then
 He was so old, he seems not older now ;
 He travels on, a solitary man,
 So helpless in appearance, that for him
 The sauntering horseman traveller does not throw
 With careless hand his alms upon the ground,
 But stops, that he may safely lodge the coin
 Within the old man's hat ; nor quits him so,
 But still, when he has given his horse the rein,
 Towards the aged Beggar turns a look
 Side-long, and half reverted. She who tends
 The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
 The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,
 And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
 The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
 Shouts to him from behind ; and, if perchance
 The old man does not change his course, the boy
 Turns with less noisy wheels to the road-side,
 And passes gently by,—without a curse
 Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.
 He travels on, a solitary man,—
 His age has no companion. On the ground
 His eyes are turn'd, and, as he moves along,
 They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
 Instead of common and habitual sight
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
 And the blue sky—one little span of earth
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
 Bowbent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
 And never knowing that he sees, some straw,
 Some scatter'd leaf, or marks which, in one track,
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
 Impress'd on the white road,—in the same line,
 At distance still the same. Poor traveller !
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his feet
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still

In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
 Ere he have pass'd the door, will turn away,
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
 The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,
 And urchins newly breech'd—all pass him by :
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this man useless. Statesmen ! ye
 Who are so restless in your wisdom,—ye
 Who have a broom still ready in your hands
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud,
 Heart-sworn, while in your pride ye contemplate
 Your talents, power, and wisdom, deem him not
 A burden of the earth. 'Tis Nature's law
 That none, the meanest of created things,
 Of forms created the most vile and brute,
 The dullest or most noxious, should exist
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
 A life and soul, to every mode of being
 Inseparably link'd. While thus he creeps
 From door to door, the villagers in him
 Behold a record which together binds
 Past deeds and offices of charity,
 Else unremember'd, and so keeps alive
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
 And that half wisdom half experience gives,
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
 Among the farms and solitary huts,
 Hamlets, and thinly scatter'd villages,
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
 The mild necessity of use compels
 To acts of love ; and habit does the work
 Of reason ; yet prepares that after joy
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
 Doth find itself insensibly disposed
 To virtue and true goodness. Some there are,
 By their good works exalted, lofty minds
 And meditative, authors of delight
 And happiness, which to the end of time
 Will live, and spread, and kindle ; minds like those
 In childhood, from this solitary being,
 This helpless wanderer, have perchance received
 (A thing more precious far than all that books
 Or the solicitudes of love can do !)
 That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
 In which they found their kindred with a world
 Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
 Who sits at his own door,—and, like the pear
 Which overhangs his head from the green wall,
 Feeds in the sunshine ; the robust and young,
 The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
 Shelter'd, and flourish in a little grove

Of their own kindred ; all behold in him
 A silent monitor, which on their minds
 Must needs impress a transitory thought
 Of self-congratulation, to the heart
 Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
 His charters and exemptions ; and, perchance,
 Though he to no one give the fortitude
 And circumspection needful to preserve
 His present blessings, and to husband up
 The respite of the season, he, at least—
 And 'tis no vulgar service—makes them felt.

Yet further. Many, I believe, there are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach : who of the moral law
 Establish'd in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers ; and not negligent,
 Meanwhile, in any tenderness of heart
 Or act of love to those with whom we dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood.
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace !
 —But of the poor man ask, the abject poor,
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul ?
 No ! man is dear to man ; the poorest poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they have been
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
 Of some small blessings—have been kind to such
 As needed kindness—for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 —Such pleasure is to one kind being known,
 My neighbour, when with punctual care, each week
 Duly as Friday comes, though press'd herself
 By her own wants, she from her chest of meal
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old mendicant, and, from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart,
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And while in that vast solitude to which
 The tide of things has led him, he appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone—
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of Heaven
 Has hung around him : and, while life is his,
 Still let him prompt the unletter'd villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
 Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
 The freshness of the valleys : let his blood

Struggle with frosty air and winter snows :
 And let the charter'd wind that sweeps the heath
 Beat his grey locks against his wither'd face.
 Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never House, misnamed "of Industry,"
 Make him a captive ! for that pent-up din,
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age !
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes ;
 And have around him, whether heard or not,
 The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
 Few are his pleasures : if his eyes have now
 Been doom'd so long to settle on the earth,
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting—let the light at least
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
 Beneath the trees, or by the grassy bank
 Of highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gather'd meal ; and, finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die !

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

'Tis not for th' unfeeling, the falsely refined,
 The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
 And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide town ;
 His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown ;
 Erect as a sunflower he stands, and the streak
 Of the unfaded rose is express'd on his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the joy
 Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy ;
 There fashion'd that countenance, which, in spite of a staff
 That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A farmer he was ; and his house far and near
 Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer :
 How oft have I heard, in sweet Tilsbury Vale,
 Of the silver-rimm'd horn whence he dealt his good ale.

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
 His fields seem'd to know what their master was doing ;
 And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
 All caught the infection—as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
 The fields better suited the ease of his soul :
 He stray'd through the fields like an indolent wight,
 The quiet of Nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought, and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door :
He gave them the best that he had ; or, to say
What less may mislead you—they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm ;
The genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out,—he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free with their money ;
For his hive had so long been replenish'd with honey
That they dreamt not of dearth. He continued his rounds,
Knock'd here, and knock'd there—pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with this ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserv'd for himself :
Then (what is too true), without *humming* a word,
Turn'd his back on the country ; and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes ! and I guess that you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the green ;
And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as needs was, did old Adam assume,—
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom ;
But Nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

He seems ten birth-days younger, is green and is stout ;
Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an old man that leisurely goes
About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
But often his mind is compell'd to demur,
And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
Like one whose own country's far over the sea ;
And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue ;
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen have come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats ?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets ;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent Garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruit and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor Winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw ;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will team,
And his hearing is touch'd with the sounds of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in the waggon, and smells at the hay ;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning you'll meet with him there :
The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam ! when low thou art laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head ;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

THERE is a flower, the Lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain ;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun itself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm and swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distress'd,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this flower I pass'd,
And recognized it, though an alter'd form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd, and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
" It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold :
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

" The sur shine may not bless it, nor the dew ;
It cannot help itself in its decay ;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue."
And in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot !
O man ! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things youth needed not !

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.

A SKETCH.

THE little hedge-row birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, is one expression ; every limb,
 His look and bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought. He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet : he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given,
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by Nature led
 To peace so perfect, that the young behold
 With envy, what the old man hardly feels.

 THE TWO THIEVES ; OR, THE LAST STAGE OF
 AVARICE.

O NOW that the genius of Bewick were mine,
 And the skill which he learn'd on the banks of the Tyne !
 Then the muses might deal with me just as they chose,
 For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical hand !
 Book-learning and books should be banish'd the land :
 And for hunger and thirst, and such troublesome calls,
 Every ale-house should then have a feast on its walls,
 The traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair ;
 Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would he care !
 For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and his Sheaves,
 Oh, what would they be to my tale of Two Thieves ?

Little Dan is unbreech'd, he is three birth-days old,
 His grandsire that age more than thirty times told ;
 There are ninety good seasons of fair and foul weather
 Between them—and both go a-stealing together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor—
 Is a cart-load of peats at an old woman's door—
 Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide,
 And his grandson's as busy at work by his side !

Old Daniel begins, he stops short—and his eye,
 Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly,
 'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
 But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

Dan once had a heart which was moved by the wire
 Of manifold pleasures and many desires :
 And what if he cherish'd his purse ? 'Twas no more
 Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one
 Who went something further than others have gone :
 And now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;
 You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand : ere the sun
 Has peer'd o'er the beeches their work is begun ;
 And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
 This child but half knows it, and that not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,
 And each, in his turn, is both leader and led ;
 And wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,
 Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither check'd by the rich nor the needy they roam ;
 For grey-headed Dan has a daughter at home,
 Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done :
 And three, were it ask'd, would be render'd for one.

Old man ! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
 I love thee, and love the sweet boy at thy side :
 Long yet mayst thou live ! for a teacher we see
 That lifts up the veil of our nature, in thee.

THE MATRON OF JEDBURGH AND HER HUSBAND.

A Jedburgh, in the course of a tour in Scotland, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our hostess.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers !
 And call a train of laughing hours !
 And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;
 And thou, too, mingle in the ring !
 Take to thy heart a new delight ;
 If not, make merry in despite !
 For there is one who scorns thy power ;
 But dance ! for, under Jedburgh Tower,
 There liveth, in the prime of glee,
 A woman, whose years are seventy-three,
 And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay, start not at that figure, there !
 Him who is rooted to his chair—
 Look at him—look again ! for he
 Hath long been of thy family.
 With legs that move not, if they can,
 And useless arms, a trunk of man,
 He sits ; and with a vacant eye ;
 A sight to make a stranger sigh !
 Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom :
 His world is in this single room.
 Is this a place for mirth and cheer—
 Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous woman is the mate
 Of him in that forlorn estate !
 He breathes a subterraneous damp ;
 But bright as vesper shines her lamp :
 He is as mute as Jedburgh Tower ;
 She jocund as it was of yore,
 With all its bravery on ; in times,
 When, all alive with merry chimes,
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
 It roused the vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due
 Is praise—heroic praise, and true !
 With admiration I behold
 Thy gladness, unsubdued and bold :
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
 The picture of a life well spent :
 This do I see, and something more ;
 A strength unthought of heretofore !
 Delighted am I for thy sake,
 And yet a higher joy partake.
 Our human nature throws away
 Its second twilight, and looks gay :
 A land of promise and of pride
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless charge ! inclosed
 Within himself, as seems—composed ;
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
 The strife of happiness and pain,
 Utterly dead ! yet, in the guise
 Of little infants, when their eyes
 Begin to follow to and fro
 The persons that before them go,
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail
 Where common cheerfulness would fail.
 She strikes upon him with the heat
 Of July suns ; he feels it sweet :
 An animal delight, though dim—
 'Tis all that now remains for him !

I look'd, I scann'd her o'er and o'er :
 The more I look'd, I wonder'd more ;
 When suddenly I seem'd t' espy
 A trouble in her strong black eye ;
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something over bright !
 And soon she made this matter plain,
 And told me, in a thoughtful strain,
 That she had borne a heavy yoke,
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke ;
 Ill-health of body, and had pined
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it!—but let praise ascend
 To Him who is our Lord and Friend!
 Who from disease and suffering
 Hath call'd for thee a second spring;
 Repaid thee for that sore distress
 By no untimely joyousness,
 Which makes of thine a blissful state,
 And cheers thy melancholy mate!

—“*gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.*”

THOUGH narrow be that old man's cares, and near,
 The poor old man is greater than he seems;
 For he hath waking empire, wide as dreams;
 An ample sov'reignty of eye and ear.
 Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer;
 The region of his inner spirit teems
 With vital sounds, and monitory gleams
 Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.
 He the seven birds hath seen, that never part,—
 Seen the “Seven Whistlers” in their nightly rounds,
 And counted them; and oftentimes will start—
 For overhead are sweeping “Gabriel's Hounds,”
 Doom'd, with their impious lord, the flying hart
 To chase for ever on aerial ground.

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S
 ISLAND, DERWENTWATER.

THIS island, guarded from profane approach
 By mountains high and waters widely spread,
 Is that recess to which St. Herbert came
 In life's decline: a self-secluded man,
 After long exercise in social cares
 And offices humane, intent t' adore
 The Deity with undistracted mind,
 And meditate on everlasting things.
 —Stranger! this shapeless heap of stones and earth
 (Long be its mossy covering undisturb'd!)
 Is revered as a vestige of the abode
 In which, through many seasons, from the world
 Removed, and the affections of the world,
 He dwelt in solitude. But he had left
 A fellow-labourer, whom the good man loved
 As his own soul; and when within his cave
 Alone he knelt before the crucifix,
 While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
 Peal'd to his orisons, and when he paced
 Along the beach of this small isle, and thought
 Of his companion, he would pray that both

(Now that their earthly duties were fulfill'd)
 Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
 So pray'd he : as our chronicles report,
 Though here the hermit number'd his last day,
 Far from St. Cuthbert, his belovèd friend,
 Those holy men both died in the same hour.

Epitaphs and Elegiac Poems.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

I.

PERHAPS some needful service of the state
 Drew Titus from the depth of studious bowers,
 And doom'd him to contend in faithless courts,
 Where gold determines between right and wrong,
 Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
 And his pure native genius, lead him back
 To wait upon the bright and gracious Muse,
 Whom he had early loved. And not in vain
 Such course he held ! Bologna's learned schools
 Were gladden'd by the sage's voice, and hung
 With fondness on these sweet Nestorian strains.
 There pleasure crown'd his days, and all his thoughts
 A roseate fragrance breathed. O human life,
 That never art secure from dolorous change !
 Behold a high injunction suddenly
 To Arno's side conducts him, and he charm'd
 A Tuscan audience, but full soon was call'd
 To the perpetual silence of the grave.
 Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
 A champion, steadfast and invincible,
 To quell the rage of literary war !

II.

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
 Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste!
 'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born
 Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.
 On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate
 To sacred studies ; and the Roman shepherd
 Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.
 Much did I watch, much labour'd ; nor had power
 To escape from many strange indignities ;

Was smitten by the great ones of the world,
 But did not fall ; for virtue braves all shocks,
 Upon herself resting immovably.
 Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
 To serve the glorious Henry, king of France,
 And in his hands I saw a high reward
 Stretch'd out for my acceptance ; but death came.
 Now, reader, learn from this my fate, how false,
 How treacherous to her promise is the world,
 And trust in God, to whose eternal doom
 Must bend the sceptred potentates of earth.

 III.

THERE never breathed a man who when his life
 Was closing, might not of that life relate
 Toils long and hard. The warrior will report
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,
 And blast of trumpets. He, who hath been doom'd
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
 Envy, and heart-inquietude, derived
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,
 Could represent the countenance horrible
 Of the vex'd waters, and the indignant rage
 Of Auster and Boötes. Forty years
 Over the well-steer'd galleys did I rule :—
 From huge Pelorus to th' Atlantic pillars,
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown ;
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft :
 Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir
 I knew the force ; and hence the rough sea's pride
 Avail'd not to my vessel's overthrow.
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I
 On regal decks beheld ! yet in the end
 I learn that one poor moment can suffice
 To equalize the lofty and the low.
 We sail the sea of life—a *calm* one finds,
 And one a *tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,
 Death is the quiet haven of us all.
 If more of my condition ye would know,
 Savona was my birthplace, and I sprang
 Of noble parents : sixty years and three
 Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

 IV.

DESTINED to war from very infancy
 Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
 In Malta the white symbol of the cross ;
 Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun

Hazard or toil : among the sands was seen
 Of Libya ; and not seldom, on the banks
 Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot
 To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
 So lived I, and repined not at such fate :
 This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
 That stripp'd of arms I to my end am brought
 On the soft down of my paternal home.
 Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
 To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
 In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
 How fleeting and how frail is human life.

V.

NOT without heavy grief of heart did he,
 On whom the duty fell (for at that time
 The father sojourn'd in a distant land),
 Deposit in the hollow of this tomb
 A brother's child, most tenderly beloved !
 Francesco was the name the youth had borne,
 Pozzobonelli his illustrious house ;
 And, when beneath this stone the corse was laid
 The eyes of all Savona stream'd with tears.
 Alas ! the twentieth April of his life
 Had scarcely flower'd ; and at this early time
 By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
 That greatly cheer'd his country : to his kin
 He promised comfort ; and the flattering thoughts
 His friends had in their fondness entertain'd,*
 He suffer'd not to languish or decay.
 Now is there not good reason to break forth
 Into a passionate lament ?—Oh soul !
 Short while a pilgrim in our nether world,
 Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air ;
 And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,
 An everlasting spring ! in memory
 Of that delightful fragrance which was once,
 From thy mild manners, quietly exhaled.

VI.

PAUSE, courteous spirit !—Balbi supplicates
 That thou, with no reluctant voice, for him
 Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer
 A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.
 This to the dead by sacred right belongs ;
 All else is nothing. Did occasion suit

In justice to the author, I subjoin the original :—

" E degli ammi-
 Non lasciava languire i bez. panceri."

To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
 Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,
 And all the wisdom of the Stagirite,
 Enrich'd and beautified his studious mind :
 With Archimedes also he conversed
 As with a chosen friend, nor did he leave
 Those laureat wreaths ungather'd which the nymphs
 Twine on the top of Pindus. Finally,
 Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
 His ears he closed to listen to the song
 Which Sion's kings did consecrate of old ;
 And fix'd his Pindus upon Lebanon.
 A blessèd man ! who of protracted days
 Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep ;
 But truly did *he* live his life.—Urbino
 Take pride in him. O passenger, farewell !

 LINES,

COMPOSED AT GRASMERE, DURING A WALK, ONE EVENING, AFTER
 A STORMY DAY, THE AUTHOR HAVING JUST READ IN A NEWS-
 PAPER THAT THE DISSOLUTION OF MR. FOX WAS HOURLY
 EXPECTED.

LOUD is the Vale ! the voice is up
 With which she speaks when storms are gone,
 A mighty unison of streams !
 Of all her voices, one !

Loud is the Vale !—this inland depth
 In peace is roaring like the sea ;
 Yon star upon the mountain-top
 Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain depress'd,
 Importunate and heavy load !
 The comforter hath found me here,
 Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad—
 Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
 For he must die who is their stay,
 Their glory disappear.

A power is passing from the earth
 To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
 And when the mighty pass away,
 What is it more than this—

That man, who is from God sent forth,
 Doth yet again to God return ?—
 Such ebb and flow must ever be ;
 Then wherefore should we mourn ?

LINES,

WRITTEN NOVEMBER 13, 1814, ON A BLANK LEAF, IN A COPY OF
THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF
THE DEATH OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL.

To public notice, with reluctance strong,
Did I deliver this unfinish'd song ;
Yet for one happy issue ; and I look
With self-congratulation on the book
Which pious, learned Murfitt saw and read.
Upon my thoughts his saintly spirit fed ;
He conn'd the new-born lay with grateful heart ;
Foreboding not how soon he must depart,
Unwitting that to him the joy was given
Which good men take with them from earth to heaven.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM,
PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile !
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
I saw thee every day ; and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I look'd, thy image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never pass'd away.

How perfect was the calm ! It seem'd no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings :
I could have fancied that the mighty deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah ! *then*, if mine had been the painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou noary pile !
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss :

Thou shouldst have seem'd a treasure-house, a *mile*
Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of Heaven :—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine,
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

childhood vision

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
 Such picture would I at that time have made ;
 And seen the soul of truth in every part ;
 A faith, a trust, that could not be betray'd.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
 I have submitted to a new control :
 A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
 A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
 This, which I know, I speak with mind *serene*. *recalled in tranquility*

Then, Beaumont, friend ! who would have been the friend
 If he had lived, of him whom I deplore,
 This work of thine I blame not, but commend,
 Th'is sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

Oh 'tis a passionate work !—yet wise and well ;
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
 That hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge castle, standing here sublime,
 I love to see the look with which it braves,
 Cased in th' unfeeling armour of old time,
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the kind !
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,
 Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

TO THE DAISY.

SWEET flower ! belike, one day, to have
 A place upon thy Poet's grave,
 I welcome thee once more :
 But he, who was on land, at sea,
 My brother, too, in loving thee,
 Although he loved more silently,
 Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day
 When to that ship he bent his way,
 To govern and to guide :
 His wish was gain'd : a little time
 Would bring him back in manhood's prime,
 And free for life, these hills to climb,
 With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day follow'd day,
 While that stout ship at anchor lay
 Beside the shores of Wight ;
 The May had then made all things green ;
 And, floating there in pomp serene,
 That ship was goodly to be seen,
 His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when call'd ashore, he sought
 The tender peace of rural thought ;
 In more than happy mood,
 To your abodes, bright daisy flowers !
 He then would steal at leisure hours,
 And loved you glittering in your bowers,
 A starry multitude.

But hark the word !—the ship is gone ;—
 From her long course returns—anon
 Sets sail : in season due,
 Once more on English earth they stand :
 But, when a third time from the land
 They parted, sorrow was at hand
 For him and for his crew.

Ill-fated vessel ! ghastly shock !
 At length deliver'd from the rock,
 The deep she hath regain'd ;
 And through the stormy night they steer,
 Labouring for life, in hope and fear,
 Towards a safer shore—how near,
 Yet not to be attain'd !

“ Silence ! ” the brave commander cried ;
 To that calm word a shriek replied,
 It was the last death-shriek.
 A few appear by morning light,
 Preserved upon the tall mast's height :
 Oft in my soul I see that sight ;
 But one dear remnant of the night—
 For him in vain I seek.

Six weeks, beneath the moving sea,
 He lay in slumber quietly ;
 Unforced, by wind or wave,
 To quit the ship for which he died
 (All claims of duty satisfied) ;
 And there they found him at her side,
 And bore him to the grave.

Vain service ! yet not vainly done,
 For this, if other end were none,
 That he, who had been cast
 Upon a way of life unmeet
 For such a gentle soul and sweet,
 Should find an undisturb'd retreat
 Near what he loved, at last ;

That neighbourhood of grove and field
 To him a resting-place should yield,
 A meek man and a brave !
 The birds shall sing, and ocean make
 A mournful murmur, for *his* sake ;
 And thou, sweet flower, shalt sleep and wake
 Upon his senseless grave !

— ♦ —

Ode.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLEC-
 TIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

*"The child is father of the man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety."*

See p. 1.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
 The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparell'd in celestial light,
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.
 It is not now as it has been of yore ;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more !

II.

The rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the rose,—
 The moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare ;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath pass'd away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief ;
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,—
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong :
 I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
 The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay ;

Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every beast keep holiday ;—
 Thou child of joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy shepherd
 boy !

IV.

Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make ; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While the earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May morning ;
 And the children are pulling,
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm
 And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm :—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !—
 —But there's a tree, of many one,
 A single field which I have look'd upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :
 The pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat :
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar ;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy,
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
 With all the persons, down to palsied age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

'Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity ;
 Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage ; thou eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find ;
 Thou, over whom thy immortality
 Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
 A presence which is not to be put by ;
 Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom, on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke

The years to bring th' inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife.
 Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That Nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benedictions : not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be bless'd ;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Black misgivings of a creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts, before which our mortal nature
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised !
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
 Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal silence : truths that wake,
 To perish never ;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor man nor boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence, in a season of calm weather,
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither ;
 Can in a moment travel thither,—
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !
 We, in thought, will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,

SWORTH'S POEMS.

...e that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May !
... though the radiance which was once so bright
now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower :
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which having been, must ever be ;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering ;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And oh ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Think not of any severing of our loves !
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
I only have relinquish'd one delight,
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they :
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet ;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live ;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears ;
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

THE EXCURSION.

To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Lonsdale, K. G., &c. &c.

OFF, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer !
In youth I roam'd, on youthful pleasures bent ;
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.
—Now by thy care befriended, I appear
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,
A token (may it prove a monument !) of
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.
Gladly would I have waited till my task
Had reach'd its close ; but life is insecure,
And hope full oft fallacious as a dream :
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask
Thy favour ; trusting that thou wilt not deem
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
July 29, 1814.

PREFACE.

THE reader must be apprised that this poem belongs to the second part of a long and laborious work ("The Recluse"), which is to consist of three parts. The author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first ; but, as the second division of the work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem ; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued friends, presents the following pages to the public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which "The Excursion" is a part derives its title of "The Recluse." Several years ago, when the author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far nature and education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished ; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society ; and to be entitled, "The Recluse," as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retire-

ment. The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please, and, he would hope, to benefit, his countrymen. Nothing further need be added than that the first and third parts of "The Recluse" will consist chiefly of meditations in the author's own person; and that in the intermediate part ("The Excursion") the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the author's intention formally to announce a system: it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the mean time the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of "The Recluse," may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole poem:—

"On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
 Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
 Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
 Accompanied by feelings of delight
 Pure, or with no displeasing sadness mix'd;
 And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
 And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
 Or elevates the mind, intent to weigh
 The good and evil of our mortal state.
 —To these emotions, whence'er they come,
 Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
 Or from the soul—an impulse to herself;
 I would give utterance in numerous verse,
 Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
 And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith;
 Of blessed consolations in distress;
 Of moral strength, and intellectual power;
 Of joy in widest commonality spread;
 Of th' Individual Mind that keeps her own
 Inviolate retirement, subject there
 To Conscience only, and the law supreme
 Of that Intelligence which governs all;
 I sing:—'fit audience' let me find, 'though few!'

"So pray'd, more gaining than he ask'd, the Bard,
 Holiest of men. Urania, I shall need
 Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven;
 For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
 Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
 To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
 All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
 That ever was put forth in personal form;
 Jehovah, with his thunder, and the choir
 Of shouting angels, and the empyreal thrones,
 I pass them, unalarm'd. Not Chaos, not
 The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
 Nor aught of blinder vacancy—scoop'd out
 By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
 As fall upon us often when we look
 Into our minds—into the mind of man—

My haunt, and the main region of my song
 —Beauty—a living presence of the earth.
 Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
 Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
 From earth's materials—walts upon my steps;
 Pitches her tents before me as I move,
 An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
 Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
 Sought in the Atlantic main, why should they be
 A history only of departed things,
 Or a mere fiction of what never was?
 For the discerning intellect of man,
 When wedded to this goodly universe
 In love and holy passion, shall find these
 A simple produce of the common day.

I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
 Of this great consummation;—and, by words
 Which speak of nothing more than what we are.
 Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
 Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
 To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims
 How exquisitely the individual Mind
 (And the progressive powers perhaps no less
 Of the whole species) to the external world
 Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too
 (Theme this but little heard of among men),
 The external world is fitted to the mind;
 And the creation (by no lower name
 Can it be call'd) which they with blended might
 Accomplish:—this is our high argument.

Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
 Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
 And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed;
 Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
 Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
 Of sorrow, barricaded evermore
 Within the walls of cities; may these sounds
 Have their authentic comment—that, even there
 Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn!

Come thou, prophetic Spirit, that inspir'st
 The human Soul of universal earth,
 Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
 A metropolitann temple in the hearts
 Of mighty poets: upon me bestow
 A gift of genuine insight; that my song
 With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
 Shedding benignant influence,—and secure,
 Itself, from all malevolent effect
 Of those mutations that extend their sway
 Throughout the nether sphere! And if with this
 I mix more lowly matter; with the thing
 Contemplated, describes the mind and man
 Contemplating; and who, and what he was,
 The transitory being that beheld
 This vision; when and where, and how he lived;
 Be not this labour useless. If such theme
 May sort with highest objects, then, dread Power,
 Whose gracious favour is the primal source
 Of all illumination, may my life
 Express the image of a better time,
 More wise desires, and simpler manners; nullo
 My heart in genuine freedom: all pure thoughts
 Be with me; so shall Thy unfalling love
 Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end.

THE EXCURSION.

BOOK I.

THE WANDERER.

A summer forenoon—The Author reaches a ruined cottage upon a common, and there meets with a reverend friend, the Wanderer, of whom he gives an account—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the trees that surround the cottage, relates the history of its last inhabitant.

TWAS summer, and the sun had mounted high :
Southward, the landscape indistinctly glared
Through a pale steam ; but all the northern downs,
In clearest air ascending, show'd far off
A surface dappled o'er with shadows, flung
From many a brooding cloud ; far as the sight
Could reach, those many shadows lay in spots
Determined and unmoved, with steady beams
Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed ;
Pleasant to him who on the soft cool moss
Extends his careless limbs along the front
Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts
A twilight of its own, an ample shade,
Where the wren warbles ; while the dreaming man,
Half conscious of the soothing melody,
With sidelong eye looks out upon the scene,
By that impending covert made more soft,
More low and distant ! Other lot was mine ;
Yet with good hope that soon I should obtain
As grateful resting-place, and livelier joy.
Across a bare wide common I was toiling
With languid feet, which by the slippery ground
Were baffled ; nor could my weak arm disperse
The host of insects gathering round my face,
And ever with me as I paced along.

Upon that open level stood a grove,
The wish'd-for port to which my steps were bound.
Thither I came, and there—amid the gloom
Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms—
Appear'd a roofless hut ; four naked walls
That stared upon each other ! I look'd round,
And to my wish and to my hope espied
Him whom I sought ; a man of reverend age,

But stout and hale, for travel unimpair'd.
 There was he seen upon the cottage bench,
 Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep :
 An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I mark'd the day before—alone
 And in the middle of the public way
 Station'd, as if to rest himself, with face
 Turn'd towards the sun then setting, while that staff
 Afforded to his figure, as he stood,
 Detain'd for contemplation or repose,
 Graceful support ; the countenance of the man
 Was hidden from my view, and he himself
 Unrecognized ; but, stricken by the sight,
 With slacken'd footsteps I advanced, and soon
 A glad congratulation we exchanged
 At such unthought-of meeting. For the night
 We parted, nothing willingly ; and now
 He by appointment waited for me here,
 Beneath the shelter of these clustering elms.

We were tried friends : I from my childhood up
 Had known him. In a little town obscure,
 A market-village, seated in a tract
 Of mountains, where my school-day time was pass'd,
 One room he own'd, the fifth part of a house,
 A place to which he drew, from time to time,
 And found a kind of home or harbour there.

He loved me ; from a swarm of rosy boys
 Singled out me, as he in sport would say,
 For my grave looks—too thoughtful for my years.
 As I grew up, it was my best delight
 To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,
 On holidays, we wander'd through the woods,
 A pair of random travellers we sate—
 We walk'd ; he pleased me with his sweet discours
 Of things which he had seen ; and often touch'd
 Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind
 Turn'd inward ; or at my request he sang
 Old songs—the product of his native hills :
 A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,
 Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
 As cool refreshing water, by the care
 Of the industrious husbandman diffused
 Through a parch'd meadow-ground in time of drought.
 Still deeper welcome found his pure discourse :
 How precious when in riper days I learn'd
 To weigh with care his words, and to rejoice
 In the plain presence of his dignity !

O many are the poets that are sown
 By Nature ! men endow'd with highest gifts—
 The vision, and the faculty divine—
 Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse

(Which in the docile season of their youth:
 It was denied them to acquire, through lack
 Of culture and the inspiring aid of books ;
 Or haply by a temper too severe ;
 Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame),
 Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led
 By circumstance to take unto the height
 The measure of themselves, these favour'd beings,
 All but a scatter'd few, live out their time,
 Husbanding that which they possess within,
 And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds
 Are often those of whom the noisy world
 Hears least ; else surely this man had not left
 His graces unreveal'd and unproclaim'd.
 But, as the mind was fill'd with inward light,
 So not without distinction had he lived,
 Beloved and honour'd—far as he was known.
 And some small portion of his eloquent speech,
 And something that may serve to set in view
 The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
 The doings, observations, which his mind
 Had dealt with—I will here record in verse ;
 Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink
 Or rise, as venerable Nature leads,
 The high and tender Muses shall accept
 With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
 And listening Time reward with sacred praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born :
 There, on a small hereditary farm,
 An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
 His father dwelt ; and died in poverty ;
 While he, whose lowly fortune I retrace,
 The youngest of three sons, was yet a babe,
 A little one, unconscious of their loss.
 But ere he had outgrown his infant days,
 His widow'd mother, for a second mate,
 Espoused the teacher of the village school ;
 Who on her offspring zealously bestow'd
 Needful instruction ; not alone in arts
 Which to his humble duties appertain'd,
 But in the lore of right and wrong, the rule
 Of human kindness, in the peaceful ways
 Of honesty, and holiness severe.
 A virtuous household, though exceeding poor !
 Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,
 And fearing God ; the very children taught
 Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's word,
 And an habitual piety, maintain'd
 With strictness scarcely known on English ground.

From his sixth year, the boy of whom I speak
 In summer tended cattle on the hills ;
 But, through the inclement and the perilous days
 Of long-continuing winter, he repair'd

To his stepfather's school, that stood alone,
 Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,
 Far from the sight of city, spire, or sound
 Of minster clock ! From that bleak tenement
 He, many an evening, to his distant home
 In solitude returning, saw the hills
 Grow larger in the darkness, all alone
 Beheld the stars come out above his head,
 And travell'd through the wood with no one near
 To whom he might confess the things he saw.
 So the foundations of his mind were laid,
 In such communion, not from terror free,
 While yet a child, and long before his time,
 Had he perceived the presence and the power
 Of greatness ; and deep feelings had impress'd
 Great objects on his mind, with portraiture
 And colour so distinct, that on his mind
 They lay like substances, and almost seem'd
 To haunt the bodily sense. He had received
 (Vigorous in native genius as he was)
 A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years,
 With these impressions would he still compare
 All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes, and forms ;
 And, being still unsatisfied with aught
 Of dimmer character, he thence attain'd
 An active power to fasten images
 Upon his brain ; and on their pictured lines
 Intensely brooded, even till they acquired
 The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
 While yet a child, with a child's eagerness
 Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
 On all things which the moving seasons brought
 To feed such appetite : nor this alone
 Appeased his yearning—in the after-day
 Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
 And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags
 He sate, and e'en in their fix'd lineaments,
 Or from the power of a peculiar eye,
 Or by creative feeling overborne,
 Or by predominance of thought oppress'd,
 E'en in their fix'd and steady lineaments
 He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind.
 Expression ever varying !

Thus inform'd,
 He had small need of books ; for many a tale
 Traditional, round the mountains hung,
 And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
 Nourish'd Imagination in her growth,
 And gave the mind that apprehensive power
 By which she is made quick to recognize
 The moral properties and scope of things.
 But eagerly he read, and read again,
 Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied ;
 The life and death of martyrs, who sustain'd,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
Triumphantly display'd in records left
Of persecution, and the Covenant—times
Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour !
And there by lucky hap had been preserved
A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,
That left half-told the preternatural tale,
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts
Strange and uncouth ; dire faces, figures dire,
Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbow'd, and lean-ankled too,
With long and ghostly shanks—forms which once seen
Could never be forgotten !

In his heart,
Where Fear sate thus, a cherish'd visitant,
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,
Or by the silent looks of happy things,
Or flowing from the universal face
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power
Of Nature, and already was prepared
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught
To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

From early childhood, even as hath been said,
From his sixth year, he had been sent abroad
In summer to tend herds : such was his task
Thenceforward till the later day of youth.
O then what soul was his, when, on the tops
Of the high mountains, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He look'd—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touch'd,
And in their silent faces did he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy ; his spirit drank
The spectacle ; sensation, soul, and form
All melted into him ; they swallow'd up
His animal being ; in them did he live,
And by them did he live : they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffer'd no request ;
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him ; it was blessedness and love !

A herdsman on the lonely mountain-tops,
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence oftentimes possess'd

Oh! then how beautiful, how bright, appear'd
The written Promise; He had early learn'd
To reverence the Volume which displays
The mystery—the life which cannot die:
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith;
There did he see the writing—all things there
Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving infinite;
There littleness was not; the least of things
Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shaped
Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.
What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive? Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place; yet was his heart
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,
Oft as he call'd those ecstasies to mind,
And whence they flow'd: and from them he acquired
Wisdom, which works through patience; thence he learn'd,
In many a calmer hour of sober thought,
To look on Nature with a humble heart,
Self-question'd where it did not understand,
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So pass'd the time; yet to the nearest town
He duly went with what small overplus
His earnings might supply, and brought away
The book which most had tempted his desires
While at the stall he read. Among the hills
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,
The annual savings of a toilsome life,
His stepfather supplied; books that explain
The purer elements of truth involved
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe
(Especially perceived where nature droops
And feeling is suppress'd), preserve the mind
Busy in solitude and poverty.
These occupations oftentimes deceived
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf
In pensive idleness. What could he do
With blind endeavours, in that lonesome life,
Thus thirsting daily? Yet still uppermost
Nature was at his heart as if he felt—
Though yet he knew not how—a wasting power
In all things which from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he linger'd in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure th' altitude of some tall crag

That is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak
 Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
 Inscribed, as with the silence of the thought,
 Upon its bleak and visionary sides,
 The history of many a winter storm,—
 Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus, before his eighteenth year was told,
 Accumulated feelings press'd his heart
 With an increasing weight; he was o'erpower'd
 By Nature, by the turbulence subdued
 Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
 And the first virgin passion of a soul
 Communing with the glorious universe.
 Full often wish'd he that the winds might rage
 When they were silent; far more fondly now
 Than in his earlier season did he love
 Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds
 That live in darkness:—from his intellect
 And from the stillness of abstracted thought
 He ask'd repose; and I have heard him say
 That often, failing at this time to gain
 The peace required, he scann'd the laws of light
 Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
 From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
 A cloud of mist, which in the sunshine frames
 A lasting tablet—for the observer's eye
 Varying its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
 And vainly by all other means, he strove
 To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,
 Thus, even from childhood upward, was he rear'd:
 For intellectual progress wanting much,
 Doubtless, of needful help—yet gaining more;
 And every moral feeling of his soul
 Strengthen'd and braced, by breathing in context
 The keen, the wholesome air of poverty,
 And drinking from the well of homely life.
 But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,
 He now was summon'd to select the course
 Of humble industry that promised best
 To yield him so unworthy maintenance.
 The mother strove to make her son perceive
 With what advantage he might teach a school
 In the adjoining village; but the youth,
 Who of this service made a short essay,
 Found that the wanderings of his thoughts were then
 A misery to him; that he must resign
 A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly spirit who constrains
 The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,
 The free-born Swiss to leave his narrow vales
 (Spirit attach'd to regions mountainous

Like their own steadfast clouds)—did now impel
 His restless mind to look abroad with hope.
 An irksome drudgery seems it to plod on,
 Through dusty ways, in storm, from door to door,
 A vagrant merchant bent beneath his load !
 Yet do such travellers find their own delight ;
 And their hard service, deem'd debasing now,
 Gain'd merited respect in simpler times,
 When squire, and priest, and they who round them dwell
 In rustic sequestration, all dependent
 Upon the Pedlar's toil—supplied their wants,
 Or pleased their fancies, with the wares he brought.
 Not ignorant was the youth that still no few
 Of his adventurous countrymen were led
 By perseverance in this track of life
 To competence and ease ; to him it bore
 Attractions manifold—and this he chose.
 He ask'd his mother's blessing ; and with tears
 Thanking his second father, ask'd from him
 Paternal blessings. The good pair bestow'd
 Their farewell benediction, but with hearts
 Foreboding evil. From his native hills
 He wander'd far : much did he see of men,
 Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
 Their passions, and their feelings ; chiefly those
 Essential and eternal in the heart,
 Which 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,
 Exist more simple in their elements,
 And speak a plainer language. In the woods,
 A lone enthusiast, and among the fields,
 Itinerant in this labour, he had pass'd
 The better portion of his time ; and there
 Spontaneously had his affections thriven
 Upon the bounties of the year, and felt
 The liberty of Nature ; there he kept
 In solitude and solitary thought
 His mind in a just equipoise of love.
 Serene it was, unclouded by the cares
 Of ordinary life ; unvex'd, unwarp'd
 By partial bondage. In his steady course,
 No piteous revolutions had he felt,
 No wild varieties of joy and grief.
 Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
 His heart lay open ; and, by Nature tuned
 And constant disposition of his thoughts
 To sympathy with man, he was alive
 To all that was enjoy'd where'er he went ;
 And all that was endured ; for in himself
 Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
 He had no painful pressure from without
 That made him turn aside from wretchedness
 With coward fears. He could afford to suffer
 With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came
 That in our best experience he was rich,

And in the wisdom of our daily life.
 For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,
 He had observed the progress and decay
 Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;
 The history of many families ;
 How they had prosper'd ; how they were o'erthrown
 By passion or mischance ; or such misrule
 Among the unthinking masters of the earth
 As makes the nations groan. This active course,
 Chosen in youth, through manhood he pursued,
 Till due provision for his modest wants
 Had been obtain'd ; and, thereupon, resolved
 To pass the remnant of his days untask'd
 With needless services, from hardship free.
 His calling laid aside, he lived at ease :
 But still he loved to pace the public roads
 And the wild paths ; and, when the summer's warmth
 Invited him, would often leave his home
 And journey far, revisiting those scenes
 That to his memory were most endear'd.
 Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits, untouch'd
 By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;
 Observant, studious, thoughtful, and refresh'd
 By knowledge gather'd up from day to day ;—
 Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself and those
 With whom from childhood he grew up, had held
 The strong hand of her purity ; and still
 Had watch'd him with an unrelenting eye.
 This he remember'd in his riper age
 With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.
 But by the native vigour of his mind,
 By his habitual wanderings out of doors,
 By loneliness, and goodness, and kind works,
 Whate'er in docile childhood or in youth
 He had imbued of fear or darker thought,
 Was melted all away : so true was this,
 That sometimes his religion seem'd to me
 Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods ;
 Who to the model of his own pure heart
 Framed his belief, as grace divine inspired,
 Or human reason dictated with awe.
 —And surely never did there live on earth
 A man of kindlier nature. The rough sports
 And teasing ways of children vex'd not him ;
 Nor could he bid them from his presence, tired
 With questions and importunate demand.
 Indulgent listener was he to the tongue
 Of garrulous age ; nor did the sick man's tale,
 To his fraternal sympathy address'd,
 Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb,
 Such as might suit a rustic sire, prepar'd

For Sabbath duties ; yet he was a man
 Whom no one could have pass'd without remark.
 Active and nervous was his gait ; his limbs
 And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
 Time had compress'd the freshness of his cheek
 Into a narrower circle of deep red ;
 But had not tamed his eye, that under brows
 Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it brought
 From years of youth ; which, like a being made
 Of many beings, he had wondrous skill
 To blend with knowledge of the years to come,
 Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was he framed : and such his course of life,
 Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
 The prized memorial of relinquish'd toils,
 Upon that cottage bench reposed his limbs,
 Screen'd from the sun. Supine the wanderer lay,
 His eyes as if in drowsiness half-shut,
 The shadows of the breezy elms above
 Dappling his face. He had not heard my steps
 As I approach'd, and near him did I stand
 Unnoticed in the shade some minutes' space.
 At length I hail'd him, seeing that his hat
 Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim
 Had newly scoop'd a running stream. He rose,
 And ere the pleasant greeting that ensued
 Was ended, "'Tis," said I, "a burning day ;
 My lips are parch'd with thirst, but you, I guess,
 Have somewhere found relief." He, at the word,
 Pointing towards a sweet-brier, bade me climb
 The fence hard by, where that aspiring shrub
 Look'd out upon the road. It was a plot
 Of garden-ground run wild, its matted weeds
 Mark'd with the steps of those, whom, as they pass'd,
 The gooseberry-trees that shot in long lank slips,
 Or currants hanging from their leafless stems
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap
 The broken wall. I look'd around, and there,
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs
 Join'd in a cold damp nook, espied a well
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy fern.
 My thirst I slaked, and from the cheerless spot
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade return'd
 Where sate the old man on the cottage bench ;
 And while, beside him, with uncover'd head,
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,
 Thus did he speak :—" I see around me here
 Things which you cannot see : we die, my friend
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth,
 Dies with him, or is changed ; and very soon
 Even of the good is no memorial left.

The poets, in their elegies and songs
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
 They call upon the hills and streams to mourn.
 And senseless rocks ; nor idly—for they speak,
 In these their invocations, with a voice
 Obedient to the strong creative power
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are
 More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,
 That steal upon the meditative mind,
 And grow with thought. Beside yon spring I stood,
 And eyed its waters till we seem'd to feel
 One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
 Of brotherhood is broken : time has been
 When, every day, the touch of human hand
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
 In mortal stillness ; and they minister'd
 To human comfort. As I stoop'd to drink,
 Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
 Green with the moss of years ; a pensive sight
 That moved my heart, recalling former days,
 When I could never pass that road but she
 Who lived within these walls, at my approach,
 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her
 As my own child. O sir ! the good die first,
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
 Hath bless'd poor Margaret for her gentle looks,
 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
 From that forsaken spring ; and no one came
 But he was welcome ; no one went away
 But that it seem'd she loved him. She is dead,
 The light extinguish'd of her lonely hut,
 The hut itself abandon'd to decay,
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave !

“ I speak,” continued he, “ of one whose stock
 Of virtues bloom'd beneath this lowly roof.
 She was a woman of a steady mind,
 Tender and deep in her excess of love,
 Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy
 Of her own thoughts : by some especial care
 Her temper had been framed, as if to make
 A being, who, by adding love to peace,
 Might live on earth a life of happiness.
 Her wedded partner lack'd not on his side
 The humble worth that satisfied her heart ;
 Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
 Keenly industrious. She with pride would to.
 That he was often seated at his loom,
 In summer, ere the mower was abroad
 Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,
 Ere the last star had vanish'd. They who pass'd
 At evening, from behind the garden fence
 Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,

After his daily work, until the light
 Had fail'd, and every leaf and flower were lost
 In the dark edges. So their days were spent
 In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy
 Was their best hope,—next to the God in heaven.

“Not twenty years ago, but you, I think,
 Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came
 Two blighting seasons when the fields were left
 With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add
 A worse affliction in the plague of war;
 This happy land was stricken to the heart!
 A wanderer then among the cottages,
 I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
 The hardships of that season; many rich
 Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor;
 And of the poor did many cease to be,
 And their place knew them not. Meanwhile abridged
 Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
 To numerous self-denials, Margaret
 Went struggling on through those calamitous years
 With cheerful hope; but ere the second autumn
 Her life's true help-mate on a sick-bed lay,
 Smitten with perilous fever. In disease
 He linger'd long; and when his strength return'd,
 He found the little he had stored, to meet
 The hour of accident or crippling age,
 Was all consumed. Two children had they now,
 One newly born. As I have said, it was
 A time of trouble: shoals of artisans
 Were from their daily labour turn'd adrift
 To seek their bread from public charity,
 They, and their wives and children—happier far
 Could they have lived as do the little birds
 That peck along the hedges, or the kite
 That makes his dwelling on the mountain rocks!

“A sad reverse it was for him who long
 Had fill'd with plenty, and possess'd in peace,
 This lonely cottage. At his door he stood,
 And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes
 That had no mirth in them; or with his knife
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks;
 Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
 In house or garden, any casual work
 Of use or ornament; and with a strange,
 Amusing, yet uneasy novelty,
 He blended, where he might, the various tasks
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.
 But this endured not; his good-humour soon
 Became a weight in which no pleasure was:
 And poverty brought on a pettish mood
 And a sore temper: day by day he droop'd,
 And he would leave his work, and to the town
 Without an errand, would direct his steps;

Or wander here and there among the fields.
 One while he would speak lightly of his babes,
 And with a cruel tongue ; at other times
 He toss'd them with a false unnatural joy :
 And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
 Of the poor innocent children. ' Every smile,'
 Said Margaret to me here beneath these trees,
 ' Made my heart bleed.' "

At this the wanderer paused ;
 And, looking up to those enormous elms,
 He said, "'Tis now the hour of deepest noon.
 At this still season of repose and peace,
 This hour, when all things which are not a rest
 Are cheerful ; while this multitude of flies
 Is filling all the air with melody ;
 Why should a tear be in an old man's eye ?
 Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
 And in the weakness of humanity,
 From natural wisdom turn our hearts away ;
 To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears,
 And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
 The calm of nature with our restless thoughts "

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone :
 But, when he ended, there was in his face
 Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,
 That for a little time it stole away
 All recollection ; and that simple tale
 Pass'd from my mind like a forgotten sound.
 While on trivial things we held discourse,
 To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,
 I thought of that poor woman as of one
 Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed
 Her homely tale with such familiar power,
 With such an active countenance, an eye
 So busy, that the things of which he spake
 Seem'd present ; and, attention now relax'd,
 There was a heart-felt chillness in my veins.
 I rose ; and, turning from the breezy shade,
 Went forth into the open air, and stood
 To drink the comfort of the warmer sun.
 Long time I had not stay'd,—ere, looking round
 Upon that tranquil ruin, I return'd,
 And begg'd of the old man that, for my sake,
 He would resume his story.

He replied,
 " It were a wantonness, and would demand
 Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts
 Could hold vain dalliance with the misery
 Even of the dead ; contented thence to draw
 A momentary pleasure, never mark'd
 By reason, barren of all future good.
 But we have known that there is often found
 In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,

A power to virtue friendly : were't not so,
 I am a dreamer among men, indeed
 An idle dreamer ! 'Tis a common tale,
 An ordinary sorrow of man's life,
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
 In bodily form. But, without further bidding,
 I will proceed.

“ While thus it fared with them,
 To whom this cottage, till those hapless years,
 Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
 To travel in a country far remote ;
 And glad I was, when, halting by yon gate
 That leads from the green lane, once more I saw
 These lofty elm-trees. Long I did not rest :
 With many pleasant thoughts I cheer'd my way
 O'er the flat common. Having reach'd the door,
 I knock'd ; and when I enter'd with the hope
 Of usual greeting, Margaret look'd at me
 A little while ; then turn'd her head away
 Speechless ; and, sitting down upon a chair,
 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
 Or how to speak to her. Poor wretch ! at last
 She rose from off her seat, and then,—O sir !
 I cannot tell how she pronounced my name.
 With fervent love, and with a face of grief
 Unutterably helpless, and a look
 That seem'd to cling upon me, she inquired
 If I had seen her husband. As she spake,
 A strange surprise and fear came to my heart,
 Nor had I power to answer ere she told
 That he had disappear'd—not two months gone,
 He left his house ; two wretched days had pass'd,
 And on the third, as wistfully she raised
 Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,
 Like one in trouble, for returning light,
 Within her chamber casement she espied
 A folded paper, lying as if placed
 To meet her waking eyes. This tremblingly
 She open'd—found no writing, but therein
 Pieces of money carefully inclosed,
 Silver and gold—' I shudder'd at the sight,'
 Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand
 Which placed it there ; and, ere that day was ended,
 That long and anxious day ! I learn'd from one
 Sent hither by my husband to impart
 The heavy news, that he had join'd a troop
 Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
 —He left me thus—he could not gather heart
 To take a farewell of me ; for he fear'd
 That I should follow with my babes, and sink
 Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

“ This tale did Margaret tell with many tears ;
 And, when she ended, I had little power

To give her comfort, and was glad to take
 Such words of hope from her own mouth as served
 To cheer us both; but long we had not talk'd,
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
 And with a brighter eye she look'd around
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
 We parted. 'Twas the time of early spring;
 I left her busy with her garden tools;
 And well remember, o'er that fence she look'd,
 And, while I paced along the footway-path,
 Call'd out, and sent a blessing after me,
 With tender cheerfulness; and with a voice
 That seem'd the very sound of happy thoughts.

“ I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,
 With my accustom'd load; in heat and cold,
 Through many a wood, and many an open ground,
 In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
 Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall;
 My best companions now the driving winds,
 And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,
 And now the music of my own sad steps,
 With many a short-lived thought that pass'd between,
 And disappear'd. I journey'd back this way
 Toward the wane of summer; when the wheat
 Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass,
 Springing afresh, had o'er the hayfield spread
 Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,
 I found that she was absent. In the shade,
 Where now we sit, I waited her return.
 Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
 'ts customary look,—only, I thought,
 The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
 Hung down in heavier tufts; and that bright weed,
 The yellow stone-crop, suffer'd to take root
 Along the window's edge, profusely grew,
 Blinding the lower panes. I turn'd aside,
 And stroll'd into her garden. It appear'd
 To lag behind the season, and had lost
 Its pride of neatness. From the border lines,
 Composed of daisy and resplendent thrift,
 Flowers straggling forth had on those paths encroach'd.
 Which they were used to deck: carnations, once
 Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less
 For the peculiar pains they had required,
 Declined their languid heads without support.
 The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells,
 Had twined about her two small rows of pease,
 And dragg'd them to the earth. Ere this an hour
 Was wasted. Back I turn'd my restless steps,
 A stranger pass'd; and, guessing whom I sought,
 He said that she was used to ramble far.
 The sun was sinking in the west; and now
 I sate with sad impatience. From within

Her solitary infant cried aloud ;
 Then, like a blast that dies away self-still'd,
 The voice was silent. From the bench I rose ;
 But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.
 The spot, though fair, was very desolate—
 The longer I remain'd, more desolate.
 And, looking round, I saw the corner stones
 Till then unnoticed, on either side the door
 With dull red stains discolour'd, and stuck o'er
 With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep,
 That fed upon the common, thither came
 Familiarly ; and found a couching-place
 Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell
 From these tall elms ; the cottage-clock struck eight ;
 I turn'd, and saw her distant a few steps.
 Her face was pale and thin, her figure too
 Was changed. As she unlock'd the door, she said,
 ' It grieves me you have waited here so long,
 But, in good truth, I've wander'd much of late,
 And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—have need
 Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'
 While, on the board she spread our evening meal,
 She told me—interrupting not the work
 Which gave employment to her listless hands—
 That she had parted with her elder child,
 To a kind master on a distant farm
 Now happily apprenticed—' I perceive
 You look at me, and you have cause ; to-day
 I have been travelling far ; and many days
 About the fields I wander, knowing this
 Only, that what I seek I cannot find ;
 And so I waste my time : for I am changed ;
 And to myself,' said she, ' have done much wrong
 And to this helpless infant. I have slept
 Weeping, and weeping have I waked ; my tears
 Have flow'd as if my body were not such
 As others are ; and I could never die.
 But I am now in mind and in my heart
 More easy ; and I hope,' said she, ' that Heaven
 Will give me patience to endure the things
 Which I behold at home.' It would have grieved
 Your very soul to see her ; Sir, I feel
 The story linger in my heart : I fear
 'Tis long and tedious ; but my spirit clings
 To that poor woman : so familiarly
 Do I perceive her manner, and her look,
 And presence ; and so deeply do I feel
 Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my walks
 A momentary trance comes over me ;
 And to myself I seem to muse on one
 By sorrow laid asleep, or borne away ;
 A human being destined to awake
 To human life, or something very near
 To human life, when he shall come again.

For whom she suffer'd. Yes, it would have grieved
 Your very soul to see her : evermore
 Her eyelids droop'd, her eyes were downward cast ;
 And, when she at her table gave me food,
 She did not look at me. Her voice was low,
 Her body was subdued. In every act
 Pertaining to her house affairs, appear'd
 The careless stillness of a thinking mind
 Self-occupied ; to which all outward things
 Are like an idle matter. Still she sigh'd,
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen,
 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
 I knew not how, and hardly whence they came.

“ Ere my departure to her care I gave,
 For her son's use, some tokens of regard,
 Which with a look of welcome she received ;
 And I exhorted her to have her trust
 In God's good love, and seek his help by prayer.
 I took my staff, and when I kiss'd her babe,
 The tears stood in her eyes. I left her then
 With the best hope and comfort I could give.
 She thank'd me for my wish ; but for my hope
 It seem'd she did not thank me.

“ I returned,
 And took my rounds along this road again
 Ere on its sunny bank the primrose flower
 Peep'd forth, to give an earnest of the spring.
 I found her sad and drooping ; she had learn'd
 No tidings of her husband ; if he lived,
 She knew not that he lived ; if he were dead,
 She knew not he was dead. She seem'd the same
 In person and appearance ; but her house
 Bespoke a sleepy hand of negligence.
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth
 Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,
 Which in the cottage window, heretofore
 Had been piled up against the corner panes
 In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves
 Lay scatter'd here and there, open or shut
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant babe
 Had from its mother caught the trick of grief,
 And sigh'd among its playthings. Once again
 I turn'd towards the garden gate, and saw,
 More plainly still, that poverty and grief
 Were now come nearer to her : weeds defaced
 The harden'd soil, and knots of wither'd grass ;
 No ridges there appear'd of clear black mold,
 No winter greenness ; of her herbs and flowers,
 It seem'd the better part were gnaw'd away
 Or trampled into earth ; a chain of straw,
 Which had been twined about the slender stem
 Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root ;

The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
 —Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
 And, noting that my eye was on the tree,
 She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone
 Ere Robert come again.' Towards the house
 Together we return'd, and she inquired
 If I had any hope :—but for her babe,
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,
 She had no wish to live—that she must die
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
 Still in its place ; his Sunday garments hung
 Upon the self-same nail ; his very staff
 Stood undisturb'd behind the door. And when,
 In bleak December, I retraced this way,
 She told me that her little babe was dead,
 And she was left alone. She now, released
 From her maternal cares, had taken up
 The employment common through these wilds, and gain'd
 By spinning hemp a pittance for herself ;
 And for this end had hired a neighbour's boy
 To give her needful help. That very time
 Most willingly she put her work aside,
 And walk'd with me along the miry road
 Heedless how far ; and, in such piteous sort
 That any heart had ached to hear her, begg'd
 That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
 For him whom she had lost. We parted then—
 Our final parting ; for from that time forth
 Did many seasons pass ere I return'd
 Into this tract again.

“Nine tedious years
 From their first separation, nine long years,
 She linger'd in unquiet widowhood ;
 A wife and widow. Needs must it have been
 A sore heart-wasting ! I have heard, my friend,
 That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
 Alone, through half the vacant Sabbath day,
 And if a dog pass'd by, she still would quit
 The shade, and look abroad. On this old bench
 For hours she sate ; and evermore her eye
 Was busy in the distance, shaping things
 That made her heart beat quick. You see that path,
 Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its grey line ;
 There, to and fro, she paced through many a day
 Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
 That girt her waist, spinning the long drawn thread
 With backward steps. Yet ever as there pass'd
 A man whose garments show'd the soldier's red,
 Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
 The little child who sate to turn the wheel
 Ceased from his task ; and she with falt'ring voice
 Made many a fond inquiry ; and when they,
 Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
 Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,

That bars the traveller's road, she often stood,
 And when a stranger horseman came, the latch
 Would lift, and in his face look wistfully ;
 Most happy, if, from aught discover'd there
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor but
 Sank to decay : for he was gone whose hand,
 At the first nipping of October frost,
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
 Chequer'd the green-grown thatch. And so she lived
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone ;
 Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain,
 Was sapp'd ; and while she slept, the nightly damps
 Did chill her breast ; and in the stormy day
 Her tatter'd clothes were ruffled by the wind ;
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
 Have parted hence : and still that length of road,
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope endear'd,
 Fast rooted at her heart : and here, my friend,—
 In sickness she remain'd ; and here she died,
 Last human tenant of these ruin'd walls !”

The old man ceased : he saw that I was moved ;
 From that low bench, rising instinctively
 I turn'd aside in weakness, nor had power
 To thank him for the tale which he had told.
 I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall,
 Review'd that woman's sufferings ; and it seem'd
 To comfort me, while, with a brother's love,
 I bless'd her in the impotence of grief.
 At length towards the cottage I return'd
 Fondly,— and traced, with interest more mild,
 That secret spirit of humanity
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies
 Of Nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,
 And silent overgrowings, still survived.
 The old man, noting this, resumed, and said,
 “ My friend, enough to sorrow you have given,
 The purposes of wisdom ask no more :
 Be wise and cheerful ; and no longer read
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye.
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.
 I well remember that those very plumes,
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,
 By mist and silent raindrops silver'd o'er,
 As once I pass'd, did to my heart convey
 So still an image of tranquillity,
 So calm and still, and look'd so beautiful
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which fill'd my mind
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair
 From ruin and from change, and all the grief
 That passing shows of being leave behind,
 Appear'd an idle dream, that could not live

Where meditation was. I turn'd away,
And walk'd along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot
A slant and mellow radiance, which began
To fall upon us, while beneath the trees,
We sate on that low bench : and now we felt,
Admonish'd thus, the sweet hour coming on.
A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,
At distance heard, peopled the milder air.
The old man rose, and, with a sprightly mien
Of hopeful preparation, grasp'd his staff ;
Together casting then a farewell look
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade ;
And, ere the stars were visible, had reach'd
A village inn,—our evening resting-place.

BOOK II.

THE SOLITARY.

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated—Morning scene, and view of a Village Wake—Wanderer's account of a friend whom he purposes to visit—View, from an eminence, of the valley which his friend had chosen for his retreat—Sound of singing from below—a funeral procession—Descent into the valley—Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the valley—Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary—Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district—Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage—The cottage entered—Description of the Solitary's apartment—Repast there—View from the window, of two mountain summits—and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him—Account of the departed inmate of the cottage—Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind—Quit the house.

IN days of yore how fortunately fared
The minstrel ! wandering on from hall to hall,
Baronial court or royal ; cheer'd with gifts
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise ;
Now meeting on his road an arm'd knight,
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
Of a clear brook ; beneath an abbey's roof
One evening sumptuously lodged ; the next
Humbly in a religious hospital ;
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood ;
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.
Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared ;
He walk'd protected from the sword of war.
By virtue of that sacred instrument,
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side ;
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went,
Opening from land to land an easy way
By melody, and by the charm of verse.

Yet not the noblest of that honour'd race
 Drew happier, loftier, more impassion'd thoughts
 From his long journeyings and eventful life,
 Than this obscure itinerant (an obscure
 But a high-soul'd and tender-hearted man)
 Had skill to draw from many a ramble, far
 And wide protracted through the tamer ground
 Of these our unimaginative days ;
 Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise
 Accoutred with his burthen and his staff ;
 And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school
 Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,
 Look'd on this guide with reverential love !
 Each with the other pleased, we now pursued
 Our journey—beneath favourable skies.
 Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light
 Unfailing : not a hamlet could we pass,
 Rarely a house, which did not yield to him
 Remembrances ; or from his tongue call forth
 Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard
 Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,
 Which Nature's various objects might supply ;
 And in the silence of his face I read
 His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,
 And the mute fish that glances in the stream,
 And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,
 And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,
 The fowl domestic, and the household dog—
 In his capacious mind he loved them all :
 Their rights acknowledging, he felt for all.
 Oft was occasion given me to perceive
 How the calm pleasures of the pasturing herd
 To happy contemplation soothed his walk
 Along the field, and in the shady grove ;
 How the poor brute's condition, forced to run
 Its course of suffering in the public road,
 Sad contrast ! all too often smote his heart
 With unavailing pity. Rich in love
 And sweet humanity, he was, himself,
 To the degree that he desired, beloved.
 Greetings and smiles we met with all day long,
 From faces that we knew ; we took our seats
 By many a cottage-hearth, where he received
 The welcome of an inmate from afar.
 Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,
 Wherein his charity was bless'd ; his voice
 Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.
 And, sometimes—where the poor man held dispute
 With his own mind, unable to subdue
 Impatience, through inaptness to perceive
 General distress in his particular lot :
 Or cherishing resentment, or in vain

Struggling against it, with a soul perplex'd,
 And finding in itself no steady power
 To draw the line of comfort that divides
 Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,
 From the injustice of our brother men—
 To him appeal was made as to a judge ;
 Who, with an understanding heart, allay'd
 The perturbation ; listen'd to the plea ;
 Resolved the dubious point ; and sentence gave,
 So grounded, so applied, that it was heard
 With soften'd spirit—even when it condemn'd.

Such intercourse I witness'd while we roved
 Now as his choice directed, now as mine ;
 Or both, with equal readiness of will,
 Our course submitting to the changeful breeze
 Of accident. But when the rising sun
 Had three times call'd us to renew our walk,
 My fellow-traveller said, with earnest voice,
 As if the thought were but a moment old,
 That I must yield myself without reserve
 To his disposal. Glad was I of this.
 We started,—and he led me towards the hills ;
 Up through an ample vale, with higher hills
 Before us, mountains stern and desolate ;
 But in the majesty of distance now
 Set off, and to our ken appearing fair
 Of aspect, with ærial softness clad,
 And beautified with morning's purple beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress
 Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,
 May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
 Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise
 From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise ;
 And they, if blest with health and hearts at ease,
 Shall lack not their enjoyment : but how faint
 Compared with ours, who, pacing side by side,
 Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all
 That we beheld ; and lend the listening sense
 To every grateful sound of earth and air—
 Pausing at will ; our spirits braced, our thoughts
 Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
 And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves.

Mount slowly, sun ! and may our journey lie
 A while within the shadow of this hill,
 This friendly hill, a shelter from thy beams !
 Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent wish :
 And as that wish, with prevalence of thanks
 For present good o'er fear of future ill,
 Stole in among the morning's blither thoughts,
 'Twas chased away, for tow'rd's the western side
 Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance.
 We saw a throng of people—wherefore met :

Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose
 On the thrill'd ear, did to the question yield
 Prompt answer ; they proclaim the annual wake,
 Which the bright season favours. Tabor and pipe
 In purpose join to hasten and reprove
 The laggard rustic ; and repay with boons
 Of merriment a particolour'd knot,
 Already form'd upon the village green.
 Beyond the limits of the shadow cast
 By the broad hill, glisten'd upon our sight
 That gay assemblage. Round them and above,
 Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,
 Casement, and cottage roof, and stems of trees
 Half-veil'd in vapoury cloud, the silver steam
 Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs
 By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a mast
 Of gold, the maypole shines ; as if the rays
 Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,
 With gladsome influence could reanimate
 The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly scene
 Invite us ; shall we quit our road, and join
 These festive matins ?" He replied, "Not loth
 Here would I linger, and with you partake,
 Not one hour merely, but till evening's close,
 The simple pastimes of the day and place.
 By the fleet racers, ere the sun be set,
 The turf of yon large pasture will be skimm'd ;
 There, too, the lusty wrestlers will contend ;
 But know we not that he who intermits
 Th' appointed task and duties of the day,
 Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day,
 Checking the finer spirits that refuse
 To flow when purposes are lightly changed ?
 We must proceed, a length of journey yet
 Remains untraced." Then, pointing with his staff
 Towards those craggy summits, his intent
 He thus imparted :—

"In a spot that lies
 Among yon mountain fastnesses conceal'd,
 You will receive, before the hour of noon,
 Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil—
 From sight of one who lives secluded there,
 Lonesome and lost : of whom, and whose past life
 (Not to forestall such knowledge as may be
 More faithfully collected from himself),
 Th'his brief communication shall suffice.

"Though now sojourning there, he, like myself,
 Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage
 Among the wilds of Scotland ; in a tract
 Where many a shelter'd and well-tended plant,
 Upon the humblest ground of social life,
 Doth at this day, I trust, the blossoms bear

Of piety and simple innocence.
 Such grateful promises his youth display'd ;
 And, as he show'd in study forward zeal,
 All helps were sought, all measures strain'd, that he
 By due scholastic discipline prepared,
 Might to the ministry be call'd ; which done,
 Partly through lack of better hopes—and part,
 Perhaps, incited by a curious mind,
 In early life he undertook the charge
 Of chaplain to a military troop
 Cheer'd by the Highland bagpipe, as they march'd
 In plaided vest—his fellow-countrymen.
 This office filling, and by native power,
 And force of native inclination, made
 An intellectual ruler in the haunts
 Of social vanity, he walk'd the world,
 Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety ;
 Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock
 Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and roam'd
 Where fortune led : and Fortune, who oft proves
 The careless wanderer's friend, to him made known
 A blooming lady—a conspicuous flower,
 Admired for beauty, for her sweetness praised,
 Whom he had sensibility to love,
 Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.

“For this fair bride, most rich in gifts of mind,
 Nor sparingly endow'd with worldly wealth,
 His office he relinquish'd ; and retired
 From the world's notice to a rural home.
 Youth's season yet with him was scarcely past,
 And she was in youth's prime. How full their joy !—
 How free their love !—nor did their love decay,
 Nor joy abate, till,—pitiable doom !
 In the short course of one undreaded year
 Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'erthrew
 Two lovely children—all that they possess'd !
 The mother follow'd : miserably bare
 The one survivor stood ; he wept, he pray'd
 For his dismissal, day and night—compell'd
 By pain to turn his thoughts towards the grave,
 And face the regions of eternity.
 An uncomplaining apathy displaced
 This anguish ; and, indifferent to delight,
 To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,
 To private interest dead, and public care.
 So lived he ; so he might have died.

“But now,
 To the wide world's astonishment, appear'd
 The glorious opening, the unlook'd-for dawn,
 That promised everlasting joy to France !
 That sudden light had power to pierce the gloom
 In which his spirit, friendless upon earth,
 In separation dwelt, and solitude.

The voice of social transport reach'd even him !
 He broke from his contracted bounds, repair'd
 To the great city, an emporium then
 Of golden expectations, and receiving
 Freights, every day, from a new world of hope.
 Thither his popular talents he transferr'd !
 And, from the pulpit, zealously maintain'd
 The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
 As one, and moving to one glorious end.
 Intoxicating service ! I might say
 A happy service ; for he was sincere
 As vanity and fondness for applause,
 And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.

“ That righteous cause of freedom did, we know,
 Combine for one hostility, as friends,
 Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves ;
 Was served by rival advocates that came
 From regions opposite as heaven and hell.
 One courage seem'd to animate them all :
 And, from the dazzling conquests daily gain'd
 By their united efforts, there arose
 A proud and most presumptuous confidence
 In the transcendent wisdom of the age,
 And its discernment ; not alone in rights,
 And in the origin and bounds of power
 Social and temporal ; but in laws divine,
 Deduced by reason, or to faith reveal'd.
 An overweening trust was raised ; and fear
 Cast out, alike of person and of thing.
 Plague from this union spread, whose subtle bane
 The strongest did not easily escape ;
 And he, what wonder ? took a mortal taint.
 How shall I trace the change, how bear to tell
 That he broke faith with them whom he had laid
 In earth's dark chambers with a Christian's hope !
 An infidel contempt of holy writ
 Stole by degrees upon his mind ; and hence
 Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced ;
 Vilest hypocrisy, the laughing, gay
 Hypocrisy, not leagu'd with fear, but pride.
 Smooth words he had to wheedle simple souls ;
 But, for disciples of the inner school,
 Old freedom was old servitude, and they
 The wisest whose opinions stoop'd the least
 To known restraints, and who most boldly drew
 Hopeful prognostications from a creed,
 Which, in the light of false philosophy,
 Spread like a halo round a misty moon,
 Widening its circle as the storms advance.

“ His sacred function was at length renounced
 And every day and every place enjoy'd
 The unshackled layman's natural liberty ;
 Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.

I do not wish to wrong him ; though the course
 Of private life licentiously display'd
 Unhallow'd actions—planted like a crown
 Upon the insolent aspiring brow
 Of spurious notions—worn as open signs
 Of prejudice subdued—he still retain'd,
 'Mid much abasement, what he had received
 From nature—an intense and glowing mind.
 Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew weak,
 And mortal sickness on her face appear'd,
 He colour'd objects to his own desire
 As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods
 Of pain were keen as those of better men,
 Nay keener, as his fortitude was less :
 And he continued, when worse days were come,
 To deal about his sparkling eloquence,
 Struggling against the strange reverse with zeal
 That show'd like happiness ; but, in despite
 Of all this outside bravery, within
 He neither felt encouragement nor hope :
 For moral dignity, and strength of mind,
 Were wanting, and simplicity of life,
 And reverence for himself ; and, last and best,
 Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of Him,
 Before whose sight the troubles of this world
 Are vain as billows in a tossing sea.

“The glory of the times fading away—
 The splendour, which had given a festal air
 To self-importance, hallow'd it, and veil'd
 From his own sight, this gone, therewith he lost
 All joy in human nature ; was consumed,
 And vex'd, and chafed, by levity and scorn,
 And fruitless indignation ; gall'd by pride ;
 Made desperate by contempt of men who throve
 Before his sight in power or fame, and won,
 Without desert, what he desired ; weak men,
 Too weak even for his envy or his hate !
 And thus beset, and finding in himself
 Nor pleasure nor tranquillity, at last,
 After a wandering course of discontent
 In foreign lands, and inwardly oppress'd
 With malady—in part, I fear, provoked
 By weariness of life—he fix'd his home,
 Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,
 Among these rugged hills ; where now he dwells,
 And wastes the sad remainder of his hours
 In self-indulging spleen, that doth not want
 Its own voluptuousness—on this resolved,
 With this content—that he will live and die
 Forgotten,—at safe distance from ‘a world
 Not moving to his mind.’”

These serious words

Closed the preparatory notices

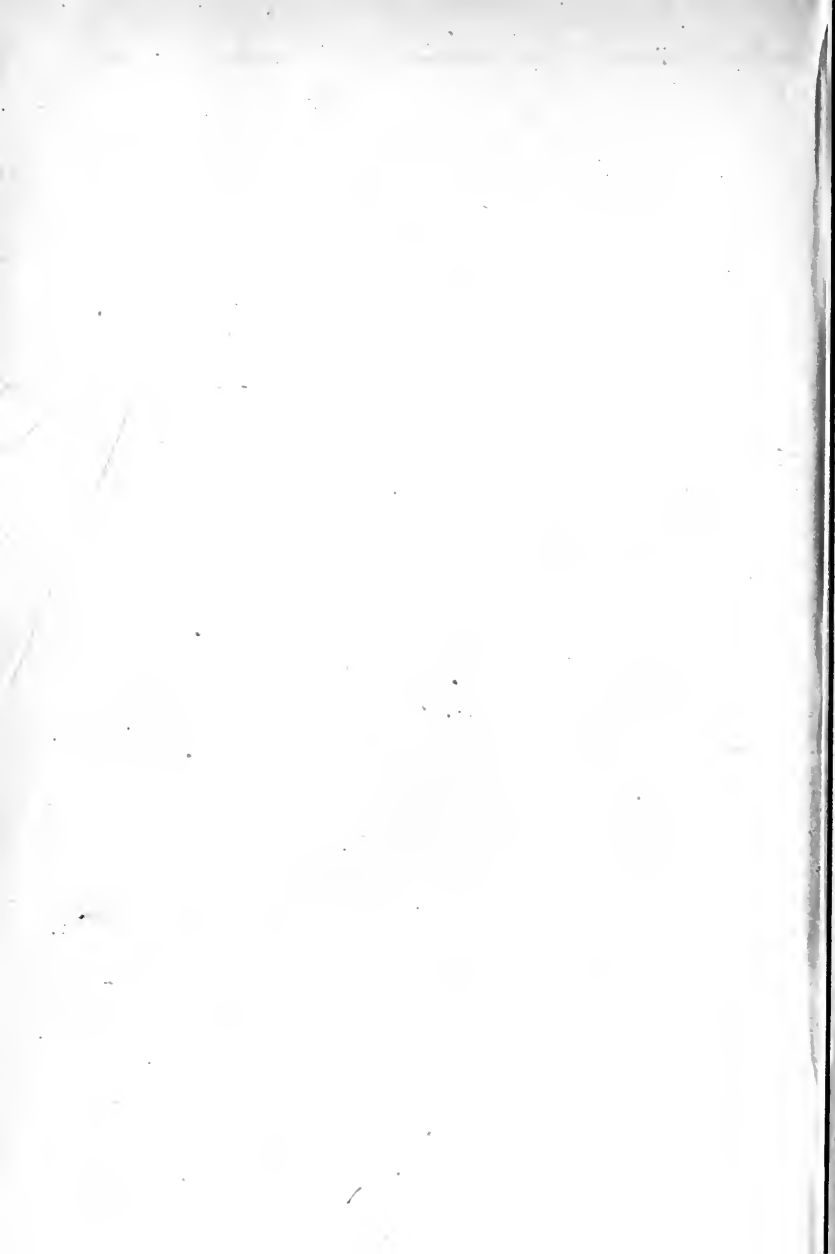
With which my fellow-traveller had beguiled
 The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.
 Now, suddenly diverging, he began
 To climb, upon its western side, a ridge,
 Pathless and smooth, a long and steep ascent ;
 As if the object of his quest had been
 Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall
 Of water, or some boastful eminence
 Renown'd for splendid prospect far and wide.
 We clomb without a track to guide our steps,
 And, on the summit, reach'd a healthy plain,
 With a tumultuous waste of huge hill-tops
 Before us ; savage region ! and I walk'd
 In weariness ; when, all at once, behold !
 Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,
 A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high
 Among the mountains ; even as if the spot
 Had been, from eldest time, by wish of theirs
 So placed,—to be shut out from all the world !
 Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn ;
 With rocks encompass'd, save that to the south
 Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge
 Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close.
 A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,
 A liquid pool, that glitter'd in the sun,
 And one bare dwelling ; one abode, no more !
 It seem'd the home of poverty and toil,
 Though not of want : the little fields, made green
 By husbandry of many thrifty years,
 Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.
 There crows the cock, single in his domain :
 The small birds find in spring no thicket there
 To shroud them ; only from the neighbouring vales
 The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill-tops,
 Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

“ Ah ! what a sweet recess,” thought I, “ is here !”
 Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
 Upon a bed of heath—“ full many a spot
 Of hidden beauty have I chanced t' espy
 Among the mountains ; never one like this ;
 So lonesome, and so perfectly secure :
 Not melancholy—no, for it is green,
 And bright, and fertile, furnish'd in itself
 With the few needful things that life requires.
 In rugged arms how soft it seems to lie,
 How tenderly protected ! Far and near
 We have an image of the pristine earth,
 The planet in its nakedness ; were this
 Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
 First, last, and single, in the breathing world,
 It could not be more quiet : peace is here
 Or nowhere ; days unruffled by the gale
 Of public news or private ; years that pass



THE EXCURSION.

“ And one here dwelling ; one abode, no more
It seemed the home of poverty and toil,
Though not of want.”



Forgetfully ; uncall'd upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain."

On these and other kindred thoughts intent,
In silence by my comrade's side I lay,
He also silent : when, from out the heart
Of that profound abyss, a solemn voice,
Or several voices in one solemn sound,
Was heard ascending ; mournful, deep, and slow
The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge !
We listen'd, looking down towards the hut,
But seeing no one : meanwhile from below
The strain continued, spiritual as before ;
And now distinctly could I recognize
These words :—"*Shall in the grave thy love be known,
In death thy faithfulness ?*" "God rest his soul !" *"*
The Wanderer cried, abruptly breaking silence ;
"He is departed, and finds peace at last !"

This scarcely spoken, and those holy strains
Not ceasing, forth appear'd in view a band
Of rustic persons from behind the hut,
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which
They shaped their course along the sloping side
Of that small valley, singing as they moved ;
A sober company and few, the men
Bareheaded, and all decently attired.
Some steps when they had thus advanced, the dirge
Ended ; and, from the stillness that ensued
Recovering, to my friend I said, "You spake,
Methought, with apprehension that these rites
Are paid to him upon whose shy retreat
This day we purposed to intrude." "I did so ;
But let us hence, that we may learn the truth.
Perhaps it is not he, but some one else,
For whom this pious service is perform'd ;
Some other tenant of the solitude."

So, to a steep and difficult descent
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to crag,
Where passage could be won ; and, as the last
Of the mute train upon the heathy top
Of that off-sloping outlet disappear'd,
I, more impatient in the course I took,
Had landed upon easy ground, and there
Stood waiting for my comrade. When, behold
An object that enticed my steps aside !
It was an entry, narrow as a door,
A passage whose brief windings open'd out
Into a platform, that lay, sheepfold-wise,
Inclosed between a single mass of rock
And one old moss-grown wall ; a cool recess,
And fanciful ! For, where the rock and wall
Met in an angle, hung a tiny roof,

Or penthouse, which most quaintly had been framed
 By thrusting two rude sticks into the wall
 And overlaying them with mountain sods ;
 To weather-fend a little turf-built seat,
 Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread
 The burning sunshine, or a transient shower ;
 But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands !
 Whose simple skill had thrung'd the grassy floor
 With work of frame less solid, a proud show
 Of baby-houses, curiously arranged ;
 Nor wanting ornament of walks between,
 With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
 And gardens interposed. Pleased with the sight,
 I could not choose but beckon to my guide,
 Who, having enter'd, carelessly look'd round,
 And now would have pass'd on, when I exclaim'd,
 " Lo ! what is here ? " and, stooping down, drew forth
 A book, that, in the midst of stones and-moss,
 And wreck of particolour'd earthenware,
 Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise
 One of those petty structures. " Gracious Heaven ! "
 The Wanderer cried, " it cannot but be his,
 And he is gone ! " The book, which in my hand
 Had open'd of itself (for it was swoln
 With searching damp, and seemingly had lain
 To th' injurious elements exposed
 From week to week), I found to be a work
 In the French tongue, a novel of Voltaire,
 His famous " Optimist. " " Unhappy man ! "
 Exclaim'd my friend ; " here, then, has been to him
 Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place
 Within how deep a shelter ! He had fits,
 Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,
 And loved the haunts of children ; here, no doubt,
 He sometimes play'd with them ; and here hath sate
 Far oft'ner by himself. This book, I guess,
 Hath been forgotten in his careless way,
 Left here when he was occupied in mind,
 And by the cottage children has been found.
 Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work ;
 Te what odd purpose have the darlings turn'd
 This sad memorial of their hapless friend ! "

" Me," said I, " most doth it surprise, to find
 Such book in such a place ! " " A book it is,"
 He answer'd, " to the person suited well,
 Though little suited to surrounding things ;
 Nor, with the knowledge which my mind possess'd,
 Could I behold it undisturb'd : 'tis strange,
 I grant, and stranger still had been to see
 The man who was its owner dwelling here
 With one poor shepherd, far from all the world '
 Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,
 As from these intimations I forbode,

Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than yours,
And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old man's hand ;
And he continued, glancing on the leaves
An eye of scorn :—"The lover," said he, "doom'd
To love when hope hath fail'd him, whom no depth
Of privacy is deep enough to hide,
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,
And that is joy to him. When change of times
Hath summon'd kings to scaffolds, do but give
The faithful servant, who must hide his head
Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,
A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,
And he too hath his comforter. How poor
Beyond all poverty, how destitute,
Must that man have been left, who, hither driven,
Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him
No dearer relique, and no better stay,
Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,
Impure conceits discharging from a heart
Harden'd by impious pride ! I did not fear
To tax you with this journey," mildly said
My venerable friend, as forth we stepp'd
Into the presence of the cheerful light ;
"For I have knowledge that you do not shrink
From moving spectacles ; but let us on."
So speaking, on he went, and at the word
I follow'd, till he made a sudden stand ;
For full in view, approaching through the gate,
That open'd from the inclosure of green fields
Into the rough uncultivated ground,
Behold the man whom he had fancied dead !
I knew, from the appearance and the dress,
That it could be no other : a pale face,
A tall and meagre person, in a garb
Not rustic,—dull and faded like himself !
He saw us not, though distant but few steps ;
For he was busy dealing from a store,
Which on a leaf he carried in his hand,
Strings of ripe currants ; gift by which he strove,
With intermixture of endearing words,
To soothe a child who walk'd beside him, weeping
As if disconsolate. "They to the grave
Are bearing him, my little one," he said—
"To the dark pit, but he will feel no pain ;
His body is at rest, his soul in heaven."

Glad was my comrade now, though he at first,
I doubt not, had been more surprised than glad.
But now, recover'd from the shock, and calm,
He soberly advanced, and to the man
Gave cordial greeting. Vivid was the light
Which flash'd at this from out the other's eyes ;
He was all fire : the sickness from his face

Pass'd like a fancy that is swept away,
 Hands join'd he with his visitant,—a grasp,
 An eager grasp ; and, many moments' space,
 When the first glow of pleasure was no more,
 And much of what had vanish'd was return'd,
 An amicable smile retain'd the life,
 Which it had unexpectedly received,
 Upon his hollow cheek. "How kind," he said ;
 "Nor could your coming have been better timed ;
 For this, you see, is in our narrow world
 A day of sorrow. I have here a charge"—
 And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly
 The sunburnt forehead of the weeping child—
 "A little mourner, whom it is my task
 To comfort ; but how came ye ? If yon track
 (Which doth at once befriend us and betray)
 Conducted hither your most welcome feet,
 Ye could not miss the funeral train ; they yet
 Have scarcely disappear'd." "This blooming child,"
 Said the old man, "is of an age to weep
 At any grave or solemn spectacle ;
 Inly distress'd, or overpower'd with awe,
 He knows not why ; but he, perchance, this day
 Is shedding orphan's tears ; and you yourself
 Must have sustain'd a loss." "The hand of Death,"
 He answer'd, "has been here ; but could not well
 Have fallen more lightly, if it had not fallen
 Upon myself." The other left these words
 Unnoticed, thus continuing :—

"From yon crag,
 Down whose steep sides we dropp'd into the vale,
 We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn sound
 Heard anywhere, but in a place like this
 'Tis more than human ! Many precious rites
 And customs of our rural ancestry
 Are gone, or stealing from us ; this, I hope,
 Will last for ever. Oft have I stopp'd
 When on my way, I could not choose but stop,
 So much I felt the awfulness of life,
 In that one moment when the corpse is lifted
 In silence, with a hush of decency,
 Then from the threshold moves with song of peace,
 And confidential yearnings, to its home,
 Its final home in earth. What traveller—who
 (How far soe'er a stranger) does not own
 The bond of brotherhood, when he sees them go,
 A mute procession, on the houseless road,
 Or passing by some single tenement
 Or cluster'd dwellings, where again they raise
 The monitory voice ? But most of all
 It touches, it confirms, and elevates,
 Then, when the body, soon to be consign'd
 Ashes to ashes, dust bequeath'd to dust,

L^{ike} raised from the church-aisle, and forward borne
Upon the shoulders of the next in love,
The nearest in affection or in blood ;
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid
In silent grief their unuplifted heads,
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's mournful plaint,
And that most awful scripture which declares
We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed !
Have I not seen ?—ye likewise may have seen
Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side,
And son and father, also side by side,
Rise from that posture ; and in concert move,
Or the green turf following the vested priest,
Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,
From which they do not shrink, and under which
They faint not, but advance towards the grave
Step after step—together, with their firm
Unhidden faces ; he that suffers most,
He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,
The most serene, with most undaunted eye !
Oh ! blest are they who live and die like these,
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourn'd
“ That poor man taken hence to-day,” replied
The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile,
Which did not please me, “ must be deem'd, I fear,
Of the unblest ; for he will surely sink
Into his mother earth without such pomp
Of grief, depart without occasion given
By him for such array of fortitude.
Full seventy winters hath he lived—and mark !
This simple child will mourn his one short hour,
And I shall miss him ; scanty tribute ! yet,
This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,
If love were his sole claim upon their care,
Like a ripe date which in the desert falls
Without a hand to gather it.” At this
I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,
“ Can it be thus, among so small a band
As ye must needs be here ? In such a place
I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight
Of a departing cloud.” “ 'Twas not for love,”
Answer'd the sick man, with a careless voice,
“ That I came hither ; neither have I found
Among associates who have power of speech,
Nor in such other converse as is here,
Temptation so prevailing as to change
That mood, or undermine my first resolve.”
Then speaking in like careless sort, he said
To my benign companion,—“ Pity 'tis
That fortune did not guide you to this house
A few days earlier ; then would you have seen
What stuff the dwellers in this solitude
That seems by Nature framed to be the best

And very bosom of pure innocence)
 Are made of ; an ungracious matter this !
 Which, for truth's sake, yet in remembrance too
 Of past discussions with this zealous friend
 And advocate of humble life, I now
 Will force upon his notice ; undeterr'd
 By the example of his own pure course,
 And that respect and deference which a soul
 May fairly claim, by niggard age enrich'd
 In what it values most—the love of God
 And his frail creature man ; but ye shall hear.
 I talk—and ye are standing in the sun
 Without refreshment !”

Saying this he led

Towards the cottage : homely was the spot,
 And to my feeling, ere we reach'd the door,
 Had almost a forbidding nakedness ;
 Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair,
 Than it appear'd when from the valley's brink
 We had look'd down upon it. All within,
 As left by the departed company,
 Was silent ; and the solitary clock
 Tick'd, as I thought, with melancholy sound.
 Following our guide, we clomb the cottage stairs
 And reach'd a small apartment dark and low,
 Which was no sooner enter'd than our host
 Said gaily, “ This is my domain, my cell,
 My hermitage, my cabin—what you will :
 I love it better than a snail his house.
 But now ye shall be feasted with our best.”
 So, with more ardour than an unripe girl
 Left one day mistress of her mother's stores,
 He went about his hospitable task.
 My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no less ;
 And pleas'd I look'd upon my grey-hair'd friend,
 As if to thank him ; he return'd that look,
 Cheer'd plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck
 We had around us ! scatter'd was the floor,
 And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,
 With books, maps, fossils, wither'd plants and flowers,
 And tufts of mountain moss ; and here and there,
 Lay, intermix'd with these, mechanic tools,
 And scraps of paper,—some I could perceive
 Scribbled with verse : a broken angling-rod
 And shatter'd telescope, together link'd
 By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook ;
 And instruments of music, some half-made,
 Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls.
 But speedily the promise was fulfill'd ;
 A feast before us, and a courteous host
 Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.
 A papkin, white as foam of that rough brook
 By which it had been bleach'd, o'erspread the board ;

And was itself half-cover'd with a load
 Of dainties,—oaten bread, curds, cheese, and cream,
 And cakes of butter curiously emboss'd,
 Dutter that had imbibed a golden tinge,
 A hue like that of yellow meadow flowers
 Faintly reflected in a silent pool.
 Nor lack'd, for more delight on that warm day,
 Our table small parade of garden fruits,
 And whortle-berries from the mountain-sides.
 The child, who long ere this had still'd his sobs,
 Was now a help to his late comforter,
 And moved, a willing page, as he was bid.
 Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,
 While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate
 Fronting the window of that little cell,
 I could not ever and anon forbear
 To glance an upward look on two huge peaks,
 That from some other vale peer'd into this.
 "Those lusty twins, on which your eyes are cast,"
 Exclaim'd our host, "if here you dwelt, would be
 Your prized companions. Many are the notes
 Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth
 From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores ;
 And well those lofty brethren bear their part
 In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
 Rides high ; then all the upper air they fill
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow
 Like smoke along the level of the blast,
 In mighty current ; theirs, too, is the song
 Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails ;
 And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
 Methinks that I have heard them echo back
 The thunder's greeting : nor have Nature's laws
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield
 Music of finer tone ; a harmony,
 So do I call it, though it be the hand
 Of silence,—though there be no voice ; the clouds,
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
 And have an answer—thither come, and shape
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
 And idle spirits : there the sun himself,
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,
 Rests his substantial orb ; between those heights,
 And on the top of either pinnacle,
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
 Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
 Than the mute agents stirring there :—alone
 Here do I sit and watch."

With bright'ning face
 The Wanderer heard him speaking thus, and said,

"Now for the tale with which you threaten'd us!"
 "In truth the threat escaped me unawares,
 And was forgotten. Let this challenge stand
 For my excuse, if what I shall relate
 Tire your attention. Outcast and cut off
 As we seem here, and must have seem'd to you
 When ye look'd down upon us from the crag,
 Islanders of a stormy mountain sea,
 We are not so; perpetually we touch
 Upon the vulgar ordinance of the world,
 And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day
 Relinquish'd, was dependent for his bread
 Upon the laws of public charity.
 The housewife, tempted by such slender gains
 As might from that occasion be distill'd,
 Open'd, as she before had done for me,
 Her doors t' admit this homeless pensioner;
 The portion gave of coarse but wholesome fare
 Which appetite required—a blind dull nook
 Such as she had, the *kennel* of his rest!
 This, in itself not ill, would yet have been
 Ill borne in earlier life: but his was now
 The still contentedness of seventy years.
 Calm did he sit beneath the wide-spread tree
 Of his old age; and yet less calm and meek,
 Winningly meek or venerably calm,
 Than slow and torpid; paying in this wise
 A penalty, if penalty it were,
 For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.
 I loved the old man, for I pitied him.
 A task it was, I own, to hold discourse
 With one so slow in gathering up his thoughts,
 But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes;
 Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way,
 And useful to his utmost power: and there
 Our housewife knew full well what she possess'd:
 He was her vassal of all labour, till'd
 Her garden, from the pasture fetch'd her kine,
 And, one among the orderly array
 Of haymakers, beneath the burning sun
 Maintain'd his place; or heedfully pursued
 His course, on errands bound to other vales,
 Leading sometimes an inexperienced child
 Too young for any profitable task.
 So moved he like a shadow that perform'd
 Substantial service. Mark me now, and learn
 For what reward. The moon her monthly round
 Hath not completed since our dame, the queen
 Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,
 Into my little sanctuary rush'd,—
 Voice to a rueful treble humanized,
 And features in deplorable dismay:
 I treat the matter lightly, but alas!
 It is most serious. From mid-noon the rain

Had fallen in torrents ; all the mountain-tops
Were hidden, and black vapours coursed their sides ;
This had I seen, and saw ; but, till she spake,
Was wholly ignorant that my ancient friend—
Who at her bidding, early and alone,
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf
For winter fuel, to his noontide meal
Came not, and now perchance upon the heights
Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.
“Inhuman !” said I, “was an old man’s life
Not worth the trouble of a thought ?—alas !
This notice comes too late.” With joy I saw
Her husband enter, from a distant vale.
We sallied forth together ; found the tools
Which the neglected veteran had dropp’d,
But through all quarters look’d for him in vain.
We shouted—but no answer ! Darkness fell
Without remission of the blast or shower,
And fears for our own safety drove us home.
I, who weep little, did, I will confess,
The moment I was seated here alone,
Honour my little cell with some few tears
Which anger and resentment could not dry.
All night the storm endured ; and, soon as help
Had been collected from the neighbouring vale,
With morning we renew’d our quest : the wind
Was fall’n, the rain abated, but the hills
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist ;
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain
Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass
A heap of ruin, almost without walls
And wholly without roof (in ancient time
It was a chapel, a small edifice,
In which the peasants of these lonely dells
For worship met upon that central height)—
Chancing to pass this wreck of stones, we there
Espied at last the object of our search,
Couch’d in a nook, and seemingly alive.
It would have moved you, had you seen the guise
In which he occupied his chosen bed,
Lying full three parts buried among tufts
Of heath-plant under and above him strown,
To baffle, as he might, the watery storm :
And there we found him breathing peaceably ;
Snug as a child that hides itself in sport
Mid a green haycock in a sunny field.
We spake—he made reply, but would not stir
At our entreaty ; less from want of power
Than apprehension and bewildering thoughts.
So was he lifted gently from the ground,
And with their freight the shepherds homeward moved
Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,
A single step, that freed me from the skirts
Of the blind vapour, open’d to my view

Glory beyond all glory ever seen
 By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !
 Though I am conscious that no power of words
 Can body forth, no hues of speech can paint
 That gorgeous spectacle—too bright and fair
 Even for remembrance ; yet the attempt may give
 Collateral interest to this homely tale.
 The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
 Was of a mighty city—boldly say
 A wilderness of building—sinking far
 And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,
 Far sinking into splendour—without end !
 Fabric it seem'd of diamond and of gold,
 With alabaster domes and silver spires ;
 And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
 Uplifted ; here, serene pavilions bright,
 In avenues disposed ; there, towers begirt
 With battlements, that on their restless fronts
 Bore stars—illumination of all gems !
 By earthly nature had the effect been wrought
 Upon the dark materials of the storm
 Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves
 And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto
 The vapours had receded, taking there
 Their station under a cerulean sky.
 O, 'twas an unimaginable sight !
 Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks, and emerald turf ;
 Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
 Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
 Molten together, and composing thus,
 Each lost in each, that marvellous array
 Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
 Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
 In fleecy folds voluminous enwrapp'd.
 Right in the midst, where interspace appear'd
 Of open court, an object like a throne
 Under a shining canopy of state
 Stood fix'd ; and fix'd resemblances were seen
 To implements of ordinary use,
 But vast in size, in substance glorified ;
 Such as by Hebrew prophets were beheld
 In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power,
 For admiration and mysterious awe.
 Below me was the earth ; this little vale,
 Lay low beneath my feet ; 'twas visible—
 I saw not, but I felt, that it was there.
 That which I *saw* was the reveal'd abode
 Of spirits in beatitude : my heart
 Swell'd in my breast. ' I have been dead,' I cried,
 ' And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore do I live ?'
 And with that pang I pray'd to be no more !
 But I forget our charge—as utterly
 I then forgot him—there I stood and gazod ;
 The apparition faded not away,

And I descended. Having reach'd the house,
 I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,
 And in serene possession of himself,
 Beside a genial fire that seem'd to spread
 A gleam of comfort o'er his pallid face.
 Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly
 Was glad to find her conscience set at ease ;
 And not less glad, for sake of her good name,
 That the poor sufferer had escaped with life.
 But, though he seem'd at first to have received
 No harm, and uncomplaining as before
 Went through his usual tasks, a silent change
 Soon show'd itself ; he linger'd three short weeks ;
 And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.

“So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am
 That it is ended.” At these words he turn'd—
 And, with blithe air of open fellowship,
 Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,
 Like one who would be merry. Seeing this
 My grey-hair'd friend said courteously—“Nay, nay,
 You have regaled us as a hermit ought ;
 Now let us forth into the sun !” Our host
 Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

BOOK III.

DESPONDENCY.

Douglas in the Valley—Another recess in it entered and described—Wanderer's sensations—Solitary's excited by the same objects—Contrast between these—Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved—Conversation exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own history at length—His domestic felicity—Afflictions—Dejection—Roused by the French Revolution—Disappointment and disgust—Voyage to America—Disappointment and disgust pursue him—His return—His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of mankind.

A HUMMING BEE—a little tinkling rill—
 A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,
 In clamorous agitation, round the crest
 Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—
 By each and all of these the pensive ear
 Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,
 When through the cottage threshold we had pass'd,
 And, deep within that lonesome valley, stood
 Once more beneath the concave of the blue
 And cloudless sky. Anon exclaim'd our host,
 Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt
 The shade of discontent which on his brow
 Had gather'd,—“Ye have left my cell—but see
 Now Nature hems you in with friendly arms !

And by her help ye are my prisoners still.
 But which way shall I lead you?—how contrive,
 In spot so parsimoniously endow'd,
 That the brief hours which yet remain may reap
 Some recompense of knowledge or delight?"
 So saying, round he look'd, as if perplex'd;
 And, to remove those doubts, my grey-hair'd friend
 Said—" Shall we take this pathway for our guide?—
 Upwards it winds, as if, in summer heats,
 Its line had first been fashion'd by the flock
 A place of refuge seeking at the root
 Of yon black yew-tree, whose protruded boughs
 Darken the silver bosom of the crag
 From which it draws its meagre sustenance.
 There in commodious shelter may we rest.
 Or let us trace this streamlet to its source;
 Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,
 And a few steps may bring us to the spot
 Where, haply, crown'd with flow'rets and green herbs,
 The mountain infant to the sun comes forth,
 Like human life from darkness." At the word
 We follow'd where he led. A sudden turn
 Through a straight passage of encumber'd ground,
 Proved that such hope was vain: for now we stood
 Shut out from prospect of the open vale,
 And saw the water that composed this rill,
 Descending, disembodied, and diffused
 O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,
 Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.
 All further progress here was barr'd. "And whc,
 Thought I," if master of a vacant hour,
 Here would not linger, willingly detain'd?
 Whether to such wild objects he were led
 When copious rains have magnified the stream
 Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,
 Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,
 The hidden nook discover'd to our view
 A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay
 Right at the foot of that moist precipice,
 A stranded ship, with keel upturn'd,—that rests
 Fearless of winds and waves. Three several stones
 Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike
 To monumental pillars: and, from these
 Some little space disjoin'd, a pair were seen,
 That with united shoulders bore aloft
 A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth.
 Barren the tablet, yet thereon appear'd
 Conspicuously station'd, one fair plant,
 A tall and shining holly, that had found
 A hospitable chink, and stood upright,
 As if inserted by some human hand
 In mockery, to wither in the sun,

Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,
 The first that enter'd. But no breeze did now
 Find entrance ; high or low appear'd no trace
 Of motion, save the water that descended,
 Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,
 And softly creeping, like a breath of air,
 Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,
 To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

“ Behold a cabinet for sages built,
 Which kings might envy !” Praise to this effect
 Broke from the happy old man’s reverend lip,
 Who to the Solitary turn’d, and said,
 “ In sooth, with love’s familiar privilege,
 You have decried, in no unseemly terms
 Of modesty, that wealth which is your own.
 Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I see
 More than the heedless impress that belongs
 To lonely nature’s casual work ; they bear
 A semblance strange of power intelligent,
 And of design not wholly worn away.
 Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,
 How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth
 From its fantastic birthplace ! And I own,
 Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,
 I cannot but incline to a belief
 That in these shows a chronicle survives
 Of purposes akin to those of man,
 But wrought with mightier arm than now prevails.
 Voiceless the stream descends into the gulf
 With timid lapse ; and lo ! while in this strait
 I stand—the chasm of sky above my head
 Is heaven’s profoundest azure ; no domain
 For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,
 Or to pass through, but rather an abyss
 In which the everlasting stars abide ;
 And whose soft gloom and boundless depth might tempt
 The curious eye to look for them by day.
 Hail Contemplation ! from the stately towers,
 Rear’d by th’ industrious hand of human art
 To lift thee high above the misty air,
 And turbulence of murmuring cities vast ;
 From academic groves, that have for thee
 Been planted, hither come and find a lodge
 To which thou mayest resort for holier peace,—
 From whose calm centre thou, through height or depth,
 Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead ;
 Measuring through all degrees, until the scale
 Of time and conscious nature disappear,
 Lost in unsearchable eternity !”

A pause ensued ; and with minuter care
 We scann’d the various features of the scene :
 And soon the tenant of that lonely vale

With courteous voice thus spake :—

"I should have grieved
Hereafter—should perhaps have blamed myself—
If from my poor retirement ye had gone
Leaving this nook unvisited ; but, in sooth,
Your unexpected presence had so roused
My spirits, that they were bent on enterprise ;
And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,
Or, shall I say—disdain'd—the game that lurk'd
At my own door. The shapes before our eyes
And their arrangement, doubtless must be deem'd
The sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance,
Rudely to mock the works of toiling man.
And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn stone,
From fancy, willing to set off her stores
By sounding titles, hath acquired the name
Of Pompey's Pillar ; that I gravely style
My Theban Obelisk ; and, there, behold
A Druid cromlech !—thus I entertain
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased
To skim along the surfaces of things,
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.
But if the spirit be oppress'd by sense
Of instability, revolt, decay,
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of Nature
And her blind helper Chance, do *then* suffice
To quicken, and to aggravate, to feed
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
Not less than that huge pile (from some abyss
Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round and round
Eddyding within its vast circumference,
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved ;
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high
Above the sandy desert, in the light
Of sun or moon. Forgive me, if I say
That an appearance, which hath raised your minds
To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause
Different effect producing) is for me
Fraught rather with depression than delight,
Though shame it were, could I not look around me,
By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.
Yet happier, in my judgment, even than you,
With your bright transports, fairly may be deem'd,
Is he (if such have ever enter'd here)
The wandering herbalist,—who, clear alike
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing thoughts,
Casts on these uncouth forms a slight regard
Of transitory interest, and peeps round
For some rare flow'ret of the hills, or plant
Of craggy fountain ; what he hopes for, wins,
Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won :

Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound
 By soul-engrossing instinct driven along
 Through wood or open field, the harmless man
 Departs, intent upon his onward quest !
 Nor is that fellow-wanderer, so deem I,
 Less to be envied (you may trace him oft
 By scars which his activity has left
 Beside our roads and pathways, though, thank Heaven !
 This covert nook reports not of his hand),
 He, who with pocket hammer smites the edge
 Of every luckless rock or stone that stands
 Before his sight, by weather-stains disguised,
 Or crusted o'er with vegetation thin,
 Nature's first growth—detaching by the stroke
 A chip or splinter to resolve his doubts—
 And, with that ready answer satisfied,
 Doth to the substance give some barbarous name,
 Then hurries on ; or from the fragments picks
 His specimen, if haply intervein'd
 With sparkling mineral, or should crystal tube
 Be lodged therein—and thinks himself enrich'd,
 Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before !
 Intrusted safely each to his pursuit,
 This earnest pair may range from hill to hill,
 And, if it please them, speed from clime to clime :
 The mind is full—no pain is in their sport."

"Then," said I, interposing, "one is near,
 Who cannot but possess in your esteem
 Place worthier still of envy. May I name,
 Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-boy—
 Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form—
 Youngest apprentice in the school of art ?
 Him, as we enter'd from the open glen,
 You might have noticed, busily engaged—
 Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the defects
 Left in the fabric of a leaky dam,
 Framed for enabling this penurious stream
 To turn a slender mill (that new-made plaything)
 For his delight—the happiest he of all !"

"Far happiest," answer'd the desponding man,
 "If, such as now he is, he might remain !
 Ah ! what avails imagination high
 Or question deep ? What profits all that earth,
 Or heaven's blue vault, is suffer'd to put forth
 Of impulse or allurement, for the soul
 To quit the beaten track of life, and soar
 Far as she finds a yielding element
 In past or future ; far as she can go
 Through time or space—if neither in the one,
 Nor in the other region, nor in aught
 That fancy, dreaming o'er the map of things,
 Hath placed beyond these penetrable bounds,
 Words of assurance can be heard—if nowhere

A habitation, for consummate good,
 Or for progressive virtue, by the search
 Can be attain'd, a better sanctuary
 From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless grave !"

"Is this," the grey-hair'd wanderer mildly said,
 "The voice, which we so lately overheard,
 To that same child, addressing tenderly
 The consolations of a hopeful mind ?
 'His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.'
 These were your words ; and, verily, methinks
 Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we stoop
 Than when we soar."

The other, not displeas'd,
 Promptly replied :—"My notion is the same ;
 And I, without reluctance, could decline
 All act of inquisition whence we rise,
 And what, when breath hath ceased, we may become
 Here are we, in a bright and breathing world !
 Our origin, what matters it ? In lack
 Of worthier explanation, say at once
 With the American (a thought which suits
 The place where now we stand) that certain men
 Leapt out together from a rocky cave ;
 And these were the first parents of mankind :
 Or, if a different image be recall'd
 By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice
 Of insects chirping out their careless lives
 On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,
 Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit
 As sound—with that blithe race who wore erewhile
 Their golden grasshoppers, in sign that they
 Had sprung from out the soil whereon they dwelt.
 But stop !—these theoretic fancies jar
 On serious minds ; for doubtless, in one sense,
 The theme *is* serious ; then, as Hindoos draw
 Their holy Ganges, from a skiey fount,
 Even so deduce the stream of human life
 From seats of power divine ; and hope, or trust,
 That our existence winds her stately course
 Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part
 Of a living ocean : or, if such may seem
 Its tendency, to be engulf'd and lost
 Like Niger, in impenetrable sands
 And utter darkness : thought which may be faced,
 Though comfortless ! Not of myself I speak ;
 Such acquiescence neither doth imply,
 In me, a meekly-bending spirit, soothed
 By natural piety ; nor a lofty mind,
 By philosophic discipline prepared
 For calm subjection to acknowledged law ;
 Pleased to have been, contented not to be.
 Such palms I boast not ; no ! to me, who find,
 Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,

Little to praise, and nothing to regret
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like joys
 That scarcely seem to have belong'd to me),
 If I must take my choice between the pair
 That rule alternately the weary hours,
 Night is than day more acceptable ; sleep
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
 A better state than waking ; death than sleep.
 Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,
 Though under covert of the wormy ground !

“ Yet be it said, in justice to myself,
 That in more genial times, when I was free
 To explore the destiny of human kind ;
 Not as an intellectual game pursued
 With curious subtlety, thereby to cheat
 Irsome sensations ; but by love of truth
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight
 In feeding thought, wherever thought could feed ;
 I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,
 For to my judgment such they then appear'd,
 Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)
 Who, in this frame of human life, perceive
 An object whereunto their souls are tied
 In discontented wedlock ; nor did e'er,
 From me, those dark, impervious shades, that hang
 Upon the region whither we are bound,
 Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams
 Of present sunshine. Deities that float
 On wings—angelic spirits ! I could muse
 O'er what from eldest time we have been told
 Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,
 And with the imagination be content,
 Not wishing more ; repining not to tread
 The little sinuous path of earthly care,
 By flowers embellish'd, and by springs refresh'd.
 ‘ Blow winds of autumn !—let your chilling breath
 Take the live herbage from the mead, and strip
 The shady forest of its green attire,—
 And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse
 The gentle brooks ! Your desolating sway,
 Thus I exclaim'd, ‘ no sadness sheds on me ;
 And no disorder in your rage I find.
 What dignity, what beauty, in this change
 From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,
 Alternate and revolving ! How benign,
 How rich in animation and delight,
 How bountiful these elements—compared
 With aught, as more desirable and fair,
 Devised by fancy for the golden age :
 Or the perpetual warbling that prevails
 In Arcady, beneath unalter'd skies,
 Through the long year in constant quiet bound,
 Night hus'd as night, and day serene as day !’

—But why this tedious record? Age we know
Is garrulous; and solitude is apt
To anticipate the privilege of age.
From far ye come; and surely with a hope
Of better entertainment—let us hence!

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more loth
To be diverted from our present theme,
I said, "My thoughts, agreeing, sir, with yours,
Would push this censure farther; for, if smiles
Of scornful pity be the just reward
Of poesy, thus courteously employ'd
In framing models to improve the scheme
Of man's existence, and recast the world,
Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,
Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,
A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull?
"Yes," said I, "shall the immunities to which
She doth lay claim, the precepts she bestows,
Establish sounder titles of esteem
For her, who (all too timid and reserved
For onset, for resistance too inert,
Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame)
Did place in flow'ry gardens curtain'd round
With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood
Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they
The ends of being would secure, and win
The crown of wisdom—to yield up their souls
To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring
Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,"
I cried, "more worthy of regard—the power,
Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed
The Stoic's heart against the vain approach
Of admiration, and all sense of joy?"

His countenance gave notice that my zeal
Accorded little with his present mind;
I ceased, and he resumed. "Ah! gentle sir,
Slight, if you will, the *means*; but spare to slight
The *end* of those, who did, by system, rank,
As the prime object of a wise man's aim,
Security from shock of accident,
Release from fear; and cherish'd peaceful days
For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief good,
And only reasonable felicity.
What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,
Through a long course of later ages, drove
The hermit to his cell in forest wide;
Or what detain'd him, till his closing eyes
Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,
Fast anchor'd in the desert? Not alone
Dread of the persecuting sword,—remorse,
Wrongs unredress'd, or insults unavenged.
And unavengeable, defeated pride,
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,

Friendship betray'd, affection unreturn'd,
 Love with despair, or grief in agony :
 Not always from intolerable pangs
 He fled ; but, compass'd round by pleasure, sigh'd
 For independent happiness ; craving peace,
 The central feeling of all happiness,
 Not as a refuge from distress or pain,
 A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,
 But for its absolute self ; a life of peace,
 Stability without regret or fear ;
 That hath been, is, and shall be evermore !
 Such the reward he sought ; and wore out life,
 There, where on few external things his heart
 Was set, and those his own ; or, if not his,
 Subsisting under Nature's steadfast law.

" What other yearning was the master tie
 Of the monastic brotherhood ; upon rock
 Aërial, or in green secluded vale,
 One after one, collected from afar,
 An undissolving fellowship ? What but this,
 The universal instinct of repose—
 The longing for confirm'd tranquillity,
 Inward and outward—humble, yet sublime :
 The life where hope and memory are as one ;
 Earth quiet and unchanged ; the human soul
 Consistent in self-rule ; and heaven reveal'd
 To meditation in that quietness !—
 Such was their scheme : thrice happy he who gain'd
 The end proposed ! And—though the same were miss'd
 By multitudes, perhaps obtain'd by none—
 They, for the attempt, and for the pains employ'd,
 Do, in my present censure, stand redeem'd
 From the unqualified disdain, that once
 Would have been cast upon them by my voice
 Delivering its decisions from the seat
 Of forward youth, that scruples not to solve
 Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules
 Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone
 To overweening faith, and is inflamed
 By courage, to demand from real life
 The test of act and suffering to provoke
 Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,
 Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt !

" A child of earth, I rested, in that stage
 Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,
 Upon earth's native energies ; forgetting
 That mine was a condition which required
 Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm
 Without vicissitude ; which, if the like
 Had been presented to my view elsewhere,
 I might have even been tempted to despise.
 But that which was serene was also bright ;
 Enliven'd happiness with joy o'erflowing,

With joy, and—oh ! that memory should survive
 To speak the word—with rapture ! Nature's boon,
 Life's genuine inspiration, happiness
 Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign ;
 Abused, as all possessions are abused
 That are not prized according to their worth.
 And yet, what worth ?—what good is given to men,
 More solid than the gilded clouds of heaven,
 What joy more lasting than a vernal flower ?
 None ! 'tis the general plaint of human kind
 In solitude ; and mutually address'd
 From each to all, for wisdom's sake : this truth
 The priest announces from his holy seat ;
 And, crown'd with garlands in the summer grove,
 The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.
 Yet, ere that final resting-place be gain'd,
 Sharp contradictions hourly shall arise
 To cross the way ; and we, perchance, by doom
 Of this same life, shall be compell'd to grieve
 That the prosperities of love and joy
 Should be permitted, oft-times, to endure
 So long, and be at once cast down for ever.
 Oh ! tremble ye to whom hath been assign'd
 A course of days composing happy months,
 And they as happy years ; the present still
 So like the past, and both so firm a pledge
 Of a congenial future, that the wheels
 Of pleasure move without the aid of hope,
 For mutability is Nature's bane ;
 And slighted Hope will be avenged ; and, when
 Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not ;
 But, in her stead, fear—doubt—and agony !”

This was the bitter language of the heart ;
 But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of voice,
 Though discomposed and vehement, were such
 As skill and graceful Nature might suggest
 To a proficient of the tragic scene,
 Standing before the multitude, beset
 With sorrowful events ; and we, who heard
 And saw, were moved. Desirous to divert,
 Or stem, the current of the speaker's thoughts,
 We signified a wish to leave that place
 Of stillness and close privacy, which seem'd
 A nook for self-examination framed,
 Or for confession, in the sinner's need,
 Hidden from all men's view. To our attempt
 He yielded not ; but, pointing to a slope
 Of mossy turf, defended from the sun ;
 And, on that couch inviting us to rest,
 Towards that tender-hearted man he turn'd
 A serious eye, and thus his speech renew'd :—
 “ You never saw, your eyes did never look
 On the bright form of her whom once I loved ;

Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
 A sound unknown to you ; else, honour'd friend !
 Your heart had borne a pitiable share
 Of what I suffer'd when I wept that loss,
 And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
 That I remember, and can weep no more.—
 Stripp'd as I am of all the golden fruit
 Of self-esteem ; and by the cutting blasts
 Of self-reproach familiarly assail'd ;
 I would not yet be of such wintry bareness,
 But that some leaf of your regard should hang
 Upon my naked branches : lively thoughts
 G'ive birth, full often, to unguarded words ;
 I grieve that, in your presence, from my tongue
 Too much of frailty hath already dropp'd ;
 But that too much demands still more.

“ You know,

Reverend compatriot ; and to you, kind sir
 (Not to be deem'd a stranger, as you come
 Following the guidance of these welcome feet
 To our secluded vale), it may be told,
 That my demerits did not sue in vain
 To one, on whose mild radiance many gazed
 With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair bride—
 In the devotedness of youthful love,
 Preferring me to parents, and the choir
 Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
 And all known places and familiar sights
 (Resign'd with sadness gently weighing down
 Her trembling expectations, but no more
 Than did to her due honour, and to me
 Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
 In what I had to build upon)—this bride,
 Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
 To a low cottage in a sunny bay,
 Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
 And the sea-breeze as innocently breathes,
 On Devon's leafy shores ; a shelter'd hold,
 In a soft clime encouraging the soil
 To a luxuriant bounty ! As our steps
 Approach th' embower'd abode—our chosen seat—
 See, rooted in the earth, its kindly bed,
 Th' unendanger'd myrtle, deck'd with flowers,
 Before the threshold stands to welcome us !
 While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbourhood,
 Not overlook'd, but courting no regard,
 Those native plants, the holly and the yew,
 Gave modest intimation to the mind
 Of willingness with which they would unite
 With the green myrtle, t' endear the hours
 Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.
 Wild were the walks upon those lonely downs.
 Track leading into track, how mark'd, how worn
 Into bright verdure, among fern and gorse,

Winding away its never-ending line
 On their smooth surface, evidence was none ·
 But there lay open to our daily haunt,
 A range of unappropriated earth,
 Where youth's ambitious feet might move at large ;
 Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld
 The shining giver of the day diffuse
 His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land
 Gay as our spirits, free as our desires,
 As our enjoyments boundless. From these heights
 We dropp'd, at pleasure, into sylvan combs ;
 Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
 And mossy seats, detain'd us side by side,
 With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts,
 'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'

“ But in due season Nature interfered,
 And call'd my partner to resign her share
 In the pure freedom of that wedded life,
 Enjoy'd by us in common. To my hope,
 To my heart's wish, my tender mate became
 The thankful captive of maternal bonds,
 And those wild paths were left to me alone ;
 There could I meditate on follies past,
 And, like a weary voyager escaped
 From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace
 A course of vain delights and thoughtless guilt,
 And self-indulgence—without shame pursued ;
 There, undisturb'd, could think of, and could thank
 Her—whose submissive spirit was to me
 Rule and restraint—my guardian ; shall I say
 That earthly Providence whose guiding love
 Within a port of rest had lodged me safe ;
 Safe from temptation, and from danger far ?
 Strains follow'd of acknowledgment address'd
 To an Authority enthroned above
 The reach of sight ; from whom, as from their source,
 Proceed all visible ministers of good
 That walk the earth—Father of heaven and earth,
 Father, and King, and Judge, adored and fear'd !
 These acts of mind, and memory, and heart,
 And spirit—interrupted and relieved
 By observations, transient as the glance
 Of flying sunbeams, or to th' outward form
 Cleaving, with power inherent and intense
 As the mute insect fix'd upon the plant
 On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from whose cup
 Draws imperceptibly its nourishment,
 Endear'd my wanderings ; and the mother's kiss,
 And infant's smile, awaited my return.

“ In privacy we dwelt—a wedded pair,
 Companions daily, often all day long ;
 Not placed by fortune within easy reach
 Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught

Beyond the allowance of our own fireside,
 The twain within our happy cottage born
 Inmates, and heirs of our united love ;
 Graced mutually by difference of sex,
 By the endearing names of nature bound,
 And with no wider interval of time
 Between their several births than served for one
 To establish something of a leader's sway ;
 Yet left them join'd by sympathy in age ;
 Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.
 On these two pillars rested as in air
 Our solitude.

“ It soothes me to perceive,
 Your courtesy withholds not from my words
 Attentive audience. But, oh ! gentle friends,
 As times of quiet and unbroken peace,
 Though, for a nation times of blessedness,
 Give back faint echoes from th' historian's page ;
 So, in the imperfect sounds of this discourse,
 Depress'd I hear, how faithless is the voice
 Which those most blissful days reverberate.
 What special record can, or need be given
 To rules and habits, whereby much was done
 But all within the sphere of little things,
 Of humble, though to us, important cares,
 And precious interests ? Smoothly did our life
 Advance, not swerving from the path prescribed ;
 Her annual, her diurnal round alike
 Maintain'd with faithful care. And you divine
 The worst effects which our condition saw,
 If you imagine changes slowly wrought,
 And in their progress imperceptible,
 Not wish'd for, sometimes noticed with a sigh
 (Whate'er of good or lovely they might bring),
 Sigh of regret, for the familiar good
 And loveliness endear'd—which they removed.

“ Seven years of occupation undisturb'd
 Establish'd seemingly a right to hold
 That happiness : and use and habit gave
 To what an alien spirit had acquired
 A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,
 With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,
 I lived and breathed ; most grateful,—it t' enjoy
 Without repining or desire for more,
 For different lot, or change to higher sphere
 (Only except some impulses of pride
 With no determined object, though upheld
 By theories with suitable support)—
 Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy
 Be proof of gratitude for what we have :
 Else, I allow, most thankless. But at once
 From some dark seat of fatal power was urged

A claim that shatter'd all. Our blooming girl,
Caught in the gripe of death, with such brief time
To struggle in as scarcely would allow
Her cheek to change its colour, was convey'd
From us to regions inaccessible,
Where height, or depth, admits not the approach:
Of living man, though longing to pursue.
With even as brief a warning—and how soon
With what short interval of time between
I tremble yet to think of—our last prop,
Our happy life's only remaining stay—
The brother, follow'd—and was seen no more!

“Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The mother now remain'd; as if in her,
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturb'd,
This second visitation had no power
To shake—but only to bind up and seal;
And to establish thankfulness of heart
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.
The eminence on which her spirit stood,
Mine was unable to attain. Immense
The space that sever'd us! But, as the sight
Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs
Incalculably distant; so, I felt
That consolation may descend from far
(And that is intercourse and union too),
While, overcome with speechless gratitude,
And, with a holier love inspired, I look'd
On her—at once superior to my woes
And partner of my loss. O heavy change!
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept
Insensibly; th' immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart-anguish,—of itself ashamed,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:
And, so consumed, she melted from my arms;
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

“What follow'd cannot be review'd in thought,
Much less retraced in words. If she, of life
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
And all the tender motions of the soul,
Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand,
Infirm, dependent, and now destitute?
I call'd on dreams and visions to disclose
That which is veil'd from waking thought; conjur'd
Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
To appear and answer; to the grave I spake
Implopingly; look'd up, and ask'd the heavens

If angels traversed their cerulean floors,
 If fix'd or wandering star could tidings yield
 Of the departed spirit—what abode
 It occupies—what consciousness retains
 Of former loves and interests. Then my soul
 Turn'd inward, to examine of what stuff
 Time's fetters are composed; and life was put
 To inquisition long and profitless!
 By pain of heart now check'd—and now impell'd—
 The intellectual power, through words and things,
 Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!
 And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
 Some trace am I enabled to retain
 Of time, else lost; existing unto me
 Only by records in myself not found.

“From that abstraction I was roused,—and how!
 Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash
 Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave
 Of these wild hills. For lo! the dread Bastille,
 With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
 Fell to the ground, by violence o'erthrown
 Of indignation, and with shouts that drown'd
 The crash it made in falling! From the wreck
 A golden palace rose, or seem'd to rise,
 The appointed seat of equitable law
 And mild paternal sway. The potent shock
 I felt; the transformation I perceived,
 As marvellously seized as in that moment
 When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
 Glory, beyond all glory ever seen—
 Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
 Dazzling the soul! Meanwhile prophetic harps
 In every grove were ringing, ‘War shall cease;
 Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?
 Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck
 The tree of liberty.’ My heart rebounded!
 My melancholy voice the chorus join'd:
 ‘Be joyful all ye nations in all lands,
 Ye that are capable of joy be glad!
 Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to yourselves
 In others ye shall promptly find; and all
 Be rich by mutual and reflected wealth.’

“Thus was I reconverted to the world;
 Society became my glittering bride,
 And airy hopes my children. From the depths
 Of natural passion seemingly escaped,
 My soul diffused itself in wide embrace
 Of institutions, and the forms of things;
 As they exist in mutable array
 Upon life's surface. What though in my veins
 There flow'd no Gallic blood, nor had I breathed
 The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal
 Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs

Of my exhausted heart. If busy men
 In sober conclave met, to weave a web
 Of amity, whose living threads should stretch
 Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
 There did I sit assisting. If, with noise
 And acclamation, crowds in open air
 Express'd the tumult of their minds, my voice
 There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song
 I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves
 Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay
 Of thanks and expectation, in accord
 With their belief I sang Saturnian rule
 Return'd, a progeny of golden years
 Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.
 With promises the Hebrew scriptures teem:
 I felt the invitation; and resumed
 A long-suspended office in the house
 Of public worship, where, the glowing phrase
 Of ancient inspiration serving me,
 I promised also,—with undaunted trust
 Foretold; and added prayer to prophecy;
 The admiration winning of the crowd,
 The help desiring of the pure devout.

“Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed!
 But History, Time's slavish scribe, will tell
 How rapidly the zealots of the cause
 Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appear'd;
 Some, tired of honest service! these, outdone,
 Disgusted, therefore, or appall'd, by aims
 Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reign'd,
 And the more faithful were compell'd to exclaim,
 As Brutus did to virtue, 'Liberty,
 I worshipp'd thee, and find thee but a shade!'”

“Such recantation had for me no charm,
 Nor would I bend to it; who should have grieved
 At aught, however fair, which bore the mien
 Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.
 Why then conceal, that, when the simple good
 In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought
 Other support, not scrupulous whence it came,
 And by what compromise it stood, not nice;
 Enough if notions seem'd to be high-pitch'd,
 And qualities determined. Ruling such,
 And with such herding, I maintain'd a strife
 Hopeless, and still more hopeless every hour;
 But, in the process, I began to feel
 That, if the emancipation of the world
 Were miss'd, I should at least secure my own,
 And be in part compensated. For rights,
 Widely—inveterately usurp'd upon,
 I spake with vehemence; and promptly seiz'd
 Whate'er abstraction furnish'd for my needs
 Or purposes; nor scrupled to proclaim,

And propagate, by liberty of life,
 Those new persuasions. Not that I rejoiced,
 Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant course,
 For its own sake ; but farthest from the walk
 Which I had trod in happiness and peace,
 Was most inviting to a troubled mind
 That in a struggling and distemper'd world
 Beheld a cherish'd image of itself.
 Yet mark the contradictions of which man
 Is still the sport ! Here Nature was my guide,
 The Nature of the dissolute ; but thee,
 O fostering Nature ! I rejected—smiled
 At others' tears in pity ; and in scorn
 At those, which thy soft influence sometimes drew
 From my unguarded heart. The tranquil shores
 Of Britain circumscribed me ; else, perhaps,
 I might have been entangled among deeds
 Which now, as infamous, I should abhor—
 Despise, as senseless ; for strangely relish'd
 The exasperated spirit of that land,
 Which turn'd an angry beak against the down
 Of its own breast ; as if it hoped thereby
 To disencumber its impatient wings.
 But all was quieted by iron bonds
 Of military sway. The shifting aims,
 The moral interests, the creative might,
 The varied functions and high attributes
 Of civil action, yielded to a power
 Formal, and odious, and contemptible.
 In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change ;
 The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced ;
 And, from the impulse of a just disdain,
 Once more did I retire into myself.
 There feeling no contentment, I resolved
 To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore
 Remote from Europe, from her blasted hopes,
 Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

“ Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the Atlantic main
 The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew :
 And who among them, but an exile, freed
 From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit
 Among the busily-employ'd, not more
 With obligation charged, with service tax'd,
 Than the loose pendant to the idle wind
 Upon the tall mast streaming ! But, ye powers
 Of soul and sense—mysteriously allied,
 O, never let the wretched, if a choice
 Be left him, trust the freight of his distress
 To a long voyage on the silent deep !
 For, like a plague, will memory break out,
 And, in the blank and solitude of things,
 Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,
 Will conscience prey. Feebly must they have felt

Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
 The vengeful furies. *Beautiful* regards
 Were turn'd on me—the face of her I loved—
 The wife and mother—pitifully fixing
 Tender reproaches insupportable.
 Where now that boasted liberty? No welcome
 From unknown objects I received; and those,
 Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky
 Did, in the placid clearness of the night,
 Disclose, had accusations to prefer
 Against my peace. Within the cabin stood
 That volume as a compass for the soul
 Revered among the nations. I implored
 Its guidance; but the infallible support
 Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused
 To one by storms annoy'd and adverse winds,
 Perplex'd with currents, of his weakness sick,
 Of vain endeavours tired, and by his own,
 And by his nature's ignorance dismay'd.

“Long-wish'd-for sight, the Western world appear'd;
 And, when the ship was moor'd, I leap'd ashore
 Indignantly—resolved to be a man,
 Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
 No longer in subjection to the past,
 With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord
 Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured:
 So like a fugitive whose feet have clear'd
 Some bound'ry which his followers may not cross
 In prosecution of their deadly chase,
 Respiring I look'd round. How bright the sun,
 How promising the breeze! Can aught produced
 In the old world compare, thought I, for power
 And majesty, with this gigantic stream
 Sprung from the desert? And behold, a city
 Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are these
 To me, or I to them? As much at least
 As he desires that they should be, whom winds
 And waves have wafted to this distant shore,
 In the condition of a damaged seed
 Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take root.
 Here may I roam at large; my business is,
 Roaming at large, t' observe, and not to feel;
 And therefore, not to act—convinced that all
 Which bears the name of action, howsoe'er
 Beginning, ends in servitude—still painful,
 And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,
 On nearer view, a motley spectacle
 Appear'd, of high pretensions—unreproved
 But by the obstreperous voice of higher still,
 Big passionate strutting on a petty stage;
 Which a detach'd spectator may regard
 Not unamused. But ridicule demands
 Quick change of objects; and, to laugh alone,

In woods and wilds, or any lonely place,
 At a composing distance from the haunts
 Of strife and folly, though it be a treat
 As choice as musing leisure can bestow
 Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
 To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
 May suit an airy demon ; but, of all
 Unsocial courses, 'tis the one least fit
 For the gross spirit of mankind—the one
 That soonest fails to please, and quickliest turns
 Into vexation. Let us, then, I said,
 Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge
 Of its own passions ; and to regions haste,
 Whose shades have never felt th' encroaching axe,
 Or soil endured a transfer in the mart
 Of dire rapacity. There, man abides,
 Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak
 In combination (wherefore else driven back
 So far, and of his old inheritance
 So easily deprived ?), but, for that cause,
 More dignified, and stronger in himself,
 Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.
 True, the intelligence of social art
 Hath overpower'd his forefathers, and soon
 Will sweep the remnant of his line away ;
 But contemplations, worthier, nobler far
 Than her destructive energies, attend
 His independence, when along the side
 Of Mississippi, or that northern stream
 Which spreads into successive seas, he walks ;
 Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,
 And his innate capacities of soul,
 There imaged : or, when having gain'd the top
 Of some commanding eminence, which yet
 Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys
 Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast
 Expanse of unappropriated earth,
 With mind that sheds a light on what he sees ;
 Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun
 Pouring, above his head, its radiance down
 Upon a living and rejoicing world !

“So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated woods,
 I bent my way ; and, roaming far and wide,
 Fail'd not to greet the merry mocking-bird ;
 And while the melancholy muceawiss
 (The sportive bird's companion in the grove)
 Repeated o'er and o'er his plaintive cry,
 I sympathized at leisure with the sound ;
 But that pure archetype of human greatness,
 I found him not. There, in his stead, appear'd
 A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure ;
 Remorseless, and submissive to no law
 But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told ! Here am I—ye have heard
What evidence I seek, and vainly seek ;
What from my fellow-beings I require,
And cannot find ; what I myself have lost,
Nor can regain : how languidly I look
Upon this visible fabric of the world,
May be divined—perhaps it hath been said.
But spare your pity, if there be in me
Aught that deserves respect : for I exist—
Within myself—not comfortless. The tenor
Which my life holds, he readily may conceive
Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain brook
In some still passage of its course, and seen
Within the depths of its capacious breast
Inverted trees, and rocks, and azure sky ;
And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam
And conglobated bubbles undissolved,
Numerous as stars ; that, by their onward lapse,
Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
Else imperceptible ; meanwhile, is heard
Perchance a roar or murmur ; and the sound
Though soothing, and the little floating isles
Though beautiful, are both by Nature charged
With the same pensive office ; and make known
Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
Precipitations, and untoward straits,
'The earth-born wanderer hath pass'd ; and quickly,
That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
Must be again encounter'd. Such a stream
Is human life ; and so the spirit fares
In the best quiet to its course allow'd :
And such is mine—save only for a hope
That my particular current soon will reach
Th' unfathomable gulf where all is still !"

BOOK IV.

DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.

State of feeling produced by the foregoing narrative—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction—Wanderer's ejaculation to the Supreme Being—Account of his own devotional feelings in youth involved in it—Implores that he may retain in age the power to find repose among enduring and eternal things—What these latter are—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith—Hence immoderate sorrow—But doubt or despondency not therefore to be inferred—And proceeds to administer consolation to the Solitary—Exhortations—How these are received—Wanderer resumes—And applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind, the disappointment of his expectations from the French Revolution—States the rational grounds of hope—And insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of the great revolutions of the world—Knowledge the source of tranquillity—Rural life and solitude particularly favourable to a knowledge of the inferior creatures—Study of their habits and ways recommended on the affections and the imagination—Exhortation to bodily exertion and an active communion with Nature—Morbid solitude a pitiable thing—If the elevated imagination cannot be exerted, try the humbler fancy—Superstition better than apathy—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society—The various modes of Religion prevented it—This illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief—Solitary interposes—Wanderer, in answer, points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling on the mind in the humble ranks of society, in rural life especially—This illustrated from present and past times—Observation that these principles tend to recall exploded superstitions and popery—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the imagination with the presumptive littleness of certain modern philosphers, whom the Solitary appears to esteem—Recommends to him other lights and guides—Asserts the power of the soul to regenerate herself—Solitary agitated, and asks how—Reply—Personal appeal—Happy for us that the imagination and affections, in our own despite, mitigate the evils of that state of intellectual slavery which the calculating understanding is so apt to produce—Exhortation to activity of body renewed—How Nature is to be communed with—Wanderer concludes with a prospect of a legitimate union of the imagination, the affections, the understanding, and the reason—Effect of the Wanderer's discourse—Evening—Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the tenant of that lonely vale
 His mournful narrative, commenced in pain,
 In pain commenced, and ended without peace ;
 Yet temper'd, not unfrequently, with strains
 Of native feeling grateful to our minds,
 And doubtless yielding some relief to his,
 While we sate listening with compassion due.
 Such pity yet surviving, with firm voice,
 That did not falter, though the heart was moved,
 The Wanderer said :—

“ One adequate support
 For the calamities of mortal life
 Exists—one only—an assured belief
 That the procession of our fate, howe'er
 Sad or disturb'd, is order'd by a Being
 Of infinite benèvolence and power,
 Whose everlasting purposes embrace
 All accidents, converting them to good.
 The darts of anguish fix not where the seat
 Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
 By acquiescence in the Will supreme
 For time and for eternity—by faith,
 Faith absolute in God, including hope,
 And the defence that lies in boundless love

Of His perfections ; with habitual dread
 Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
 Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone
 To the dishonour of His holy name.
 Soul of our souls, and Safeguard of the world,
 Sustain, Thou only canst, the sick of heart !
 Restore their languid spirits, and recall
 Their lost affections unto Thee and thine !”

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,
 He thus continued, lifting up his eyes
 To heaven :—“ How beautiful this dome of sky,
 And the vast hills, in fluctuation fix'd
 At Thy command, how awful ! Shall the soul,
 Human and rational, report of Thee,
 Even less than these? Be mute who will, who can,
 Yet I will praise Thee with impassion'd voice :
 My lips, that may forget Thee in the crowd,
 Cannot forget Thee here, where Thou hast built
 For Thy own glory in the wilderness !
 Me didst Thou constitute a priest of thine,
 In such a temple as we now behold
 Rear'd for thy presence : therefore am I bound
 To worship, here and everywhere, as one
 Not doom'd to ignorance, though forced to tread,
 From childhood up, the ways of poverty ;
 From unreflecting ignorance preserved,
 And from debasement rescued. By thy grace
 The particle divine remain'd unquench'd ;
 And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,
 Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless flowers,
 From Paradise transplanted. Wintry age
 Impends ; the frost will gather round my heart,
 And if they wither, I am worse than dead !
 Come, labour, when the worn-out frame requires
 Perpetual sabbath—come, disease and want,
 And sad exclusion through decay of sense—
 But leave me unabated trust in Thee—
 And let Thy favour, to the end of life,
 Inspire me with ability to seek
 Repose and hope among eternal things—
 Father of heaven and earth !—and I am rich,
 And will possess my portion in content !

“ And what are things eternal ?—Powers depart,²
 The grey-hair'd Wand'rer steadfastly replied,
 Answering the question which himself had asked,
 “ Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
 And passions hold a fluctuating seat ;
 But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
 And subject neither to eclipse or wane,
 Duty exists ; immutably survive,
 For our support, the measures and the forms
 Which an abstract intelligence supplies ;
 Whose kingdom is where time and space are not.

Of other converse, which mind, soul, and heart
 Do, with united urgency, require,
 What more, that may not perish? Thou, dread Source,
 Prime, self-existing Cause and End of all
 That, in the scale of being fill their place,
 Above our human region, or below,
 Set and sustain'd—Thou, who didst wrap the cloud
 Of infancy around us, that Thyself,
 Therein, with our simplicity awhile,
 Mightst hold, on earth, communion undisturb'd—
 Who, from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,
 Or from its death-like void, with punctual care,
 And touch as gentle as the morning light,
 Restor'st us daily to the powers of sense,
 And reason's steadfast rule—Thou, Thou alone
 Art everlasting, and the blessèd spirits,
 Which Thou includest, as the sea her waves.
 For adoration Thou endurest; endure
 For consciousness the motions of thy will;
 For apprehension those transcendent truths
 Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
 (Submission constituting strength and power)
 Even to Thy Being's infinite majesty!
 This universe shall pass away—a frame
 Glorious, because the shadow of Thy might!
 A step, or link, for intercourse with Thee.
 Ah! if the time must come, in which my feet
 No more shall stray where meditation leads
 By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
 Loved haunts like these—the unimprison'd mind
 May yet have scope to range among her own,
 Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.
 If the dear faculty of sight should fail,
 Still it may be allow'd me to remember
 What visionary powers of eye and soul
 In youth were mine; when, station'd on the top
 Of some huge hill, expectant, I beheld
 The sun rise up, from distant climes return'd
 Darkness to chase, and sleep, and bring the day,
 His bounteous gift!—or saw him towards the deep
 Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
 Attended; then my spirit was entranced
 With joy exalted to beatitude;
 The measure of my soul was fill'd with bliss
 And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with light,
 With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!

“Those fervent raptures are for ever flown,
 And, since their date, my soul hath undergone
 Change manifold, for better or for worse;
 Yet cease I not to struggle and t' aspire
 Heavenward, and chide the part of me that flags
 Through sinful choice, or dread necessity
 On human nature, from above, imposed.

'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
 Earth to despise ; but, to converse with Heaven—
 This is not easy. To relinquish all
 We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,
 And stand in freedom loosen'd from this world,
 I deem not arduous ; but must needs confess,
 That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
 Conceptions equal to the soul's desires,
 And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
 Heights which the soul is competent to gain.
 Man is of dust : ethereal hopes are his,
 Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
 Want due consistence ; like a pillar of smoke,
 That with majestic energy from earth
 Rises, but, having reach'd the thinner air,
 Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
 From this infirmity of mortal kind
 Sorrow proceeds, which else were not ; at least,
 If grief be something hallow'd and ordain'd,
 If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
 Through this, 'tis able to maintain its hold
 In that excess which conscience disapproves.
 For who could sink and settle to that point
 Of selfishness ; so senseless who could be
 In framing estimates of loss and gain,
 As long and perseveringly to mourn
 For any object of his love, removed
 From this unstable world, if he could fix
 A satisfying view upon that state
 Of pure, imperishable blessedness,
 Which reason promises, and Holy Writ
 Insures to all believers ? Yet mistrust
 Is of such incapacity, methinks,
 No natural branch ; despondency far less.
 And, if there be whose tender frames have droop'd.
 Even to the dust, apparently through weight
 Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power,
 An agonizing sorrow to transmute,
 Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
 When wanted most ; a confidence impair'd
 So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
 With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
 Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
 O no ! full oft the innocent sufferer sees
 Too clearly, feels too vividly, and longs
 To realize the vision with intense
 And over-constant yearning : there, there lies
 The excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
 Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
 This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
 Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
 For any passion of the soul that leads
 To ecstasy, and, all the crooked paths
 Of time and change disdaining, takes its course

Along the line of limitless desires.
 I, speaking now from such disorder free—
 Nor sleep, nor craving, but in settled peace—
 I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
 Are glorified ; or, if they sleep, shall wake
 From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief
 In mercy, carried infinite degrees
 Beyond the tenderness of human hearts ;
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief
 In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
 That finds no limits but its own pure will.

“ Here, then, we rest, not fearing to be left
 In undisturb'd possession of our creed,
 For aught that human reasoning can achieve
 To unsettle or perplex us ; yet with pain
 Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,
 That, though immovably convinced, we want
 Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith,
 As soldiers live by courage ; as, by strength
 Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.
 Alas ! the endowment of immortal power
 Is match'd unequally with custom, time,
 And domineering faculties of sense,
 In *all* ; in most, with superadded foes,
 Idle temptations, open vanities
 Of dissipation ; countless, still-renew'd,
 Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing world ;
 And, in the private regions of the mind,
 Ill-govern'd passions, ranklings of despite,
 Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,
 Distress and care. What then remains ? To seek
 Those helps, for his occasions ever near,
 Who lacks not will to use them ; vows, renew'd
 On the first motion of a holy thought ;
 Vigils of contemplation ; praise, and prayer,—
 A stream which, from the fountain of the heart,
 Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
 Without access of unexpected strength.
 But, above all, the victory is most sure
 For him who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
 To yield entire submission to the law
 Of conscience,—conscience revered and obey'd,
 As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
 And his most perfect image in the world.
 Endeavour thus to live ; these rules regard ;
 These helps solicit ; and a steadfast seat
 Shall then be yours among the happy few
 Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
 Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
 Ere disencumber'd of her mortal chains,
 Doubt shall be quell'd and trouble chased away,
 With only such degree of sadness left

As may support longings of pure desire,
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave."

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage
Pour'd forth his aspirations, and announced
His judgments, near that lonely house we paced
A plot of green sward, seemingly preserved
By Nature's care from wreck of scatter'd stones,
And from the encroachment of encircling heath.
Small space; but, for reiterated steps,
Smooth and commodious; as a stately deck
Which to and fro the mariner is used
To tread for pastime, talking with his mates,
Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,
While the ship glides before a steady breeze.
Stillness prevail'd around us; and the voice
That spake was capable to lift the soul
Towards regions yet more tranquil. But, methought
That he, whose fix'd despondency had given
Impulse and motive to that strong discourse,
Was less upraised in spirit than abash'd;
Shrinking from admonition, like a man
Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.
Yet, not to be diverted from his aim,
The Sage continued:—"For that other loss,
The loss of confidence in social man,
By the unexpected transports of our age
Carried so high, that every thought which look'd
Beyond the temporal destiny of the kind,
To many seem'd superfluous, as no cause
For such exalted confidence could e'er
Exist; so, none is now for such despair:
The two extremes are equally remote
From truth and reason; do not, then, confound
One with the other, but reject them both,
And choose the middle point, whereon to build
Sound expectations. This doth he advise
Who shared at first the illusion; but was soon
Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks
Which Nature gently gave in woods and fields;
Nor unreprieved by Providence, thus speaking
To the inattentive children of the world:—
'Vain-glorious generation! what new powers
'On you have been conferr'd—what gifts, withheld
'From your progenitors, have ye received,
'Fit recompense of new desert—what claim
'Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees
'For you should undergo a sudden change;
'And the weak functions of one busy day,
'Reclaiming and extirpating, perform
'What all the slowly-moving years of time,
'With their united force, have left undone?
'By nature's gradual processes be taught,

‘By story be confounded. Ye aspire
 ‘Rashly, to fall once more ; and that false fruit.
 ‘Which, to your overweening spirits, yields
 ‘Hope of a flight celestial, will produce
 ‘Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her sons
 ‘Shall not the less, though late, be justified.’

“Such timely warning,” said the Wanderer, “gave
 That visionary voice ; and, at this day,
 When a Tartarean darkness overspreads
 The groaning nations ; when the impious rule,
 By will or by establish’d ordinance,
 Their own dire agents, and constrain the good
 To acts which they abhor ; though I bewail
 This triumph, yet the pity of my heart
 Prevents me not from owning that the law
 By which mankind now suffers, is most just.
 For by superior energies, more strict
 Affiance in each other, faith more firm
 In their unhallow’d principles, the bad
 Have fairly earn’d a victory o’er the weak,
 The vacillating, inconsistent good.
 Therefore, not unconsol’d, I wait—in hope
 To see the moment when the righteous cause
 Shall gain defenders zealous and devout
 As they who have opposed her ; in which Virtue
 Will to her efforts tolerate no bounds
 That are not lofty as her rights ; aspiring
 By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.
 That spirit only can redeem mankind ;
 And when that sacred spirit shall appear,
 Then shall *our* triumph be complete as theirs.
 Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the wise
 Have still the keeping of their proper peace,
 Are guardians of their own tranquillity.
 They act or they recede, observe and feel,
 ‘Knowing’ (to adopt the energetic words
 Which a time-hallow’d poet hath employed)
 ‘Knowing the heart of man is set to be
 The centre of this world, about the which
 Those revolutions of disturbances
 Still roll ; where all th’ aspects of misery
 Predominate ; whose strong effects are such
 As he must bear, being powerless to redress ;
 And that unless above himself he can
 Erect himself, how poor a thing is man !”*

“Happy is he who lives to understand
 Not human nature only, but explores
 All natures, to the end that he may find
 The law that governs each ; and where begins
 The union, the partition where, that makes
 Kind and degree among all visible beings ;

* Daniel.

The constitutions, powers, and faculties,
 Which they inherit,—cannot step beyond,—
 And cannot fall beneath ; that do assign
 To every class its station and its office,
 Through all the mighty commonwealth of things,
 Up from the creeping plant to sovereign man.
 Such converse, if directed by a meek,
 Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love ;
 For knowledge is delight ; and such delight
 Breeds love ; yet, suited as it rather is
 To thought and to the climbing intellect,
 It teaches less to love, than to adore ;
 If that be not indeed the highest love ! ”

“ Yet, ” said I, tempted here to interpose,
 “ The dignity of life is not impair’d
 By aught that innocently satisfies
 The humbler cravings of the heart ; and he
 Is a still happier man, who, for those heights
 Of speculation not unfit, descends,
 And such benign affections cultivates
 Among the inferior kinds ; not merely those
 That he may call his own, and which depend,
 As individual objects of regard,
 Upon his care ; from whom he also looks
 For signs and tokens of a mutual bond ;
 But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,
 Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.
 Nor is it a mean phase of rural life
 And solitude, that they do favour most,
 Most frequently call forth, and best sustain
 These pure sensations ; that can penetrate
 The obstreperous city ; on the barren seas
 Are not unfelt,—and much might recommend,
 How much they might inspirit and endear,
 The loneliness of this sublime retreat ! ”

“ Yes, ” said the sage, resuming the discourse,
 Again directed to his downcast friend,
 “ If, with the froward will and grovelling soul
 Of man offended, Liberty is here,
 And invitation every hour renew’d,
 To mark *their* placid state who never heard
 Of a command which they have power to break,
 Or rule which they are tempted to transgress :
 These, with a soothed or elevated heart,
 May we behold—their knowledge register—
 Observe their ways ; and, free from envy, find
 Complacency there : but wherefore this to you ?
 I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth,
 The redbreast feeds in winter from your hand ;
 A box perchance is from your casement hung
 For the small wren to build in ; not in vain,
 The barriers disregarding that surround
 This deep abiding-place, before your sight

Mounts on the breeze the butterfly, and soars,
 Small creature as she is, from earth's bright flowers
 Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns
 In the waste wilderness ; the soul ascends
 Towards her native firmament of heaven,
 When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,
 Upborne, at evening, on replenish'd wing,
 This shady valley leaves, and leaves the dark
 Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing
 A proud communication with the sun
 Low sunk beneath the horizon. List !—I heard,
 From yon huge breast of rock, a solemn bleat,
 Sent forth as if it were the mountain's voice,
 As if the visible mountain made the cry.
 Again !” The effect upon the soul was such
 As he express'd : for, from the mountain's heart
 The solemn bleat appear'd to come ; there was
 No other—and the region all around
 Stood silent, empty of all shape of life.
 It was a lamb, left somewhere to itself,
 The plaintive spirit of the solitude !
 He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,
 Through consciousness that silence in such place
 Was best,—the most affecting eloquence.
 But soon his thoughts return'd upon themselves,
 And, in soft tone of speech, he thus resumed :—

“ Ah ! if the heart, too confidently raised,
 Perchance too lightly occupied, or lull'd
 Too easily, despise or overlook
 The vassalage that binds her to the earth,
 Her sad dependence upon time, and all
 The trepidations of mortality,
 What place so destitute and void but there
 The little flower her vanity shall check ;
 The trailing worm reprove her thoughtless pride ?

“ These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds,
 Does that benignity pervade, that warms
 The mole contented with her darksome walk
 In the cold ground ; and to the emmet gives
 Her foresight, and the intelligence that makes
 The tiny creatures strong by social league ;
 Supports the generations, multiplies
 Their tribes till we behold a spacious plain
 Or grassy bottom, all with little hills—
 Their labour—cover'd, as a lake with waves ;
 Thousands of cities, in the desert place
 Built up of life, and food, and means of life !
 Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,
 Creatures that in communities exist,
 Less, as might seem, for general guardianship,
 Or through dependence upon mutual aid,
 Than by participation of delight
 And a strict love of fellowship, combined.

What other spirit can it be that prompts
 The gilded summer flies to mix and weave
 Their sports together in the solar beam,
 Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy ?
 More obviously the self-same influence rules
 The feather'd kinds ; the fieldfare's pensive flocks,
 The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,
 Hovering above these inland solitudes,
 Unscatter'd by the wind, at whose loud call
 Their voyage was begun : nor is its power
 Unfelt among the sedentary fowl
 That seek yon pool, and there prolong their stay
 In silent congress ; or together roused
 Take flight ; while with their clang the air resounds
 And, over all, in that ethereal arch,
 Is the mute company of changeful clouds ;
 —Bright apparition suddenly put forth,
 The rainbow, smiling on the faded storm ;
 The mild assemblage of the starry heavens ;
 And the great sun, earth's universal lord !

" How bountiful is Nature ! he shall find
 Who seeks not ; and to him, who hath not ask'd,
 Large measure shall be dealt. Three sabbath-days
 Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent
 Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights ;
 And what a marvellous and heavenly show
 Was to your sight reveal'd !—the swains moved on,
 And heeded not : you linger'd, and perceived.
 There is a luxury in self-dispraise ;
 And inward self-disparagement affords
 To meditative spleen a grateful feast.
 Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,
 You judge thankfully ; distemper'd nerves
 Infect the thoughts ; the languor of the frame
 Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your couch—
 Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell ;
 Nor let the hallow'd powers that shed from heaven
 Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye
 Look down upon your taper, through a watch
 Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling
 In this deep hollow ; like a sullen star
 Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.
 Take courage, and withdraw yourself from ways
 That run not parallel to Nature's course.
 Rise with the lark ! your matins shall obtain
 Grace, be their composition what it may,
 If but with hers perform'd ; climb once again,
 Climb every day, those ramparts ; meet the breeze
 Upon their tops,—adventurous as a bee
 That from your garden thither soars, to feed
 On new-blown heath ; let yon commanding rock
 Be your frequented watch-tower ; roll the stone
 In thunder down the mountain : with all your might
 Chase the wild goat ; and if the boid red deer

Fly to these harbours, driven by hound and horn
Loud echoing, add your speed to the pursuit ;
So, wearied to your hut shall you return,
And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted towards the hills
An animated eye ; and thoughts were mine
Which this ejaculation clothed in words :—
"Oh ! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,
To have a body (this our vital frame
With shrinking sensibility endued,
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood),
And to the elements surrender it
As if it were a spirit !—How divine,
The liberty, for frail, for mortal man,
To roam at large among unpeopled glens
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps ; regions consecrate
To oldest time ! and, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
Be as a presence or a motion—one
Among the many there ; and, while the mists
Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
And phantoms from the crags and solid earth
As fast as a musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument ; and, while the streams
(As at a first creation and in haste
To exercise their untried faculties),
Descending from the region of the clouds
And starting from the hollows of the earth
More multitudinous every moment, rend
Their way before them, what a joy to roam
An equal among mightiest energies ;
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,
' Be this continued so from day to day,
Nor let it have an end from month to month ! "

" Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from my lips
The strain of transport, " whosoe'er in youth
Has, through ambition of his soul, given way
To such desires, and grasp'd at such delight,
Shall feel the stirrings of them late and long ;
In spite of all the weakness that life brings,
Its cares and sorrows ; he, though taught to own
The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake—
Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—
Loving the spots which once he gloried in.

" Compatriot—friend ! remote are Garry's hills,
The streams far distant of your native glen ;
Yet is their form and image here express'd
As by a duplicate—at least set forth
With brotherly resemblance. Turn your steps

Wherever fancy leads ; by day, by night,
 Are various engines working, not the same
 As those by which your soul in youth was moved,
 But by the great Artificer endued
 With no inferior pow'r. You dwell alone ;
 You walk, you live, you speculate alone ;
 Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince,
 For you a stately gallery maintain
 Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,
 Have acted, suffered, travell'd far, observed
 With no incurious eye ; and books are yours,
 Within whose silent chamber treasure lies
 Preserved from age to age ; more precious far
 Than that accumulated store of gold
 And orient gems, which, for a day of need,
 The sultan hides within ancestral tombs ;
 These hoards of truth you can unlock at will :
 And music waits upon your skilful touch,—
 Sounds which the wandering shepherd from these heights
 Hears, and forgets his purpose. Furnish'd thus,
 How can you droop, if willing to be raised ?

“ A piteous lot it were to flee from man—
 Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose hours
 Are by domestic pleasures uncaress'd
 And unenliven'd ; who exists whole years
 Apart from benefits received or done
 'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd ;
 Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,
 Of the world's interests—such a one hath need
 Of a quick fancy and an active heart,
 That for the day's consumption books may yield
 A not unwholesome food, and earth and air
 Supply his morbid humour with delight.
 Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her haunts of ease
 And easy contemplation—gay parterres,
 And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades
 And shady groves, for recreation framed :
 These may he range, if willing to partake
 Their soft indulgences, and in due time
 May issue thence, recruited for the tasks
 And course of service Truth requires from those
 Who tend her altars, wait upon her throne,
 And guard her fortresses. Who thinks, and feels,
 And recognizes ever and anon
 The breeze of Nature stirring in his soul,
 Why need such man go desperately astray,
 And nurse 'the dreadful appetite of death ?'
 If tired with systems, each in its degree
 Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,
 Let him build systems of his own, and smile
 At the fond work—demolish'd with a touch ;
 If unreligious, let him be at once
 Among ten thousand innocents, enroll'd

A pupil in the many-chamber'd school,
Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.

“Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's verge,
And daily lose what I desire to keep :
Yet rather would I instantly decline
To the traditionary sympathies
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
A fearful apprehension from the owl
Or death-watch, and as readily rejoice,
If two auspicious magpies cross'd my way ;
This rather would I do than see and hear
The repetitions wearisome of sense,
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place ;
Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
On outward things, with formal inference ends,
Or, if the mind turn inward, 'tis perplex'd,
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research ;
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the seat
Where peace and happy consciousness should dwell
On its own axis restlessly revolves,
Yet nowhere finds the cheering light of truth.

“Upon the breast of new-created earth
Man walk'd ; and when and wheresoe'er he moved,
Alone or mated, solitude was not.
He heard, upon the wind, the articulate voice
Of God ; and angels to his sight appear'd,
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise,
Or through the groves gliding like morning mist
Enkindled by the sun. He sate, and talk'd
With winged messengers, who daily brought
To his small island in th' ethereal deep
Tidings of joy and love. From these pure heights
(Whether of actual vision, sensible
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
Have condescendingly been shadow'd forth
Communications spiritually maintain'd,
And intuitions moral and divine)
Fell human kind—to banishment condemn'd,
That flowing years repeal'd not, and distress,
And grief spread wide ; but man escaped the doom
Of destitution—solitude was not.
—Jehovah—shapeless Power above all powers,
Single and one, the omnipresent God,
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,
Or cloud of darkness, localized in heaven—
On earth, enshrined within the wandering ark,
Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne
Between the Cherubim—on the chosen race
Shower'd miracles, and ceased not to dispense
Judgments that fill'd the land from age to age
With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear,
And with amazement smote—thereby to assert
His scorn'd, or unacknowledged sovereignty.

And when the One, ineffable of name,
 In nature indivisible, withdrew
 From mortal adoration or regard,
 Not then was Deity engulf'd, nor man,
 The rational creature, left to feel the weight
 Of his own reason, without sense or thought
 Of higher reason, and a purer will
 To benefit and bless, through mightier power.
 Whether the Persian, zealous to reject
 Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
 And roofs of temples built by human hands,
 The loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,
 With myrtle-wreath'd tiara on his brows,
 Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,
 And to the winds and mother elements,
 And the whole circle of the heavens, for him
 A sensitive existence, and a God
 With lifted hands invoked and songs of praise :
 Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense
 Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed
 For influence undefined a personal shape ;
 And, from the plain, with toil immense, uprear'd
 Tower eight times planted on the top of tower,
 That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch
 Descending, there might rest ; and, from that height,
 Pure and serene, the godhead overlook
 Winding Euphrates, and the city vast
 Of his devoted worshippers, far stretch'd,
 With grove, and field, and garden interspersed ;
 Their town, and foodful region for support
 Against the pressure of beleagu'ring war.

" Chaldean shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
 Beneath the concave of unclouded skies
 Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,
 Look'd on the polar star, as on a guide
 And guardian of their course, that never closed
 His steadfast eye. The planetary five
 With a submissive reverence they beheld ;
 Watch'd, from the centre of their sleeping flocks,
 Those radiant Mercuries, that seem'd to move
 Carrying through ether, in perpetual round,
 Decrees and resolutions of the gods ;
 And, by their aspects, signifying works
 Of dim futurity, to man reveal'd.
 —The imaginative faculty was lord
 Of observations natural ; and, thus
 Led on, those shepherds made report of stars
 In set rotation passing to and fro,
 Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
 And its invisible counterpart, adorn'd
 With answering constellations, under earth,
 Removed from all approach of living sight,
 But present to the dead, who, so they deem'd,

Like those celestial messengers, behold
All accidents, and judges were of all.

“The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
Rivers, and fertile plains, and sounding shores,
Under a cope of variegated sky,
Could find commodious place for every god,
Promptly received, as prodigally brought,
From the surrounding countries, at the choice
Of all adventurers. With unrivall’d skill,
As nicest observation furnish’d hints
For studiot’s fancy, did his hand bestow
On fluent operations a fix’d shape ;
Metal or stone, idolatrously served.
And yet, triumphant o’er this pompous show
Of art, this palpable array of sense,
On every side encounter’d ; in despite
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
By wandering rhapsodists ; and in contempt
Of doubt and bold denials hourly urged
Amid the wrangling schools—a ‘spirit’ hung,
Beautiful region ! o’er thy towns and farms,
Statues and temp’les, and memorial tombs ;
And emanations were perceived. and acts
Of immortality, in Nature’s course,
Exemplified by mysteries that were felt
As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed
And armèd warrior ; and in every grove
A gay or pensive tenderness prevail’d,
When piety more awful had relax’d.
‘Take, running river, take these locks of mine,’—
Thus would the votary say,—‘this sever’d hair,
My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
Thankful for my belovèd child’s return.
Thy banks, Cephisus, he again hath trod,
Thy murmurs heard, and drunk the crystal lymph
With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
And moisten all day long those flowery fields.’
And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
Of life continuous—being unimpair’d—
That hath been, is, and where it was and is,
There shall be—seen, and heard, and felt, and known,
And recognized,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident ;
From diminution safe and weakening age ;
While man grows old, and dwindles, and decays,
And countless generations of mankind
Depart, and leave no vestige where they trod.

“We live by admiration, hope, and love ;
And, even as these are well and wisely fix’d,
In dignity of being we ascend.
But what is error ?” “Answer he who can !”
The Sceptic somewhat haughtily exclaim’d ;

“Love, hope, and admiration—are they not
 Mad Fancy’s favourite vassals? Does not life
 Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,
 Guides to destruction? Is it well to trust
 Imagination’s light when Reason’s fails,
 Th’ unguarded taper where the guarded faints?
 —Stoop from those heights, and soberly declare
 What error is; and, of our errors, which
 Doth most debase the mind; the genuine seats
 Of power, where are they? Who shall regulate,
 With truth, the scale of intellectual rank?”

“Methinks,” persuasively the sage replied,
 “That for this arduous office you possess
 Some rare advantages. Your early days
 A grateful recollection must supply
 Of much exalted good that may attend
 Upon the very humblest state. Your voice
 Hath in my hearing often testified
 That poor men’s children, they, and they alone,
 By their condition taught, can understand
 The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks
 For daily bread. A consciousness is yours
 How feelingly religion may be learn’d
 In smoky cabins, from a mother’s tongue—
 Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the din
 Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength
 At every moment,—and, with strength, increase
 Of fury; or while snow is at the door,
 Assaulting and defending, and the wind,
 A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—
 Fearful, but resignation tempers fear,
 And piety is sweet to infant minds.
 —The shepherd lad, who in the sunshine carves
 On the green turf a dial, to divide
 The silent hours; and who to that report
 Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt
 His round of pastoral duties, is not left
 With less intelligence for *moral* things
 Of gravest import. Early he perceives,
 Within himself, a measure and a rule,
 Which to the sun of truth he can apply,
 That shines for him, and shines for all mankind.
 Experience, daily fixing his regards
 On nature’s wants, he knows how few they are,
 And where they lie, how answer’d and appeas’d.
 This knowledge ample recompense affords
 For manifold privations; he refers
 His notions to this standard; on this rock
 Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,
 Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime content,
 Imagination—not permitted here
 To waste her powers, as in the worldling’s mind,
 On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,

And trivial ostentation—is left free
 And puissant to range the solemn walks
 Of time and nature, girded by a zone
 That, while it binds, invigorates and supports.
 Acknowledge, then, that whether by the side
 Of his poor hut, or on the mountain-top,
 Or in the cultured field, a man like this
 (Take from him what you will upon the score
 Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes
 For noble purposes of mind : his heart
 Beats to the heroic song of ancient days ;
 His eye distinguishes ; his soul creates ;
 And those illusions which excite the scorn
 Or move the pity of unthinking minds,
 Are they not mainly outward ministers
 Of inward conscience ? With whose service charg'd
 They come and go, appear and disappear
 Diverting evil purposes, remorse
 Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
 Or pride of heart abating : and whene'er
 For less important ends those phantoms move,
 Who would forbid them, if their presence serve,
 Among wild mountains and unpeopled heaths,
 Filling a space else vacant, to exalt
 The forms of Nature, and enlarge her powers ?

“ Once more to distant ages of the world
 Let us revert, and place before our thoughts
 The face which rural solitude might wear
 To the unenlighten'd swains of pagan Greece.
 In that fair clime the lonely herdsman, stretch'd
 On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
 With music lull'd his indolent repose :
 And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
 When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
 A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
 Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetch'd
 Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
 A beardless youth, who touch'd a golden lute,
 And fill'd the illumined groves with ravishment.
 The nightly hunter, lifting up his eyes
 Towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
 Call'd on the lovely wanderer who bestow'd
 That timely light, to share his joyous sport ;
 And hence, a beaming goddess, with her nymphs,
 Across the lawn and through the darksome grove
 (Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
 By echo multiplied from rock or cave)
 Swept in the storm of chase, as moon and stars
 Glance rapidly along the clouded heavens,
 When winds are blowing strong. The traveller slaked
 His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thank'd
 The Naiad. Sunbeams upon distant hills
 Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,

Might, with small help from fancy, be transform'd
 Into fleet Oreads, sporting visibly.
 The zephyrs fanning as they pass'd, their wings,
 Lack'd not, for love, fair objects, whom they woo'd
 With gentle whisper. Wither'd boughs grotesque,
 Stripp'd of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
 From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
 In the low vale, or on steep mountain-side—
 And sometimes, intermix'd with stirring horns
 Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard—
 These were the lurking satyrs, a wild brood
 Of gamesome deities—or Pau himself,
 The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring god !”

No apter strain could have been chosen : I mark'd
 Its kindly influence on the yielding brow
 Of our companion gradually diffused,
 While, listening, he had paced the noiseless turf,
 Like one whose untired ear a murmuring stream
 Detains ; but tempted now to interpose,
 He with a smile exclaim'd,—

“Tis well you speak
 At a safe distance from our native land,
 And from the mansions where our youth was taught.
 The true descendants of those godly men
 Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of zeal,
 Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles
 That harbour'd them,—the souls retaining yet
 The churlish features of that after race
 Who fled to caves, and woods, and naked rocks,
 In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,
 Or what their scruples construed to be such—
 How, think you, would they tolerate this scheme
 Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged
 Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh
 The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain
 Uprooted ; would re-consecrate our wells
 To good Saint Fillan, and to fair Saint Anne ;
 And from long banishment recall Saint Giles,
 To watch again with tutelary love
 O'er stately Edinborough throned on crags ?
 A blessèd restoration—to behold
 The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,
 Once more parading through her crowded streets,
 Now simply guarded by the sober powers
 Of science, and philosophy, and sense !”

This answer follow'd :—“ You have turn'd my thoughts
 Upon our brave progenitors, who rose
 Against idolatry with warlike mind,
 And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk
 In caves, and woods, and under dismal rocks,
 Deprived of shelter, covering, fire, and food ;
 Why?—for this very reason—that they felt,
 And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they moved,•

A spiritual presence, oft-times misconceived :
 But still a high dependence, a divine
 Bounty and government, that fill'd their hearts
 With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and love ;
 And from their fervent lips drew hymns of praise
 With which the deserts rang. Though favour'd less,
 Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,
 Were those bewilder'd pagans of old time.
 Beyond their own poor natures and above
 They look'd ; were humbly thankful for the good
 Which the warm sun solicited, and earth
 Bestow'd ; were gladsome,—and their moral sense
 They fortified with reverence for the gods ;
 And they had hopes that overstepp'd the grave.

“Now, shall our great discoverers,” he exclaim'd.
 Raising his voice triumphantly, “obtain
 From sense and reason less than these obtain'd,
 Though far misled ? Shall men for whom our age
 Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
 To explore the world without and world within,
 Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious souls—
 Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced
 To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh
 The planets in the hollow of their hand ;
 And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains
 Have solved the elements, or analyzed
 The thinking principle—shall they in fact
 Prove a degraded race ? And what avails
 Renown, if their presumption make them such ?
 Oh ! there is laughter at their work in heaven !
 Inquire of ancient Wisdom ; go, demand
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
 That we should pry far off, yet be unraised :
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
 Viewing all objects unremittingly
 In disconnection dead and spiritless ;
 And still dividing, and dividing still,
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
 With the perverse attempt, while littleness
 May yet become more little ; waging thus
 An impious warfare with the very life
 Of our own souls ! And if indeed there be
 An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
 Our dark foundations rest, could He design,
 Or will His rites and services permit
 That this magnificent effect of power,
 The earth we tread, the sky which we behold
 By day, and all the pomp which night reveals,
 That these—and that superior mystery
 Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
 And the dread soul within it—should exist
 Only to be examined, ponder'd, search'd,
 Probed, vex'd, and criticised ? Accuse me not

Of arrogance, unknown wanderer as I am—
 If, having walk'd with Nature threescore years,
 And offer'd, far as frailty would allow,
 My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
 I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
 Whom I have served, that their divinity
 Revolts, offended, at the ways of men
 Sway'd by such motives, to such end employ'd ;
 Philosophers, who, when the human soul
 Is of a thousand faculties composed,
 And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
 This soul, and the transcendant universe,
 No more than as a mirror that reflects
 To proud self-love her own intelligence ;
 That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
 Of infinite being, twinkling restlessly !

“Nor higher place can be assign'd to him
 And his compeers—the laughing sage of France.
 Crown'd was he, if my memory doth not err,
 With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,
 In sign of conquest by his wit achieved,
 And benefits his wisdom had conferr'd.
 His tottering body was oppress'd with flowers ;
 Far less becoming ornaments than those
 With which Spring often decks a mouldering tree !
 Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain old man,
 And a most frivolous people. Him I mean
 Who framed, to ridicule confiding faith,
 This sorry legend ; which by chance we found
 Piled in a nook, through malice, as might seem,
 Among more innocent rubbish.” Speaking thus,
 With a brief notice when, and how, and where,
 We had espied the book, he drew it forth,
 And courteously, as if the act removed,
 At once all traces from the good man's heart
 Of unbenign aversion or contempt,
 Restored it to its owner. “Gentle friend”—
 Herewith he grasp'd the Solitary's hand,—
 “You have known better lights and guides than these—
 Ah ! let not aught amiss within dispose
 A noble mind to practise on herself,
 And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
 Of passion : whatsoever is felt or fear'd
 From higher judgment-seats—make no appeal
 To lower ! Can you question that the soul
 Inherits an allegiance, not by choice
 To be cast off, upon an oath proposed
 By each new upstart notion ? In the ports
 Of levity no refuge can be found,
 No shelter, for a spirit in distress.
 He, who by wilful disesteem of life
 And proud insensibility to hope,
 Affronts the eye of solitude, shall learn

That her mild nature can be terrible ;
 That neither she nor silence lack the power
 T' avenge their own insulted majesty.
 O blest seclusion ! when the mind admits
 The law of duty ; and thereby can live
 Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,
 Link'd in entire complacence with her choice ;
 When youth's presumptuousness is mellow'd down,
 And manhood's vain anxiety dismiss'd ;
 When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,
 Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung
 In sober plenty ; when the spirit stoops
 To drink with gratitude the crystal stream
 Of unreprieved enjoyment ; and is pleased
 To muse, and be saluted by the air
 Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower scents
 From out the crumbling ruins of fallen pride
 And chambers of transgression, now forlorn.
 O calm, contented days, and peaceful nights !
 Who, when such good can be obtain'd, would strive
 To reconcile his manhood to a couch
 Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,
 Stuff'd with the thorny substance of the past,
 For fix'd annoyance ; and full oft beset
 With floating dreams, disconsolate and black,
 The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

“ Within the soul a faculty abides,
 That with interpositions, which would hide
 And darken, so can deal, that they become
 Contingencies of pomp ; and serve to exalt
 Her native brightness. As the ample moon,
 In the deep stillness of a summer eve
 Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
 Burns like an unconsuming fire of light,
 In the green trees ; and, kindling on all sides
 Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
 Into a substance glorious as her own,
 Yea with her own incorporated, by power
 Capacious and serene—like power abides
 In man's celestial spirit ; Virtue thus
 Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus feeds
 A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
 From the encumbrances of mortal life,
 From error, disappointment,—nay, from guilt ;
 And sometimes, so relenting Justice wills,
 From palpable oppressions of despair.”

The Solitary by these words was touch'd
 With manifest emotion, and exclaim'd,
 “ But how begin—and whence ?—‘The mind is free,
 Resolve,’ the haughty moralist would say,
 ‘This single act is all that we demand.’
 Alas ! such wisdom bids a creature fly,
 Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn

His natural wings! To friendship let him turn
 For succour; but perhaps he sits alone
 On stormy waters, in a little boat
 That holds but him, and can contain no more!
 Religion tells of amity sublime
 Which no condition can preclude; of One
 Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants,
 All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs;
 But is that bounty absolute? His gifts,
 Are they not still, in some degree, rewards
 For acts of service? Can His love extend
 To hearts that own not Him? Will showers of grace,
 When in the sky no promise may be seen,
 Fall to refresh a parch'd and wither'd land?
 Or shall the groaning spirit cast her load
 At the Redeemer's feet?"

In rueful tone,
 With some impatience in his mien he spake;
 And this reply was given:—

“As men from men
 Do in the constitution of their souls
 Differ, by mystery not to be explain'd;
 And as we fall by various ways, and sink
 One deeper than another, self-condemn'd,
 Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame,
 So manifold and various are the ways
 Of restoration, fashion'd to the steps
 Of all infirmity, and tending all
 To the same point,—attainable by all;
 Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.
 —For him to whom I speak an easy road
 Lies open: we have heard from you a voice
 At every moment soften'd in its course
 By tenderness of heart; have seen your eye,
 Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,
 Kindle before us. Your discourse this day,
 That, like the fabled Lethe, wish'd to flow
 In creeping sadness, through oblivious shades
 Of death and night, has caught at every turn
 The colours of the sun. Access for you
 Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
 Which the imaginative will upholds
 In seats of wisdom, not to be approach'd
 By the inferior faculty that moulds,
 With her minute and speculative pains,
 Opinion, ever changing. I have seen
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd snell;
 To which, in silence hush'd, his very soul
 Listen'd intently; and his countenance soon
 Brighten'd with joy; for murmurings from within
 Were heard,—sonorous cadences! whereby,

To his belief, the monitor express'd
 Mysterious union with its native sea.
 Even such a shell the universe itself
 Is to the ear of faith ; and there are times,
 I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
 Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
 Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
 And central peace, subsisting at the heart
 Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
 Adore, and worship, when you know it not ;
 Pious beyond the intention of your thought,
 Devout above the meaning of your will.
 Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.
 The estate of man would be indeed forlorn,
 If false conclusions of the reasoning power
 Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
 Through which the ear converses with the heart.
 Has not the soul, the being of your life,
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,
 In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
 At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky
 To rest upon their circumambient walls ;
 A temple framing of dimensions vast,
 And yet not too enormous for the sound
 Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,
 To glorify the Eternal ! What if these
 Did never break the stillness that prevails
 Here— if the solemn nightingale be mute,
 And the soft woodlark here did never chant
 Her vespers—Nature fails not to provide
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
 Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights
 And blind recesses of the cavern'd rocks ;
 The little rills, and waters numberless,
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
 With the loud streams ; and often, at the hour
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
 One voice—the solitary raven, flying
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
 Unseen, perchance above the power of sight—
 An iron knell ! with echoes from afar,
 Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
 The wanderer accompanies her flight
 Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,
 Diminishing by distance till it seem'd
 To expire, yet from the abyss is caught again,
 And yet again recover'd !

“ But descending
 From these imaginative heights, that yield
 Far-stretching views into eternity,
 Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler power
 Your cherish'd sullenness is forced to bend

Even here, where her amenities are sown
 With sparing hand. Then trust yourself abroad
 To range her blooming bowers and spacious fields,
 Where on the labours of the happy throng
 She smiles, including in her wide embrace
 City, and town, and tower, and sea with ships
 Sprinkled; be our companion while we track
 Her rivers populous with gliding life;
 While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march,
 And pierce the gloom of her majestic woods,
 Roaming, or resting under grateful shade,
 In peace and meditative cheerfulness;
 Where living things, and things inanimate,
 Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear,
 And speak to social reason's inner sense,
 With inarticulate language.

“ For the man,
 Who, in this spirit, communes with the forms
 Of Nature; who, with understanding heart,
 Doth know and love such objects as excite
 No morbid passions, no inquietude,
 No vengeance, and no hatred, needs must feel
 So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
 Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
 But seek for objects of a kindred love
 In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
 Accordingly, he by degrees perceives
 His feelings of aversion soften'd down;
 A holy tenderness pervade his frame.
 His sanity of reason not impair'd,
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
 From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round
 And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks;
 Until abhorrence and contempt are things
 He only knows by name; and if he hear
 From other mouths, the language which they speak,
 He is compassionate; and has no thought,
 No feeling, which can overcome his love.

“ And further; by contemplating these forms
 In the relations which they bear to man,
 He shall discern, how, through the various means
 Which silently they yield, are multiplied
 The spiritual presences of absent things,
 Convoked by knowledge; and for his delight
 Still ready to obey the gentle call.
 Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come
 When they shall meet no object but may teach
 Some acceptable lesson to their minds
 Of human suffering, or of human joy.
 For them shall all things speak of man; they read
 Their duties in all forms; and general laws,
 And local accidents, shall tend alike
 To rouse, to urge, and with the will confer

The ability to spread the blessings wide
 Of true philanthropy. The light of love
 Not failing, perseverance from their steps
 Departing not, they shall at length obtain
 The glorious habit by which sense is made
 Subservient still to moral purposes,
 Auxiliar to divine. That change shall clothe
 The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
 The burthen of existence. Science then
 Shall be a precious visitant ; and then,
 And only then, be worthy of her name.
 For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull eye,
 Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
 Chain'd to its object in brute slavery ;
 But taught with patient interest to watch
 The processes of things, and serve the cause
 Of order and distinctness, not for this
 Shall it forget that its most noble use,
 Its most illustrious province, must be found
 In furnishing clear guidance, a support
 Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive* power
 So build we up the being that we are ;
 Thus deeply drinking in the soul of things,
 We shall be wise perforce ; and while inspired
 By choice, and conscious that the will is free,
 Unswerving shall we move, as if impell'd
 By strict necessity, along the path
 Of order and of good. What'e'r we see,
 What'e'r we feel, by agency direct
 Or indirect, shall tend to feed and nurse
 Our faculties, shall fix in calmer seats
 Of moral strength, and raise to loftier heights
 Of love divine, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the sage that eloquent harangue,
 Pour'd forth with fervour in continuous stream ;
 Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,
 An Indian chief discharges from his breast
 Into the hearing of assembled tribes,
 In open circle seated round, and hush'd
 As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf
 Stirs in the mighty woods. So did he speak.
 The words he utter'd shall not pass away ;
 For they sank into me—the bounteous gift
 Of one whom time and nature had made wise,
 Gracing his language with authority
 Which hostile spirits silently allow ;
 Of one accustom'd to desires that feed
 On fruitage gather'd from the tree of life ;
 To hopes on knowledge and experience built ;
 Of one in whom persuasion and belief
 Had ripen'd into faith, and faith become
 A passionate intuition ; whence the soul,
 Though bound to earth by ties of pity and love,
 From all injurious servitude was free.

The sun, before his place of rest were reach'd,
 Had yet to travel far, but unto us,
 To us who stood low in that hollow dell,
 He had become invisible,—a pomp
 Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread
 Upon the mountain-sides, in contrast bold
 With ample shadows, seemingly no less
 Than those resplendent lights, his rich bequest,
 A dispensation of his evening power.
 Adown the path which from the glen had led
 The funeral train, the shepherd and his mate
 Were seen descending; forth in transport ran
 Our little page; the rustic pair approach;
 And in the matron's aspect may be read
 A plain assurance that the words which told
 How that neglected pensioner was sent,
 Before his time, into a quiet grave,
 Had done to her humanity no wrong.
 But we are kindly welcomed; promptly served
 With ostentatious zeal. Along the floor
 Of the small cottage in the lonely dell
 A grateful couch was spread for our repose;
 Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we slept,
 Stretch'd upon fragrant heath, and lull'd by sound
 Of far off torrents charming the still night,
 And to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,
 Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

 BOOK V.

THE PASTOR.

Farewell to the Valley—Reflections—Sight of a large and populous Vale—Solitary consents to go forward—Vale described—The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him—The Churchyard—Church and Monuments—The Solitary musing, and where—Roused—In the churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind—Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to—Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life—Inconsistency of the best men—Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind—General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth—Outward appearance of content and happiness in degree illusive—Pastor approaches—Appeal made to him—His answer—Wanderer in sympathy with him—Suggestion that the least ambitious inquirers may be most free from error—The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observations of life among these mountains—and for what purpose—Pastor consents—Mountain cottage—Excellent qualities of its inhabitants—Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind—Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the churchyard—Graves of unbaptized Infants—What sensations they excite—Funeral and sepulchral observances—Whence—Ecclesiastical establishments—Whence derived—Profession of belief in the doctrine of immortality.

“FAREWELL, deep valley, with thy one rude house,
 And its small lot of life-supporting fields,
 And guardian rocks! With unreverted eyes
 I cannot pass thy bounds, attractive seat!
 To the still influx of the morning light

Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but veil'd
 From human observation, as if yet
 Primeval forests wrapp'd thee round with dark
 Impenetrable shade ; once more farewell,
 Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,
 By Nature destined from the birth of things
 For quietness profound !”

Upon the side
 Of that green slope, the outlet of the vale,
 Lingered behind my comrades, thus I breathed
 A parting tribute to a spot that seem'd
 Like the fix'd centre of a troubled world.
 And now, pursuing leisurely my way,
 “ How vain,” thought I, “ it is, by change of place—
 To seek that comfort which the mind denies ;
 Yet trial and temptation oft are shunn'd
 Wisely ; and by such tenure do we hold
 Frail life's possessions, that even they whose fate
 Yields no peculiar reason of complaint
 Might, by the promise that is here, be won
 To steal from active duties, and embrace
 Obscurity, and calm forgetfulness.
 Knowledge, methinks, in these disorder'd times,
 Should be allow'd a privilege to have
 Her anchorites, like piety of old ;
 Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstain'd
 By war, might, if so minded, turn aside
 Uncensured, and subsist, a scatter'd few,
 Living to God and nature, and content
 With that communion. Consecrated be
 The spots where such abide ! But happier still
 The man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends
 That meditation and research may guide
 His privacy to principles and powers
 Discover'd, or invented, or set forth,
 Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,
 In lucid order ; so that, when his course
 Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,
 He sought not praise—and praise did overlook
 His unobtrusive merit ; but his life
 Sweet to himself, was exercised in good
 That shall survive his name and memory.”

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere
 Accompanied these musings ; fervent thanks
 For my own peaceful lot and happy choice ;
 A choice that from the passions of the world
 Withdrew, and fix'd me in a still retreat,
 Shelter'd, but not to social duties lost,
 Secluded but not buried ; and with song
 Cheering my days, and with industrious thought
 With the ever-welcome company of books,
 By virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,
 And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,
 Following the rugged road by sledge or wheel
 Worn in the moorland, till I overtook
 My two associates, in the morning sun
 Halting together on a rocky knoll,
 From which the road descended rapidly
 To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive host put forth his hand
 In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old man said,
 "The fragrant air its coolness still retains ;
 The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop
 The dewy grass ; you cannot leave us now,
 We must not part at this inviting hour."
 To that injunction, earnestly express'd,
 He yielded, though reluctant ; for his mind
 Instinctively disposed him to retire
 To his own covert ; as a billow, heaved
 Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.
 So we descend ; and winding round a rock,
 Attain a point that show'd the valley, stretch'd
 In length before us ; and, not distant far,
 Upon a rising ground, a grey church-tower,
 Whose battlements were screen'd by tufted trees,
 And towards a crystal mere, that lay beyond,
 Among steep hills and woods embosom'd, flow'd
 A copious stream with boldly-winding course ;
 Here traceable, there hidden, there again
 To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.
 On the stream's bank, and everywhere, appear'd
 Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots,
 Some scatter'd o'er the level, others perch'd
 On the hill-sides, a cheerful quiet scene,
 Now in its morning purity array'd.

"As 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,"
 Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power,
 Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,
 Destroy'd their unoffending commonwealth,
 A popular equality doth seem
 Here to prevail ; and yet a house of state
 Stands yonder, one beneath whose roof, methinks,
 A rural lord might dwell." "No feudal pomp,"
 Replied our friend, a chronicler who stood
 Where'er he moved upon familiar ground—
 "Nor feudal power is there ; but there abides,
 In his allotted home, a genuine Priest,
 The shepherd of his flock ; or, as a king
 Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
 The father of his people—such is he ;
 And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice
 Under his spiritual sway, collected round him
 In this sequester'd realm. He hath vouchsafed
 To me some portion of his kind regard ;
 And something also of his inner mind

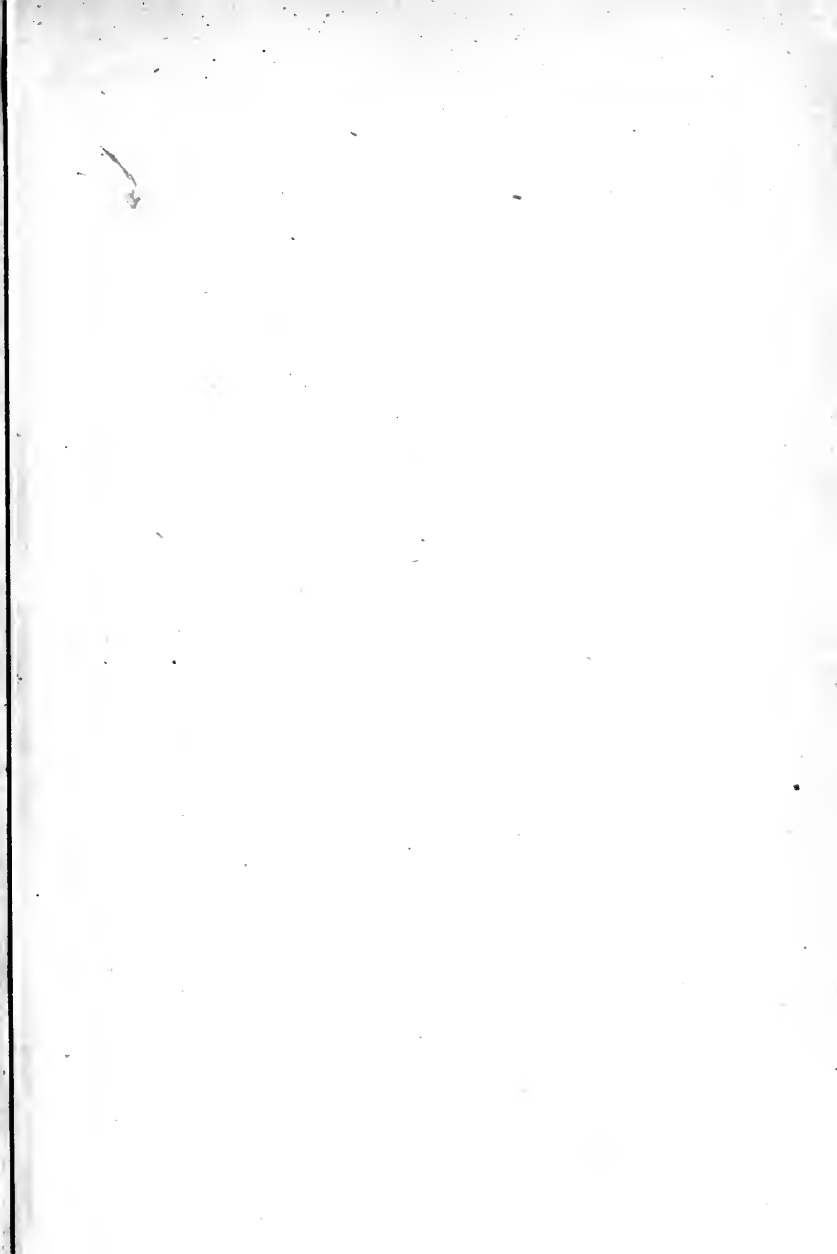
Hath he imparted—but I speak of him
As he is known to all.

“The calm delights
Of unambitious piety he chose,
And learning’s solid dignity; though born
Of knightly race, not wanting powerful friends.
This good to reap, these pleasures to secure,
Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew
From academic bowers. He loved the spot—
Who does not love his native soil?—he prized
The ancient rural character, composed
Of simple manners, feelings unsuppress’d
And undisguised, and strong and serious thought:
A character reflected in himself,
With such embellishment as well beseems
His rank and sacred function. This deep vale
Is lengthen’d out by many a winding reach,
Not visible to us; and one of these
A turreted manorial hall adorns,
In which the good man’s ancestors have dwelt
From age to age, the patrons of this cure.
To them, and to his decorating hand,
The vicar’s dwelling, and the whole domain,
Owes that presiding aspect which might well
Attract your notice; statelier than could else
Have been bestow’d, in course of common chance,
On an unwealthy mountain benefice.”

This said, oft halting, we pursued our way;
Nor reach’d the village churchyard till the sun,
Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen
Above the summits of the highest hills,
And round our path darted oppressive beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred pile
Stood open; and we enter’d. On my frame,
At such transition from the fervid air,
A grateful coolness fell, that seem’d to strike
The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
And natural reverence which the place inspired.
Not framed to nice proportions was the pile,
But large and massy, for duration built;
With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
By naked rafters intricately cross’d,
Like leafless underboughs in some thick grove,
All wither’d by the depth of shade above.
Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each in its ornamental scroll inclosed;
Each also crown’d with winged heads—a pair
Of rudely-painted cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,
Was occupied by oaken benches ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only show’d
Some inoffensive marks of earthly state

And vain distinction. A capacious pew
 Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined ;
 And marble monuments were here display'd
 Upon the walls ; and on the floor beneath
 Sepulchral stones appear'd, with emblems graven,
 And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
 And shining effigies of brass inlaid.
 The tribute by these various records claim'd,
 Without reluctance did we pay ; and read
 The ordinary chronicle of birth,
 Office, alliance, and promotion—all
 Ending in dust ; of upright magistrates,
 Grave doctors strenuous for the mother church,
 And uncorrupted senators, alike
 To king and people true. A brazen plate,
 Not easily decipher'd, told of one
 Whose course of earthly honour was begun
 In quality of page among the train
 Of the eighth Henry, when he cross'd the seas
 His royal state to show, and prove his strength
 In tournament upon the fields of France.
 Another tablet register'd the death,
 And praised the gallant bearing of a knight,
 Tried in the sea-fights of the second Charles.
 Near this brave knight his father lay entomb'd ;
 And, to the silent language giving voice,
 I read how, in his manhood's earlier day,
 He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war,
 And rightful government subverted, found
 One only solace, that he had espoused
 A virtuous lady tenderly beloved
 For her benign affections ; and for this
 Yet more endear'd to him, that in her state
 Of wedlock richly crown'd with Heaven's regard,
 She with a numerous issue fill'd his house,
 Who throve, like plants uninjured by the storm
 That laid their country waste. No need to speak
 Of less particular notices assign'd
 To youth or maiden gone before their time,
 And matrons and unwedded sisters old ;
 Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed
 In modest panegyric. " These dim lines,
 What would they tell ? " said I ; but, from the task
 Of puzzling out that faded narrative,
 With whisper soft my venerable friend
 Call'd me ; and, looking down the darksome aisle,
 I saw the tenant of the lonely vale
 Standing apart ; with curv'd arm reclined
 On the baptismal font ; his pallid face
 Upturn'd, as if his mind were rapt, or lost
 In some abstraction ; gracefully he stood,
 The semblance bearing of a sculptured form
 That leans upon a monumental urn
 In peace, from morn to night, from year to year.





THE EXCURSION.

“ On the moss-grown wall
My ancient friend and I together took
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,
Standing before us,”

Him from that posture did the sexton rouse ;
Who enter'd, humming carelessly a tune,
Continuation haply of the notes
That had beguiled the work from which he came,
With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder hung ;
To be deposited, for future need,
In their appointed place. The pale Recluse
Withdrew ; and straight we follow'd,—to a spot
Where sun and shade were intermix'd ; for there
A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms
From an adjoining pasture, overhung
Small space of that green churchyard with a light
And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown wall
My ancient friend and I together took
Our seats ; and thus the Solitary spake,
Standing before us :—“ Did you note the mien
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,
Death's hireling, who scoops out his neighbour's grave,
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,
As unconcern'd as when he plants a tree ?
I was abruptly summon'd by his voice
From some affecting images and thoughts,
And from the company of serious words.
Much, yesterday, was said in glowing phrase
Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes
For future states of being ; and the wings
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,
Hover'd above our destiny on earth ;
But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul
In sober contrast with reality,
And man's substantial life. If this mute earth
Of what it holds could speak, and every grave
Were as a volume, shut, yet capable
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame,
To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill
That which is done accords with what is known
To reason, and by conscience is enjoin'd ;
How idly, how perversely, life's whole course,
To this conclusion deviates from the line,
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all
At its aspiring outset. Mark the babe
Not long accustom'd to this breathing world ;
One that hath barely learn'd to shape a smile,
Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp
With tiny fingers—to let fall a tear ;
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,
To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,
The outward functions of intelligent man ;
A grave proficient in amusive feats
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare
His expectations, and announce his claims
To that inheritance which millions rue
That they were ever born to ! In due time

A day of solemn ceremonial comes ;
 When they, who for this minor hold in trust
 Rights that transcend the humblest heritage
 Of mere humanity, present their charge,
 For this occasion daintily adorn'd
 At the baptismal font. And when the pure
 And consecrating element hath cleansed
 The original stain, the child is there received
 Into the second ark, Christ's Church, with trust
 That he, from wrath redeem'd, therein shall float
 Over the billows of this troublesome world,
 To the fair land of everlasting life.
 Corrupt affections, covetous desires,
 Are all renounced ; high as the thought of man
 Can carry virtue, virtue is profess'd ;
 A dedication made, a promise given
 For due provision to control and guide,
 And unremitting progress to insure
 In holiness and truth."

" You cannot blame,"

Here interposing fervently I said,
 " Rites which attest that man by nature lies
 Bedded for good and evil in a gulf
 Fearfully low ; nor will your judgment scorn
 Those services, whereby attempt is made
 To lift the creature towards that eminence
 On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty
 He stood ; or if not so, whose top serene
 At least, he feels 'tis given him to descry ;
 Not without aspirations evermore
 Returning, and injunctions from within
 Doubt to cast off and weariness ; in trust
 That what the soul perceives, if glory lost,
 May be, through pains and persevering hope,
 Recover'd ; or, if hitherto unknown,
 Lies within reach, and one day shall be gain'd."

" I blame them not," he calmly answer'd—" nor
 The outward ritual and establish'd forms
 With which communities of men invest
 These inward feelings, and th' aspiring views
 To which the lips give public utterance,
 Are both a natural process, and by me
 Shall pass uncensured ; though the issue prove,
 Bringing from age to age its own reproach,
 Incongruous, impotent, and blank. But oh !
 If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable,
 As the lost angel by a human voice
 Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my mind,
 Far better not to move at all than move
 By impulse sent from such illusive power,—
 That finds and cannot fasten down ; that grasps
 And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps ;
 That tempts, emboldens—doth a while sustain,

And then betrays ; accuses and inflicts
 Remorseless punishment ; and so retreads
 Th' inevitable circle ; better far
 Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless peace,
 By foresight or remembrance undisturb'd !

“ Philosophy ! and thou more vaunted name
 Religion ! with thy statelier retinue,
 Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the visible world
 Choose for your emblems whatso'er ye find
 Of safest guidance and of firmest trust—
 The torch, the star, the anchor—nor except
 The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet
 The generations of mankind have knelt
 Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,
 And through that conflict seeking rest—of you,
 High-titled powers, am I constrain'd to ask,
 Here standing, with th' unvoyageable sky
 In faint reflection of infinitude,
 Stretch'd overhead, and at my pensive feet
 A subterraneous magazine of bones,
 In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be laid,
 Where are your triumphs—your dominion where—
 And in what age admitted and confirm'd ?
 —Not for a happy land do I inquire,
 Island or grove, that hides a blessèd few
 Who, with obedience willing and sincere,
 To your serene authorities conform ;
 But whom, I ask, of individual souls,
 Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked ways,
 Inspired, and thoroughly fortified ? If the heart
 Could be inspected to its inmost folds
 By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,
 Who shall be named—in the resplendent line
 Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man
 Whom the best might of conscience, truth, and hope,
 For one day's little compass, has preserved
 From painful and discreditable shocks
 Of contradiction, from some vague desire
 Culpably cherish'd, or corrupt relapse
 To some unsanction'd fear ? ”

“ If this be so,
 And man,” said I, “ be in his noblest shape
 Thus pitiaibly infirm ; then, He who made,
 And who shall judge the creature, will forgive.
 Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint
 Is all too true ; and surely not misplaced ;
 For, from this pregnant spot of ground, such thoughts
 Rise to the notice of a serious mind
 By natural exhalation. With the dead
 In their repose, the living in their mirth,
 Who can reflect unmoved, upon the round
 Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,
 By which, on Christian lands from age to age

Profession mocks performance. Earth is sick,
 And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words
 Which states and kingdoms utter when they talk
 Of truth and justice. Turn to private life
 And social neighbourhood ; look we to ourselves ;
 A light of duty shines on every day
 For all ; and yet how few are warm'd or cheer'd !
 How few who mingle with their fellow-men
 And still remain self-govern'd, and apart,
 Like this our honour'd friend ; and thence acquire
 Right to expect his vigorous decline,
 That promises to th' end a blest old age !”

“ Yet,” with a smile of triumph thus exclaim'd
 The Solitary, “ in the life of man,
 If to the poetry of common speech
 Faith may be given, we see as in a glass
 A true reflection of the circling year,
 With all its seasons. Grant that spring is there,
 In spite of many a rough untoward blast,
 Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers ;
 Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich day,
 That *ought* to follow, faithfully express'd ?
 And mellow autumn, charged with bounteous fruit,
 Where is she imaged—in what favour'd clime
 Her lavish pomp and ripe magnificence ?
 Yet, while the better part is miss'd, the worse
 In man's autumnal season is set forth
 With a resemblance not to be denied,
 And that contents him ; bowers that hear no more
 The voice of gladness, less and less supply
 Of outward sunshine and internal warmth :
 And, with this change, sharp air and falling leaves,
 Foretelling total winter, blank and cold.

“ How gay the habitations that adorn
 This fertile valley ! Not a house but seems
 To give assurance of content within,
 Embosom'd happiness and placid love :
 As if the sunshine of the day were met
 With answering brightness in the hearts of all
 Who walk this favour'd ground. But chance regards,
 And notice forced upon incurious ears ;
 These, if these only, acting in despite
 Of the encomiums by my friend pronounced
 On humble life, forbid the judging mind
 To trust the smiling aspect of this fair
 And noiseless commonwealth. The simple race
 Of mountaineers, by nature's self removed
 From foul temptations, and by constant care
 Of a good shepherd tended, as themselves
 Do tend their flocks, these share man's general lot
 With little mitigation. They escape,
 Perchance, guilt's heavier woes ; and do not feel
 The tedium of fantastic idleness ;

Yet life, as with the multitude, with them
 Is fashion'd like an ill constructed tale
 That on the outset wastes its gay desires,
 Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,
 And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving
 Old things repeated with diminish'd grace,
 And all the labour'd novelties, at best
 Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power
 Evince the want and weakness whence they spring."

While in this serious mood we held discourse,
 The reverend Pastor toward the churchyard gate
 Approach'd ; and, with a mild respectful air
 Of native cordiality, our friend
 Advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien
 Was he received, and mutual joy prevail'd.
 Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess
 That he, who now upon the mossy wall
 Sate by my side, had vanish'd, if a wish
 Could have transferr'd him to his lonely house
 Within the circuit of those guardian rocks.
 For me, I look'd upon the pair, well pleas'd :
 Nature had fram'd them both, and both were mark'd
 By circumstance with intermixture fine
 Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak
 Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,
 Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,
 One might be liken'd : flourishing appear'd,
 Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,
 The other—like a stately sycamore,
 That spreads, in gentler pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged ; and soon
 The Pastor learn'd that his approach had given
 A welcome interruption to discourse
 Grave, and in truth full often sad. "Is man
 A child of hope? Do generations press
 On generations, without progress made?
 Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,
 Perforce? Are we a creature in whom good
 Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will
 Acknowledge reason's law? A living power
 Is virtue—or no better than a name—
 Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound!
 So that the only substance which remains
 (For thus the tenor of complaint hath run),
 Among so many shadows, are the pains
 And penalties of miserable life,
 Doom'd to decay, and then expire in dust!
 —Our cogitations this way have been drawn,
 These are the points," the Wanderer said, "on which
 Our inquest turns. Accord, good sir, the light
 Of your experience, to dispel this gloom.
 By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart
 That frets, or languishes, be still'd and cheer'd."

"Our nature," said the Priest, in mild reply,
 "Angels may weigh and fathom : they perceive,
 With undistemper'd and unclouded spirit,
 The object as it is ; but for ourselves,
 That speculative height we may not reach.
 The good and evil are our own ; and we
 Are that which we would contemplate from far.
 Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—
 Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—
 As virtue's self ; like virtue is beset
 With snares ; tried, tempted, subject to decay.
 Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,
 Blind were we without these ; through these alone
 Are capable to notice or discern,
 Or to record ! we judge, but cannot be
 Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest boast,
 Reason, best reason, is t' imperfect man
 An effort only, and a noble aim ;
 A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,
 Still to be courted—never to be won.
 —Look forth, or each man dive into himself,
 What sees he, but a creature too perturb'd,
 That is transported to excess ; that yearns,
 Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much ;
 Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils ;
 Batters on spleen, or moulders in despair.
 Thus truth is miss'd, and comprehension fails ;
 And darkness and delusion round our path
 Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury lurks
 Within the very faculty of sight.

"Yet for the general purposes of faith
 In Providence, for solace and support,
 We may not doubt that who can best subject
 The will to reason's law, can strictliest live
 And act in that obedience, he shall gain
 The clearest apprehension of those truths,
 Which unassisted reason's utmost power
 Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,
 And our regards confining within bounds
 Of less exalted consciousness, through which
 The very multitude are free to range,
 We safely may affirm that human life
 Is either fair or tempting, a soft scene
 Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,
 Or a forbidden tract of cheerless view ;
 Even as the same is look'd at or approach'd.
 Permit me," said the Priest, continuing, "here
 To use an illustration of my thought,
 Drawn from the very spot on which we stand.
 —In changeful April, when, as he is wont,
 Winter has reassumed a short-lived sway
 And whiten'd all the surface of the fields,
 It, from the sullen region of the north,

Towards the circuit of this holy ground,
 Your walk conducts you, ere the vigorous sun,
 High climbing, hath attain'd his noon-tide height,
 These mounds, transversely lying side by side
 From east to west, before you will appear
 A dreary plain of unilluminated snow,
 With more than wintry cheerlessness and gloom
 Saddening the heart. Go forward, and look back ;
 On the same circuit of this churchyard ground
 Look, from the quarter whence the lord of light,
 Of life, of love, and gladness, doth dispense
 His beams, which, unexcluded in their fall,
 Upon the southern side of every grave
 Have gently exercised a melting power,
 Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye.
 All fresh and beautiful, and green and bright,
 Hopeful and cheerful—vanish'd is the snow,
 Vanish'd or hidden ; and the whole domain,
 To some, too lightly minded, might appear
 A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.
 This contrast, not unsuitable to life,
 Is to that other state more apposite,
 Death, and its twofold aspect ; wintry one,
 Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut out—
 The other, which the ray divine hath touch'd,
 Replete with vivid promise, bright as spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wanderer thus
 With a complacent animation spake,
 "And, in your judgment, sir, the mind's repose
 On evidence is not to be insured
 By act of naked reason. Moral truth
 Is no mechanic structure, built by rule ;
 And which, once built, retains a steadfast shape
 And undisturb'd proportions ; but a thing
 Subject, you deem, to vital accidents ;
 And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
 Whose root is fix'd in stable earth, whose head
 Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sincere
 I re-salute these sentiments, confirm'd
 By your authority. But how acquire
 The inward principle that gives effect
 To outward argument, the passive will
 Meek to admit, the active energy,
 Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm
 To keep and cherish—how shall man unite
 A self-forgetting tenderness of heart
 And earth-despising dignity of soul—
 Wise in that union, and without it blind !"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not obtain
 The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright,
 This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you
 Declared at large ; and by what exercise
 From visible nature or the inner self

Power may be train'd, and renovation brought
 To those who need the gift. But, after all,
 Is aught so certain as that man is doom'd
 To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance—
 The natural roof of that dark house in which
 His soul is pent? How little can be known!
 This is the wise man's sigh; how far we err—
 This is the good man's not unfrequent pang.
 And they perhaps err least, the lowly class
 Whom a benign necessity compels
 To follow reason's least ambitious course;
 Such do I mean, who, unperplex'd by doubt
 And unincited by a wish to look
 Into high objects farther than they may,
 Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,
 The narrow avenue of daily toil,
 For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaim'd
 The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy plough,
 And patient spade, and shepherd's simple crook,
 And ponderous loom resounding while it holds
 Body and mind in one captivity;
 And let the light mechanic tool be hail'd
 With honour, which, encasing by the power
 Of long companionship, the artist's hand,
 Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,
 From a too busy commerce with the heart!
 Inglorious implements of craft and toil,
 Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,
 By slow solicitation, earth to yield
 Her annual bounty sparingly dealt forth
 With wise reluctance, you would I extol
 Not for gross good alone which ye produce,
 But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife
 Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those
 Who to your dull society are born,
 And with their humble birthright rest content.
 —Would I had ne'er renounced it!"

A slight flush
 Of moral anger previously had tinged
 The old man's cheek: but, at this closing turn
 Of self-reproach, it pass'd away. Said he,
 "That which we feel we utter: as we think
 So have we argued; reaping for our pains
 No visible recompense. For our relief,
 You," to the Pastor turning thus he spake,
 "Have kindly interposed. May I entreat
 Your further help? The mine of real life
 Dig for us; and present us, in the shape
 Of virgin ore, that gold which we by pains
 Fruitless as those of aëry alchemists,
 Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies
 Around us a domain where you have long

Held spiritual sway, have guided and consoled,
 And watch'd the outward course and inner heart
 Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts ;
 For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what man
 He is who cultivates yon hanging field ;
 What qualities of mind she bears, who comes,
 For morn and evening service, with her pail,
 To that green pasture ; place before our sight
 The family who dwell within yon house
 Fenced round with glittering laurel ; or in that
 Below, from which the curling smoke ascends.
 Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,
 And have the dead around us, take from them
 Your instances ; for they are both best known,
 And by frail man most equitably judged.
 Epitomize the life ; pronounce, you can,
 Authentic epitaphs on some of these
 Who, from their lowly mansions hither brought,
 Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our feet.
 So, by your records, may our doubts be solved ;
 And so, not searching higher, we may learn
 To prize the breath we share with human kind,
 And look upon the dust of man with awe."

The Priest replied :—" An office you impose
 For which peculiar requisites are mine ;
 Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task
 Would be most grateful. True indeed it is
 That they whom death has hidden from our sight
 Are worthiest of the mind's regard ; with these
 The future cannot contradict the past :
 Mortality's last exercise and proof
 Is undergone ; the transit made that shows
 The very soul, reveal'd as it departs.
 Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,
 Ere we descend into these silent vaults,
 One picture from the living.

" You behold,
 High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark
 With stony barrenness, a shining speck
 Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower
 Brush it away, or cloud pass over it ;
 And such it might be deem'd—a sleeping sunbeam ;
 But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,
 Cut off, an island in the dusky waste ;
 And that attractive brightness is its own.
 The lofty site, by Nature framed, to tempt,
 Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones,
 The tiller's hand, a hermit might have chosen,
 For opportunity presented thence
 Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er land
 And ocean, and look down upon the works,
 The habitations, and the ways of men,
 Himself unseen. But no tradition tells

That ever hermit dipp'd his maple dish
 In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon green fields ;
 And no such visionary views belong
 To those who occupy and till the ground,
 And on the bosom of the mountain dwell—
 A wedded pair in childless solitude.
 A house of stones collected on the spot,
 By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in front,
 Back'd also by a ledge of rock, whose crest
 Of birch-trees waves above the chimney-top ;
 In shape, in size, and colour, an abode
 Such as in unsafe times of border war
 Might have been wish'd for and contrived, to elude
 The eye of roving plunderer—for their need
 Suffices ; and unshaken bears the assault
 Of their most dreaded foe, the strong south-west,
 In anger blowing from the distant sea.
 Alone within her solitary hut ;
 There, or within the compass of her fields,
 At any moment may the dame be found,
 True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest
 And to the grove that holds it. She beguiles
 By intermingled work of house and field
 The summer's day, and winter's ; with success
 Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,
 Even at the worst, a smooth stream of content,
 Until the expected hour at which her mate
 From the far-distant quarry's vault returns,
 And by his converse crowns a silent day
 With evening cheerfulness. In powers of mind,
 In scale of culture, few among my flock
 Hold lower rank than this sequester'd pair :
 But humbleness of heart descends from Heaven :
 And that best gift of Heav'n hath fall'n on them—
 Abundant recompense for every want.
 Stoop from your height, ye proud, and copy these !
 Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can hear
 The voice of wisdom whispering scripture texts
 For the mind's government, or temper's peace ;
 And recommending for their mutual need,
 Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity !”

“ Much was I pleased,” the grey-hair'd Wanderer said.
 “ When to those shining fields our notice first
 You turn'd ; and yet more pleased have from your lips
 Gather'd this fair report of those who dwell
 In that retirement ; whither, by such course
 Of evil hap and good as oft awaits
 A lone wayfaring man, I once was brought.
 Dark on my road the autumnal evening fell
 While I was traversing yon mountain-pass,
 And night succeeded with unusual gloom,
 So that my feet and hands at length became
 Guides better than mine eyes—until a light

High in the gloom appear'd, too high, methought,
 For human habitation ; but I long'd
 To reach it, destitute of other hope.
 I look'd with steadiness as sailors look
 On the north star, or watch-tower's distant lamp,
 And saw the light, now fix'd, and shifting now,
 Not like a dancing meteor, but in line
 Of never-varying motion, to and fro.
 'It is no night-fire of the naked hills,'
 Said I— 'some friendly covert must be near.'
 With this persuasion thitherward my steps
 I turn, and reach at last the guiding light ;
 Joy to myself ! but to the heart of her
 Who there was standing on the open hill
 (The same kind matron whom your tongue hath praised),
 Alarm and disappointment ! The alarm
 Ceased, when she learn'd through what mishap I came
 And by what help had gain'd those distant fields.
 Drawn from her cottage, on that open height,
 Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,
 Or paced the ground, to guide her husband home,
 By that unwearied signal, kenn'd afar ;
 An anxious duty ! which the lofty site,
 Far from all public road or beaten way,
 And traversed only by a few faint paths,
 Imposes, whensoever untoward chance
 (Such chance is rare) detains him till the night
 Falls black upon the hills. 'But come,' she said,
 'Come let me lead you to our poor abode :
 Behind those rocks it stands, as if it shunn'd,
 In churlishness, the eye of all mankind ;
 But the few guests who seek the door receive
 Most hearty welcome.' Entering I beheld
 A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth
 Sate down ; and to her office, with leave ask'd
 The dame return'd. Before that glowing pile
 Of mountain turf required the builder's hand
 Its wasted splendour to repair, the door
 Open'd and she re-enter'd with glad looks,
 Her helpmate following. Hospitable fare,
 Frank conversation, made the evening's treat :
 Need a bewilder'd traveller wish for more ?
 But more was given ; the eye, the mind, the heart,
 Found exercise in noting as we sate
 By the bright fire, the good man's face—composed.
 Of features elegant ; an open brow
 Of undisturb'd humanity ; a cheek
 Suffused with something of a feminine hue ;
 Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard ;
 But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,
 Expression slowly varying, that evinced
 A tardy apprehension. From a fount
 Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,
 But honour'd once, these features and that mien

May have descended, though I see them here.
 In such a man, so gentle and subdued,
 Withal so graceful in his gentleness,
 A race illustrious for heroic deeds,
 Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.
 This pleasing fancy (cherish'd and upheld
 By sundry recollections of such fall
 From high to low, ascent from low to high,
 As books record, and even the careless mind
 Cannot but notice among men and things)
 Went with me to the place of my repose.

“ Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of day,
 I yet had risen too late to interchange
 A morning salutation with my host,
 Gone forth already to the far off seat
 Of his day's work. ‘ Three dark mid-winter months
 Pass,’ said the matron, ‘ and I never see,
 Save when the Sabbath brings its kind release,
 My helpmate's face by light of day. He quits
 His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.
 And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we gain the bread
 For which we pray ; and for the wants provide
 Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.
 Companions have I many ; many friends,
 Dependents, comforters : my wheel, my fire,
 All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,
 The cackling hen, the tender chicken brood,
 And the wild birds, that gather round my porch.
 This honest sheep-dog's countenance I read ;
 With him can talk ; nor seldom waste a word
 On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.
 And if the blustering wind that drives the clouds,
 Care not for me, he lingers round my door,
 And makes me pastime when our tempers suit :
 But, above all, my thoughts are my support.’
 The matron ended, nor could I forbear
 To exclaim, ‘ O happy ! yielding to the law
 Of these privations, richer in the main :
 While thankless thousands are oppress'd and clogg'd
 By ease and leisure ; by the very wealth
 And pride of opportunity made poor ;
 While tens of thousands falter in their path,
 And sink, through utter want of cheering light ;
 For you the hours of labour do not flag ;
 For you each evening hath its shining star,
 And every Sabbath-day its golden sun.’ ”

“ Yes ! ” said the Solitary, with a smile
 That seem'd to break from an expanding heart,
 “ The untutor'd bird may found, and so construct,
 And with such soft materials line, her nest,
 Fix'd in the centre of a prickly brake,
 That the thorns wound her not ; they only guard.
 Powers, not unjustly liken'd to those gifts

Of happy instinct which the woodland bird
 Shares with her species, Nature's grace sometimes
 Upon the individual doth confer,
 Among the higher creatures born and train'd,
 To use of reason. And I own, that, tired
 Of the ostentatious world—a swelling stage,
 With empty actions and vain passions stuff'd,
 And from the private struggles of mankind
 Hoping for less than I could wish to hope,
 Far less than once I trusted and believed—
 I love to hear of those who, not contending
 Nor summon'd to contend for virtue's prize,
 Miss not the humbler good at which they aim ;
 Bless'd with a kindly faculty to blunt
 The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn
 Into their contraries the petty plagues
 And hindrances with which they stand beset.
 In early youth, among my native hills,
 I knew a Scottish peasant who possess'd
 A few small crofts of stone-encumber'd ground ;
 Masses of every shape and size, that lay
 Scatter'd about beneath the mould'ring walls
 Of a rough precipice ; and some, apart,
 In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,
 As if the moon had shower'd them down in spite ;
 But he repined not. Though the plough was scared
 By these obstructions, ' Round the shady stones
 A fertilizing moisture,' said the swain,
 ' Gathers, and is preserved ; and feeding dew
 And damps, through all the droughty summer day
 From out their substance issuing, maintain
 Herbage that never fails : no grass springs up
 So green, so fresh, so plentiful as mine !'
 See, in this well-condition'd soul, a third
 To match with your good couple, that put forth
 Their homely graces on the mountain-side.
 But thinly sown these natures ; rare, at least,
 The mutual aptitude of seed and soil
 That yields such kindly product. He, whose bed
 Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor pensioner
 Brought yesterday from our sequester'd dell
 Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,
 If living now, could otherwise report
 Of rustic loneliness : that grey-hair'd orphan—
 So call him, for humanity to him
 No parent was—could feelingly have told,
 In life, in death, what solitude can breed
 Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice ;
 Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.
 But your compliance, sir, with our request
 My words too long have hinder'd."

Undeterr'd,

Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,
 In no ungracious opposition, given

To the confiding spirit of his own
 Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor said,
 Around him looking : " Where shall I begin ;
 Who shall be first selected from my flock,
 Gather'd together in their peaceful fold ?"
 He paused, and having lifted up his eyes
 To the pure heaven, he cast them down again
 Upon the earth beneath his feet, and spake :—

" To a mysteriously consorted pair
 This place is consecrate ; to death and life,
 And to the best affections that proceed
 From their conjunction. Consecrate to faith
 In Him who bled for man upon the cross,
 Hallow'd to revelation, and no less
 To reason's mandates, and the hopes divine
 Of pure imagination ; above all,
 To charity and love, that have provided,
 Within these precincts, a capacious bed
 And receptacle, open to the good
 And evil, to the just and the unjust,
 In which they find an equal resting-place ;
 Even as the multitude of kindred brooks
 And streams, whose murmur fills this hollow vale,
 Whether their course be turbulent or smooth,
 Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost
 Within the bosom of yon crystal lake,
 And end their journey in the same repose.

" And blest are they who sleep ; and we that know,
 While in a spot like this we breathe and walk,
 That all beneath us by the wings are cover'd
 Of motherly humanity, outspread
 And gathering all within their tender shade,
 Though loth and slow to come. A battle-field,
 In stillness left, when slaughter is no more,
 With this compared is a strange spectacle !
 A rueful sight, the wild shore strewn with wrecks,
 And trod by people in afflicted quest
 Of friends and kindred, whom the angry sea
 Restores not to their prayers ! Ah, who would think
 That all the scatter'd subjects which compose
 Earth's melancholy vision through the space
 Of all her climes,—these wretched, these depraved,
 To virtue lost, insensible of peace,
 From the delights of charity cut off,
 To pity dead, the oppressor and the oppress'd,—
 Tyrants who utter the destroying word,
 And slaves who will consent to be destroy'd,—
 Were of one species with the shelter'd few,
 Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,
 Did lodge, in an appropriated spot,
 This file of infants ; some that never breathed
 The vital air ; and others who, allow'd
 That privilege, did yet expire too soon,

Or with too brief a warning, to admit
Administration of the holy rite
That lovingly consigns the babe to th' arms
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.
These, that in trembling hope are laid apart ;
And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him ; and the tott'ring little one,
Taken from air and sunshine when the rose
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek ;
The thinking, thoughtless schoolboy ; the bold youth,
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid,
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are opening round her ; those of middle age,
Cast down while confident in strength they stand,
Like pillars fix'd more firmly, as might seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them ; the decay'd
And burthensome ; and, lastly, that poor few
Whose light of reason is with age extinct ;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,
The earliest summon'd and the longest spared,—
Are here deposited, with tribute paid
Various ; but unto each some tribute paid,
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,
Society were touch'd with kind concern,
And gentle ' Nature grieved that one should die ;'
Or, if the change demanded no regret,
Observed the liberating stroke—and bless'd.
And whence that tribute—wherefore these regards ?
Not from the naked *heart* alone of man
(Though framed to high distinction upon earth
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness)—No," the philosophic Priest
Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and pure,
With her two faculties of eye and ear,—
The one by which a creature, whom his sins
Have render'd prone, can upward look to heaven—
The other, that empowers him to perceive
The voice of Deity, on height and plain,
Whisp'ring those truths in stillness, which the Word
To the four quarters of the winds proclaims.
Not without such assistance could the use
Of these benign observances prevail.
Thus are they born, thus foster'd and maintain'd ;
And, by the care prospective of our wise
Forefathers, who, to guard against the shocks,
The fluctuation and decay of things,
Embodied and establish'd these high truths
In solemn institutions : men convinced
That life is love and immortality,

The being one, and one the element.
 There lies the channel and original bed,
 From the beginning hollow'd out and scoop'd
 For man's affections—else betray'd and lost,
 And swallow'd up 'mid deserts infinite !
 This is the genuine course, the aim, and end
 Of prescient reason ; all conclusions else
 Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse.
 The faith partaking of those holy times,
 Life, I repeat, is energy of love,
 Divine or human, exercised in pain,
 In strife, and tribulation, and ordain'd,
 If so approved and sanctified, to pass,
 Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

 BOOK VI.

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

Poet's Address to the State and Church of England—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient worthies of the Church—He begins his narratives with an instance of unrequited love—Anguish of mind subdued—And how—The lonely miner an instance of perseverance, which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness—Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some stranger whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here—Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonizing influence of solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life—The rule by which peace may be obtained expressed—And where—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality—Answer of the Pastor—What subjects he will exclude from his narrative ; conversation upon this—Instance of an unamiable character, a female—And why given—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love—Instance of heavier guilt—And its consequences to the offender—With this instance of a marriage contract broken is contrasted one of a widower, evincing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female children—Second marriage of widower prudential and happy.

HAIL to the crown by freedom shaped to gird
 An English sovereign's brow—and to the throne
 Whereon he sits ! whose deep foundations lie
 In veneration and the people's love ;
 Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
 —Hail to the State of England ! And conjoin
 With this a salutation as devout,
 Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church ;
 Founded in truth ; by blood of martyrdom
 Cemented ; by the hands of wisdom rear'd
 In beauty of holiness, with order'd pomp,
 Decent and unreprieved. The voice, that greets
 The majesty of both, shall pray for both ;
 That mutually protected and sustain'd,
 They may endure as long as sea surrounds
 This favour'd land, or sunshine warms her soil.
 And oh, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains !
 Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-towers,
 And spires whose " silent finger points to heaven ;"
 Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk
 Of ancient minster, lifted above the cloud

Of the dense air which town or city breeds
To intercept the sun's glad beams—may ne'er
That true succession fail of English hearts,
That can perceive, not less than heretofore
Our ancestors did feelingly perceive,
What in those holy structures ye possess
Of ornamental interest, and the charm
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
And human charity, and social love.
Thus never shall th' indignities of time
Approach their reverend graces unopposed ;
Nor shall the elements be free to hurt
Their fair proportions ; nor the blinder rage
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn ;
And, if the desolating hand of war
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow,
Upon the throng'd abodes of busy men
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill their minds
Exclusively with transitory things)
An air and mien of dignified pursuit ;
Of sweet civility on rustic wilds.
The poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
Of those pure altars worthy ; ministers
Detach'd from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambition's longings undisturb'd ;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them ; whose least distinguish'd day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the Sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessèd angels, pitying human cares.
And, as on earth it is the doom of truth
To be perpetually attack'd by foes
Open or covert, be that priesthood still,
For her defence, replenish'd with a band
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts
Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course
Of the revolving world's disturbances
Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven avert !
To meet such trial) from their spiritual sires
Degenerate ; who, constrain'd to wield the sword
Of disputation, shrunk not, though assail'd
With hostile din, and combating in sight
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ;
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,
So to declare the conscience satisfied :
Nor for their bodies would accept release ;
But, blessing God and praising him, bequeath'd
With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame,
The faith which they by diligence had earn'd,
And through illuminating grace received,
For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a man (inheriting the zeal
 And from the sanctity of elder times
 Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom,
 If multiplied, and in their stations set,
 Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land
 Spread true religion and her genuine fruits)
 Before me stood that day ; on holy ground
 Fraught with the relics of mortality,
 Exalting tender themes, by just degrees
 To lofty raised ; and to the highest, last ;
 The head and mighty paramount of truths ;
 Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,
 For mortal creatures, conquer'd and secured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith
 Announced, as a preparatory act
 Of reverence to the spirit of the place,
 The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground ;
 Not, as before, like one oppress'd with awe,
 But with a mild and social cheerfulness ;
 Then to the Solitary turn'd and spake.

“ At morn or eve, in your retired domain,
 Perchance you not unfrequently have mark'd
 A visitor, intent upon the task
 Of prying, low and high, for herbs and flowers ;
 Too delicate employ, as would appear,
 For one who, though of drooping mien, had yet
 From nature's kindness received a frame
 Robust as ever rural labour bred.”

The Solitary answer'd : “ Such a form
 Full well I recollect. We often cross'd
 Each other's path ; but, as th' intruder seem'd
 Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,
 And I as willingly did cherish mine,
 We met, and pass'd like shadows. I have heard,
 From my good host, that he was crazed in brain
 By unrequited love, and scaled the rocks,
 Dived into caves, and pierced the matted woods,
 In hope to find some virtuous herb of power
 To cure his malady !”

The Vicar smiled,—
 “ Alas ! before to-morrow's sun goes down,
 His habitation will be here : for him
 That open grave is destined.”

“ Died he then
 Of pain and grief ?” the Solitary ask'd ;
 “ Believe it not—oh, never could that be !”

“ He loved,” the Vicar answer'd, “ deeply loved,
 Loved fondly, truly, fervently ; and pined
 When he had told his love, and sued in vain ;
 Rejected, yea repell'd ; and, if with scorn
 Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but

A high-prized plume which female beauty wears.
That he could brook, and glory in ; but when
 The tidings came that she whom he had woo'd
 Was wedded to another, and his heart
 Was forced to rend away its only hope ;
 Then, Pity could have scarcely found on earth
 An object worthier of regard than he,
 In the transition of that bitter hour.
 Lost was she—lost ! nor could the sufferer say
 That in the act of preference he had been
 Unjustly dealt with ; but the maid was gone !
 She, whose dear name with unregarded sighs
 He long had bless'd, whose image was preserved—
 Shrined in his breast with fond idolatry,
 Had vanish'd from his prospects and desires ;
 Not by translation to the heavenly choir
 Who have put off their mortal spoils—ah no !
 She lives another's wishes to complete,—
 ' Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,—
 ' His lot and hers, as misery is mine !'

“ Such was that strong concussion ; but the man,
 Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some huge oak
 By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed
 The steadfast quiet natural to a mind
 Of composition gentle and sedate,
 And, in its movements, circumspect and slow.
 Of rustic parents bred, he had been train'd
 (So prompted their aspiring wish) to skill
 In numbers, and the sedentary art
 Of penmanship,—with pride profess'd, and taught
 By his endeavours in the mountain dales.
 Now, those sad tidings weighing on his heart,
 To books, and papers, and the studious desk,
 He stoutly re-address'd himself—resolved
 To quell his pain, and enter on the path
 Of old pursuits with keener appetite
 And closer industry. Of what ensued
 Within his soul no outward sign appear'd,
 Till a betraying sickliness was seen
 To tinge his cheek ; and through his frame it crept
 With slow mutation unconcealable ;
 Such universal change as autumn makes
 In the fair body of a leafy grove
 Discolour'd, then divested. 'Tis affirm'd
 By poets skill'd in Nature's secret ways
 That Love would not submit to be controll'd
 By mastery : and the good man lack'd not friends
 Who strove t' instil this truth into his mind,
 A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.
 ' Go to the hills,' said one, ' remit a while
 This baneful diligence : at early morn
 Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and woods ;
 And, leaving it to others to foretell,

By calculations sage, the ebb and flow
 Of tides, and when the moon will be eclipsed,
 Do you, for your own benefit, construct
 A calendar of flow'rs, pluck'd as they blow
 Where health abides, and cheerfulness and peace.
 Th' attempt was made ; 'tis needless to report
 How hopelessly ; but innocence is strong,
 And an entire simplicity of mind
 A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven,
 That opens, for such sufferers, relief
 Within their souls, a fount of grace divine ;
 And doth commend their weakness and disease
 To Nature's care, assisted in her office
 By all the elements that round her wait
 To generate, to preserve, and to restore ;
 And by her beautiful array of forms
 Shedding sweet influence from above, or pure
 Delight exhaling from the ground they tread."
 "Impute it not t' impatience, if," exclaim'd
 The Wanderer, "I infer that he was heal'd
 By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err : the powers, which had been lost
 By slow degrees, were gradually regain'd ;
 The fluttering nerves composed ; the beating heart
 In rest establish'd ; and the jarring thoughts
 To harmony restored. But yon dark mould
 Will cover him ; in height of strength—to earth
 Hastily smitten, by a fever's force ;
 Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused
 Time to look back with tenderness on her
 Whom he had loved in passion, and to send
 Some farewell words ; and, with those words, a prayer
 That, from his dying hand, she would accept
 Of his possessions, that which most he prized,
 A book, upon the surface of whose leaves
 Some chosen plants, disposed with nicest care,
 In undecaying beauty were preserved.
 Mute register, to him, of time and place,
 And various fluctuations in the breast ;
 To her, a monument of faithful love
 Conquer'd, and in tranquillity retain'd.

"Close to his destined habitation, lies
 One whose endeavours did at length achieve
 A victory less worthy of regard,
 Though marvellous in its kind. A place exists
 High in these mountains, that allured a band
 Of keen adventurers to unite their pains,
 In search of treasure there by nature form'd,
 And there conceal'd : but they who tried were foil'd,
 And all desisted, all, save him alone ;
 Who taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,
 And trusting only to his own weak hands,
 Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,

Unseconded, uncountenanced ; then, as time
 Pass'd on, while still his lonely efforts found
 No recompense, derided ; and at length,
 By many pitied, as insane of mind ;
 By others dreaded as the luckless thrall
 Of subterranean spirits, feeding hope
 By various mockery of sight and sound ;
 Hope, after hope, encouraged and destroy'd.
 —But when the lord of seasons had matured
 The fruits of earth through space of twice ten years,
 The mountain's entrails offer'd to the view
 Of the old man, and to his trembling grasp,
 His bright, his long-deferr'd, his dear reward.
 Not with more transport did Columbus greet
 A world, his rich discovery ! But our swain,
 A very hero till his point was gain'd,
 Proved all unable to support the weight
 Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he look'd
 With an unsettled liberty of thought,
 Of schemes and wishes ; in the daylight walk'd
 Giddy and restless ; ever and anon
 Quaff'd in his gratitude immoderate cups ;
 And truly might be said to die of joy !
 He vanish'd ; but conspicuous to this day
 The path remains that link'd his cottage-door
 To the mine's mouth ; a long and slanting track.
 Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
 Worn by his daily visits to and from
 The darksome centre of a constant hope.
 This vestige, neither force of beating rain,
 Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw,
 Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away ;
 And it is named, in memory of the event,
 The 'Path of Perseverance.'

“Thou, from whom
 Man has his strength,” exclaim'd the Wanderer, “oh !
 Do thou direct it ! To the virtuous grant
 The penetrative eye which can perceive
 In this blind world the guiding vein of hope,
 That, like this labourer, such may dig their way,
 'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrined ;'
 Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve !”

“That prayer were not superfluous,” said the Priest,
 “Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,
 That Westminster, for Britain's glory, holds
 Within the bosom of her awful pile,
 Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,
 Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due to all,
 Wherever laid, who living fell below
 Their virtue's humbler mark ; a sigh of *pain*
 If to the opposite extreme they sank.
 How would you pity her who yonder rests ;
 Him, farther off ; the pair, who here are laid ;

But, above all, that mixture of earth's mould
 Whom sight of this green hillock to my mind
 Recalls ! *He* lived not till his locks were nipp'd
 By seasonable frost of age ; nor died
 Before his temples, prematurely forced
 To mix the manly brown with silver grey,
 Gave obvious instance of the sad effect
 Produced, when thoughtless folly hath usurp'd
 The natural crown which sage experience wears.
 Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,
 And prompt to exhibit all that he possess'd
 Or could perform ; a zealous actor, hired
 Into the troop of mirth, a soldier—sworn
 Into the lists of giddy enterprise—
 Such was he ; yet, as if within his frame
 Two several souls alternately had lodged,
 Two sets of manners could the youth put on ;
 And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird
 That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,
 Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth and still
 As the mute swan that floats adown the stream.
 Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,
 Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,
 That flutters on the bough, more light than he ;
 And not a flower, that droops in the green shade,
 More winningly reserved ! If ye inquire
 How such consummate elegance was bred
 Amid these wilds ; a composition framed
 Of qualities so adverse—to diffuse,
 Where'er he moved, diversified delight ;
 A simple answer may suffice, even this,—
 'Twas Nature's will ; who sometimes undertakes,
 For the reproof of human vanity,
 Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.
 Hence, for this favourite—lavishly endow'd
 With personal gifts, and bright instinctive wit,
 While both, embellishing each other, stood
 Yet farther recommended by the charm
 Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,
 And skill in letters, every fancy shaped
 Fair expectations ; nor, when to the world's
 Capacious field forth went the adventurer, there
 Were he and his attainments overlook'd,
 Or scantily rewarded ; but all hopes,
 Cherish'd for him, he suffer'd to depart,
 Like blighted buds ; or clouds that mimick'd land
 Before the sailor's eye ; or diamond drops
 That sparkling deck'd the morning grass ; or aught
 That *was* attractive—and hath ceased to be !
 —Yet when this prodigal return'd, the rites
 Of joyful greeting were on him bestow'd,
 Who, by humiliation undeterr'd,
 Sought for his weariness a place of rest
 Within his father's gates. Whence came he ?—cloth'd

In tatter'd garb, from hovels where abides
 Necessity, the stationary host
 Of vagrant poverty ; from rifted barns,
 Where no one dwells but the wide-staring owl
 And the owl's prey ; none permanently house,
 But many harbour ; from these haunts, to which
 He had descended from the proud saloon,
 He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,
 The wreck of gaiety ! But soon revived
 In strength, in power refitted, he renew'd
 His suit to fortune ; and she smiled again
 Upon a fickle ingrate. Thrice he rose,
 Thrice sank as willingly. For he, whose nerves
 Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his voice
 Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,
 By the nice finger of fair ladies touch'd,
 In glittering halls, was able to derive
 Not less enjoyment from an abject choice.
 Who happier for the moment ? who more blithe
 Than this fallen spirit ? in those dreary holds
 His talents lending to exalt the freaks
 Of merrymaking beggars,—now, provoked
 To laughter multiplied in louder peals
 By his malicious wit ; then, all enchain'd
 With mute astonishment, themselves to see
 In their own arts outdone, their fame eclipsed,
 As by the very presence of the fiend
 Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,
 For knavish purposes ! The city, too
 (With shame I speak it), to her guilty bowers
 Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect
 As there to linger, there to eat his bread,
 Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment ;
 Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,
 Listen who would, be wrought upon who might,
 Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.
 Truths I record to many known, for such
 The not unfrequent tenor of his boast,
 In ears that relish'd the report ; but all
 Was from his parents happily conceal'd ;
 Who saw enough for blame and pitying love.
 They also were permitted to receive
 His last, repentant breath ; and closed his eyes,
 No more to open on that irksome world
 Where he had long existed in the state
 Of a young fowl beneath one mother hatch'd,
 Though from another sprung of different kind,
 Where he had lived, and could not cease to live,
 Distracted in propensity ; content
 With neither element of good or ill,
 And yet in both rejoicing ; man unblest ;
 Of contradictions infinite the slave,
 Till his deliverance, when mercy made him
 One with himse'f, and one with those who sleep.*

"'Tis strange," observed the Solitary, "strange
 It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,
 That in a land where charity provides
 For all who can no longer feed themselves,
 A man like this should choose to bring his shame
 To the parental door ; and with his sighs
 Infect the air which he had freely breathed
 In happy infancy. He could not pine,
 Whene'er rejected, howsoe'er forlorn,
 Through lack of converse ; no, he must have found
 Abundant exercise for thought and speech
 In his dividual being, self-review'd,
 Self-catechised, self-punish'd. Some there are
 Who, drawing near their final home, and much
 And daily longing that the same were reach'd,
 Would rather shun than seek the fellowship
 Of kindred mould. Such haply here are laid !"

"Yes," said the Priest, "the genius of our hills—
 Who seems, by these stupendous barriers cast
 Round his domain, desirous not alone
 To keep his own, but also to exclude
 All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,
 Even by this studied depth of privacy,
 The unhappy alien hoping to obtain
 Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,
 In place from outward molestation free,
 Helps to eternal ease. Of many such
 Could I discourse ; but as their stay was brief,
 So their departure only left behind
 Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace
 Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair
 Who, from the pressure of their several fates,
 Meeting as strangers, in a petty town,
 Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach
 Of this far-winding vale, remain'd as friends
 True to their choice ; and gave their bones in trust
 To this loved cemetery, here to lodge
 With unescutcheon'd privacy interr'd
 Far from the family vault. A chieftain one
 By right of birth ; within whose spotless breast
 The fire of ancient Caledonia burn'd :
 He, with the foremost whose impatience hail'd
 The Stuart, landing to resume, by force
 Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,
 Aroused his clan ; and, fighting at their head,
 With his brave sword endeavour'd to prevent
 Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped
 From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores
 He fled ; and when the lenient hand of time
 Those troubles had appeased, he sought and gain'd,
 For his obscured condition, an obscure
 Retreat, within this nook of English ground.

The other, born in Britain's southern tract.

Had fix'd his milder loyalty, and placed
 His gentler sentiments of love and hate
 There, where they placed them who in conscience prized
 The new succession, as a line of kings
 Whose oath had virtue to protect the land
 Against the dire assaults of papacy
 And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark
 On the distemper'd flood of public life,
 And cause for most rare triumph will be thine,
 If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,
 The stream, that bears thee forward, prove not, soon
 Or late, a perilous master. He, who oft,
 Under the battlements and stately trees
 That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,
 Had moralized on this, and other truths
 Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied,
 Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh
 Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitterness,
 When he had crush'd a plentiful estate
 By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat
 In Britain's senate. Fruitless was th' attempt ;
 And while the uproar of that desperate strife
 Continued yet to vibrate on his ear,
 The vanquish'd Whig, beneath a *borrow'd* name
 (For the mere sound and echo of his own
 Haunted him with sensations of disgust
 Which he was glad to lose), slunk from the world
 To the deep shade of these untravell'd wilds ;
 In which the Scottish laird had long possess'd
 An undisturb'd abode. Here, then, they met,
 Two doughty champions ; flaming Jacobite
 And sullen Hanoverian ! You might think
 That losses and vexations less severe
 Than those which they had severally sustain'd,
 Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
 For his ungrateful cause ; no,—I have heard
 My reverend father tell that, 'mid the calm
 Of that small town encountering thus, they fill'd,
 Daily, its bowling-green with harmless strife ;
 Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the church,
 And vex'd the market-place. But in the breasts
 Of these opponents gradually was wrought,
 With little change of general sentiment,
 Such change towards each other, that their days
 By choice were spent in constant fellowship ;
 And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,
 Those very bickerings made them love it more.

“ A favourite boundary to their lengthen'd walks
 This churchyard was. And, whether they had come
 Treading their path in sympathy, and link'd
 In social converse, or by some short space
 Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
 One spirit seldom fail'd to extend its sway

Over both minds, when they awhile had mark'd
 The visible quiet of this holy ground,
 And breathed its soothing air—the spirit of hope
 And saintly magnanimity—that, spurning
 The field of selfish difference and dispute,
 And every care which transitory things,
 Earth, and the kingdoms of the earth create,
 Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,
 Preclude forgiveness, from the praise debarr'd
 Which else the Christian virtue might have claim'd
 There live who yet remember here to have seen
 Their courtly figures, seated on the stump
 Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.
 But, as the remnant of the long-lived tree
 Was disappearing by a swift decay,
 They, with joint care, determined to erect,
 Upon its site, a dial, which should stand
 For public use; and also might survive
 As their own private monument: for this
 Was the particular spot in which they wish'd
 (And Heaven was pleased to accomplish the desire)
 That, undivided, their remains should lie.
 So, where the moulder'd tree had stood, was raised
 Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of steps
 That to the decorated pillar lead,
 A work of art, more sumptuous, as might seem,
 Than suits this place; yet built in no proud scorn
 Of rustic homeliness; they only aim'd
 To insure for it respectful guardianship.
 Around the margin of the plate, whereon
 The shadow falls, to note the stealthy hours,
 Winds an inscriptive legend." At these words
 Thither we turn'd; and gather'd as we read,
 The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couch'd:—
 "Time flies; it is his melancholy task
 To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
 And reproduce the troubles he destroys.
 But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
 Discerning mortal, do thou serve the will
 Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
 Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirm'd!"

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unletter'd muse,"
 Exclaim'd the sceptic, "and the strain of thought
 Accords with Nature's language; the soft voice
 Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks
 Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.
 If, then, their blended influence be not lost
 Upon our hearts—not wholly lost, I grant,
 Even upon mine—the more are we required
 To feel for those among our fellow-men,
 Who, offering no obeisance to the world,
 Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a sense
 Of constant intelicity'—cut off

From peace, like exiles on some barren rock,
 Their life's appointed prison ; not more free
 Than sentinels, 'tween two armies set,
 With nothing better, in the chill night air,
 Than their own thoughts to comfort them. Say why
 That ancient story of Prometheus chain'd ?
 The vulture—th' inexhaustible repast
 Drawn from his vitals. Say what meant the woe
 By Tantalus entail'd upon his race,
 And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes ?
 Fictions in form, but in their substance truths—
 Tremendous truths ! familiar to the men
 Of long-past times ; nor obsolete in ours.
 Exchange the shepherd's frock of native grey
 For robes with regal purple tinged ; convert
 The crook into a sceptre ; give the pomp
 Of circumstance, and here the tragic muse
 Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.
 Amid the groves, beneath the shadowy hills,
 The generations are prepared ; the pangs,
 The internal pangs are ready ; the dread strife
 Of poor humanity's afflicted will
 Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest, in answer, "these be terms
 Which a divine philosophy rejects,
 We, whose establish'd and unfailling trust
 Is in controlling Providence, admit
 That through all stations human life abounds
 With mysteries ; for if Faith were left untried,
 How could the might that lurks within her then
 Be shown ? her glorious excellence—that ranks
 Among the first of powers and virtues—proved ?
 Our system is not fashion'd to preclude
 That sympathy which you for others ask ;
 And I could tell, not travelling for my theme
 Beyond the limits of these humble graves,
 Of strange disasters ; but I pass them by,
 Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hush'd in peace.
 Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat
 Of man degraded in his Maker's sight
 By the deformities of brutish vice :
 For, though from these materials might be framed
 Harsh portraiture, in which a vulgar face
 And a coarse outside of repulsive life
 And unaffected manners may at once
 Be recognized by all—" "Ah ! do not think,"
 The Wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaim'd,
 "Wish could be ours that you, for such poor gain
 (Gain shall I call it ?—gain of what ?—for whom ?)
 Should breathe a word tending to violate
 Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look for
 In slight of that forbearance and reserve
 Which common hyman-heartedness inspires,

And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far
From us to infringe the laws of charity.
Let judgment here in mercy be pronounced;
This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and this
Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind
How, from his lofty throne, the sun can fling
Colours as bright on exhalations bred
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,
As by the rivulet, sparkling where it runs,
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,
"Of such illusion do we here incur;
Temptation here is none to exceed the truth;
No evidence appears that they who rest
Within this ground, were covetous of praise,
Or of remembrance e'en, deserved or not.
Green is the churchyard, beautiful and green,
Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge;
A heaving surface, almost wholly free
From interruption of sepulchral stones,
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf
And everlasting flowers. These dalesmen trust
The lingering gleam of their departed lives
To oral records and the silent heart:
Depository faithful and more kind
Than fondest epitaphs: for, if it fall,
What boots the sculptured tomb? And who can blame
Who rather would not envy, men that feel
This mutual confidence; if from such source
The practice flow,—if thence, or from a deep
And general humility in death?
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring
From disregard of time's destructive power,
As only capable to prey on things
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

"Yet, in less simple districts, where we see
Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone
In courting notice, and the ground all paved
With commendations of departed worth,
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent lives,
Of each domestic charity fulfill'd,
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my part,
Though with the silence pleased which here prevails,
Among those fair recitals also range,
Soothed by the natural spirit which they breathe,
And, in the centre of a world whose soil
Is rank with all unkindness, compass'd round
With such memorials, I have sometimes felt
That 'twas no momentary happiness

To have *one* inclosure where the voice that speaks
 In envy or detraction is not heard ;
 Which malice may not enter ; where the trace
 Of evil inclinations is unknown ;
 Where love and pity tenderly unite
 With resignation ; and no jarring tone
 Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb
 Of amity and gratitude."

" Thus sanction'd,"

The Pastor said, " I willingly confine
 My narrative to subjects that excite
 Feelings with these accordant ; love, esteem,
 And admiration ; lifting up a veil,
 A sunbeam introducing among hearts
 Retired and covert ; so that ye shall have
 Clear images before your gladden'd eyes
 Of Nature's unambitious underwood,
 And flowers that prosper in the shade. And when
 I speak of such among my flock as swerved
 Or fell, those only will I single out
 Upon whose lapse, or error, something more
 Than brotherly forgiveness may attend ;
 To such will we restrict our notice, else
 Better my tongue were mute. And yet there are,
 I feel, good reasons why we should not leave
 Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.
 For strength to persevere and to support,
 And energy to conquer and repel,
 These elements of virtue, that declare
 The native grandeur of the human soul,
 Are ofttimes not unprofitably shown
 In the perverseness of a selfish course :
 Truth every day exemplified, no less,
 In the grey cottage by the murmuring stream
 Than the fantastic conqueror's roving camp,
 Or in the factious senate, unappall'd,
 While merciless proscription ebbs and flows.
 —There," said the Vicar, pointing as he spake,
 " A woman rests in peace ; surpass'd by few
 In power of mind, and eloquent discourse
 Tall was her stature, her complexion dark
 And saturnine ; her port erect, her head
 Not absolutely raised, as if to hold
 Converse with heaven, nor yet depress'd tow'rds earth,
 But in projection carried, as she walk'd
 For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes :
 Wrinkled and furrow'd with habitual thought
 Was her broad forehead ; like the brow of one
 Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful glare
 Of overpowering light.—While yet a child,
 She, 'mid the humble flow'rets of the vale,
 Tower'd like the imperial thistle, not unfurnished
 With its appropriate grace, yet rather framed
 To be admired, than coveted and loved.

Even at that age she ruled as sovereign queen
 Among her playmates ; else their simple sports
 Had wanted power to occupy a mind
 Held in subjection by a strong control
 Of studious application, self-imposed.
 Books were her creditors ; to them she paid,
 With pleasing, anxious eagerness, the hours
 Which they exacted ; were it time allow'd,
 Or seized upon by stealth, or fairly won,
 By stretch of industry from other tasks.
 —Ob ! pang of sorrowful regret for them
 Whom, in their youth, sweet study has enthral'd,
 That they have lived, for harsher servitude,
 Whether in soul, in body, or estate !
 Such doom was hers ; yet nothing could subdue
 Her keen desire of knowledge, or efface
 Those brighter images, by books impress'd
 Upon her memory ; faithfully as stars
 That occupy their places,—and, though oft
 Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimm'd by haze,
 Are not to be extinguish'd, or impair'd.

“ Two passions, both degenerate, for they both
 Began in honour, gradually obtain'd
 Rule over her, and vex'd her daily life ;
 An unrelenting, avaricious thrift,
 And a strange thralldom of maternal love,
 That held her spirit, in its own despite,
 Bound by vexation, and regret, and scorn.
 Constrain'd forgiveness, and relenting vows,
 And tears, in pride suppress'd, in shame conceal'd,
 To a poor dissolute son, her only child.
 Her wedded days had open'd with mishap,
 Whence dire dependence. What could she perform
 To shake the burthen off ? Ah ! there she felt
 Indignantly, the weakness of her sex,
 Th' injustice of her low estate. She mused ;
 Resolved ; adhered to her resolve ; her heart
 Closed by degrees to charity ; and, thence
 Expecting not Heaven's blessing, placed her trust
 In ceaseless pains and parsimonious care,
 Which got, and sternly hoarded each day's gain.

“ Thus all was re-establish'd, and a pile
 Constructed, that sufficed for every end,
 Save the contentment of the builder's mind ;
 A mind by nature indisposed to aught
 So placid, so inactive, as content ;
 A mind intolerant of lasting peace,
 And cherishing the pang which it deplored.
 Dread life of conflict ! which I oft compar'd
 To the agitation of a brook that runs
 Down rocky mountains—buried now and lost
 In silent pools, unfathomably deep ;—
 Now, in a moment, starting forth again

With violence, and proud of its escape ;
Until it sink once more, by slow degrees,
Or instantly, into as dark repose.

“A sudden illness seized her in the strength
Of life's autumnal season. Shall I tell
How on her bed of death the matron lay,
To Providence submissive, so she thought ;
But fretted, vex'd, and wrought upon—almost
To anger, by the malady that griped
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,
As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb.
She pray'd, she moan'd—her husband's sister watch'd
Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs ;
And yet the very sound of that kind foot
Was anguish to her ears ! ‘And must she rule,
This was the dying woman heard to say
In bitterness, ‘and must she rule and reign,
Sole mistress of this house, when I am gone ?
Sit by my fire—possess what I possess'd—
Tend what I tended, calling it her own !’
Enough—I fear, too much. Of nobler feeling
Take this example. One autumnal eve,
While she was yet in prime of health and strength,
I well remember, while I pass'd her door,
Musing with loitering step, and upward eye .
Turn'd tow'rds the planet Jupiter that hung
Above the centre of the vale, a voice
Roused me—her voice ; it said, “That glorious star
In its untroubled element, will shine
As now it shines, when we are laid in earth
And safe from all our sorrows.” She is safe,
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,
And harsh unkindnesses, are all forgiv'n,
Though in this vale remember'd with deep awe !”

The Vicar paused ; and tow'rds a seat advanced
A long stone seat, framed in the churchyard wall
Part under shady sycamore, and part
Offering a place of rest in pleasant sunshine,
Even as may suit the comers, old or young,
Who seek the house of worship, while the bells
Yet ring with all their voices, or before
The last hath ceased its solitary knell.
To this commodious resting-place he led ;
Where, by his side, we all sat down ; and there
His office, uninvited, he resumed.

“As, on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March,
Screen'd by its parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour ; the small heap
Speaks for itself ; an infant there doth rest,
The sheltering hillock is the mother's grave.
If mild discourse, and manners that conferr'd

A natural dignity on humblest rank ;
 If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,
 That for a face not beautiful did more
 Than beauty for the fairest face can do ;
 And if religious tenderness of heart,
 Grieving for sin, and penitential tears
 Shed when the clouds had gather'd and disstrain'd
 The spotless ether of a maiden life ;
 If these may make a hallow'd spot of earth
 More holy in the sight of God or man ;
 Then, on that mould, a sanctity shall brood,
 Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

“ Ah ! what a warning for a thoughtless man,
 Could field or grove, or any spot of earth,
 Show to his eye an image of the pangs
 Which it hath witness'd—render back an echo
 Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod !
 There, by her innocent baby's precious grave,
 Yea, doubtless on the turf that roofs her own,
 The mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel
 In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
 Now she is not ; the swelling turf reports
 Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's tears
 Is silent ; nor is any vestige left
 Upon the pathway, of her mournful tread ;
 Nor of that pace with which she once had moved
 In virgin fearlessness, a step that seem'd
 Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
 Upon the mountains wet with morning dew,
 In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.
 Serious and thoughtful was her mind ; and yet,
 By reconcilment exquisite and rare,
 The form, port, motions, of this cottage girl
 Were such as might have quicken'd and inspired
 A Titian's hand, address'd to picture forth
 Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade
 When first the hunter's startling horn is heard
 Upon the golden hills. A spreading elm
 Stands in our valley, call'd 'the Joyful Tree ;'
 An elm distinguish'd by that festive name,
 From dateless usage which our peasants hold
 Of giving welcome to the first of May
 By dances round its trunk. And if the sky
 Permit, like honours, dance and song, are paid
 To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty stars
 Or the clear moon. The queen of these gay sports,
 If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,
 Was hapless Ellen. No one touch'd the ground
 So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
 Less gracefully were braided ; but this praise,
 Methinks, would better suit another place.

“ She loved, and fondly deem'd herself beloved.
 The road is dim, the current unperceived,

The weakness painful and most pitiful,
 By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,
 May be deliver'd to distress and shame.
 Such fate was hers. The last time Ellen danced
 Among her equals round 'the Joyful Tree,'
 She bore a secret burthen; and full soon
 Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—
 Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,
 Alone, within her widow'd mother's house.
 It was the season sweet of budding leaves,
 Of days advancing tow'rds their utmost length,
 And small birds singing to their happy mates.
 Wild is the music of the autumnal wind
 Among the faded woods; but these blithe notes
 Strike the deserted to the heart: I speak
 Of what I know, and what we feel within.
 Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt
 Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost twig
 A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
 At morn and evening, from that naked perch,
 While all the undergrove is thick with leaves,
 A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
 Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.
 'Ah! why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
 'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge,
 'And nature that is kind in woman's breast,
 'And reason that in man is wise and good,
 'And fear of Him who is a righteous judge;
 'Why do not these prevail for human life,
 'To keep two hearts together that began
 'Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
 'Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
 'To grant, or be received, while that poor bird
 '—O come and hear him! Thou who hast to me
 'Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly creature,
 'One of God's simple children that yet know not
 'The universal Parent, how he sings
 'As if he wish'd the firmament of heaven
 'Should listen, and give back to him the voice
 'Of his triumphant constancy and love;
 'The proclamation that he makes, how far
 'His darkness doth transcend our fickle light!'

“Such was the tender passage, not by me
 Repeated without loss of simple phrase,
 Which I perused, even as the words had been
 Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand
 To the blank margin of a valentine,
 Bedropp'd with tears. 'Twill please you to be told
 That, studiously withdrawing from the eye
 Of all companionship, the sufferer yet
 In lonely reading found a meek resource.
 How thankful for the warmth of summer days,
 And their long twilight!—friendly to that stealth

With which she snapp'd into the cottage barn,
 And found a secret oratory there ;
 Or, in the garden, pored upon her book
 By the last lingering help of open sky,
 Till the dark night dismiss'd her to her bed.
 Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose
 The unconquerable pang of despised love.

“ A kindlier passion open'd on her soul
 When that poor child was born. Upon its face
 She look'd as on a pure and spotless gift
 Of unexpected promise, where a grief
 Or dread was all that had been thought of—joy
 Far sweeter than bewilder'd traveller feels
 Upon a perilous waste, where all night long
 Through darkness he hath toil'd and fearful storm.
 When he beholds the first pale speck serene
 Of day-spring in the gloomy east reveal'd,
 And greets it with thanksgiving. ‘ Till this hour,
 Thus in her mother's hearing Ellen spake,
 ‘ There was a stony region in my heart ;
 ‘ But He, at whose command the parched rock
 ‘ Was smitten, and pour'd forth a quenching stream,
 ‘ Hath soften'd that obduracy, and made
 ‘ Unlook'd-for gladness in the desert place,
 ‘ To save the perishing ; and, henceforth, I look
 ‘ Upon the light with cheerfulness, for thee
 ‘ My infant ! and for that good mother dear,
 ‘ Who bore me, and hath pray'd for me in vain ;
 ‘ Yet not in vain,—it shall not be in vain.’
 She spake, nor was the assurance unfulfill'd,
 And if heart-rending thoughts would oft return,
 They stay'd not long. The blameless infant grew ;
 The child whom Ellen and her mother loved
 They soon were proud of ; tended it and nursed,
 A soothing comforter, although forlorn ;
 Like a poor singing-bird from distant lands ;
 Or a choice shrub, which he who passes by
 With vacant mind, not seldom may observe
 Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,
 Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

“ Through four months' space the infant drew its food
 From the maternal breast : then scruples rose ;
 Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and cross'd
 The sweet affection. She no more could bear
 By her offence to lay a twofold weight
 On a kind parent willing to forget
 Their slender means ; so, to that parent's care
 Trusting her child, she left their common home,
 And with contented spirit undertook
 A foster-mother's office.

“ 'Tis, perchance,
 Unknown to you that in these simple vales

The natural feeling of equality
 Is by domestic service unimpair'd ;
 Yet, though such service be, with us, removed
 From sense of degradation, not the less
 The ungentle mind can easily find means
 To impose severe restraints and laws unjust ;
 Which hapless Ellen now was doom'd to feel.

“ In selfish blindness, for I will not say
 In naked and deliberate cruelty,
 The pair, whose infant she was bound to nurse,
 Forbad her all communion with her own.
 They argued that such meeting would disturb
 The mother's mind, distract her thoughts, and thus
 Unfit her for her duty ; in which dread,
 Week after week, the mandate was enforced.
 So near ! yet not allow'd, upon that sight
 To fix her eyes—alas ! 'twas hard to bear !
 But worse affliction must be borne—far worse !
 For 'tis Heaven's will, that, after a disease
 Begun and ended within three days' space,
 Her child should die ; as Ellen now exclaim'd,
 Her own, deserted child ! Once, only once,
 She saw it in that mortal malady ;
 And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain
 Permission to attend its obsequies.
 She reach'd the house—last of the funeral train ;
 And some one, as she enter'd, having chanced
 To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
 ' Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
 Of anger never seen in her before,
 ' Nay, ye must wait my time !' and down she sat,
 And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat,
 Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping
 Upon the last sweet slumber of her child,
 Until at length her soul was satisfied.

“ You see the infant's grave ; and to this spot
 The mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
 And whatsoe'er the errand, urged her steps ;
 Hither she came ; and here she stood, or knelt
 In the broad day—a rueful Magdalene !
 So call her ; for not only she bewail'd
 A mother's loss, but mourn'd in bitterness
 Her own transgression ; penitent sincere
 As ever raised to Heaven a streaming eye.
 At length the parents of the foster-child,
 Noting that in despite of their commands,
 She still renew'd, and could not but renew,
 Those visitations, ceased to send her forth,
 Or, to the garden's narrow bounds confined,
 I fall'd not to remind them that they err'd ;
 For holy Nature might not thus be cross'd,
 Thus wrong'd in woman's breast : in vain I pleaded :
 But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapp'd,

And the flower droop'd ; as every one could see,
 It hung its head in mortal languishment.
 Aided by this appearance, I at length
 Prevail'd ; and, from those bonds released, she went
 Home to her mother's house. The youth was fled ;
 The rash betrayer could not face the shame
 Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused ;
 And little would his presence, or proof given
 Of a relenting soul, have now avail'd ;
 For, like a shadow, he was past away
 From Ellen's thoughts ; had perish'd to her mind
 For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,
 Save only those which to their common shame,
 And to his moral being, appertain'd.
 Hope from that quarter would, I know, have brought
 A heavenly comfort : there she recognized
 An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need ;
 There, and, as seem'd, there only. She had raised,
 Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest
 In blindness all too near the river's edge ;
 That work a summer flood with hasty swell
 Had swept away, and now her spirit long'd
 For its last flight to heaven's security.
 The bodily frame was wasted day by day ;
 Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,
 Her mind she strictly tutor'd to find peace
 And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought,
 And much she read, and brooded feelingly
 Upon her own unworthiness. To me,
 As to a spiritual comforter and friend,
 Her heart she open'd, and no pains were spared
 To mitigate, as gently as I could,
 The sting of self-reproach with healing words.
 Meek saint—through patience glorified on earth !
 In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sat,
 The ghastly face of cold decay put on
 A sun-like beauty, and appear'd divine !
 May I not mention, that, within these walls,
 In due observance of her pious wish,
 The congregation join'd with me in prayer
 For her soul's good ? Nor was that office vain.
 Much did she suffer ; but if any friend,
 Beholding her condition, at the sight
 Gave way to words of pity or complaint,
 She still'd them with a prompt reproof, and said :
 ' He who afflicts me knows what I can bear,
 And when I fail, and can endure no more,
 Will mercifully take me to Himself.'
 So, through the cloud of death her spirit pass'd
 Into that pure and unknown world of love
 Where injury cannot come : and here is laid
 The mortal body by her infant's side."

The Vicar ceased, and downcast looks made known

That each had listen'd with his inmost heart.
 For me, the emotion scarcely was less strong
 Or less benign than that which I had felt
 When, seated near my venerable friend,
 Beneath those shady elms, from him I heard
 The story that retraced the slow decline
 Of Margaret sinking on the lonely heath,
 With the neglected house in which she dwelt.
 I noted that the Solitary's cheek
 Confess'd the power of nature. Pleased, though sad,
 More pleased than sad, the grey-hair'd Wand'rer sate,
 Thanks to his pure imaginative soul,
 Capacious and serene ; his blameless life,
 His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and love
 Of human kind ! He was it who first broke
 The pensive silence, saying, " Blest are they
 Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong
 Than to do wrong, although themselves have err'd.
 This tale gives proof that Heaven most gently deals
 With such in their affliction. Ellen's fate,
 Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,
 Call to my mind dark hints which I have heard
 Of one who died within this vale, by doom
 Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.
 Where, sir, I pray you, where are laid the bones
 Of Wilfred Armathwaite ?" The Vicar answer'd :—
 " In that green nook, close by the churchyard wall,
 Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself
 In memory and for warning, and in sign
 Of sweetness, where dire anguish had been known,
 Of reconciliation after deep offence,
 There doth he lie. In this, his native vale,
 He own'd and till'd a little plot of land ;
 Here, with his consort and his children saw
 Days that were seldom cross'd by petty strife,
 Years safe from large misfortune ; and maintain'd
 That course which minds, of insight not too keen,
 Might look on with entire complacency.
 Yet, in himself and near him, there were faults
 At work to undermine his happy state
 By sure, though tardy, progress. Active, prompt,
 And lively was the housewife ; in the vale
 None more industrious ; but her industry,
 Ill-judged, full oft, and specious, tended more
 To splendid neatness, to a showy, trim,
 And overlabour'd purity of house,
 Than to substantial thrift. He, on his part,
 Generous and easy-minded, was not free
 From carelessness ; and thus, in lapse of time,
 These joint infirmities induced decay
 Of worldly substance ; and distress of mind,
 That to a thoughtful man was hard to shun,
 And which he could not cure. A blooming girl
 Served in the house, a favourite that had grown

Beneath his eye, encouraged by his care.
 Poor now in tranquil pleasure, he gave way
 To thoughts of troubled pleasure; he became
 A lawless suitor to the maid; and she
 Yielded unworthily. Unhappy man!
 That which he had been weak enough to do
 Was misery in remembrance; he was stung,
 Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the smiles
 Of wife and children stung to agony.
 Wretched at home, he gain'd no peace abroad;
 Ranged through the mountains, slept upon the earth,
 Ask'd comfort of the open air, and found
 No quiet in the darkness of the night,
 No pleasure in the beauty of the day.
 His flock he slighted; his paternal fields
 Became a clog to him, whose spirit wish'd
 To fly—but whither? And this gracious church,
 That wears a look so full of peace and hope
 And love, benignant mother of the vale,
 How fair amid her brood of cottages!
 She was to him a sickness and reproach.
 Much to the last remain'd unknown; but this
 Is sure, that through remorse and grief he died;
 Though pitied among men, absolved by God,
 He could not find forgiveness in himself;
 Nor could endure the weight of his own shame.

"Here rests a mother. But from her I turn,
 And from her grave. Behold—upon that ridge,
 Which, stretching boldly from the mountain side,
 Carries into the centre of the vale
 Its rocks and woods—the cottage where she dwelt;
 And where yet dwells her faithful partner, left
 (Full eight years past) the solitary prop
 Of many helpless children. I begin
 With words which might be prelude to a tale
 Of sorrow and dejection; but I feel
 No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes
 See daily in that happy family.
 Bright garland form they for the pensive brow
 Of their undrooping father's widowhood.
 Those six fair daughters, budding yet—not one,
 Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower.
 Depress'd and desolate of soul, as once
 That father was, and fill'd with anxious fear,
 Now by experience taught, he stands assured,
 That God, who takes away, yet takes not half
 Of what He seems to take; or gives it back,
 Not to our prayer, but far beyond our prayer;
 He gives it—the boon produce of a soil
 Which our endeavours have refused to till,
 And hope hath never water'd. The abode
 Whose grateful owner can attest these truths,
 Even were the object nearer to our sight,

Would seem in no distinction to surpass
 The rudest habitations. Ye might think
 That it had sprung self-raised from earth, or grown
 Out of the living rock, to be adorn'd
 By nature only ; but, if thither led,
 Ye would discover, then, a studious work
 Of many fancies prompting many hands.
 Brought from the woods, the honeysuckle twines
 Around the porch, and seems, in that trim place,
 A plant no longer wild ; the cultured rose
 There blossoms, strong in health, and will be soo
 Roof-high ; the wild pink crowns the garden wall
 And with the flowers are intermingled stones
 Sparry and bright, the scatterings of the hills.
 These ornaments that fade not with the year,
 A hardy girl continues to provide ;
 Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights,
 Her father's prompt attendant, does for him
 All that a boy could do—but with delight
 More keen, and prouder daring ; yet hath she
 Within the garden, like the rest, a bed
 For her own flowers and favourite herbs—a space
 By sacred charter holden, for her use.
 These, and whatever else the garden bears
 Of fruit or flower, permission ask'd or not.
 I freely gather ; and my leisure draws
 A not unfrequent pastime from the sight
 Of the bees murmuring round their shelter'd hives
 In that inclosure ! while the mountain rill,
 That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes his voice
 To the pure course of human life, which there
 Flows on in solitude from year to year.
 But at the closing in of night, then most
 This dwelling charms me. Cover'd by the gloom,
 Then, in my walks, I oftentimes stop short
 (Who could refrain ?) and feed by stealth my sight
 With prospect of the company within,
 Laid open through the blazing window ;—there
 I see the eldest daughter at her wheel
 Spinning amain, as if to overtake
 The never-halting time ; or, in her turn,
 Teaching some novice of the sisterhood
 That skill in this, or other household work,
 Which, from her father's honour'd hand, herself,
 While she was yet a little one, had learn'd.
 Mild man ! he is not gay, but they are gay ;
 And the whole house seems fill'd with gaiety.
 Thrice happy, then, the mother may be deem'd,
 The wife, who rests beneath that turf, from which
 I turn'd, that ye in mind might witness where
 And how her spirit yet survives on earth !

“The next three ridges—those upon the left—
 By close connection with our present thought.

Tempt me to add, in praise of humble worth,
 Their brief and unobtrusive history.
 One hillock, ye may note, is small and low,
 Sunk almost to a level with the plain
 By weight of time ; the others, undepress'd,
 Are bold and swelling. There a husband sleeps,
 Deposited, in pious confidence
 Of glorious resurrection with the just,
 Near the loved partner of his early days ;
 And, in the bosom of that family mould,
 A second wife is gather'd to his side ;
 The approved assistant of an arduous course
 From his mid-noon of manhood to old age !
 He also of his mate deprived, was left
 Alone—'mid many children ; one a babe
 Orphan'd as soon as born. Alas ! 'tis not
 In course of nature that a father's wing
 Should warm these little ones ; and can he feed ?
 That was a thought of agony more keen.
 For, hand in hand with death, by strange mishap
 And chance encounter on their diverse road,
 The ghastlier shape of poverty had enter'd
 Into that house, unfear'd and unforeseen.
 He had stepp'd forth in time of urgent need,
 The generous surety of a friend ; and now
 The widow'd father found that all his rights
 In his paternal fields were undermined :
 Landless he was and penniless. The dews
 Of night and morn, that wet the mountain sides,
 The bright stars twinkling on their dusky tops,
 Were conscious of the pain that drove him forth
 From his own door, he knew not when to range—
 He knew not where ; distracted was his brain,
 His heart was cloven ; and full oft he pray'd,
 In blind despair, that God would take them all.
 —But suddenly, as if in one kind moment
 To encourage and reprove, a gleam of light
 Broke from the very bosom of that cloud
 Which darken'd the whole prospect of his days.
 For he, who now possess'd the joyless right
 To force the bondsman from his house and lands,
 In pity, and by admiration urged
 Of his un murmuring and considerate mind,
 Meekly submissive to the law's decree,
 Lighten'd the penalty with liberal hand.
 The desolate father raised his head, and look'd
 On the wide world in hope. Within these walls,
 In course of time was solemnized the vow
 Whereby a virtuous woman, of grave years
 And of prudential habits, undertook
 The sacred office of a wife to him,
 Of mother to his helpless family.
 Nor did she fail—in nothing did she fail,
 Through various exercise of twice ten years,

Save in some partial fondness for that child
 Which at the birth she had received, the babe
 Whose heart had known no mother but herself,
 —By mutual efforts, by united hopes,
 By daily-growing help of boy and girl,
 Train'd early to participate that zeal
 Of industry, which runs before the day
 And lingers after it ; by strong restraint
 Of an economy which did not check
 The heart's more generous motions tow'rd's themselves
 Or to their neighbours ; and by trust in God,
 This pair insensibly subdued the fears
 And troubles that beset their life : and thus
 Did the good father and his second mate
 Redeem at length their plot of smiling fields.
 These, at this day, the eldest son retains :
 The younger offspring, through the busy world,
 Have all been scatter'd wide, by various fates ;
 But each departed from the native vale,
 In beauty flourishing, and moral worth !"

BOOK VII.

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS—CONTINUED.

Impression of these narratives upon the author's mind—Pastor invited to give account of certain graves that lie apart—Clergyman and his family—Fortunate influence of change of situation—Activity in extreme old age—Another clergyman, a character of resolute virtue—Lamentations over mis-directed applause—Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man—Elevated character of a blind man—Reflection upon blindness—Interrupted by a peasant who passes—His animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity—He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting trees—A female infant's grave : joy at her birth ; sorrow at her departure—A youthful peasant—His patriotic enthusiasm—Distinguished qualities—And untimely death—Exultation of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this picture—Solitary how affected—Monument of a knight—Traditions concerning him—Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the revolutions of society—Hints at his own past calling—Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the historian pass'd,
 The words he utter'd, and the scene that lay
 Before our eyes, awaken'd in my mind
 Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours,
 When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale
 (What time the splendour of the setting sun
 Lay beautiful on Snowdon's craggy top,
 On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmair),
 A wandering youth, I listen'd with delight
 To pastoral melody or warlike air,
 Drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp
 By some accomplish'd master ; while he sat
 Amid the quiet of the green recess,
 And there did inexhaustibly dispense
 An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,

Tender or blithe ; now, as the varying mood
 Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice
 From youth or maiden, or some honour'd chief
 Of his compatriot villagers (that hung
 Around him, drinking in the impassion'd notes
 Of the time-hallow'd minstrelsy) required
 For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains of power
 Were they, to seize and occupy the sense ;
 But to a higher mark than song can reach
 Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream
 Which overflow'd the soul was pass'd away,
 A consciousness remain'd that it had left,
 Deposited upon the silent shore
 Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
 That shall not die, and cannot be destroy'd.

“ These grassy heaps lie amicably close,”
 Said I, “ like surges heaving in the wind
 Upon the surface of a mountain pool :
 Whence comes it, then, that yonder we behold
 Five graves, and only five, that lie apart,
 Unsociable company and sad ;
 And, furthermore, appearing to encroach
 On the smooth playground of the village-school ? ”

The Vicar answer'd : “ No disdainful pride
 In them who rest beneath, nor any course
 Of strange or tragic accident, hath help'd
 To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.
 —Once more look forth, and follow with your eyes
 The length of road which from yon mountain's base
 Through bare inclosures stretches, till its line
 Is lost among a little tuft of trees ;
 Then, reappearing in a moment, quits
 The cultured fields, and up the heathy waste,
 Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,
 Towards an easy outlet of the vale.
 That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,
 By which the road is hidden, also hides
 A cottage from our view ; though I discern
 (Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees
 The smokeless chimney-top. All unembower'd
 And naked stood that lowly parsonage
 (For such in truth it is, and appertains
 To a small chapel in the vale beyond)
 When hither came its last inhabitant.

“ Rough and forbidding were the choicest roads
 By which our northern wilds could then be cross'd ;
 And into most of these secluded vales
 Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
 So, at his dwelling-place the priest arrived
 With store of household goods, in panniers slung
 On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,
 And on the back of more ignoble beast,
 That, with like burthen of effects most priz'd

Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.
 Young was I then, a school-boy of eight years ;
 But still, methinks, I see them as they pass'd
 In order, drawing tow'rds their wish'd-for home.
 —Rock'd by the motion of a trusty ass
 Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised freight,
 Each in his basket nodding drowsily ;
 Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with flowers,
 Which told that 'twas the pleasant month of June ;
 And, close behind, the comely matron rode,
 A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,
 And with a lady's mien.—From far they came,
 Even from Northumbrian hills ; yet theirs had been
 A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheer'd
 By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest ;
 And freak put on, and arch word dropp'd, to swell
 The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
 That gather'd round the slowly-moving train.
 ' Whence do they come ? and with what errand charged !
 Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
 Who pitch their tents beneath the green-wood tree ?
 Or are they strollers, furnish'd to enact
 Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the Wood,
 And, by that whisker'd tabby's aid, set forth
 The lucky venture of sage Whittington,
 When the next village hears the show announced
 By blast of trumpet ? ' Plenteous was the growth
 Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen
 On many a staring countenance portray'd
 Of boor or burgher, as they march'd along.
 And more than once their steadiness of face
 Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
 To their inventive humour, by stern looks,
 And questions in authoritative tone,
 From some staid guardian of the public peace,
 Checking the sober steed on which he rode,
 In his suspicious wisdom ; oftener still
 By notice indirect, or blunt demand
 From traveller halting in his own despite,
 A simple curiosity to ease :
 Of which adventures, that beguiled and cheer'd
 Their grave migration, the good pair would tell,
 With undiminish'd glee, in hoary age.

“ A priest he was by function ; but his course
 From his youth up, and high as manhood's noon
 (The hour of life to which he then was brought),
 Had been irregular ; I might say, wild ;
 By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care
 Too little check'd. An active, ardent mind ;
 A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme
 To cheat the sadness of a rainy day ;
 Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games ;
 A generous spirit, and a body strong
 To cope with stoutest champions of the bowl ;

Had earn'd for him sure welcome, and the rights
 Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall
 Of country squire ; or at the statelier board
 Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly pomp
 Withdrawn,—to while away the summer hours
 In condescension among rural guests.

“ With these high comrades he had revell'd long,
 Had frolick'd many a year ; a simple clerk
 By hopes of coming patronage beguiled
 And vex'd, until the weary heart grew sick ;
 And so, abandoning each higher aim
 And all his showy friends, at length he turn'd
 For a life's stay, though slender, yet assured,
 To this remote and humble chapelry ;
 Which had been offer'd to his doubtful choice
 By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and bare
 They found the cottage, their allotted home :
 Naked without, and rude within ; a spot
 With which the scantily-provided cure
 Not long had been endow'd ; and far remote
 The chapel stood, divided from that house
 By an unpeopled tract of mountain waste.
 Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might hang
 On his own mind, to quarrel with the choice
 Or the necessity that fix'd him here ;
 Apart from old temptations, and constrain'd
 To punctual labour in his sacred charge.
 See him a constant preacher to the poor !
 And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,
 Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,
 The sick in body, or distress'd in mind ;
 And, by as salutary change compell'd,
 Month after month, in that obscure abode
 To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day
 With no engagement, in his thoughts, more proud
 Or splendid than his garden could afford,
 His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock ranged,
 Or these wild brooks ; from which he now return'd
 Contentedly to make a temperate meal
 At his own board, where sat his gentle mate
 And three fair children plentifully fed,
 Though simply, from their little household farm ;
 With acceptable treat of fish or fowl
 By nature yielded to his practised hand ;—
 To help the small but certain comings-in
 Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less
 Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs
 A charitable door. So days and years
 Pass'd on ;—the inside of that rugged house
 Was trimm'd and brighten'd by the matron's care,
 And gradually enrich'd with things of price,
 Which might be lack'd for use or ornament.
 What, though no soft and costly sofa there
 Insidiously stretch'd out its lazy length,

And no vain mirror glitter'd on the walls,
 Yet were the windows of the low abode
 By shutters weather-fenced, which at once
 Repell'd the storm and deaden'd its loud roar.
 There, snow white curtains hung in decent folds ;
 Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain plants,
 That creep along the ground with sinuous trail,
 Were nicely braided ; and composed a work
 Like Indian mats, that with appropriate grace
 Lay at the threshold and the inner doors ;
 And a fair carpet, woven of home-spun wool,
 But tintured daintily with florid hues,
 For seemliness and warmth, on festive days,
 Cover'd the smooth blue slabs of mountain stone
 With which the parlour-floor, in simplest guise
 Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid.
 These pleasing works the housewife's skill produced :
 Meanwhile the unседentary master's hand
 Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,
 To rear for food, for shelter, and delight ;
 A thriving covert ! And when wishes, form'd
 In youth, and sanction'd by the riper mind,
 Restered me to my native valley, here
 To end my days ; well pleased was I to see
 The once bare cottage, on the mountain-side,
 Screen'd from assault of every bitter blast ;
 While the dark shadows of the summer leaves
 Danced in the breeze, upon its mossy roof.
 Time, which had thus afforded willing help
 To beautify with Nature's fairest growth
 This rustic tenement, had gently shed,
 Upon its master's frame a wintry grace ;
 The comeliness of unenfeebled age.
 But how could I say, gently ? for he still
 Retain'd a flashing eye, a burning palm,
 A stirring foot, and head which beat at nights
 Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
 Few likings had he dropp'd, few pleasures lost ;
 Generous and charitable, prompt to serve ;
 And still his harsher passions kept their hold—
 Anger and indignation. Still he loved
 The sound of titled names, and talk'd in glee
 Of long-past banquetings with high-born friends :
 Then, from these lulling fits of vain delight
 Uproused by recollected injury, rail'd
 At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft
 In bitterness, and with a threatening eye
 Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.
 These transports, with staid looks of pure good-will,
 And with soft smile, his consort would reprove.
 She, far behind him in the race of years,
 Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced
 Far nearer, in the habit of her soul.
 To that still region whither all are bound.

Him might we liken to the setting sun
 As I have seen it, on some gusty day
 Struggling and bold, and shining from the west
 With an inconstant and unmellow'd light ;
 She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung
 As if with wish to veil the restless orb,
 From which it did itself imbibe a ray
 Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this ;
 I better love to sprinkle on the sod
 Which now divides the pair, or rather say
 Which still unites them, praises, like heaven's dew,
 Without distinction falling upon both.
 Yoke-fellows were they long and well approved
 To endure and to perform.

“ With frugal pains,

Yet in a course of generous discipline,
 Did this poor churchman and his consort rear
 Their progeny. Of three—sent forth to try
 The paths of fortune in the open world,
 One, not endow'd with firmness to resist
 The suit of pleasure, to his native vale
 Return'd and humbly till'd his father's glebe.
 The youngest daughter, too, in duty stay'd
 To lighten her declining mother's care.
 But, ere the bloom was past away which health
 Preserved to adorn a cheek no longer young,
 Her heart, in course of nature, finding place
 For new affections, to the holy state
 Of wedlock they conducted her ; but still
 The bride adhering to those filial cares,
 Dwelt with her mate beneath her father's roof.

“ Our very first in eminence of years
 This old man stood, the patriarch of the vale !
 And, to his unmolested mansion, death
 Had never come, through space of forty years ;
 Sparing both old and young in that abode.
 Suddenly then they disappear'd : not twice
 Had summer scorch'd the fields ; not twice had fallen,
 On those high peaks, the first autumnal snow,
 Before the greedy visiting was closed,
 And the long-privileged house left empty—swept
 As by a plague : yet no rapacious plague
 Had been among them ; all was gentle death,
 One after one, with intervals of peace.
 A happy consummation ! an accord
 Sweet, perfect, to be wish'd for ! save that here
 Was something which to mortal sense might sound
 Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed sire,
 The oldest, he was taken last, survived
 When the meek partner of his age, his son,
 His daughter, and that late and high-prized gift,
 His little smiling grandchild, were no more.

All gone, all vanish'd ! he deprived and bare,

How will he face the remnant of his life?
 What will become of him? we said, and mused
 In sad conjectures—‘Shall we meet him now
 Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks?
 Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
 Striving to entertain the lonely hours
 With music?’ (for he had not ceased to touch
 The harp or viol which himself had framed,
 For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.)
 ‘What titles will he keep? will he remain
 Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
 A planter and a rearer from the seed?
 A man of hope and forward-looking mind
 Even to the last!’—Such was he, unsubdued.
 But Heaven was gracious; yet a little while,
 And this survivor, with his cheerful throng
 Of open schemes, and all his inward hoard
 Of unsunn’d griefs, too many and too keen,
 Was overcome by unexpected sleep,
 In one blest moment. Like a shadow thrown
 Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
 Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay
 For noontide solace on the summer grass,
 The warm lap of his mother earth: and so,
 Their lenient term of separation past,
 That family (whose graves you there behold)
 By yet a higher privilege once more
 Were gather’d to each other.”

Calm of mind

And silence waited on these closing words;
 Until the Wanderer (whether moved by fear
 Lest in these passages of life were some
 That might have touch’d the sick heart of his friend
 Too nearly, or intent to reinforce
 His own firm spirit in degree depress’d
 By tender sorrow for our mortal state)
 Thus silence broke:—“Behold a thoughtless man
 From vice and premature decay preserved
 By useful habits, to a fitter soil
 Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit, lodged
 In the untrodden desert, tells his beads,
 With each repeating its allotted prayer,
 And thus divides and thus relieves the time;
 Smooth task, with his compared! whose mind could string,
 Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread
 Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile
 A solitude, unchosen, unprofess’d,
 Till gentlest death released him. Far from us
 Be the desire—too curiously to ask
 How much of this is but the blind result
 Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,
 And what to higher powers is justly due.
 But you, sir, know that in a neighbouring vale

A priest abides before whose life such doubts
 Fall to the ground ; whose gifts of nature lie
 Retired from notice, lost in attributes
 Of reason, honourably effaced by debts
 Which her poor treasure-house is content to owe,
 And conquests over her dominion gain'd,
 To which her frowardness must needs submit.
 In this one man is shown a temperance, proof
 Against all trials ; industry severe
 And constant as the motion of the day ;
 Stern self-denial round him spread, with shade
 That might be deem'd forbidding, did not there
 All generous feelings flourish and rejoice ;
 Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,
 And resolution competent to take
 Out of the bosom of simplicity
 All that her holy customs recommend,
 And the best ages of the world prescribe.
 Preaching, administering, in every work
 Of his sublime vocation, in the walks
 Of worldly intercourse 'twixt man and man,
 And in his humble dwelling, he appears
 A labourer, with moral virtue girt,
 With spiritual graces, like a glory, crown'd."

" Doubt can be none," the Pastor said, " for whom
 This portraiture is sketch'd. The great, the good,
 The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise,—
 These titles emperors and chiefs have borne,
 Honour assumed or given : and him the ' Wonderful,'
 Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart,
 Deservedly have styled.—From his abode
 In a dependent chapelry, that lies
 Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,
 Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,—
 And, having once espoused, would never quit ;
 Hither, ere long, that lowly, great, good man
 Will be convey'd. An unelaborate stone
 May cover him ; and by its help, perchance,
 A century shall hear his name pronounced,
 With images attendant on the sound ;
 Then shall the slowly-gathering twilight close
 In utter night ; and of his course remain
 No cognizable vestiges, no more
 Than of this breath, which frames itself in words
 To speak of him, and instantly dissolves.
 —Noise is there not enough in doleful war,
 But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,
 And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,
 To multiply and aggravate the din ?
 Pangs are there not enough in hopeless love—
 And, in requited passion, all too much
 Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—
 But that the minstrel of the rural shade

Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse
 The perturbation in the suffering breast,
 And propagate its kind, where'er he may?
 —Ah who (and with such rapture as befits
 The hallow'd theme) will rise and celebrate
 The good man's deeds and purposes; retrace
 His struggles, his discomfiture deplore,
 His triumphs hail, and glorify his end?
 That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury clouds
 Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain,
 And like the soft infections of the heart,
 By charm of measured words may spread through field,
 And cottages; and piety survive
 Upon the lips of men in hall or bower;
 Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,
 And grave encouragement, by song inspired.
 —Vain thought! but wherefore murmur or repine?
 The memory of the just survives in heaven:
 And, without sorrow, will this ground receive
 That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best
 Of what it holds confines us to degrees
 In excellence less difficult to reach,
 And milder worth: nor need we travel far
 From those to whom our last regards were paid,
 For such example.

Almost at the root
 Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare
 And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,
 Oft stretches tow'rd's me, like a long straight path
 Traced faintly in the green-sward; there beneath
 A plain blue stone, a gentle dalesman lies,
 From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn
 The precious gift of hearing. He grew up
 From year to year in loneliness of soul;
 And this deep mountain valley was to him
 Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn
 Did never rouse this cottager from sleep
 With startling summons; nor for his delight
 The vernal cuckoo shouted; nor for him
 Murmur'd the labouring bee. When stormy winds
 Were working the broad bosom of the lake
 Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,
 Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud
 Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,
 The agitated scene before his eye
 Was silent as a picture: evermore
 Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved;
 Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts
 Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
 Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side
 Ascended with his staff and faithful dog;
 The plough he guided, and the scythe he sway'd;
 And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
 Among the jocund reapers. For himself,

All watchful and industrious as he was,
 He wrought not ; neither flock nor field he own'd ;
 No wish for wealth had place within his mind ;
 Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.
 Though born a younger brother, need was none
 That from the floor of his paternal home
 He should depart, to plant himself anew.
 And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
 His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued
 Of rights to him ; but he remain'd well pleas'd,
 By the pure bond of independent love,
 An inmate of a second family,
 The fellow-labourer and friend of him
 To whom the small inheritance had fallen.
 Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight
 That press'd upon his brother's house, for books
 Were ready comrades whom he could not tire,
 Of whose society the blameless man
 Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,
 Even to old age, with unabated charm
 Beguiled his leisure hours, refresh'd his thoughts ;
 Beyond its natural elevation raised
 His introverted spirit, and bestow'd
 Upon his life an outward dignity
 Which all acknowledged. The dark winter night,
 The stormy day, had each its own resource ;
 Song of the muses, sage historic tale,
 Science severe, or word of Holy Writ
 Announcing immortality and joy
 To the assembled spirits of the just,
 From imperfection and decay secure.
 Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field,
 To no perverse suspicion he gave way,
 No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint :
 And they, who were about him, did not fail
 In reverence, or in courtesy ; they prized
 His gentle manners ; and his peaceful smiles,
 The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,
 Were met with answering sympathy and love.

" At length, when sixty years and five were told,
 A slow disease insensibly consumed
 The powers of nature ; and a few short steps
 Of friends and kindred bore him from his home
 (Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)
 To the profounder stillness of the grave.
 Nor was his funeral denied the grace
 Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief ;
 Heart-sorrow render'd sweet by gratitude.
 And now that monumental stone preserves
 His name, and unambitiously relates
 How long, and by what kindly outward aids,
 And in what pure contentedness of mind,
 The sad privation was by him endured.

And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing sound
Was wasted on the good man's living ear,
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity ;
And, at the touch of every wandering breeze,
Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

“ Soul-cheering light, most bountiful of things !
Guide of our way, mysterious comforter !
Whose sacred influence, spread through earth and heaven,
We all too thanklessly participate,
Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him
Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch.
Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he complain'd ;
Ask of the channell'd rivers if they held
A safer, easier, more determined course.
What terror doth it strike into the mind
To think of one, who cannot see, advancing
Towards some precipice's airy brink !
But, timely warn'd, *he* would have stay'd his steps ;
Protected, say enlighten'd, by his ear,
And on the very brink of vacancy
Not more endanger'd than a man whose eye
Beholds the gulf beneath. No flow'ret blooms
Throughout the lofty range of these rough hills,
Or in the woods, that could from him conceal
Its birthplace ; none whose figure did not live
Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth
Enrich'd with knowledge his industrious mind ;
The ocean paid him tribute from the stores
Lodged in her bosom ; and by science led,
His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.
Methinks I see him ; how his eyeballs roll'd
Beneath his ample brow, in darkness pair'd,—
But each instinct with spirit ; and the frame
Of the whole countenance alive with thought,
Fancy, and understanding ; while the voice
Discours'd of natural and moral truth
With eloquence, and such authentic power,
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood
Abash'd, and tender pity awed.”

“ A noble, and, to unreflecting minds,
A marvellous spectacle,” the Wanderer said,
“ Beings like these present ! But proofs abound
Upon the earth that faculties, which seem
Extinguish'd, do not, *therefore*, cease to be.
And to the mind among her powers of sense
This transfer is permitted,—not alone
That the bereft may win their recompense ;
But for remoter purposes of love
And charity ; not last nor least for this,
That to the imagination may be given
A type and shadow of an awful truth,
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,
Darkness is banish'd from the realms of death,

By man's imperishable spirit, quell'd.
 Unto the men who see not as we see,
 Futurity was thought, in ancient times,
 To be laid open, and they prophesied.
 And know we not that from the blind have flow'd
 The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre ;
 And wisdom married to immortal verse !"

Among the humbler worthies, at our feet
 Lying insensible to human praise,
 Love, or regret—*whose* lineaments would next
 Have been portray'd, I guess not ; but it chanced
 That near the quiet churchyard where we sate,
 A team of horses, with a pond'rous freight
 Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,
 Whose sharp descent confounded their array,
 Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse, and mourn
 The waste of death ; and lo ! the giant oak
 Stretch'd on his bier !—that massy timber-wain ;
 Nor fail to note the man who guides the team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class :
 Grey locks profusely round his temples hung
 In clust'ring curls, like ivy, which the bite
 Of winter cannot thin ; the fresh air lodged
 Within his cheek, as light within a cloud ;
 And he return'd our greeting with a smile.
 When he had pass'd, the Solitary spake :
 "A man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
 And confident to-morrows ; with a face
 Not worldly-minded ; for it bears too much
 Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health,
 Freedom and hope ; but keen, withal, and shrewd.
 His gestures note,—and hark ! his tones of voice
 Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answer'd : "You have read him well
 Year after year is added to his store
 With *silent* increase : summers, winters—past,
 Past or to come ; yea, boldly might I say,
 Ten summers and ten winters of the space
 That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,
 Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix
 The obligation of an anxious mind,
 A pride in having, or a fear to lose ;
 Possess'd like outskirts of some large domain,
 By any one more thought of than by him
 Who holds the land in fee, its careless lord !
 Yet is the creature rational—endow'd
 With foresight ; hears, too, every Sabbath day,
 The Christian promise with attentive ear,
 Nor disbelieves the tidings which he hears.
 Meanwhile the incense offer'd up by him
 Is of the kind which beasts and birds present

In grove or pasture ; cheerfulness of soul,
 From trepidation and repining free.
 How many scrupulous worshippers fall down
 Upon their knees, and daily homage pay
 Less worthy, less religious even, than his !

“This qualified respect, the old man’s due,
 Is paid without reluctance ; but in truth”
 (Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)
 “I feel at times a motion of despite
 Towards one, whose bold contrivances and skill,
 As you have seen, bear such conspicuous part
 In works of havoc ; taking from these vales,
 One after one, their proudest ornaments.
 Full oft his doings leave me to deplore
 Tall ash-tree sown by winds, by vapours nursed,
 In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks ;
 Light birch, aloft upon the horizon’s edge,
 Transparent texture, framing in the east
 A veil of glory for the ascending moon ;
 And oak whose roots by noontide dew were damp’d,
 And on whose forehead inaccessible
 The raven lodged in safety. Many a ship
 Launch’d into Morecamb Bay, hath owed to him
 Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that bears
 The loftiest of her pendants. Help he gives
 To lordly mansion rising far or near ;
 The enormous wheel that turns ten thousand spindles,
 And the vast engine labouring in the mine,
 Content with meaner prowess, must have lack’d
 The trunk and body of their marvellous strength,
 If his undaunted enterprise had fail’d
 Among the mountain coves, or keen research
 In forest, park, or chase. Yon household fir,
 A guardian planted to fence off the blast,
 But towering high the roof above, as if
 Its humble destination were forgot ;
 That sycamore, which annually holds
 Within its shade, as in a stately tent
 On all sides open to the fanning breeze,
 A grave assemblage, seated while they shear
 The fleece-encumber’d flock—the ‘Joyful Elm,’
 Around whose trunk the lasses dance in May,
 And the ‘Lord’s Oak’ would plead their several rights
 In vain, if he were master of their fate.
 Not one would have his pitiful regard,
 For prized accommodation, pleasant use,
 For dignity, for old acquaintance sake,
 For ancient custom or distinguish’d name.
 His sentence to the axe would doom them all.
 But green in age and lusty as he is,
 And promising to stand from year to year,
 Less, as might seem, in rivalry with men
 Than with the forest’s more enduring growth,

His own appointed hour will come at last ;
 And like the haughty spoilers of the world,
 This keen destroyer, in his turn, must fall.

“ Now from the living, pass we once again ;
 From age,” the Priest continued, “ turn your thoughts ;—
 From age, that often unlamented drops,
 And mark that daisied hillock, three spans long.
 Seven lusty sons sate daily round the board
 Of Gold-rill side ; and when the hope had ceased
 Of other progeny, a daughter then
 Was given, the crowning glory of the whole !
 Welcomed with joy, whose penetrating power
 Was not unfelt amid that heavenly calm
 With which by nature every mother's soul
 Is stricken, in the moment when her throes
 Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry
 Which tells her that a living child is born,
 And she lies conscious in a blissful rest,
 That the dread storm is weather'd by them both.

“ The father—him at this unlook'd-for gift
 A bolder transport seizes. From the side
 Of his bright hearth, and from his open door,
 And from the laurel-shaded seat thereby,
 Day after day the gladness is diffused
 To all that come, and almost all that pass ;
 Invited, summon'd, to partake the cheer
 Spread on the never-empty board, and drink
 Health and good wishes to his new-born girl,
 From cups replenish'd by his joyous hand.
 Those seven fair brothers variously were moved
 Each by the thoughts best suited to his years :
 But most of all, and with most thankful mind,
 The hoary grandsire felt himself enrich'd ;
 A happiness that ebb'd not, but remain'd
 To fill the total measure of the soul !
 From the low tenement, his own abode,
 Whither, as to a little private cell,
 He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise,
 To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,
 Once every day he duteously repair'd
 To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe :
 For in that female infant's name he heard
 The silent name of his departed wife ;
 Heart-stirring music ! hourly heard that name,
 Full blest he was, ‘ Another Margaret Green,’
 Oft did he say, ‘ was come to Gold-rill side.’

“ Oh ! pang unthought of, as the precious boon
 Itself had been unlook'd-for :—oh ! dire stroke
 Of desolating anguish for them all !
 Just as the child could totter on the floor,
 And by some friendly finger's help upstay'd,
 Range round the garden-walk, whose low ground-flowers

Were peeping forth, shy messengers of spring,—
 Even at that hopeful time,—the winds of March,
 One sunny day, smiting insidiously,
 Raised in the tender passage of the throat
 Viewless obstruction ; whence, all unforewarn'd,
 The household lost their hope and soul's delight.
 But Providence, that gives and takes away
 By his own law, is merciful and just ;
 Time wants not power to soften all regrets,
 And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress
 Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears
 Fail not to spring from either parent's eye
 Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,
 Yet this departed little one, too long
 The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps
 In what may now be call'd a peaceful grave.

“ On a bright day, the brightest of the year,
 These mountains echo'd with an unknown sound,
 A volley, thrice repeated o'er the corse
 Let down into the hollow of that grave,
 Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould.
 Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth !
 Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these sods,
 That they may knit together, and therewith
 Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness !
 Nor so the valley shall forget her loss.
 Dear youth, by young and old alike beloved,
 To me as precious as my own !—Green herbs
 May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)
 Over thy last abode, and we may pass
 Reminded less imperiously of thee :—
 The ridge itself may sink into the breast
 Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more ;
 Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,
 Thy image disappear. The mountain-ash,
 Deck'd with autumnal berries that outshine
 Spring's richest blossoms, yields a splendid show,
 Amid the leafy woods ; and ye have seen
 By a brook-side, or solitary tarn,
 How she her station doth adorn,—the pool
 Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
 Are brighten'd round her. In his native vale
 Such and so glorious did this youth appear ;
 A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts
 By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
 Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
 By all the graces with which Nature's hand
 Had bounteously array'd him. As old bards
 Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,
 I'an or Apollo, veil'd in human form ;
 Yet, like the sweet-breath'd violet of the shade,
 Discover'd in their own despite to sense
 Of mortals (if such fables without blame

May find chance mention on this sacred ground,
 So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise
 And through the impediment of rural cares,
 In him reveal'd a scholar's genius shone;
 And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,
 In him the spirit of a hero walk'd
 Our unpretending valley.—How the coit,
 Whizz'd from the stripling's arm! If touch'd by him,
 The inglorious football mounted to the pitch
 Of the lark's flight, or shaped a rainbow curve,
 Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!
 The indefatigable fox had learn'd
 To dread his perseverance in the chase.
 With admiration he could lift his eyes
 To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand
 Was loth to assault the majesty he loved;
 Else had the strongest fastnesses proved weak
 To guard the royal brood. The sailing glead,
 The wheeling swallow, and the darting snipe,
 The sportive sea-gull dancing with the waves,
 And cautious water-fowl, from distant climes,
 Fix'd at their seat,—the centre of the Mere,
 Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim.

"From Gallia's coast a tyrant's threats were hurl'd;
 Our country mark'd the preparations vast
 Of hostile forces; and she call'd—with voice
 That fill'd her plains, and reach'd her utmost shores
 And in remotest vales was heard—To arms!
 Then, for the first time, here you might have seen
 The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet changed,
 That flash'd uncouthly through the woods and fields.
 Ten hardy striplings, all in bright attire,
 And graced with shining weapons, weekly march'd
 From this lone valley, to a central spot
 Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice
 Of the surrounding district, they might learn
 The rudiments of war; ten—hardy, strong,
 And valiant; but young Oswald, like a chief
 And yet a modest comrade, led them forth
 From their shy solitude, to face the world,
 With a gay confidence and seemly pride:
 Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet
 Like youths released from labour, and yet bound
 To most laborious service, though to them
 A festival of unencumber'd ease;
 The inner spirit keeping holiday,
 Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

"Oft have I mark'd him, at some leisure hour,
 Stretch'd on the grass or seated in the shade
 Among his fellows, while an ample map
 Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,
 From which the gallant teacher would discourse,
 Now pointing this way and now that.—'Here flows,

Thus would he say, 'The Rhine, that famous stream !
 Fastward, the Danube, tow'rd's this inland sea,
 A mightier river, winds from realm to realm :
 And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back
 Bespotted with innumerable isles.
 Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk ; observe
 His capital city !' Thence, along a tract
 Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears
 His finger moved, distinguishing the spots
 Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged :
 Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields
 On which the sons of mighty Germany
 Were taught a base submission. 'Here behold
 A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,
 Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods,
 And mountains white with everlasting snow !'
 And surely he that spake with kindling brow,
 Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best
 Of that young peasantry who, in our days,
 Have fought and perish'd for Helvetia's rights,
 Ah, not in vain !—or those who, in old time,
 For work of happier issue, to the side
 Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,
 When he had risen alone ! No braver youth
 Descended from Judea's heights, to march
 With righteous Joshua ; or appear'd in arms
 When grove was fell'd, and altar was cast down,
 And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-inflamed,
 And strong in hatred of idolatry."

This spoken, from his seat the Pastor rose,
 And moved towards the grave. Instinctively
 His steps we follow'd ; and my voice exclaim'd,
 "Power to the oppressors of the world is given,
 A might of which they dream not. Oh ! the curse,
 To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,
 Father and founder of exalted deeds ;
 And, to whole nations bound in servile straits
 The liberal donor of capacities
 More than heroic ! this to be, nor yet
 Have sense of one connatural wish, nor yet
 Deserve the least return of human thanks ;
 Winning no recompense but deadly hate
 With pity mix'd—astonishment with scorn !"

When these involuntary words had ceased,
 The Pastor said : "So Providence is served ;
 The forked weapon of the skies can send
 Illumination into deep, dark holds,
 Which the mild sunbeam hath not power to pierce.
 Why do ye quake, intimidated thrones ?
 For, not unconscious of the mighty debt
 Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer owes,
 Europe, through all her habitable seats,

Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who still
 Exist, as pagan temples stood of old,
 By very horror of their impious rites
 Preserved—are suffer'd to extend their pride,
 Like cedars on the top of Lebanon
 Darkening the sun. But less impatient thoughts,
 And love 'all hoping, and expecting all,'
 This hallow'd grave demands, where rests in peace
 A humble champion of the better cause;
 A peasant youth—so call him, for he ask'd
 No higher name; in whom our country show'd,
 As in a favourite son, most beautiful.
 In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,
 Spread with the spreading of her wealthy arts;
 England, the ancient and the free, appear'd
 In him to stand before my swimming eyes
 Unconquerably virtuous and secure.
 No more of this, lest I offend his dust;
 Short was his life, and a brief tale remains.

“One summer's day, a day of annual pomp
 And solemn chase, from morn to sultry noon
 His steps had follow'd, fleetest of the fleet,
 The red-deer driven along its native heights
 With cry of hound and horn; and from that toil
 Return'd with sinews weaken'd and relax'd,
 This generous youth, too negligent of self
 (A natural failing which maturer years
 Would have subdued), took fearlessly—and kept—
 His wonted station in the chilling flood,
 Among a busy company convened
 To wash his father's flock. Convulsions dire
 Seized him, that self-same night; and through the space
 Of twelve ensuing days his frame was wrench'd,
 Till Nature rested from her work in death.
 To him, thus snatch'd away, his comrades paid
 A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour
 Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless blue,—
 A golden lustre slept upon the hills:
 And if by chance a stranger, wand'ring there,
 From some commanding eminence had look'd
 Down on this spot, well pleased would he have seen
 A glittering spectacle; but every face
 Was pallid; seldom hath that eye been moist
 With tears that wept not then; nor were the few,
 Who from their dwellings came not forth to join
 In this sad service, less disturb'd than we.
 They started at the tributary peal
 Of instantaneous thunder, which announced,
 Through the still air, the closing of the grave
 And distant mountains echo'd with a sound
 Of lamentation never heard before!”

The Pastor ceased. My venerable friend
 Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye,

And, when that eulogy was ended, stood
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived
The prolongation of some still response,
Sent by the ancient soul of this wide land—
The spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,
Its rights and virtues—by that Deity
Descending and supporting his pure heart
With patriotic confidence and joy.
And, at the last of those memorial words,
The pining Solitary turn'd aside ;
Whether through manly instinct to conceal
Tender emotions spreading from the heart
To his worn cheek ; or with uneasy shame
For those cold humours of habitual spleen,
Which, fondly seeking in dispraise of man,
Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes urged
To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.
Right tow'rds the sacred edifice his steps
Had been directed ; and we saw him now
Intent upon a monumental stone,
Whose uncouth form was grafted on the wall,
Or rather seem'd to have grown into the side
Of the rude pile ; as ofttimes trunks of trees
Where Nature works in wild and craggy spots,
Are seen incorporate with the living rock ;
To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note
Of his employment, with a courteous smile
Exclaim'd, " The sagest antiquarian's eye
That task would foil." And with these added words,
He thitherward advanced : " Tradition tells
That, in Eliza's golden days, a knight
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,
And fix'd his home in this sequester'd vale.
'Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,
Or as a stranger reach'd this deep recess,
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing thought
I sometimes entertain, that haply bound
To Scotland's court in service of his queen,
Or sent on mission to some northern chief
Of England's realm, this vale he might have seen
With transient observation ; and thence caught
An image fair, which, bright'ning in his soul
When years admonish'd him of failing strength,
And he no more rejoiced in war's delights,
Had power to draw him from the world,—resolved
To make that paradise his chosen home,
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turn'd.
Vague thoughts are these ; but if belief may rest
Upon unwritten story fondly traced
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat
The knight arrived, with pomp of spear and shield,
And borne upon a charger cover'd o'er
With gilded housings. And the lofty steed—

His sole companion, and his faithful friend,
 Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range
 In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes
 Of admiration and delightful awe,
 By those untravell'd dalesmen. With less pride,
 Yet free from touch of envious discontent,
 They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,
 Like a bright star, amid the lowly band
 Of their rude homesteads. Here the warrior dwelt,
 And in that mansion children of his own,
 Or kindred, gather'd round him. As a tree
 That falls and disappears, the house is gone :
 And, through improvidence, or want of love
 For ancient worth and honourable things,
 The spear and shield are vanish'd, which the knight
 Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch
 Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains
 Of that foundation in domestic care
 Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left
 Of the mild-hearted champion, save this stone,
 Faithless memorial ! and his family name
 Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang
 From out the ruins of his stately lodge ;
 These, and the name and title at full length,—
 Sir Alfred Irthing—with appropriate words
 Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath
 Or posy, girding round the several fronts
 Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells,
 That in the steeple hang, his pious gift."

"So falls, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,"
 The grey-hair'd Wanderer pensively exclaim'd,
 "All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
 The stars of human glory are cast down ;
 Perish the roses and the flowers of kings ;
 Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms
 Of all the mighty, wither'd and consumed !
 Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
 Long to protect her own. The man himself
 Departs ; and soon is spent the line of those
 Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
 In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,
 Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,
 Fraternities and orders—heaping high
 New wealth upon the burthen of the old,
 And placing trust in privilege confirm'd
 And re-confirm'd—are scoff'd at with a smile
 Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
 Of desolation, aim'd : to slow decline
 These yield, and these to sudden overthrow ;
 Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
 Expire ; and Nature's pleasant robe of green,
 Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps
 Their monuments and their memory. The vast frame

Of social nature changes evermore
Her organs and her members, with decay
Restless, and restless generation, powers
And functions dying and produced at need,—
And by this law the mighty whole subsists :
With an ascent and progress in the main ;
Yet, oh ! how disproportion'd to the hopes
And expectations of self-flattering minds !
The courteous knight, whose bones are here interr'd,
Lived in an age conspicuous as our own
For strife and ferment in the minds of men ;
Whence alteration, in the forms of things,
Various and vast. A memorable age !
Which did to him assign a pensive lot,
To linger 'mid the last of those bright clouds,
That, on the steady breeze of honour, sail'd
In long procession calm and beautiful.
He, who had seen his own bright order fade,
And its devotion gradually decline
(While War, relinquishing the lance and shield,
Her temper changed, and bow'd to other laws),
Had also witness'd, in his morn of life,
That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,
In town, and city, and sequester'd glen,
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,
And old religious house—pile after pile ;
And shook the tenants out into the fields,
Like wild beasts without home ! Their hour was come,
But why no softening thought of gratitude,
No just remembrance, scruple, or wise doubt ?
Benevolence is mild ; nor borrows help,
Save at worst need, from bold impetuous force,
Fitiest allied to anger and revenge.
But human-kind rejoices in the might
Of mutability, and airy hopes,
Dancing around her, hinder and disturb
Those meditations of the soul which feed
The retrospective virtues. Festive songs
Break from the madden'd nations at the sight
Of sudden overthrow ; and cold neglect
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

“ Even,” said the Wanderer, “ as that courteous knight,
Bound by his vow to labour for redress
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact
By sword and lance the law of gentleness,
If I may venture of myself to speak,
Trusting that not incongruously I blend
Low things with lofty, I too shall be doom'd
To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem
Of the poor calling which my youth embraced
With no unworthy prospect. But enough ;
Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twere seemlier now
To stop, and yield our gracious teacher thanks

For the pathetic records which his voice
 Hath here deliver'd : words of heartfelt truth,
 Tending to patience when affliction strikes ;
 To hope and love ; to confident repose
 In God ; and reverence for the dust of man.'

 BOOK VIII.

THE PARSONAGE.

Pastor's apprehensions that he might have detained his auditors too long—Invitation to his house—Solitary disinclined to comply—Rallies the Wanderer—And somewhat playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the knight-errant—which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the country from the manufacturing spirit—Favourable effects—The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth—Gives instances—Physical science unable to support itself—Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler classes of society—Picture of a child employed in a cotton-mill—Ignorance and degradation of children among the agricultural population reviewed—Conversation broken off by a renewed invitation from the Pastor—Path leading to his house—Its appearance described—His daughter—His wife—His son (a boy) enters with his companion—Their happy appearance—The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale
 To those acknowledgments subscribed his own,
 With a sedate compliance, which the Priest
 Fail'd not to notice, inly pleased, and said :—
 " If ye, by whom invited, I commenced
 Those narratives of calm and humble life,
 Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gain'd ;
 And, in return for sympathy bestow'd,
 And patient listening, thanks accept from me.
 —Life, death, eternity ! momentous themes
 Are these—and might demand a seraph's tongue,
 Were they not equal to their own support ;
 And therefore no incompetence of mine
 Could do them wrong. The universal forms
 Of human nature, in a spot like this,
 Present themselves at once to all men's view :
 Ye wish'd for act and circumstance, that make
 The individual known and understood ;
 And such as my best judgment could select
 From what the place afforded, have been given ;
 Though apprehensions cross'd me, in the course
 Of this self-pleasing exercise, that ye
 My zeal to his would liken, who, possess'd
 Of some rare gems, or pictures finely wrought,
 Unlocks his cabinet, and draws them forth
 One after one—soliciting regard
 To this, and this, as worthier than the last,
 Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased
 More than th' exhibitor himself, becomes

Weary and faint, and longs to be released.
—But let us hence ! my dwelling is in sight,
And there—”

At this the Solitary shrunk
With backward will ; but, wanting not address
That inward motion to disguise, he said
To his compatriot, smiling as he spake,—
“ The peaceable remains of this good knight
Would be disturb'd, I fear, with wrathful scorn,
If consciousness could reach him where he lies
That one, albeit of these degenerate times,
Deploring changes past, or dreading change
Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in thought,
The fine vocation of the sword and lance
With the gross aims and body-bending toil
Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth
Pitied, and, where they are not known, despised.
Yet, by the good knight's leave, the two estates
Are graced with some resemblance. Errant those,
Exiles and wanderers ; and the like are these,
Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and dale,
Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.
What though no higher recompense they seek
Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil
Full oft procured, yet such may claim respect,
Among the intelligent, for what this course
Enables them to be and to perform,
Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,
While solitude permits the mind to feel ;
And doth instruct her to supply defects
By the division of her inward self,
For grateful converse : and to these poor men,
As I have heard you boast with honest pride,
Nature is bountiful ; where'er they go,
Kind nature's various wealth is all their own.
Versed in the characters of men ; and bound,
By tie of daily interest, to maintain
Conciliatory manners and smooth speech ;
Such have been, and still are, in their degree,
Examples efficacious to refine
Rude intercourse ; apt instruments to excite,
By importation of unlook'd-for arts,
Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice ;
Raising, through just gradation, savage life
To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.
Within their moving magazines is lodged
Power that comes forth to quicken and exalt
Th' affections seated in the mother's breast,
And in the lover's fancy ; and to feed
The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.
By these itinerants, as experienced men,
Counsel is given ; contention they appease
With healing words , and in remotest wilds,

Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings bring ;—
 Could the proud quest of chivalry do more ?”

“ Happy,” rejoin’d the Wanderer, “ they who gain
 A panegyric from your generous tongue !
 But, if to these wayfarers once pertain’d
 Aught of romantic interest, ’tis gone ;
 Their purer service, in this realm at least,
 Is past for ever. An inventive age
 Has wrought, if not with speed of magic, yet
 To most strange issues. I have lived to mark
 A new and unforeseen creation rise
 From out the labours of a peaceful land,
 Wielding her potent enginery to frame
 And to produce, with appetite as keen
 As that of war, which rests not night or day,
 Industrious to destroy ! With fruitless pains
 Might one like me *now* visit many a tract
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,
 A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,
 Wish’d for, or welcome, wheresoe’er he came—
 Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill ;
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter proud,
 And dignified by battlements and towers
 Of some stern castle, mouldering on the brow
 Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.
 The footpath faintly mark’d, the horse-track wild,
 And formidable length of plashy lane
 (Prized avenues ere others had been shaped
 Or easier links connecting place with place),
 Have vanish’d—swallow’d up by stately roads,
 Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom
 Of England’s farthest glens. The earth has lent
 Her waters, air her breezes ; and the sail
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless interchange,
 Glistening along the low and woody dale,
 Or on the naked mountain’s lofty side.
 Meanwhile, at social industry’s command,
 How quick, how vast an increase ! From the germ
 Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced
 Here a huge town, continuous and compact,
 Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and there,
 Where not a habitation stood before,
 The abodes of men irregularly mass’d
 Like trees in forests,—spread through spacious tracts,
 O’er which the smoke of unremitting fires
 Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths
 Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.
 And, wheresoe’er the traveller turns his steps,
 He sees the barren wilderness erased,
 Or disappearing ; triumph that proclaims
 How much the mild directress of the plough
 Owes to alliance with these new-born arts !
 Hence is the wide sea peopled,—and the shores

Of Britain are resorted to by ships
 Freightèd from every climate of the world
 With the world's choicest produce. Hence that sum
 Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,
 Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays ;
 That animating spectacle of sails
 Which, through her inland regions, to and fro
 Pass with the respirations of the tide,
 Perpetual, multitudinous ! Finally,
 Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice
 Of thunder, daunting those who would approach
 With hostile purposes the blessèd isle,
 Truth's consecrated residence, the seat
 Impregnable of liberty and peace.

“ And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock
 Faithfully watch'd, and, by that loving care
 And Heaven's good providence, preservèd from taint !
 With you I grieve, when on the darker side
 Of this great change I look ; and there behold,
 Through strong temptation of those gainful arts,
 Such outrage done to nature as compels
 The indignant power to justify herself ;
 Yea, to avenge her violatèd rights,
 For England's bane. When soothing darkness spreads
 O'er hill and vale,” the Wanderer thus express'd
 His recollections, “ and the punctual stars,
 While all things else are gathering to their homes,
 Advance, and in the firmament of heaven
 Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturb'd,
 As if their silent company were chargèd
 With peaceful admonitions for the heart
 Of all-beholding man, earth's thoughtful lord ;
 Then in full many a region, once like this
 The assured domain of calm simplicity
 And pensive quiet, an unnatural light,
 Prépared for never-resting labour's eyes,
 Breaks from a many-window'd fabric huge ;
 And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,—
 Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll
 That spake the Norman conqueror's stern behest,
 A local summons to unceasing toil !
 Disgorge'd are now the ministers of day ;
 And, as they issue from the illumined pile,
 A fresh band meets them at the crowded door,
 And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,
 That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
 Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed
 Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths.
 Mother and little children, boys and girls
 Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
 Within this temple, where is offer'd up
 To gain—the master idol of the realm,
 Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old

Our ancestors, within the still domain
 Of vast cathedral or conventual church,
 Their vigils kept ; where tapers day and night
 On the dim altar burn'd continually,
 In token that the house was evermore
 Watching to God. Religious men were they ;
 Nor would their reason, tutor'd to aspire
 Above this transitory world, allow
 That there should pass a moment of the year
 When in their land the Almighty's service ceased.

“Triumph who will in these profaner rites
 Which we, a generation self-extoll'd,
 As zealously perform—I cannot share
 His proud complacency : yet I exult,
 Casting reserve away—exult to see
 An intellectual mastery exercised
 O'er the blind elements ; a purpose given,
 A perseverance fed ; almost a soul
 Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,
 Measuring the force of those gigantic powers
 Which, by the thinking mind have been compell'd
 To serve the will of feeble-bodied man.
 For with the sense of admiration blends
 The animating hope that time may come,
 When strengthen'd, yet not dazzled, by the might
 Of this dominion over nature gain'd,
 Men of all lands shall exercise the same
 In due proportion to their country's need ;
 Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,
 All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
 Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes—
 Pyre, by the margin of the sounding waves—
 Palmyra, central in the desert—fell ;
 And the arts died by which they had been raised.
 Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
 Upon the plain of vanish'd Syracuse,
 And feelingly the sage shall make report
 How insecure, how baseless in itself,
 Is that philosophy, whose sway is framed
 For mere material instruments—how weak
 Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropp'd
 By virtue. He, with sighs of pensive grief,
 Amid his calm abstractions, would admit
 That not the slender privilege is theirs
 To save themselves from blank forgetfulness !”

When from the Wanderer's lips these words had fall'n,
 I said, “And did in truth these vaunted arts
 Possess such privilege, how could we escape
 Regret and painful sadness, who revere,
 And would preserve, as things above all price,
 The old domestic morals of the land,
 Her simple manners, and the stable worth
 That dignified and cheer'd a low estate ?

Oh! where is now the character of peace,
 Sobriety, and order, and chaste love,
 And honest dealing, and untainted speech,
 And pure goodwill, and hospitable cheer,
 That made the very thought of country life
 A thought of refuge for a mind detain'd
 Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd?—
 Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept
 With conscientious reverence, as a day
 By the Almighty Lawgiver pronounced
 Holy and blest—and where the winning grace
 Of all the lighter ornaments attach'd
 To time and season, as the year roll'd round?"

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passionate response,
 "Fled utterly! or only to be traced
 In a few fortunate retreats like this;
 Which I behold with trembling, when I think
 What lamentable change a year—a month—
 May bring; that brook converting as it runs
 Into an instrument of deadly bane
 For those, who, yet untempted to forsake
 The simple occupations of their sires,
 Drink the pure water of its innocent stream
 With lip almost as pure. Domestic bliss
 (Or call it comfort, by a humbler name),
 How art thou blighted for the poor man's heart!
 Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
 The habitations empty! or perchance
 The mother left alone,—no helping hand
 To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
 No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,
 Or in despatch of each day's little growth
 Of household occupation; no nice arts
 Of needlework; no bustle at the fire,
 Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
 Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
 Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command!
 The father—if perchance he still retain
 His old employments—goes to field or wood,
 No longer led or follow'd by his sons;
 Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his* sight;
 Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth;
 Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,
 Ne'er to return! That birthright now is lost.
 Economists will tell you that the state
 Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling thought,
 And false as monstrous! Can the mother thrive
 By the destruction of her innocent sons?
 In whom a premature necessity
 Blocks out the forms of nature, preconsumes
 The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up
 The infant being in itself, and makes
 Its very spring a season of decay!

The lot is wretched, the condition sad,
 Whether a pining discontent survive,
 And thirst for change ; or habit hath subdued
 The soul depress'd ; dejected—even to love
 Of her dull tasks, and close captivity.
 O banish far such wisdom as condemns
 A native Briton to these inward chains,
 Fix'd in his soul, so early and so deep,
 Without his own consent, or knowledge, fix'd !
 He is a slave to whom release comes not,
 And cannot come. The boy, where'er he turns,
 Is still a prisoner ; when the wind is up
 Among the clouds and in the ancient woods,
 Or when the sun is rising in the heavens,
 Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the school
 Of his attainments ? no : but with the air
 Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.
 His raiment, whiten'd o'er with cotton flakes,
 Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes.
 Creeping his gait and cowering—his lip pale—
 His respiration quick and audible ;
 And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam
 From out those languid eyes could break, or blush
 Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,
 Is that the countenance, and such the port,
 Of no mean being ? One who should be clothed
 With dignity befitting his proud hope ;
 Who, in his very childhood, should appear
 Sublime—from present purity and joy !
 The limbs increase ; but liberty of mind
 Thus gone for ever, this organic frame,
 Which from Heaven's bounty we receive, instinct
 With light and gladsome motions, soon becomes
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead ;
 And even the touch, so exquisitely pour'd
 Through the whole body, with a languid will
 Performs its functions ; rarely competent
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind
 Of what there is delightful in the breeze,
 The gentle visitations of the sun,
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived.
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised
 On such foundations ?”

“ Hope is none for him !”

The pale Recluse indignantly exclaim'd,
 “ And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep.
 Yet be it ask'd, in justice to our age,
 If there were not, before those arts appear'd,
 These structures rose, commingling old and young,
 And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint ;
 Then, if there were not, in our far-famed isle,
 Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed
 Air unimprison'd, and had lived at large ;

Yet walk'd beneath the sun, in human shape,
 As abject as degraded? At this day,
 Who shall enumerate the crazy huts
 And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth
 A ragged offspring, with their own blanch'd hair
 Crown'd like the image of fantastic Fear;
 Or wearing, we might say, in that white growth
 An ill-adjusted turban for defence
 Or fierceness, wreath'd around their sunburnt brows,
 By savage nature's unassisted care.
 Naked, and colour'd like the soil, the feet
 On which they stand; as if thereby they drew
 Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,
 From earth, the common mother of us all.
 Figure and mien, complexion and attire,
 Are framed to strike dismay, but the outstretch'd hand
 And whining voice denote them supplicants
 For the least boon that pity can bestow.
 Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found;
 And with their parents dwell upon the skirts
 Of furze-clad commons; and are born and rear'd
 At the mine's mouth, beneath impending rocks,
 Or in the chambers of some natural cave;
 And where their ancestors erected huts,
 For the convenience of unlawful gain,
 In forest purlieus; and the like are bred,
 All England through, where nooks and slips of ground
 Purloin'd in times less jealous than our own,
 From the green margin of the public way,
 A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom
 And gaiety of cultivated fields.
 Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)
 Do I remember oftentimes to have seen
 'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. Upon the watch,
 Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand;
 Then, following closely with the cloud of dust,
 An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone,
 Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.
 Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin,
 And, on the freight of merry passengers
 Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;
 And spin—and pant—and overhead again,
 Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost,
 Or bounty tires,—and every face that smiled
 Encouragement, hath ceased to look that way.
 But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,
 These, bred to little pleasure in themselves,
 Are profitless to others. Turn we then
 To Britons born and bred within the pale
 Of civil polity, and early train'd
 To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,
 The bread they eat. A sample should I give
 Of what this stock produces to enrich
 And beautify the tender age of life,

A sample fairly cull'd—ye would exclaim,
 'Is this the whistling ploughboy whose shrill notes
 Impart new gladness to the morning air?'
 Forgive me! if I venture to suspect
 That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,
 Are of no finer frame: his joints are stiff;
 Beneath a cumbrous frock that to the knees
 Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,
 Fellows to those which lustily upheld
 The wooden stools for everlasting use,
 On which our fathers sate. And mark his brow!
 Under whose shaggy canopy are set
 Two eyes, not dim, but of a healthy stare;
 Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and strange;
 Proclaiming boldly that they never drew
 A look or motion of intelligence
 From infant conning of the Christ-cross-row,
 Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,
 Till perfect mast'ry crown the pains at last.
 What kindly warmth from touch of fost'ring hand,
 What penetrating power of sun or breeze,
 Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul
 Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheath'd in ice?
 This torpor is no pitiable work
 Of modern ingenuity; no town
 Nor crowded city may be tax'd with aught
 Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law,
 To which in after-years he may be roused.
 This boy the fields produce; his spade and hoe,
 The carter's whip which on his shoulder rests
 In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,
 The sceptre of his sway; his country's name,
 Her equal rights, her churches and her schools,
 What have they done for him? And, let me ask,
 For tens of thousands uninform'd as he?
 In brief—what liberty of mind is here?"

This cheerful sally pleased the mild good man,
 To whom the appeal couch'd in those closing words
 Was pointedly address'd; and to the thoughts
 Which, in assent or opposition, rose
 Within his mind, he seem'd prepared to give
 Prompt utterance; but, rising from our seat,
 The hospitable Vicar interposed
 With invitation earnestly renew'd.
 We follow'd, taking as he led, a path
 Along a hedge of stately hollies framed,
 Whose flexile boughs, descending with a weight
 Of leafy spray, conceal'd the stems and roots
 That gave them nourishment. How sweet, methought,
 When the fierce wind comes howling from the north,
 How grateful, this impenetrable screen!
 Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot
 On rural business passing to and fro

Was the commodious walk ; a careful hand
 Had mark'd the line, and strown the surface o'er
 With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights
 Fetch'd by the neighbouring brook. Across the vale
 The stately fence accompanied our steps ;
 And thus the pathway, by perennial green
 Guarded and graced, seem'd fashion'd to unite,
 As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,
 The Pastor's mansion with the house of prayer.

Like image of solemnity conjoin'd
 With feminine allurements soft and fair,
 The mansion's self display'd ; a reverend pile
 With bold projections and recesses deep ;
 Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood
 Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to admire
 The pillar'd porch, elaborately emboss'd ;
 The low wide windows with their mullions old ;
 The cornice richly fretted, of grey stone ;
 And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,
 By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers
 And flowering shrubs, protected and adorn'd.
 Profusion bright ! and every flower assuming
 A more than natural vividness of hue,
 From unaffected contrast with the gloom
 Of sober cypress, and the darker foil
 Of yew, in which survived some traces, here
 Not unbecoming, of grotesque device
 And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof
 Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,
 Blending their diverse foliage with the green
 Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasp'd
 The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight
 For wren and redbreast, where they sit and sing
 Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.
 Nor must I pass unnoticed (leaving else
 The picture incomplete, as it appear'd
 Before our eyes) a relique of old times
 Happily spared, a little Gothic niche
 Of nicest workmanship ; which once had held
 The sculptured image of some patron saint,
 Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down
 On all who enter'd those religious doors.

But lo ! where from the rocky garden mount,
 Crown'd by its antique summer-house, descends,
 Light as the silver fawn, a radiant girl ;
 For she hath recognized her honour'd friend
 The Wanderer, ever welcome ! A prompt kiss
 The gladsome child bestows at his request,
 And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,
 Hangs on the old man with a happy look,
 And with a pretty restless hand of love,
 We enter ; need I tell the courteous guise
 In which the lady of the place received

Our little band, with salutation meet
 To each accorded ? Graceful was her port ;
 A lofty stature undepress'd by time,
 Whose visitation had not spared to touch
 The finer lineaments of frame and face ;
 To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in
 And wisdom loves. But when a stately ship
 Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast
 On homeward voyage, what if wind and wave,
 And hardship undergone in various climes,
 Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,
 And that full trim of inexperienced hope
 With which she left her haven—not for this,
 Should the sun strike her, and the impartial breeze
 Play on her streamers, doth she fail to assume
 Brightness and touching beauty of her own,
 That charm all eyes—so bright to us appear'd
 This goodly matron, shining in the beams
 Of unexpected pleasure. Soon the board
 Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here in cool shelter, while the scorching heat
 Oppress'd the fields, we sate, and entertain'd
 The mid-day hours with desultory talk ;
 From trivial themes to general argument
 Passing, as accident or fancy led,
 Or courtesy prescribed. While question rose
 And answer flow'd, the fetters of reserve
 Dropp'd from our minds ; and even the shy Reclusæ
 Resumed the manners of his happier days ;
 He in the various conversation bore
 A willing, and, at times, a forward part ;
 Yet with the grace of one who in the world
 Had learn'd the art of pleasing, and had now
 Occasion given him to display his skill,
 Upon the stedfast 'vantage ground of truth.
 He gazed with admiration unsuppress'd
 Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale,
 Seen, from the shady room in which we sate,
 In soften'd perspective ; and more than once
 Praised the consummate harmony serene
 Of gravity and elegance, diffused
 Around the mansion and its whole domain ;
 Not, doubtless, without help of female taste
 And female care. " A blessèd lot is yours !"
 He said, and with that exclamation breathed
 A tender sigh ; but, suddenly the door
 Opening, with eager haste two lusty boys
 Appear'd, confusion checking their delight.
 Not brothers they in feature or attire,
 But fond companions, so I guess'd, in field,
 And by the river side—from which they come,
 A pair of anglers, laden with their spoil.
 One bears a willow pannier on his back,

The boy of plainer garb, and more abash'd
 In countenance—more distant and retired.
 Twin might the other be to that fair girl
 Who bounded towards us from the garden mount,
 Triumphant entry this to him!—for see,
 Between his hands he holds a smooth blue stone,
 On whose capacious surface is outspread
 Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted trouts ;
 Ranged side by side, in regular ascent,
 One after one, still lessening by degrees
 Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.
 Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone
 With its rich spoil : their number he proclaims ;
 Tells from what pool the noblest had been dragg'd ;
 And where the very monarch of the brook,
 After long struggle, had escaped at last—
 Stealing alternately at them and us
 (As doth his comrade too) a look of pride.
 And, verily, the silent creatures made
 A splendid sight, together thus exposed ;
 Dead—but not sullied or deform'd by death,
 That seem'd to pity what he could not spare.

But oh ! the animation in the mien
 Of those two boys!—yea in the very words
 With which the young narrator was inspired,
 When, as our questions led, he told at large
 Of that day's prowess! Him might I compare,
 His look, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,
 To a bold brook which splits for better speed,
 And, at the self-same moment, works its way
 Through many channels, ever and anon
 Parted and reunited : his compeer
 To the still lake, whose stillness is to the eye
 As beautiful, as grateful to the mind.
 But to what object shall the lovely girl
 Be liken'd ? She whose countenance and air
 Unite the graceful qualities of both,
 E'en as she shares the pride and joy of both.

My grey-hair'd friend was moved ; his vivid eye
 Glisten'd with tenderness ; his mind, I knew,
 Was full, and had, I doubted not, return'd,
 Upon this impulse, to the theme erewhile
 Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys
 Did now withdraw to take their well-earn'd meal ;
 And he (to whom all tongues resign'd their rights
 With willingness—to whom the general ear
 Listen'd with readier patience than to strain
 Of music, lute, or harp,—a long delight,
 That ceased not when his voice had ceased), as one
 Who from truth's central point serenely views
 The compass of his argument, began
 Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

BOOK IX.

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND AN EVENING VISIT TO
THE LAKE.

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the universe—Its noblest seat the human soul—How lively this principle is in childhood—Hence the delight in old age of looking back upon childhood—The dignity, powers, and privileges of age asserted—These not to be looked for generally, but under a just government—Right of a human creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere instrument—Vicious inclinations are best kept under by giving good ones an opportunity to show themselves—The condition of multitudes deplored from want of due respect to this truth on the part of their superiors in society—Former conversation recurred to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light—Genuine principles of equality—Truth placed within reach of the humblest—Happy state of the two boys again adverted to—Earnest wish expressed for a system of national education established universally by government—Glorious effects of this foretold—Wanderer breaks off—Walk to the lake—Embark—Description of scenery and amusements—Grand spectacle from the side of a hill—Address of Priest to the Supreme Being, in the course of which he contrasts with ancient barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him—The change ascribed to Christianity—Apostrophe to his dock, living and dead—Gratitude to the Almighty—Return over the lake—Parting with the Solitary—Under what circumstances.

“ To every form of being is assign'd,”
 Thus calmly spake the venerable sage,
 “ An *active* principle : how'er removed
 From sense and observation, it subsists
 In all things, in all natures, in the stars
 Of azure heaven, the unending clouds,
 In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
 That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,
 The moving waters, and the invisible air.
 Whate'er exists hath properties that spread
 Beyond itself, communicating good,
 A simple blessing, or with evil mix'd ;
 Spirit that knows no insulated spot,
 No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link
 It circulates, the soul of all the worlds.
 This is the freedom of the universe ;
 Unfolded still the more, more visible,
 The more we know, and yet is revered least,
 And least respected, in the human mind,
 Its most apparent home. The food of hope
 Is meditated action ; robb'd of this,
 Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
 We perish also ; for we live by hope
 And by desire ; we see by the glad light,
 And breathe the sweet air of futurity ;
 And so we live, or else we have no life.
 To-morrow, nay, perchance, this very hour
 (For every moment has its own to-morrow),
 Those blooming boys, whose hearts are almost sick
 With present triumph, will be sure to find
 A field before them freshen'd with the dew
 Of other expectations ; in which course

Their happy year spins round. The youth obeys
 A like glad impulse ; and so moves the man
 'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and fears ;
 Or so he ought to move. Ah ! why in age
 Do we revert so fondly to the walks
 Of childhood, but that there the soul discerns
 The dear memorial footsteps unimpair'd
 Of her own native vigour—but for this,
 That it is given her thence in age to hear
 Reverberations, and a choral song,
 Commingling with the incense that ascends,
 Undaunted, towards the imperishable heavens,
 From her own lonely altar ? Do not think
 That good and wise will ever be allow'd,
 Though strength decay, to breathe in such estate
 As shall divide them wholly from the stir
 Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said
 That man descends into the vale of years ;
 Yet have I thought that we might also speak,
 And not presumptuously, I trust, of age,
 As of a final eminence, though bare
 In aspect and forbidding, yet a point
 On which 'tis not impossible to sit
 In awful sovereignty ; a place of power—
 A throne, which may be liken'd unto his,
 Who, in some placid day of summer, looks
 Down from a mountain-top,—say one of those
 High peaks, that bound the vale where now we are
 Faint and diminish'd to the gazing eye,
 Forest and field, and hill and dale, appear,
 With all the shapes upon their surface spread.
 But while the gross and visible frame of things
 Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,
 Yea, almost on the mind itself, and seems
 All unsubstantialized—how loud the voice
 Of waters, with invigorated peal
 From the full river in the vale below
 Ascending ! For on that superior height
 Who sits is disencumber'd from the press
 Of near obstructions, and is privileged
 To breathe in solitude, above the host
 Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air
 That suits not them. The murmur of the leaves,
 Maany and idle, touches not his ear :
 This he is freed from, and from thousand notes
 Not less unceasing, not less vain than these,
 By which the finer passages of sense
 Are occupied ; and the soul, that would incline
 To listen, is prevented or deterr'd.

“ And may it not be hoped that, placed by age
 In like removal, tranquil, though severe,
 We are not so removed for utter loss,
 But for some favour, suited to our need ?
 What more than this, that we thereby should gain

Fresh power to commune with th' invisible world
 And hear the mighty stream of tendency
 Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
 A clear, sonorous voice, inaudible
 To the vast multitude, whose doom it is
 To run the giddy round of vain delight,
 Or fret and labour on the plain below.
 But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes
 Of man may rise, as to a welcome close
 And termination of his mortal course,
 Them only can such hope inspire whose minds
 Have not been starved by absolute neglect,
 Nor bodies crush'd by unremitting toil ;
 To whom kind Nature, therefore, may afford
 Proof of the sacred love she bears for all ;
 Whose birthright reason, therefore, may insure.
 For me, consulting what I feel within
 In times when most existence with herself
 Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,
 That, far as kindly Nature hath free scope
 And reason's sway predominates, even so far,
 Country, society, and time itself,
 That saps the individual's bodily frame,
 And lays the generations low in dust,
 Do, by th' Almighty Ruler's grace, partake
 Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth
 And cherishing with ever-constant love,
 That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is turn'd
 Out of her course, wherever man is made
 An offering or a sacrifice, a tool
 Or implement, a passive thing employ'd
 As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
 Of common right or interest in the end ;
 Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.
 Say, what can follow for a rational soul
 Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
 And strength in evil ? Hence an after-call
 For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,
 And ofttimes death, avenger of the past,
 And the sole guardian in whose hands we dare
 Intrust the future. Not for these sad issues
 Was man created ; but t' obey the law
 Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis known,
 That when we stand upon our native soil,
 Unbowl'd by such objects as oppress
 Our active powers, those powers themselves become
 Strong to subvert our noxious qualities :
 They sweep away infection from the heart,
 And, by the substitution of delight,
 Suppress all evil ; whence the being moves
 In beauty through the world ; and all who see
 Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what power
 Of language shall a feeling heart express

Her sorrow for that multitude in whom
 We look for health from seeds that have been sown
 In sickness, and for increase in a power
 That works but by extinction? On themselves
 They cannot lean, nor turn to their own hearts
 To know what they must do; their wisdom is
 To look into the eyes of others, thence
 To be instructed what they must avoid:
 Or rather, let us say, how least observed,
 Flow with most quiet and most silent death,
 With the least taint and injury to the air
 The oppressor breathes, their human form divine,
 And their immortal soul, may waste away."

The sage rejoin'd: "I thank you—you have spared
 My voice the utterance of a keen regret,
 A wide compassion, which with you I share.
 When, heretofore, I placed before your sight
 A most familiar object of our days—
 A little one, subjected to the arts
 Of modern ingenuity, and made
 The senseless member of a vast machine,
 Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel,
 Think not that, pitying him, I could forget
 The rustic boy, who walks the fields untaught,
 The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,
 And miserable hunger. Much—too much,
 Of this unhappy lot, in early youth
 We both have witness'd, lot which I myself
 Shared, though in mild and merciful degree:
 Yet was my mind to hindrances exposed,
 Through which I struggled, not without distress
 And sometime injury, like a sheep enthrall'd
 'Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that breaks
 Through a strong net, and mounts upon the wind,
 Though with her plumes impair'd. If they, whose souls
 Should open while they range the richer fields
 Of merry England, are obstructed less,
 By indigence, their ignorance is not less,
 Nor less to be deplored. For who can doubt
 That tens of thousands at this day exist
 Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs
 Of those who once were vassals of her soil,
 Following its fortunes like the beasts or trees
 Which it sustain'd. But no one takes delight
 In this oppression; none are proud of it;
 It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;
 A standing grievance, an indigenous vice
 Of every country under heaven. My thoughts
 Were turn'd to evils that are new and chosen,
 A bondage lurking under shape of good,—
 Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,
 But all too fondly follow'd and too far;
 To victims, which the merciful can see

Nor think that they are victims, turn'd to wrongs,
 Which women, who have children of their own,
 Regard without compassion, yea, with praise !
 I spake of mischief which the wise diffuse
 With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads,
 The healthier, the securer, we become ;
 Delusion which a moment may destroy !
 Lastly, I mourn'd for those whom I had seen
 Corrupted and cast down, on favour'd ground,
 Where circumstance and nature had combined
 To shelter innocence, and cherish love :
 Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,
 Possess'd of health, and strength, and peace of mind ;
 Thus would have lived, or never have been born.

“ Alas ! what differs more than man from man !
 And whence that difference—whence but from himself ?
 For see the universal race endow'd
 With the same upright form—the sun is fix'd,
 And the infinite magnificence of heaven,
 Within the reach of every human eye ;
 The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears ;
 The vernal field infuses fresh delight
 Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,
 Even as an object is sublime or fair,
 That object is laid open to the view
 Without reserve or veil ; and as a power
 Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
 Are each and all enabled to perceive
 That power, that influence, by impartial law.
 Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all ;
 Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and tears ;
 Imagination, freedom in the will ;
 Conscience to guide and check ; and death to be
 Foretasted, immortality presumed.
 Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be deem'd
 The failure, if the Almighty, to this point
 Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
 The excellence of moral qualities
 From common understanding ; leaving truth
 And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark,
 Hard to be won, and only by a few !
 Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,
 And frustrate all the rest ! Believe it not :
 The primal duties shine aloft—like stars ;
 The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
 Are scatter'd at the feet of man—like flowers.
 The generous inclination, the just rule,
 Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—
 No mystery is here ; no special boon
 For high, and not for low ; for proudly graced—
 And not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
 To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth
 As from the haughty palace. He, whose soul

Ponders this true equality, may walk
 The fields of earth with gratitude and hope ;
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find
 Motive to sadder grief, as we have found ;
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath made
 So wide a difference betwixt man and man.

“Then let us rather fix our gladden'd thoughts
 Upon the brighter scene. How blest that pair
 Of blooming boys (whom we beheld even now)
 Blest in their several and their common lot !
 A few short hours of each returning day,
 The thriving prisoners of their village school ;
 And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant homes
 Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy ;
 To breathe and to be happy, run and shout
 Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss ;
 For every genial power of heaven and earth,
 Through all the seasons of the changeful year,
 Obsequiously doth take upon herself
 To labour for them—bringing each in turn
 The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge, health,
 Beauty, or strength ! Such privilege is theirs,
 Granted alike in the outset of their course
 To both ; and, if that partnership must cease,
 I grieve not,”—to the Pastor here he turn'd,
 “Much as I glory in that child of yours,
 Repine not for his cottage comrade, whom
 Belike no higher destiny awaits
 Than the old hereditary wish fulfill'd ;
 The wish for liberty to live—content
 With what Heaven grants—and die, in peace of mind,
 Within the bosom of his native vale.
 At least, whatever fate the noon of life
 Reserves for either, this is sure, that both
 Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn ;
 Whether regarded as a jocund time,
 That in itself may terminate, or lead
 In course of nature to a sober eve.
 Both have been fairly dealt with ; looking back
 They will allow that justice has in them
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind.”

He paused, as if revolving in his soul
 Some weighty matter ; then, with fervent voice
 And an impassion'd majesty, exclaim'd—

“Oh for the coming of that glorious time
 When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
 And best protection, this imperial realm,
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
 An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
 Them who are born to serve her and obey :
 Binding herself by statute to secure

For all the children whom her soil maintains
 The rudiments of letters, and to inform
 The mind with moral and religious truth,
 Both understood and practised,—so that none,
 However destitute, be left to droop
 By timely culture unsustain'd ; or run
 Into a wild disorder ; or be forced
 To drudge through weary life without the aid
 Of intellectual implements and tools ;
 A savage horde among the civilized,
 A servile band among the lordly free !
 This right, as sacred almost as the right
 To exist and be supplied with sustenance
 And means of life, the lisping babe proclaims
 To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,
 For the protection of his innocence ;
 And the rude boy—who, having overpass'd
 The sinless age, by conscience is enroll'd,
 Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,
 And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,
 Or turns the sacred faculty of speech
 To impious use—by process indirect
 Declares his due, while he makes known his need.
 This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,
 This universal plea in vain address'd,
 To eyes and ears of parents who themselves
 Did, in the time of their necessity,
 Urge it in vain ; and, therefore, like a prayer
 That from the humblest floor ascends to heaven,
 It mounts to reach the State's parental ear ;
 Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,
 And be not most unfeelingly devoid
 Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
 The unquestionable good—which, England, safe
 From interference of external force,
 May grant at leisure ; without risk incur'd
 That what in wisdom for herself she doth,
 Others shall e'er be able to undo.

“ Look ! and behold, from Calpe's sunburnt cliff
 To the flat margin of the Baltic Sea,
 Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds ;
 Laws overturn'd ; and territory split,
 Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
 And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes
 Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust
 Of the same breath are shatter'd and destroy'd.
 Meantime the sovereignty of these fair isles
 Remains entire and indivisible :
 And, if that ignorance were removed which acts
 Within the compass of their several shores
 To breed commotion and disquietude,
 Each might preserve the beautiful repose
 Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.

—The discipline of slavery is unknown
 Amongst us,—hence the more do we require
 The discipline of virtue ; order else
 Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.
 Thus, duties rising out of good possess'd,
 And prudent caution needful to avert
 Impending evil, do alike require
 That permanent provision should be made
 For the whole people to be taught and train'd.
 So shall licentiousness and black resolve
 Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take
 Their place ; and genuine piety descend,
 Like an inheritance, from age to age.

“ With such foundations laid, avaunt the fear
 Of numbers crowded on their native soil,
 To the prevention of all healthful growth,
 Through mutual injury ! Rather in the law
 Of increase and the mandate from above
 Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for joy.
 For, as the element of air affords
 An easy passage to the industrious bees
 Fraught with their burthens ; and a way as smooth
 For those ordain'd to take their sounding flight
 From the throng'd hive, and settle where they list
 In fresh abodes—their labour to renew ;
 So the wide waters, open to the power,
 The will, the instincts, and appointed needs
 Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
 Her swarms, and in succession send them forth,
 Bound to establish new communities
 On every shore whose aspect favours hope
 Or bold adventure ; promising to skill
 And perseverance their deserved reward.
 Yes,” he continued, kindling as he spake,
 “ Change wide and deep, and silently perform'd,
 This land shall witness ; and, as days roll on,
 Earth's universal frame shall feel th' effect,
 Even till the smallest habitable rock,
 Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
 Of humanized society ; and bloom
 With civil arts, and send their fragrance forth,
 A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.
 From culture, universally bestow'd
 On Britain's noble race in freedom born,
 Expect these mighty issues ; from the pains
 And quiet care of unambitious schools,
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear,
 Thence look for these magnificent results !
 Vast the circumference of hope—and ye
 Are at its centre, British lawgivers ;
 Ah ! sleep not there in shame ! Shall Wisdom's voice,
 From out the bosom of these troubled times
 Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,

And shall the venerable halls ye fill
 Refuse to echo the sublime decree ?
 Trust not to partial care a general good ;
 Transfer not to futurity a work
 Of urgent need. Your country must complete
 Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,
 Now, when oppression, like th' Egyptian plague
 Of darkness, stretch'd o'er guilty Europe, makes
 The brightness more conspicuous, that invests
 The happy island where ye think and act ;
 Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,
 Show to the wretched nations for what end
 The powers of civil polity were given."

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,
 The sage broke off. No sooner had he ceased
 Than, looking forth, the gentle lady said,
 "Beheld, the shades of afternoon have fallen
 Upon this flow'ry slope ; and see—beyond—
 The lake, though bright, is of a placid blue,
 As if preparing for the peace of evening.
 How temptingly the landscape shines ! The air
 Breathes invitation ; easy is the walk
 To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moor'd
 Beneath a shelt'ring tree." Upon this hint
 We rose together : all were pleased ; but most
 The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flush'd with joy.
 Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
 She vanish'd—eager to impart the scheme
 To her loved brother and his shy compeer.
 Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house
 And earnest preparation. Forth we went,
 And down the valley on the streamlet's bank
 Pursued our way, a broken company,
 Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.
 Thus having reach'd a bridge, that overarch'd
 The hasty rivulet, where it lay becalm'd
 In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
 A twofold image ; on a grassy bank
 A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
 Another and the same ! Most beautiful,
 On the green turf, with his imperial front
 Shaggy and bold, and wreath'd horns superb,
 The breathing creature stood ; as beautiful,
 Beneath him, show'd his shadowy counterpart.
 Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
 And each seem'd centre of his own fair world :
 Antipodes unconscious of each other,
 Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
 Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight !

"Ah ! what a pity were it to disperse,
 Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,
 And yet a breath can do it !"

These few words

The lady whisper'd, while we stood and gazed
 Gather'd together, all in still delight,
 Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said
 In like low voice to my particular ear,
 "I love to hear that eloquent old man
 Pour forth his meditations, and descant
 On human life from infancy to age.
 How pure his spirit—in what vivid hues
 His mind gives back the various forms of things,
 Caught in their fairest, happiest attitude!
 While he is speaking, I have power to see
 Even as he sees; but when his voice hath ceased,
 Then, with a sigh, I sometimes feel, as now,
 That combinations so serene and bright,
 Like those reflected in yon quiet pool,
 Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
 To great and small disturbances exposed."
 More had she said—but sportive shouts were heard;
 Sent from the jocund hearts of those two boys,
 Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,
 Down the green field came tripping after us.
 When we had cautiously embark'd, the pair
 Now for a prouder service were address'd:
 But an inexorable law forbade,
 And each resign'd the oar which he had seized.
 Whereat, with willing hand I undertook
 The needful labour—grateful task!—to me
 Pregnant with recollections of the time
 When, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere!
 A youth, I practised this delightful art;
 Toss'd on the waves alone, or, 'mid a crew
 Of joyous comrades. Now the reedy marge
 Clear'd, with a strenuous arm I dipp'd the oar
 Free from obstruction; and the boat advanced
 Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,
 That, disentangled from the shady boughs
 Of some thick wood, her place of covert, cleaves
 With correspondent wings th' abyss of air.
 "Observe," the Vicar said, "yon rocky isle
 With birch-trees fringed; my hand shall guide the helm
 While thitherward we bend our course; or while
 We seek that other, on the western shore,—
 Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,
 Supporting gracefully a massy dome
 Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate
 A Grecian temple rising from the deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we cannot err
 In this delicious region." Cultured slopes,
 Wild tracts of forest ground, and scatter'd groves,
 And mountains bare, or clothed with ancient woods,
 Surrounded us; and, as we held our way
 Along the level of the glassy flood,

They ceased not to surround us ; change of place,
 From kindred features diversely combined,
 Producing change of beauty ever new.
 —Ah ! that such beauty, varying in the light
 Of living nature, cannot be portray'd
 By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill ;
 But is the property of him alone
 Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
 And in his mind recorded it with love !
 Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse
 Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet speaks
 Of trivial occupations well devised,
 And unsought pleasures springing up by chance ;
 As if some friendly genius had ordain'd
 That, as the day thus far had been enrich'd
 By acquisition of sincere delight,
 The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,
 A gipsy fire we kindled on the shore
 Of the fair isle with birch-trees fringed—and there,
 Merrily seated in a ring, partook
 The beverage drawn from China's fragrant herb.
 Launch'd from our hands, the smooth stone skimm'd the lake ;
 With shouts we roused the echoes ; stiller sounds
 The lovely girl supplied—a simple song,
 Whose low tones reached not to the distant rocks
 To be repeated there, but gently sank
 Into our hearts, and charm'd the peaceful flood.
 Rapaciously we gather'd flow'ry spoils
 From land and water ; lilies of each hue—
 Golden and white, that float upon the waves,
 And court the wind ; and leaves of that shy plant
 (Her flowers were shed), the lily of the vale,
 That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds
 Her pensive beauty ; from the breeze her sweets.

Such product and such pastime, did the place
 And season yield ; but, as we re-embark'd,
 Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore
 Of that wild spot, the Solitary said
 In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,
 "The fire, that burn'd so brightly to our wish,
 Where is it now ? Deserted on the beach
 It seems extinct ; nor shall the fanning breeze
 Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
 Whose ends are gain'd ? Behold an emblem here
 Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys !
 And, in this unpremeditated slight
 Of that which is no longer needed, see
 The common course of human gratitude !"

This plaintive note disturb'd not the repose
 Of the still evening. Right across the lake
 Our pinnace moves : then, coasting creek and bay,

Glades we beheld, and into thickets peep'd,
 Where couch the spotted deer ; or raised our eyes
 To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
 Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls.
 Thus did the bark, meandering with the shore,
 Pursue her voyage, till a point was gain'd
 Where a projecting line of rock, that framed
 A natural pier, invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,
 We clomb a green hill's side, and thence obtain'd,
 Slowly, a less and less obstructed sight
 Of the flat meadows and indented coast
 Of the whole lake, in compass seen : far off,
 And yet conspicuous, stood the old church-tower,
 In majesty presiding o'er the vale
 And all her dwellings ; seemingly preserved
 From the intrusion of a restless world
 By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,
 With resting-place of mossy stone ; and there
 We sate reclined, admiring quietly
 The frame and general aspect of the scene ;
 And each not seldom eager to make known
 His own discoveries ; or to favourite points
 Directing notice, merely from a wish
 To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.
 That rapturous moment ne'er shall I forget
 When these particular interests were effaced
 From every mind ! Already had the sun,
 Sinking with less than ordinary state,
 Attain'd his western bound ; but rays of light—
 Now suddenly diverging from the orb,
 Retired behind the mountain tops or veil'd
 By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown
 Of the blue firmament—aloft—and wide ;
 And multitudes of little floating clouds,
 Pierced through their thin ethereal mould, ere we,
 Who saw, of change were conscious, had become
 Vivid as fire—clouds separately poised,
 Innumerable multitude of forms
 Scatter'd through half the circle of the sky ;
 And giving back, and shedding each on each,
 With prodigal communion, the bright hues
 Which from the unapparent fount of glory
 They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.
 That which the heavens display'd, the liquid deep
 Repeated ; but with unity sublime !

While from the grassy mountain's open side
 We gazed, in silence hush'd, with eyes intent
 On the refulgent spectacle, diffused
 Through earth, sky, water, and all visible space,
 The Priest, in holy transport, thus exclaim'd :—

"Eternal Spirit! universal God!
 Power inaccessible to human thought
 Save by degrees and steps which Thou hast deign'd
 To furnish; for this image of Thyself,
 To the infirmity of mortal sense
 Vouchsafed; this local, transitory type
 Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp
 Of those who fill thy courts in highest heaven,
 The radiant cherubim;—accept the thanks
 Which we, thy humble creatures, here convened.
 Presume to offer; we, who from the breast
 Of the frail earth, permitted to behold
 The faint reflections only of thy face,
 Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!
 Such as they are who in thy presence stand
 Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink
 Imperishable majesty stream'd forth
 From thy empyreal throne, the elect of earth
 Shall be—divested at the appointed hour
 Of all dishonour—cleansed from mortal stain.
 Accomplish, then, their number; and conclude
 Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,
 The consummation that will come by stealth
 Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,
 Oh! let thy Word prevail, to take away
 The sting of human nature. Spread the law,
 As it is writter: in thy holy book,
 Throughout all lands; let every nation hear
 The high behest, and every heart obey:
 Both for the love of purity, and hope
 Which it affords, to such as do thy will
 And persevere in good, that they shall rise,
 To have a nearer view of Thee in heaven.
 Father of good! this prayer in bounty grant,
 In mercy grant it to thy wretched sons.
 Then, nor till then, shall persecution cease,
 And cruel wars expire. The way is mark'd,
 The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received
 These tidings, and in Christian temples meet
 The sacred truth to acknowledge, linger still;
 Preferring bonds and darkness to a state
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love
 Proffer'd to all, while yet on earth detain'd.
 So fare the many; and the thoughtful few,
 Who, in the anguish of their souls, bewail
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask,
 Shall it endure? Shall enmity and strife,
 Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their seed;
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope
 Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,
 And ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day arrive
 When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell

In crowded cities, without fear shall live
 Studious of mutual benefit—and he,
 Whom morning wakes, among sweet dews and flowers
 Of every clime, to till the lonely field,
 Be happy in himself? The law of faith,
 Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,
 Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve!
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart!
 And with that help the wonder shall be seen
 Fulfill'd, the hope accomplish'd; and thy praise
 Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

“Once, while the name Jehovah was a sound
 Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle
 Unheard, the savage nations bow'd their heads
 To gods delighting in remorseless deeds;
 Gods which themselves had fashion'd, to promote
 Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.
 Then, in the bosom of yon mountain cove,
 To those inventions of corrupted man
 Mysterious rites were solemnized; and there,
 Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods,
 Of those dread idols, some, perchance, received
 Such dismal service, that the loudest voice
 Of the swoln cataracts (which now are heard
 Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome,
 Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks
 Of human victims, offered up to appease
 Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes
 Had visionary faculties to see
 The thing that hath been as the thing that is,
 Aghast we might behold this spacious mere
 Bedimm'd with smoke, in wreaths voluminous,
 Flung from the body of devouring fires,
 To Taranis erected on the heights
 By priestly hands, for sacrifice perform'd
 Exultingly, in view of open day
 And full assemblage of a barbarous host;
 Or to Andates, female power! who gave
 (For so they fancied) glorious victory.
 A few rude monuments of mountain stone
 Survive; all else is swept away.—How bright
 The appearances of things! From such how changed
 The existing worship; and, with those compared,
 The worshippers how innocent and blest!
 So wide the difference, a willing mind
 At this affecting hour might almost think
 That Paradise, the lost abode of man,
 Was raised again; and to a happy few,
 In its original beauty, here restored.

“Whence but from Thee, the true and only God,
 And from the faith derived through Him who bled
 Upon the cross, this marvellous advance
 Of good from evil; as if one extreme

Were left—the other gain'd. O ye, who come
 To kneel devoutly in yon reverend pile,
 Call'd to such office by the peaceful sound
 Of sabbath bells ; and ye who sleep in earth,
 All cares forgotten, round its hallow'd walls !
 For you, in presence of this little band
 Gather'd together on the green hill-side,
 Your Pastor is embolden'd to prefer
 Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King ;
 Whose love, whose counsel, whose commands have made
 Your very poorest rich in peace of thought
 And in good works ; and him, who is endow'd
 With scantiest knowledge, master of all truth
 Which the salvation of his soul requires.
 Conscious of that abundant favour shower'd
 On you, the children of my humble care ;
 On your abodes, 'mid this beloved land,
 Our birthplace, home, and country, while on earth
 We sojourn,—loudly do I utter thanks
 With earnest joy, that will not be suppress'd.
 These barren rocks, your stern inheritance ;
 These fertile fields, that recompense your pains ;
 The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-top ;
 Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,
 Or hush'd ; the roaring waters, or the still ;—
 They see the offering of my lifted hands—
 They hear my lips present their sacrifice—
 They know if I be silent, morn or even :
 For though in whispers speaking, the full heart
 Will find a vent ; and thought is praise to Him,
 Audible praise to Thee, omniscient Mind,
 From whom all gifts descend, all blessings flow ! ~

This vesper service closed, without delay,
 From that exalted station, to the plain
 Descending, we pursued our homeward course,
 In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,
 Beneath a faded sky. No trace remain'd
 Of those celestial splendours ; grey the vault,
 Pure, cloudless ether ; and the star of eve
 Was wanting ; but inferior lights appear'd
 Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and some
 Above the darken'd hills stood boldly forth
 In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attain'd
 Her mooring-place ; where, to the sheltering tree,
 Our youthful voyagers bound fast her prow,
 With prompt yet careful hands. This done, we pass'd
 The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar's door
 Was reach'd, the Solitary check'd his steps ;
 Then, intermingling thanks, on each bestow'd
 A farewell salutation, and the like
 Receiving, took the slender path that leads
 To the one cottage in the lonely dell,
 His chosen residence. But, ere he turn'd

As if, a welcome promise had been given
 That he would share the pleasures and pursuits
 Of yot another summer's day, consumed
 In wandering with us through the valleys fair,
 And o'er the mountain wastes, "Another sun,"
 Said he, "shall shine upon us ore we part,
 Another sun, and peradventure more ;
 If time, with free consent, be yours to give,
 And season favours."

To enfeebled power,
 From this communion with uninjured minds,
 What renovation had been brought ; and what
 Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,
 Dejected, and habitually disposed
 To seek, in degradation of the kind,
 Excuse and solace for her own defects ;
 How far those erring notions were reform'd ;
 And whether aught, of tendency as good
 And pure, from further intercourse ensued ;
 This (if delightful hopes, as heretofore,
 Inspire the serious song, and gentle hearts
 Cherish, and lofty minds approve the part)
 My future labours may not leave untold.



THE
WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE;

OR,

THE FATE OF THE NORTONS.

Weak is the will of man, his judgment blind ;
Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays ;
Heavy is woe ; and joy, for human kind,
A mournful thing,—so transient is the blaze !”—
Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days
Who wants the glorious faculty, assign'd
To elevate the more than reasoning mind,
And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.
Imagination is that sacred power,
Imagination lofty and refined :
'Tis hers to pluck the amarantine flower
Of faith, and round the sufferer's temples bind
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

In twells'd shed with clustering roses gay,
And, MARY I oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's lay
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, born of heavenly birth,
To seek her knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, beloved I pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious, in compassion shed
For her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited ;
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart
The milk-white lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a fairy shell
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught ;
Free fancy prized each specious miracle,
And all its finer inspiration caught ;
Till, in the bosom of our rustic cell,
We by a lamentable change were taught
That "bliss with mortal man may not abide"—
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied !

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,
For us the voice of melody was mute.
—But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,
Heaven's breathing influence fail'd not to bestow
A timely promise of unlook'd-for fruit,
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content
From blossoms wild of fancy's innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear
 Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell
 And griefs whose sery motion comes not near
 The pangs that tempt the spirit to rebel;
 Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,
 High over hill and low adown the dell
 Again we wander'd, willing to partake
 All that she suffer'd for her dear lord's sake.

Then, too, this song of *mine* once more could please,
 Where angrish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,
 Is temper'd and and allay'd by sympathies
 Aloft ascending, and descending deep,
 Even to the inferior kinds; whom forest trees
 Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep
 Of the sharp winds;—fair creatures!—to whom Heaven
 A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic story cheer'd us; for it speaks
 Of female patience winning firm repose;
 And of the recompense which conscience seeks,
 A bright, encouraging example shows;
 Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,
 Needful amid life's ordinary woes;—
 Hence, not for them unfitted who would bloom
 A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
 Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive;
 O, that my mind were equal to fulfill
 The comprehensive mandate which they give—
 Vain aspiration of an earnest will!
 Yet in this moral strain a power may live,
 Beloved Wife! such solace to impart
 As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTCOMB-LAKE,
 April 20, 1815.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.

CANTO FIRST.

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower
The bells ring loud with gladsome power ;
The sun is bright ; the fields are gay
With people in their best array
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,
Along the banks of the crystal Wharf,
Through the vale retired and lowly,
Trooping to that summons holy.
And, up among the moorlands, see
What sprinklings of blithe company—
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,
That down the steep hills force their way,
Like cattle through the budded brooms ;
Path, or no path, what care they !
And thus in joyous mood they hie
To Bolton's mouldering Priory

What would they there ? Full fifty years
That sumptuous pile, with all its peers,
Too harshly hath been doom'd to taste
The bitterness of wrong and waste :
Its courts are ravaged ; but the tower
Is standing, with a voice of power,
That ancient voice which wont to call
To mass or some high festival.
And in the shatter'd fabric's heart
Remaineth one protected part ;
A rural chapel, neatly dress'd,
In covert like a little nest ;
And thither young and old repair,
This sabbath day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the churchyard fills ; anon
Look again, and they all are gone :
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak !
And scarcely have they disappear'd
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard :
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice !

They sing a service which they feel :
 For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal,
 And faith and hope are in their prime,
 In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,
 And all is hush'd, without and within ;
 For, though the priest more tranquilly
 Recites the holy liturgy,
 The only voice which you can hear
 Is the river murmuring near.
 When soft ! the dusky trees between,
 And down the path through the open green,
 Where is no living thing to be seen,
 And through yon gateway, where is found,
 Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
 Free entrance to the churchyard ground,
 And right across the verdant sod
 Towards the very house of God,
 Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
 Comes gliding in serene and slow,
 Soft and silent as a dream,
 A solitary Loe !
 White she is as lily of June,
 And beauteous as the silver moon
 When out of sight the clouds are driven,
 And she is left alone in heaven ;
 Or like a ship some gentle day
 In sunshine sailing far away,
 A glittering ship, that hath the plain
 Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead !
 Lie quiet in your churchyard bed !
 Ye living tend your holy cares,
 Ye multitude pursue your prayers,
 And blame not me if my heart and sight
 Are occupied with one delight !
 'Tis a work for sabbath hours
 If I with this bright creature go :
 Whether she be of forest bowers,
 From the bowers of earth below ;
 Or a spirit, for one day given,
 A gift of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
 Wait upon her as she ranges
 Round and through this pile of state,
 Overthrown and desolate !
 Now a step or two her way
 Is through space of open day,
 Where the enamour'd sunny light
 Brightens her that was so bright ;
 Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
 Falls upon her like a breath.

From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath ;
Now some gloomy nook partakes
Of the glory that she makes,—
High-ribb'd vault of stone, or cell
With perfect cunning framed as well
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
Of the elder's bushy head ;
Some jealous and forbidding cell,
That doth the living stars repel,
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering doe
Fills many a damp obscure recess
With lustre of a saintly show ;
And, re-appearing, she no less
To the open day gives blessedness.
But say, among these holy places,
Which thus assiduously she paces,
Comes she with a votary's task,
Rite to perform, or boon to ask ?
Fair pilgrim ! harbours she a sense
Of sorrow, or of reverence ?
Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,
Crush'd as if by wrath divine—
For what survives of house where God
Was worshipp'd, or where man abode—
For old magnificence undone—
Or for the gentler work begun
By Nature, softening and concealing,
And busy with a hand of healing,—
The altar, whence the cross was rent,
Now rich with mossy ornament,—
The dormitory's length laid bare,
Where the wild-rose blossoms fair ;
And sapling ash, whose place of birth
Is that lordly chamber's hearth ?
She sees a warrior carved in stone,
Among the thick weeds stretch'd alone ;
A warrior, with his shield of pride
Cleaving humbly to his side,
And hands in resignation press'd,
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast .
Methinks she passeth by the sight,
As a common creature might ;
If she be doom'd to inward care,
Or service, it must lie elsewhere.
But hers are eyes serenely bright,
And on she moves, with pace how light !
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown ,
And in this way she fares, till at last
Beside the ridge of a grassy grave
In quietness she lays her down ;

Gently as a weary wave
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,
Against an anchor'd vessel's side;
Even so, without distress, doth she
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,
To a lingering motion bound,
Like the river in its flowing;
Can there be a softer sound?
So the balmy minutes pass,
While this radiant creature lies
Couch'd upon the dewy grass,
Pensively with downcast eyes.
When now again the people rear
A voice of praise with awful cheer!
It is the last, the parting song;
And from the temple forth they throng—
And quickly spread themselves abroad—
While each pursues his several road.
But some, a variegated band
Of middle-aged, and old, and young,
And little children by the hand
Upon their leading mothers hung,
Turn, with obeisance gladly paid,
Towards the spot, where full in view,
The lovely doe of whitest hue,
Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound;
Which two spears' length of level ground
Did from all other graves divide:
As if in some respect of pride;
Or melancholy's sickly mood,
Still shy of human neighbourhood;
Or guilt, that humbly would express
A penitential loneliness.

"Look, there she is, my child! draw near;
She fears not—wherefore should we fear?
She means no harm;"—but still the boy,
To whom the words were softly said,
Hung back, and smiled, and blush'd for joy,
A shame-faced blush of glowing red!
Again the mother whisper'd low,
"Now you have seen the famous doe;
From Rylstone she hath found her way
Over the hills this sabbath day;
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone;
Thus doth she keep, from year to year,
Her sabbath morning, foul or fair."

This whisper soft repeats what he
Had known from early infancy.
Bright is the creature—as in dreams

The boy had seen her—yea more bright—
 But is she truly what she seems ?
 He asks with insecure delight,
 Asks of himself—and doubts—and still
 The doubt returns against his will :
 Though he, and all the standers by,
 Could tell a tragic history
 Of facts divulged, wherein appear
 Substantial motive, reason clear,
 Why thus the milk-white doe is found
 Couchant beside that lonely mound ;
 And why she duly loves to pace
 The circuit of this hallow'd place.
 Nor to the child's inquiring mind
 Is such perplexity confined :
 For, spite of sober truth, that sees
 A world of fix'd remembrances
 Which to this mystery belong,
 if, undeceived, my skill can trace
 The characters of every face,
 There lack not strange delusion here,
 Conjecture vague, and idle fear,
 And superstitious fancies strong,
 Which do the gentle creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported sire
 Who in his youth had often fed
 Full cheerily on convent bread,
 And heard old tales by the convent fire,
 And lately hath brought home the scars
 Gather'd in long and distant wars),
 That old man—studious to expound
 The spectacle—hath mounted high
 To days of dim antiquity :
 When Lady Aäliza mourn'd
 Her son, and felt in her despair,
 The pang of unavailing prayer ;
 Her son in Wharf's abysses drown'd,
 The noble boy of Egremound.
 From which affliction, when God's grace
 At length had in her heart found place,
 A pious structure, fair to see,
 Rose up—this stately Priory !
 The lady's work—but now laid low ;
 To the grief of her soul that doth come and go,
 In the beautiful form of this innocent doe ;
 Which, though seemingly doom'd in its breast to sustain
 A soften'd remembrance of sorrow and pain,
 Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and bright,
 And glides o'er the earth like an angel of light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door,
 And, through the chink in the fractured floor
 Look down, and see a grisly sight ;
 A vault where the bodies are buried upright !

There, face by face, and hand by hand,
 The Claphams and Mauleverers stand ;
 And, in his place, among son and sire,
 Is John de Clapham, that fierce esquire,
 A valiant man, and a name of dread,
 In the ruthless wars of the White and Red ;
 Who dragg'd Earl Pembroke from Banbury church,
 And smote off his head on the stones of the porch !
 Look down among them, if you dare ;
 Oft does the white doe loiter there,
 Prying into the darksome rent ;
 Nor can it be with good intent ;
 So thinks that dame of haughty air,
 Who hath a page her book to hold,
 And wears a frontlet edged with gold.
 Well may her thoughts be harsh ; for she
 Numbers among her ancestry
 Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously !

That slender youth, a scholar pale,
 From Oxford come to his native vale,
 He also hath his own conceit :
 It is, thinks he, the gracious fairy
 Who loved the shepherd lord to meet
 In his wanderings solitary ;
 Wild notes she in his hearing sang,
 A song of Nature's hidden powers,
 That whistled like the wind, and rang
 Among the rocks and holly bowers.
 'Twas said that she all shapes could wear,
 And oftentimes before him stood,
 Amid the trees of some thick wood,
 In semblance of a lady fair,
 And taught him signs, and show'd him sights,
 In Craven's dens, on Cumbria's heights ;
 When under cloud of fear he lay,
 A shepherd clad in homely grey,
 Nor left him at his later day.
 And hence, when he, with spear and shield,
 Rode, full of years, to Flodden field,
 His eye could see the hidden spring,
 And how the current was to flow ;
 The fatal end of Scotland's king,
 And all that hopeless overthrow.
 But not in wars did he delight,
 This Clifford wish'd for worthier might ;
 Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state ;
 Him his own thoughts did elevate,
 Most happy in the shy recess
 Of Barden's humble quietness.
 And choice of studious friends had he
 Of Bolton's dear fraternity,
 Who, standing on this old church tower,
 In many a calm propitious hour,

Perused, with him, the starry sky ;
 Or in their cells with him did pry
 For other lore, through strong desire
 Searching the earth with chemic fire ;
 But they and their good works are fled,
 And all is now disquieted,
 And peace is none, for living or dead !

Ah, pensive scholar ! think not so,
 But look again at the radiant doe !
 What quiet watch she seems to keep,
 Alone, beside that grassy heap !

Why mention other thoughts unmeet
 For vision so composed and sweet ?
 While stand the people in a ring,
 Gazing, doubting, questioning ;
 Yea, many overcome, in spite
 Of recollections clear and bright,
 Which yet do unto some impart
 An undisturb'd repose of heart.
 And all the assembly own a law
 Of orderly respect and awe ;
 But see ! they vanish, one by one ;
 And last, the doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled
 By busy dreams and fancies wild,
 To which, with no reluctant strings,
 Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;
 And now before this pile we stand
 In solitude and utter peace :
 But, harp ! thy murmurs may not cease,—
 Thou hast breeze-like visitings ;
 For a spirit with angel wings
 Hath touch'd thee, and a spirit's hand :
 A voice is with us—a command
 To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,
 A tale of tears, a mortal story !

CANTO SECOND.

THE harp in lowliness obey'd ;
 And first we sang of the greenwood shade,
 And a solitary maid ;
 Beginning, where the song must end,
 With her, and with her sylvan friend ;
 The friend who stood before her sight,
 Her only unextinguish'd light,—
 Her last companion, in a dearth
 Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For she it was,—'twas she who wrought
 Meekly, with foreboding thought,
 In vermeil colours and in gold,

An unblest work, which, standing by,
 Her father did with joy behold,
 Exulting in the imagery ;
 A banner—one that did fulfil
 Too perfectly his headstrong will :
 For on this banner had her hand
 Embroider'd (such was the command)
 The sacred cross, and figured there
 The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;
 Full soon to be uplifted high,
 And float in rueful company !

It was the time when England's queen
 Twelve years had reign'd, a sovereign dread ;
 Nor yet the restless crown had been
 Disturb'd upon her virgin head ;
 But now the inly-working north
 Was ripe to send its thousands forth,
 A potent vassalage, to fight
 In Percy's and in Neville's right,
 Two earls fast leagued in discontent,
 Who gave their wishes open vent,
 And boldly urged a general plea,—
 The rites of ancient piety
 To be by force of arms renew'd ;
 Glad prospect for the multitude !
 And that same banner, on whose breast
 The blameless lady had express'd
 Memorials chosen to give life
 And sunshine to a dangerous strife ;
 This banner, waiting for the call,
 Stood quietly in Rylstone Hall.

It came—and Francis Norton said,
 "O father! rise not in this fray,—
 The hairs are white upon your head :
 Dear father! hear me when I say
 It is for you too late a day.
 Bethink you of your own good name ;
 A just and gracious queen have we,
 A pure religion, and the claim
 Of peace on our humanity.
 'Tis meet that I endure your scorn,—
 I am your son, your eldest born ;
 But not for lordship or for land,
 My father, do I clasp your knees ;
 The banner touch not, stay your hand,—
 This multitude of men disband,
 And live at home in blissful ease ;
 For these my brethren's sake—for me—
 And, most of all, for Emily !"

Loud noise was in the crowded hall,
 And scarcely could the father hear
 That name, which had a dying fall,

The name of his only daughter dear ;
 And on the banner which stood near
 He glanced a look of holy pride,
 And his wet eyes were glorified ;
 Then seized the staff, and thus did say :
 " Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,
 Keep thou this ensign till the day
 When I of thee require the same ;
 Thy place be on my better hand ;
 And seven as true as thou, I see,
 Will cleave to this good cause and me."
 He spake, and eight brave sons straightway
 All fellow'd him, a gallant band !

Forth when sire and sons appear'd,
 A gratulating shout was rear'd,
 With din of arms and minstrelsy,
 From all his warlike tenantry,
 Aⁿ horsed and harness'd with him to ride ;
 A shout to which the hills replied !

But Francis, in the vacant hall,
 Stood silent—under dreary weight,—
 A phantasm, in which roof and wall
 Shook, totter'd, swam before his sight,
 A phantasm like a dream of night.
 Thus overwhelm'd, and desolate,
 He found his way to a postern-gate ;
 And, when he waked at length, his eye
 Was on the calm and silent sky,
 With air about him breathing sweet,
 And earth's green grass beneath his feet ;
 Nor did he fail ere long to hear
 A sound of military cheer,
 Faint, but it reach'd that shelter'd spot ;
 He heard, and it disturb'd him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance
 Which he had grasp'd unknowingly,—
 Had blindly grasp'd, in that strong trance,
 That dimness of heart agony ;
 There stood he, cleansed from the despair
 And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.
 The past he calmly hath review'd ;
 But where will be the fortitude
 Of this brave man, when he shall see
 That form beneath the spreading tree,
 And know that it is Emily ?
 Oh ! hide them from each other,—hide
 Kind Heaven, this pair severely tried !

He saw her, where in open view
 She sate, beneath the spreading yew,
 Her head upon her lap, concealing
 In solitude her bitter feeling ;
 How could he choose but shrink or sigh ;

He shrunk, and mutter'd inwardly,
 " Might ever son *command* a sire,
 The act were justified to-day."
 This to himself—and to the maid,
 Whom now he had approach'd, he said.
 " Gone are they,—they have their desire ;
 And I with thee one hour will stay,
 To give thee comfort if I may."

He paused, her silence to partake,
 And long it was before he spake :
 Then, all at once, his thoughts turn'd round,
 And fervent words a passage found.

" Gone are they, bravely, though misied,
 With a dear father at their head !
 The sons obey a natural lord ;
 The father had given solemn word
 To noble Percy,—and a force
 Still stronger bends him to his course.
 This said, our tears to-day may fall
 As at an innocent funeral.
 In deep and awful channel runs
 This sympathy of sire and sons ;
 Untried our brothers were beloved,
 And now their faithfulness is proved ;
 For faithful we must call them, bearing
 That soul of conscientious daring.
 There were they all in circle—there
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,
 John with a sword that will not fail,
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,
 And those bright twins were side by side ;
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified,
 Was he, whose arm yet lacks the power
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower !
 I, in the right of eldest-born,
 And in a second father's place,
 Presumed to stand against their scorn,
 And meet their pity face to face ;
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,
 I to my father knelt and pray'd ;
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke,
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,
 And would have laid his purpose by,
 But for a glance of his father's eye,
 Which I myself could scarcely brook.

" Then be we, each, and all, forgiven !
 Thee, chiefly thee, my sister dear,
 Whose pangs are register'd in heaven,—
 The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,
 And smiles, that dared to take their place,
 Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,
 As that unhallow'd banner grew

Beneath a loving old man's view.
 Thy part is done—thy painful part ;
 Be thou then satisfied in heart !
 A further, though far easier task
 Than thine hath been, my duties ask ;
 With theirs my efforts cannot blend,
 I cannot for such cause contend ;
 Their aims I utterly forswear ;
 But I in body will be there.
 Unarm'd and naked will I go,
 Be at their side, come weal or woe :
 On kind occasions I may wait,
 See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.
 Bare breast I take and an empty hand.”—
 Therewith he threw away the lance
 Which he had grasp'd in that strong trance,
 Spurn'd it—like something that would stand
 Between him and the pure intent
 Of love on which his soul was bent.

“ For thee, for thee, is left the sense
 Of trial past without offence
 To God or man ; such innocence,
 Such consolation, and the excess
 Of an unmerited distress ;
 In that thy very strength must lie.
 O sister, I could prophesy !
 The time is come that rings the knell
 Of all we loved, and loved so well.
 Hope nothing, if I thus may speak
 To thee a woman, and thence weak ;
 Hope nothing, I repeat ; for we
 Are doom'd to perish utterly :
 'Tis meet that thou with me divide
 The thought while I am by thy side,
 Acknowledging a grace in this,
 A comfort in the dark abyss :
 But look not for me when I'm gone,
 And be no further wrought upon.
 Farewell all wishes, all debate,
 All prayers for this cause, or for that !
 Weep, if that aid thee ; but depend
 Upon no help of outward friend ;
 Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave
 To fortitude without reprieve.
 For we must fall, both we and ours,
 This mansion and these pleasant bowers,
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead, hall,—
 Our fate is theirs, will reach them all ;
 The young horse must forsake his manger,
 And learn to glory in a stranger ;
 The hawk forget his perch,—the hound
 Be parted from his ancient ground :
 The blast will sweep us all away,

One desolation, one decay !
 And even this creature !"—which words saying
 He pointed to a lovely doe,
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying,
 Fair creature, and more white than snow ;
 " Even she will to her peaceful woods
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,
 And be in heart and soul the same
 She was before she hither came,—
 Ere she had learn'd to love us all,
 Herself beloved in Rylstone Hall.
 But thou, my sister, doom'd to be
 The last leaf which by Heaven's decree
 Must hang upon a blasted tree ;
 If not in vain we have breathed the breath
 Together of a purer faith—
 If hand in hand we have been led
 And thou, (O happy thought this day !)
 Not seldom foremost in the way—
 If on one thought our minds have fed,
 And we have in one meaning read—
 If, when at home, our private weal
 Hath suffer'd from the shock of zeal,
 Together we have learn'd to prize
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice—
 If we like combatants have fared,
 And for this issue been prepared—
 If thou art beautiful, and youth
 And thought endue thee with all truth,
 Be strong—be worthy of the grace
 Of God, and fill thy destined place ;
 A soul, by force of sorrows high,
 Uplifted to the purest sky
 Of undisturb'd humanity !"

He ended,—or she heard no more
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,
 And at the mansion's silent door,
 He kiss'd the consecrated maid ;
 And down the valley he pursued,
 Alone, the armèd multitude.

CANTO THIRD.

Now joy for you and sudden cheer,
 Ye watchmen upon Brancepeth Towers ;
 Looking forth in doubt and fear,
 Telling melancholy hours !
 Proclaim it ! let your masters hear
 That Norton with his band is near.
 The watchmen from their station high
 Pronounced the word,—and the earls descry,

Forthwith, the armèd company
Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair
Gone forth to hail him on the plain—
“This meeting, noble lords, looks fair ;
I bring with me a goodly train ;
Their hearts are with you :—hill and dale
Have help'd us : Ure we cross'd and Swale,
And horse and harness follow'd—see
The best part of their yeomanry !
Stand forth, my sons !—these eight are mine,
Whom to this service I commend ;
Which way soe'er our fate incline,
These will be faithful to the end ;
They are my all”—voice fail'd him here,—
“My all save one, a daughter dear !
Whom I have left, the mildest birth,
The meekest child on this bless'd earth.
I had—but these are by my side,
These eight, and this is a day of pride !
The time is ripe—with festive din,
Lo ! how the people are flocking in,—
Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand
When snow lies heavy upon the land.”

He spake bare truth ; for far and near
From every side came noisy swarms
Of peasants, in their homely gear ;
And mix'd with these, to Brancepeth came
Grave gentry of estate and name,
And captains known for worth in arms ;
And pray'd the earls in self-defence
To rise, and prove their innocence.—
“Rise, noble earls—put forth your might
For holy church, and the people's right !”

The Norton fix'd, at this demand,
His eye upon Northumberland,
And said, “The minds of men will own
No loyal rest while England's crown
Remains without an heir, the bait
Of strife and factions desperate ;
Who, paying deadly hate in kind
Through all things else, in this can find
A mutual hope, a common mind ;
And plot, and pant to overwhelm
All ancient honour in the realm.
Brave earls ! to whose heroic veins
Our noblest blood is given in trust,
To you a suffering state complains,
And ye must raise her from the dust.
With wishes of still bolder scope
On you we look, with dearest hope,
Even for our altars,—for the prize

In heaven, of life that never dies ;
 For the old and holy church we mourn,
 And must in joy to her return.
 Behold !"—and from his son, whose stand
 Was on his right—from that guardian hand,
 He took the banner, and unfurl'd
 The precious folds—"Behold," said he,
 "The ransom of a sinful world ;
 Let this your preservation be,—
 The wounds of hands and feet and side,
 And the sacred cross on which Jesus died !
 This bring I from an ancient hearth,
 These records wrought in pledge of love
 By hands of no ignoble birth,
 A maid o'er whom the blessèd Dove
 Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood
 While she the holy work pursued."
 "Uplift the standard !" was the cry
 From all the list'ners that stood round ;
 "Plant it,—by this we live or die !"

The Norton ceased not for that sound,
 But said, "The prayer which ye have heard,
 Much injured earls, by these preferr'd,
 Is offer'd to the saints, the sigh
 Of tens of thousands, secretly."
 "Uplift it !" cried once more the band,
 And then a thoughtful pause ensued.
 "Uplift it !" said Northumberland—
 Whereat, from all the multitude,
 Who saw the banner rear'd on high
 In all its dread emblazonry,
 With tumult and indignant rout
 A voice of uttermost joy broke out :
 The transport was roll'd down the river of Were,
 And Durham, the time-honour'd Durham, did hear,
 And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were stirr'd by the shout !

Now was the North in arms : they shine
 In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,
 At Percy's voice : and Neville sees
 His followers gathering in from Tees,
 From Were, and all the little rills
 Conceal'd among the forked hills.
 Seven hundred knights, retainers all
 Of Neville, at their master's call
 Had sate together in Raby Hall ;
 Such strength that earldom held of yore ;
 Nor wanted at this time rich store
 Of well-appointed chivalry.
 Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,
 And greet the old paternal shield,
 They heard the summons ; and, furthermore,
 Came foot and horseman of each degree,
 Unbound by pledge of fealty ;

Appear'd, with free and open hate
 Of novelties in church and state ;
 Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire,
 And the Romish priest, in priest's attire.
 And thus, in arms, a zealous band
 Proceeding under joint command,
 To Durham first their course they bear,
 And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat
 Sang mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—
 And trod the Bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward, smooth and free
 "They muster'd their host at Wetherby,
 Full sixteen thousand fair to see ;"
 The choicest warriors of the North :
 But none for undisputed worth
 Like those eight sons ; who, in a ring,
 Each with a lance, erect and tall,
 A falchion, and a buckler small,
 Stood by their sire on Clifford Moor,
 In youthful beauty flourishing,
 To guard the standard which he bore,
 With feet that firmly press'd the ground
 They stood, and girt their father round ;
 Such was his choice,—no steed will he
 Henceforth bestride ; triumphantly
 He stood upon the verdant sod,
 Trusting himself to the earth, and God.
 Rare sight to embolden and inspire !
 Proud was the field of sons and sire,
 Of him the most ; and, sooth to say,
 No shape of man in all the array
 So graced the sunshine of that day.
 The monumental pomp of age
 Was with this goodly personage ;
 A stature undepress'd in size,
 Unbent, which rather seem'd to rise,
 In open victory o'er the weight
 Of seventy years, to higher height ;
 Magnific limbs of wither'd state,—
 A face to fear and venerate,—
 Eyes dark and strong—and on his head
 Rich locks of silver hair thick spread,
 Which a brown morion half conceal'd,
 Light as a hunter's of the field ;
 And thus, with girdle round his waist,
 Whereon the banner-staff might rest
 At need, he stood, advancing high
 The glittering, floating pageantry.

Who sees him ! Many see, and one
 With unparticipated gaze,
 Who 'mong these thousands friend hath none
 And treads in solitary ways.
 He, following wheresoe'er he might,

Hath watch'd the banner from afar,
 As shepherds watch a lonely star,
 Or mariners the distant light
 That guides them on a stormy night,
 And now, upon a chosen plot
 Of rising ground, yon heathy spot,
 He takes this day his far-off stand,
 With breast unmail'd, unweapon'd hand.
 Bold is his aspect ; but his eye
 Is pregnant with anxiety,
 While, like a tutelary power,
 He there stands fix'd, from hour to hour.
 Yet sometimes, in more humble guise,
 Stretch'd out upon the ground he lies,—
 As if it were his only task
 Like herdsman in the sun to bask,
 Or by his mantle's help to find
 A shelter from the nipping wind :
 And thus, with short oblivion blest,
 His weary spirits gather rest.
 Again he lifts his eyes, and lo !
 The pageant glancing to and fro ;
 And hope is waken'd by the sight
 That he thence may learn, ere fall of night,
 Which way the tide is doom'd to flow.

To London were the chieftains bent ;
 But what avails the bold intent ?
 A royal army is gone forth
 To quell the rising of the North ;
 They march with Dudley at their head,
 And in seven days' space, will to York be led !
 Can such a mighty host be raised
 Thus suddenly, and brought so near ?
 The earls upon each other gazed ;
 And Neville was oppress'd with fear ;
 For, though he bore a valiant name,
 His heart was of a timid frame.
 And bold if both had been, yet they
 " Against so many may not stay ;"
 And therefore will retreat to seize
 A stronghold on the banks of Tees ;
 There wait a favourable hour,
 Until Lord Dacre with his power
 From Naworth comes ; and Howard's aid
 Be with them—openly display'd.

While through the host, from man to man,
 A rumour of this purpose ran,
 The standard giving to the care
 Of him who heretofore did bear
 That charge, impatient Norton sought
 The chieftains, to unfold his thought,
 And thus abruptly spake,—“ We yield
 (And can it be ?) an unfought field !

How often hath the strength of Heaven
To few triumphantly been given !
Still do our very children boast
Of mitred Thurston—what a host
He conquer'd ! Saw we not the plain
(And flying shall behold again)
Where faith was proved, while to battle moved
The standard on the sacred wain,
On which the grey-hair'd barons stood,
And the infant heir of Mowbray's blood,
Beneath the saintly ensigns three,
Their confidence and victory ?
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name—
Must Westmoreland be ask'd with shame
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,
In that other day of Neville's Cross ?
When, as the vision gave command,
The Prior of Durham with holy hand
Saint Cuthbert's relic did uprear
Upon the point of a lofty spear,
And God descended in his power,
While the monks pray'd in maiden's bower.
Less would not at our need be due
To us, who war against the untrue ;
The delegates of Heaven we rise,
Convoked the impious to chastise ;
We, we the sanctities of old
Would re-establish and uphold.”
The chiefs were by his zeal confounded,
But word was given, and the trumpet sounded ;
Back through the melancholy host
Went Norton, and resumed his post.
“ Alas ! ” thought he, “ and have I borne
This banner raised so joyfully,
This hope of all posterity,
Thus to become at once the scorn
Of babbling winds as they go by,
A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,
To the frail clouds a mockery ! ”
“ Even these poor eight of mine would stem ”—
Half to himself, and half to them
He spake—“ would stem, or quell a force
Ten times their number, man and horse ;
This by their own unaided might,
Without their father in their sight,
Without the cause for which they fight ;
A cause, which on a needful day
Would breed us thousands brave as they.”
—So speaking, he upraised his head
Towards that imagery once more ;
But the familiar prospect shed
Despondency unfelt before ;
A shock of intimations vain,
Blank fear, and superstitious pain,

Fell on him, with the sudden thought
 Of her by whom the work was wrought ;
 " O wherefore was her count'nance bright
 With love divine and gentle light ?
 She did in passiveness obey,
 But her faith lean'd another way.
 Ill tears she wept,—I saw them fall,
 I overheard her as she spake
 Sad words to that mute animal,
 The white doe, in the hawthorn brake ;
 She steep'd, but not for Jesu's sake,
 This cross in tears : by her, and one
 Unworthier far, we are undone—
 Her brother was it, who assail'd
 Her tender spirit, and prevail'd.
 Her other parent, too, whose head
 In the cold grave hath long been laid,
 From reason's earliest dawn beguiled
 The docile, unsuspecting child :
 Far back—far back my mind must go
 To reach the well-spring of this woe !"
 While thus he brooded, music sweet
 Was play'd to cheer them in retreat ;
 But Norton linger'd in the rear :
 Thought follow'd thought—and ere the last
 Of that unhappy train was pass'd,
 Before him Francis did appear.

" Now when 'tis not your aim t' oppose,
 Said he, " in open field your foes ;
 Now that from this decisive day
 Your multitude must melt away,
 An unarm'd man may come, unblamed,
 To ask a grace that was not claim'd
 Long as your hopes were high ; he now
 May hither bring a fearless brow,
 When his discountenance can do
 No injury,—may come to you.
 Though in your cause no part I bear,
 Your indignation I can share ;
 Am grieved this backward march to see,
 How careless and disorderly !
 I scorn your chieftains—men who lead,
 And yet want courage at their need,
 Then look at them with open eyes !
 Deserve they further sacrifice ?
 My father ! I would help to find
 A place of shelter, till the rage
 Of cruel men do like the wind
 Exhaust itself, and sink to rest ;
 Be brother now to brother join'd !
 Admit me in the equipage
 Of your misfortunes. that at least,
 Whatever fate remains behind.

I may bear witness in my breast,
To your nobility of mind !”

“Thou enemy—my bane and blight !
Oh, bold to fight the coward’s fight
Against all good !”—but why declare,
At length, the issue of this prayer ?
Or how, from his depression raised,
The father on his son had gazed ;
Suffice it that the son gave way,
Nor strove that passion to allay,
Nor did he turn aside to prove
His brothers’ wisdom, or their love ;
But calmly from the spot withdrew,
The like endeavours to renew,
Should e’er a kindlier time ensue.

CANTO FOURTH.

FROM cloudless ether looking down,
The moon, this tranquil evening, sees
A camp, and a beleaguer’d town,
And castle like a stately crown
On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;
And, southward far, with moors between,
Hill-tops, and floods, and forests green,
The bright moon sees that valley small
Where Rylstone’s old sequester’d Hall
A venerable image yields
Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;
While from one pillar’d chimney breathes
The silver smoke, and mounts in wreaths.
The courts are hush’d ; for timely sleep
The greyhounds to their kennel creep ;
The peacock in the broad ash-tree
Aloft is roosted for the night,
He who in proud prosperity
Of colours manifold and bright,
Walk’d round, affronting the daylight ;
And higher still, above the bower
Where he is perch’d, from yon lone tower
The hall-clock in the clear moonshine
With glittering finger points at nine.
Ah ! who could think that sadness here
Had any sway—or pain—or fear ?
A soft and lulling sound is heard
Of streams inaudible by day ;
The garden pool’s dark surface—stirr’d
By the night insects in their play—
Breaks into dimples small and bright ;
A thousand, thousand rings of light
That shape themselves and disappear

Almost as soon as seen : and lo !
 Not distant far, the milk-white doe :
 The same fair creature which was nigh,
 Feeding in tranquillity,
 When Francis utter'd to the maid
 His last words in the yew-tree shade :
 The same fair creature, who hath found
 Her way into forbidden ground ;
 Where now, within this spacious plot
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,
 With lawns, and beds of flowers, and shades
 Of trellis-work, in long arcades,
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall
 Of close-clipp'd foliage green and tall,
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,
 And terraces in trim array, —
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,
 With pine and cedar spreading wide
 Their darksome boughs on either side,
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;
 Happy as others of her kind,
 That, far from human neighbourhood,
 Range—unrestricted as the wind—
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But where at this still hour is she—
 The consecrated Emily ?
 Even while I speak, behold the maid
 Emerging from the cedar shade
 To open moonshine, where the doe
 Beneath the cypress spire is laid,
 Like a patch of April snow
 Upon a bed of herbage green
 Lingered, in a woody glade,
 Or behind a rocky screen—
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen
 By the shepherd, is pass'd by
 With an inattentive eye,
 Nor more regard doth she bestow
 Upon the uncomplaining doe !

Yet the meek creature was not free,
 Erewhile, from some perplexity :
 For thrice hath she approach'd, this day,
 The thought-bewilder'd Emily ;
 Endeavouring in her gentle way,
 Some smile or look of love to gain,—
 Encouragement to sport or play ;
 Attempts which by the unhappy maid
 Have all been slighted or gainsaid.
 O welcome to the viewless breeze !
 'Tis fraught with acceptable feeling,
 And instantaneous sympathies
 Into the sufferer's bosom stealing.
 Ere she hath reach'd yon rustic shed

Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread
 Along the walls and overhead,
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers
 Revives a memory of those hours
 When here, in this remote alcove
 (While from the pendent woodbine came
 Like odours, sweet as if the same),
 A fondly anxious mother strove
 To teach her salutary fears
 And mysteries above her years.
 Yes, she is soothed : an image faint—
 And yet not faint—a presence bright
 Returns to her ; 'tis that bless'd saint
 Who with mild looks and language mild
 Instructed here her darling child,
 While yet a prattler on the knee,
 To worship in simplicity
 The invisible God, and take for guide
 The faith reform'd and purified.

'Tis flown—the vision ; and the sense
 Of that beguiling influence !
 “ But oh ! thou angel from above, -
 Thou spirit of maternal love,
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear,
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;
 As thou thy presence hast to me
 Vouchsafed—in radiant ministry
 Descend on Francis !—through the air
 Of this sad earth to him repair,
 Speak to him with a voice, and say,
 That he must cast despair away ! ”

Then from within the embower'd retreat,
 Where she had found a grateful seat,
 Perturb'd she issues. She will go ;
 Herself will follow to the war,
 And clasp her father's knees ; ah, no !
 She meets the insuperable bar,
 The injunction by her brother laid ;
 His parting charge—but ill obey'd !
 That interdicted all debate,
 All prayer for this cause or for that ;
 All efforts that would turn aside
 The headstrong current of their fate :
 Her duty is to stand and wait ;
 In resignation to abide
 The shock, and finally secure
 O'er pain and grief a triumph pure.
 She knows, she feels it, and is cheer'd ;
 At least her present pangs are check'd.
 And now an ancient man appear'd,
 Approaching her with grave respect.
 Down the smooth walk which then she trod,

He paced along the silent sod,
 And greeting her, thus gently spake :
 " An old man's privilege I take ;
 Dark is the time—a woeful day !
 Dear daughter of affliction, say
 How can I serve you?—point the way."

" Rights have you, and may well be told
 You with my father have grown old
 In friendship : go—from him—from me—
 Strive to avert this misery !
 This would I beg ; but on my mind
 A passive stillness is enjoin'd.
 If prudence offer help or aid,
 On *you* is no restriction laid ;
 You not forbidden to recline
 With hope upon the will divine."

" Hope," said the sufferer's zealous friend,
 " Must not forsake us till the end.
 In Craven's wilds is many a den
 To shelter persecuted men :
 Far underground is many a cave
 Where they might lie, as in the grave,
 Until this storm had ceased to rave ;
 Or let them cross the river Tweed,
 And be at once from peril freed !"

" Ah, tempt me not !" she faintly sigh'd ;
 " I will not counsel nor exhort,—
 With my condition satisfied ;
 But you, at least, may make report
 Of what befalls : be this your task,
 This may be done ; 'tis all I ask !"

She spake, and from the lady's sight
 The sire, unconscious of his age,
 Departed promptly as a page
 Bound on some errand of delight.
 " The noble Francis, wise as brave,"
 Thought he, " may have the skill to save :
 With hopes in tenderness conceal'd,
 Unarm'd he follow'd to the field.
 Him will I seek : the insurgent powers
 Are now besieging Barnard's towers,—
 Grant that the moon which shines this night
 May guide them in a prudent flight !"

But quick the turns of chance and change,
 And knowledge has a narrow range ;
 Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
 And wishes blind, and efforts vain.
 Their flight the fair moon may not see ;
 For, from mid-heaven, already she
 Hath witness'd their captivity.
 She saw the desperate assault
 Upon that hostile castle made ;

But dark and dismal is the vault
 Where Norton and his sons are laid !
 Disastrous issue ! He had said,
 " This night yon haughty towers must yield,
 Or we for ever quit the field.
 Neville is utterly dismay'd,
 For promise fails of Howard's aid ;
 And Dacre to our call replies
 That he is unprepared to rise.
 My heart is sick ; this weary pause
 Must needs be fatal to the cause.
 The breach is open ; on the wall,
 This night, the banner shall be planted !"
 'Twas done. His sons were with him—all
 They belt him round with hearts undaunted :
 And others follow—sire and son
 Leap down into the court—" 'Tis won,"
 They shout aloud ; but Heaven decreed
 Another close
 To that brave deed

Which struck with terror friends and foe !
 The friend shrinks back, the foe recoils
 From Norton and his filial band ;
 But they, now caught within the toils,
 Against a thousand cannot stand ;
 The foe from numbers courage drew,
 And overpower'd that gallant few.
 " A rescue for the standard !" cried
 The father from within the walls ;
 But see, the sacred standard falls !
 Confusion through the camp spreads wide
 Some fled, and some their fears detain'd ;
 But ere the moon had sunk to rest
 In her pale chambers of the west,
 Of that rash levy nought remain'd.

CANTO FIFTH.

HIGH on a point of rugged ground,
 Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell,
 Above the loftiest ridge or mound
 Where foresters or shepherds dwell,
 An edifice of warlike frame
 Stands single—Norton Tower its name ;
 It fronts all quarters, and looks round
 O'er path and road, and plain and dell,
 Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,
 Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent,
 Though bleak and bare, and as seldom free
 As Pendle Hill or Pennygent
 From wind, or frost, or vapours wet,

Had often heard the sound of glee
 When there the youthful Nortons met
 To practise games and archery :
 How proud and happy they ! the crowd
 Of lookers-on how pleased and proud !
 And from the heat of the noontide sun,
 From showers, or when the prize was won,
 They to the watch-tower did repair,
 Commodious pleasure-house ! and there
 Would mirth run round, with generous fare ;
 And the stern old lord of Rylstone Hall,
 He was the proudest of them all !

But now, his child, with anguish pale,
 Upon the height walks to and fro ;
 'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,—
 Received the bitterness of woe :
 Dead are they, they were doom'd to die
 The sons and father all are dead,
 All dead save one : and Emily
 No more shall seek this watch-tower high,
 To look far forth with anxious eye ;
 She is relieved from hope and dread,
 Though suffering in extremity.

For she had hoped—had hoped and fear'd—
 Such rights did feeble nature claim ;
 And oft her steps had hither steer'd,
 Though not unconscious of self-blame ;
 For she her brother's charge revered,
 His farewell words ; and by the same,
 Yea, by her brother's very name,
 Had, in her solitude, been cheer'd.

She turn'd to him, who, with his eye,
 Was watching her while on the height
 She sate, or wander'd restlessly,
 O'erburden'd by her sorrow's weight—
 To him who this dire news had told,
 And now beside the mourner stood
 (That grey-hair'd man of gentle blood,
 Who with her father had grown old
 In friendship, rival hunters they,
 And fellow-warriors in their day)—
 To Rylstone he the tidings brought ;
 Then on this place the maid had sought,
 And told, as gently as could be,
 The end of that sad tragedy,
 Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the lady turn'd :—" You said
 That Francis lives—*he* is not dead ?"

" Your noble brother hath been spared ;
 To take his life they have not dared.
 On him, and on his high endeavour,

The light of praise shall shine for ever !
 Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain
 His solitary course maintain ;
 Not vainly struggled—in the might
 Of duty seeing with clear sight ;
 He was their comfort to the last,
 Their joy till every pang was past.

“ I witness'd when to York they came :
 What, lady, if their feet were tied !
 They might deserve a good man's blame ;
 But, marks of infamy and shame,
 These were their triumph, these their pride,
 ‘ Lo, Francis comes ! ’ the people cried,
 ‘ A prisoner once, but now set free !
 ‘ Tis well, for he the worst defied
 ‘ For sake of natural piety ;
 ‘ He rose not in this quarrel, he
 ‘ His father and his brothers woo'd,
 ‘ Both for their own and country's good,
 ‘ To rest in peace—he did divide,
 ‘ He parted from them ; but at their side
 ‘ Now walks in unanimity—
 ‘ Then peace to cruelty and scorn,
 ‘ While to the prison they are borne,
 ‘ Peace, peace to all indignity ! ’

“ And so in prison were they laid—
 Oh hear me, hear me, gentle maid !
 For I am come with power to bless,
 To scatter gleams through your distress
 Of a redeeming happiness.
 Me did a reverent pity move
 And privilege of ancient love,
 But most, compassion for your fate,
 Lady !—for your forlorn estate ;
 Me did these move, and I made bold,
 And entrance gain'd to that stronghold.

“ Your father gave me cordial greeting ;
 But to his purposes, that burn'd
 Within him, instantly return'd—
 He was commanding and entreating,
 And said, ‘ We need not stop, my son !
 ‘ But I will end what is begun ;
 ‘ Tis matter which I do not fear
 ‘ To intrust to any living ear.’
 And so to Francis he renew'd
 His words, more calmly thus pursued :—

“ ‘ Might this our enterprise have sped,
 ‘ Change wide and deep the land had seen,
 ‘ A renovation from the dead,
 ‘ A spring-tide of immortal green :
 ‘ The darksome altars would have blazed
 ‘ Like stars when clouds are rol'd away ;

'Salvation to all eyes that gazed,
 'Once more the rood had been upraised
 'To spread its arms, and stand for aye.
 'Then, then, had I survived to see
 'New life in Bolton Priory ;
 'The voice restored, the eye of truth
 'Re-open'd that inspired my youth ;
 'Had seen her in her pomp array'd ;
 'This banner (for such vow I made)
 'Should on the consecrated breast
 'Of that same temple have found rest :
 'I would myself have hung it high,
 'Glad offering of glad victory !

" ' A shadow of such thought remains
 'To cheer this sad and pensive time ;
 'A solemn fancy yet sustains
 'One feeble being—bids me climb
 'Even to the last—one effort more
 'To attest my faith, if not restore.

" ' Hear then,' said he, ' while I impart,
 'My son, the last wish of my heart.
 'The banner strive thou to regain ;
 'And, if th' endeavour be not vain,
 'Bear it—to whom if not to thee
 'Shall I this lonely thought consign ?—
 'Bear it to Bolton Priory,
 'And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine,
 'To wither in the sun and breeze,
 'Mid those decaying sanctities.
 'There let at least the gift be laid,
 'The testimony there display'd ;
 'Bold proof that with no selfish aim,
 'But for lost faith and Christ's dear name,
 'I helmeted a brow though white,
 'And took a place in all men's sight ;
 'Yea, offer'd up this beauteous brood,
 'This fair unrivall'd brotherhood,
 'And turn'd away from thee, my son !
 'And left—but be the rest unsaid,
 'The name untouch'd, the tear unshed,—
 'My wish is known and I have done :
 'Now promise, grant this one request—
 'This dying prayer—and be thou blest !'

" Then Francis answer'd fervently,
 'If God so will, the same shall be.' "

" Immediately this solemn word
 Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,
 And officers appear'd in state
 To lead the prisoners to their fate.
 They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear
 To tell, or, lady, you to hear ?
 They rose—embraces none were given—

They stood like trees when earth and heaven
 Are calm ; they knew each other's worth,
 And reverently the band went forth.
 They met, when they had reach'd the door,
 The banner—which a soldier bore—
 One marshall'd thus with base intent
 That he in scorn might go before,
 And, holding up this monument,
 Conduct them to their punishment ;
 So cruel Sussex, unrestrain'd
 By human feeling, had ordain'd.
 The unhappy banner Francis saw,
 And, with a look of calm command
 Inspiring universal awe,
 He took it from the soldier's hand ;
 And all the people that were round
 Confirm'd the deed in peace profound.
 —High transport did the father shed
 Upon his son—and they were led,
 Led on, and yielded up their breath,
 Together died a happy death !
 But Francis, soon as he had braved
 This insult, and the banner saved,
 That moment, from among the tide
 Of the spectators, occupied
 In admiration or dismay,
 Bore unobserved his charge away."

These things, which thus had in the sight
 And hearing pass'd of him who stood
 With Emily, on the watch-tower height,
 In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,
 He told ; and oftentimes with voice
 Of power to encourage or rejoice ;
 For deepest sorrows that aspire,
 Go high, no transport ever higher.
 " Yet, yet in this affliction," said
 The old man to the silent maid,
 " Yet, lady ! Heaven is good—the night
 Shows yet a star which is most bright ;
 Your brother lives—he lives—is come,
 Perhaps, already to his home ;
 Then let us leave this dreary place."
 She yielded, and with gentle pace,
 Though without one uplifted look,
 To Rylstone Hall her way she took.

CANTO SIXTH.

WHY comes not Francis ? Joyful cheer
 In that parental gratulation,
 And glow of righteous indignation,
 Went with him from the doleful city.

He fled—yet in his flight could hear
 The death-sound of the minster bell ;
 That sullen stroke pronounced farewell
 To Marmaduke, cut off from pity !
 'To Ambrose that ! and then a knell
 For him, the sweet half-open'd flower !
 For all—all dying in one hour !
 Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts of love
 Should bear him to his sister dear
 With motion fleet as wingèd dove ;
 Yea, like a heavenly messenger,
 An angel-guest, should he appear.
 Why comes he not ?—for westward fast
 Along the plain of York he pass'd ;
 The banner staff was in his hand,
 The imagery conceal'd from sight,
 And cross th' expanse, in open flight,
 Reckless of what impels or leads,
 Uncheck'd he hurries on ; nor heeds
 The sorrow of the villagers ;
 From the triumphant cruelties
 Of vengeful military force,
 And punishment without remorse,
 Uncheck'd he journeys—under law
 Of inward occupation strong ;
 And the first object which he saw,
 With conscious sight, as he swept along,
 It was the banner in his hand !—
 He felt and made a sudden stand.

He look'd about like one betray'd :
 What hath he done—what promise made ?
 Oh weak, weak moment—to what end
 Can such a vain oblation tend,
 And he the bearer ? Can he go
 Carrying this instrument of woe,
 And find—find anywhere, a right
 To excuse him in his country's sight ?
 No ! will not all men deem the change
 A downward course, perverse and strange ?
 Here is it,—but how—when—must she,
 The unoffending Emily,
 Again this piteous object see ?

Such conflict long did he maintain
 Within himself, and found no rest ;
 Calm liberty he could not gain ;
 And yet the service was unblest.
 His own life into danger brought
 By this sad burden—even that thought
 Raised self-suspicion which was strong,
 Swaying the brave man to his wrong :
 And how, unless it were the sense
 Of all-disposing Providence,
 't will intelligibly shown,

Finds he the banner in his hand,
 Without a thought to such intent,
 Or conscious effort of his own—
 And no obstruction to prevent
 His father's wish and last command !
 And, thus beset, he heaved a sigh,
 Remembering his own prophecy
 Of utter desolation, made
 To Emily in the yew-tree shade :
 He sigh'd, submitting to the power,
 The might of that prophetic hour.
 " No choice is left ; the deed is mine—
 Dead are they, dead !—and I will go,
 And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,
 Will lay the relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will
 He went, and traversed plain and hill ;
 And up the vale of Wharf his way
 Pursued ; and, on the second day,
 He reach'd a summit whence his eyes
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.
 There Francis for a moment's space
 Made halt—but hark ! a noise behind
 Of horsemen at an eager pace,
 He heard, and with misgiving mind.
 'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the band ;
 They come, by cruel Sussex sent ;
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand
 Of death had drunk their punishment,
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed,
 How Francis had the banner claim'd,
 And with that charge had disappear'd ;
 By all the standers-by revered.
 His whole bold carriage (which had quell'd
 Thus far the opposer, and repell'd
 All censure,—enterprise so bright
 That even bad men had vainly striven
 Against that overcoming light)
 Was then review'd, and prompt word given,
 That to what place soever fled,
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gain'd the height
 Where Francis stood in open sight.
 They hem him round—" Behold the proof !
 Behold the ensign in his hand !
 He did not arm, he walk'd aloof—
 For why ?—to save his father's land ;
 Worst traitor of them all is he,
 A traitor dark and cowardly !"

" I am no traitor ! " Francis said,
 " Though this unhappy freight I bear :
 It weakens me, my heart hath bled

Till it is weak—but you beware,
 Nor do a suffering spirit wrong,
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong!²
 At this, he from the beaten road
 Retreated, towards a brake of thorn,
 Which like a place of vantage show'd ;
 And there stood bravely, though forloru.
 In self-defence, with a warrior's brow,
 He stood, nor weaponless was now ;
 He from a soldier's hand had snatch'd
 A spear, and with his eyes he watch'd
 Their motions, turning round and round :
 His weaker hand the banner held ;
 And straight, by savage zeal impell'd,
 Forth rush'd a pikeman, as if he,
 Not without harsh indignity,
 Would seize the same ; instinctively,
 To smite the offender, with his lance
 Did Francis from the brake advance ;
 But, from behind, a treacherous wound
 Unfeeling, brought him to the ground,—
 A mortal stroke :—oh, grief to tell !
 Thus, thus the noble Francis fell :
 There did he lie, of breath forsaken ;
 The banner from his grasp was taken,
 And borne exultingly away ;
 And the body was left on the ground where it lay.

Two days, as many nights, he slept
 Alone, unnoticed, and unwept ;
 For at that time distress and fear
 Possess'd the country far and near ;
 The third day, one who chanced to pass
 Beheld him stretch'd upon the grass.
 A gentle forester was he,
 And of the Norton tenantry ;
 And he had heard that by a train
 Of horsemen Francis had been slain.
 Much was he troubled—for the man
 Hath recognized his pallid face ;
 And to the nearest huts he ran,
 And call'd the people to the place.
 "How desolate is Rylstone Hall !"
 Such was the instant thought of all ;
 And if the lonely lady there
 Should be, this sight she cannot bear !
 Such thought the forester express'd,
 And all were sway'd, and deem'd it best
 That, if the priest should yield assent
 And join himself to their intent,
 Then they, for Christian pity's sake,
 In holy ground a grave would make ;
 That straightway buried he should be
 In the churchyard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made
 The grave where Francis must be laid.
 In no confusion or neglect
 This did they, but in pure respect
 That he was born of gentle blood,
 And that there was no neighbourhood
 Of kindred for him in that ground :
 So to the churchyard they are bound,
 Bearing the body on a bier
 In decency and humble cheer ;
 And psalms are sung with holy sound.

But Emily hath raised her head,
 And is again disquieted ;
 She must behold !—so many gone,
 Where is the solitary one ?
 And forth from Rylstone Hall stepp'd she, —
 To seek her brother forth she went
 And tremblingly her course she bent
 Tow' rds Bolton's ruin'd Priory.
 She comes, and in the vale hath heard
 The funeral dirge—she sees the knot
 Of people—sees them in one spot—
 And darting like a wounded bird,
 She reach'd the grave, and with her breast
 Upon the ground, received the rest, —
 The consummation, the whole ruth
 And sorrow of this final truth !

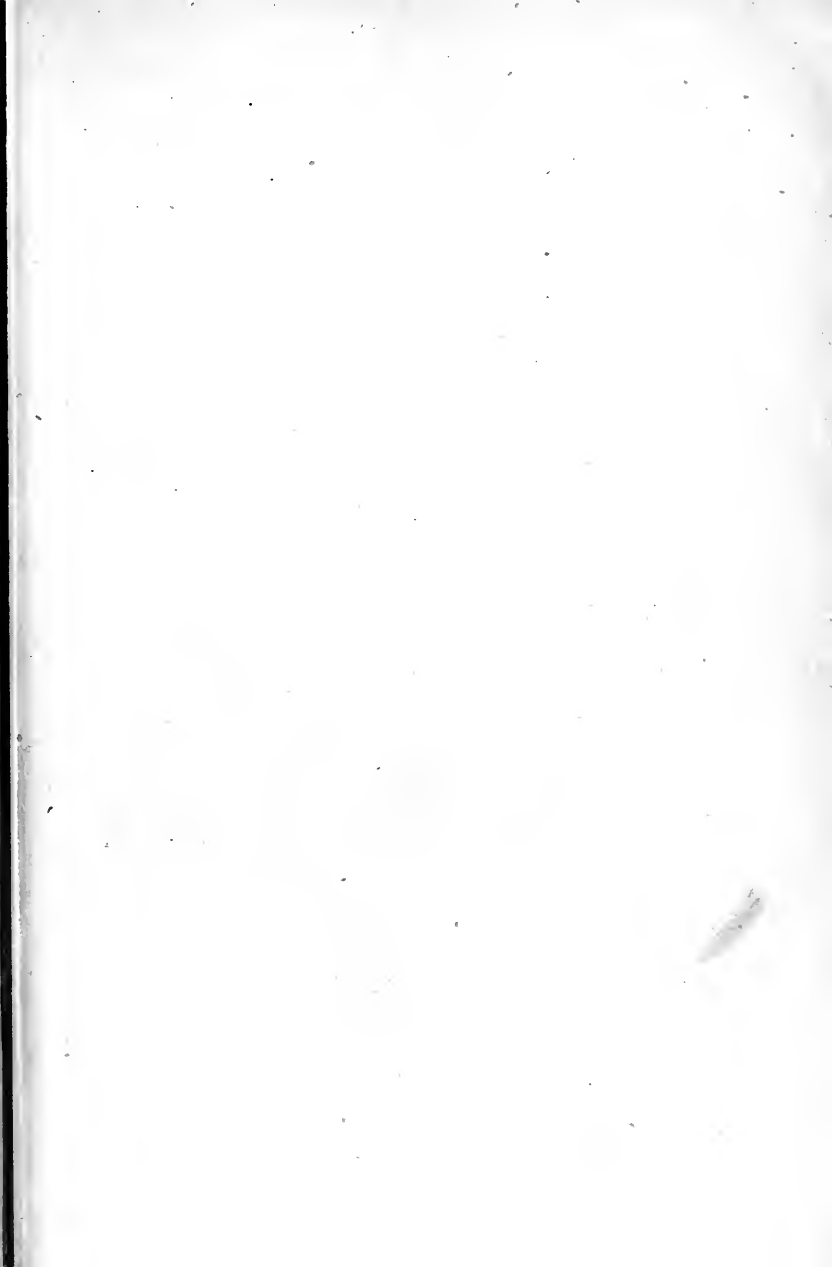
CANTO SEVENTE.

THOU spirit ! whose angelic hand
 Was to the harp a strong command,
 Call'd the submissive strings to wake
 In glory for this maiden's sake,
 Say, spirit ! whither hath she fled
 To hide her poor afflicted head ?
 What mighty forest in its gloom
 Enfolds her ?—Is a rifted tomb
 Within the wilderness her seat ?
 Some island which the wild waves beat,
 Is that the sufferer's last retreat ?
 Or some aspiring rock that shrouds
 Its perilous front in mists and clouds ?
 High climbing rock—deep sunless dale—
 Sea—desert—what do these avail ?
 Oh take her anguish and her fears
 Into a calm recess of years !

'Tis done ; despoil and desolation
 O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown ;
 The walks and pools neglect hath sown
 With weeds, the bowers are overthrown,

Or have given way to slow mutation,
 While, in their ancient habitation
 The Norton name hath been unknown :
 The lordly mansion of its pride
 Is stripp'd ; the ravage hath spread wide
 Through park and field, a perishing
 That mocks the gladness of the spring !
 And, with this silent gloom agreeing,
 There is a joyless human being,
 Of aspect such as if the waste
 Were under her dominion placed :
 Upon a primrose bank, her throne
 Of quietness, she sits alone ;
 There seated, may this maid be seen,
 Among the ruins of a wood,
 Erewhile a covert bright and green,
 And where full many a brave tree stood,
 That used to spread its boughs, and ring
 With the sweet birds' carolling.
 Behold her, like a virgin queen,
 Neglecting in imperial state
 These outward images of fate,
 And carrying inward a serene
 And perfect sway, through many a thought
 Of chance and change that hath been brought
 To the subjection of a holy,
 Though stern and rigorous, melancholy !
 The like authority, with grace
 Of awfulness, is in her face,—
 There hath she fix'd it ; yet it seems
 To o'ershadow by no native right
 That face, which cannot lose the gleams—
 Lose utterly—the tender gleams—
 Of gentleness, and meek delight,
 And loving-kindness ever bright.
 Such is her sovereign mien ; her dress
 (A vest, with woollen cincture tied,
 A hood of mountain wool undyed)
 Is homely—fashion'd to express
 A wandering pilgrim's humbleness.

And she *hath* wander'd, long and far,
 Beneath the light of sun and star ;
 Hath roam'd in trouble and in grief,
 Driven forward like a wither'd leaf,
 Yea like a ship at random blown
 To distant places and unknown.
 But now she dares to seek a haven
 Among her native wilds of Craven ;
 Hath seen again her father's roof,
 And put her fortitude to proof.
 The mighty sorrow has been borne,
 And she is thoroughly forlorn :
 Her soul doth in itself stand fast,





THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.

“—but as no trace
Was found of anything to fear,
Even to her feet the creature came,
And laid its head upon her knee.”

Sustain'd by memory of the past
 And strength of reason ; held above
 The infirmities of mortal love ;
 Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,
 And awfully impenetrable.

And so—beneath a moulder'd tree,
 A self-surviving leafless oak,
 By unregarded age from stroke
 Of ravage saved—sate Emily.
 There did she rest, with head reclined,
 Herself most like a stately flower
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of birth
 Hath separated from its kind,
 To live and die in a shady bower,
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,
 A troop of deer came sweeping by,
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder !
 For, of that band of rushing deer,
 A single one in mid career
 Hath stopp'd, and fix'd its large full eye
 Upon the Lady Emily.
 A doe most beautiful, clear white,
 A radiant creature, silver bright !

Thus check'd, a little while it stay'd ;
 A little thoughtful pause it made !
 And then advanced with stealth-like pace,
 Drew softly near her—and more near,
 Stopp'd once again : but as no trace
 Was found of anything to fear,
 Even to her feet the creature came,
 And laid its head upon her knee,
 And look'd into the lady's face,
 A look of pure benignity,
 And fond unclouded memory.
 "It is," thought Emily, "the same,
 The very doe of other years !"
 The pleading look the lady view'd,
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued
 She melted into tears—
 A flood of tears, that flow'd apace
 Upon the happy creature's face.

O moment ever blest ! O pair
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's choicest care !
 This was for you a precious greeting,
 For both a bounteous, fruitful meeting.
 Join'd are they, and the sylvan doe—
 Can she depart—can she forego
 The lady, once her playful peer,
 And now her sainted mistress dear ?
 And will not Emily receive
 This lovely chronicler of things

Long past, delights and sorrowings?
 Lone sufferer! will not she believe
 The promise in that speaking face,
 And take this gift of Heaven with grace?

That day, the first of a reunion
 Which was to teem with high communion,
 That day of balmy April weather,
 They tarried in the wood together;
 And when, ere fall of evening dew
 She from this sylvan haunt withdrew,
 The white doe track'd with faithful pace
 The lady to her dwelling-place;
 That nook where, on paternal ground,
 A habitation she had found,
 The master of whose humble board
 Once own'd her father for his lord;
 A hut, by tufted trees defended,
 Where Rylstone Brook with Wharf is blended.

When Emily by morning light
 Went forth, the doe was there in sight.
 She shrunk: with one frail shock of pain,
 Received and follow'd by a prayer,
 Did she behold—saw ~~one~~ again;
 Shun will she not, she feels, will bear;
 But wheresoever she look'd round
 All now was trouble-haunted ground.
 So doth the sufferer deem it good
 Even once again this neighbourhood
 To leave. Unwoo'd, yet unforbidden,
 The white doe follow'd up the vale,
 Up to another cottage—hidden
 In the deep fork of Amerdale:
 And there may Emily restore
 Herself, in spots unseen before.
 Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,
 By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,
 Haunts of a strengthening amity
 That calm'd her, cheer'd, and fortified?
 For she hath ventured now to read
 Of time, and place, and thought, and deed,
 Endless history that lies
 In her silent follower's eyes!
 Who with a power like human reason,
 Discerns the favourable season,
 Skill'd to approach or to retire,
 From looks conceiving her desire,
 From look, deportment, voice, or mien,
 That vary to the heart within.
 If she too passionately writhed
 Her arms, or over deeply breathed,
 Walk'd quick or slowly, every mood
 In its degree was understood,
 Then well may their accord be true,

And kindly intercourse ensue.
 Oh ! surely 'twas a gentle rousing
 When she by sudden glimpse espied
 The white doe on the mountain browsing,
 Or in the meadow wander'd wide !
 How pleased, when down the straggler sank
 Beside her, on some sunny bank !
 How soothed, when in thick bower inclosed,
 They like a nested pair reposed !
 Fair vision ! when it cross'd the maid
 Within some rocky cavern laid,
 The dark cave's portal gliding by,
 White as the whitest cloud on high,
 Floating through the azure sky.
 What now is left for pain or fear ?
 That presence, dearer and more dear,
 Did now a very gladness yield
 At morning to the dewy field,
 While they side by side were straying,
 And the shepherd's pipe was playing ;
 And with a deeper peace endued
 The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her companion, in such frame
 Of mind, to Rylstone back she came ;
 And, wandering through the wasted groves,
 Received the memory of old loves,
 Undisturb'd and undistress'd,
 Into a soul which now was blest
 With a soft spring day of holy,
 Mild, delicious melancholy :
 Not sunless gloom, or unenlighten'd,
 But by tender fancies brighten'd.

When the bells of Rylstone play'd
 Their sabbath music—"God us ayde !" ¹
 That was the sound they seem'd to speak
 Inscriptive legend, which I ween
 May on those holy bells be seen,
 That legend and her grandsire's name :
 And oftentimes the lady meek
 Had in her childhood read the same,
 Words which she slighted at that day !
 But now, when such sad change was wrought,
 And of that lonely name she thought,
 The bells of Rylstone seem'd to say,
 While she sat listening in the shade,
 With vocal music, "God us ayde !" ¹
 And all the hills were glad to bear
 Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lack'd she reason's firmest power ;
 But with the white doe at her side
 Up doth she climb to Norton Tower,
 And thence looks round her far and wide.

Her fate there measures,—all is still'd,—
 The feeble hath subdued her heart ;
 Behold the prophecy fulfill'd,
 Fulfill'd, and she sustains her part !
 But here her brother's words have fail'd,—
 Here hath a milder doom prevail'd ;
 That she, of him and all bereft,
 Hath yet this faithful partner left.—
 This single creature that disproves
 His words, remains for her, and loves.
 If tears are shed, they do not fall
 For loss of him, for one or all ;
 Yet, sometimes—sometimes doth she weep —
 Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep ;
 A few tears down her cheek descend
 For this her last and living friend.

Bless, tender hearts, their mutual lot,
 And bless for both this savage spot!
 Which Emily doth sacred hold.
 For reasons dear and manifold ;—
 Here hath she, here before her sight,
 Close to the summit of this height,
 The grassy rock-encircled pound
 In which the creature first was found.
 So beautiful the spotless thrall
 (A lovely youngling white as foam),
 That it was brought to Rylstone Hall ;
 Her youngest brother led it home,
 The youngest, then a lusty boy,
 Brought home the prize—and with what joy !

But most to Bolton's sacred pile,
 On favouring nights she loved to go :
 There ranged through cloister, court, and aisle,
 Attended by the soft-paced doe ;
 Nor did she fear in the still moonshine
 To look upon Saint Mary's shrine ;
 Nor on the lonely turf that show'd
 Where Francis slept in his last abode.
 For that she came ; there oft and long
 She sat in meditation strong :
 And, when she from the abyss return'd
 Of thought, she neither shrunk nor mourn'd ;
 Was happy that she lived to greet
 Her mute companion as it lay
 In love and pity at her feet ;
 How happy in her turn to meet
 That recognition ! the mild glance
 Beam'd from that gracious countenance ;
 Communication, like the ray
 Of a new morning, to the nature
 And prospects of the inferior creature !

A mortal song we frame, by dower

Encouraged of celestial power ;
 Power which the viewless spirit shed
 By whom we were first visited ;
 Whose voice we heard, whose hand and wings
 Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,
 When, left in solitude, erewhile
 We stood before this ruin'd pile,
 And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,
 Sang in this presence kindred themes ;
 Distress and desolation spread
 Through human hearts, and pleasure dead,—
 Dead—but to live again on earth,
 A second and yet nobler birth ;
 Dire overthrow, and yet how high
 The re-ascent in sanctity !
 From fair to fairer ; day by day
 A more divine and loftier way !
 Even such this blessed pilgrim trod,
 By sorrow lifted tow'rd's her God ;
 Uplifted to the purest sky
 Of undisturb'd mortality.
 Her own thoughts loved she, and could bend
 A dear look to her lowly friend ;—
 There stopp'd ; her thirst was satisfied
 With what this innocent spring supplied—
 Her sanction inwardly she bore,
 And stood apart from human cares :
 But to the world return'd no more,
 Although with no unwilling mind
 Help did she give at need, and join'd
 The Wharfedale peasants in their prayers.
 At length, thus faintly, faintly tied
 To earth, she was set free, and died.
 Thy soul, exalted Emily,
 Maid of the blasted family,
 Rose to the God from whom it came !
 In Rylstone church her mortal frame
 Was buried by her mother's side.

Most glorious sunset !—and a ray
 Survives—the twilight of this day ;
 In that fair creature whom the field
 Support, and whom the forest shields,
 Who, having fill'd a holy place,
 Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace ;
 And bears a memory and a mind
 Raised far above the law of kind ;
 Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
 Which her dear mistress once held dear :
 Loves most what Emily loved most—
 The inclosure of this churchyard ground ;
 Here wanders like a gliding ghost,
 And every Sabbath here is found :
 Comes with the people when the bells

Are heard among the moorland dells,
Finds entrance through yon arch, where way
Lies open on the Sabbath day ;
Here walks amid the mournful waste
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,
And floors encumber'd with rich show
Of fretwork imagery laid low ;
Paces softly, or makes halt,
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault,
By plate of monumental brass
Dim gleaming among weeds and grass,
And sculptured forms of warriors brave ;
But chiefly by that single grave,
That one sequester'd hillock green,
The pensive visitant is seen.
There doth the gentle creature lie
With those adversities unmoved ;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
In their benignity approved !
And aye, methinks, this hoary pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say,
"Thou, thou art not a child of Time,
But daughter of the Eternal Prime !"

NOTES.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Page 98.

To the Daisy.

THIS poem, and two others to the same flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to a poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery's, entitled, "A Field Flower." This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him. I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the father of English poets:—

"Though it happe me to rehersin—
That ye han in your freshe songis saled,
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaled,
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour
Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour."

1807.

p. 112.

The Seven Sisters.

The story of this poem is from the German of FREDERICA BRUN.

p. 126.

The Horn of Egremont Castle.

THIS story is a Cumberland tradition; I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Huddlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.

p. 154.

Song at the feast of Brougham Castle.

HENRY, Lord Clifford, &c. &c., who is the subject of this poem, was the son of John, Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John, Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader of English history, was the person who, after the battle of Wakefield, slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, "in part of revenge" (say the authors of the History of Cumberland and Westmoreland); "for the earl's father had slain his." A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed); but who, as he adds, "dare promise anything temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this lord to speak." This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; for the earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born), that he was the next child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard, Duke of York, and that king was then eighteen years of age: and for the small distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vincent in his book of Nobility, p. 622, where he writes of them all. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander, two or three

years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time; and therefore would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth. But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the house of York: so that after the battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, "when called to parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely; but otherwise came seldom to London or the court; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles." Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal edifices spoken of in the poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these castles; and we have seen, that after the wars of York and Lancaster they were rebuilt. In the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c. &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the family of Tufton, three of these castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas, Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when the order was issued, the earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, chap. lviii. v. 12, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader:—"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.

p. 154. *Earth help'd him with the cry of blood.*

This line is from the "Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the dramatist), whose poems are written with so much spirit, elegance, and harmony.

p. 156. *And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale Tarn, &c.*

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal fish, inhabitants of this tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld. Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddle Back.

p. 157. *Armour rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls.*

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines, and what follows, that, besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate progenitors of the person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken all died in the field.

THE EXCURSION.

Page 281.

Much did he see of men.

"We learn from Cæsar and other Roman writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the settlements have done, and continue to do, much more towards civilizing the Indian natives than all the missionaries, Papist or Protestant, who have ever been sent among them."—*Heron's Journey in Scotland.*

p. 313.

Lost in unsearchable Eternity!

Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with much pleasure, in Burnet's "Theory of the Earth," a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature.

p. 329.

Of Mississippi, or that northern stream.

"A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas, that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the man of mind: he who is placed in the sphere of nature and of God might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's; he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him.—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered Savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready-produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exaltation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, 'These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.' He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially: his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars."—*From the notes upon The Hurricane, a poem, by William Gilbert.*

The reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.

p. 334.

*'Tis by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise, &c.*

See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Biography."

- p. 335. *Alas! the endowment of immortal power
Is match'd unequally with custom, time, &c.*

This subject is treated at length in the Ode—"Intimations of Immortality," p. 266.

- p. 337. *Knowing the heart of man is set to he, &c.*

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole poem is very beautiful.

- p. 376. *And spires whose ' silent finger points to heaven.'*

An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point, as with silent finger, to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich, though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. See "The Friend," by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.

- p. 420. *Perish the roses and the flowers of kings.*

The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the foundation-charters of some of the ancient abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the abbey of St. Mary's, Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of kings, emperors, and dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," &c.

- p. 424. *————— Earth has lent
Her waters, Air her breezes.*

In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture which, in his poem of "The Fleece," the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.

- p. 439. *Binding herself by statute.*

The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to over-rate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.

Page 453. *From Bolton's old monastic tower.*

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the transept was a tower." This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward in some building of superior height to the ridge.

p. 453. *A rural chapel, neatly dress'd.*

"The nave of the church having been reserved at the dissolution, for the use of the Saxon cure, is still a parochial chapel; and at this day is as well kept as the neatest English cathedral."

p. 453. *Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak.*

"At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for £70. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1,400 feet of timber."

p. 457. *When Lady Adliza mourn'd.*

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's hook, and in the poem, "The Force of Prayer," p. 185.

p. 457. *Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door.*

"At the east end of the north aisle of Bolton Priory Church is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and a vault where, according to tradition, the Claphams (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Mauleverers) were interred upright." John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a name of great note in his time; "he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive."

p. 458. *Who loved the shepherd lord to meet.*

See note (p. 491) on song at the feast of Brougham Castle.

p. 464. *Ye watchmen upon Brancepeth Towers.*

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland.

p. 469. *Of mitred Thurston, what a host
He conquer'd!*

See the historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.

p. 475. *An edifice of warlike frame
Stands single (Norton Tower its name).*

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of

a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are pretty entire), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch-tower."

p. 483.

—————*Despoil and Desolation*
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown.

"After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the Crown, where they remained till the second or third of James; they were then granted to Francis, Earl of Cumberland."

p. 486.

In the deep fork of Amerdale.

"At the extremity of the parish of Burnsall, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfdale to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the north-west, is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment."—*Dr. Whitaker.*

p. 487.

When the bells of Rylstone played
Their Sabbath music—"Gōd us aȝdē."

On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, J. N. for John Norton, and the motto, "Gōd us aȝdē."

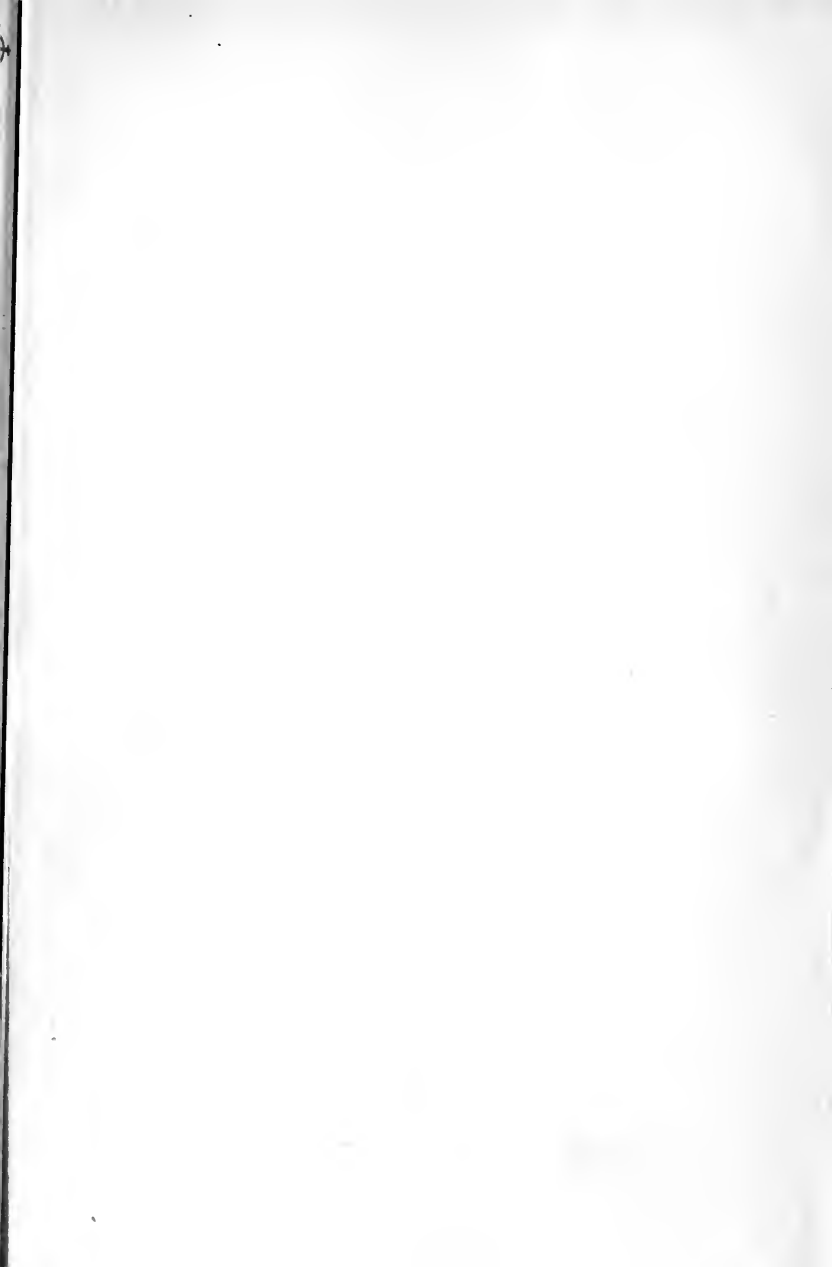
p. 488.

The grassy rock-encircled pound.

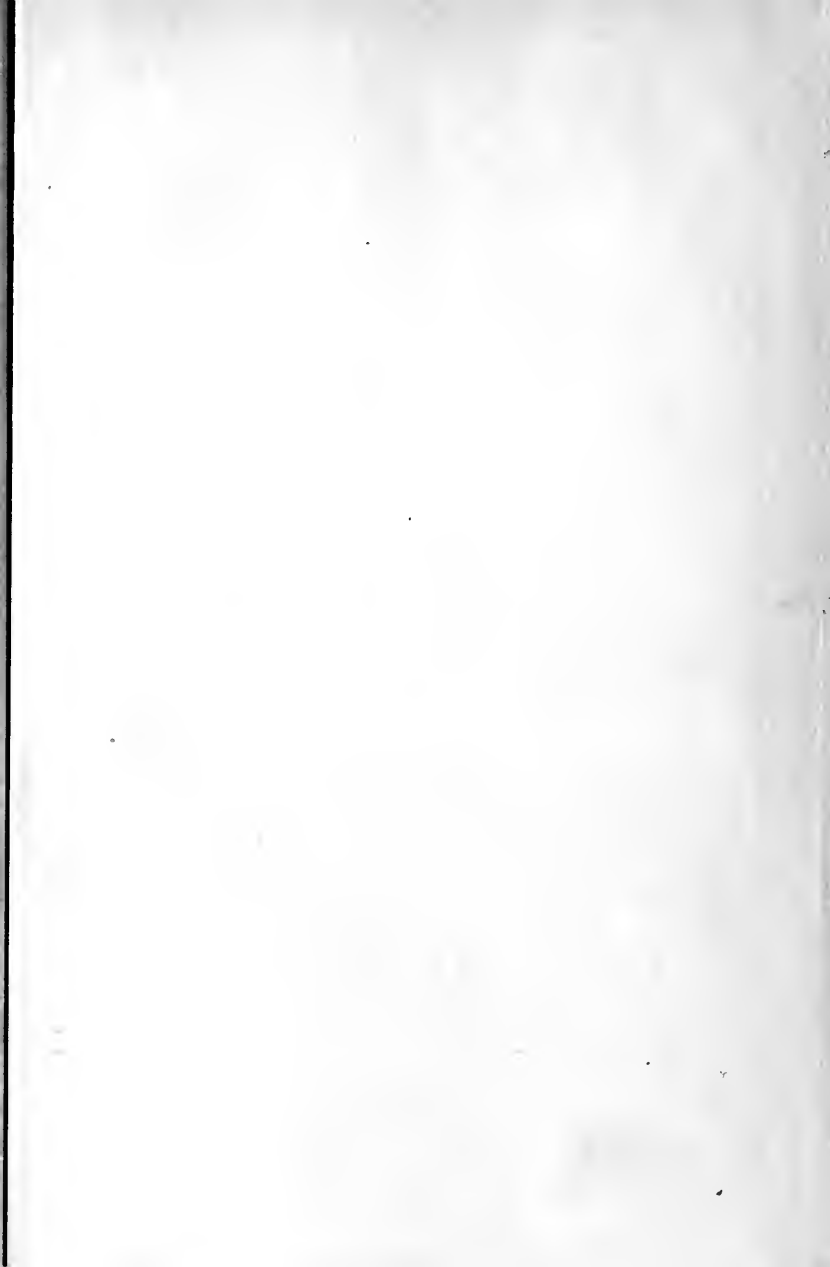
Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"On the plain summit of the-hill are the foundations of a strong wall, stretching from the south-west to the north-east corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the north and west, where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that would stand on such ground."

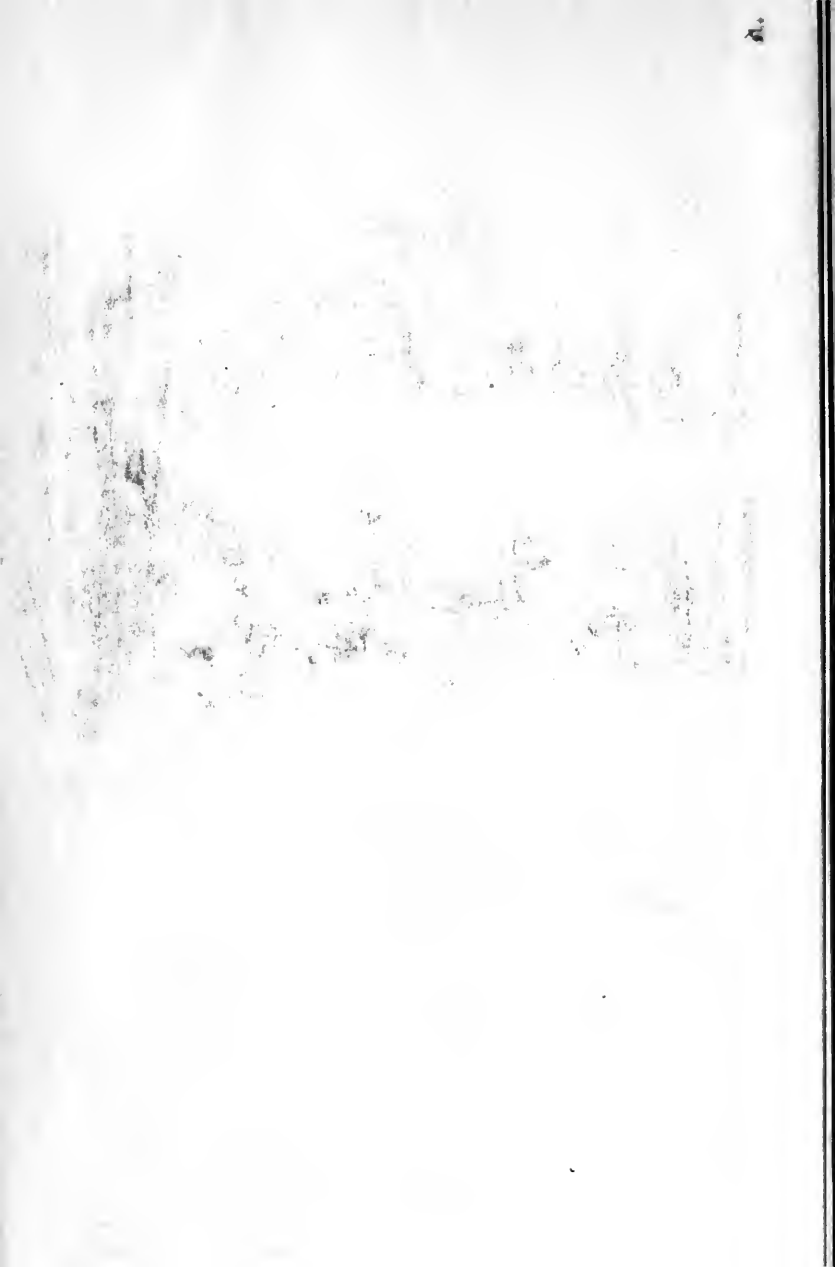
From the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, &c., were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mousetrap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these inclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests, and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow.

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire.









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