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THE POEMS
OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.



Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
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THE POEMS

OF

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THE principle of this edition of Coleridge is intimated by the title, which promises not his poems but his poetry. He is no exception to the almost universal rule that the works of even the greatest poets include much which might be consigned to oblivion without detriment to their reputation. Such a course, however, is neither recommendable on all accounts, nor practicable on all occasions. The pebble of poetry is sometimes the pearl of biography ; nor is it easy to recall what has once been given to the world under the auspices of a great name. The judgment of editors cannot be implicitly trusted ; and the most judicious retrenchment exposes the publisher to the charge of having mutilated an author. Coleridge's wood, hay, and stubble must consequently continue along with his fine gold ; and, by a curious paralogism, the only editions esteemed standard will be those where the abstract standard of excellence is disregarded. The only alternative hitherto attempted has been that of an anthology, and one has been prepared by the incomparably competent hands of Mr. Swinburne.

Such a miniature collection, however, though proferring "infinite riches in a little room," cannot include everything on which the poet might rest his fame, or that the lovers of his poetry would wish to have in their hands. There is room for something intermediate—for an ampler and more generous collection where the rule is not so much the inclusion of the most beautiful as the exclusion of the most defective. Coleridge is a peculiarly favourable subject for an experiment of this nature, for an unerring test is supplied by himself. His poems lie as it were in two strata, which may be conveniently distinguished as eighteenth and nineteenth century deposits. Much of his early poetry is insignificant, not from want of genius, but because composed under the influence of misleading and conventional precedents. Marvellous as was his intellectual power, he was still more eminent as a critic than as an original thinker: and he did not discover what a world of inspiration lay around him until his meeting with Wordsworth. From that time Coleridge wrote like a poet by the grace of God: and all that the retrenching editor need do is to cancel all poems previous to this epoch, some few excepted which deserve preservation on special grounds; and to detach certain "dead leaves in the bay-leaf crown" of later years in the shape of merely trivial or occasional pieces, or serious efforts to which the poet's failing energies were unequal. It is also necessary in this edition, thus abridged, to omit the original and translated dramas, in themselves most worthy of

preservation, inasmuch as they would exact an entirely disproportionate space.

Coleridge's eventful life and varied genius do not admit of satisfactory treatment within moderate limits. Either the man must give way to the poet or the philosopher, or both of these must make room for the man. Coleridge's editors have usually preferred biography to criticism, and to this preference literature is indebted for three very able memoirs. Mr. Shepherd's is satisfactory in every respect. Mr. Ashe's would be more than satisfactory but for an abruptness conveying the impression of a want of finish with which in fact it is not chargeable. The last editor, the late lamented Mr. Dykes Campbell, has excelled his predecessors by the production of a perfect masterpiece of condensed biography. It seems useless to do again what has so recently been so excellently done. We shall assume the reader to be already fairly well acquainted with the leading incidents in Coleridge's life, and shall refer to these merely as they illustrate his place as a poet. His equally important position as a philosopher does not concern us: nor have we at present much to say upon him in his character as critic—the character in which, with all our reverence for him as a poet, we should on the whole be inclined to pronounce him most memorable.

In all these capacities Coleridge presents himself eminently as a *Bahnbrecher*, one who, although receiving his own original impulse from another, makes

a way for successors. He might say with his own 'Ancient Mariner'—

“I was the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.”

If the application is not precisely appropriate, it is because it seems to imply more energetic action and more deliberate adaptation of means to ends than lay in Coleridge. He was rather an avenue for invasive light than a fire-bringing Prometheus; or his relation to the world of thought and poetry might be even better compared with that which Shelley attributes to Phœbus in his character of the Sun—

“I am the Eye with which the Universe
Beholds itself, and knows itself divine.”

He was not merely an exemplar of the new age, but its hierophant. Better than any contemporary except Wordsworth, whose critical writings are too much confined to the enforcement of particular principles, he could expound as well as exhibit the mighty change which had come over English poetry since the proclamation of a new dispensation by the significant, though to most invisible, apparition of Blake's *Poetical Sketches* in 1783. Other poets seem, as indeed they were, the unconscious productions of an age of ferment, the instruments and vehicles of irresistible forces, “building better than they knew.” Coleridge, while as immediately inspired as any of them, knows better whence he has come and whither he is going. His frailties and his misfortunes deprived him of the glory he might have attained of being the supreme poet of

his age, but he remains its supreme critic. In another point of view he is more interesting still. Decisively as he has broken with conventional poetry in his more important writings, no contemporary poet of his rank has left so much verse composed in obedience to conventional canons, and reproductive of the tone and spirit of the preceding age. This is indeed mere accident, explicable by the fact that his poetical vein flowed most freely in early youth, and that, although, as he himself informs us, guarded against the stock conventionalities by the precepts of his master at Christ's Hospital, he nevertheless produced a great amount of verse before he had learned to discriminate between subjects proper and improper for poetry. The result is important, for it allows the comparison of the schools of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century as exhibited in the same person.

Of late years a reaction in favour of the eighteenth-century style in poetry has been observable in several quarters: among other indications of which may be named the preference recently avowed on a public occasion by no less weighty an authority than Mr. Balfour. To a certain extent this is perfectly legitimate, and indeed inevitable. Every age treats its immediate predecessor as the Roman miners treated the ore of Sardinia, gets all it can out of it, and leaves a valuable residuum to the ages to come. The ore, once deemed exhausted, is taken up again, and found to be teeming with unexpected wealth; hence a reaction astonishing to the dominant school of criticism

of the day, but entirely sane and laudable. The revival of interest in the old English drama in Coleridge's time is a signal instance: and a similar revival in favour of Dryden, Pope, and Addison would be equally welcome. But to exalt these eminent writers at the expense of their successors, to represent them as the models of taste and the pontiffs of an orthodox creed in art from which these successors have apostatized, raises quite another contention, which compels us to inquire of its advocates, what is their definition of poetry? Is it to them what, *teste* Shelley, it was to our Coleridge—

“ He spoke of poetry, and how
 Divine it was—a light, a love—
 A spirit which like wind doth blow
 As it listeth, to and fro,
 A dew rained down from God above ;

“ A power which comes and goes like dream,
 And which none can ever trace—
 Heaven's light on earth—Truth's brightest beam.
 And when he ceased there lay the gleam
 Of those words upon his face.”

Or is their ideal of poetry strong sense, vigorously expressed in resonant verse? That the poetry of the eighteenth century, as a whole, belongs to this latter class, is evident from the fact that the injury which it suffers from conversion into prose is more detrimental to its form than to its spirit. Pope's sentences, divested of their rhymes and their cadences, would certainly have suffered much: but the loss would be purely one of literary form, not of the spiritual aroma which they never possessed. But turn Coleridge or

Shelley or Keats into prose, and we shall at once be conscious of having lost something besides literary form, and obtained an infinitely less valuable residuum than the same process would have given in the case of Pope or Dryden. The conclusion is inevitable, that nineteenth-century poetry has a soul, an essence, an aroma which eighteenth-century poetry has not ; and that the panegyrists of the latter at the expense of the former deceive themselves in imagining that their homage is given to poetry while it is really rendered to intellect.

We have remarked that no writer upon Coleridge need hope to render full justice to his theme. Not only was Coleridge, as he has been most justly termed, a myriad-minded man, but the various branches of his intellectual activity so interlace that it is difficult to consider him long in any point of view without being insensibly led to another. Severe limitation is necessary if anything is to be effected in an essay of moderate length. We shall select a vein hitherto but little wrought in confining our attention to Coleridge's place in poetical literature as the incarnate transition, so to speak, from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, summing up in his own person in the restricted field of English poetry that description of spiritual evolution which Goethe has exhibited on a large scale in his symbolical representation of Faust and Helena's passage from the classical into the mediæval age. The poetry of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries lie associated within the covers of his writings,

and the impressiveness of the contrast is enhanced by the absence of any intermediate period. The transition from Coleridge's first to his second manner is almost instantaneous. An accurate discrimination between what for brevity's sake we may term his inspired and his uninspired work, is of the utmost importance to his fame as a poet. Most interesting, too, are the inquiries under what influences this metamorphosis was effected with such suddenness; and why so brilliant an outburst was followed by relapse, not indeed into his original manner, but into almost absolute silence as a poet. These questions cannot be overlooked, and are especially appropriate for discussion in the preface to a volume of selected poetry, although it may not be possible to offer any entirely satisfactory reply to them. The one point absolutely certain, and it is one of supreme importance, is that the verdict of the greatest of English critics, evinced by the surest of tests, his own practice, has been given in favour of the poetry of the nineteenth as compared with that of the eighteenth century.

No greater service could be rendered to Coleridge's poetical fame than to bring this fact clearly into light. Like all his great contemporaries, except Shelley, he suffers from the large proportion of inferior matter among his really exquisite and divine work. The same is the case with Byron, Wordsworth, and Keats; but the explanation is different in every instance. With Byron it is mainly the fitfulness and frequent

lapse of genuine inspiration. It was only now and then that his imagination was sufficiently ardent to fuse and kindle the matter cast into its furnace. The great inequality of Wordsworth may be attributed partly to his having continued writing during nearly the whole of his life; partly to the inherent defects of plan in his long poems; chiefly, perhaps, to the self-esteem which forbade him to conceive that anything which he had touched could be devoid of value. Few poets have amended or tried to amend more; but few have retrenched less. The cause of the inequality of Keats is merely the youthful inexperience inseparable from his first poetical ferment. Had he spent a life of average duration in the full exercise of poetical activity, the crudities of his first attempts would be no more remembered than the similar extravagances or insipidities of Tennyson; but his early death, by magnifying their proportion to the general bulk of his writings, has invested them with a factitious importance. Coleridge's less interesting poetry might also be described as the product of youthful inexperience; but its genesis and its substance differ widely from Keats's. The latter's failures are the failures of Inspiration trying its unfledged wings. Coleridge's shortcomings cannot be justly described as failures, for they fully attain the writer's standard of excellence, but that standard is low. The immature Keats is an innovator and iconoclast, bent on destroying the models which the immature Coleridge follows with dutiful humility. Keats has nothing of

the eighteenth century about him : Coleridge begins as an eighteenth-century poet. Keats pursues a gradual course of development, harmonious and consistent with itself : Coleridge undergoes a sudden conversion and a complete regeneration. Hence, while Keats's "first blights," as he called them, though made by accident to appear more important than they really are, can never be wholly dissociated from the general body of his work, Coleridge's early poetry need not be taken into account at all in our estimate of his poetical genius. It greatly concerns Coleridge to bear this in mind, for clearly it makes the greatest difference to any writer's fame whether he is regarded as the fountain of an ocean of verse of the most various degrees of merit, or whether our estimate of him is formed entirely by a consideration of a phial of some of the most quintessential poetry in the world. This is not now contested by any one. When we think of Coleridge as a poet we think of 'The Ancient Mariner,' of 'Christabel,' of 'Kubla Khan,' of 'Genevieve,' of 'The Nightingale' and its companion blank verse idylls. We do not think in the least of 'Religious Musings' and the other poems produced before the days of 'The Lake School.' But many of our ancestors thought very differently. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the taste of the eighteenth century was naturally still in the ascendant, and would, in all probability, have continued to rule much longer but for the influence of Scott and Byron. These poets, though not so deeply or truly inspired as some of

their contemporaries, irresistibly commanded attention by their vigour and their successful extension of the sway of poetry over the adjacent domain of fiction. They compelled the old-fashioned critics to praise where on their own principles they ought to have condemned, and thus made a breach for Wordsworth and Coleridge to enter in their wake, as Shelley and Keats afterwards in theirs. But there was a time when the criticism which had inconsistently recognized Scott and Byron was so far from consenting to go any further, that these productions of Coleridge which afford the present age the most exquisite delight, and upon which his claim to poetical greatness is now entirely and universally based, were singled out as proofs that he was no poet at all. Said the *Edinburgh Review*—

“Upon the whole, we look upon this publication [containing ‘Christabel,’ ‘Kubla Khan,’ and ‘The Pains of Sleep’] as one of the most notable pieces of impertinence of which the press has lately been guilty ; and one of the boldest experiments that has as yet been made upon the patience or understanding of the public. The other productions of the Lake School have generally exhibited talents thrown away upon subjects so mean that no power of genius could enoble them ; or perverted and rendered useless by a false theory of poetical composition. But even in the worst of them, if we except the ‘White Doe’ of Mr. Wordsworth and some of the Laureate odes, there were always some gleams of feeling or of fancy. But

the thing now before us is utterly destitute of value. It exhibits from beginning to end not a ray of genius ; and we defy any man to point out a passage of poetical merit in any of the three pieces which it contains, except, perhaps, the following lines, and even these are not very brilliant."

If Hazlitt was really the writer of this astounding deliverance it cannot have been wholly sincere, and must have been largely inspired by spite and animosity. Yet he must have felt that he was expressing an opinion not likely to provoke the dissent of the generality, and in fact his review passed the editorial censorship of Jeffrey, and excited few complaints except from the luckless victim. Men clearly perceived that a new element had come into poetry irreconcilable [with the traditional standard of excellence, and that there was no room for both. Coleridge, then, has the unique distinction among the poets of his time of himself exemplifying the antagonistic styles within the compass of his own writings. This justifies the reprint of some of his poetry which at first sight, according to the standard of the present day, hardly seems to deserve the distinction. It is of quite another order to the inferior poetry of Wordsworth or Byron, its inferiority is not that of high power impaired by old age, or mere iteration of a message already delivered, or of brilliant talent striving to fill the place of genius, it is that of genius as yet unawakened, and syllabbling the old tongue from ignorance of the new. Hence

though worthless as poetry, it is of permanent value as a document, and possesses an importance far exceeding the inferior work of the poets just named. We see in it what we do not see in them, how men of true genius would have written if the great awakenings of the Romantic School and the French Revolution had never taken place, and are able to gauge in some degree our intellectual indebtedness to these mighty mutations. The contrast is the more instructive, as the early poems are by no means unpoetical. There is scarcely one which does not give evidence of having proceeded from a true poet. The cause of their unquestionable inferiority is the inferiority of the language, not so much in particular phrases, as in the general cast of diction. It is as though a painter had sought to express a subject which required to be painted in oil through the medium of water-colours. The distinction cannot be accurately conveyed in a phrase, but we should not be far wrong if we said that here, and here only, Coleridge is conventional. He writes in the manner which he found to prevail when he commenced poetical composition. His originality had not carried him to the length of fashioning a new style for its expression. Individuality he certainly has: one can always be sure that the poems are Coleridge's and not another's: but the peculiar impress of the author is much less distinct than that of even so imitative a poet as Tennyson's upon his early writings. The same may be remarked in a field where he was more original still, his prose

criticism. Coleridge's individuality may always be recognized here, but it is not the robust individuality of a Macaulay or a Carlyle.

Perhaps in this comparative inability to assert himself forcibly, while lavishing the most exquisite poems and the most subtle criticisms, we find the secret of Coleridge's strength, as well as of his weakness. Splendid as was his imagination, potent as was his intellect, these were not in the highest sense creative. Rather was he receptive and susceptible. It is significant that of all great English poets he should have been the greatest critic. Dryden, Wordsworth, Shelley, Arnold, all excelled in this department, but all must yield the palm to Coleridge. Now although the highest criticism is in a sense original, as bringing to light what was previously unseen, it is unoriginal in this, that it must be waked into activity by another mind. Criticism, like Hope, cannot live without an object. It is of course possible that the passionate conviction of a very independent and self-sufficing poet may throw him upon criticism, but he will hardly, like Coleridge, take to it as a congenial element. One can scarcely imagine Dante jotting down criticisms on the margins of his books, though his footprints might possibly have been sometimes tracked by the vestiges of rent leaves. Coleridge annotated everything, with most charming and profitable results, but in so doing showed that his was one of the class of minds which require to be impregnated. What he was as a commentator, he also was in original composition. He

slid naturally into the style which he found current around him, and required to be emancipated from it by a mind of more inventiveness and vigour, and nearer than his to the essential truth of things. There can be no doubt that this influence proceeded from William and Dorothy Wordsworth. Coleridge's poems, in a revised form and with many retrenchments, had appeared very shortly before he came to know Wordsworth, otherwise than by a casual rencontre. "Nothing in the volume," says Mr. Dykes Campbell, "gives the least hint that Coleridge's hand was already on the latch of the magic casements which were to open on the perilous seas sailed by the 'Ancient Mariner,' and the fairy lands of 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan.'" Neither, it may be added, is there anything to suggest the less daringly imaginative but not less beautiful blank verse performances of Coleridge's best period, 'The Nightingale,' 'Frost at Midnight,' 'Fears in Solitude,' and so many more. The capacity for such composition came to him after he became acquainted with the Wordsworths.

Wordsworth assuredly did not teach Coleridge out of a book, and Coleridge's regeneration can be ascribed to nothing else than the perception that his friend was leading where he could follow him. He came after Wordsworth as one bird might follow another through an open window—a bird of more gorgeous plumage certainly, though not of sweeter voice. In truth a great revolution had been wrought in imaginative literature, and the only question was

how long it would take the new ideas to become dominant. It would be interesting, but beyond our present scope, to trace them back to their germs in Rousseau and others ; it will be more to the purpose to inquire under what aspect the reform presented itself to the men who initiated it, Wordsworth and Coleridge. Briefly, their object may be said to have been to enforce a return to nature. The most obvious announcement of this principle to the ordinary reader was the revolution in poetic diction, the discarding of merely conventional poetic language, and the reversion to a natural simplicity of speech which, especially in Wordsworth, frequently wore the semblance of baldness. But this was merely a symptom : the essential fact was that English poetry, with a few exceptions, had drifted away from Nature, and that the reformers wished to bring them together again. It had ceased to be what Milton declares poetry ought to be—sensuous ; and become intellectual, and intellect stands a remove further from Nature than sense does. Throughout Coleridge's early poems, there is hardly a trace of any joy in Nature for her own sake, or any use for her except as affording ornaments for human emotions and abstract thoughts. Stars and flowers are indeed introduced, but in such language as might have been equally well used by one who had seen neither. There is a total absence of that minute observation which may indeed be carried too far when the detail is suffered to become more important than the object, but which is at all events

welcome as a proof that the poet has seen what he describes. But the later pieces are full of exquisite description clearly derived from actual contact with the object. He tells us in 'Frost at Midnight,' that when a boy at school he had often gazed intently at the film upon the firebar which was supposed to announce the advent of a stranger: but never, before 1797, had it occurred to him to find poetical worth in anything so trivial. And now, with what felicity it is introduced to heighten the impression of perfect stillness!

The thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film which fluttered in the grate
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.

Never until very recently had he imagined a training up with Nature for himself or others. Now, after deploring his own education "mid cloisters dim," he exclaims—

But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.

Once more, Coleridge might at any time have predicted "therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee," though it may be doubted whether he would have expressed it so simply, tersely, and musically. But it is not probable that before coming under Wordsworth's influence, he would have thought of so ex-

panding it as to wind up 'Frost at Midnight' with a general panorama in miniature of the whole year, produced by a dexterous selection of striking picturesque circumstances, and enabling him to conclude the poem with no less dignity than it began—

Whether the summer clothe the general earth
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
 Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
 Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

The dry bones now live indeed. If we compare this with even the best descriptive verse of the eighteenth-century school, or such as Coleridge himself was writing a year or two previously, we are conscious of a great deliverance, an emergence into a higher and purer region. It is not a mere advance in a normal development, like the successive volumes of Tennyson, but is an absolute elevation of the entire poetic personality into "an ampler aether, a diviner air." Previously the poet has excelled in those departments which would have equally befitted a good writer of prose; his present performances have so little in common with prose that, were they even despoiled of their metrical form, they would still be poetry. They are perhaps better adapted than anything else in our language to exhibit the fundamental distinction between poetry in its purest form and the thought or narrative whose sole claims to the title of poetry are metrical expression and artificial diction.

They have thus the merit of bringing to the plainest issue the question between the poetry of the intellect and the poetry of the imagination. Was Kingsley right or wrong in deploring that "Pope and plain sense had gone out, and Shelley and the seventh heaven come in"?

Coleridge enables us to answer this question decisively. He has set both the old and the new wine before us, and we find the new better. This is now undisputed. There was an admirable consistency about the Edinburgh Reviewer who could see no merit whatever in Coleridge's later poetry. Such a person had a perfect right to prefer the poetry of the eighteenth century. But this position is no longer tenable. The man who seriously thought 'Religious Musings' finer than 'Christabel' would not be argued with, he would be ignored. All, whatever their school or their sympathies, concur in allowing that the poems which Coleridge composed in perfect emancipation from conventional restraints are much better than those which he wrote while still in subjection to them. It is inconceivable that he should have been an ordinary writer as long as he composed on correct principles, and inspired as soon as he began to go wrong. To admit—and everybody does—the vast superiority of the poetry which he produced after his acquaintance with Wordsworth to that which he had composed prior to that date, is virtually to surrender the cause of the pseudo-classic school.

This conclusion, unimpeachable as regards the

merits of the rival schools, may be perverted if it is made an index to the personal merits of their chief representatives. It does not follow that Wordsworth and Coleridge were endowed with more powerful minds than Dryden and Pope because they have given us greater poetry. From one point of view it may be argued that the poet is the creature of his age—that as Shakespeare himself must have found another manifestation for his genius than the drama if he had lived in the time of Augustus—so Dryden and Pope would have been greater Coleridges and Wordsworths if they had flourished at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and *vice versa*. When it is considered how great a Dryden Byron would have made, and what curious affinities exist between the genius of Pope and the genius of Tennyson, this view cannot be dismissed as purely fanciful. It may also be contended that poetical genius is not the highest conceivable endowment, and that the powers of reasoning and pointed expression evinced in the writings of Pope and kindred poets, set them above writers admittedly superior to them in melody, fancy, and imagination. This view deserves attention, because it pervades much of what is enforced and more of what is taken for granted on the subject of poetry, and is not without support from the critical writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge themselves. It may be briefly defined as the utilitarian view of poetry, the distinct preference of the *prodesse* to the *delectare*.

Is not this still the unacknowledged principle of

much of our poetical criticism? Few, it must be feared, care for poetry as poetry and nothing else. We find poets eulogized or censured for their views of life, for their speculative opinions, for the supposed influence of their writings, salutary or otherwise, not at all for their poetry. It does not seem to be recognized that poetry is an entity as real and as independent of other entities as form or colour are independent of weight and size. It seems to be overlooked that while the merit of a poem is undoubtedly enhanced if the writer's ideas are true as well as poetical, just as, *caeteris paribus*, the embodiment of a fine conception in marble is preferable to an equally fine embodiment in wax, the standard of merit is not the truth, but the poetry. Poetry in a poem, though it can never be forgiven for infidelity to the truth of nature or of human nature, can exist perfectly well with a very moderate amount of conformity to truth as ascertained by the speculative intellect. The charm, other than that of its verbal merits, of the induction to Tennyson's 'Lotus Eaters,' for example, would disappear if the drowsy Libyan afternoon were other than the poet has painted it: but the most complete demonstration of the vanity of belief in personal immortality would leave the poetical beauty of 'Crossing the Bar' exactly where it is. One of the great poems of the world is founded upon an absurd belief, the generation of the universe by the fortuitous collision of atoms, yet the merit of Lucretius as a poet is not in the least

impaired by the fallacies of his philosophy. It may be true that he would have been a still better poet with a sounder cosmogony; but the criticism does not affect his genius, but the material in which it wrought. Conversely, Plato's *Republic* and Darwin's *Origin of Species* would have been contemptible compositions if they had been expressed in sorry verse, although their intellectual power might have been exactly the same. This should be perfectly obvious, yet how rarely do we see a poet judged as a poet! Wordsworth is preferred to Shelley by those who regard his ideas as more profound and sane than his rival's, not as a thinker or a moralist, which, granting the premises, would be legitimate, but as a poet. Shelley in his turn is preferred to Keats, because he expressed views and sympathies to which Keats was a stranger, a circumstance which indeed renders him more interesting as a man and more important as a writer, without in the least proving that he was the better poet. Goethe endured quarantine until a very obtuse set of readers tardily satisfied themselves that *Faust* was neither immoral nor impious; and we have just seen Shakespeare excommunicated by Tolstoi for tepidity as a democrat. It is quite possible to protest against such vagaries without becoming committed to the opposite and equally pernicious theory of "art for art." It is by no means true that the intellectual outfit of a poet and the moral purpose of his work are matters of indifference. Let two writers of equal genius work on the same topic, and the finer work

will indubitably be produced by him whose moral tone is the higher, and whose moral purpose is the more intense. But suppose them of unequal gifts—let one be endowed with divine madness from the Muses, and the other with nothing but moral enthusiasm, and the work of the former, whatever its shortcomings, will be great and precious, and that of the other, in so far as concerns its claims to rank as poetry or art, absolutely worthless.

If this is the case, it is obvious that the claims of the Dryden-Pope school to precedence on the ground of poetry are invalid, and that the superiority which their admirers claim for them can only be asserted, if at all, in the sphere of intellect. This is not to affirm that Dryden and Pope were not very considerable poets, but poetry is not the first consideration with them. Their most splendid passages owe their splendour to exactly the same qualities as confer the same distinction upon Macaulay's prose—judicious choice of words, skilful disposition of them for rhetorical effect, sonorous utterance, cogent sense. All admirable qualities, but present in an even greater degree in the *Philippics* of Demosthenes. We cannot, therefore, accept them as models for an age that follows after poetry. Their useful function is the subordinate one of school-masters, not preceptors of the eternal principles of art, but powerful curbs on the extravagances of enthusiasm, and monitors of the importance of good style and good sense. The essential spirit of poetry cannot be

imbibed from any human teacher, but it can be displayed, and probably no poet exhibits it so clearly as Coleridge in his most exquisite poems. Here we have, so to speak, the chemical rays of the spectrum of poetry, intense and subtle beyond the rest, but less capable of being yoked to useful ends. As the photographic power inherent in the chemical ray slumbers until it falls upon the right material, so the charms of Coleridge's best verse are wasted on all save delicate and sensitive minds, and their most fervent admirers can point to no such tangible influences from them as accompany the study of Wordsworth and Shelley. Few, indeed, have more profoundly influenced their epoch than Coleridge, but this influence does not proceed from the best and highest, and, in truth, his criticisms excepted, the only quite satisfactory part of his literary activity, but from his comparatively feeble utterances in prose, mere fragments and suggestions of what he might have achieved as a thinker. These have nevertheless produced important effects, while his really inspired and perfect work has given the world little else than pleasure. There cannot well be a stronger proof that the place of a poet is not to be determined by its conformity to a utilitarian standard. Coleridge possessed a magnificent intellect, and his writings have been most serviceable to mankind; yet his greatest performances, those on which his fame must in the main rest, are those in which there is least of utility, and least of merely intellectual power. We

must therefore conclude that poetry is neither exalted utility nor sublimated intellect, but an entity of itself, distinct from and independent of both, though capable of harmonious and advantageous alliance with them ; and must come back to Shelley's definition, already cited, as expressing the sober sense no less than the imaginative aspect of the matter. It is, of course, evident, and this Coleridge and Shelley would have fully granted, that the poet cannot always dwell in a realm of pure imagination, and that in proportion as he stoops to sublunary things he must approve himself conversant with the ordinary affairs of the world. It would, for example, have been idle for Goethe to have written his *Tasso*, or Shelley his *Cenci*, without some knowledge of the Italy of the end of the sixteenth century. But this power would have been just as much needed by the historian who should have essayed to present a picture of the time. It is consequently not poetry, but a gift essential to the manifestation of poetry in certain departments, especially the dramatic. It is also manifest that this faculty of vivid realization, although a most valuable endowment, is not pre-eminently an intellectual one, since Wordsworth and Coleridge, the deepest thinkers of their age, possessed it in but a limited measure, while it is conspicuous in Scott and Byron.

Coleridge sometimes persuaded himself that his poetry was the product of serious and deliberate effort. "With this view," he says, "I wrote 'The Ancient Mariner.'" This may be read in the light of Mr.

Dykes Campbell's dry comment on a similar asseveration—"In *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge gave what he was then willing to believe were his reasons for writing these parodies." Coleridge would have us believe that he and Wordsworth had formed a scheme of joint action, in which his own part would have been "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and semblance of truth sufficient to procure for shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith." Writing, however, to Davy near the very time (Oct. 1800), he accounts for the non-appearance of 'Christabel' in the second volume of *Lyrical Ballads* on the ground that "the poem was in direct opposition to the very purpose for which *Lyrical Ballads* were published," which is defined to be "the application of extraordinary passions to the incidents of common life." We learn from the matter-of-fact and veracious Wordsworth that the impulse to composition, so far as tangible, was the *magister artis, ingenique largitor*:—"We had both determined to write some poetry for a monthly magazine, the profits of which were to defray the expenses of a little excursion we were to make together." There is no reason to doubt that this prosaic need actually prompted the composition of one of the most inspired poems in our language, but it was the mere casual accident which liberated forces long slowly accumulating. The need returned, but the inspiration did not accompany it. In 1800, Coleridge, by his own account, was unable to make any progress

with the second part of 'Christabel' until, dining out, "somehow or other" he "drank so much wine that I found some effort and dexterity requisite to balance myself on the higher edge of sobriety." It is to be hoped that his dexterity was as successful in the estimation of others as in his own. However this may have been, the next day 'Christabel' started afresh, on a lower level than of old, yet not unsuccessfully; although, "seeing double," Coleridge persuaded himself that he had written twice as many verses as he really had. These anecdotes are not very compatible with a preconceived purpose either of elevating ordinary things or of bestowing reality upon the creatures of the imagination. Coleridge was simply a great lyrical poet, who, throughout his *annus mirabilis* of 1797, and for some time afterwards, was in a state of joyous exaltation from the new world of poetry which had been disclosed to him by Wordsworth. As the force of the new influence waned, his powers waned with it: though never entirely forsaken by inspiration, he was never again the poet of that glorious time. But one thing he never did, he never recurred to the style of his early compositions. He always wrote as the Coleridge of 1797, if fitfully and with diminished power—

For he on honeydew had fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

The loss which English poetry has sustained by the collapse of Coleridge's poetical productiveness is beyond calculation, almost beyond conception. He

lived until 1834. If every year of his life had yielded such a harvest as 1797, he would have produced a greater amount of high poetry than all his contemporaries put together. In so far as his impoverishment resulted from actual desertion by the inward impulse, no blame can be imputed to him, "the wind bloweth where it listeth." But external causes certainly cooperated, which might have been eluded. One was his growing devotion to philosophy, and what was worse, his constant indecision whether he would be a philosopher or a poet. He never perceived that he was, in a sense, more of a critic than a thinker, and that, just as he had required a Wordsworth, a man on the whole less gifted than himself, to impregnate his mind with the germs of a higher poetry than he had hitherto known; so his best powers of thought were called forth by assent or antagonism to the opinions of others, frequently texts of little worth in comparison with the commentary. He was not content to inscribe the margins of musty folios with penetrating criticism, or to lavish the unconsidered opulence of his table-talk, but he was for ever planning, and persuading himself that he had all but executed, some marvellous reconciliation of all contradictory systems which would leave no one any excuse for differing from anybody else. This visionary project was responsible for much of Coleridge's unproductiveness in poetry and other departments; pre-occupation with it was an upas, which suffered nothing else to spring up in its neighbourhood. It is remarkable

that two of the greatest geniuses of the age were also fascinated by it, and were preserved from wasting their time, one by ill-health, the other by the second of the causes which to so great an extent paralyzed Coleridge—opium. “I consider poetry,” says Shelley, “very subordinate to moral and metaphysical science, and but for my health,” etc. De Quincey in his youth planned a philosophical treatise on a larger scale than Coleridge’s, to which he intended to devote his whole life. His talent for metaphysical research was probably at least equal to Coleridge’s, but who that knows his caprice and fastidiousness can doubt that the result would have been a mass of extracts and memoranda for an unwritten book? Opium came to the rescue, bracing up De Quincey’s energies by depriving him of his little independence, and compelling him to work or starve. Necessity forced him upon just the kind of work which suited him best. Obligated to write for periodicals, the needs of the situation debarred him from the endless research and dismaying prolixity so dear to his natural inclinations, and enriched our literature with a series of cabinet pictures which would have remained unfinished if attempted on heroic scale. But no necessity could cure Coleridge of forming schemes beyond his capacity to execute, and the time wasted in dreaming over them, and the discouragement and self-reproach begotten of their continual failure, must be reckoned among the causes which impeded the full exertion of his powers. In so far as opium contributed to this

everlasting reverie and chronic impotence of will, it was assuredly among his enemies. This need not have been so, there was no fatality in the matter. Another important cause of the comparative torpidity of Coleridge's poetical power was, in our opinion, a step which he need not have taken. If a period could be fixed for the duration of his flourishing epoch, his pride and prime of genius, it would begin with his acquaintance with Wordsworth, and end with his final departure from Nether Stowey, June 1800. He assigned various reasons for the step, but the true reason was that given by Mrs. Sandford, "Coleridge would never have been content to live in the west of England while Wordsworth was living in the north," supplemented perhaps by another, his admiration for Dorothy Wordsworth, who would in all probability have become his wife but for the unfortunate precipitation, under strong pressure from well-meaning and much-mistaken Southey, which had already made him the husband of an excellent woman entirely unsuited to him. Had this union taken place, it is safe to affirm that Coleridge's history would have been entirely different, that the finest of his poems would not be exquisite fragments, and that his mind would not be best discerned in the mirror of other intellects. But it was too late. Dorothy could now at best be but a disturbing influence; Wordsworth's chary sympathy was a poor substitute for Tom Poole; one instinctively feels the warm, genial son of opulent Devon misplaced in the stern though grand environ-

ment of the Lakes, where Wordsworth was so perfectly at home. From this time ill-health, opium, pecuniary embarrassment, domestic jars, and painful estrangements increase and multiply, and although Coleridge's genius remains essentially as great as ever, its power of adequate manifestation dwindles more and more.

The period which we have signalized as that of Coleridge's most brilliant poetical activity comprises 'The Ancient Mariner,' 'Christabel,' 'Kubla Khan,' 'Genevieve,' 'The Nightingale,' 'Frost at Midnight,' 'This Lime-tree Bower my Prison,' 'Fears in Solitude,' 'Ode to France,' 'Lines in the Hartz Forest,' and 'The Wanderings of Cain.' Were these removed from his works, he would lose all title to be esteemed a great poet. The translation of 'Wallenstein' falls within the same period. Never again did he rise to an equal height, except in two exquisite but very brief poems, the inspiration of his advanced years. Still, Coleridge's long Third Period (1800—1834) is not senility, and is not decadence. Save in the two beautiful pieces just alluded to ('Youth and Age' and 'Work without Hope') he remains upon a lower level than of old, his wing has lost the power to upbear him to the seventh heaven of poetry. But within his own sphere he is still perfect. If we knew nothing of him but 'The Garden of Boccaccio' (1828), we should still say that a poet of rare elegance and charm had graced the latter days of George IV. Poems more exquisitely finished and absolutely perfect in their way than 'The Butterfly' (1815), and 'Love,

Hope, and Patience in Education' (1829), will not be found in English literature. They are, moreover, not mere intellectual exercises, but genuine inspirations, showing that Coleridge's poetical faculty remained undebased, though it had no longer the energy for any conspicuous manifestation of its existence.

It will be understood that any regrets here expressed for the limited and fragmentary character of Coleridge's performances as poet or thinker have reference not to the merit of the work in itself, but to its amount in comparison with what it lay in him to have achieved. Any one of his best poems would suffice for the immortality of any poet: taken altogether, they place him upon an eminence inferior to none of his great contemporaries. But the man's powers were gigantic, and it would have been easy for him to have been the central sun of the constellation of his brilliant period. That he failed to be this is perhaps as much the fault of others as of himself. An ingenious attempt has been made in our time to classify the souls of poets as either masculine or feminine; and although the principle adopted cannot have been sound, for the impetuous and indomitable Shelley is petticoated under its operation—a species of sex in souls is hardly to be disputed. Among the poets those may with justice be described as feminine who more or less require to be impregnated by contact with other minds, whether spirits of old speaking through books, or spirits incarnated in living men. The very sensitiveness of Keats's poetical temperament rendered him

in a measure dependent : he usually wrote under the influence of some famous old poet—first Spenser, afterwards Milton, at the last, Dante. Coleridge is rarely imitative of another author, but his Muse required to be wooed by the sympathy of a kindred spirit. Wordsworth sufficed him for a time, but sympathy alone will not flourish without admiration ; and, although Coleridge was by no means exacting, Wordsworth, who thought ‘The Ancient Mariner’ needed some apology, was honestly unable to enter into the airy and spiritual graces of his poetry. Dorothy Wordsworth, who might have been everything to him, was tied up from him by an iron knot ; and it is most pathetic to see Coleridge, dimly conscious of his want, turning blindly about for his satisfaction to the most unlikely quarters, even to Alsop. He had the most sympathetic of friends in Charles Lamb, but the smaller minds of his day could not with every good intention satisfy his craving, and the greater men, except Shelley, who only knew him afar off, had no proper conception of his rank as a man of surpassing genius. One there was who might—or who might not—have supplied the lack of all the rest. If Coleridge, when in Germany, instead of spending his time at Hanover, had gone straight to Weimar, the consequences might have been momentous to himself and to English literature. It is by no means certain ; Goethe could be very blind and very unsympathetic. But had it proved otherwise, had he appreciated Coleridge at his worth, he might by admiration, by reproof, by example, above

all by the contagion of a common interest in the highest things, have infused the needful fire and confidence into him, have checked his self-indulgence and self-deception, and prevented the misuse of his powers. Coleridge's very weakness and dependence would have insured the triumph of Goethe's salutary influence. *Faust* would have been rendered into English with as great success as *Wallenstein*; and it might have come to be said that not even Goethe's *Faust* was so great a work as Goethe's Coleridge.

But although Coleridge's poetical production fell in quantity far below what might have been hoped from him, the better portion of it surpassed all reasonable expectation in its quality. Before him, there seemed no probability that English poetry would be enriched by 'Christabel' and 'The Ancient Mariner.' It might have been predicted, especially after the appearance of Burns, Blake, and Chatterton, that the reaction from the formality and artificiality of the reigning taste must evolve an antagonistic type somewhat resembling Wordsworth's; the revival of interest in the Elizabethans betokened the appearance of a Keats; and the Revolution could hardly fail to find laureates of the stamp of a Byron or a Shelley. But Coleridge could not have been foretold; his best vein is in the main independent of these and other contemporary movements; it is quint-essential poetry, and that is all. As a consequence, he has founded no school. There are no tendencies to imbibe, no mannerisms to copy. The only abiding

trace of his influence, perhaps, is the English blank verse idyll as subsequently perfected by Tennyson, who would hardly have achieved such success if, while elaborating his verse to the last degree of artistic polish, he had not kept his comparatively artless predecessor continually in mind. It is, however, the greatest of mistakes to speak of Coleridge as a wasted force, the recipient of misused gifts, a man who accomplished little. As a prose writer, though achieving no one great work, he deposited the seeds of thought in innumerable minds. As a poet, to speak only of the aspect under which we have principally considered him, he has shown within the compass of his own writings what is and what is not poetry, and forced all professed admirers of poetry to consider whether she can exist without inspiration, and whether in speaking of poetic excellence they do not really mean the excellence of the ethical teacher, the advocate, the stylist, or some other merit equally capable of manifestation in prose. It is right to honour Dryden and Pope for what they were, but the man who would place them along with or above Coleridge as poets, must admit that he dissents from the opinion of the Greeks respecting poetry, and regards it as a form of intellectual exercise. Coleridge's themes, except in his early and now and then in his late period, are distinctly poetical; and none understand like him to create a perpetual feeling of enchantment by the constant but unobtrusive employment of the most beautiful and melodious words. As a

painter and musician in speech he is surpassed by none of his contemporaries ; and his 'Ancient Mariner,' and the first part of his 'Christabel,' are related to the bulk of nineteenth-century poetry, down to the time of Rossetti, as 'The Tempest' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' are to the other plays of Shakespeare.

The editor of the choicest examples of a poet may well be allowed more liberty in all respects than an editor of a poet's complete works, for, in venturing to omit, he has already taken a freedom in comparison with which all others are trifling. He is thus permitted to enhance the charm of his writer by varying the arrangement of his compositions. The principal and entirely sufficient reason for a strictly chronological arrangement, the illustration of the author's mental growth, disappears when that growth is only partially exhibited. It is thus possible to grace the Temple of Poesy with a worthy porch ; while the reader of the complete edition often has to stoop to an entrance more befitting a crypt than a cathedral. Browning's works, indeed, if the little ante-chapel of 'Pauline' may be overlooked, are provided with a magnificent portal in 'Paracelsus' ; but the initial poems of the standard editions of Wordsworth and Tennyson seem strangely disproportioned to what is to follow : and Coleridge's case is worse. Nearly all his inferior poetry belongs to his juvenile period ; in the chronological editions of his works, therefore, one mediocre poem follows another until the quester for beauty wearies at being unable to

discern so much as an *ignis fatuus*. It has appeared to the present editor most desirable to ascertain a principle which would justify him in beginning with a really strong poem. This he has found in observing the order of publication adopted by Coleridge himself. Discarding his juvenile productions, his first important appearance as a poet was as the contributor of five poems to Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*. It is very desirable that the original association of these pieces should be shown by their being grouped together in at least one edition. They form, therefore, one independent division of this volume, and their chronological precedence affords a welcome opportunity of ushering the collection in with perhaps the most important and most widely known of all Coleridge's poems—'The Ancient Mariner.' From the first pages of the book, therefore, he stands revealed as a great poet. His next publication also includes two of his most memorable pieces—'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan,' with 'The Pains of Sleep,' their bright conspicuous satellite. With these the editor has taken the liberty of associating two other poems, 'The Wanderings of Cain,' and 'The Blossoming of the Solitary Date-Tree,' whose spiritual affinity to the above is so close that they would seem misplaced elsewhere. About the same time that he prepared 'Christabel' and its companions for the press, Coleridge collected his other pieces, the earlier printed poems excepted, under the title of 'Sibylline Leaves,' but found, or at least kept, no publisher until

1817. The contents of this volume are reproduced here in the same order and under the same divisions as printed by the author, excepting 'The Ancient Mariner' and its companions which constitute the first section, and such few pieces as do not appear to attain the standard of poetical excellence required by the plan of this volume. Two satirical poems, masterpieces in their burlesque way, omitted from 'Sibylline Leaves,' but subsequently included in Coleridge's works, have been added to the division of political poetry from the difficulty of finding an appropriate place for them elsewhere. The next section consists of such of the other poems of Coleridge's mature epoch, eligible for our purpose, as were either composed subsequently to the publication of 'Sibylline Leaves,' or may be deemed to have been excluded from that collection by accident. The arrangement of these is generally chronological, but has sometimes been varied for the sake of bringing together pieces which gain by juxtaposition. The next section includes those few early poems in which Coleridge made some approach to his subsequent distinction. This can perhaps scarcely be said of the most elaborate 'Religious Musings,' which is nevertheless highly important as exhibiting the poet most fully under those eighteenth-century influences from which he was to depart so widely, and bringing the issue between rhetoric and poetry to a point. If it had been composed a few years later, it would have been a great poem: at present its position in Coleridge's works is exactly analogous

to that of 'Queen Mab' in Shelley's. Lastly, we have placed the translations together, instead of allowing them to continue mingled with Coleridge's original work. A full conception of his powers as a translator is, of course, only to be obtained from his version of 'Wallenstein,' necessarily omitted here inasmuch as it would have been as long as all the rest of the volume. Few have been equally qualified for translation by command of language, general flexibility of mind, and enthusiastic appreciation of excellence in others. If, like Shelley, he had devoted to translation the intervals when he felt incapable of original composition, vast would have been the gain to English literature. His entire career, alas! is full of such tantalizing possibilities; it should have been easy for this very great man to have been much greater than he was. Yet when all is said it remains true that this collection of the choicest poetry he has left us surpasses in beauty any anthology that could be made of the best work of all his contemporaries until the appearance of Shelley and Keats. No rule, indeed, can be prescribed for forming such a collection other than the individual taste of the editor; but the sifting of Coleridge's work was never a very difficult matter; and is now the easier for the successive and practically unanimous verdicts of generations.

Coleridge's poems abound with matter for annotation, but not much that ought to be said has escaped his editors. It is, nevertheless, necessary in an independent edition to go over their ground again,

re-state their conclusions, and arbitrate where they differ. Nearly everything vital to the comprehension of the poems has been discussed by Mr. Dykes Campbell and Mr. Ashe, and the present Editor has in general been content to follow in their footsteps. By the kindness, however, of Stuart Montagu Samuel, Esq., and Messrs. John Pearson & Co., he has been enabled to make additions of some moment. To the former gentleman he is indebted for the inspection of a proof copy of 'Sibylline Leaves,' corrected by Coleridge himself shortly after publication, which has yielded some various readings, and some interesting remarks. To Messrs. Pearson he is obliged for the communication of a long and important note on 'Zapolya' in the form of a letter to Lockhart, transcribed from the fly-leaf of a copy in their possession. 'Zapolya' is not included in this edition: the biographical no less than the literary interest of this remarkable annotation nevertheless urged that it should be placed as soon as possible upon record, and with the assent of Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, it appears here as an appendix to the Notes. The copy has also afforded some various readings of importance, which have been given in the note. It has not usually been thought necessary to notice various readings, when there is no doubt as to Coleridge's ultimate preference. The text generally followed is Mr. Campbell's, with some divergences as regards punctuation.

R. GARNETT.

April 1897.

THE ANCIENT MARINER
AND
OTHER POEMS.



THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.—T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

ARGUMENT.

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country. [1798.]

PART I.

An ancient
Mariner
meeteth
three Gal-
lants bidden
to a wed-
ding-feast,
and de-
taineth one.

IT is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
“By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp’st thou me?
The Bridegroom’s doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May’st hear the merry din.”

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 "There was a ship," quoth he. 10
 "Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!"
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest
 is spell-bound by the
 eye of the
 old sea-far-
 ing man, and
 constrained
 to hear his
 tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years child :
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
 He cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner. 20

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner
 tells how the
 ship sailed
 southward
 with a good
 wind and
 fair weather,
 till it reached
 the Line.

The Sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he !
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon—" 30
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest
 heareth the
 bridal music ;
 but the
 Mariner con-
 tinueth his
 tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
 Red as a rose is she ;
 Nodding their heads before her goes
 The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
 Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

40

“ And now the Storm-blast came, and he
 Was tyrannous and strong :
 He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
 And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
 As who pursued with yell and blow
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,
 And forward bends his head,
 The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
 And southward aye we fled.

50

And now there came both mist and snow,
 And it grew wondrous cold :
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
 As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
 Did send a dismal sheen :
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
 The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
 The ice was all around :
 It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
 Like noises in a swound !

60

The ship
 driven by a
 storm toward
 the south
 pole.

The land of
 ice, and of
 fearful
 sounds where
 no living
 thing was to
 be seen.

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,
came
through the
snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steered us through !

70

And lo ! the
Albatross
proveth a
bird of good
omen, and
followeth the
ship as it re-
turned north-
ward through
fog and float-
ing ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine ;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient
Mariner in-
hospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner !
From the fiends, that plague thee thus !— 80
Why look'st thou so ?"—With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II.

The Sun now rose upon the right :
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,
 Nor any day for food or play
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

90

His ship-
 mates cry
 out against
 the ancient
 Mariner, for
 killing the
 bird of good
 luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
 And it would work 'em woe :
 For all averred, I had killed the bird
 That made the breeze to blow.
 Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,
 That made the breeze to blow !

But when the
 fog cleared
 off, they
 justify the
 same, and
 thus make
 themselves
 accomplices
 in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 The glorious Sun uprist :
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird
 That brought the fog and mist. 100
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 That bring the fog and mist.

The fair
 breeze con-
 tinues ; the
 ship enters
 the Pacific
 Ocean, and
 sails north-
 ward, even
 till it reaches
 the Line.
 The ship
 hath been
 suddenly be-
 calmed.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
 The furrow followed free ;
 We were the first that ever burst
 Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
 'Twas sad as sad could be ;
 And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea ! 110

All in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody Sun, at noon,

Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Al-
batross be-
gins to be
avenged.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, every where
Nor any drop to drink.

120

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

130

A Spirit had
followed
them ; one of
the invisible
inhabitants
of this
planet,

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so :
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

neither departed souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew,
Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may
be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or
element without one or more.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The ship-
mates, in
their sore
distress,
would fain
throw the
whole guilt
on the
ancient
Mariner :
in sign
whereof they
hang the
dead sea-
bird round
his neck.

Ah ! well-a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

140

PART III.

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time !
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a
sign in the
element afar
off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist ;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

150

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
And still it neared and neared :
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 We could nor laugh nor wail;
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, 160
 And cried, A sail! a sail!

A flash of joy;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call:
 Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in,
 As they were drinking all.

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
 Hither to work us weal;
 Without a breeze, without a tide,
 She steadies with upright keel! 170

The western wave was all a-flame,
 The day was well-nigh done!
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
 With broad and burning face. 180

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
 How fast she nears and nears!

Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?

And is that Woman all her crew?

Is that a Death? and are there two?

Is Death that Woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190

Her locks were yellow as gold :

Her skin was as white as leprosy,

The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,

Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,

And the twain were casting dice ;

"The game is done ! I've won ! I've won !"

Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :

At one stride comes the dark ; 200

With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,

Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up !

Fear at my heart, as at a cup,

My life-blood seemed to sip !

The stars were dim, and thick the night,

The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white ;

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.

The Spectre-
Woman and
her death-
mate, and no
other on
board the
skeleton-
ship.
Like vessel,
like crew !

Death and
Life-in-
Death have
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) win-
neth the
ancient
Mariner.
No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun.

At the rising
of the Moon,

From the sails the dew did drip—
 Till clomb above the eastern bar
 The horned Moon, with one bright star 210
 Within the nether tip.

One after another,
 One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
 Too quick for groan or sigh,
 Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
 And cursed me with his eye.

His ship-
 mates drop
 down dead.
 Four times fifty living men,
 (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
 With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
 They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
 Death
 begins her
 work on the
 ancient
 Mariner. 220
 The souls did from their bodies fly,—
 They fled to bliss or woe!
 And every soul, it passed me by,
 Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV.

The Wed-
 ding-Guest
 feareth that a
 Spirit is talk-
 ing to him ;
 “ I fear thee, ancient Mariner !
 I fear thy skinny hand !
 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
 As is the ribbed sea-sand.¹

¹ For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed. [Note of S. T. C., first printed in *Sibylline Leaves*.]

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."—

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest ! 230

This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,

Alone on a wide wide sea !

And never a saint took pity on

My soul in agony.

But the
ancient Ma-
riner assur-
eth him of
his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to
relate his
horrible pen-
ance.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful !

And they all dead did lie :

And a thousand thousand slimy things

Lived on ; and so did I.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,

240

And drew my eyes away ;

I looked upon the rotting deck,

And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray ;

But or ever a prayer had gusht,

A wicked whisper came, and made

My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,

And the balls like pulses beat ;

For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky

250

Lay like a load on my weary eye,

And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they :
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high ;
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye ! 260
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward ; and every where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt away 270
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
 I watched their rich attire :
 Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
 They coiled and swam ; and every track 280
 Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty
 and their
 happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue
 Their beauty might declare :
 A spring of love gushed from my heart,
 And I blessed them unaware :
 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
 And I blessed them unaware.

He blesseth
 them in his
 heart.

The spell
 begins to
 break.

The selfsame moment I could pray ;
 And from my neck so free
 The Albatross fell off, and sank 290
 Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

Oh sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
 Beloved from pole to pole !
 To Mary Queen the praise be given !
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
 That slid into my soul.

By grace of
 the holy
 Mother, the
 ancient
 Mariner is
 refreshed
 with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
 That had so long remained,
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;
 And when I awoke, it rained. 300

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank ;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth
 sounds and
 seeth strange
 sights and
 commotions
 in the sky
 and the ele-
 ment.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 It did not come anear ;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

310

The upper air burst into life ;
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen ;
 To and fro they were hurried about ;
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
 And the rain poured down from one black
 cloud ;
 The Moon was at its edge.

320

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side :
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies
of the ship's
crew are in-
spired, and
the ship
moves on ;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan. 330

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ;
Yet never a breeze up blew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew. 340

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee :
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me.

But not by
the souls of
the men, nor
by dæmons
of earth or
middle air,
but by a
blessed troop
of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

“ I fear thee, ancient Mariner ! ”
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their
arms, 350
And clustered round the mast ;

Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun ;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are ;
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

360

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased : yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

370

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lone-
some Spirit
from the
south pole
carries on
the ship as
far as the
Line, in
obedience
to the an-
gelic troop,
but still re-
quireth
vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go. 380
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound : 390
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar
Spirit's fel-
low-dæmons,
the invisible
inhabitants
of the ele-
ment, take
part in his
wrong ; and
two of them
relate, one to
the other,
that penance
long and
heavy for
the ancient
Mariner

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

“ Is it he ? ” quoth one, “ Is this the man ?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400
The harmless Albatross.

hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

The spirit who bideth by himself
 In the land of mist and snow,
 He loved the bird that loved the man
 Who shot him with his bow."

The other was a softer voice,
 As soft as honey-dew :
 Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
 And penance more will do."

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

"But tell me, tell me ! speak again,
 Thy soft response renewing—
 What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
 What is the ocean doing ?" 410

SECOND VOICE.

"Still as a slave before his lord,
 The ocean hath no blast ;
 His great bright eye most silently
 Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go ;
 For she guides him smooth or grim.
 See, brother, see ! how graciously
 She looketh down on him." 420

FIRST VOICE.

“But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?”

The Mariner
hath been
cast into a
trance; for
the angelic
power
causeth the
vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

SECOND VOICE.

“The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.”

The super-
natural
motion is
retarded;
the Mariner
awakes,
and his pen-
ance begins
anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on 430
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high,
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
finally ex-
piated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turned round walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows a frightful fiend 450
 Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—
 It mingled strangely with my fears,
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460
 Yet she sailed softly too :
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
 On me alone it blew.

And the
 ancient Ma-
 riner behold-
 eth his native
 country.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
 The lighthouse top I see ?
 Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
 Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
 And I with sobs did pray—
 O let me be awake, my God ! 470
 Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn !
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
 That stands above the rock :
 The moonlight steeped in silentness
 The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light, 480
 Till rising from the same,
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,
 In crimson colours came.

The angelic
 spirits leave
 the dead
 bodies,

And appear
 in their own
 forms of
 light.

A little distance from the prow
 Those crimson shadows were :
 I turned my eyes upon the deck—
 Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
 And by the holy rood !
 A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
 On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
 It was a heavenly sight !
 They stood as signals to the land,
 Each one a lovely light ;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
 No voice did they impart—
 No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
 Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
 I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
 My head was turned perforce away,
 And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
 I heard them coming fast :
 Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
 The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
 It is the Hermit good !
 He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
 That he makes in the wood.
 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

The Hermit
 of the Wood,

This Hermit good lives in that wood
 Which slopes down to the sea.
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
 He loves to talk with mariners
 That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
 He hath a cushion plump : 520
 It is the moss that wholly hides
 The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
 " Why, this is strange, I trow !
 Where are those lights so many and fair,
 That signal made but now ?"

Approacheth
 the ship with
 wonder.

" Strange, by my faith !" the Hermit said—
 " And they answered not our cheer !
 The planks look warped ! and see those sails,
 How thin they are and sere ! 530
 I never saw aught like to them,
 Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
 My forest-brook along ;
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
 That eats the she-wolf's young."

" Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—
 (The Pilot made reply)
 I am a-feared"—" Push on, push on !" 540
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirred ;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 And straight a sound was heard.

The ship
suddenly
sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread :
It reached the ship, it split the bay ;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient
Mariner is
saved in the
Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound, 550
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit ;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
“ Ha! ha! ” quoth he, “ full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.”

And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land !
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him ;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

“ O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man ! ”

The Hermit crossed his brow.

“ Say quick, ” quoth he, “ I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou ? ”

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched

With a woful agony,

Which forced me to begin my tale ; 580

And then it left me free.

And ever
and anon
throughout
his future
life an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land,

Since then, at an uncertain hour,

That agony returns :

And till my ghastly tale is told,

This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;

I have strange power of speech ;

That moment that his face I see,

I know the man that must hear me :

To him my tale I teach. 590

What loud uproar bursts from that door !

The wedding-guests are there :

But in the garden-bower the bride

And bride-maids singing are :

And hark the little vesper bell,

Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been

Alone on a wide wide sea :

So lonely 'twas, that God himself

Scarce seemed there to be. 600

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

And to
teach, by his
own ex-
ample, love
and rever-
ence to all
things that
God made
and loveth.

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast. 610

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small :
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone : and now the Wedding-Guest 620
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

LOVE.

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve ; 10
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve !

She leant against the arméd man,
The statue of the arméd knight ;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve. 20

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a fitting blush,
 With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
 For well she knew I could not choose
 But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
 Upon his shield a burning brand ;
 And that for ten long years he wooed
 The Lady of the Land.

30

I told her how he pined : and ah !
 The deep, the low, the pleading tone
 With which I sang another's love,
 Interpreted my own.

She listened with a fitting blush,
 With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;
 And she forgave me that I gazed
 Too fondly on her face !

40

But when I told the cruel scorn
 That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
 And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
 Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
 And sometimes from the darksome shade,
 And sometimes starting up at once
 In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
 An angel beautiful and bright ;
 And that he knew it was a Fiend,
 This miserable Knight !

50

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land.

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ; 60

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity.

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ; 70
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin-shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name. 80

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stepped—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

90

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride ;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

A CONVERSATION POEM, WRITTEN IN APRIL 1798.

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
 Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
 Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
 Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge.
 You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
 But hear no murmuring : it flows silently,
 O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
 A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim,
 Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
 That gladden the green earth, and we shall find 10
 A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
 And hark ! the Nightingale begins its song,
 "Most musical, most melancholy" bird !
 A melancholy bird ? Oh idle thought !
 In Nature there is nothing melancholy.
 But some night-wandering man whose heart was
 pierced
 With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
 Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
 (And so, poor wretch ! fill'd all things with himself,
 And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale 20
 Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
 First named these notes a melancholy strain :
 And many a poet echoes the conceit ;
 Poet who hath been building up the rhyme

When he had better far have stretched his limbs
 Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
 By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
 Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
 Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
 And of his fame forgetful ! so his fame
 Should share in Nature's immortality,
 A venerable thing ! and so his song
 Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
 Be loved like Nature ! But 'twill not be so ;
 And youths and maidens most poetical,
 Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
 In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
 Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
 O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

30

My Friend, and thou, our Sister ! we have learnt 40
 A different lore : we may not thus profane
 Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
 And joyance ! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
 That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
 With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
 As he were fearful that an April night
 Would be too short for him to utter forth
 His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
 Of all its music !

And I know a grove
 Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
 Which the great lord inhabits not ; and so
 This grove is wild with tangling underwood,

50

And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
 Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
 But never elsewhere in one place I knew
 So many nightingales ; and far and near,
 In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
 They answer and provoke each other's songs,
 With skirmish and capricious passagings,
 And murmurs musical and swift jug jug, 60
 And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
 Stirring the air with such an harmony,
 That should you close your eyes, you might almost
 Forget it was not day ! On moonlight bushes,
 Whose dewy leaflets are but half-disclosed,
 You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
 Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
 Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
 Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,

Who dwelleth in her hospitable home 70
 Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
 (Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
 To something more than Nature in the grove)
 Glides through the pathways; she knows all their notes,
 That gentle Maid ! and oft, a moment's space,
 What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
 Hath heard a pause of silence ; till the moon
 Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
 With one sensation, and those wakeful birds
 Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy, 80
 As if some sudden gale had swept at once

A hundred airy harps ! And she hath watched
 Many a nightingale perch giddily
 On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
 And to that motion tune his wanton song
 Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler ! till to-morrow eve,
 And you, my friends ! farewell, a short farewell !
 We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
 And now for our dear homes.—That strain again ! 90
 Full fain it would delay me ! My dear babe,
 Who, capable of no articulate sound,
 Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
 How he would place his hand beside his ear,
 His little hand, the small forefinger up,
 And bid us listen ! And I deem it wise
 To make him Nature's play-mate. He knows well
 The evening-star ; and once, when he awoke
 In most distressful mood (some inward pain
 Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream), 100
 I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
 And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
 Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
 While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,
 Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam ! Well !—
 It is a father's tale : But if that Heaven
 Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
 Familiar with these songs, that with the night
 He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
 Sweet Nightingale ! once more, my friends ! fare-
 well.

THE FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE :

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

Foster-Mother. I never saw the man whom you describe.

Maria. 'Tis strange ! he spake of you familiarly
As mine and Albert's common Foster-mother.

Foster-Mother. Now blessings on the man, whoe'er
he be,
That joined your names with mine ! O my sweet
lady,
As often as I think of those dear times
When you two little ones would stand at eve,
On each side of my chair, and make me learn
All you had learnt in the day ; and how to talk
In gentle phrase, then bid me sing to you— 10
'Tis more like heaven to come, than what *has* been !

Maria. O my dear Mother ! this strange man has
left me
Troubled with wilder fancies, than the moon
Breeds in the love-sick maid who gazes at it,
Till lost in inward vision, with wet eye,
She gazes idly !—But that entrance, Mother !

Foster-Mother. Can no one hear ? It is a perilous
tale !

Maria. No one.

Foster-Mother. My husband's father told it me,
 Poor old Leoni!—Angels rest his soul!
 He was a woodman, and could fell and saw 20
 With lusty arm. You know that huge round beam
 Which props the hanging wall of the old chapel?
 Beneath that tree, while yet it was a tree,
 He found a baby wrapt in mosses, lined
 With thistle-beards, and such small locks of wool
 As hang on brambles. Well, he brought him home,
 And reared him at the then Lord Velez' cost.
 And so the babe grew up a pretty boy,
 A pretty boy, but most unteachable—
 And never learnt a prayer, nor told a bead, 30
 But knew the names of birds, and mocked their notes,
 And whistled, as he were a bird himself:
 And all the autumn 'twas his only play
 To get the seeds of wild flowers, and to plant them
 With earth and water, on the stumps of trees.
 A Friar, who gathered simples in the wood,
 A grey-haired man—he loved this little boy,
 The boy loved him—and, when the Friar taught him,
 He soon could write with the pen; and from that
 time,
 Lived chiefly at the Convent or the Castle. 40
 So he became a very learned youth.
 But Oh! poor wretch!—he read, and read, and read,
 Till his brain turned—and ere his twentieth year,
 He had unlawful thoughts of many things:
 And though he prayed, he never loved to pray
 With holy men, nor in a holy place—
 But yet his speech, it was so soft and sweet,

The late Lord Velez ne'er was wearied with him.
 And once, as by the north side of the Chapel
 They stood together, chained in deep discourse, 50
 The earth heaved under them with such a groan,
 That the wall tottered, and had well-nigh fallen
 Right on their heads. My Lord was sorely frightened ;
 A fever seized him ; and he made confession
 Of all the heretical and lawless talk
 Which brought this judgment : so the youth was
 seized .

And cast into that hole. My husband's father
 Sobbed like a child—it almost broke his heart.
 And once as he was working in the cellar,
 He heard a voice distinctly ; 'twas the youth's, 60
 Who sung a doleful song about green fields,
 How sweet it were on lake or wild savannah
 To hunt for food, and be a naked man,
 And wander up and down at liberty.
 He always doted on the youth, and now
 His love grew desperate ; and defying death,
 He made that cunning entrance I described :
 And the young man escaped.

Maria. 'Tis a sweet tale :
 Such as would lull a listening child to sleep,
 His rosy face besoiled with unwiped tears.— 70
 And what became of him ?

Foster-Mother. He went on shipboard
 With those bold voyagers, who made discovery
 Of golden lands. Leoni's younger brother
 Went likewise, and when he returned to Spain,
 He told Leoni, that the poor mad youth,

Soon after they arrived in that new world
 In spite of his dissuasion, seized a boat,
 And all alone, set sail by silent moonlight,
 Up a great river, great as any sea,
 And ne'er was heard of more : but 'tis supposed, 80
 He lived and died among the savage men.

THE DUNGEON.

AND this place our forefathers made for men !
 This is the process of our love and wisdom,
 To each poor brother who offends against us—
 Most innocent, perhaps—and what if guilty?
 Is this the only cure? Merciful God !
 Each pore and natural outlet shrivell'd up
 By ignorance and parching poverty
 His energies roll back upon his heart,
 And stagnate and corrupt ; till changed to poison,
 They break out on him, like a loathsome plague-spot ;
 Then we call in our pamper'd mountebanks— 11
 And this is their best cure ! uncomforted
 And friendless solitude, groaning and tears,
 And savage faces, at the clanking hour,
 Seen through the steams and vapours of his dungeon,
 By the lamp's dismal twilight ! So he lies
 Circlèd with evil, till his very soul
 Unmoulds its essence, hopelessly deformed
 By sights of ever more deformity !

With other ministrations thou, O nature ! 20
Healest thy wandering and distempered child :
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters,
Till he relent, and can no more endure
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy ;
But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,
His angry spirit healed and harmonized
By the benignant touch of love and beauty. 30



CHRISTABEL
AND
OTHER POEMS.



CHRISTABEL.

PART THE FIRST.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;
Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew !

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch ;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour; 10
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full ;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray : 20
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
 Whom her father loves so well,
 What makes her in the wood so late,
 A furlong from the castle gate?
 She had dreams all yesternight
 Of her own betrothed knight;
 And she in the midnight wood will pray
 For the weal of her lover that's far away. 30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
 The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
 And nought was green upon the oak
 But moss and rarest mistletoe:
 She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
 And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
 The lovely lady, Christabel!
 It moaned as near, as near can be,
 But what it is she cannot tell.— 40
 On the other side it seems to be,
 Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
 Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
 There is not wind enough in the air
 To move away the ringlet curl
 From the lovely lady's cheek—
 There is not wind enough to twirl
 The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
 That dances as often as dance it can, 50
 Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
 On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !
 Jesu, Maria, shield her well !
 She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
 And stole to the other side of the oak.

What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,
 Drest in a silken robe of white,
 That shadowy in the moonlight shone : 60
 The neck that made that white robe wan,
 Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;
 Her blue-veined feet unsandalled were,
 And wildly glittered here and there
 The gems entangled in her hair.
 I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
 A lady so richly clad as she—
 Beautiful exceedingly !

Mary mother, save me now !
 (Said Christabel,) And who art thou ? 70

The lady strange made answer meet,
 And her voice was faint and sweet :—
 Have pity on my sore distress,
 I scarce can speak for weariness :
 Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear !
 Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?
 And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
 Did thus pursue her answer meet :—

My sire is of a noble line,
 And my name is Geraldine : 80
 Five warriors seized me yestermorn,

Me, even me, a maid forlorn :
 They choked my cries with force and fright,
 And tied me on a palfrey white.
 The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
 And they rode furiously behind.
 They spurred amain, their steeds were white :
 And once we crossed the shade of night.
 As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
 I have no thought what men they be ; 90
 Nor do I know how long it is
 (For I have lain entranced I wis)
 Since one, the tallest of the five,
 Took me from the palfrey's back,
 A weary woman, scarce alive.
 Some muttered words his comrades spoke :
 He placed me underneath this oak ;
 He swore they would return with haste ;
 Whither they went I cannot tell—
 I thought I heard, some minutes past, 100
 Sounds as of a castle bell.
 Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
 And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
 And comforted fair Geraldine :
 O well, bright dame ! may you command
 The service of Sir Leoline ;
 And gladly our stout chivalry
 Will he send forth and friends withal
 To guide and guard you safe and free 110
 Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed
 That strove to be, and were not, fast.
 Her gracious stars the lady blest,
 And thus spake on sweet Christabel :
 All our household are at rest,
 The hall as silent as the cell ;
 Sir Leoline is weak in health,
 And may not well awakened be,
 But we will move as if in stealth, 120
 And I beseech your courtesy,
 This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
 Took the key that fitted well ;
 A little door she opened straight,
 All in the middle of the gate,
 The gate that was ironed within and without,
 Where an army in battle array had marched out.
 The lady sank, belike through pain,
 And Christabel with might and main 130
 Lifted her up, a weary weight,
 Over the threshold of the gate :
 Then the lady rose again,
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court : right glad they were.
 And Christabel devoutly cried
 To the lady by her side,
 Praise we the Virgin all divine
 Who hath rescued thee from thy distress ! 140

Alas, alas! said Geraldine,
 I cannot speak for weariness.
 So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
 The mastiff old did not awake,
 Yet she an angry moan did make!
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
 Never till now she uttered yell
 Beneath the eye of Christabel. 150
 Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
 Pass as lightly as you will!
 The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
 Amid their own white ashes lying ;
 But when the lady passed, there came
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
 And Christabel saw the lady's eye, 160
 And nothing else saw she thereby,
 Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
 Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
 O softly tread, said Christabel,
 My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
 And jealous of the listening air
 They steal their way from stair to stair,

Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room, 170
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain, 180
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine, 190
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?
Christabel answered—Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.

I have heard the grey-haired friar tell
 How on her death-bed she did say,
 That she should hear the castle-bell 200
 Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
 O mother dear! that thou wert here!
 I would, said Geraldine, she were!

But soon with altered voice, said she—
 “Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
 I have power to bid thee flee.”
 Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
 Why stares she with unsettled eye?
 Can she the bodiless dead espy?
 And why with hollow voice cries she, 210
 “Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
 Though thou her guardian spirit be,
 Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me.”

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
 And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
 Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
 Dear lady! it hath wildered you!
 The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
 And faintly said, “'tis over now!”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank: 220
 Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
 And from the floor whereon she sank,
 The lofty lady stood upright:
 She was most beautiful to see,
 Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
“All they who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befel, 230
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.”

Quoth Christabel, So let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro, 240
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest, 250
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side—
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ;
 Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !
 Deep from within she seems half-way
 To lift some weight with sick assay,
 And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;
 Then suddenly, as one defied, 260
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,
 And lay down by the Maiden's side !—
 And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah wel-a-day !
 And with low voice and doleful look
 These words did say :
 " In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel !
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;
 But vainly thou warrest, 271
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning,
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair ;
 And didst bring her home with thee in love and
 in charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp air."

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST.

It was a lovely sight to see
 The lady Christabel, when she 280
 Was praying at the old oak tree ;
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows ;
 Her slender palms together prest,
 Heaving sometimes on her breast ;
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear, 290
 Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me !)
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
 Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
 Dreaming that alone, which is—
 O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?
 And lo ! the worker of these harms,
 That holds the maiden in her arms,
 Seems to slumber still and mild, 300
 As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine ! since arms of thine

Have been the lovely lady's prison.
 O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
 Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
 The night-birds all that hour were still.
 But now they are jubilant anew,
 From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
 Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell! 310

And see! the lady Christabel
 Gathers herself from out her trance;
 Her limbs relax, her countenance
 Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
 Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
 And oft the while she seems to smile
 As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
 Like a youthful hermitess, 320
 Beauteous in a wilderness,
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep,
 And, if she move unquietly,
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.
 No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
 What if she knew her mother near?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call: 330
 For the blue sky bends over all!

PART THE SECOND.

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead :
These words Sir Leoline will say
Many a morn to his dying day !

And hence the custom and law began
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell, 340
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell !
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can !
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair, 350
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother ;

And oft too, by the knell offended,
 Just as their one ! two ! three ! is ended,
 The devil mocks the doleful tale
 With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still ! through mist and cloud 360
 That merry peal comes ringing loud ;
 And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
 And rises lightly from the bed ;
 Puts on her silken vestments white,
 And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
 And nothing doubting of her spell
 Awakens the lady Christabel.

“ Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel ?
 I trust that you have rested well.”

And Christabel awoke and spied 370
 The same who lay down by her side—
 O rather say, the same whom she
 Raised up beneath the old oak tree !
 Nay, fairer yet ! and yet more fair !
 For she belike hath drunken deep
 Of all the blessedness of sleep !
 And while she spake, her looks, her air,
 Such gentle thankfulness declare,
 That (so it seemed) her girded vests
 Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts. 380
 “ Sure I have sinn'd !” said Christabel,
 “ Now heaven be praised if all be well !”
 And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
 Did she the lofty lady greet
 With such perplexity of mind
 As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown, 390
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.
The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies, 400
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above ; 410
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.

Each spake words of high disdain
 And insult to his heart's best brother :
 They parted—ne'er to meet again !
 But never either found another
 To free the hollow heart from paining— 420
 They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
 Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
 A dreary sea now flows between.
 But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
 Shall wholly do away, I ween,
 The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
 Stood gazing on the damsel's face :
 And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
 Came back upon his heart again. 430

O then the Baron forgot his age,
 His noble heart swelled high with rage ;
 He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side
 He would proclaim it far and wide,
 With trump and solemn heraldry,
 That they, who thus had wronged the dame
 Were base as spotted infamy !
 " And if they dare deny the same,
 My herald shall appoint a week,
 And let the recreant traitors seek 440
 My tourney court—that there and then
 I may dislodge their reptile souls
 From the bodies and forms of men !"
 He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !

For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he
kenned

In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.

450

Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—
(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound :
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round, 460
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child ?" 470
The Baron said—His daughter mild

Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
 I ween, she had no power to tell
 Aught else: so mighty was the spell.
 Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
 Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
 Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
 As if she feared she had offended
 Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
 And with such lowly tones she prayed 480
 She might be sent without delay
 Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
 "Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!
 Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
 And take two steeds with trappings proud,
 And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
 To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
 And clothe you both in solemn vest,
 And over the mountains haste along, 490
 Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
 Detain you on the valley road.

"And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
 My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
 Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
 And reaches soon that castle good
 Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,
 Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet! 500

And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
 Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !
 Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
 Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
 He bids thee come without delay
 With all thy numerous array ;
 And take thy lovely daughter home .
 And he will meet thee on the way
 With all his numerous array,
 White with their panting palfreys' foam : 510
 And, by mine honour ! I will say,
 That I repent me of the day
 When I spake words of fierce disdain
 To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !—
 —For since that evil hour hath flown,
 Many a summer's sun hath shone ;
 Yet ne'er found I a friend again
 Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.”

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
 Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ; 520
 And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
 His gracious hail on all bestowing ;
 “Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
 Are sweeter than my harp can tell ;
 Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
 This day my journey should not be,
 So strange a dream hath come to me ;
 That I had vowed with music loud
 To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
 Warn'd by a vision in my rest ! 530

For in my sleep I saw that dove,
 That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
 And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
 Sir Leoline ! I saw the same,
 Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
 Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
 Which when I saw and when I heard,
 I wonder'd what might ail the bird ;
 For nothing near it could I see,
 Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
 old tree.

540

“ And in my dream, methought, I went
 To search out what might there be found ;
 And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
 That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
 I went and peered, and could descry
 No cause for her distressful cry ;
 But yet for her dear lady's sake
 I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
 When lo ! I saw a bright green snake
 Coiled around its wings and neck.
 Green as the herbs on which it couched,
 Close by the dove's its head it crouched ;
 And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
 Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !
 I woke ; it was the midnight hour,
 The clock was echoing in the tower ;
 But though my slumber was gone by,
 This dream it would not pass away—
 It seems to live upon my eye !

550

And thence I vowed this self-same day
 With music strong and saintly song
 To wander through the forest bare,
 Lest aught unholy loiter there." 560

Thus Bracy said : the Baron, the while,
 Half-listening heard him with a smile ;
 Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
 His eyes made up of wonder and love ;
 And said in courtly accents fine,
 " Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
 With arms more strong than harp or song, 570
 Thy sire and I will crush the snake ! "
 He kissed her forehead as he spake,
 And Geraldine in maiden wise
 Casting down her large bright eyes,
 With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
 She turned her from Sir Leoline ;
 Softly gathering up her train,
 That o'er her right arm fell again ;
 And folded her arms across her chest,
 And couched her head upon her breast, 580
 And looked askance at Christabel—
 Jesu, Maria, shield her well !

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
 And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
 Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
 And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,
 At Christabel she look'd askance !—
 One moment—and the sight was fled !

But Christabel in dizzy trance
 Stumbling on the unsteady ground 590
 Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound ;
 And Geraldine again turned round,
 And like a thing that sought relief,
 Full of wonder and full of grief,
 She rolled her large bright eyes divine
 Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas ! her thoughts are gone,
 She nothing sees—no sight but one !
 The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
 I know not how, in fearful wise, 600
 So deeply had she drunken in
 That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
 That all her features were resigned
 To this sole image in her mind :
 And passively did imitate
 That look of dull and treacherous hate !
 And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
 Still picturing that look askance
 With forced unconscious sympathy
 Full before her father's view— 610
 As far as such a look could be
 In eyes so innocent and blue !

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
 Paused awhile, and inly prayed :
 Then falling at the Baron's feet,
 " By my mother's soul do I entreat
 That thou this woman send away !"
 She said : and more she could not say :

For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell. 620

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;
The same, for whom thy lady died !
O, by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child !
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died :
Prayed that the babe for whom she died, 630
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline !
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage, 640
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonour'd thus in his old age ;
Dishonour'd by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—

He rolled his eye with stern regard
 Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
 And said in tones abrupt, austere— 650
 “Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
 I bade thee hence!” The bard obeyed;
 And turning from his own sweet maid,
 The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
 Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND.

A little child, a limber elf,
 Singing, dancing to itself,
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
 That always finds, and never seeks,
 Makes such a vision to the sight 660
 As fills a father's eyes with light;
 And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
 Upon his heart, that he at last
 Must needs express his love's excess
 With words of unmeant bitterness.
 Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
 Thoughts so all unlike each other;
 To mutter and mock a broken charm,
 To dally with wrong that does no harm.
 Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty 670
 At each wild word to feel within
 A sweet recoil of love and pity.
 And what, if in a world of sin

(O sorrow and shame should this be true !)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

KUBLA KHAN.

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And here were gardens bright with sinuous
rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this earth in'fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced,
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20

Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
 It hath not been my use to pray
 With moving lips or bended knees ;
 But silently, by slow degrees,
 My spirit I to Love compose,
 In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
 With reverential resignation,
 No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
 Only a sense of supplication ;
 A sense o'er all my soul imprest 10
 That I am weak, yet not unblest,
 Since in me, round me, everywhere
 Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud
 In anguish and in agony,
 Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
 Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me :
 A lurid light, a trampling throng,
 Sense of intolerable wrong,
 And whom I scorned, those only strong ! 20
 Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
 Still baffled, and yet burning still !

Desire with loathing strangely mixed
 On wild or hateful objects fixed.
 Fantastic passions ! maddening brawl !
 And shame and terror over all !
 Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
 Which all confused I could not know
 Whether I suffered, or I did :
 For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe, 30
 My own or others still the same
 Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame !

So two nights passed : the night's dismay
 Saddened and stunned the coming day.
 Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me
 Distemper's worst calamity.
 The third night, when my own loud scream
 Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
 O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
 I wept as I had been a child ; 40
 And having thus by tears subdued
 My anguish to a milder mood,
 Such punishments, I said, were due
 To natures deepliest stained with sin,
 For aye entempesting anew
 The unfathomable hell within
 The horror of their deeds to view,
 To know and loathe, yet wish and do !
 Such griefs with such men well agree,
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me ? 50
 To be beloved is all I need,
 And whom I love I love indeed.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

PREFATORY NOTE.

A PROSE composition, one not in metre at least, seems *prima facie* to require explanation or apology. It was written in the year 1798, near Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, at which place (*sanctum et amabile nomen!* rich by so many associations and recollections) the author had taken up his residence in order to enjoy the society and close neighbourhood of a dear and honoured friend, T. Poole, Esq. The work was to have been written in concert with another [Wordsworth], whose name is too venerable within the precincts of genius to be unnecessarily brought into connection with such a trifle, and who was then residing at a small distance from Nether Stowey. The title and subject were suggested by myself, who likewise drew out the scheme and the contents for each of the three books or cantos, of which the work was to consist, and which, the reader is to be informed, was to have been finished in one night! My partner undertook the first canto: I the second: and which ever had *done first*, was to set about the third. Almost thirty years have passed by; yet at this moment I cannot without something more than a smile moot the question which of the two things was the more impracticable, for a mind so eminently original to compose another man's thoughts and fancies, or for a taste so austere pure and simple to imitate the Death of Abel? Methinks I see his grand and noble countenance as at the moment when having despatched my own portion of the task at full finger-speed, I hastened to him with my manuscript—that look of humorous despondency fixed on his almost blank sheet of paper, and then its silent mock-piteous admission of failure struggling with the sense of the exceeding ridiculousness of the whole scheme—which broke up in a laugh: and the 'Ancient Mariner' was written instead.

Years afterward, however, the draft of the plan and proposed incidents, and the portion executed, obtained favour in the eyes

of more than one person, whose judgment on a poetic work could not but have weighed with me, even though no parental partiality had been thrown into the same scale, as a make-weight: and I determined on commencing anew, and composing the whole in stanzas, and made some progress in realising this intention, when adverse gales drove my bark off the "Fortunate Isles" of the Muses: and then other and more momentous interests prompted a different voyage, to firmer anchorage and a securer port. I have in vain tried to recover the lines from the palimpsest tablet of my memory: and I can only offer the introductory stanza, which had been committed to writing for the purpose of procuring a friend's judgment on the metre, as a specimen:—

Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
 That leafy twine his only dress!
 A lovely Boy was plucking fruits,
 By moonlight, in a wilderness.
 The moon was bright, the air was free,
 And fruits and flowers together grew
 On many a shrub and many a tree:
 And all put on a gentle hue,
 Hanging in the shadowy air
 Like a picture rich and rare.
 It was a climate where, they say,
 The night is more belov'd than day.
 But who that beauteous Boy beguil'd,
 That beauteous Boy to linger here?
 Alone, by night, a little child,
 In place so silent and so wild—
 Has he no friend, no loving mother near?

I have here given the birth, parentage, and premature decease of the 'Wanderings of Cain, a poem,'—intreating, however, my Readers, not to think so meanly of my judgment as to suppose that I either regard or offer it as any excuse for the publication of the following fragment (and I may add, of one or two others in its neighbourhood) in its primitive crudity. But I should find still greater difficulty in forgiving myself were I to record *pro tædio publico* a set of petty mishaps and annoyances

which I myself wish to forget. I must be content therefore with assuring the friendly Reader, that the less he attributes its appearance to the Author's will, choice, or judgment, the nearer to the truth he will be.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

CANTO II.

“A LITTLE further, O my father, yet a little further, and we shall come into the open moonlight.” Their road was through a forest of fir-trees; at its entrance the trees stood at distances from each other, and the path was broad, and the moonlight and the moonlight shadows reposed upon it, and appeared quietly to inhabit that solitude. But soon the path winded and became narrow; the sun at high noon sometimes speckled, but never illumined it, and now it was dark as a cavern.

“It is dark, O my father!” said Enos, “but the path under our feet is smooth and soft, and we shall soon come out into the open moonlight.”

“Lead on, my child!” said Cain; “guide me, little child!” And the innocent little child clasped a finger of the hand which had murdered the righteous Abel, and he guided his father. “The fir branches drip upon thee, my son.” “Yea, pleasantly, father, for I ran fast and eagerly to bring thee the pitcher and the cake, and my body is not yet cool. How

happy the squirrels are that feed on these fir-trees ! they leap from bough to bough, and the old squirrels play round their young ones in the nest. I clomb a tree yesterday at noon, O my father, that I might play with them, but they leaped away from the branches, even to the slender twigs did they leap, and in a moment I beheld them on another tree. Why, O my father, would they not play with me ? I would be good to them as thou art good to me : and I groaned to them even as thou groanest when thou givest me to eat, and when thou coverest me at evening, and as often as I stand at thy knee and thine eyes look at me." Then Cain stopped, and stifling his groans he sank to the earth, and the child Enos stood in the darkness beside him.

And Cain lifted up his voice and cried bitterly, and said, "The Mighty One that persecuteth me is on this side and on that ; he pursueth my soul like the wind, like the sand-blast he passeth through me ; he is around me even as the air ! O that I might be utterly no more ! I desire to die—yea, the things that never had life, neither move they upon the earth—behold ! they seem precious to mine eyes. O that a man might live without the breath of his nostrils. So I might abide in darkness, and blackness, and an empty space ! Yea, I would lie down, I would not rise, neither would I stir my limbs till I became as the rock in the den of the lion, on which the young lion resteth his head whilst he sleepeth. For the torrent that roareth far off hath a voice : and the clouds in heaven look terribly on me ; the Mighty

One who is against me speaketh in the wind of the cedar grove ; and in silence am I dried up." Then Enos spake to his father, " Arise, my father, arise, we are but a little way from the place where I found the cake and the pitcher." And Cain said, " How knowest thou ?" and the child answered—" Behold the bare rocks are a few of thy strides distant from the forest ; and while even now thou wert lifting up thy voice, I heard the echo." Then the child took hold of his father, as if he would raise him : and Cain being faint and feeble rose slowly on his knees and pressed himself against the trunk of a fir, and stood upright and followed the child.

The path was dark till within three strides' length of its termination, when it turned suddenly ; the thick black trees formed a low arch, and the moonlight appeared for a moment like a dazzling portal. Enos ran before and stood in the open air ; and when Cain, his father, emerged from the darkness, the child was affrighted. For the mighty limbs of Cain were wasted as by fire ; his hair was as the matted curls on the bison's forehead, and so glared his fierce and sullen eye beneath : and the black abundant locks on either side, a rank and tangled mass, were stained and scorched, as though the grasp of a burning iron hand had striven to rend them ; and his countenance told in a strange and terrible language of agonies that had been, and were, and were still to continue to be.

The scene around was desolate ; as far as the eye could reach it was desolate : the bare rocks faced each other, and left a long and wide interval of thin

white sand. You might wander on and look round and round, and peep into the crevices of the rocks and discover nothing that acknowledged the influence of the seasons. There was no spring, no summer, no autumn : and the winter's snow, that would have been lovely, fell not on these hot rocks and scorching sands. Never morning lark had poised himself over this desert ; but the huge serpent often hissed there beneath the talons of the vulture, and the vulture screamed, his wings imprisoned within the coils of the serpent. The pointed and shattered summits of the ridges of the rocks made a rude mimicry of human concerns, and seemed to prophecy mutely of things that then were not ; steeples, and battlements, and ships with naked masts. As far from the wood as a boy might sling a pebble of the brook, there was one rock by itself at a small distance from the main ridge. It had been precipitated there perhaps by the groan which the Earth uttered when our first father fell. Before you approached, it appeared to lie flat on the ground, but its base slanted from its point, and between its point and the sands a tall man might stand upright. It was here that Enos had found the pitcher and cake, and to this place he led his father. But ere they had reached the rock they beheld a human shape : his back was towards them, and they were advancing unperceived, when they heard him smite his breast and cry aloud, "Woe is me ! woe is me ! I must never die again, and yet I am perishing with thirst and hunger."

Pallid, as the reflection of the sheeted lightning on

the heavy-sailing night-cloud, became the face of Cain ; but the child Enos took hold of the shaggy skin, his father's robe, and raised his eyes to his father, and listening whispered, " Ere yet I could speak, I am sure, O my father, that I heard that voice. Have not I often said that I remembered a sweet voice? O my father ! this is it " : and Cain trembled exceedingly. The voice was sweet indeed, but it was thin and querulous, like that of a feeble slave in misery, who despairs altogether, yet can not refrain himself from weeping and lamentation. And, behold ! Enos glided forward, and creeping softly round the base of the rock, stood before the stranger, and looked up into his face. And the Shape shrieked, and turned round, and Cain beheld him, that his limbs and his face were those of his brother Abel whom he had killed ! And Cain stood like one who struggles in his sleep because of the exceeding terribleness of a dream.

Thus as he stood in silence and darkness of soul, the Shape fell at his feet, and embraced his knees, and cried out with a bitter outcry, " Thou eldest born of Adam, whom Eve, my mother, brought forth, cease to torment me ! I was feeding my flocks in green pastures by the side of quiet rivers, and thou killedst me ; and now I am in misery." Then Cain closed his eyes, and hid them with his hands ; and again he opened his eyes, and looked around him, and said to Enos, " What beholdest thou ? Didst thou hear a voice, my son ? " " Yes, my father, I beheld a man in unclean garments, and he uttered a sweet voice,

full of lamentation." Then Cain raised up the Shape that was like Abel, and said :—"The Creator of our father, who had respect unto thee, and unto thy offering, wherefore hath he forsaken thee ?" Then the Shape shrieked a second time, and rent his garment, and his naked skin was like the white sands beneath their feet ; and he shrieked yet a third time, and threw himself on his face upon the sand that was black with the shadow of the rock, and Cain and Enos sate beside him ; the child by his right hand, and Cain by his left. They were all three under the rock, and within the shadow. The Shape that was like Abel raised himself up, and spake to the child, "I know where the cold waters are, but I may not drink, wherefore didst thou then take away my pitcher?" But Cain said, "Didst thou not find favour in the sight of the Lord thy God?" The Shape answered, "The Lord is God of the living only, the dead have another God." Then the child Enos lifted up his eyes and prayed ; but Cain rejoiced secretly in his heart. "Wretched shall they be all the days of their mortal life," exclaimed the Shape, "who sacrifice worthy and acceptable sacrifices to the God of the dead ; but after death their toil ceaseth. Woe is me, for I was well beloved by the God of the living, and cruel wert thou, O my brother, who didst snatch me away from his power and his dominion." Having uttered these words, he rose suddenly, and fled over the sands : and Cain said in his heart, "The curse of the Lord is on me ; but who is the God of the dead?" and he ran after the

Shape, and the Shape fled shrieking over the sands, and the sands rose like white mists behind the steps of Cain, but the feet of him that was like Abel disturbed not the sands. He greatly outrun Cain, and turning short, he wheeled round, and came again to the rock where they had been sitting, and where Enos still stood; and the child caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and he fell upon the ground. And Cain stopped, and beholding him not, said, "he has passed into the dark woods," and he walked slowly back to the rock; and when he reached it the child told him that he had caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and that the man had fallen upon the ground: and Cain once more sat beside him, and said, "Abel, my brother, I would lament for thee, but that the spirit within me is withered, and burnt up with extreme agony. Now, I pray thee by thy flocks, and by thy pastures, and by the quiet rivers which thou lovedst, that thou tell me all that thou knowest. Who is the God of the dead? where doth he make his dwelling? what sacrifices are acceptable unto him? for I have offered, but have not been received; I have prayed, and have not been heard; and how can I be afflicted more than I already am?" The Shape arose and answered, "O that thou hadst had pity on me as I will have pity on thee. Follow me, Son of Adam! and bring thy child with thee!"

And they three passed over the white sands between the rocks, silent as the shadows.

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE-TREE.

A LAMENT.

I SEEM to have an indistinct recollection of having read either in one of the ponderous tomes of George of Venice, or in some other compilation from the uninspired Hebrew writers, an apologue or Rabbinical tradition to the following purpose :

While our first parents stood before their offended Maker, and the last words of the sentence were yet sounding in Adam's ear, the guileful false serpent, a counterfeit and a usurper from the beginning, presumptuously took on himself the character of advocate or mediator, and pretending to intercede for Adam, exclaimed : "Nay, Lord, in thy justice, not so ! for the man was the least in fault. Rather let the Woman return at once to the dust, and let Adam remain in this thy Paradise." And the word of the Most High answered Satan : "*The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* Treacherous Fiend ! if with guilt like thine, it had been possible for thee to have the heart of a Man, and to feel the yearning of a human soul for its counterpart, the sentence, which thou now counsellest, should have been inflicted on thyself."

The title of the following poem was suggested by a fact mentioned by Linnæus, of a date-tree in a nobleman's garden which year after year had put forth a full show of blossoms, but never produced fruit, till a branch from another date-tree had been conveyed from a distance of some hundred leagues. The first leaf of the MS. from which the poem has been transcribed, and which contained the two or three introductory stanzas, is wanting : and the author has in vain taxed his memory to repair the loss. But a rude draught of the poem contains the substance of the stanzas, and the reader is requested to receive it as the substitute. It is not impossible, that some congenial spirit, whose years do not exceed those of the Author at the time the poem was written, may find a pleasure in restoring the Lament to its original integrity by a reduction of the thoughts to the requisite metre.

S. T. C.

I

BENEATH the blaze of a tropical sun the mountain peaks are the Thrones of Frost, through the absence of objects to reflect the rays. "What no one with us shares, seems scarce our own." The presence of a ONE,

The best beloved, who loveth me the best,

is for the heart, what the supporting air from within is for the hollow globe with its suspended car. Deprive it of this, and all without, that would have buoyed it aloft even to the seat of the gods, becomes a burthen and crushes it into flatness.

2

The finer the sense for the beautiful and the lovely, and the fairer and lovelier the object presented to the sense; the more exquisite the individual's capacity of joy, and the more ample his means and opportunities of enjoyment, the more heavily will he feel the ache of solitariness, the more unsubstantial becomes the feast spread around him. What matters it, whether in fact the viands and the ministering graces are shadowy or real, to him who has not hand to grasp nor arms to embrace them?

3

Imagination; honourable aims;
 Free commune with the choir that cannot die;
 Science and song; delight in little things,
 The buoyant child surviving in the man;
 Fields, forests, ancient mountains, ocean, sky,

With all their voices—O dare I accuse
 My earthly lot as guilty of my spleen,
 Or call my destiny niggard ! O no ! no !
 It is her largeness, and her overflow,
 Which being incomplete, disquieteth me so !

4

For never touch of gladness stirs my heart,
 But timorously beginning to rejoice
 Like a blind Arab, that from sleep doth start
 In lonesome tent, I listen for thy voice.
 Beloved ! 'tis not thine ; thou art not there !
 Then melts the bubble into idle air,
 And wishing without hope I restlessly despair.

5

The mother with anticipated glee'
 Smiles o'er the child, that, standing by her chair
 And flattening its round cheek upon her knee,
 Looks up, and doth its rosy lips prepare
 To mock the coming sounds. At that sweet sight
 She hears her own voice with a new delight ;
 And if the babe perchance should lisp the notes
 aright,

6

Then is she tenfold gladder than before. .
 But should disease or chance the darling take,
 What then avail those songs, which sweet of yore
 Were only sweet for their sweet echo's sake ?
 Dear maid ! no prattler at a mother's knee
 Was e'er so dearly prized as I prize thee :
 Why was I made for Love and Love denied to me ?

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.



POEMS OCCASIONED BY POLITICAL
EVENTS.

ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR.

Ἴοὺ ἰοὺ, ὦ ὦ κακά.

Ἵπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
Στροβεῖ, ταρασσῶν φροιμίοις ἐφημίοις.

Τὸ μέλλον ἤξει. Καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρῶν
Ἄγαν ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτεῖρας ἐρεῖς.

Æschyl. Agam. 1215-18; 1240-41.

ARGUMENT.

THE Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the Image of the Departing Year, etc., as in a vision. The second Epode prophesies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

I.

SPIRIT who sweepst the wild Harp of Time !
 It is most hard, with an untroubled ear
 Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear !
 Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's unchanging clime,
 Long had I listened, free from mortal fear,
 With inward stillness, and a bowèd mind ;
 When lo ! their folds far waving on the wind,
 I saw the skirts of the Departing Year !
 Starting from my silent sadness
 Then with no unholy madness 10
 Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,
 I raised the impetuous song, and solemnized his flight.

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,
 From the prison's direr gloom,
 From distemper's midnight anguish ;
 And thence, where poverty doth waste and languish ;
 Or where, his two bright torches blending,
 Love illumines Manhood's maze ;
 Or where o'er cradled infants blending,
 Hope has fixed her wishful gaze ; 20
 Hither, in perplexed dance,
 Ye woes ! ye young-eyed Joys ! advance !
 By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
 Whose indefatigable sweep
 Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
 I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band !

From every private bower,
 And each domestic hearth,
 Hasten for one solemn hour ;
 And with a loud and yet a louder voice, 30
 O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
 Weep and rejoice !
 Still echoes the dread Name that o'er the earth
 Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of Hell :
 And now advance in saintly Jubilee
 Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy spell,
 They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty !

III.

I marked Ambition in his war-array !
 I heard the mailèd Monarch's troublous cry—
 " Ah ! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay !
 Groans not her chariot on its onward way ? " 41
 Fly, mailèd Monarch, fly !
 Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,
 No more on Murder's lurid face
 The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye !
 Manes of the unnumbered slain !
 Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !
 Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
 When human ruin choked the streams,
 Fell in conquest's glutton hour, 50
 Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !
 Spirits of the uncoffined slain,
 Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
 Oft, at night, in misty train,
 Rush around her narrow dwelling !

The exterminating fiend is fled—

(Foul her life, and dark her doom)

Mighty armies of the dead

Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb!

Then with prophetic song relate,

60

Each some tyrant-murderer's fate!

IV.

Departing Year! 'twas on no earthly shore

My soul beheld thy vision! Where alone,

Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,

Aye Memory sits: thy robe inscribed with gore,

With many an unimaginable groan

Thou storied'st thy sad hours! Silence ensued,

Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,

Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories
shone.

Then, his eye wild ardours glancing,

70

From the choired gods advancing,

The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,

And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

V.

Throughout the blissful throng,

Hushed were harp and song:

Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads
seven,

(The mystic Words of Heaven)

Permissive signal make:

The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings and
spake!

"Thou in stormy blackness throning, 80
 Love and uncreated Light,
 By the Earth's unsoled groaning,
 Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !
 By Peace with proffer'd insult scared,
 Masked hate and envying scorn !
 By years of havoc yet unborn !
 And Hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
 But chief by Afric's wrongs,
 Strange, horrible, and foul !
 By what deep guilt belongs 90
 To the deaf Synod, ' full of gifts and lies !'
 By Wealth's insensate laugh ! by Torture's howl !
 Avenger, rise !
 For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
 Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ?
 Speak ! from thy storm-black Heaven, O speak
 aloud !
 And on the darkling foe
 Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud !
 O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
 The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries ! 100
 Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans
 below !
 Rise, God of Nature ! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled ;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
 And ever, when the dream of night
 Renews the phantom to my sight,

VIII.

Abandoned of Heaven ! mad Avarice thy guide,
 At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
 Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,
 And joined the wild yelling of Famine and Blood !
 The nations curse thee ! They with eager wondering
 Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture, scream ! 140
 Strange-eyed Destruction ! who with many a dream
 Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
 Soothes her fierce solitude ; yet as she lies
 By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
 If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
 O Albion ! thy predestined ruins rise,
 The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
 Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

Away, my soul, away !
 In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing— 150
 And hark ! I hear the famished brood of prey
 Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !
 Away, my soul, away !
 I unpartaking of the evil thing,
 With daily prayer and daily toil
 Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
 Have wailed my country with a loud lament.
 Now I recentre my immortal mind
 In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
 Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim 160
 God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

FRANCE: AN ODE.

I.

YE Clouds ! that far above me float and pause,
 Whose pathless march no mortal may controul !
 Ye Ocean-Waves ! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
 Yield homage only to eternal laws !
 Ye Woods ! that listen to the night-birds' singing,
 Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
 Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
 Have made a solemn music of the wind !
 Where, like a man beloved of God,
 Through glooms, which never woodman trod, 10
 How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
 My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
 Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
 By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound !
 O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high !
 And O ye Clouds that far above me soared !
 Thou rising Sun ! thou blue rejoicing Sky !
 Yea, every thing that is and will be free !
 Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
 With what deep worship I have still adored 20
 The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
 And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and
 sea,
 Stamped her strong foot and said she would be
 free,

Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared !

With what a joy my lofty gratulation

Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band :

And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,

Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,

The Monarchs marched in evil day, 30

And Britain joined the dire array ;

Though dear her shores and circling ocean,

Though many friendships, many youthful loves

Had swoln the patriot emotion

And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves ;

Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat

To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,

And shame too long delay'd and vain retreat !

For ne'er, O Liberty ! with partial aim

I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame ; 40

But blessed the pæans of delivered France,

And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

“ And what,” I said, “ though Blasphemy's loud
 scream

With that sweet music of deliverance strove !

Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove

A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream !
 Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
 The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light !"
 And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and
 trembled,
 The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and
 bright ; 50
 When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
 Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;
 When, insupportably advancing,
 Her arm made mockery of the warrior's ramp ;
 While, timid looks of fury glancing,
 Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
 Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore ;
 Then I reproached my fears that would not flee ;
 "And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom teach her lore
 In the low huts of them that toil and groan ! 60
 And, conquering by her happiness alone,
 Shall France compel the nations to be free,
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth
 their own."

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams !
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
 From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—
 I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
 Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
 And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
 With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I cherished
 One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes ! 71

To scatter rage and traitorous guilt
 Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
 A patriot-race to disinherit
 Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ;
 And with inexpiable spirit
 To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
 O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
 And patriot only in pernicious toils !
 Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind? 80
 To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
 Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
 To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
 From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray?

v.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
 Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game
 They burst their manacles and wear the name
 Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
 O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
 Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ; 90
 But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
 Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
 Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
 (Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
 Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
 And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
 Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
 The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the
 waves !
 And there I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's verge,

Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above, 100
Had made one murmur with the distant surge !

Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty ! my spirit felt thee there.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

WRITTEN IN APRIL 1798, DURING THE ALARM
OF AN INVASION.

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell ! O'er stiller place
No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely : but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve, 10
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh ! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook !
Which all, methinks, would love ; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise !
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,

While from the singing lark (that sings unseen
 The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
 And from the sun, and from the breezy air, 20
 Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame ;
 And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
 Made up a meditative joy, and found
 Religious meanings in the forms of Nature !
 And so, his senses gradually wrapt
 In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
 And dreaming hears thee still, O singing lark ;
 That singest like an angel in the clouds ! 21 765

My God ! it is a melancholy thing
 For such a man, who would full fain preserve 30
 His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
 For all his human brethren—O my God !
 It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
 What uproar and what strife may now be stirring
 This way or that way o'er these silent hills—
 Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
 And all the crash of onset ; fear and rage,
 And undetermined conflict—even now,
 Even now, perchance, and in his native isle :
 Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun ! 40
 We have offended, Oh ! my countrymen !
 We have offended very grievously,
 And been most tyrannous. From east to west
 A groan of accusation pierces Heaven !
 The wretched plead against us ; multitudes
 Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
 Our brethren ! Like a cloud that travels on,

Steamed up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
Even so, my countrymen! have we gone forth
And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs, 50
And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
With slow perdition murders the whole man,
His body and his soul! Meanwhile, at home,
All individual dignity and power
Engulfed in Courts, Committees, Institutions,
Associations and Societies,
A vain, speech-mouthing, speech-reporting Guild,
One Benefit-Club for mutual flattery,
We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth; 60
Contemptuous of all honourable rule,
Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
For gold, as at a market! The sweet words
Of Christian promise, words that even yet
Might stem destruction, were they wisely preached,
Are muttered o'er by men, whose tones proclaim
How flat and wearisome they feel their trade:
Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
To deem them falsehoods or to know their truth.
Oh blasphemous! the book of life is made 70
A superstitious instrument, on which
We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break;
For all must swear—all and in every place,
College and wharf, council and justice-court;
All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed,
Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
The rich, the poor, the old man and the young;
All, all make up one scheme of perjury,

That faith doth reel ; the very name of God
 Sounds like a juggler's charm ; and, bold with joy, 80
 Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
 (Portentous sight !) the owlet Atheism,
 Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
 Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them close,
 And hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven,
 Cries out, " Where is it ? "

Thankless too for peace,
 (Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous seas)
 Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
 To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war !
 Alas ! for ages ignorant of all 90
 Its ghastlier workings, (famine or blue plague,
 Battle, or siege, or flight through wintry snows,)
 We, this whole people, have been clamorous
 For war and bloodshed ; animating sports,
 The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
 Spectators and not combatants ! No guess
 Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
 No speculation on contingency,
 However dim and vague, too vague and dim
 To yield a justifying cause ; and forth, 100
 (Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
 And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)
 We send our mandates for the certain death
 Of thousands and ten thousands ! Boys and girls,
 And women, that would groan to see a child
 Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
 The best amusement for our morning meal !

The poor wretch, who has learnt his only prayers
 From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
 To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father, 110
 Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
 And technical in victories and defeats,
 And all our dainty terms for fratricide ;
 Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
 Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
 We join no feeling and attach no form !
 As if the soldier died without a wound ;
 As if the fibres of this godlike frame
 Were gored without a pang ; as if the wretch,
 Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds, 120
 Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed ;
 As though he had no wife to pine for him,
 No God to judge him ! Therefore, evil days
 Are coming on us, O my countrymen !
 And what if all-avenging Providence,
 Strong and retributive, should make us know
 The meaning of our words, force us to feel
 The desolation and the agony
 Of our fierce doings ?

Spare us yet awhile,

Father and God ! O ! spare us yet awhile ! 130
 Oh ! let not English women drag their flight
 Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
 Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
 Laughed at the breast ! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
 Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
 Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,

And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
 Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves pure !
 Stand forth ! be men ! repel an impious foe,
 Impious and false, a light yet cruel race, 140
 Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
 With deeds of murder ; and still promising
 Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
 Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
 Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes
 And all that lifts the spirit ! Stand we forth ;
 Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
 And let them toss as idly on its waves
 As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-blast
 Swept from our shores ! And oh ! may we return 150
 Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
 Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
 So fierce a foe to frenzy !

I have told,

O Britons ! O my brethren ! I have told
 Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
 Nor deem my zeal or factious or mistimed ;
 For never can true courage dwell with them,
 Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not look
 At their own vices. We have been too long
 Dupes of a deep delusion ! Some, belike, 160
 Groaning with restless enmity, expect
 All change from change of constituted power ;
 As if a Government had been a robe,
 On which our vice and wretchedness were tagged
 Like fancy-points and fringes, with the robe

Pulled off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
 A radical causation to a few
 Poor drudges of chastising Providence,
 Who borrow all their hues and qualities
 From our own folly and rank wickedness, 170
 Which gave them birth and nursed them. Others,
 meanwhile,

Dote with a mad idolatry ; and all
 Who will not fall before their images,
 And yield them worship, they are enemies
 Even of their country !

Such have I been deemed.—

But, O dear Britain ! O my Mother Isle !
 Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
 To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
 A husband, and a father ! who revere
 All bonds of natural love, and find them all 180
 Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
 O native Britain ! O my mother Isle !
 How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and
 holy

To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
 Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
 Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
 All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
 All adoration of the God in nature,
 All lovely and all honourable things,
 Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel 190
 The joy and greatness of its future being ?
 There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul

Unborrowed from my country ! O divine
 And beauteous island ! thou hast been my sole
 And most magnificent temple, in the which
 I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
 Loving the God that made me !—

May my fears,
 My filial fears, be vain ! and may the vaunts
 And menace of the vengeful enemy
 Pass like the gust, that roared and died away 200
 In the distant tree : which heard, and only heard
 In this low dell, bow'd not the delicate grass.

But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
 The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze :
 The light has left the summit of the hill,
 Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
 Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
 Farewell, awhile, O soft and silent spot !
 On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
 Homeward I wind my way ; and lo ! recalled 210
 From bodings that have well-nigh wearied me,
 I find myself upon the brow, and pause
 Startled ! And after lonely sojourning
 In such a quiet and surrounded nook,
 This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
 Dim-tinted, there the mighty majesty
 Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
 And elmy fields, seems like society—
 Conversing with the mind, and giving it
 A livelier impulse and a dance of thought ! 220
 And now, beloved Stowey ! I behold

Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four huge elms
 Clustering, which mark the mansion of my friend ;
 And close behind them, hidden from my view,
 Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe
 And my babe's mother dwell in peace ! With light
 And quickened footsteps thitherward I tend,
 Remembering thee, O green and silent dell !
 And grateful, that by nature's quietness
 And solitary musings, all my heart 230
 Is softened, and made worthy to indulge
 Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human kind.

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

A WAR ECLOGUE.

The Scene a desolated Tract in La Vendée. FAMINE
is discovered lying on the ground ; to her enter
 FIRE and SLAUGHTER.

Fam. Sisters ! sisters ! who sent you here ?

Slau. [*to Fire*]. I will whisper it in her ear.

Fire. No ! no ! no !

Spirits hear what spirits tell :

'Twill make an holiday in Hell.

No ! no ! no !

Myself, I named him once below,
 And all the souls, that damnèd be,
 Leaped up at once in anarchy,

Clapped their hands and danced for glee. 10
 They no longer heeded me ;
 But laughed to hear Hell's burning rafters
 Unwillingly re-echo laughters !

No ! no ! no !

Spirits hear what spirits tell :
 'Twill make an holiday in Hell !

Fam. Whisper it, sister ! so and so !

In a dark hint, soft and slow.

Slau. Letters four do form his name—
 And who sent you ?

Both. The same ! the same ! 20

Slau. He came by stealth, and unlocked my den,
 And I have drunk the blood since then
 Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

Both. Who bade you do 't ?

Slau. The same ! the same !

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo !

To him alone the praise is due.

Fam. Thanks, sister, thanks ! the men have bled,
 Their wives and their children faint for bread.

I stood in a swampy field of battle ; 30

With bones and skulls I made a rattle,

To frighten the wolf and carrion-crow

And the homeless dog—but they would not go.

So off I flew : for how could I bear

To see them gorge their dainty fare ?

I heard a groan and a peevish squall,

And through the chink of a cottage-wall—

Can you guess what I saw there ?

Both. Whisper it, sister ! in our ear.

Fam. A baby beat its dying mother : 40

I had starved the one and was starving the other !

Both. Who bade you do 't ?

Fam. The same ! the same !

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo !

To him alone the praise is due.

Fire. Sisters ! I from Ireland came !

Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,

I triumph'd o'er the setting sun !

And all the while the work was done,

On as I strode with my huge strides, 50

I flung back my head and I held my sides,

It was so rare a piece of fun

To see the sweltered cattle run

With uncouth gallop through the night,

Scared by the red and noisy light !

By the light of his own blazing cot

Was many a naked Rebel shot :

The house-stream met the flame and hissed,

While crash ! fell in the roof, I wist,

On some of those old bed-rid nurses, 60

That deal in discontent and curses.

Both. Who bade you do 't ?

Fire. The same ! the same !

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo !

To him alone the praise is due.

All. He let us loose, and cried Halloo !

How shall we yield him honour due ?

Fam. Wisdom comes with lack of food.
 I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,
 Till the cup of rage o'erbrim : 70
 They shall seize him and his brood—

Slau. They shall tear him limb from limb !

Fire. O thankless beldames and untrue !
 And is this all that you can do
 For him, who did so much for you ?
 Ninety months he, by my troth !
 Hath richly catered for you both ;
 And in an hour would you repay
 An eight years' work ?—Away ! away !
 I-alone am faithful ! I 80
 Cling to him everlastingly.

THE DEVIL'S THOUGHTS.

FROM his brimstone bed at break of day
 A walking the DEVIL is gone,
 To visit his little snug farm of the earth
 And see how his stock went on.

Over the hill and over the dale,
 And he went over the plain,
 And backward and forward he swished his long tail
 As a gentleman swishes his cane.

And how then was the Devil drest?
Oh! he was in his Sunday's best : 10
His jacket was red and his breeches were blue,
And there was a hole where the tail came through.

He saw a lawyer killing a viper
On a dung heap beside his stable,
And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind
Of Cain and his brother, Abel.

A pothecary on a white horse
Rode by on his vocations,
And the Devil thought of his old Friend
Death in the Revelations. 20

He saw a cottage with a double coach-house,
A cottage of gentility :
And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
Is pride that apes humility.

He went into a rich bookseller's shop,
Quoth he! we are both of one college,
For I myself sate like a cormorant once
Fast by the Tree of Knowledge.

Down the river there plied, with wind and tide,
A pig with vast celerity ; 30
And the Devil look'd wise as he saw how the
while,

It cut its own throat. "There!" quoth he with a
 smile,
 "Goes 'England's commercial prosperity.'"

As he went through Cold-Bath Fields he saw
 A solitary cell ;
 And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
 For improving his prisons in Hell.

General —————'s burning face
 He saw with consternation,
 And back to hell his way did take,
 For the Devil thought by a slight mistake
 It was General Conflagration.

40

THE TWO ROUND SPACES ON THE
 TOMBSTONE.

THE Devil believes that the Lord will come,
 Stealing a march without beat of drum,
 About the same time that he came last
 On an old Christmas-day in a snowy blast :
 Till he bids the trump sound neither body nor soul
 stirs
 For the dead men's heads have slipt under their
 bolsters.

Ho ! ho ! brother Bard, in our churchyard
 Both beds and bolsters are soft and green ;
 Save one alone, and that's of stone,
 And under it lies a Counsellor keen. 10
 This tomb would be square, if it were not too
 long ;
 And 'tis rail'd round with iron, tall, spear-like, and
 strong.

This fellow from Aberdeen hither did skip
 With a waxy face and a blubber lip,
 And a black tooth in front to show in part
 What was the colour of his whole heart.

This Counsellor sweet,
 This Scotchman complete,
 (The Devil scotch him for a snake !),
 I trust he lies in his grave awake. 20

On the sixth of January,
 When all around is white with snow
 As a Cheshire yeoman's dairy,
 Brother Bard, ho ! ho ! believe it, or no,
 On that stone tomb to you I'll show
 After sunset, and before cock-crow,
 Two round spaces clear of snow.

I swear by our Knight and his forefathers' souls,
 That in size and shape they are just like the holes
 In the large house of privy 30
 Of that ancient family.

On those two places clear of snow
 There have sat in the night for an hour or so,
 Before sunrise, and after cock-crow

(He kicking his heels, she cursing her corns,
All to the tune of the wind in their horns),
 The Devil and his Grannam,
 With the snow-drift to fan 'em ;
Expecting and hoping the trumpet to blow ;
For they are cock-sure of the fellow below !

40

LOVE POEMS.

LEWTI,

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.

AT midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight gleam
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half sheltered from my view
By pendent boughs of tressy yew. — 10
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
Onward to the moon it passed;

Still brighter and more bright it grew,
 With floating colours not a few,
 Till it reach'd the moon at last :
 Then the cloud was wholly bright, 20
 With a rich and amber light !
 And so with many a hope I seek
 And with such joy I find my Lewti ;
 And even so my pale wan cheek
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty !
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind,
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
 Away it goes ; away so soon ?
 Alas ! it has no power to stay : 30
 Its hues are dim, its hues are grey,
 Away it passes from the moon !
 How mournfully it seems to fly,
 Ever fading more and more,
 To joyless regions of the sky—
 And now 'tis whiter than before !
 As white as my poor cheek will be,
 When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
 A dying man for love of thee.
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
 And yet, thou didst not look unkind. 41

I saw a vapour in the sky,
 Thin, and white, and very high ;
 I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
 Perhaps the breezes that can fly
 Now below and now above,

Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
 Of Lady fair that died for love.
 For maids, as well as youths, have perished
 From fruitless love too fondly cherished. 50
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
 For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
 Slip the crumbling banks for ever:
 Like echoes to a distant thunder,
 They plunge into the gentle river.
 The river-swans have heard my tread,
 And startle from their reedy bed.
 O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
 Your movements to some heavenly tune! 60
 O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
 To see you move beneath the moon,
 I would it were your true delight
 To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies
 When silent night has closed her eyes:
 It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
 The nightingale sings o'er her head:
 Voice of the Night! had I the power
 That leafy labyrinth to thread, 70
 And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,
 I then might view her bosom white
 Heaving lovely to my sight,
 As these two swans together heave
 On the gently-swelling wave.

Oh ! that she saw me in a dream,
 And dreamt that I had died for care ;
 All pale and wasted I would seem
 Yet fair withal, as spirits are !
 I'd die indeed, if I might see 80
 Her bosom heave, and heave for me !
 Soothe, gentle image ! soothe my mind !
 To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

THE PICTURE,
 OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

THROUGH weeds and thorns, and matted underwood
 I force my way ; now climb, and now descend
 O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
 Crushing the purple whorts ; while oft unseen,
 Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
 The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil,
 I know not, ask not whither ! A new joy,
 Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
 And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
 Beckons me on, or follows from behind, 10
 Playmate, or guide ! The master-passion quelled,
 I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
 The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
 Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
 Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
 High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;
 Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,
 And of this busy human heart aweary,
 Worships the spirit of unconscious life 20
 In tree or wild-flower.—Gentle lunatic!
 If so he might not wholly cease to be,
 He would far rather not be that he is;
 But would be something that he knows not of,
 In winds or waters, or among the rocks!

But hence, fond wretch! breathe not contagion
 here!

No myrtle-walks are these: these are no groves
 Where Love dare loiter! If in sullen mood
 He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
 His dainty feet, the briar and the thorn 30
 Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
 Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
 Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades!
 And you, ye Earth-winds! you that make at morn
 The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs!
 You, O ye wingless Airs! that creep between
 The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
 Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
 The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
 Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp, 40
 Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
 Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin Gnomes!
 With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
 His little Godship, making him perforce

Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's
back.

This is my hour of triumph ! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine 50
Clothes as with net-work : here will couch my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook
That murmurs with a dead yet tinkling sound ;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze that visits me
Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow, 60
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek ;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze ! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song, 70
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream ! no pool of thine,

Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
 Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
 The face, the form divine, the downcast look
 Contemplative ! Behold ! her open palm
 Presses her cheek and brow ! her elbow rests
 On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
 That leans towards its mirror ! Who erewhile
 Had from her countenance turned, or looked by stealth
 (For fear is true-love's cruel nurse), he now 81
 With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
 Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
 Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
 E'en as that phantom-world on which he gazed,
 But not unheeded gazed : for see, ah ! see,
 The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
 The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
 Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells :
 And suddenly, as one that toys with time, 90
 Scatters them on the pool ! Then all the charm
 Is broken—all that phantom world so fair
 Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
 And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,
 Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes !
 The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
 The visions will return ! And lo ! he stays :
 And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
 Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
 The pool becomes a mirror ; and behold 100
 Each wildflower on the marge inverted there,
 And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
 O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned

On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!
Homeward she steals through many a woodland
maze

Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there, 110
The Naiad of the mirror!

Not to thee,
O wild and desert stream! belongs this tale:
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well:
Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream!

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead, 120
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to re-unite! And see! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found: and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye!
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds, 130

The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
 Dimness o'erswum with lustre! Such the hour
 Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds;
 And hark, the noise of a near waterfall!
 I pass forth into light—I find myself
 Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
 Of forest trees, the Lady of the Woods),
 Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
 That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
 The landscape on my sight! Two crescent hills 140
 Fold in behind each other, and so make
 A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
 With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
 Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
 The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray,
 Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.
 How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
 Swings in its winnow! All the air is calm.
 The smoke from cottage-chimneys, tinged with
 light,
 Rises in columns; from this house alone, 150
 Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
 And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this?
 That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,
 And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
 His dear head pillow'd on a sleeping dog—
 One arm between its fore-legs, and the hand
 Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
 Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.
 A curious picture, with a master's haste
 Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin, 160

Peeled from the birchen bark ! Divinest maid !
Yon bark her canvas, and those purple berries
Her pencil ! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin ! She has been newly here ;
And lo ! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
The pressure still remains ! O blessed couch !
For this may'st thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells ! O Isabel !
Daughter of genius ! stateliest of our maids ! 170
More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed,
The Lesbian woman of immortal song !
O child of genius ! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me ! My heart,
Why beats it thus ? Through yonder coppice-wood
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway
On to her father's house. She is alone !
The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
And fit it is I should restore this sketch, 180
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relique ? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste,
The picture in my hand which she has left ;
She cannot blame me that I follow'd her :
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

THE KEEPSAKE.

THE tedded hay, the first fruits of the soil,
 The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
 Show summer gone, ere come. The foxglove tall
 Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
 Or when it bends beneath the up-springing lark,
 Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
 (In vain the darling of successful love)
 Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
 The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
 Nor can I find, amid my lonely walk 10
 By rivulet, or spring, or wet roadside,
 That blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook,
 Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not!
 So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
 With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk
 Has worked (the flowers which most she knew I
 loved),
 And, more beloved than they, her auburn hair.

In the cool morning twilight, early waked
 By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
 Softly she rose, and lightly stole along, 20
 Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
 Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning breeze,
 Over their dim fast-moving shadows hung,
 Making a quiet image of disquiet
 In the smooth, scarcely moving river-pool.

There, in that bower where first she owned her love,
And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy
From off her glowing cheek, she sate and stretched
The silk upon the frame, and worked her name
Between the Moss-Rose and Forget-me-not— 30
Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair !
That forced to wander till sweet spring return,
I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
Her voice (that even in her mirthful mood
Has made me wish to steal away and weep),
Nor yet the entrancement of that maiden kiss
With which she promised, that when spring returned,
She would resign one half of that dear name,
And own thenceforth no other name but mine !

TO A YOUNG LADY,

[MISS LAVINIA POOLE,]

ON HER RECOVERY FROM A FEVER.

WHY need I say, Louisa dear !
How glad I am to see you here,
A lovely convalescent ;
Risen from the bed of pain and fear,
And feverish heat incessant.

The sunny showers, the dappled sky,
The little birds that warble high,

Their vernal loves commencing,
 Will better welcome you than I
 With their sweet influencing.

10

Believe me, while in bed you lay,
 Your danger taught us all to pray :
 You made us grow devouter !
 Each eye looked up and seemed to say,
 How can we do without her ?

Besides, what vexed us worse, we knew
 They have no need of such as you
 In the place where you were going :
 This World has angels all too few,
 And Heaven is overflowing !

20

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL.

IF I had but two little wings
 And were a little feathery bird,
 To you I'd fly, my dear !
 But thoughts like these are idle things,
 And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly :
 I'm always with you in my sleep !
 The world is all one's own.
 But then one wakes, and where am I ?
 All, all alone.

10

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids :
So I love to wake ere break of day :
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

Do you ask what the birds say? The Sparrow, the
Dove,
The Linnet and Thrush say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm
weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

THE VISIONARY HOPE.

SAD lot, to have no Hope! Though lowly kneeling
He fain would frame a prayer within his breast,
Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of healing,
That his sick body might have ease and rest;

He strove in vain ! the dull sighs from his chest
Against his will the stifling load revealing,
Though Nature forced ; though like some captive
guest,

Some royal prisoner at his conqueror's feast,
An alien's restless mood but half concealing,
The sternness on his gentle brow confessed, 10
Sickness within and miserable feeling :
Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
And dreaded sleep, each night repelled in vain,
Each night was scattered by its own loud screams :
Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
One deep full wish to be no more in pain.

That Hope, which was his inward bliss and boast,
Which waned and died, yet ever near him stood,
Though changed in nature, wander where he would—
For Love's Despair is but Hope's pining Ghost ! 20
For this one hope he makes his hourly moan,
He wishes and *can* wish for this alone !
Pierced, as with light from Heaven, before its gleams
(So the love-stricken visionary deems)
Disease would vanish, like a summer shower,
Whose dews fling sunshine from the noon-tide bower !
Or let it stay ! yet this one Hope should give
Such strength that he would bless his pains and live.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

I.

How warm this woodland wild recess !
 Love surely hath been breathing here :
 And this sweet bed of heath, my dear !
 Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
 As if to have you yet more near.

II.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
 On sea-ward Quantock's heathy hills,
 Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
 Float here and there, like things astray,
 And high o'er head the sky-lark shrills. 10

III.

No voice as yet had made the air
 Be music with your name ; yet why
 That asking look ? that yearning sigh ?
 That sense of promise every where ?
 Beloved ! flew your spirit by ?

IV.

As when a mother doth explore
 The rose-mark on her long-lost child,
 I met, I loved you, maiden mild !
 As whom I long had loved before—
 So deeply had I been beguiled. 20

V.

You stood before me like a thought,
 A dream remembered in a dream.
 But when those meek eyes first did seem
 To tell me Love within you wrought—
 O Greta, dear domestic stream !—

VI.

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
 Has not Love's whisper evermore
 Been ceaseless as thy gentle roar ?
 Sole voice when other voices sleep,
 Dear under-song in Clamour's hour. 30

MUTUAL PASSION.

ALTERED AND MODERNIZED FROM AN OLD POET.

I LOVE, and he loves me again,
 Yet dare I not tell who :
 For if the nymphs should know my swain,
 I fear they'd love him too.
 Yet while my joy's unknown,
 Its rosy buds are but half-blown :
 What no one with me shares, seems scarce my
 own.
 I'll tell, that if they be not glad,
 They yet may envy me :

But then if I grow jealous mad, 10
 And of them pitied be,
 'Twould vex me worse than scorn!
 And yet it cannot be forborne,
 Unless my heart would like my thoughts be torn.

He is, if they can find him, fair
 And fresh, and fragrant too;
 As after rain the summer air,
 And looks as lilies do,
 That are this morning blown!
 Yet, yet I doubt, he is not known, 20
 Yet, yet I fear to have him fully shown.

But he hath eyes so large, and bright,
 Which none can see, and doubt
 That Love might thence his torches light
 Tho' Hate had put them out!
 But then to raise my fears,
 His voice——what maid so ever hears
 Will be my rival, though she have but ears.

I'll tell no more! yet I love him,
 And he loves me; yet so, 30
 That never one low wish did dim
 Our love's pure light, I know——
 In each so free from blame,
 That both of us would gain new fame,
 If love's strong fears would let me tell his name!

MEDITATIVE POEMS.

HYMN BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc !
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly ; but thou, most awful Form !
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently ! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass : methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge ! But when I look again, 10
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity !
O dread and silent Mount ! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought : entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
 So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
 Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my Thought,
 Yea; with my Life and Life's own secret joy : 20
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
 Into the mighty vision passing—there
 As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven !

Awake, my soul ! not only passive praise
 Thou owest ! not alone these swelling tears,
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy ! Awake,
 Voice of sweet song ! Awake, my heart, awake !
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the Vale !
 O struggling with the darkness all the night, 30
 And visited all night by troops of stars,
 Or when they climb the sky or when they sink :
 Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
 Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
 Co-herald : wake, O wake, and utter praise !
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth ?
 Who filled thy countenance with rosy light ?
 Who made thee parent of perpetual streams ?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !
 Who called you forth from night and utter death, 40
 From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
 For ever shattered and the same for ever ?

Who gave you your invulnerable life,
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
 And who commanded (and the silence came),
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain— 50
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
 Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
 God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God! 59
 God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
 Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain storm!
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
 Ye signs and wonders of the element!
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise! 69

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,

Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
 Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base
 Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
 To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
 Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth ! 80
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
 Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
 Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE,
 IN THE HARTZ FOREST.

I STOOD on Brocken's sovran height, and saw
 Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,
 A surging scene, and only limited
 By the blue distance. Heavily my way
 Downward I dragged through fir-groves evermore,
 Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral forms
 Speckled with sunshine ; and, but seldom heard,
 The sweet bird's song became an hollow sound ;
 And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
 Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct 10
 From many a note of many a waterfall,

And the brook's chatter ; 'mid whose islet-stones
 The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
 Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat
 Sat, his white beard slow waving. I moved on
 In low and languid mood : for I had found
 That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
 Their finer influence from the Life within ;—
 Fair-cyphers else : fair, but of import vague
 Or unconcerning, where the heart not finds 20
 History or prophecy of friend, or child,
 Or gentle maid, our first and early love,
 Or father, or the venerable name
 Of our adored country ! O thou Queen,
 Thou delegated Deity of Earth,
 O dear, dear England ! how my longing eye
 Turned westward, shaping in the steady clouds
 Thy sands and high white cliffs !

My native Land !

Filled with the thought of thee this heart was proud,
 Yea, mine eye swam with tears : that all the view 30
 From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
 Floated away, like a departing dream,
 Feeble and dim ! Stranger, these impulses
 Blame thou not lightly ; nor will I profane,
 With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,
 That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
 That God is everywhere ! the God who framed
 Mankind to be one mighty family,
 Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF
FEBRUARY 1796.

SWEET flower ! that peeping from thy russet stem
Unfoldest timidly, (for in strange sort
This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering
month
Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon
thee
With blue voluptuous eye) alas, poor Flower !
These are but flatteries of the faithless year.
Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,
Even now the keen North-East is on its way.
Flower that must perish ! shall I liken thee
To some sweet girl of too too rapid growth 10
Nipped by consumption mid untimely charms ?
Or to Bristowa's bard, the wondrous boy !
An amaranth, which earth scarce seem'd to own,
Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
Beat it to earth ? or with indignant grief
Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
Bright flower of hope killed in the opening bud ?
Farewell, sweet blossom ! better fate be thine
And mock my boding ! Dim similitudes
Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour 20
From anxious Self, Life's cruel task-master !

And the warm woings of this sunny day
 Tremble along my frame and harmonize
 The attempered organ, that even saddest thoughts
 Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh tunes
 Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

My pensive Sara ! thy soft cheek reclined
 Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
 To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
 With white-flowered jasmin, and the broad-leaved
 myrtle,
 (Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love !)
 And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
 Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
 Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
 Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents
 Snatched from yon bean-field ! and the world so
 hushed ! 10
 The stilly murmur of the distant sea
 Tells us of silence.

And that simplest lute,
 Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark !

How by the desultory breeze caressed,
 Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
 It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
 Tempt to repeat the wrong ! And now, its strings
 Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
 Over delicious surges sink and rise,
 Such a soft floating witchery of sound 20
 As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
 Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-Land,
 Where melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
 Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
 Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing !
 O ! the one life within us and abroad,
 Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
 A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,
 Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every where—
 Methinks, it should have been impossible 30
 Not to love all things in a world so filled ;
 Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
 Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love ! as on the midway slope
 Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
 Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
 The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
 And tranquil muse upon tranquillity ;
 Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
 And many idle flitting phantasies, 40
 Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
 As wild and various as the random gales
 That swell and flutter on this subject lute !

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of all ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman ! nor such thoughts 50
Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ !
Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
These shapings of the unregenerate mind ;
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of him,
The Incomprehensible ! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ; 60
Who with his saving mercies healèd me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, heart-honoured Maid !

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF
RETIREMENT.

Sermoni propria.—HOR.

Low was our pretty Cot: our tallest rose
 Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
 At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
 The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
 Our myrtles blossom'd; and across the porch
 Thick jasmins twined: the little landscape round
 Was green and woody, and refreshed the eye.
 It was a spot which you might aptly call
 The Valley of Seclusion! Once I saw
 (Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness) 10
 A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
 Bristowa's citizen: methought, it calmed
 His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
 With wiser feelings: for he paused, and looked
 With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,
 Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round again.
 And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed Place.
 And we *were* blessed. Oft with patient ear
 Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
 (Viewless, or haply for a moment seen 20
 Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered tones
 I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet girl!
 The inobtrusive song of Happiness,

Unearthly minstrelsy ! then only heard
 When the soul seeks to hear ; when all is hushed,
 And the heart listens !”

But the time, when first
 From that low dell, steep up the stony mount
 I climbed with perilous toil and reached the top,
 Oh ! what a goodly scene ! *Here* the bleak mount,
 The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep ;
 Grey clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields ;
 And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed, 32
 Now winding bright and full, with naked banks ;
 And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the wood,
 And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire ;
 The Channel *there*, the Islands and white sails,
 Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless
 Ocean—

It seemed like Omnipresence ! God, methought,
 Had built him there a Temple : the whole World
 Seemed imaged in its vast circumference : 40
 No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart.
 Blest hour ! It was a luxury,—to be !

Ah ! quiet dell ! dear cot, and mount sublime !
 I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
 While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
 That I should dream away the entrusted hours
 On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
 With feelings all too delicate for use ?
 Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
 Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth : 50

And he that works me good with unmoved face,
Does it but half : he chills me while he aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man !
Yet even this, this cold beneficence
Praise, praise it, O my Soul ! oft as thou scann'st
The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe,
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the wretched,
Nursing in some delicious solitude
Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies !
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand, 60
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.

Yet oft when after honourable toil
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to dream,
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot !
Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet abode !
Ah !—had none greater ! And that all had such !
It might be so—but the time is not yet. 70
Speed it, O Father ! Let thy Kingdom come !

TO THE REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE.

With some Poems.

Notus in fratres animi paterni.

HOR. *Carm.* lib. 1, 2.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having passed
 His youth and early manhood in the stir
 And turmoil of the world, retreats at length,
 With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
 To the same dwelling where his father dwelt ;
 And haply views his tottering little ones
 Embrace those aged knees and climb that lap,
 On which first kneeling his own infancy
 Lisp'd its brief prayer. Such, O my earliest friend !
 Thy lot, and such thy brothers too enjoy. 10
 At distance did ye climb life's upland road,
 Yet cheered and cheering : now fraternal love
 Hath drawn you to one centre. Be your days
 Holy, and blest and blessing may ye live !

To me the Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed
 A different fortune and more different mind—
 Me from the spot where first I sprang to light
 Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had fixed
 Its first domestic loves ; and hence through life
 Chasing chance-started friendships. A brief while 20
 Some have preserved me from life's pelting ills ;
 But, like a tree with leaves of feeble stem,

If the clouds lasted, and a sudden breeze
 Ruffled the boughs, they on my head at once
 Dropped the collected shower ; and some most false,
 False and fair-foliaged as the Manchineel,
 Have tempted me to slumber in their shade
 E'en mid the storm ; then breathing subtlest damps,
 Mixed their own venom with the rain from Heaven,
 That I woke poisoned ! But, all praise to Him 30
 Who gives us all things, more have yielded me
 Permanent shelter ; and beside one friend,
 Beneath the impervious covert of one oak,
 I've raised a lowly shed, and know the names
 Of Husband and of Father ; not unhearing
 Of that divine and nightly-whispering voice,
 Which from my childhood to maturer years
 Spake to me of predestinated wreaths,
 Bright with no fading colours !

Yet at times

My soul is sad, that I have roamed through life 40
 Still most a stranger, most with naked heart
 At mine own home and birth-place ; chiefly then,
 When I remember thee, my earliest friend !
 Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my youth,
 Didst trace my wanderings with a father's eye,
 And, boding evil yet still hoping good,
 Rebuked each fault, and over all my woes
 Sorrowed in silence ! He who counts alone
 The beatings of the solitary heart,
 That Being knows, how I have loved thee ever, 50
 Loved as a brother, as a son revered thee !

Oh! 'tis to me an ever new delight,
 To talk of thee and thine : or when the blast
 Of the shrill winter, rattling our rude sash,
 Endears the cleanly hearth and social bowl ;
 Or when as now, on some delicious eve,
 We in our sweet sequestered orchard-plot
 Sit on the tree crooked earth-ward ; whose old
 boughs,
 That hang above us in an arborous roof,
 Stirred by the faint gale of departing May, 60
 Send their loose blossoms slanting o'er our heads !

Nor dost not *thou* sometimes recall those hours,
 When with the joy of hope thou gavest thine ear
 To my wild firstling-lays. Since then my song
 Hath sounded deeper notes, such as beseem
 Or that sad wisdom folly leaves behind,
 Or such as, tuned to these tumultuous times,
 Cope with the tempest's swell !

These various strains,

Which I have framed in many a various mood,
 Accept, my Brother ! and (for some perchance 70
 Will strike discordant on thy milder mind)
 If aught of error or intemperate truth
 Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
 Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it !

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH.

THIS Sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
Such tents the Patriarchs loved ! O long unharmed
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves ! Long may the
Spring,

Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse ! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a fairy's page, 10
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
Here twilight is and coolness : here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, Pilgrim, here ! Here rest ! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees !

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane !
(So call him, for so mingling blame with praise
And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest friends,
Masking his birth-name, wont to character
His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal)
'Tis true that, passionate for ancient truths,
And honouring with religious love the Great
Of elder times, he hated to excess,
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
The hollow puppets of an hollow age, 10
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
Its worthless idols ! Learning, power, and time,
(Too much of all) thus wasting in vain war
Of fervid colloquy. Sicknes, 'tis true,
Whole years of weary days, besieged him close,
Even to the gates and inlets of his life !
But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm,
And with a natural gladness, he maintained
The citadel unconquered, and in joy
Was strong to follow the delightful Muse. 20
For not a hidden path, that to the shades
Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads,
Lurked undiscovered by him ; not a rill
There issues from the fount of Hippocrene,
But he had traced it upward to its source,
Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell,

Knew the gay wild flowers on its banks, and culled
 Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone,
 Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,
 The haunt obscure of old Philosophy, 30
 He bade with lifted torch its starry walls
 Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame
 Of odorous lamps tended by Saint and Sage.
 O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts !
 O studious Poet, eloquent for truth !
 Philosopher ! contemning wealth and death,
 Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love !
 Here, rather than on monumental stone,
 This record of thy worth thy Friend inscribes,
 Thoughtful, with quiet tears upon his cheek. 40

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE INDIA
 HOUSE, LONDON.

In the June of 1797 some long-expected friends paid a visit to the author's cottage ; and on the morning of their arrival, he met with an accident, which disabled him from walking during the whole time of their stay. One evening, when they had left him for a few hours, he composed the following lines in the garden-bower.

WELL, they are gone, and here must I remain,
 This lime-tree bower my prison ! I have lost
 Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
 Most sweet to my remembrance even when age

Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness! They,
 meanwhile,
 Friends, whom I never more may meet again,
 On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,
 Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance,
 To that still roaring dell, of which I told ;
 The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep, 10
 And only speckled by the mid-day sun ;
 Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to rock
 Flings arching like a bridge ;—that branchless ash,
 Unsunned and damp, whose few poor yellow leaves
 Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still,
 Fanned by the water-fall ! and there my friends
 Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,
 That all at once (a most fantastic sight !)
 Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge
 Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge 20
 Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and view again
 The many-steepled tract magnificent
 Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,
 With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light up
 The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two Isles
 Of purple shadow ! Yes ! they wander on
 In gladness all ; but thou, methinks, most glad,
 My gentle-hearted Charles ! for thou hast pined
 And hungered after Nature, many a year,
 In the great City pent, winning thy way 30
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain
 And strange calamity ! Ah ! slowly sink

Behind the western ridge, thou glorious Sun !
 Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,
 Ye purple heath-flowers ! richlier burn, ye clouds !
 Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves !
 And kindle, thou blue Ocean ! So my friend
 Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have stood,
 Silent with swimming sense ; yea, gazing round
 On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem 40
 Less gross than bodily ; and of such hues
 As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes
 Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight

Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad
 As I myself were there ! Nor in this bower,
 This little lime-tree bower, have I not marked
 Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath the blaze
 Hung the transparent foliage ; and I watched
 Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to see
 The shadow of the leaf and stem above, 50
 Dappling its sunshine ! And that walnut-tree
 Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance lay
 Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
 Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest mass
 Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue
 Through the late twilight : and though now the bat
 Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,
 Yet still the solitary humble-bee
 Sings in the bean-flower ! Henceforth I shall know
 That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure ; 60
 No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,
 No waste so vacant, but may well employ

Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
 Awake to Love and Beauty ! and sometimes
 'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,
 That we may lift the soul, and contemplate
 With lively joy the joys we cannot share.
 My gentle-hearted Charles ! when the last rook
 Beat its straight path along the dusky air
 Homewards, I blest it ! deeming its black wing 70
 (Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)
 Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated glory,
 While thou stood'st gazing ; or when all was still,
 Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a charm
 For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom
 No sound is dissonant which tells of Life.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECITATION
 OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL
 MIND

FRIEND of the wise ! and Teacher of the Good !
 Into my heart have I received that Lay
 More than historic, that prophetic Lay
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
 Of the foundations and the building up
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to tell
 What may be told, to the understanding mind
 Revealable ; and what within the mind

By vital breathings secret as the soul
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart 10
 Thoughts all too deep for words !—

Theme hard as high !

Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth),
 Of tides obedient to external force,
 And currents self-determined, as might seem,
 Or by some inner Power ; of moments awful,
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
 When power streamed from thee, and thy soul
 received

The light reflected, as a light bestowed—
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth, 20
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
 Native or outland, lakes and famous hills !
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
 Were rising ; or by secret mountain-streams,
 The guides and the companions of thy way !
 —Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
 Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
 Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
 Like some becalmèd bark beneath the burst 30
 Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.
 For thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
 When from the general heart of human kind

Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity !
 —Of that dear Hope afflicted and struck down,
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and sure
 From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute
 self, 40

With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
 Far on—herself a glory to behold,
 The Angel of the vision ! Then (last strain)
 Of Duty, chosen Laws controlling choice,
 Action and joy !—An Orphic song indeed,
 A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
 To their own music chaunted !

O great Bard !

Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
 With stedfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great 50
 Have all one age, and from one visible space
 Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
 Are permanent, and Time is not with them,
 Save as it worketh for them, they in it.
 Nor less a sacred Roll, than those of old,
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
 Among the archives of mankind, thy work
 Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes ! 60
 Ah ! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,
 The pulses of my being beat anew :
 And even as life returns upon the drowned,
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—

Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of hope ;
 And hope that scarce would know itself from fear ;
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
 And genius given, and knowledge won in vain ; 70
 And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,
 And all which patient toil had reared, and all,
 Commune with thee had opened out—but flowers
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
 In the same coffin, for the self-same grave !

That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
 Singing of glory and futurity,
 To wander back on such unhealthful road,
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm ! And ill 80
 Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
 Strew'd before thy advancing !

Nor do thou,
 Sage Bard ! impair the memory of that hour
 Of thy communion with my nobler mind
 By pity or grief, already felt too long !
 Nor let my words import more blame than needs.
 The tumult rose and ceased : for Peace is nigh
 Where wisdom's voice has found a listening heart.
 Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
 The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours 90
 Already on the wing.

Eve following eve,
 Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of Home

Is sweetest ! moments for their own sake hailed
 And more desired, more precious, for thy song,
 In silence listening, like a devout child,
 My soul lay passive, by thy various strain
 Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,
 With momentary stars of my own birth,
 Fair constellated foam, still darting off
 Into the darkness ; now a tranquil sea, 100
 Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when—O Friend ! my comforter and guide !
 Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength !—
 Thy long sustained Song finally closed,
 And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
 Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
 That happy vision of beloved faces—
 Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
 I sate, my being blended in one thought
 (Thought was it ? or aspiration ? or resolve ?) 110
 Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
 And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings : save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood, 10
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;
Only that film which fluttered on the grate
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit 20
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O ! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,

To watch that fluttering *stranger!* and as oft
 With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
 Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,
 Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
 From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day, 30
 So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
 Most like articulate sounds of things to come !
 So gazed I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams !
 And so I brooded all the following morn,
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
 Fixed with mock study on my swimming book :
 Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up, 40
 For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
 My play-mate when we both were clothed alike !

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
 Fill up the interspersed vacancies
 And momentary pauses of the thought !
 My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore, 50
 And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But thou, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags

Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself
Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

60

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eave-drops
fall

70

Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

ODES AND MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

DEJECTION : AN ODE.

WRITTEN APRIL 4, 1802.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arm ;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear !
We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I.

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright !
And overspread with phantom light,

10

(With swimming phantom light o'erspread,
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
 The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
 And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
 And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
 Thosesounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
 And sent my soul abroad,
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and
 live!

20

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
 A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
 In word, or sigh, or tear—
 O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
 All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green :
 And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye! 30
 And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
 That give away their motion to the stars ;
 Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
 Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen :
 Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are !

III.

My genial spirits fail ;
 And what can these avail 40
 To lift the smothering weight from off my breast ?
 It were a vain endeavour,
 Though I should gaze for ever
 On that green light that lingers in the west :
 I may not hope from outward forms to win
 The passion and the life whose fountains are within.

IV.

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone does Nature live :
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !
 And would we aught behold, of higher worth, 50
 Than that inanimate cold world allowed
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
 Ah ! from the soul itself must issue forth
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth—
 And from the soul itself must there be sent
 A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
 Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

V.

O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask of me
 What this strong music in the soul may be ! 60
 What, and wherein it doth exist,
 This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
 This beautiful and beauty-making power.
 Joy, virtuous Lady ! Joy that ne'er was given,

Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
 Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
 Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
 Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
 A new Earth and new Heaven,
 Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud— 70
 Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
 We in ourselves rejoice!
 And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,
 All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
 This joy within me dallied with distress,
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness :
 For hope grew round me, like the twining vine, 80
 And fruits and foliage not my own seemed mine.
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth :
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth ;
 But oh ! each visitation
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
 My shaping spirit of Imagination.
 For not to think of what I needs must feel,
 But to be still and patient, all I can ;
 And haply by abstruse research to steal
 From my own nature all the natural man— 90
 This was my sole resource, my only plan :
 Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
 And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
 Reality's dark dream !

I turn from you, and listen to the wind,

Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
 Of agony by torture lengthened out
 That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,
 Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree, 100
 Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
 Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
 Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
 Mad Lutanist ! who in this month of showers,
 Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
 Mak'st Devils' yule with worse than wintry song
 The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.

Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds !

Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold !

What tell'st thou now about ?

110

'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
 With groans of trampled men, with smarting
 wounds—

At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the
 cold !

But hush ! there is a pause of deepest silence !

And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
 With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
 It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud !
 A tale of less affright,
 And tempered with delight,

As Otway's self had framed the tender lay, 120
 'Tis of a little child
 Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way :
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother
 hear.

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep :
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep !
Visit her, gentle Sleep ! with wings of healing,
 And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling, 130
 Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth !
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice ;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddy of her living soul !
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady ! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

ODE TO GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE,
ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH STANZA IN HER "PAS-
SAGE OVER MOUNT GOTHARD."

And hail the Chapel ! hail the Platform wild !
Where Tell directed the avenging dart,
With well-strung arm, that first preserved his child,
Then aim'd the arrow at the tyrant's heart.

SPLENDOUR'S fondly-foster'd child !
And did you hail the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell !
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
Whence learnt you that heroic measure ?

Light as a dream your days their circlets ran,
From all that teaches brotherhood to Man
Far, far removed ! from want, from hope, from fear !
Enchanting music lulled your infant ear, 10
Obeisance, praises soothed your infant heart :
Emblazonments and old ancestral crests,
With many a bright obtrusive form of art,
Detained your eye from Nature : stately vests,
That veiling strove to deck your charms divine,
Rich viands, and the pleasurable wine,
Were yours unearned by toil ; nor could you see
The unenjoying toiler's misery.
And yet, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
You hailed the Chapel and the Platform wild, 20

Where once the Austrian fell
 Beneath the shaft of Tell !
 O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
 Whence learnt you that heroic measure ?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame
 All living faculties of bliss ;
 And Genius to your cradle came,
 His forehead wreathed with lambent flame,
 And bending low, with godlike kiss
 Breath'd in a more celestial life ; 30
 But boasts not many a fair compeer
 A heart as sensitive to joy and fear ?
 And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife,
 Some few, to nobler being wrought,
 Co-rivals in the nobler gift of thought.
 Yet *these* delight to celebrate
 Laurell'd War and plumy State ;
 Or in verse and music dress
 Tales of rustic happiness—
 Pernicious tales ! insidious strains ! 40
 That steel the rich man's breast,
 And mock the lot unblest,
 The sordid vices and the abject pains,
 Which evermore must be
 The doom of ignorance and penury !
 But you, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
 You hail'd the Chapel and the Platform wild,
 Where once the Austrian fell
 Beneath the shaft of Tell !

O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
Whence learnt you that heroic measure?

50

You were a Mother ! That most holy name,
Which Heaven and Nature bless,
I may not vilely prostitute to those
Whose infants owe them less
Than the poor caterpillar owes
Its gaudy parent fly.

You were a mother ! at your bosom fed
The babes that loved you. You, with laughing
eye,
Each twilight-thought, each nascent feeling read, 60
Which you yourself created. Oh ! delight !
A second time to be a mother,
Without the mother's bitter groans :
Another thought, and yet another,
By touch, or taste, by looks or tones,
O'er the growing sense to roll,
The mother of your infant's soul !
The Angel of the Earth, who, while he guides
His chariot-planet round the goal of day,
All trembling gazes on the eye of God, 70
A moment turned his awful face away ;
And as he viewed you, from his aspect sweet
New influences in your being rose,
Blest intuitions and communions fleet
With living Nature, in her joys and woes !
Thenceforth your soul rejoiced to see
The shrine of social Liberty !

And in the sultry summer's heat
 Will build me up a mossy seat ; 20
 And when the gust of Autumn crowds,
 And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,
 Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
 Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
 To thee I dedicate the whole !
 And while within myself I trace
 The greatness of some future race,
 Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
 The present works of present man— 30
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile !

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

[CHARLES LLOYD,]

ON HIS PROPOSING TO DOMESTICATE WITH THE
 AUTHOR.

Composed in 1796.

A MOUNT, not wearisome and bare and steep,
 But a green mountain variously up-piled,
 Where o'er the jutting rocks soft mosses creep,
 Or coloured lichens with slow oozing weep ;
 Where cypress and the darker yew start wild ;

And, 'mid the summer torrent's gentle dash
 Dance brightened the red clusters of the ash ;
 Beneath whose boughs, by those still sounds be-
 guiled,

Calm Pensiveness might muse herself to sleep ;
 Till haply startled by some fleecy dam, 10

That rustling on the bushy clift above
 With melancholy bleat of anxious love,
 Made meek enquiry for her wandering lamb :
 Such a green mountain 'twere most sweet to climb,
 E'en while the bosom ached with loneliness—
 How more than sweet, if some dear friend should
 bless

The adventurous toil, and up the path sublime
 Now lead, now follow : the glad landscape round,
 Wide and more wide, increasing without bound !

O then 'twere loveliest sympathy, to mark 20
 The berries of the half-uprooted ash

Dripping and bright ; and list the torrent's dash,—

Beneath the cypress, or the yew more dark,
 Seated at ease, on some smooth mossy rock ;
 In social silence now, and now to unlock
 The treasured heart ; arm linked in friendly arm,
 Save if the one, his muse's witching charm
 Muttering brow-bent, at unwatched distance lag ;

Till high o'er head his beckoning friend appears,
 And from the forehead of the topmost crag 30

Shouts eagerly ; for haply there uprears
 That shadowing Pine its old romantic limbs,
 Which latest shall detain the enamoured sight

Seen from below, when eve the valley dims,
 Tinged yellow with the rich departing light ;
 And haply, basoned in some unsunned cleft,
 A beauteous spring, the rock's collected tears,
 Sleeps sheltered there, scarce wrinkled by the gale !
 Together thus, the world's vain turmoil left,
 Stretched on the crag, and shadowed by the pine, 40
 And bending o'er the clear delicious fount,
 Ah ! dearest youth ! it were a lot divine
 To cheat our noons in moralising mood,
 While west-winds fanned our temples toil-bedewed :
 Then downwards slope, oft pausing, from the
 mount,
 To some lone mansion, in some woody dale,
 Where smiling with blue eye, Domestic Bliss
 Gives this the Husband's, that the Brother's kiss !

Thus rudely versed in allegoric lore,
 The Hill of Knowledge I essayed to trace ; 50
 That verdurous hill with many a resting-place,
 And many a stream, whose warbling waters pour
 To glad, and fertilise the subject plains ;
 That hill with secret springs, and nooks untrod,
 And many a fancy-blest and holy sod
 Where Inspiration, his diviner strains
 Low-murmuring, lay ; and starting from the rock's
 Stiff evergreens, (whose spreading foliage mocks
 Want's barren soil, and the bleak frosts of age,
 And Bigotry's mad fire-invoking rage !) 60
 O meek retiring spirit ! we will climb,
 Cheering and cheered, this lovely hill sublime ;

And from the stirring world up-lifted high
 (Whose noises, faintly wafted on the wind,
 To quiet musings shall attune the mind,
 And oft the melancholy theme supply),
 There, while the prospect through the gazing eye
 Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
 We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile at fame,
 Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same, 70
 As neighbouring fountains image each the whole :
 Then when the mind hath drunk its fill of truth
 We'll discipline the heart to pure delight,
 Rekindling sober joy's domestic flame.
 They whom I love shall love thee, honoured youth !
 Now may Heaven realize this vision bright !

LINES TO W. LINLEY, ESQ.,

WHILE HE SANG A SONG TO PURCELL'S MUSIC.

WHILE my young cheek retains its healthful hues,
 And I have many friends who hold me dear,
 Linley ! methinks, I would not often hear
 Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
 All memory of the wrongs and sore distress
 For which my miserable brethren weep !
 But should uncomforted misfortunes steep
 My daily bread in tears and bitterness ;
 And if at death's dread moment I should lie
 With no beloved face at my bed-side,

To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks such strains, breathed by my angel-guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died !

SONNET

TO THE RIVER OTTER.

DEAR native Brook ! wild Streamlet of the West !
How many various-fated years have past,
What happy and what mournful hours, since last
I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
Numbering its light leaps ! yet so deep imprest
Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
I never shut amid the sunny ray,
But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows grey,
And bedded sand that veined with various dyes
Gleamed through thy bright transparence ! On my
way,
Visions of Childhood ! oft have ye beguiled
Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs :
Ah ! that once more I were a careless Child !

MELANCHOLY.

A FRAGMENT.

STRETCH'D on a mouldered Abbey's broadest wall,
Where ruining ivies propped the ruins steep—
Her folded arms wrapping her tattered pall,
Had Melancholy mused herself to sleep.
The fern was press'd beneath her hair,
The dark green Adder's Tongue was there ;
And still as past the flagging sea-gale weak,
The long lank leaf bowed fluttering o'er her cheek.

That pallid cheek was flushed : her eager look
Beamed eloquent in slumber ! Inly wrought, 10
Imperfect sounds her moving lips forsook,
And her bent forehead work'd with troubled
thought.
Strange was the dream——

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY.

AN ALLEGORY.

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,
 (I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
 Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
 Two lovely children run an endless race,
 A sister and a brother!
 This far outstript the other;
 Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
 And looks and listens for the boy behind:
 For he, alas! is blind!
 O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed, 10
 And knows not whether he be first or last.

THE DESTINY OF NATIONS.

A VISION.

AUSPICIOUS Reverence! Hush all meaner song,
 Ere we the deep prelude strain have poured
 To the Great Father, only Rightful King,
 Eternal Father! King Omnipotent!
 The Will, the Word, the Breath,—the Living God.

Such symphony requires best instrument.
 Seize, then, my soul ! from Freedom's trophied dome
 The harp which hangeth high between the shields
 Of Brutus and Leonidas ! With that
 Strong music, that soliciting spell, force back 10
 Man's free and stirring spirit that lies entranced.

For what is freedom, but the unfettered use
 Of all the powers which God for use had given?
 But chiefly this, him first, him last to view
 Through meaner powers and secondary things
 Effulgent, as through clouds that veil his blaze.
 For all that meets the bodily sense I deem
 Symbolical, one mighty alphabet
 For infant minds ; and we in this low world
 Placed with our backs to bright Reality, 20
 That we may learn with young unwounded ken
 The substance from its shadow. Infinite Love,
 Whose latence is the plenitude of All,
 Thou with retracted beams, and self-eclipse
 Veiling, revealest thine eternal Sun.

But some there are who deem themselves most free
 When they within this gross and visible sphere
 Chain down the wingèd thought, scoffing ascent,
 Proud in their meanness : and themselves they cheat
 With noisy emptiness of learned phrase, 30
 Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,
 Self-working tools, uncaused effects, and all
 Those blind omniscients, those almighty slaves,
 Untenanting creation of its God.

But properties are God : the naked mass
 (If mass there be, fantastic guess or ghost)
 Acts only by its inactivity,
 Here we pause humbly. Others boldlier think
 That as one body seems the aggregate
 Of atoms numberless, each organized ; 40
 So by a strange and dim similitude
 Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds
 Are one all-conscious Spirit, which informs
 With absolute ubiquity of thought
 (His one eternal self-affirming act !)
 All his involvèd Monads, that yet seem
 With various province and apt agency
 Each to pursue its own self-centering end.
 Some nurse the infant diamond in the mine ;
 Some roll the genial juices through the oak ; 50
 Some drive the mutinous clouds to clash in air,
 And rushing on the storm with whirlwind speed,
 Yoke the red lightnings to their volleying car.
 Thus these pursue their never-varying course,
 No eddy in their stream. Others, more wild,
 With complex interests weaving human fates,
 Duteous or proud, alike obedient all,
 Evolve the process of eternal good.

And what if some rebellious, o'er dark realms
 Arrogate power ? yet these train up to God, 60
 And on the rude eye, unconfirmed for day,
 Flash meteor-lights better than total gloom,
 As ere from Lieule-Oaive's vapoury head
 The Laplander beholds the far-off Sun

Dart his slant beam on unobeying snows,
While yet the stern and solitary Night
Brooks no alternate sway, the Boreal Morn
With mimic lustre substitutes its gleam,
Guiding his course or by Niemi lake
Or Balda Zhiok, or the mossy stone 70
Of Solfar-kapper, while the snowy blast
Drifts arrowy by, or eddies round his sledge,
Making the poor babe at its mother's back
Scream in its scanty cradle : he the while
Wins gentle solace as with upward eye
He marks the streamy banners of the North,
Thinking himself those happy spirits shall join
Who there in floating robes of rosy light
Dance sportively. For Fancy is the power
That first unsensualizes the dark mind, 80
Giving it new delights ; and bids it swell
With wild activity ; and peopling air,
By obscure fears of beings invisible,
Emancipates it from the grosser thrall
Of the present impulse, teaching Self-control,
Till Superstition with unconscious hand
Seat Reason on her throne. Wherefore not vain,
Nor yet without permitted power impressed,
I deemed those legends terrible, with which
The polar ancient thrills his uncouth throng : 90
Whether of pitying Spirits that make their moan
O'er slaughter'd infants, or that giant bird
Vuokho, of whose rushing wings the noise
Is tempest, when the unutterable Shape
Speeds from the mother of Death, and utters once
That shriek, which never murderer heard, and lived.

Or if the Greenland Wizard in strange trance
 Pierces the untravelled realms of Ocean's bed
 (Where live the innocent as far from cares
 As from the storms and overwhelming waves 100
 Dark tumbling on the surface of the deep)
 Over the abysm, even to that uttermost cave
 By mis-shaped prodigies beleaguered, such
 As earth ne'er bred, nor air, nor the upper sea.

There dwells the Fury Form, whose unheard name
 With eager eye, pale cheek, suspended breath,
 And lips half-opening with the dread of sound,
 Unsleeping Silence guards, worn out with fear
 Lest haply escaping on some treacherous blast
 The fateful word let slip the Elements 110
 And frenzy Nature. Yet the wizard her,
 Arm'd with Torngarsuck's power, the Spirit of Good,
 Forces to unchain the foodful progeny
 Of the Ocean's stream,—Wild phantasies! yet wise,
 On the victorious goodness of high God
 Teaching reliance, and medicinal hope,
 Till from Bethabra northward, heavenly Truth
 With gradual steps, winning her difficult way,
 Transfer their rude Faith perfected and pure.

If there be Beings of higher class than Man, 120
 I deem no nobler province they possess,
 Than by disposal of apt circumstance
 To rear up kingdoms: and the deeds they prompt,
 Distinguishing from mortal agency,
 They choose their human ministers from such states
 As still the Epic song half fears to name,

Repelled from all the minstrelsies that strike
The palace-roof and soothe the monarch's pride.

And such, perhaps, the Spirit, who (if words
Witnessed by answering deeds may claim our
faith) 130

Held commune with that warrior-maid of France
Who scourged the Invader. From her infant days,
With Wisdom, mother of retired thoughts,
Her soul had dwelt; and she was quick to mark
The good and evil thing, in human lore
Undisciplined. For lowly was her birth,
And Heaven had doom'd her early years to toil
That pure from Tyranny's least deed, herself
Unfeared by fellow-natures, she might wait
On the poor labouring man with kindly looks, 140

And minister refreshment to the tired
Way-wanderer, when along the rough-hewn bench
The sweltry man had stretched him, and aloft
Vacantly watched the rudely-pictured board
Which on the mulberry-bough with welcome creak
Swung to the pleasant breeze. Here, too, the Maid
Learnt more than schools could teach: Man's shifting
mind,

His vices and his sorrows! And full oft
At tales of cruel wrong and strange distress
Had wept and shivered. To the tottering Eld 150
Still as a daughter would she run: she placed
His cold limbs at the sunny door, and loved
To hear him story, in his garrulous sort,
Of his eventful years, all come and gone.

So twenty seasons past. The Virgin's form,
 Active and tall, nor sloth nor luxury
 Had shrunk or paled. Her front sublime and broad,
 Her flexile eye-brows wildly haired and low,
 And her full eye, now bright, now unillumed,
 Spake more than Woman's thought; and all her
 face 160

Was moulded to such features as declared
 That pity there had oft and strongly worked,
 And sometimes indignation. Bold her mien,
 And like an haughty huntress of the woods
 She moved: yet sure she was a gentle maid!
 And in each motion her most innocent soul
 Beamed forth so brightly, that who saw would say
 Guilt was a thing impossible in her!
 Nor idly would have said—for she had lived
 In this bad World, as in a place of tombs, 170
 And touched not the pollutions of the dead.

'Twas the cold season when the rustic's eye
 From the drear desolate whiteness of his fields
 Rolls for relief to watch the skiey tints
 And clouds slow-varying their huge imagery;
 When now, as she was wont, the healthful Maid
 Had left her pallet ere one beam of day
 Slanted the fog-smoke. She went forth alone
 Urged by the indwelling angel-guide, that oft,
 With dim inexplicable sympathies 180
 Disquieting the heart, shapes out Man's course
 To the predoomed adventure. Now the ascent
 She climbs of that steep upland, on whose top

The Pilgrim-man, who long since eve had watched
 The alien shine of unconcerning stars,
 Shouts to himself, there first the Abbey-lights
 Seen in Neufchâtel's vale ; now slopes adown
 The winding sheep-track vale-ward : when, behold
 In the first entrance of the level road
 An unattended team ! The foremost horse 190
 Lay with stretched limbs ; the others, yet alive
 But stiff and cold, stood motionless, their manes
 Hoar with the frozen night-dews. Dismally
 The dark-red dawn now glimmered ; but its gleams
 Disclosed no face of man. The maiden paused,
 Then hailed who might be near. No voice replied.
 From the thwart wain at length there reached her
 ear

A sound so feeble that it almost seemed
 Distant : and feebly, with slow effort pushed,
 A miserable man crept forth : his limbs 200
 The silent frost had eat, scathing like fire.
 Faint on the shafts he rested. She, meantime,
 Saw crowded close beneath the coverture
 A mother and her children—lifeless all,
 Yet lovely ! not a lineament was marred—
 Death had put on so slumber-like a form !
 It was a piteous sight ; and one, a babe,
 The crisp milk frozen on its innocent lips,
 Lay on the woman's arm, its little hand
 Stretched on her bosom.

Mutely questioning, 210

The Maid gazed wildly at the living wretch.

He, his head feebly turning, on the group
 Looked with a vacant stare, and his eye spoke
 The drowsy calm that steals on worn-out anguish.
 She shuddered ; but, each vainer pang subdued,
 Quick disentangling from the foremost horse
 The rustic bands, with difficulty and toil
 The stiff cramped team forced homeward. There
 arrived,
 Anxiously tends him she with healing herbs,
 And weeps and prays—but the numb power of
 Death 220
 Spreads o'er his limbs ; and ere the noon-tide hour,
 The hovering spirits of his wife and babes
 Hail him immortal ! Yet amid his pangs,
 With interruptions long from ghastly throes,
 His voice had faltered out this simple tale.

The village, where he dwelt an husbandman,
 By sudden inroad had been seized and fired
 Late on the yester-evening. With his wife
 And little ones he hurried his escape.
 They saw the neighbouring hamlets flame, they
 heard 230
 Uproar and shrieks ! and terror-struck drove on
 Through unfrequented roads, a weary way !
 But saw nor house nor cottage. All had quenched
 Their evening hearth-fire : for the alarm had spread.
 The air clipt keen, the night was fanged with frost,
 And they provisionless ! The weeping wife
 Ill hushed her children's moans ; and still they
 moaned,

Till fright and cold and hunger drank their life.
They closed their eyes in sleep, nor knew 'twas
death.

He only, lashing his o'er-wearied team, 240
Gained a sad respite, till beside the base
Of the high hill his foremost horse dropped dead.
Then hopeless, strengthless, sick for lack of food,
He crept beneath the coverture, entranced,
Till wakened by the maiden.—Such his tale.

Ah! suffering to the height of what was suffered,
Stung with too keen a sympathy, the Maid
Brooded with moving lips, mute, startful, dark!
And now her flushed tumultuous features shot
Such strange vivacity, as fires the eye 250
Of misery fancy-crazed! and now once more
Naked, and void, and fixed, and all within
The unquiet silence of confused thought
And shapeless feelings. For a mighty hand
Was strong upon her, till in the heat of soul
To the high hill-top tracing back her steps,
Aside the beacon, up whose smouldered stones
The tender ivy-trails crept thinly, there,
Unconscious of the driving element,
Yea, swallow'd up in the ominous dream, she sate 260
Ghastly as broad-eyed Slumber! a dim anguish
Breathed from her look! and still with pant and sob,
Inly she toiled to flee, and still subdued,
Felt an inevitable Presence near.

Thus as she toiled in troublous ecstasy,
A horror of great darkness wrapt her round,

And a voice uttered forth unearthly tones,
 Calming her soul,—“O Thou of the Most High
 Chosen, whom all the perfected in Heaven
 Behold expectant——”

270

[The following fragments were intended to form part of the poem when finished.]

“Maid beloved of Heaven!

(To her the tutelary Power exclaimed)

Of Chaos the adventurous progeny

Thou seest; foul missionaries of foul sire,

Fierce to regain the losses of that hour

When Love rose glittering, and his gorgeous wings

Over the abyss fluttered with such glad noise,

As what timé after long and pestful calms,

With slimy shapes and miscreated life

Poisoning the vast Pacific, the fresh breeze

280

Wakens the merchant-sail uprising. Night

An heavy unimaginaire moan

Sent forth, when she the Protoplast beheld

Stand beauteous on Confusion's charmèd wave.

Moaning she fled, and enter'd the Profound

That leads with downward windings to the cave

Of darkness palpable, Desert of Death

Sunk deep beneath Gehenna's massy roots.

There many a dateless age the Beldame lurked

And trembled; till engendered by fierce Hate, 290

Fierce Hate and gloomy Hope, a Dream arose,

Shaped like a black cloud marked with streaks of
 fire.

It roused the Hell-Hag; she the dew-damp wiped

From off her brow, and through the uncouth maze
 Retraced her steps ; but ere she reached the mouth
 Of that drear labyrinth, shuddering she paused,
 Nor dared re-enter the diminished gulph.
 As through the dark vaults of some mouldered tower
 (Which, fearful to approach, the evening hind
 Circles at distance in his homeward way) 300
 The winds breathe hollow, deemed the plaining groan
 Of prisoned spirits ; with such fearful voice
 Night murmured, and the sound through Chaos went.
 Leaped at her call her hideous-fronted brood !
 A dark behest they heard, and rushed on earth ;
 Since that sad hour, in camps and courts adored,
 Rebels from God, and Monarchs o'er Mankind !”

From his obscure haunt
 Shrieked Fear, of Cruelty the ghastly dam,
 Feverish yet freezing, eager-paced yet slow, 310
 As she that creeps from forth her swampy reeds,
 Ague, the biform hag ! when early Spring
 Beams on the marsh-bred vapours.

“ Even so (the exulting Maiden said)
 The sainted heralds of Good Tidings fell,
 And thus they witnessed God ! But now the clouds
 Treading, and storms beneath their feet, they soar
 Higher, and higher soar, and soaring sing
 Loud songs of triumph ! O ye spirits of God,
 Hover around my mortal agonies !” 320

She spake, and instantly faint melody
Melts on her ear, soothing and sad, and slow,
Such measures, as at calmest midnight heard
By aged hermit in his holy dream,
Foretell and solace death ; and now they rise
Louder, as when with harp and mingled voice
The white-robed multitude of slaughtered saints
At Heaven's wide-opened portals gratulant
Receive some martyred patriot. The harmony
Entranced the Maid, till each suspended sense 330
Brief slumber seized, and confused ecstasy.

At length awakening slow, she gazed around :
And through a mist, the relict of that trance
Still thinning as she gazed, an Isle appeared,
Its high, o'er-hanging, white, broad-breasted cliffs,
Glass'd on the subject ocean. A vast plain
Stretched opposite, where ever and anon
The plough-man following sad his meagre team
Turned up fresh skulls unstartled, and the bones
Of fierce hate-breathing combatants, who there 340
All mingled lay beneath the common earth,
Death's gloomy reconciliation ! O'er the fields
Stept a fair form, repairing all she might,
Her temples olive-wreathed ; and where she trod,
Fresh flowerets rose, and many a foodful herb.
But wan her cheek, her footsteps insecure,
And anxious pleasure beamed in her faint eye,
As she had newly left a couch of pain,
Pale Convalescent ! (yet some time to rule
With power exclusive o'er the willing world, 350

That blest prophetic mandate then fulfilled—
 Peace be on Earth !) An happy while, but brief,
 She seemed to wander with assiduous feet,
 And healed the recent harm of chill and blight,
 And nursed each plant that fair and virtuous grew.

But soon a deep precursive sound moaned hollow :
 Black rose the clouds, and now (as in a dream),
 Their reddening shapes, transformed to warrior-hosts,
 Coursed o'er the sky, and battled in mid-air.
 Nor did not the large blood-drops fall from
 heaven 360

Portentous ! while aloft were seen to float,
 Like hideous features looming on the mist,
 Wan stains of ominous light ! Resigned, yet sad,
 The fair form bowed her olive-crownèd brow,
 Then o'er the plain with oft-reverted eye
 Fled till a place of tombs she reached, and there
 Within a ruined sepulchre obscure
 Found hiding-place.

The delegated Maid

Gazed through her tears, then in sad tones ex-
 claimed ;—

“Thou mild-eyed Form ! wherefore, ah ! wherefore
 fled? 370

The Power of Justice like a name all light,
 Shone from thy brow ; but all they, who unblamed
 Dwelt in thy dwellings, call thee Happiness.
 Ah ! why, uninjured and unprofited,
 Should multitudes against their brethren rush ?
 Why sow they guilt, still reaping misery ?

Lenient of care, thy songs, O Peace! are sweet,
 As after showers the perfumed gale of eve,
 That flings the cool drops on a feverous cheek;
 And gay thy grassy altar piled with fruits. 380
 But boasts the shrine of Dæmon War one charm,
 Save that with many an orgie strange and foul,
 Dancing around with interwoven arms,
 The Maniac Suicide and Giant Murder
 Exult in their fierce union? I am sad,
 And know not why the simple peasants crowd
 Beneath the Chieftains' standard!" Thus the Maid.

To her the tutelary Spirit replied:
 "When Luxury and Lust's exhausted stores
 No more can rouse the appetites of kings; 390
 When the low flattery of their reptile lords
 Falls flat and heavy on the accustomed ear;
 When eunuchs sing, and fools buffoonery make,
 And dancers writhe their harlot limbs in vain;
 Then War and all its dread vicissitudes
 Pleasingly agitate their stagnant hearts;
 Its hopes, its fears, its victories, its defeats,
 Insipid Royalty's keen condiment!
 Therefore uninjured and unprofited
 (Victims at once and executioners), 400
 The congregated husbandmen lay waste
 The vineyard and the harvest. As along
 The Bothnic coast, or southward of the Line,
 Though hushed the winds and cloudless the high
 noon,
 Yet if Leviathan, weary of ease,

In sports unwieldy toss his island-bulk,
 Ocean behind him billows, and before
 A storm of waves breaks foamy on the strand.
 And hence, for times and seasons bloody and
 dark,
 Short Peace shall skin the wounds of causeless
 War, 410
 And War, his strained sinews knit anew,
 Still violate the unfinished works of Peace.
 But yonder look ! for more demands thy view !”
 He said : and straightway from the opposite Isle
 A vapour sailed, as when a cloud, exhaled
 From Egypt's fields that steam hot pestilence,
 Travels the sky for many a trackless league,
 Till o'er some death-doomed land, distant in vain,
 It broods incumbent. Forthwith from the plain,
 Facing the Isle, a brighter cloud arose, 420
 And steered its course which way the vapour
 went.

The Maiden paused, musing what this might
 mean.

But long time passed not, ere that brighter cloud
 Returned more bright ; along the plain it swept ;
 And soon from forth its bursting sides emerged
 A dazzling form, broad-bosomed, bold of eye,
 And wild her hair, save where with laurels bound.
 Not more majestic stood the healing God,
 When from his bow the arrow sped that slew
 Huge Python. Shrieked Ambition's giant throng, 430
 And with them hissed the locust-fiends that crawled

And glittered in Corruption's slimy track.
Great was their wrath, for short they knew their
reign ;

And such commotion made they, and uproar,
As when the mad tornado bellows through
The guilty islands of the western main,
What time departing for their native shores,
Eboe, or Koromantyn's plain of palms,
The infuriate spirits of the murdered make
Fierce merriment, and vengeance ask of Heaven. 440
Warmed with new influence, the unwholesome
plain

Sent up its foulest fogs to meet the morn :
The Sun that rose on Freedom, rose in Blood !

“Maiden beloved, and Delegate of Heaven !
(To her the tutelary Spirit said)
Soon shall the morning struggle into day,
The stormy morning into cloudless noon.
Much hast thou seen, nor all canst understand—
But this be thy best omen—Save thy Country !”
Thus saying, from the answering Maid he passed, 450
And with him disappeared the heavenly Vision.

“Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven !
All-conscious Presence of the Universe !
Nature's vast ever-acting Energy !
In will, in deed, Impulse of All to All !
Whether thy Love with unrefracted ray
Beam on the Prophet's purged eye, or if,
Diseasing realms, the Enthusiast, wild of thought,

Scatter new frenzies on the infected throng,
Thou both inspiring and predooming both, 460
Fit instruments and best, of perfect end :
Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven !”

And first a landscape rose
More wild and waste and desolate than where
The white bear, drifting on a field of ice,
Howls to her Sundered cubs with piteous rage
And savage agony.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

OF late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone ;
And, from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain ! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cow'r'd o'er my own vacancy !
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumb'ring, seem'd alone to wake ; 10
O Friend ! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design.
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry !
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
Framed in the silent poesy of form.
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
Emerging from a mist : or like a stream 20
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's dream,
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might

The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my chest,
As though an infant's finger touched my breast.
And one by one (I know not whence) were brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my thought
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ; 30
Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love ;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man ;
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn caves
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and waves ;
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades ;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast ;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest, 40
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,
Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd
Even in my dawn of thought—Philosophy ;
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie, 50
She bore no other name than Poesy ;
And, like a gift from heaven, in lifeful glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and stone,

As if with elfin playfellows well known,
And life revealed to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And all awake ! And now in fixed gaze stand, 60
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand ;
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer ;
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer ! I myself am there,
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,
And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings ;
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she dwells.
With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possess, 71
And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.
The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy !
O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and hills
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills ;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old, 80
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn ;
Palladian palace with its storied halls ;

Fountains, where Love lies listening to their falls ;
 Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
 And Nature makes her happy home with man ;
 Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
 With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
 And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head, 90
 A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
 Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn ;—
 Thine all delights, and every muse is thine ;
 And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
 Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance !
 Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
 See ! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
 The new-found roll of old Mæonides ;¹
 But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
 Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet smart !² 100
 O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,
 Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
 Where, half conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
 Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious to thy
 muse !

¹ Boccaccio claimed for himself the glory of having first introduced the works of Homer to his countrymen.

² I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the *Filocolo* of Boccaccio : where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancifiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's *Art of Love*. "Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovvidio, nel quale il sommo poeta mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne' freddi cuori accendere."

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,
 And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
 Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes
 The vestal fires, of which her lover grieves,
 With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves !

TO MATILDA BETHAM FROM A STRANGER.

[“One of our most celebrated poets, who had, I was told, picked out and praised the little piece ‘On a Cloud,’ another had quoted (saying it would have been faultless if I had not used the word *Phœbus* in it, which he thought inadmissible in modern poetry), sent me some verses inscribed ‘To Matilda Betham, from a Stranger’; and dated ‘Keswick, Sept. 9, 1802, S. T. C.’ I should have guessed whence they came, but dared not flatter myself so highly as satisfactorily to believe it, before I obtained the avowal of the lady who had transmitted them.”]

MATILDA ! I have heard a sweet tune played
 On a sweet instrument—thy Poesie—
 Sent to my soul by Boughton's pleading voice,
 Where friendship's zealous wish inspirited,
 Deepened and fill'd the subtle tones of taste :
 (So have I heard a Nightingale's fine notes
 Blend with the murmurs of a hidden stream !)
 And now the fair, wild offspring of thy genius,
 Those wanderers whom thy fancy had sent forth
 To seek their fortune in this motley world, 10
 Have found a little home within my heart,
 And brought me, as the quit-rent of their lodging,
 Rose-buds, and fruit-blossoms, and pretty weeds,
 And timorous laurel leaflets half-disclos'd,
 Engarlanded with gadding woodbine tendrils !

A coronel, which, with undoubting hand,
I twine around the brows of patriot HOPE !

The Almighty, having first composed a Man,
Set him to music, framing Woman for him,
And fitted each to each, and made them one ! 20
And 'tis my faith, that there's a natural bond
Between the female mind and measur'd sounds,
Nor do I know a sweeter Hope than this,
That this sweet Hope, by judgment unrepov'd,
That our own Britain, our dear mother Isle,
May boast one Maid, a poetess indeed,
Great as th' impassion'd Lesbian, in sweet song,
And O ! of holier mind, and happier fate.

Matilda ! I dare twine thy vernal wreath
Around the brows of patriot Hope ! But thou 30
Be wise ! be bold ! fulfil my auspices !
Tho' sweet thy measures, stern must be thy thought,
Patient thy study, watchful thy mild eye !
Poetic feelings, like the stretching boughs
Of mighty oaks, pay homage to the gales,
Toss in the strong winds, drive before the gust,
Themselves one giddy storm of fluttering leaves ;
Yet, all the while self-limited, remain
Equally near the fix'd and solid trunk
Of Truth and Nature in the howling storm, 40
As in the calm that stills the aspen grove.
Be bold, meek Woman ! but be wisely bold !
Fly, ostrich-like, firm land beneath thy feet,
Yet hurried onward by thy wings of fancy

Swift as the whirlwind, singing in their quills.
 Look round thee ! look within thee ! think and feel !
 What nobler meed, Matilda ! canst thou win,
 Than tears of gladness in a Boughton's eyes,
 And exultation even in strangers' hearts ?

THE TWO FOUNTS.

STANZAS ADDRESSED TO A LADY [MRS. ADERS] ON
 HER RECOVERY WITH UNBLEMISHED LOOKS,
 FROM A SEVERE ATTACK OF PAIN.

'Twas my last waking thought, how it could be
 That thou, sweet friend, such anguish should'st endure;
 When straight from Dreamland came a Dwarf, and he
 Could tell the cause, forsooth, and knew the cure.

Methought he fronted me with peering look
 Fix'd on my heart ; and read aloud in game
 The loves and griefs therein, as from a book :
 And uttered praise like one who wished to blame.

In every heart (quoth he) since Adam's sin
 Two Founts there are, of Suffering and of Cheer ! 10
 That to let forth, and this to keep within !
 But she, whose aspect I find imaged here,

Of Pleasure only will to all dispense,
 That Fount alone unlock, by no distress
 Choked or turned inward, but still issue thence
 Unconquered cheer, persistent loveliness.

As on the driving cloud the shiny bow,
 That gracious thing made up of tears and light,
 Mid the wild rack and rain that slants below
 Stands smiling forth, unmoved and freshly bright : 20

Although the spirits of all lovely flowers,
 Inweaving each its wreath and dewy crown,
 Or ere they sank to earth in vernal showers,
 Had built a bridge to tempt the angels down.

Even so, Eliza ! on that face of thine,
 On that benignant face, whose look alone
 (The soul's translucence thro' her crystal shrine !)
 Has power to soothe all anguish but thine own,

A beauty hovers still, and ne'er takes wing,
 But with a silent charm compels the stern 30
 And torturing Genius of the bitter spring,
 To shrink aback, and cower upon his urn.

Who then needs wonder, if (no outlet found
 In passion, spleen, or strife) the Fount of Pain
 O'erflowing beats against its lovely mound,
 And in wild flashes shoots from heart to brain ?

Sleep, and the Dwarf with that unsteady gleam
 On his raised lip, that aped a critic smile,
 Had passed : yet I, my sad thoughts to beguile,
 Lay weaving on the tissue of my dream ; 40

Till audibly at length I cried, as though
 Thou hadst indeed been present to my eyes,
 O sweet, sweet sufferer ; if the case be so,
 I pray thee, be less good, less sweet, less wise !

In every look a barbed arrow send,
On those soft lips let scorn and anger live !
Do anything, rather than thus, sweet friend !
Hoard for thyself the pain, thou wilt not give !

THE EXCHANGE.

WE pledged our hearts, my love and I,—
I in my arms the maiden clasping ;
I could not guess the reason why,
But, oh ! I trembled like an aspen.
Her father's leave she bade me gain ;
I went, but shook like any reed !
I strove to act the man—in vain !
We had exchanged our hearts indeed.

THE DAY-DREAM.

FROM AN EMIGRANT TO HIS ABSENT WIFE.

IF thou wert here, these tears were tears of light !
But from as sweet a vision did I start
As ever made these eyes grow idly bright !
And though I weep, yet still around my heart
A sweet and playful tenderness doth linger,
Touching my heart as with an infant's finger.

THE SNOWDROP.

[A FRAGMENT.]

I

FEAR thou no more, thou timid Flower !
Fear thou no more the winter's might,
The whelming thaw, the ponderous shower,
The silence of the freezing night !
Since Laura murmured o'er thy leaves
The potent sorceries of song,
To thee, meek Flowret ! gentler gales
And cloudless skies belong.

2.

Her eye with tearful meanings fraught,
My fancy saw her gaze on thee : 10
Interpreting the spirit's thought,
The spirit's eager sympathy,
Now trembled with thy trembling stem
And while thou droopedst o'er thy bed
With sweet unconscious sympathy
Inclined the drooping head.

3.

She droop'd her head, she stretch'd her arm,
She whisper'd low her witching rhymes,
Fame unreluctant heard the charm,
And bore thee to Pierian climes ! 20

Fear thou no more the matin frost
 That sparkled on thy bed of snow :
 For there, mid laurels ever green,
 Immortal thou shalt blow.

4.

Thy petals boast a white more soft,
 The spell hath so perfumèd thee,
 That careless Love shall deem thee oft
 A blossom from his myrtle tree.
 Then laughing o'er the fair deceit
 Shall race with some Etesian wind 30
 To seek the woven arboret
 Where Laura lies reclin'd.

5.

All them whom Love and Fancy grace,
 When grosser eyes are clos'd in sleep,
 The gentle spirits of the place
 Waft up the insuperable steep,
 On whose vast summit broad and smooth
 Her nest the Phoenix Bird conceals,
 And where by cypresses o'erhung
 The heavenly Lethe steals. 40

6.

A sea-like sound the branches breathe,
 Stirr'd by the breeze that loiters there ;
 And all that stretch their limbs beneath,
 Forget the coil of mortal care.

Strange mists along the margins rise,
 To heal the guests who thither come,
 And fit the soul to re-endure
 Its earthly martyrdom.

THE GOOD, GREAT MAN.

“How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits
 Honour or wealth with all his worth and pains!
 It sounds like stories from the land of spirits
 If any man obtain that which he merits,
 Or any merit that which he obtains.”

REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

FOR shame, dear friend, renounce this canting strain!
 What would'st thou have a good great man obtain?
 Place? titles? salary? a gilded chain?
 Or throne of corses which his sword had slain?
 Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends!
 Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
 The good great man? three treasures, Love, and
 Light,
 And Calm Thoughts, regular as infant's breath:
 And three firm friends, more sure than day and night,
 Himself, his Maker, and the Angel Death!

PHANTOM.

ALL look and likeness caught from earth,
All accident of kin and birth,
Had pass'd away. There was no trace
Of aught on that illumined face,
Upraised beneath the rifted stone
But of one spirit all her own ;—
She, she herself, and only she,
Shone through her body visibly.

CONSTANCY TO AN IDEAL OBJECT.

SINCE all that beat about in Nature's range,
Or veer or vanish ; why should'st thou remain
The only constant in a world of change,
O yearning Thought ! that liv'st but in the brain ?
Call to the Hours, that in the distance play,
The faery people of the future day——
Fond Thought ! not one of all that shining swarm
Will breathe on thee with life-enkindling breath,
Till when, like strangers shelt'ring from a storm,
Hope and Despair meet in the porch of Death ! 10
Yet still thou haunt'st me ; and though well I see,
She is not thou, and only thou art she,

Still, still as though some dear embodied Good,
Some living Love before my eyes there stood
With answering look a ready ear to lend,
I mourn to thee and say—"Ah! loveliest friend!
That this the meed of all my toils might be,
To have a home, an English home and thee!"
Vain repetition! Home and Thou are one.
The peaceullest cot, the moon shall shine upon, 20
Lulled by the thrush and wakened by the lark,
Without thee were but a becalmed bark,
Whose helmsman on an ocean waste and wide
Sits mute and pale his mouldering helm beside.

And art thou nothing? Such thou art, as when
The woodman winding westward up the glen
At wintry dawn, where o'er the sheep-track's maze
The viewless snow-mist weaves a glistening haze,
Sees full before him, gliding without tread,
An image with a glory round its head; 30
The enamoured rustic worships its fair hues,
Nor knows he makes the shadow he pursues!

SEPARATION.

A SWORDED man whose trade is blood,
In grief, in anger, and in fear,
Thro' jungle, swamp, and torrent flood,
I seek the wealth you hold so dear!

The dazzling charm of outward form,
 The power of gold, the pride of birth,
 Have taken Woman's heart by storm—
 Usurp'd the place of inward worth.

Is not true Love of higher price
 Than outward form, though fair to see, 10
 Wealth's glittering fairy-dome of ice,
 Or echo of proud ancestry?—

O! Asra, Asra! couldst thou see
 Into the bottom of my heart,
 There's such a mine of Love for thee,
 As almost might supply desert!

(This separation is, alas!
 Too great a punishment to bear;
 O! take my life, or let me pass
 That life, that happy life, with her!) 20

The perils, erst with steadfast eye
 Encounter'd, now I shrink to see—
 Oh! I have heart enough to die—
 Not half enough to part from Thee!

A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY A VIEW OF
SADDLEBACK IN CUMBERLAND.

ON stern Blencartha's perilous height
The winds are tyrannous and strong ;
And flashing forth unsteady light
From stern Blencartha's skiey height,
As loud the torrents throng !
Beneath the moon, in gentle weather,
They bind the earth and sky together.
But oh ! the sky and all its forms, how quiet !
The things that seek the earth, how full of noise and
riot !

A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
God grant me grace my prayers to say :
O God ! preserve my mother dear
In strength and health for many a year ;
And, O ! preserve my father too,
And may I pay him reverence due ;
And may I my best thoughts employ
To be my parents' hope and joy ;
And O ! preserve my brothers both
From evil doings and from sloth ;

And may we always love each other
 Our friends, our father, and our mother :
 And still, O Lord, to me impart
 An innocent and grateful heart,
 That after my last sleep I may
 Awake to thy eternal day ! *Amen.*

METRICAL FEET.

LESSON FOR A BOY.

TRŌCHĚE trĭps frŏm lŏng tŏ shŏrt ;
 From long to long in solemn sort
 Slŏw Spŏndĕe stāks ; strŏng fŏot ! yea ill able
 Ĕvĕr tŏ cŏme ũp wĭth Dāctŭl trĭsŭllāblĕ.
 Īambĭcs mārĕh frŏm shŏrt tŏ lŏng ;—
 Wĭth ā lĕāp ānd ā bŏund thĕ swĭft Ānāpĕsts
 thrŏng ;
 One syllable long, with one short at each side,
 Āmphĭbrāĕhŭs hāstes wĭth ā stātelŭ stride ;—
 Fĭrst ānd lāst bĕĭng lŏng, mĭddlĕ shŏrt, Āmĭhĭmācer
 Strĭkes hĭs thŭndĕrĭng hŏofs lĭke ā prŏud hĭgh-brĕd
 rācer.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

A FRAGMENT.

OFT, oft methinks, the while with thee,
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea, in that very name of Wife !
A pulse of love, that ne'er can sleep !
A feeling that upbraids the heart
With happiness beyond desert,
That gladness half requests to weep ! 10
Nor bless I not the keener sense
And unalarming turbulence
Of transient joys, that ask no sting
From jealous fears, or coy denying ;
But born beneath Love's brooding wing,
And into tenderness soon dying,
Wheel out their giddy moment, then
Resign the soul to love again.
A more precipitated vein
Of notes, that eddy in the flow 20
Of smoothest song, they come, they go,
And leave their sweeter understrain
Its own sweet self—a love of Thee
That seems, yet cannot greater be !

A DAY-DREAM.

My eyes make pictures, when they are shut :
 I see a fountain, large and fair,
 A willow and a ruined hut,
 And thee, and me and Mary there.
 O Mary! make thy gentle lap our pillow !
 Bend o'er us, like a bower, my beautiful green willow !

A wild-rose roofs the ruined shed,
 And that and summer well agree :
 And lo! where Mary leans her head,
 Two dear names carved upon the tree! 10
 And Mary's tears, they are not tears of sorrow :
 Our sister and our friend will both be here to-morrow.

'Twas day! but now few, large, and bright,
 The stars are round the crescent moon !
 And now it is a dark warm night,
 The balmiest of the month of June!
 A glow-worm fall'n, and on the marge remounting
 Shines, and its shadow shines, fit stars for our sweet
 fountain.

O ever—ever be thou blest !
 For dearly, Asra! love I thee ! 20
 This brooding warmth across my breast,
 This depth of tranquil bliss—ah, me!
 Fount, tree and shed are gone, I know not whither,
 But in one quiet room we three are still together.

The shadows dance upon the wall,
By the still dancing fire-flames made;
And now they slumber moveless all!
And now they melt to one deep shade!
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal thee:
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I feel
thee! 30

Thine eyelash on my cheek doth play—
'Tis Mary's hand upon my brow!
But let me check this tender lay
Which none may hear but she and thou!
Like the still hive at quiet midnight humming,
Murmur it to yourselves, ye two beloved women!

THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL.

AN ALLEGORY.

I.

HE too has flitted from his secret nest,
Hope's last and dearest child without a name!—
Has flitted from me, like the warmthless flame,
That makes false promise of a place of rest
To the tired Pilgrim's still believing mind;—
Or like some Elfin Knight in kingly court,
Who having won all guerdons in his sport,
Glides out of view, and whither none can find!

II.

Yes! he hath flitted from me—with what aim,
 Or why, I know not! 'Twas a home of bliss, 10
 And he was innocent, as the pretty shame
 Of babe, that tempts and shuns the menaced
 kiss,
 From its twy-cluster'd hiding place of snow!
 Pure as the babe, I ween, and all aglow
 As the dear hopes, that swell the mother's breast—
 Her eyes down gazing o'er her clasped charge;—
 Yet gay as that twice happy father's kiss,
 That well might glance aside, yet never miss,
 Where the sweet mark emboss'd so sweet a
 targe—
 Twice wretched he who hath been doubly blest! 20

III.

Like a loose blossom on a gusty night
 He flitted from me—and has left behind
 (As if to them his faith he ne'er did plight)
 Of either sex and answerable mind
 Two playmates, twin-births of his foster-dame:—
 The one a steady lad (Esteem he hight)
 And Kindness is the gentler sister's name.
 Dim likeness now, though fair she be and good,
 Of that bright boy who hath us all forsook;—
 But in his full-eyed aspect when she stood, 30
 And while her face reflected every look,
 And in reflection kindled—she became
 So like him, that almost she seem'd the same!

IV.

Ah! he is gone, and yet will not depart!—
 Is with me still, yet I from him exiled!
 For still there lives within my secret heart
 The magic image of the magic Child,
 Which there he made up-grow by his strong art,
 As in that crystal orb—wise Merlin's feat,—
 The wondrous "World of Glass," wherein inisled
 All long'd for things their beings did repeat;— 41
 And there he left it, like a Sylph beguiled,
 To live and yearn and languish incomplete!

V.

Can wit of man a heavier grief reveal?
 Can sharper pang from hate or scorn arise?—
 Yes! one more sharp there is that deeper lies,
 Which fond Esteem but mocks when he would heal.
 Yet neither scorn nor hate did it devise,
 But sad compassion and atoning zeal!
 One pang more blighting-keen than hope betray'd!
 And this it is my woeful hap to feel, 51
 When, at her Brother's hest, the twin-born Maid
 With face averted and unsteady eyes,
 Her truant playmate's faded robe puts on;
 And inly shrinking from her own disguise
 Enacts the faery Boy that's lost and gone.
 O worse than all! O pang all pangs above
 Is Kindness counterfeiting absent Love!

"Ἔρως ἀεὶ λάληθρος ἑταῖρος.

IN many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal;
But in far more the estrangèd heart lets know
The absence of the love, which yet it fain would
shew.

THE BUTTERFLY.

THE Butterfly the ancient Grecians made
The soul's fair emblem, and its only name—
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade
Of earthly life!—For in this mortal frame
Ours is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,
Manifold motions making little speed,
And to deform and kill the things whereon we
feed.

MOLES.

* * * * *

THEY shrink in as moles
 (Nature's mute monks, live mandrakes of the ground)
 Creep back from Light—then listen for its sound ;—
 See but to dread, and dread they know not why—
 The natural alien of their negative eye. 10

SONG.

SUNG BY GLYCINE IN 'ZAPOLYA,'
 ACT II. SCENE 2.

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,
 From sky to earth it slanted :
 And poised therein a bird so bold—
 Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted !
 He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled
 Within that shaft of sunny mist ;
 His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
 All else of amethyst !
 And thus he sang : " Adieu ! adieu !
 Love's dreams prove seldom true. 10
 The blossoms they make no delay :
 The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.
 Sweet month of May,
 We must away ;
 Far, far away !
 To-day ! to-day !

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

10

COLOGNE.

IN Köln, a town of monks and bones,
And pavements fanged with murderous stones,
And rags, and hags, and hideous wenches;
I counted two and seventy stenches,
All well defined and several stinks.
Ye Nymphs that reign o'er sewers and sinks,
The river Rhine, it is well known,
Doth wash your city of Cologne;
But tell me, Nymphs! what power divine
Shall henceforth wash the river Rhine?

FANCY IN NUBIBUS ;
OR, THE POET IN THE CLOUDS.

O ! IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
 Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
 To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
 Or let the easily persuaded eyes
 Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
 Of a friend's fancy ; or with head bent low
 And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
 'Twixt crimson banks ; and then, a traveller, go
 From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous
 land !
 Or listening to the tide, with closed sight, 10
 Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
 By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
 Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
 Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

WATER BALLAD.

“ COME hither, gently rowing,
 Come, bear me quickly o'er
 This stream so brightly flowing
 To yonder woodland shore.

But vain were my endeavour
 To pay thee, courteous guide ;
 Row on, row on, for ever
 I'd have thee by my side.

“ Good boatman, prithee haste thee,
 I seek my father-land.”— 10

“ Say, when I there have placed thee,
 Dare I demand thy hand ? ”

“ A maiden's head can never
 So hard a point decide ;
 Row on, row on, for ever
 I'd have thee by my side. ”

The happy bridal over
 The wanderer ceased to roam,
 For, seated by her lover,
 The boat became her home. 20

And still they sang together
 As steering o'er the tide :

“ Row on through wind and weather
 For ever by my side. ”

TO NATURE.

It may indeed be phantasy when I
 Essay to draw from all created things
 Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely clings ;
 And trace in leaves and flowers that round me lie
 Lessons of love and earnest piety.

So let it be ; and if the wide world rings
 In mock of this belief, it brings
 Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.
 So will I build my altar in the fields,
 And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be, 10
 And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower yields
 Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,
 Thee only God ! and thou shalt not despise
 Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

YOUTH AND AGE.

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
 Both were mine ! Life went a-maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young !

When I was young ?—Ah, woful When !
 Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and Then !
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong,
 O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, 10
 How lightly *then* it flashed along :—
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,
 That ask no aid of sail or oar,
 That fear no spite of wind or tide !
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather
 When Youth and I lived in't together.

Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismiss'd ;
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

LOVE'S FIRST HOPE.

O FAIR is Love's first hope to gentle mind !
As Eve's first star thro' fleecy cloudlet peeping ;
And sweeter than the gentle south-west wind,
O'er willowy meads and shadow'd waters creeping,
And Ceres' golden fields ;—the sultry hind
Meets it with brow uplift, and stays his reaping.

DUTY SURVIVING SELF-LOVE :
THE ONLY SURE FRIEND OF DECLINING LIFE.

A SOLILOQUY.

UNCHANGED within, to see all changed without,
Is a blank lot and hard to bear, no doubt.
Yet why at others' warnings should'st thou fret ?
Then only might'st thou feel a just regret,
Hadst thou withheld thy love or hid thy light
In selfish forethought of neglect and slight.

O wiselier then, from feeble yearnings freed,
 While, and on whom, thou may'st—shine on! nor
 heed

Whether the object by reflected light
 Return thy radiance or absorb it quite : 10
 And though thou notest from thy safe recess
 Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome air,
 Love them for what they are ; nor love them less,
 Because to thee they are not what they were.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE.

LINES COMPOSED 21ST FEBRUARY 1827.

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
 The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
 And Winter slumbering in the open air,
 Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
 And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
 Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
 Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
 Bloom, O ye amaranths ! bloom for whom ye may,
 For me ye bloom not ! Glide, rich streams, away ! 10
 With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll :
 And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul ?
 Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
 And Hope without an object cannot live.

Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting does the work of both.

EPITAPH.

STOP, Christian passer-by !—Stop, child of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seem'd he.—
O, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C. ;
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death !
Mercy for praise, to be forgiven for fame
He asked, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou the
same !



EARLY POEMS.



RELIGIOUS MUSINGS.

A DESULTORY POEM, WRITTEN ON THE CHRISTMAS
EVE OF 1794.

THIS is the time, when most divine to hear,
The voice of Adoration rouses me,
As with a Cherub's trump : and high upborne,
Yea, mingling with the Choir, I seem to view
The vision of the heavenly multitude,
Who hymned the song of Peace o'er Bethlehem's
fields !

Yet thou more bright than all the Angel-blaze,
That harbingered thy birth, Thou Man of Woes !
Despisèd Galilæan ! For the Great
Invisible (by symbols only seen) 10
With a peculiar and surpassing light
Shines from the visage of the oppressed good man,
When heedless of himself the scourged saint
Mourns for the oppressor. Fair the vernal mead,
Fair the high grove, the sea, the sun, the stars ;
True impress each of their creating Sire !
Yet nor high grove, nor many-colour'd mead,

Nor the green ocean with his thousand isles,
 Nor the starred azure, nor the sovran sun,
 E'er with such majesty of portraiture 20
 Imaged the supreme beauty uncreate,
 As thou, meek Saviour ! at the fearful hour
 When thy insulted anguish winged the prayer
 Harped by Archangels, when they sing of mercy !
 Which when the Almighty heard from forth his throne
 Diviner light filled Heaven with ecstasy !
 Heaven's hymnings paused : and Hell her yawning
 mouth
 Closed a brief moment.

Lovely was the death

Of Him whose life was Love ! Holy with power
 He on the thought-benighted Sceptic beamed 30
 Manifest Godhead, melting into day
 What floating mists of dark idolatry
 Broke and misshaped the omnipresent Sire :
 And first by Fear uncharmed the drowsed Soul.
 Till of its nobler nature it 'gan feel
 Dim recollections ; and thence soared to Hope,
 Strong to believe whate'er of mystic good
 The Eternal dooms for His immortal sons.
 From Hope and firmer Faith to perfect Love
 Attracted and absorbed : and centered there 40
 God only to behold, and know, and feel,
 Till by exclusive consciousness of God
 All self-annihilated it shall make
 God its Identity : God all in all !
 We and our Father one !

And blest are they,
 Who in this fleshly World, the elect of Heaven,
 Their strong eye darting through the deeds of men,
 Adore with steadfast unpresuming gaze
 Him Nature's essence, mind, and energy !
 And gazing, trembling, patiently ascend 50
 Treading beneath their feet all visible things
 As steps, that upward to their Father's throne
 Lead gradual—else nor glorified nor loved.
 They nor contempt embosom nor revenge :
 For they dare know of what may seem deform
 The Supreme Fair sole operant : in whose sight
 All things are pure, his strong controlling love
 Alike from all educing perfect good.
 Their's too celestial courage, inly armed—
 Dwarfing Earth's giant brood, what time they muse 60
 On their great Father, great beyond compare !
 And marching onwards view high o'er their heads
 His waving banners of Omnipotence.

Who the Creator love, created Might
 Dread not : within their tents no terrors walk.
 For they are holy things before the Lord
 Aye unprofaned, though Earth should league with
 Hell ;
 God's altar grasping with an eager hand
 Fear, the wild-visaged, pale, eye-starting wretch,
 Sure-refuged hears his hot-pursuing fiends 70
 Yell at vain distance. Soon refreshed from Heaven
 He calms the throb and tempest of his heart.
 His countenance settles ; a soft solemn bliss

Swims in his eye—his swimming eye upraised :
 And Faith's whole armour glitters on his limbs !
 And thus transfigured with a dreadless awe,
 A solemn hush of soul, meek he beholds
 All things of terrible seeming : yea, unmoved
 Views e'en the immitigable ministers
 That shower down vengeance on these latter days.
 For kindling with intenser Deity 81
 From the celestial Mercy-seat they come,
 And at the renovating wells of Love
 Have fill'd their vials with salutary wrath,
 To sickly Nature more medicinal
 Than what soft balm the weeping good man pours
 Into the lone despoilèd traveller's wounds !

Thus from the Elect, regenerate through faith,
 Pass the dark passions and what thirsty cares
 Drink up the spirit, and the dim regards 90
 Self-centre. Lo they vanish ! or acquire
 New names, new features—by supernal grace
 Enrobed with Light, and naturalised in Heaven.
 As when a shepherd on a vernal morn
 Through some thick fog creeps timorous with slow
 foot,
 Darkling he fixes on the immediate road
 His downward eye : all else of fairest kind
 Hid or deformed. But lo ! the bursting Sun !
 Touched by the enchantment of that sudden beam
 Straight the black vapour melteth, and in globes 100
 Of dewy glitter gems each plant and tree ;
 On every leaf, on every blade it hangs !

Dance glad the new-born intermingling rays,
And wide around the landscape streams with glory !

There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
Truth of subliming import ! with the which
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,
He from his small particular orbit flies
With blest outstarting ! From himself he flies, 110
Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze
Views all creation ; and he loves it all,
And blesses it, and calls it very good !
This is indeed to dwell with the Most High !
Cherubs and rapture-trembling Seraphim
Can press no nearer to the Almighty's throne.
But that we roam unconscious, or with hearts
Unfeeling of our universal Sire,
And that in His vast family no Cain
Injures uninjured (in her best-aimed blow 120
Victorious Murder a blind Suicide),
Haply for this some younger Angel now
Looks down on Human Nature : and, behold !
A sea of blood bestrewed with wrecks, where
mad
Embattling Interests on each other rush
With unhelmed rage !

'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide Majesty, to know ourselves
Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole !
This fraternises man, this constitutes

Our charities and bearings. But 'tis God 130
 Diffused through all, that doth make all one
 whole ;

This the worst superstition, him except
 Aught to desire, Supreme Reality !
 The plenitude and permanence of bliss !
 O Fiends of Superstition ! not that oft
 The erring priest hath stained with brother's blood
 Your grisly idols, not for this may wrath
 Thunder against you from the Holy One !

But o'er some plain that steameth to the sun, 139
 Peopled with Death ; or where more hideous Trade
 Loud-laughing packs his bales of human anguish ;
 I will raise up a mourning, O ye Fiends !
 And curse your spells, that film the eye of Faith,
 Hiding the present God ; whose presence lost,
 The moral world's cohesion, we become
 An Anarchy of Spirits ! Toy-bewitched,
 Made blind by lusts, disherited of soul,
 No common centre Man, no common sire
 Knoweth ! A sordid solitary thing,

Mid countless brethren with a lonely heart 150
 Through courts and cities the smooth savage
 roams

Feeling himself, his own low self the whole ;
 When he by sacred sympathy might make
 The whole one Self ! Self, that no alien knows !
 Self, far diffused as Fancy's wing can travel !
 Self, spreading still ! Oblivious of its own,
 Yet all of all possessing ! This is Faith !
 This the Messiah's destined victory !

But first offences needs must come ! Even now¹
 (Black hell laughs horrible—to hear the scoff !) 160
 Thee to defend, meek Galilæan ! thee
 And thy mild laws of Love unutterable,
 Mistrust and enmity have burst the bands
 Of social peace : and listening Treachery lurks
 With pious fraud to snare a brother's life ;
 And childless widows o'er the groaning land
 Wail numberless ; and orphans weep for bread !
 Thee to defend, dear Saviour of Mankind !
 Thee, Lamb of God ! thee, blameless Prince of
 Peace !

From all sides rush the thirsty brood of War !— 170
 Austria, and that foul Woman of the North,
 The lustful murderess of her wedded lord !
 And he, connatural Mind ! whom (in their songs
 So bards of elder time had haply feigned)
 Some Fury fondled in her hate to man,
 Bidding her serpent hair in mazy surge
 Lick his young face, and at his mouth inbreathe

¹ January 21st, 1794, in the debate on the Address to his Majesty, on the speech from the Throne, the Earl of Guildford moved an amendment to the following effect :—"That the House hoped his Majesty would seize the earliest opportunity to conclude a peace with France," etc. This motion was opposed by the Duke of Portland, who "considered the war to be merely grounded on one principle—the preservation of the Christian Religion." May 30th, 1794, the Duke of Bedford moved a number of resolutions, with a view to the establishment of a peace with France. He was opposed (among others) by Lord Abingdon in these remarkable words : "The best road to Peace, my Lords, is War ! and War carried on in the same manner in which we are taught to worship our Creator, namely, with all our souls, and with all our minds, and with all our hearts, and with all our strength."

Horrible sympathy ! And leagued with these
 Each petty German princeling, nursed in gore !
 Soul-hardened barterers of human blood ! 180
 Death's prime slave-merchants ! Scorpion-whips of
 Fate !

Nor least in savagery of holy zeal,
 Apt for the yoke, the race degenerate,
 Whom Britain erst had blushed to call her sons !
 Thee to defend the Moloch Priest prefers
 The prayer of hate, and bellows to the herd,
 That Deity, Accomplice Deity
 In the fierce jealousy of wakened wrath
 Will go forth with our armies and our fleets
 To scatter the red ruin on their foes ! 190
 O blasphemy ! to mingle fiendish deeds
 With blessedness !

Lord of unsleeping Love,
 From everlasting Thou ! We shall not die.
 These, even these, in mercy didst thou form,
 Teachers of Good through Evil, by brief wrong
 Making Truth lovely, and her future might
 Magnetic o'er the fixed untrembling heart.

In the primeval age a dateless while
 The vacant Shepherd wander'd with his flock,
 Pitching his tent where'er the green grass waved. 200
 But soon Imagination conjured up
 An host of new desires : with busy aim,
 Each for himself, Earth's eager children toiled.

So Property began, twy-streaming fount,
 Whence Vice and Virtue flow, honey and gall.
 Hence the soft couch, and many-coloured robe,
 The timbrel, and arched dome and costly feast,
 With all the inventive arts, that nursed the soul
 To forms of beauty, and by sensual wants
 Unsensualized the mind, which in the means 210
 Learnt to forget the grossness of the end,
 Best pleased with its own activity.
 And hence Disease that withers manhood's arm,
 The daggered Envy, spirit-quenching Want,
 Warriors, and Lords, and Priests—all the sore ills
 That vex and desolate our mortal life.
 Wide-wasting ills ! yet each the immediate source
 Of mightier good. Their keen necessities
 To ceaseless action goading human thought
 Have made Earth's reasoning animal her Lord ; 220
 And the pale-featured Sage's trembling hand
 Strong as an host of armed Deities,
 Such as the blind Ionian fabled erst.

From Avarice thus, from Luxury and War
 Sprang heavenly Science ; and from Science Freedom.
 O'er waken'd realms Philosophers and Bards
 Spread in concentric circles : they whose souls,
 Conscious of their high dignities from God,
 Brook not wealth's rivalry ! and they, who long
 Enamoured with the charms of order, hate 230
 The unseemly disproportion : and who'er
 Turn with mild sorrow from the victor's car

And the low puppetry of thrones, to muse
On that blest triumph, when the Patriot Sage
Called the red lightnings from the o'er-rushing cloud
And dashed the beauteous terrors on the earth
Smiling majestic. Such a phalanx ne'er
Measured firm paces to the calming sound
Of Spartan flute ! These on the fated day,
When, stung to rage by pity, eloquent men 240
Have roused with pealing voice the unnumbered tribes
That toil and groan and bleed, hungry and blind—
These, hush'd awhile with patient eye serene,
Shall watch the mad careering of the storm ;
Then o'er the wild and wavy chaos rush
And tame the outrageous mass, with plastic might
Moulding Confusion to such perfect forms,
As erst were wont,—bright visions of the day !—
To float before them, when, the summer noon,
Beneath some arched romantic rock reclined 250
They felt the sea-breeze lift their youthful locks ;
Or in the month of blossoms, at mild eve,
Wandering with desultory feet inhaled
The wafted perfumes, and the flocks and woods
And many-tinted streams and setting sun
With all his gorgeous company of clouds
Ecstatic gazed ! then homeward as they strayed
Cast the sad eye to earth, and inly mused
Why there was misery in a world so fair.

Ah ! far removed from all that glads the sense, 260
From all that softens or ennobles Man,

The morsel tossed by law-forced charity,
 And die so slowly, that none call it murder !
 O loathly suppliants ! ye, that unreceived 290
 Totter heart-broken from the closing gates
 Of the full Lazar-house ; or, gazing, stand
 Sick with despair ! O ye to Glory's field
 Forced or ensnared, who, as ye gasp in death,
 Bleed with new wounds beneath the vulture's
 beak !

O thou poor widow, who in dreams dost view
 Thy husband's mangled corse, and from short doze
 Start'st with a shriek ; or in thy half-thatched cot
 Waked by the wintry night-storm, wet and cold
 Cow'rst o'er thy screaming baby ! Rest awhile, 300
 Children of wretchedness ! More groans must rise,
 More blood must stream, or ere your wrongs be
 full.

Yet is the day of retribution nigh :
 The Lamb of God hath opened the fifth seal :
 And upward rush on swiftest wing of fire
 The innumerable multitude of wrongs
 By man on man inflicted ! Rest awhile,
 Children of wretchedness ! The hour is nigh
 And lo ! the Great, the Rich, the Mighty Men,
 The Kings and the Chief Captains of the World, 310
 With all that fixed on high like stars of Heaven
 Shot baleful influence, shall be cast to earth,
 Vile and down-trodden, as the untimely fruit
 Shook from the fig-tree by a sudden storm.
 Even now the storm begins: each gentle name,

Faith and meek Piety, with fearful joy
 Tremble far-off—for lo! the Giant Frenzy
 Uprooting empires with his whirlwind arm
 Mocketh high Heaven; burst hideous from the cell
 Where the old hag, unconquerable, huge, 320
 Creation's eyeless drudge, black Ruin, sits
 Nursing the impatient earthquake.

O return!

Pure Faith! meek Piety! The abhorred Form
 Whose scarlet robe was stiff with earthly pomp,
 Who drank iniquity in cups of gold,
 Whose names were many and all blasphemous,
 Hath met the horrible judgment! Whence that
 cry?

The mighty army of foul Spirits shrieked
 Disherited of earth! For she hath fallen
 On whose black front was written Mystery; 330
 She that reeled heavily, whose wine was blood;
 She that worked whoredom with the Dæmon Power,
 And from the dark embrace all evil things
 Brought forth and nurtured: mitred Atheism!
 And patient Folly who on bended knee
 Gives back the steel that stabbed him; and pale Fear
 Hunted by ghastlier shapings than surround
 Moon-blasted Madness when he yells at midnight!
 Return pure Faith! return meek Piety!
 The kingdoms of the world are your's: each heart 340
 Self-governed, the vast family of Love
 Raised from the common earth by common toil

Enjoy the equal produce. Such delights
 As float to earth, permitted visitants !
 When in some hour of solemn jubilee
 The massy gates of Paradise are thrown
 Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
 Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
 And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,
 And they, that from the crystal river of life 350
 Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales !
 The favoured good man in his lonely walk
 Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks
 Strange bliss which he shall recognise in heaven.
 And such delights, such strange beatitude
 Seize on my young anticipating heart
 When that blest future rushes on my view !
 For in his own and in his Father's might
 The Saviour comes ! While as the Thousand Years
 Lead up their mystic dance, the Desert shouts ! 360
 Old Ocean claps his hands ! The mighty Dead
 Rise to new life, who'er from earliest time
 With conscious zeal had urged Love's wondrous
 plan,
 Coadjutors of God. To Milton's trump
 The high groves of the renovated Earth
 Unbosom their glad echoes : inly hushed,
 Adoring Newton his serener eye
 Raises to heaven : and he of mortal kind
 Wisest, he first who marked the ideal tribes
 Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain. 370
 Lo ! Priestley there, patriot, and saint, and sage ;

Him, full of years, from his loved native land
 Statesmen blood-stained and priests idolatrous
 By dark lies maddening the blind multitude
 Drove with vain hate. Calm, pitying, he retired,
 And mused expectant on these promised years.

O Years ! the blest pre-eminence of Saints !
 Ye sweep athwart my gaze, so heavenly bright,
 The wings that veil the adoring Seraphs' eyes,
 What time they bend before the Jasper Throne 380
 Reflect no lovelier hues ! Yet ye depart,
 And all beyond is darkness. Heights most strange,
 Whence Fancy falls, fluttering her idle wing.
 For who of woman born may paint the hour,
 When seized in his mid course, the Sun shall wane
 Making noon ghastly ! Who of woman born
 May image in the workings of his thought,
 How the black-visaged, red-eyed Fiend outstretched
 Beneath the unsteady feet of Nature groans,
 In fevrish slumbers—destined then to wake, 390
 When fiery whirlwinds thunder his dread name
 And Angels shout, Destruction ! How his arm
 The last great Spirit lifting high in air
 Shall swear by Him, the ever-living One,
 Time is no more !

Believe thou, O my soul,
 Life is a vision shadowy of Truth ;
 And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,
 Shapes of a dream ! The veiling clouds retire,

And lo ! the Throne of the redeeming God
Forth flashing unimaginaire day 400
Wraps in one blaze earth, heaven, and deepest hell.

Contemplant Spirits ! ye that hover o'er
With untired gaze the immeasurable fount
Ebullient with creative Deity !
And ye of plastic power, that interfused
Roll through the grosser and material mass
In organising surge ! Holies of God !
(And what if Monads of the infinite mind ?)
I haply journeying my immortal course
Shall sometime join your mystic choir ! Till then 410
I discipline my young novice thought
In ministeries of heart-stirring song,
And aye on Meditation's heaven-ward wing
Soaring aloft I breathe the empyreal air
Of Love, omnific, omnipresent Love,
Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul
As the great Sun, when he his influence
Sheds on the frost-bound waters—The glad stream
Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

[LATEST VERSION—1829.]

O WHAT a wonder seems the fear of death,
 Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep,
 Babes, Children, Youths, and Men,
 Night following night for threescore years and ten !
 But doubly strange, where life is but a breath
 To sigh and pant with, up Want's rugged steep.

Away, Grim Phantom ! Scorpion King, away !
 Reserve thy terrors and thy stings display
 For coward Wealth and Guilt in robes of State !
 Lo ! by the grave I stand of one, for whom 10
 A prodigal Nature and a niggard Doom
 (*That* all bestowing, *this* withholding all)
 Made each chance knell from distant spire or dome
 Sound like a seeking Mother's anxious call,
 Return, poor Child ! Home, weary truant, home !

Thee, Chatterton ! these unblest stones protect
 From want, and the bleak freezings of neglect.
 Too long before the vexing Storm-blast driven
 Here hast thou found repose ! beneath this sod !
 Thou ! O vain word ! *thou* dwell'st not with the
 clod ! 20

Amid the shining Host of the Forgiven

Thou at the throne of mercy and thy God
 The triumph of redeeming Love dost hymn
 (Believe it, O my Soul !) to harps of Seraphim.

Yet oft, perforce ('tis suffering Nature's call),
 I weep that heaven-born Genius *so* shall fall ;
 And oft, in Fancy's saddest hour, my soul
 Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
 Now groans my sickening heart, as still I view
 Thy corse of livid hue ; 30
 Now indignation checks the feeble sigh,
 Or flashes through the tear that glistens in mine
 eye !

Is this the land of song-ennobled line ?
 Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
 Poured forth his lofty strain ?
 Ah me ! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
 Beneath chill Disappointment's shade,
 His weary limbs in lonely anguish lay'd.
 And o'er her darling dead
 Pity hopeless hung her head, 40
 While " mid the pelting of that merciless storm,"
 Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form !

Sublime of thought, and confident of fame,
 From vales where Avon winds the Minstrel came.
 Light-hearted youth ! aye, as he hastes along,
 He meditates the future song,
 How dauntless Ælla frayed the Dacian foe ;
 And while the numbers flowing strong
 In eddies whirl, in surges throng,

Exulting in the spirits' genial throe 50
 In tides of power his life-blood seems to flow.

And now his cheeks with deeper ardors flame,
 His eyes have glorious meanings, that declare
 More than the light of outward day shines there,
 A holier triumph and a sterner aim !
 Wings grow within him ; and he soars above
 Or Bard's or Minstrel's lay of war or love.
 Friend to the friendless, to the sufferer health,
 He hears the widow's prayer, the good man's praise ;
 To scenes of bliss transmutes his fancied wealth, 60
 And young and old shall now see happy days.
 On many a waste he bids trim gardens rise,
 Gives the blue sky to many a prisoner's eyes ;
 And now in wrath he grasps the patriot steel,
 And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel.

Sweet Flower of Hope ! free Nature's genial child !
 That didst so fair disclose thy early bloom,
 Filling the wide air with a rich perfume !
 For thee in vain all heavenly aspects smil'd ;
 From the hard world brief respite could they win—
 The frost nipped sharp without, the canker preyed
 within ! 71

Ah ! where are fled the charms of vernal Grace,
 And Joy's wild gleams that lightened o'er thy face ?
 Youth of tumultuous soul, and haggard eye !
 Thy wasted form, thy hurried steps I view,
 On thy wan forehead starts the lethal dew,
 And oh ! the anguish of that shuddering sigh !

Such were the struggles of the gloomy hour,
 When Care, of withered brow,
 Prepared the poison's death-cold power : 80
 Already to thy lips was raised the bowl,
 When near thee stood Affection meek
 (Her bosom bare, and wildly pale her cheek)

Thy sullen gaze she bade thee roll
 On scenes that well might melt thy soul ;
 Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,
 Thy native cot, where still, at close of day,
 Peace smiling sate, and listened to thy lay ;
 Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear,
 And mark thy mother's thrilling tear ; 90
 See, see her breast's convulsive throes,
 Her silent agony of woe !

Ah ! dash the poisoned chalice from thy hand !

And thou hadst dashed it, at her soft command,
 But that Despair and Indignation rose,
 And told again the story of thy woes ;
 Told the keen insult of the unfeeling heart,
 The dread dependence on the low-born mind ;
 Told every pang, with which thy soul must smart,
 Neglect, and grinning Scorn, and Want combined !
 Recoiling quick, thou badest the friend of pain 101
 Roll the black tide of Death through every freezing
 vein !

Ye woods ! that wave o'er Avon's rocky steep,
 To Fancy's ear sweet is your murmuring deep !
 For here she loves the cypress wreath to weave ;
 Watching, with wistful eye, the saddening tints of eve.

Here, far from men, amid this pathless grove,
 In solemn thought the Minstrel wont to rove,
 Like star-beam on the slow sequestered tide
 Lone-glittering, through the high tree branching
 wide. 110

And here, in Inspiration's eager hour,
 When most the big soul feels the mastering power,
 These wilds, these caverns roaming o'er,
 Round which the screaming sea-gulls soar,
 With wild unequal steps he passed along,
 Oft pouring on the winds a broken song :
 Anon, upon some rough rock's fearful brow
 Would pause abrupt—and gaze upon the waves below.

Poor Chatterton ! *he* sorrows for thy fate 119
 Who would have praised and loved thee, ere too late.
 Poor Chatterton ! farewell ! of darkest hues
 This chaplet cast I on thy unshaped tomb ;
 But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
 Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom !
 For oh ! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing,
 Have blackened the fair promise of my spring ;
 And the stern Fate transpierced with viewless dart
 The last pale Hope that shivered at my heart !

Hence, gloomy thoughts ! no more my soul shall dwell
 On joys that were ! no more endure to weigh 130
 The shame and anguish of the evil day,
 Wisely forgetful ! O'er the ocean swell
 Sublime of Hope I seek the cottaged dell
 Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray ;

And, dancing to the moon-light roundelay,
The wizard Passions weave a holy spell !

O Chatterton ! that thou wert yet alive !
Sure thou would'st spread the canvas to the gale,
And love with us the tinkling team to drive
O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale ; 140
And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
Hanging, enraptured, on thy stately song,
And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy
All deftly masked as hoar Antiquity.

Alas, vain Phantasies ! the fleeting brood
Of Woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood !
Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,
Where Susquehannah pours his untamed stream ;
And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide, 150
Will raise a solemn cenotaph to thee,
Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy !
And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

ABSENCE.

A FAREWELL ODE ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR JESUS
COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

WHERE graced with many a classic spoil
 Cam rolls his reverend stream along,
 I haste to urge the learned toil
 That sternly chides my love-lorn song :
 Ah me ! too mindful of the days
 Illumed by Passion's orient rays,
 When Peace, and Cheerfulness and Health
 Enriched me with the best of wealth.

Ah fair Delights ! that o'er my soul
 On Memory's wing, like shadows fly ! 10
 Ah Flowers ! which Joy from Eden stole
 While Innocence stood smiling by !—
 But cease, fond Heart ! this bootless moan :
 Those Hours on rapid pinions flown
 Shall yet return, by Absence crowned,
 And scatter livelier roses round.

The Sun who ne'er remits his fires
 On heedless eyes may pour the day :
 The Moon, that oft from Heaven retires,
 Endears her renovated ray. 20

What though she leave the sky unblest
 To mourn awhile in murky vest ?
 When she relumes her lovely light,
 We bless the Wanderer of the Night.

SONGS OF THE PIXIES.

THE Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half-way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation called the Pixies' Parlour. The roots of old trees form its ceiling ; and on its sides are innumerable cyphers, among which the author discovered his own cypher and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the Author, during the summer months of the year 1793, conducted a party of young ladies ; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colourless yet clear, was proclaimed the Faery Queen. On which occasion the following Irregular Ode was written.

I.

WHOM the untaught Shepherds call
 Pixies in their madrigal,
 Fancy's children, here we dwell :
 Welcome, Ladies ! to our cell.
 Here the wren of softest note
 Builds its nest and warbles well ;
 Here the blackbird strains his throat ;
 Welcome, Ladies ! to our cell.

II.

When fades the moon all shadowy-pale,
 And scuds the cloud before the gale, 10
 Ere Morn with living gems bedight
 Purples the East with streaky light,
 We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dews
 Clad in robes of rainbow hues ;
 Or sport amid the rosy gleam
 Soothed by the distant-tinkling team,
 While lusty Labour scouting sorrow
 Bids the Dame a glad good-morrow,
 Who jogs the accustomed road along,
 And paces cheery to her cheering song. 20

III.

But not our filmy pinion
 We scorch amid the blaze of day,
 When Noontide's fiery-tressed minion,
 Flashes the fervid ray.
 Aye from the sultry heat
 We to the cave retreat
 O'er-canopied by huge roots intertwined
 With wildest texture, blackened o'er with age :
 Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
 Beneath whose foliage pale 30
 Fanned by the unfrequent gale
 We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV.

Thither, while the murmuring throng
 Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
 By Indolence and Fancy brought,
 A youthful Bard, "unknown to Fame,"
 Wooes the Queen of Solemn Thought,
 And heaves the gentle misery of a sigh
 Gazing with tearful eye,
 As round our sandy grot appear 40
 Many a rudely-sculptured name
 To pensive Memory dear!
 Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctured hue,
 We glance before his view:
 O'er his hush'd soul our soothing witcheries shed
 And twine our faery garlands round his head.

V.

When Evening's dusky car
 Crowned with her dewy star
 Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight;
 On leaves of aspen trees 50
 We tremble to the breeze
 Veiled from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
 Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
 Along our wildly-bowered sequestered walk,
 We listen to the enamoured rustic's talk;
 Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
 Where young-eyed Loves have built their turtle nest;
 Or guide of soul-subduing power
 The electric flash, that from the melting eye
 Darts the fond question and the soft reply. 60

VI.

Or through the mystic ringlets of the vale
 We flash our faery feet in gamesome prank ;
 Or, silent-sandal'd, pay our defter court,
 Circling the Spirit of the Western Gale,
 Where wearied with his flower-caressing sport,
 Supine he slumbers on a violet bank ;
 Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam
 By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream ;
 Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
 Dash'd o'er the rocky channel froths along ; 70
 Or where, his silver waters smoothed to rest,
 The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII.

Hence thou lingerer, Light !
 Eve saddens into Night.
 Mother of wildly-working dreams ! we view
 The sombre hours, that round thee stand
 With down-cast eyes (a duteous band !)
 Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
 Sorceress of the ebon throne !
 Thy power the Pixies own, 80
 When round thy raven brow
 Heaven's lucent roses glow,
 And clouds in watery colours drest
 Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest :
 What time the pale moon sheds a softer day
 Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam :
 For mid the quivering light 'tis ours to play,
 Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII.

Welcome, Ladies ! to the cell
 Where the blameless Pixies dwell : 90
 But thou, Sweet Nymph ! proclaimed our Faery
 Queen,
 With what obeisance meet
 Thy presence shall we greet ?
 For lo ! attendant on thy steps are seen
 Graceful Ease in artless stole,
 And white-robed Purity of soul,
 With Honour's softer mien ;
 Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,
 And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,
 Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view, 100
 As snow-drop wet with dew.

IX.

Unboastful Maid ! though now the Lily pale
 Transparent grace thy beauties meek ;
 Yet ere again along the impurpling vale,
 The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove,
 Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
 We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek ;
 And, haply, from the nectar-breathing Rose
 Extract a Blush for Love !

LINES

TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

ONCE more, sweet Stream ! with slow foot wandering
near,

I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
Escaped the flashing of the noontide hours,
With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
(Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn)
My languid hand shall wreath thy mossy urn.
For not through pathless grove with murmur rude
Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph, Solitude ;
Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
The Hermit-fountain of some dripping cell ! 10
Pride of the Vale ! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh.
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve with pensive look
Whistling lorn ditties leans upon his crook,
Or, starting, pauses with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-loved maid's accustomed tread : 20
She, vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Loiters, the long-fill'd pitcher in her hand.

Unboastful Stream ! thy fount with pebbled falls
 The faded form of past delight recalls,
 What time the morning sun of Hope arose,
 And all was joy ; save when another's woes
 A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
 Like passing clouds impictured on thy breast.
 Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
 Or silvery stole beneath the pensive Moon : 30
 Ah ! now it works rude brakes and thorns among,
 Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along !

THE SIGH.

WHEN Youth his faery reign began
 Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man ;
 While Peace the present hour beguiled,
 And all the lovely Prospect smiled ;
 Then, Mary ! 'mid my lightsome glee
 I heaved the painless Sigh for thee.

And when, along the waves of woe,
 My harassed Heart was doomed to know
 The frantic burst of Outrage keen,
 And the slow Pang that gnaws unseen ; 10
 Then shipwrecked on Life's stormy sea
 I heaved an anguished Sigh for thee !

But soon Reflection's power imprest
 A stiller sadness on my breast ;

And sickly Hope with waning eye
Was well content to droop and die :
I yielded to the stern decree,
Yet heaved a languid Sigh for thee !

And though in distant climes to roam,
A wanderer from my native home, 20
I fain would soothe the sense of Care,
And lull to sleep the Joys that were !
Thy Image may not banished be—
Still, Mary ! still I sigh for thee.

IMITATED FROM THE WELSH.

IF while my passion I impart,
You deem my words untrue,
O place your hand upon my heart—
Feel how it throbs for *you* !

Ah no ! reject the thoughtless claim
In pity to your Lover !
That thrilling touch would aid the flame
It wishes to discover.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

[FROM 'THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE,' ACT I.]

TELL me, on what holy ground
 May Domestic Peace be found?
 Halcyon daughter of the skies,
 Far on fearful wings she flies,
 From the pomp of sceptered state,
 From the rebel's noisy hate.
 In a cottaged vale she dwells,
 Listening to the Sabbath bells!
 Still around her steps are seen
 Spotless Honour's meeker mien, 10
 Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
 Sorrow smiling through her tears,
 And, conscious of the past employ,
 Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

TO SCHILLER.

SCHILLER! that hour I would have wished to die,
 If through the shuddering midnight I had sent
 From the dark dungeon of the tower time-rent
 That fearful voice, a famished Father's cry—
 Lest in some after moment aught more mean
 Might stamp me mortal! A triumphant shout
 Black Horror screamed, and all her goblin rout

Diminished shrunk from the more withering scene !
 Ah ! Bard tremendous in sublimity !
 Could I behold thee in thy loftier mood 10
 Wandering at eve with finely-frenzied eye
 Beneath some vast old tempest-swinging wood !
 Awhile with mute awe gazing I would brood :
 Then weep aloud in a wild ecstasy !

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

SISTER of love-lorn Poets, Philomel !
 How many Bards in city garret pent,
 While at their window they with downward eye
 Mark the faint lamp-beam on the kennelled mud,
 And listen to the drowsy cry of Watchmen
 (Those hoarse unfeather'd Nightingales of Time !)
 How many wretched Bards address thy name,
 And hers, the full-orbed Queen that shines above.
 But I *do* hear thee, and the high bough mark,
 Within whose mild moon-mellowed foliage hid 10
 Thou warblest sad thy pity-pleading strains.
 O ! I have listen'd, till my working soul,
 Waked by those strains to thousand phantasies,
 Absorbed hath ceased to listen ! Therefore oft,
 I hymn thy name : and with a proud delight
 Oft will I tell thee, Minstrel of the Moon !
 "Most musical, most melancholy" Bird !
 That all thy soft diversities of tone,
 Tho' sweeter far than the delicious airs

That vibrate from a white-arm'd Lady's harp, 20
 What time the languishment of lonely love
 Melts in her eye, and heaves her breast of snow,
 Are not so sweet as is the voice of her,
 My Sara—best beloved of human kind !
 When breathing the pure soul of tenderness
 She thrills me with the Husband's promised name !

LINES

COMPOSED WHILE CLIMBING THE LEFT ASCENT OF
 BROCKLEY COOMB, SOMERSETSHIRE, MAY 1795.

WITH many a pause and oft reverted eye
 I climb the Coomb's ascent : sweet songsters near
 Warble in shade their wild-wood melody :
 Far off the unvarying Cuckoo soothes my ear.
 Up scour the startling stragglers of the flock
 That on green plots o'er precipices browze :
 From the forced fissures of the naked rock
 The Yew-tree bursts ! Beneath its dark green boughs
 (Mid which the May-thorn blends its blossoms white)
 Where broad smooth stones jut out in mossy seats, 10
 I rest :—and now have gained the topmost site.
 Ah ! what a luxury of landscape meets
 My gaze ! Proud towers, and cots more dear to me,
 Elm-shadow'd fields, and prospect-bounding sea !
 Deep sighs my lonely heart : I drop the tear :
 Enchanting spot ! O were my Sara here !

TRANSLATIONS.



HYMN TO THE EARTH.

[IMITATED FROM STÖLBERG'S 'HYMNE AN
DIE ERDE.']

HEXAMETERS.

EARTH! thou mother of numberless children, the
nurse and the mother,
Hail! O Goddess, thrice hail! Blest be thou! and,
blessing, I hymn thee!
Forth, ye sweet sounds! from my harp, and my voice
shall float on your surges—
Soar thou aloft, O soul! and bear up my song on
thy pinions.

Travelling the vale with mine eyes—green meadows
and lake with green island,
Dark in its basin of rock, and the bare stream flowing
in brightness,
Thrill'd with thy beauty and love in the wooded slope
of the mountain,
Here, great mother, I lie, thy child, with his head on
thy bosom!
Playful the spirits of noon, that rushing soft through
thy tresses,

Green-haired goddess ! refresh me ; and hark ! as they
hurry or linger, 10
Fill the pause of my harp, or sustain it with musical
murmurs.
Into my being thou murmurest joy, and tenderest
sadness
Shedd'st thou, like dew, on my heart, till the joy and
the heavenly sadness
Pour themselves forth from my heart in tears, and the
hymn of thanksgiving.

Earth ! thou mother of numberless children, the nurse
and the mother,
Sister thou of the stars, and beloved by the Sun, the
rejoicer !
Guardian and friend of the moon, O Earth, whom
the comets forget not,
Yea, in the measureless distance wheel round and
again they behold thee !
Fadeless and young (and what if the latest birth of
creation ?)
Bride and consort of Heaven, that looks down upon
thee enamoured ! 20
Say, mysterious Earth ! O say, great mother and
goddess,
Was it not well with thee then, when first thy lap
was ungirdled,
Thy lap to the genial Heaven, the day that he wooed
thee and won thee !
Fair was thy blush, the fairest and first of the blushes
of morning !

Deep was the shudder, O Earth ! the throe of thy
 self-retention :
 Inly thou strovest to flee, and didst seek thyself at
 thy centre !
 Mightier far was the joy of thy sudden resilience ; and
 forthwith
 Myriad myriads of lives teemed forth from the mighty
 embracement.
 Thousand-fold tribes of dwellers, impelled by thousand-
 fold instincts,
 Filled, as a dream, the wide waters ; the rivers sang
 on their channels ; 30
 Laughed on their shores the hoarse seas ; the yearning
 ocean swelled upward ;
 Young life lowed through the meadows, the woods,
 and the echoing mountains,
 Wandered bleating in valleys, and warbled on blossom-
 ing branches.

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CATULLIAN HENDECASYLLABLES.

HEAR, my beloved, an old Milesian story !—
 High, and embosomed in congregated laurels,
 Glimmered a temple upon a breezy headland ;
 In the dim distance amid the skiey billows
 Rose a fair island ; the god of flocks had blest it.
 From the far shores of the bleat-resounding island
 Oft by the moonlight a little boat came floating,

Came to the sea-cave beneath the breezy headland,
 Where amid myrtles a pathway stole in mazes
 Up to the groves of the high embosomed temple. 10
 There in a thicket of dedicated roses,
 Oft did a priestess, as lovely as a vision,
 Pouring her soul to the son of Cytherea,
 Pray him to hover around the slight canoe-boat,
 And with invisible pilotage to guide it
 Over the dusk wave, until the nightly sailor
 Shiv'ring with ecstasy sank upon her bosom.

THE HOMERIC HEXAMETER
 DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.

STRONGLY it bears us along in swelling and limitless
 billows,
 Nothing before and nothing behind but the sky and
 the ocean.

THE OVIDIAN ELEGIAC METRE
 DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.

IN the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column;
 In the Pentameter aye falling in melody back

ON A CATARACT
FROM A CAVERN NEAR THE SUMMIT OF A
MOUNTAIN PRECIPICE.

[AFTER STÖLBERG'S 'UNSTERBLICHER JÜNGLING.']

UNPERISHING youth !
Thou leapest from forth
The cell of thy hidden nativity ;
Never mortal saw
The cradle of the strong one ;
Never mortal heard
The gathering of his voices ;
The deep-murmured charm of the son of the rock,
That is lisped evermore at his slumberless fountain.
There's a cloud at the portal, a spray-woven veil 10
At the shrine of his ceaseless renewing ;
It embosoms the roses of dawn,
It entangles the shafts of the noon,
And into the bed of its stillness
The moonshine sinks down as in slumber,
That the son of the rock, that the nursling of heaven
May be born in a holy twilight !

The wild goat in awe
Looks up and beholds
Above thee the cliff inaccessible ; 20

Thou at once full-born
 Maddenest in thy joyance,
 Whirlest, shatterest, splittest
 Life invulnerable.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

[IMITATED FROM SCHILLER.]

NEVER, believe me,
 Appear the Immortals,
 Never alone :

Scarce had I welcomed the Sorrow-beguiler,
 Iacchus ! but in came Boy Cupid the Smiler ;
 Lo ! Phœbus the Glorious descends from his throne !
 They advance, they float in, the Olympians all !
 With Divinities fills my
 Terrestrial hall !

How shall I yield you 10
 Due entertainment,
 Celestial quire ?

Me rather, bright guests ! with your wings of up-
 buoyance
 Bear aloft to your homes, to your banquets of joyance,

That the roofs of Olympus may echo my lyre !
 Hah ! we mount ! on their pinions they waft up my
 soul !

O give me the nectar !
 O fill me the bowl !

Give him the nectar !
 Pour out for the poet, 20
 Hebe ! pour free !

Quicken his eyes with celestial dew,
 That Styx the detested no more he may view,
 And like one of us Gods may conceit him to be !
 Thanks, Hebe ! I quaff it. Io Pæan, I cry !
 The wine of the Immortals
 Forbids me to die !

MIGNON'S SONG.

[FROM GOETHE.]

KNOW'ST thou the land where the pale citrons grow,
 The golden fruits in darker foliage glow ?
 Soft blows the wind that breathes from that blue
 sky ;
 Still stands the myrtle and the laurel high.
 Know'st thou it well, that land, beloved Friend ?
 Thither with thee, O, thither would I wend !

WESTPHALIAN SONG.

[The following is an almost literal translation of a very old and very favourite song among the Westphalian Boors. The turn at the end is the same with one of Mr. Dibdin's excellent songs, and the air to which it is sung by the Boors is remarkably sweet and lively.]

WHEN thou to my true-love com'st
 Greet her from me kindly ;
 When she asks thee how I fare ?
 Say, folks in Heaven fare finely.
 When she asks, " What ! Is he sick ?"
 Say, dead !—and when for sorrow
 She begins to sob and cry,
 Say, I come to-morrow.

NAMES.

[FROM LESSING.]

I ASK'D my fair one happy day,
 What I should call her in my lay ;
 By what sweet name from Rome or Greece ;
 Lalage, Neæra, Chloris,
 Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,
 Arethusa or Lucrece.

“ Ah!” replied my gentle fair,
“ Beloved, what are names but air?
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris, 10
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only, only call me thine.”

JOB'S LUCK.

SLY Beelzebub took all occasions
To try Job's constancy and patience ;
He took his honours, took his health,
He took his children, took his wealth,
His camels, horses, asses, cows—
And the sly Devil did not take his spouse.

But Heaven that brings out good from evil,
And loves to disappoint the Devil,
Had predetermined to restore 10
Twofold all Job had before,
His children, camels, horses, cows,—
Short-sighted Devil, not to take his spouse !

ASTROLOGY.

[FROM WALLENSTEIN.]

O NEVER rudely will I blame his faith
 In the might of stars and angels! 'Tis not merely
 The human being's Pride that peoples space
 With life and mystical predominance ;
 Since likewise for the stricken heart of Love
 This visible nature, and this common world,
 Is all too narrow: yea, a deeper import
 Lurks in the legend told my infant years
 Than lies upon that truth, we live to learn.
 For fable is Love's world, his home, his birth-place :
 Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays and talismans, II
 And spirits; and delightedly believes
 Divinities, being himself divine.
 The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
 The fair humanities of old religion,
 The Power, the Beauty, and the Majesty,
 That had her haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
 Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
 Or chasms and watery depths; all these have vanished.
 They live no longer in the faith of reason. 20
 But still the heart doth need a language, still
 Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,
 And to yon starry world they now are gone,
 Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth

With man as with their friend; and to the lover
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
Shoot influence down : and ever at this day
'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
And Venus who brings everything that's fair.

THEKLA'S SONG.

[FROM WALLENSTEIN.]

THE cloud doth gather, the greenwood roar,
The damsel paces along the shore ;
The billows they tumble with might, with might ;
And she flings out her voice to the darksome night ;
Her bosom is swelling with sorrow ;
The world it is empty, the heart will die,
There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky :
Thou Holy One, call thy child away !
I've lived and loved, and that was to-day—
Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.



NOTES

p. 3. THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IT is universally known that this marvellous poem was composed in November 1797, and commenced during a pedestrian excursion undertaken by Coleridge and Wordsworth; that it was suggested by a dream of Coleridge's friend Cruickshank, but really founded upon an idea of Wordsworth's, who had read of albatrosses in Shelvocke's *Voyage*; and that it was to have been a joint composition, but is in fact almost entirely Coleridge's. The accounts of the two poets harmonize in all essential particulars, but differ as to the spot where the poem was begun, which Wordsworth places on the road between Nether Stowey and Watchet, and Coleridge on that between Nether Stowey and Dulverton. Wordsworth says that it was commenced at the beginning of an excursion to Lynton by way of Watchet and Minehead; but if it is the ballad which Dorothy Wordsworth, writing on November 20, states to have been planned in a walk undertaken on November 13, this cannot have been the case, for this was a walk of only eight miles. If it was not, Wordsworth's and Coleridge's accounts may be reconciled by supposing the tourists to have returned by way of Dulverton, and the poem to have been planned at the end instead of the beginning of the excursion.

No editor, so far as we have ascertained, has hitherto referred to Shelvocke's *Voyage* (published in 1726), to discover what the adventure of the albatross really was. Such a reference would have revealed the extreme imperfection of Wordsworth's account. He says: "I had been reading in Shelvocke's *Voyage* a day or two before, that,

while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.'" Any one would suppose that the sole fact derived from Shelvocke was the existence of albatrosses at Cape Horn, and that the incident of the Mariner's killing one was entirely Wordsworth's invention. In truth it is neither his invention nor another's, but a simple fact, with however a remarkable difference from the incident in the poem, which greatly extenuates the slayer's offence. The albatross was a *black* one, and naturally deemed a bird of ill omen. Shelvocke says:

"We had not had the sight of one fish of any kind since we were come to the southward of the Straits of Le Mair, nor one sea-bird, except a disconsolate black albatross who accompanied us for several days, hovering about us as if he had lost himself, till Hatley, my second captain, observing in one of his melancholy fits that the bird was always hovering near us, imagined from his colour that it might be some ill omen. That which, I suppose, induced him the more to encourage his superstition, was the continued series of contrary tempestuous winds which had oppressed us ever since we had got into this sea. But be that as it would, he, after some fruitless attempts, at length shot the albatross, not doubting, perhaps, that we should have a fair wind after it."

It would be very interesting to know whether Coleridge was aware of the blackness of Shelvocke's albatross, and had the discrimination to conceal it, or whether the circumstance was never imparted to him. Wordsworth thinks that he never saw the book. Some few touches of natural description seem to have been suggested by passages in *The Strange and Dangerous Voyage of Captain Thomas James*, 1653.

There is a wide difference between the text of the 'Ancient Mariner' as it originally appeared in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) and the form which it assumed in that of 1800, and subsequent editions. The revision is a great improvement, especially in clearing away archaisms and other affectations of simplicity. The

truly ridiculous line, for instance, "The sailors gave it biscuit-worms" (weevils for an albatross!) becomes, "It ate the food it ne'er had eat." A few more alterations were made when the poem was reprinted in 'Sibylline Leaves.' The text of the 'Ancient Mariner' as it originally stood in the 1798 edition of *Lyrical Ballads* is reprinted in the Appendix to Mr. Campbell's edition, and the variations of the edition of 1800 are shown in footnotes. It also appears in Professor Dowden's edition of *Lyrical Ballads*.

ll. 41, 42, *marginal note*. Mr. Dykes Campbell improves upon all preceding editors by correcting *drawn* into *driven*. He might have fortified his emendation by referring to the Argument: "How a ship having passed the Line was *driven* by storms."

l. 104. *The furrow followed free*. In 'Sibylline Leaves' Coleridge altered *followed* to *streamed off*, remarking: "I had not been long on board a ship before I perceived that this [followed] was the image as seen by the spectator from the shore, or from another vessel. From the ship itself the wake appears like a brook flowing off from the stern." Poetry and melody, however, got the better of truth to nature, and the old reading was restored in the next edition.

l. 108. *Quoth she, and whistles thrice*. After this line, in 'Sibylline Leaves,' appeared a stanza originally printed in *Lyrical Ballads*—

"A gust of wind sterte up behind
 And whistled through his bones :
 Through the holes of his eyes and the hole of his mouth,
 Half whistles and half groans."

Upon this Coleridge comments as follows in the copy of 'Sibylline Leaves' in the possession of Mr. Stuart Montagu Samuel: "This stanza I had earnestly urged the printer to omit, but he was a coxcomb, and had an opinion of his own, forsooth! The Devil daub him! (*i.e.* his own Devil)."

Coleridge's judicious application of the *πλέον ἡμίον πάντος* maxim by the rejection of superfluous horror may be paralleled with Keats's delicacy in discarding for his *Ode to Melancholy* an initial stanza treating of

gibbets and bones, and beginning "No, no, go not to Lethe."

l. 200. *At one stride comes the dark.* Coleridge annotates in Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves' (not the same as that seen by Mr. Dykes Campbell): "Between the Tropics there is no twilight. As the Sun's last segment dips down and the evening gun is fired the constellations appear arrayed."

p. 29. LOVE.

This poem first appeared in the *Morning Post*, December 21, 1799, under the title of 'Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladié,' and was republished with important alterations in the second volume of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800). Scott preferred the original version, and reprinted it in *English Minstrelsy* in 1810. Coleridge commenced the projected 'Dark Ladié,' and the fragment has appeared in his works since 1834, but seems too imperfect for reproduction here. Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge suggested to Mr. Dykes Campbell that 'Love' was probably written at Sockburn, on the Tees, where, in November 1799, Coleridge visited the Wordsworths, themselves on a visit to their connections the Hutchinsons. There is a recumbent statue of an armed knight in Sockburn church.

l. 9. *The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene*, etc. "The moon above us blending in the evening lights." Coleridge's letter describing his ascent of the Brocken, May 17, 1799.

"I can hardly say a word upon this poem for very admiration. I must observe, however, that one of the charms of it consists in the numerous repetitions and revolvings of the words, one on the other, as if taking delight in their own beauty."—Leigh Hunt, *Imagination and Fancy*.

p. 33. THE NIGHTINGALE.

First printed in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798. It seems hardly necessary to say that the scenery of the poem is that of the Quantocks about Nether Stowey and Alfoxden; that, "My Friend, and thou, our Sister!" are William

and Dorothy Wordsworth; that, though not "hard by" Alfoxden, the "castle huge" is probably the ruined castle overhanging Nether Stowey, and that the "most gentle maid" is Dorothy Wordsworth.—CAMPBELL.

l. 14. *Oh idle thought!* Coleridge afterwards became alarmed lest he should be thought to have censured Milton, and wrote: "This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description; it is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a *dramatic propriety*."

Of all Coleridge's poems in blank verse, exquisite as most of them are, this is the best. By such of these as are not merely descriptive or meditative, he became the founder of the English idyll afterwards perfected by Tennyson, and to which Southey, though with far inferior genius, materially contributed.

p. 37. THE FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE.

Printed in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798. An excerpt from *Osorio*, Act IV.

p. 40. THE DUNGEON.

Lyrical Ballads, 1798. From *Osorio*, and *Remorse*, Act V. sc. i.

p. 45. CHRISTABEL.

'Christabel' was first published in 1816, along with 'Kubla Khan' and 'The Pains of Sleep.' Coleridge states in a preface that the first part was written at Nether Stowey in 1797, and the second in 1800, after his return from Germany. It is almost to be regretted that this second part was ever composed, for, although containing many beautiful passages, and one most memorable one, it has little of the unearthly magic of the first; and the fruitless attempt to complete the poem kept it out of the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800, where it was to have appeared. Coleridge always persisted that he perfectly saw his way to complete it in five parts; but if inspiration had ever really revisited him, the action would have taken a different

course to any that he could have conceived in his ordinary state of mind. According to Gillman, one incident in the continuation was to have been the metamorphosis of the evil thing that has come to wreck Christabel's peace from the witch Geraldine into the semblance of Christabel's lover, to the great distress of the maiden, who cannot comprehend her instinctive repugnance to what has hitherto been most dear to her. This is probably correct, for nearly the same conception appears in 'Love'—

“There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight !”

A most poetical imagination, but one exceedingly difficult to manage after we have become familiarized with Geraldine in her feminine shape. On the whole we may be thankful that 'Christabel' has remained what it is, the most marvellous fragment that ever came from the human mind. Coleridge had at one time thought "of extending 'Christabel' and giving it new characters and a greater number of incidents." This would have brought it down to the level of the metrical romances of Scott and Byron. As early as 1800 he had told Davy that he did not for his own part think nearly so highly of 'Christabel' as Wordsworth did: just as Sydney Dobell underrated his own 'Keith of Ravelston,' so infinitely more ethereal than the mass of his poetry.

1. 7. *Mastiff-bitch*. "I advised Coleridge to alter this into—

‘Sir Leoline, the baron round,
Had a toothless mastiff-bitch.’

But Coleridge, who has no alacrity in altering, changed this first termination to *which*, but left in the other."—C. LAMB, *apud* Alsop, *Letters*, etc. It was in fact the second line which Coleridge thus altered in the editions of 1828 and 1829, but *bitch* has been restored in all subsequent editions except Mr. Campbell's.

ll. 16—20.

“The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.”

“The moon is immensely large, the sky scattered over with clouds. Then soon closed in, contracting the dimensions of the moon; in short, concealing her.”—Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, January 31, 1798, and therefore after the composition of the first part of ‘Christabel,’ if Coleridge's account of the date of this is correct. A similar query is raised by another entry on March following: “One only leaf upon the top of a tree, the sole remaining leaf, danced round and round like a rag blown by the wind.” (See ll. 49—52.)

l. 34. *Rarest* mistletoe. The epithet is appropriate in a sense not intended by the writer, for the chances were a million to one against Christabel finding mistletoe upon an oak.

l. 129. *The lady sank, belike through pain.* Because no demon could without aid pass the holy emblem over the lintel. There is a profound moral in this popular superstition. The devil cannot come into your house unless you bring him in yourself.

l. 167. *And jealous of the listening air.* This beautiful line was first introduced into the edition of 1828.

ll. 179, 180.

*Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain.*

These lines must have been unconsciously present to Shelley's mind when he wrote in ‘Rosalind and Helen’—

“The rites of a religion sweet
Whose god was in her heart and brain.”

l. 253. *A sight to dream of, not to tell.*

The Edinburgh Reviewer says that in a manuscript copy which he had seen this line was succeeded by another—

“Hideous, deformed, and pale of hue,”

and adds that this line was the keystone of the poem, and that is why Coleridge left it out. The criticism is inept, for the missing line is fully implied by the line which remains, and it is a proof of Coleridge's judgment and delicacy that he suppressed it. But the statement is unquestionably correct, for l. 251 is now left without any corresponding rhyme.

l. 408. *Alas! they had been friends in youth, etc.*

Coleridge, writing to Poole in 1813, calls this famous passage, "the best and sweetest lines that ever I wrote." But he was wrong. Any excellent poet minded to write on broken friendship might by taking due pains have produced something like them; but the first part of 'Christabel' is full of magical felicities not only unapproachable, but inconceivable save by one wholly possessed by the God. We agree with Mr. E. H. Coleridge that the passage probably alludes to the breach with Southey.

A translation of the greater part of this passage with the heading *Lebewohl*, by no less a poet than Heinrich Heine, is preserved in *Ueber Heinrich Heine*. Von Schmidt-Weissenfels: Berlin, 1857. It is worth reprinting as Heine's, although in every way inferior to his versions of Byron—

"Befreundet waren weiland ihre Herzen,
Doch Lästereien können Wahrheit schwärzen;
Und die Beständigkeit wohnt nur dort oben:
Und dornig ist das Leben, und die Jugend
Ist eitel; und entzweit sein mit Geliebten,
Das kann wie Wahnsinnschmerz im Hirne toben!

* * * * *

Doch nie fand sich ein Mittler diesen beiden,
Der heilen wollte ihrer Herzen Leiden.
Genüben standen sich die Schmerzgestalten,
Wie Klippen, die des Blitzes Strahl gespalten.
Ein wilder, wüster Strom fließt jetzt dazwischen;
Doch aller Elemente zornige Schaar
Vermag wohl nimmer gänzlich zu verwischen
Die holde Spur von dem, was einstens war."

l. 656. *A little child, a limber elf*. We agree with Mr. Dykes Campbell in thinking it highly improbable that

this "conclusion to Part the Second," which does not occur in any MS., was originally written for 'Christabel.' The lines were sent to Southey on May 6, 1801, and were probably written about that time. They seem to have some reference to Hartley Coleridge.

It is needless to remark that the composition of 'Christabel,' whose metrical form was imitated by Scott before the poem had seen the light, makes an era in the history of English metre. Coleridge wrote as follows on this point in the preface to the first edition—

"The metre of 'Christabel' is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle, namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion."

p. 69. KUBLA KHAN.

First published in 1816, along with 'Christabel' and 'The Pains of Sleep.' Coleridge says that he prints it in deference to the wish of a distinguished poet, probably Byron, and rather as a psychological curiosity than on the ground of poetical merit; but it is impossible to believe him unwitting what a wonderful thing he had done. Had this been possible, the admiration of Lamb's circle must have opened his eyes. "He repeats it so enchantingly," writes Lamb to Wordsworth, "that he irradiates and brings heaven and elysian bowers into our parlour when he sings or says it." A psychological curiosity it certainly was, if the famous story of its genesis can be relied upon—how Coleridge, in the summer of 1797, as he says, but it must have been 1798, retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Lynton, fell asleep under the influence of an anodyne over the passage in Purchas's *Pilgrims* describing how "in Xanadu did Cublai Can build a stately palace, encompassing sixteene miles of plaine ground with a wall," how he composed from two to three hundred lines upon this theme in his slumber, and awakening wrote down what we possess, and how

having proceeded thus far the remainder was dissipated by an inopportune visitor, whose name he has omitted to hand down for the execration of posterity. It will never be known whether this striking tale of a vision is sooth, or itself a dream.

l. 2. *A stately pleasure-dome decree.* Leigh Hunt, in *Imagination and Fancy*, says he has some recollection of a version which read *pleasure house ordain; sea* in l. 5 being altered into *main* for the sake of rhyme. If so, this was probably an earlier version than that now current, for Purchas says "sumptuous house of pleasure." Mrs. Robinson, who died in December 1800, appears to have read the poem.

l. 40. *Singing of Mount Abora.* There seems to be no mountain of this name in Abyssinia at the present day, though one may be mentioned by some ancient traveller. Whether this be the case, or whether the mountain be Coleridge's invention, the name must be connected with the river *Atbara*, the *Astaboras* of the ancients, which rises in Abyssinia and falls into the Nile near Berber. The principal affluent of this river is the *Tacazze = terrible*, so called from the impetuosity of its stream. If Coleridge knew this, an unconscious association with the impetuosity of the river he had been describing may have led to the apparently far-fetched introduction of the Abyssinian maid into a poem of Tartary. His poem without doubt suggested the juxtaposition of Abyssinia and Tartary in Keats's Bacchanal hymn in the fourth book of *Endymion*—

"I saw parched Abyssinia rouse and sing
To the silver cymbals' ring.
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce
Old Tartary the fierce."

p. 71. THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

Written in 1803, and first published along with 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan' in 1816.

p. 73. THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

The history of this wonderfully striking fragment is given in the author's prefatory note. The date of com-

position would be 1797. Wordsworth having failed to execute his part, it apparently begins with Canto II., but in fact no introduction is wanted. The verses were first printed in a note to *Aids to Reflection* in 1825, the poem in the *Bijou* of 1828, the piece as a whole in the edition of the *Poetical Works* of the same year. There is a remarkable resemblance between the opening passage and Shelley's prose fragment of *The Coliseum*, which would have been referred to imitation if it had been possible for Shelley to have been acquainted with Coleridge's work. The remorse of Cain is powerfully depicted in a picture by Paul Falconer Poole, R.A., in a picture in the Diploma collection of the Royal Academy.

p. 82. THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE TREE.

Written about 1805, first printed in 1828.

p. 87. ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR.

This poem was composed on December 23—26, 1796, at the prompting of Benjamin Flower, editor of the *Cambridge Intelligencer*, best remembered in our day as the father of Eliza Flower and Sarah Flower Adams. It appeared in an abbreviated form on December 31, and the complete text was simultaneously published as a quarto pamphlet.

ll. 6, 7, 8. The original reading of these lines has been restored in deference to the strongly expressed opinion of Coleridge himself in a MS. note in Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves,' even though he did not effect the changes he so warmly advocated when he came to republish the poem—

"I have restored this stanza to its original form, and have this to record, that I have never made an alteration in compliment to the taste and opinion of another without finding it complained of and regretted by one (often by several) of far higher claims to decide a question in poetry. Mr. Cary, the excellent Englisher of Dante, was, I found, vexed and almost indignant at the substitution of 'submitted' and 'train' for 'bowèd' and 'skirts.' On the other hand, I never corrected a

poem on the impulse of my own feelings without manifest improvement, as in 'The Ancient Mariner' and 'Christabel.'"

p. 94. FRANCE, AN ODE.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, April 16, 1798, under the title of 'The Recantation.'

p. 98. FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

First printed in 1793.

l. 223. *The mansion of my friend.* Thomas Poole.

p. 106. FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, January 8, 1798. When the poem came to be reprinted in 'Sibylline Leaves,' Coleridge accompanied it with a very wordy and entirely unnecessary "apologetic preface," included in all complete editions of his works. Taken to task with mock-seriousness, he had been baited into feeling ashamed of his own work, one of his best performances in its way. He should have replied, if at all, in the spirit of the anonymous quatrain added to Lord Carlisle's verses to Lady Holiand dissuading her from accepting Napoleon's bequest of his snuff-box—

"Lady, accept the gift a hero wore,
In spite of all this philanthropic stuff.
Let not seven stanzas written by a bore
Prevent your ladyship from taking snuff."

p. 109. THE DEVIL'S THOUGHTS.

This poem, better known as 'The Devil's Walk,' although this title has not the writer's authority, was first printed in the *Morning Post* for September 6, 1799, with many variations from the text here published, which is that of the editions of 1828 and 1829. The first three stanzas, and the ninth, are by Southey, who afterwards composed and published a much longer and very inferior 'Devil's Walk' of his own. The lines were immensely popular, and had numerous imitators, including Shelley. They were for a time very generally attributed to Porson.

p. 112. THE TWO ROUND SPACES ON THE
TOMBSTONE.

"This is an epitaph on Sir James Mackintosh, written of course many years before his death." MS. note, apparently by Frere, in Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves.' The lines first appeared in the *Morning Post* for December 4, 1800; and we have followed Mr. Campbell in reproducing the original version instead of the revised one in the edition of 1834. This was accompanied by a note by Coleridge, expressing his "hope that they will be taken, as assuredly they were composed, in mere sport." Other versions have appeared in periodicals.

p. 114. LEWTI.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, April 13, 1798, under the signature of *Nicius Erythraeus*, the pseudonym assumed in the seventeenth century by J. V. Rossi, the author of the delightful 'Pinacotheca Imaginum illustrium virorum.' It was to have appeared in the *Lyrical Ballads* in the same year, but was withdrawn at the last moment, and 'The Nightingale' substituted.

l. 15. *I saw a cloud of palest hue*, etc. This passage possibly suggested an equally beautiful description of another aspect of cloudy moonlight in Shelley's 'Rosalind and Helen'—

"As a frail cloud wandering o'er the moon,
Beneath its light invisible,
Is seen when it folds its grey wings again
To alight on midnight's dusky plain."

l. 45. *Perhaps the breezes that can fly*, etc. Coleridge writes in Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves'—
"This image was borrowed by Miss Baillie in her 'Basil,' as the dates of the poems prove."

l. 53. *Hush!* In 'Sibylline Leaves' this was misprinted *Slush!* a maddening but not altogether unintelligible blunder, the context considered. Coleridge writes in Mr. Samuel's copy—"This leaf the publisher had promised to cancel along with a few others made ludicrous by blunders of the press, and still worse by the presumptuous ignorance and coxcombrity of the British

printer. Though this promise, however, was not kept, still this ridiculous blunder was marked in the errata, and yet the *Monthly Review* adduces it as one of the hundred new-coined, barbarous, and much-imitative words, or rather letters, representing noises, that disfigure my poems. Except one quoted from Shakespeare (tu-whit, tu-whoo), in the 'Christabel,' there is not a single instance in all my works."

p. 117. THE PICTURE.

On this poem, which, with many variations from the text as now given, first appeared in the *Morning Post* of September 6, 1802, Coleridge thus comments in Mr. Samuel's annotated copy of 'Sibylline Leaves' (not the copy seen by Mr. Dykes Campbell)—

"I do not recollect any number of lines under the name of a poem that more strikingly illustrates the nature and necessity of some one Spirit, a Unity beside and beyond mere connection, a life in and over all, as the Light at once hidden and revealed in the colours that are the component integers of the vision. In this poem there is no defect of connection. The thoughts pass into each other without a *saltus*, the imagery is sufficiently homogeneous; and the feelings harmonize with both, and plainly produce or modify both. But there is no under-current that moves forward from within, the one spirit is absent, and it is this that makes the ship to go."

These strictures seem like a particular application of Coleridge's criticism on himself in *Anima Poetæ*, p. 197, where he compares himself to "the tropic annual or biennial, which grows nearly as high and spreads as large as the oak, but in which the wood, the heart, is wanting—the vital works vehemently, but the immortal is not with it." Whatever justice there may be in this, he would be an unreasonable reader who wanted more beauty than he finds in this exquisite poem, which appears from a letter of Lamb's, quoted by Mr. Campbell, to have been written at Greta.

- l. 78. *Her elbow rests*
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree.

This description seems to have suggested the situation

of Susanna Touchandgo sleeping on the bough over the torrent in Peacock's *Crotchet Castle*, chapter xiv.

l. 121. In Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves,' and is altered in MS. into *to*.

p. 124. THE KEEPSAKE.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, September 17, 1802. It had been written two years before.

l. 14. *Emmeline*. Probably denotes Dorothy Wordsworth, Emmeline being Wordsworth's poetical name for his sister. This explains Shelley's direction to his publisher (not carried out) to alter *Emma* into *Betty* in 'Peter Bell the Third,' "Emma, as I now recollect, is the real name of the sister of a great poet."

p. 125. TO A YOUNG LADY.

First printed in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800.

p. 126. SOMETHING CHILDISH, ETC.

This poem also first appeared in *The Annual Anthology*, under the signature *Cordomi*, "the heart at home." It was sent to Mrs. Coleridge in a letter from Gottingen, April 23, 1799. It is partly imitated from the German popular song, 'Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär'."

p. 127. ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, October 16, 1802, under the title of 'The Language of Birds.' Four lines were omitted in the text of 'Sibylline Leaves,' followed here.

p. 128. THE VISIONARY HOPE.

First printed in 'Sibylline Leaves.' Probably written about the same time as 'The Pains of Sleep.'

p. 129. RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

This exquisite poem was first published in 'Sibylline Leaves.' It seems strange that there should have been

any question respecting the date of composition. Coleridge unmistakably implies that when writing it he is at the Quantocks, from which he has been absent for eight years. This precisely agrees with the facts: he revisited Poole at Nether Stowey in June 1807, for the first time since his departure in 1799. He further implies that he has been for some time deeply attached to one whom he had met eight years before by the banks of the Greta. This can be no other than Sarah Hutchinson, the Asra of his 'Day Dream.' The poem, therefore, was written in the summer of 1807.

p. 130. MUTUAL PASSION.

First printed in 'Sibylline Leaves.' The "old poet," from whom it is "altered and modernised," is a German Minnesinger.

p. 132. HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

First appeared in the *Morning Post*, Sept. 11, 1802, with an introductory note, which must have misled every reader to conclude that Coleridge had composed the poem upon the spot. It is now well known that he never saw Mont Blanc, and that his poem is merely an expansion—though a magnificent one—of an ode by the German poetess, Frederike Brun. Though brief and diminutive in comparison with Coleridge's hymn, Frederike Brun's lyric is nevertheless highly poetical, and expressed in much finer and more sonorous alcaics than it would be easy to write in English. Coleridge was followed by two poets who actually had seen Mont Blanc, and one of whom wrote upon the spot. Neither Shelley nor Sydney Dobell seems indebted to Coleridge for anything, save that his "Motionless torrents, silent cataracts," is thus nobly expanded by the latter poet—

"Cold crested tides
And cataracts more white than wintry foam
Eternally in act of the great leap
That never may be ta'en, these fill the gorge
And rear upon the steep uplifted waves
Immovable, that proudly feign to go."

Many alterations in the text were made between 1802 and 1829. A revised version of 1803 will be found in the appendix to Mr. Dykes Campbell's edition.

p. 135. LINES WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT
ELBINGERODE.

Composed in 1799, and printed in the *Morning Post* for September 17, and elsewhere, but never complete until October 1835.

p. 137. ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM, ETC.

Published originally in the *Watchman*, April 11, 1796.

p. 138. THE AEOLIAN HARP.

Composed on August 20, 1795. "This poem," Mr. Campbell justly says, "marks an era in the development of Coleridge's powers of expression, both as regards melody and individuality." It would have been better without the concluding paragraph, apparently added to please Sara Fricker, who became Sara Coleridge on October 4 following. Coleridge thus annotates this poem in Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves'—

"Let me be excused if it should seem to others too mere a trifle to justify my noticing it—but I have some claim to the thanks of no small number of the readers of poetry in having first introduced this species of short blank verse poems, of which Southey, Lamb, Wordsworth, and others have produced so many exquisite specimens. It would gratify me, I confess, to see the lines from 9 ('How exquisite,' &c.) to l. 48 extracted in the *Ed. Magazine*."

This looks as though Mr. Samuel's copy of 'Sibylline Leaves' had been annotated for the use of Wilson, Lockhart, or some other person connected with *Blackwood*, although there is evidence of its having been in the possession of John Hookham Frere.

p. 141. REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE
OF RETIREMENT.

This fine poem appeared in the *Monthly Magazine* for

October 1796, and must have been written on leaving Clevedon in the winter of 1795.

p. 144. TO THE REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE.

This poem must have been written in the May following Coleridge's visit to his reconciled family in July 1796. Published in 1797 as a dedication of his poems to his brother, who objected, not apparently to the poem, but to its employment as a dedication. Coleridge bitterly deplores the estrangement, of which he felt himself guiltless, in a letter to his nephew in January 1828.

l. 25. *Some most false*, etc. Compare the celebrated passage in *Epipsychidion*, "There, one whose voice was venom'd melody," etc.

p. 147. INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN.

Morning Post, September 24, 1802.

p. 148. A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

First printed in *The Friend*, November 23, 1809. A note says, "Imitated, in the movements rather than the thought, from the seventh of Gli Epitafi of Chiabrera." "Idoloclastes Satyrane" is, of course, Coleridge himself.

p. 149. THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

First printed in the *Annual Anthology* for 1800. The words addressed to Charles Lamb, etc., which occur there, were never reprinted by Coleridge, in consequence, apparently, of Lamb's objection to the description of himself as "the gentle-hearted Charles," upon which he lived to value himself. "I have been called the gentle-hearted Charles, and shall I derogate?"

l. 74. *Flew creaking*. Some months after I had written this line, it gave me pleasure to find that Bartram had observed the same circumstance of the Savanna Crane. "When these birds move their wings in flight . . . we plainly hear the quill feathers; their shafts and webs upon one another creak as the joints or workings

of a vessel in a tempestuous sea."—COLERIDGE. Bartram's is one of the most delightful and instructive books of travel ever written.

p. 152. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

These lines were composed in January 1807, at Coleorton Farnham, where Coleridge was Wordsworth's guest. They prove that his poetical power was undiminished, although a strong emotion was needed to call it into full activity. In all editions of his works they are entitled, as he himself entitled them when first printed in 'Sibylline Leaves,' 'To a Gentleman.' We have restored the name of Wordsworth, which never would have been omitted but for their unhappy though temporary estrangement. The poem as originally sent to Sir George Beaumont differs so much from the text of 'Sibylline Leaves,' that Mr. Campbell has reprinted it in his appendix.

l. 61. *Her own natural notes.* In the original version this line was succeeded by the following grand passage—

"Dear shall it be to every human heart,
 To me how more than dearest! me, on whom
 Comfort from thee, and utterances of thy love,
 Came with such heights and depths of harmony,
 Such sense of wings uplifting, that its might
 Scattered and quelled me, till my thoughts became
 A bodily tumult; and thy faithful hopes,
 Thy hopes of me, dear Friend, by me unfelt,
 Were troublous to me, almost as a voice
 Familiar once, and more than musical;
 As a dear woman's voice to one cast forth,
 A wanderer with a worn-out heart forlorn,
 Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.
 O Friend, too well thou know'st, of what sad years
 The long suppression had benumbed my soul,
 That, even as life," etc.

l. 98. *With momentary stars of my own birth.*

"A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it; and every now and then light detachments of this white

cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness."—COLERIDGE, quoting a passage from his own 'Satyrane Letters' in *The Friend*.

p. 157. FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

First published in a quarto pamphlet in 1798, along with the 'Ode to France' and 'Fears in Solitude.' It must have been written in the winter of 1797-98. It is perhaps the most beautiful of all Coleridge's blank verse poems after 'The Nightingale,' but owes much to the continual alterations it underwent before it assumed its final shape in the edition of 1829. In the first edition, but in no other, it was terminated by six lines which entirely destroyed the impressive solemnity of the present conclusion.

p. 160. DEJECTION, AN ODE.

First printed in the *Morning Post* of October 4, 1802, Wordsworth's wedding-day. In this edition, the "Lady" of the poem as now printed was "Edmund," a poetical name for Wordsworth, who had been directly addressed as "William" in the original manuscript. When the Ode was reprinted in 'Sibylline Leaves' painful misunderstandings had impaired, though they had not destroyed, the friendship of the poets, and Coleridge could no longer speak or think of Wordsworth as he had done. The alteration of the real "Edmund" into an imaginary "Lady," with the numerous changes of the text which it has enforced, has greatly prejudiced his poem. The concluding stanza in particular, most appropriate as first written, now appears overstrained and almost nonsensical. The text of the first recension is given in the appendix to Mr. Dykes Campbell's edition.

l. 13. *I see the old Moon in her lap.*

"The ghost of her dead mother, whose dim form
Bends in dark ether from her infant's chair."

Triumph of Life.

l. 28.

*The western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green.*

According to Trelawny, this passage was ridiculed by Byron, who must have been colour-blind if he had not himself seen what he denied to exist. Some years after the composition of this poem Coleridge noted at Bristol—“Blue sky through the glimmering interspaces of the dark elms at twilight rendered a lovely deep yellow-green—all the rest a delicate blue.” (*Anima Poetæ*, p. 175.)

l. 31. *Those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars
That give away their motion to the stars.*

“Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,
Piloted by the many-wandering blast,
And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.”
Letter to Maria Gisborne.

l. 120. *As Otway's self.* In the *Morning Post*, *Edmund's*, meaning Wordsworth. The change is most unfortunate, Otway, though a master of pathos, having no vocation for “lays.” The reference is no doubt to Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray*, but must not be taken quite literally: as there is no element of delight in that heart-breaking ballad other than its poetic beauty.

p. 166. ODE TO GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF
DEVONSHIRE.

First printed in the *Morning Post* for December 24, 1799. The Duchess's poem had appeared in the same journal two days previously. Coleridge struck out in ink lines 68—77 from a copy of the reprint in the *Annual Anthology*, but did not maintain the exclusion when the poem appeared in ‘Sibylline Leaves.’

p. 169. ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.

This exquisite poem appeared in the *Morning Post* for December 4, 1801, prefaced by two very inferior stanzas never reprinted.

p. 170. TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

Written in November 1796, a month before ‘The Departing Year,’ and like this an indication that Cole-

ridge might have been a great poet, even without Wordsworth, with whom he was not then acquainted. Published in 1797.

p. 173. LINES TO W. LINLEY.

Written in September 1797, printed in 1800.

p. 174. SONNET TO THE RIVER OTTER.

First printed in 1797.

p. 175. MELANCHOLY.

Printed in 'Sibylline Leaves,' and there stated by Coleridge to have first appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* for 1794, where Mr. Campbell could not find it. Its merit renders a later date probable.

l. 6. *Adder's Tongue*. A botanical mistake. The plant which the poet here describes is called the Hart's Tongue.—COLERIDGE.

p. 176. TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY.

First published in 'Sibylline Leaves,' where Coleridge calls it "a school-boy poem." It may have been intended, as he says, to depict the feelings of a school-boy living in his future holiday, but assuredly was not written until he had left his school-boy days long behind him.

p. 176. THE DESTINY OF NATIONS.

This eloquent rhapsody, the most characteristic utterance of Coleridge's *Sturm-und-Drang* period, consists of the lines he contributed to Southey's 'Joan of Arc,' which were printed in the quarto edition of that poem in 1796, but never again as part of it. It was first reprinted in 'Sibylline Leaves,' together with the notes upon it, which had appeared in 'Joan of Arc.' Coleridge annotated several copies, and the more important of his notes are given by Mr. Campbell. By the kindness of Mr. Stuart Samuel we are enabled to add another, embodying thirteen hitherto unpublished lines. Against ll. 35—37:

“But properties are God : the naked mass
(If mass there be, fantastic guess or ghost)
Acts only by its inactivity,”

Coleridge has written :—“Must be altered, as false in philosophy and subversive of religion. The lines below are for trial, or rather a hint or memorandum—

“What is but as God is? What wing of thought
May overtake, what spell of words may bind
The mirthful fugitive Alien that exists,
Yet is not? who declare the cloud whose edge
Refracts the Light into the showerless fire,
The unreceiving Void, that sends it back
A gorgeous Spectre? O proud soul of man,
Strong art thou in thy weakness, and dost make
The sheltering limits of thy scanty ken
In living outline eddy into foam,
A novel Light! the Vision of a world.”

l. 20. *Placed with our backs to bright Reality*, etc. The idea is derived from the opening of the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*.

l. 279. *With slimy shapes and miscreated life
Poisoning the vast Pacific.*

An interesting anticipation of 'The Ancient Mariner.'

l. 458. *Diseasing realms, the Enthusiast*. This seems curious English, but *diseasing* is admitted by Dr. Murray as an active verb in the sense of *infect*, though pronounced obsolete in that of *distress* or *disturb*.

p. 197. THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

First printed in the *Keepsake* for 1829, where it accompanied a drawing by Stothard.

p. 201. TO MATILDA BETHAM.

Discovered by Mr. Dykes Campbell, in what appears to be a fragment of a privately printed autobiography of Matilda Betham, bound up with other tracts in a volume in the Forster collection at South Kensington, and published by him in the *Athenæum* for March 15, 1890.

The date of composition is 1802, as appears from the extract printed at the head of the verses.

l. 48. *A Boughton's eyes.* Lady Boughton, wife of Sir Charles Rouse-Boughton, Bart.

p. 203. THE TWO FOUNTS.

Written in 1826, and first printed in the *Bijou* for 1828. Mrs. Aders was the daughter of Raphael Smith, the engraver.

p. 205. THE EXCHANGE.

Probably first printed in some periodical about 1804.

p. 205. THE DAY-DREAM.

Written in Germany, and printed in the *Morning Post*, Oct. 19, 1802. It was first included in Coleridge's works in 1852.

p. 207. THE SNOWDROP.

Discovered in MS. by Mr. Dykes Campbell, and first printed in his edition. Coleridge had either offered it, or intended to offer it, to the *Morning Post*. In a note addressed to the editor, it is stated to have been composed after reading Mrs. Robinson's poem with the same title.

l. 30. *Etesian.* An inappropriate epithet, as *Etesian wind* means no more than a wind blowing at stated seasons, and in our climate it comes from the north.

p. 209. THE GOOD, GREAT MAN.

First printed in the *Morning Post*.

ll. 14, 15. *And three firm friends,* etc. Mr. Campbell remarks on the authority of a MS. note by an unknown hand, that Coleridge took this beautiful thought from Hooker (*Eccl. Pol.*, bk. v.). Probably he did, but is the thought original with Hooker? It sounds Rabbinical.

p. 210. PHANTOM.

Found in a diary kept during the voyage to Malta. First printed in 1834.—CAMPBELL.

p. 210. CONSTANCY TO AN IDEAL OBJECT.

Printed for the first time in the 1828 edition of the *Poetical Works*. Mr. Campbell thinks that it was written at Malta.

p. 211. SEPARATION.

Probably written on the voyage to Malta; first printed in 1834.

p. 213. A THOUGHT, ETC.

Written at Olevano in Tuscany, March 8, 1806, on the way home from Malta. First printed in the *Amulet*, 1833.

p. 213. A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

The date seems unknown. If written for his daughter Sara, it would be about 1807.

p. 214. METRICAL FEET.

Written for Hartley in 1803. Some lines subsequently added for Derwent in 1807, are only interesting as showing that Coleridge then pronounced his surname as a disyllable. In 1811 he pronounced it as a trisyllable, making it rhyme with *Polar ridge* in an epigram written about that date. In 1794 Thomas Poole writes it *Coldridge*, showing that he gave it its correct pronunciation as a disyllable.

p. 215. THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

Supposed to have been written in 1807.

p. 216. A DAY-DREAM.

Probably written in 1807; first printed in the *Bijou* for 1828. "Asra," as elsewhere, is the anagram of Sara [Hutchinson]. "Mary" is Mrs. Wordsworth; "our sister and our friend" are Dorothy and William Wordsworth.

p. 217. THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL.

Commenced in 1807, probably not completed for some years afterwards. First printed in the 1828 edition of the *Poetical Works*.

p. 220. *Epos, etc.

This quatrain served as the motto to one of the divisions of the Poems in the editions of 1828 and 1829. Its own motto is from the Greek Anthology.

p. 220. THE BUTTERFLY.

First printed in *Biographia Literaria*, 1817.

l. 6. *Manifold motions making little speed.* It would not be easy to find a more tersely descriptive line than this in English poetry.

p. 221. MOLES.

Written in 1817, and printed by itself in Coleridge's works until Mr. Campbell discovered that it belonged to a fragmentary poem entitled 'Limbo,' which we have not reproduced.

p. 223. THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

Of uncertain date; first printed in 1834.

p. 224. FANCY IN NUBIBUS.

First printed in *Blackwood*, Nov. 1819. The last five lines are adapted from Stölberg.

p. 224. WATER BALLAD.

First printed in the *Athenæum*, Oct. 9, 1831.

p. 225. TO NATURE.

First printed in 1836 by Alsop, who could not remember how the lines had come into his hands.

p. 226. YOUTH AND AGE.

The first draft of this exquisite poem dates from 1823.

It was published, as far as the line "That Youth and I are housemates still," in the *Literary Souvenir* and the *Bijou* for 1828, and assumed its ultimate shape about 1832.

p. 228. LOVE'S FIRST HOPE.

Described by Coleridge as an early poem, but Mr. Campbell proves by a memorandum of his own that it was written in 1824. It is partly adapted from a passage in Sidney's *Arcadia*:—"Her breath is more sweet than a gentle south-west wind, which comes creeping over flowery fields and shadowed waters in the heat of summer." Wordsworth also laid Sidney under contribution for a passage in one of his finest sonnets:—

"Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand."

p. 228. DUTY SURVIVING SELF-LOVE.

Written in 1826; first printed in 1828.

p. 229. WORK WITHOUT HOPE.

First printed in the *Bijou* for 1828, and included in the edition of Coleridge's *Poetical Works*, published in the same year. In this and in the edition of 1829, the first line of this incomparable poem is disfigured by the misprint of *stags* for *slugs*, which, utterly out of keeping as it is with the scenery of a Highgate garden, has found an editor to restore and defend it.

p. 230. LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION.

These lines, no less exquisite than the preceding poem, first appeared in the *Keepsake* for 1830.

p. 231. EPITAPH.

Appears to have been written in 1833, the year before Coleridge's death. It seems invidious to cavil at a composition so generally and in many respects so justly admired, but the last couplet will not bear criticism. Coleridge himself was entitled, if he thought fit, to ask

"mercy for praise, to be forgiven for fame," but such supplications would be grotesquely misplaced in the mouths of most passers-by, Christian or otherwise.

p. 235. RELIGIOUS MUSINGS.

"The statement," says Mr. Dykes Campbell, "that this poem was written on the Christmas Eve of 1794, may be true of some portion of it, but is very far from being applicable to the whole. Coleridge left London for Bristol early in January 1795, and there is no reasonable doubt that the unfinished poem sent to Lamb soon after was 'Religious Musings.'" Coleridge then thought, and for some time continued to think, very highly of his poem, which does, indeed, represent the highest achievement of which he was capable so long as his taste remained subservient to the precepts of the eighteenth century.

l. 173. *And he, connatural mind.* Absurd as it seems, the "connatural mind" can be no one else than "le monstre Pitt, l'ennemi du genre humain."

l. 369. *He first who marked the ideal tribes,
Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain.*

David Hartley.

p. 251. MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

Coleridge's first considerable poem, originally composed at Christ's Hospital in 1790. Mr. Dykes Campbell gives this primitive version from a MS. copy in a book "into which the headmaster of Christ's Hospital, James Boyer, caused his boys to transcribe their best poetical and prose exercises." He also prints the final version of 1829, reproduced in this edition. Very considerable changes had been made in the interval.

p. 257. ABSENCE.

First printed in the *Cambridge Intelligencer*, October 11, 1794.

p. 258. SONGS OF THE PIXIES.

First printed in 1796.

p. 263. LINES TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING.

First printed in 1796.

p. 264. THE SIGH.

Addressed to Mary Evans. Written, according to Coleridge, in June 1794, and first printed in 1796.

p. 265. IMITATED FROM THE WELSH.

Printed in 1796. Mr. Campbell conjectures that it was written on or soon after the Welsh tour of 1794. This may be the case, yet the thought seems to us to savour rather of *Welschland* than of Wales: but, as Coleridge then knew no Italian, he probably derived the thought from some modern Latin poet.

p. 266. DOMESTIC PEACE.

'The Fall of Robespierre,' in which these beautiful lines appeared, was written by Coleridge and Southey in 1794, shortly after Robespierre's catastrophe.

p. 266. TO SCHILLER.

Printed in 1796, with the addition of a note in which Coleridge seems to imply, though he does not explicitly affirm, that it was written on occasion of his first reading *The Robbers* at college; not later, then, than 1794. In so, he could only have known Schiller in the English version.

l. 6. Coleridge in 1797 altered *mortal* into *human*, under the impression that he had committed a bull. "I wish to die, that nothing may stamp me mortal." As he eventually restored the original reading, he probably came to see that no bull had in fact been committed, since the passage may very well be interpreted: "I should have wished to die as soon as I felt conscious of having achieved the *ne plus ultra* of sublimity." "Nay, sir, beyond lobster sauce, I take it, ye cannot go."—*Mr. MacQuedy in 'Crotchet Castle.'*

p. 267. TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

These lines, never reprinted by Coleridge himself after 1803, are interesting as containing the germ of the immortal Conversation Poem: ("nightingale-music sleeping in the egg") as are the lines which follow for their relation to passages in 'The Lime-Tree Bower my Prison,' and 'Fears in Solitude.'

p. 271. HYMN TO THE EARTH.

First printed in *Friendship's Offering* for 1834.

p. 273. CATULLIAN HENDECASYLLABLES.

First printed in the 1834 edition of Coleridge's poems, without the acknowledgment which should have been made of its being a translation from the German of Friedrich Matthisson. The title is a misnomer, for by making the first foot a dactyl, Coleridge has written dodecasyllabic instead of hendecasyllabic lines. Tennyson has given a metrically correct example of this Phalaecian metre, in which Platen has composed an entire epic,—*Die Abassiden*.

Mr. Campbell has freed this little gem from two flaws introduced by the printer: *placed* for *blest* in l. 5, and *bleak* for *bleat* in l. 6.

The verses translated by Coleridge are, of course, merely the introduction to Matthisson's Milesian tale, which runs on for eighty or ninety lines more.

p. 274. THE HOMERIC HEXAMETER. THE OVIDIAN ELEGIAC METRE.

These are translations from Schiller, originally published in *Friendship's Offering*.

p. 275. ON A CATARACT.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834. The last beautiful lines are an addition of Coleridge's own.

p. 276. THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

First printed in 'Sibylline Leaves.'

p. 277. MIGNON'S SONG.

The first stanza only. First printed in 1834.

p. 278. WESTPHALIAN SONG.

Probably translated on Coleridge's visit to Germany in 1799.

p. 278. NAMES.

An unacknowledged translation from Lessing, first printed in the *Morning Post*, August 17, 1799.

p. 279. JOB'S LUCK.

From Owen's Latin Epigrams, but very probably through the medium of Lessing, who imitated it. First printed in the *Morning Post*, September 26, 1801.

p. 280. ASTROLOGY.

This famous passage, though a speech in a play, and not complete in itself, is inserted here in deference to the opinion of Leigh Hunt, who enumerates it among the pieces of Coleridge which should be brought together to give "infinite riches in a little room." It comes, of course, from Coleridge's translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, Act III. sc. iv. of 'The Piccolomini,' as Schiller wrote it, the arrangement of acts and scenes being different in the translation. Max Piccolomini is the speaker. Coleridge's additions and alterations are less important than usually supposed. The following five lines of Schiller, following "that truth we live to learn," are entirely omitted by him—

“Die heitre Welt der Wunder ist's allein
Die dem entzückten Herzen Antwort gibt,
Die ihre ew'gen Räume mir eröffnet,
Mir tausend Zweige reich entgegen streckt,
Worauf der trunkne Geist sich selig wiegt.”

On the other hand, the seven magnificent lines beginning "The intelligible forms," are expanded from two lines of Schiller's—

“Die alten Fabelwesen sind nicht mehr,
Das reizende Geschlecht ist ausgewandert.”

· 1. 1. *His faith.* Wallenstein's.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

MR. SAMUEL'S copy of 'Sibylline Leaves,' so frequently referred to, contains MS. notes by Coleridge on two poems not included in this selection, 'The Three Graves' and 'Human Life,' which it seems desirable to place upon record, although they have no reference to the contents of this volume.

With respect to 'The Three Graves,' Coleridge complains that, although he had expressly stated in his preface that the ballad was not presented as poetry, and was in no way connected with the author's judgment concerning poetical diction, "this very poem was selected, notwithstanding this preface, as a proof of my judgment and poetic diction, and a fair specimen of the style of my poems generally (see the *Mirror*); nay! the very words of the preface were used, omitting the *not*, etc.

"On the publication of the 'Wallenstein,' one of the reviewers transcribed my preface as his review, attributing to me the opinions against which I had warned the reader in my own words. Long before this, two little tracts of mine, each on a different subject, printed but not published, fell into the hands of the Monthly Reviewer, and both having the same coloured paper outside, though with different titles, he denounced to the public the low trick of publishing the same book with two title-pages."

HUMAN LIFE, OR THE DENIAL OF IMMORTALITY.

On these lines, which appear in 'Sibylline Leaves,' but have not been reprinted in this selection, Coleridge comments—

“These lines were written in purposed imitation of Donne, but Charles Lamb says that he sees no other resemblance but that more thought is packed together than is compatible with poetry.”

To this Frere subjoins:—“I see little or no imitation of Donne, and it has struck me as a poem completely *sui generis*—excellent in its kind, and what matters it that there are other kinds more eligible in general? Surely it may claim one page and a half out of 300? With the same condensation of thought as Donne’s ‘Anniversary,’ it has more stream, more passion, and the thoughts are more natural. But one ought to hear Coleridge himself read it.”—J. H. F.

COLERIDGE ON HIS TRAGEDY ‘ZAPOLYA.’

A copy of ‘Zapolya’ was sold in 1895 at Messrs. Sotheby’s, and purchased by Messrs. Pearson and Co., to whom I am indebted for permission to print, with the friendly assent of Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, a transcript of a letter respecting the play from Coleridge to the author of ‘Peter’s Letters to his Kinsfolk’ [J. C. Lockhart], copied by Coleridge himself upon the fly-leaves. It does not appear whether Coleridge was acquainted with the authorship of ‘Peter’s Letters,’ but he was, no doubt, gratified by the handsome mention of himself made in the book. ‘Zapolya,’ written in the winter of 1815-16, was published towards Christmas in 1817, and the letter to Lockhart was probably written shortly after March 1819, when Blackwood had called upon Coleridge to solicit contributions for his magazine. The ‘Letters’ appeared early in 1819 in a professed second edition, really the first. Coleridge’s ‘Biographia Literaria’ had been shamefully treated in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, but Lockhart was not the author of the article, and had rebuked the assailants of Coleridge in a passage in ‘Peter’s Letters,’ which could not have escaped the poet’s attention:—“I saw an article in *Blackwood’s Magazine* the other day, in which it seemed to be made matter of congratulatory reflection that ‘if Mr. Coleridge should make his appearance suddenly among any company of well-educated people on this side of the Tweed, he would

meet with some little difficulty in making them comprehend who he was.' What a fine idea for a Scotch critic to hug himself upon!"

TO THE AUTHOR OF 'PETER'S LETTERS TO HIS KINSFOLK,' FROM HIS OBLIGED S. T. COLERIDGE.

"DEAR SIR,

"If you knew, or if it were in my power adequately to represent to you, the condition of mind, body, and estate under which this dramatic effort was commenced, carried on, and ended; or the contradictory efforts between which I was struggling; or rather the continued contradiction between the anxiety to make something that would do for the theatre in its present state, and the disgust at writing *Musis et Apolline nullo* (a sin against *my own* ghost, sufficiently avenged by the insolence and unfeeling caprice with which I was treated by the classical committee, one of whom coolly informed me that after 'Bertram' the public would not be contented without something truly Shakspearean, if not equal to, yet *like* the tragedy of 'Bertram' !!), you would be disposed to look for the beauties rather than the faults, and if you found¹ any of the former, to wonder at their existence far beyond your admiration. The character of Glycine pleases me so much upon a calm perusal of the work that I regret its being, so to say, thrown away. I have planned a *rifacciamento* of the play, so as to remedy the plurality of nearly equal interests, and the want of prominence, from the too crowded foreground, and of continuity in the female characters.

S. T. C.

"P.S.—N.B. 'Zapolya' was printed without my consent, and the permission to publish it extorted from my facility; or, in part, from the most mischievous vice in

¹ Am I misled by parental vanity when I acknowledge a favourable opinion of pages 21, 22; the six last lines of p. 25; pp. 26—31; the passages marked pp. 30, 39, and 44; and p. 106?

my character, the wretched cowardice that shrinks from reiterating No, when another is impudent enough to repeat and re-urge in entreaty. A thousand were to be printed, and the half profits given me as soon as the printing, etc., had been paid. I was informed that not a hundred had been sold. On the publisher's bankruptcy, it came out that 2000 had been printed, and 1100 sold. Similar proceedings with all my other works, so that I was forced to become my own purchaser, in order to prevent their being sold *en masse* for waste paper. And yet I am called to account for doing nothing, for indolence, etc., etc., though not Southey himself has worked harder than myself. My writings are not pleasing to the public,—well! I do not blame the public, but surely I ought not to be publicly blamed."

This letter, interesting in every way, corrects the statement generally made respecting the sale of 'Zapolya.' It appears that two thousand was not the number of copies sold, but of copies printed, and that the actual sale was nine hundred less. Coleridge was at every disadvantage from the obscurity as well as the rascality of the publisher with whom he had unfortunately become connected. His being obliged to buy up his own books probably accounts for the number of copies of 'Sibylline Leaves' with MS. annotations by him.

In the same copy of 'Zapolya' are a few MS. alterations in Coleridge's hand, not introduced when the play was included in his works, but which seem worthy of consideration.

Line 101 of the first scene of the Prelude (Campbell's edition) is deleted entirely. In the next line, "That these black death-flags" is altered into "These sable death-flags," and the words are given to Kiuprili, whom Ragozzi interrupts with "Are but treason's signals."

In the same scene, the text from "Being equal all in crime" to "For its own outwitting" (ll. 113—118) is cancelled.

After l. 377 of the Second Part, Act I. sc. i., "It is the ground-swell of a teeming instinct," Coleridge has inserted "Or like an isle forced up by nether fires." Act IV. sc. iii. l. 54 was to read, "From henceforth thou no

longer shalt forbid me." The passages which Coleridge especially recommends to Lockhart's attention correspond in Campbell's edition to Prelude, scene i., ll. 351—398; the same, 427—432; the whole of scene ii.; Pt. 2, Act II. sc. i. ll. 48—52; ll. 67—76; ll. 151—154; and Act IV. sc. i. ll. 69—91.









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Coleridge, Samuel Taylor
Poems

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